

The
Collected Works
of
Edward Sapir

Mouton
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The
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of
Edward Sapir

III



The Collected Works of Edward Sapir

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The
Collected Works
of
Edward Sapir
III

Culture

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Sections I and III

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Section II

Judith T. Irvine

Section IV and V

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*Edward Sapir, about 1928, Chicago, Illinois
(Courtesy of Sapir family)*

Edward Sapir (1884–1939) has been referred to as “one of the most brilliant scholars in linguistics and anthropology in our country” (Franz Boas) and as “one of the greatest figures in American humanistic scholarship” (Franklin Edgerton). His classic book, *Language* (1921), is still in use, and many of his papers in general linguistics, such as “Sound Patterns in Language” and “The Psychological Reality of Phonemes,” stand also as classics. The development of the American descriptive school of structural linguistics, including the adoption of phonemic principles in the study of non-literary languages, was primarily due to him.

The large body of work he carried out on Native American languages has been called “ground-breaking” and “monumental” and includes descriptive, historical, and comparative studies. They are of continuing importance and relevance to today’s scholars.

Not to be ignored are his studies in Indo-European, Semitic, and African languages, which have been characterized as “masterpieces of brilliant association” (Zellig Harris). Further, he is recognized as a forefather of ethnolinguistic and sociolinguistic studies.

In anthropology Sapir contributed the classic statement on the theory and methodology of the American school of Franz Boas in his monograph, “Time Perspective in Aboriginal American Culture” (1916). His major contribution, however, was as a pioneer and proponent for studies on the interrelation of culture and personality, of society and the individual, providing the theoretical basis for what is known today as symbolic anthropology.

He was, in addition, a poet, and contributed papers on aesthetics, literature, music, and social criticism.

Note to the Reader

Throughout *The Collected Works of Edward Sapir*, those publications whose typographic complexity would have made new typesetting and proofreading difficult have been photographically reproduced. All other material has been newly typeset. When possible, the editors have worked from Sapir's personal copies of his published work, incorporating his corrections and additions into the reset text. Such emendations are acknowledged in the endnotes. Where the editors themselves have corrected an obvious typographical error, this is noted by brackets around the corrected form.

The page numbers of the original publication are retained in the photographically reproduced material; in reset material, the original publication's pagination appears as bracketed numbers within the text at the point where the original page break occurred. To avoid confusion and to conform to the existing literature, the page numbers cited in introductions and editorial notes are those of the original publications.

Footnotes which appeared in the original publications appear here as footnotes. Editorial notes appear as endnotes. Endnote numbers are placed in the margins of photographically reproduced material; in reset material they are inserted in the text as superscript numbers in brackets. The first, unnumbered endnote for each work contains the citation of the original publication and, where appropriate, an acknowledgment of permission to reprint the work here.

All citations of Sapir's works in the editorial matter throughout these volumes conform to the master bibliography that appears in Volume XVI; since not all works will be cited in any given volume, the letters following the dates are discontinuous within a single volume's references. In volumes where unpublished materials by Sapir have been cited, a list of the items cited and the archives holding them is appended to the References.

Contents

Frontispiece: Edward Sapir, about 1928	6
Preface	15

SECTION ONE: CULTURE, SOCIETY, AND THE INDIVIDUAL

REGNA DARNELL AND JUDITH T. IRVINE, EDITORS

Introduction	19
Do We Need a "Superorganic"? (1917)	27
Culture, Genuine and Spurious (1924)	43
Notes on Psychological Orientation in a Given Society (1926): Hanover Conference Presentation and excerpts of discussion	73
Anthropology and Sociology (1927)	99
Speech as a Personality Trait (1927)	119
The Meaning of Religion (1928)	133
Proceedings, First Colloquium on Personality, American Psychi- atric Association (1928)	147
The Unconscious Patterning of Behavior in Society (1928)	155
Proceedings, Second Colloquium on Personality, American Psy- chiatric Association (1930)	173
The Cultural Approach to the Study of Personality (1930): Hanover Conference presentation and excerpts of discussion	199
Original Memorandum to the Social Science Research Council	243
A Project for the Study of Acculturation among the American Indians, with Special Reference to the Investigation of Prob- lems of Personality	246
The Proposed Work of the Committee on Personality and Culture	249
Custom (1931)	255
Fashion (1931)	265
Cultural Anthropology and Psychiatry (1932)	277

Group (1932)	293
The Emergence of the Concept of Personality in a Study of Cultures (1934)	303
Personality (1934)	313
Symbolism (1934)	319
Extracts from the Proceedings of the Conference on Personality and Culture (1935)	327
Summary of proceedings and excerpts of discussion, 1935 . . .	328
Extracts from the minutes, 1936 and 1938 meetings of the Committee on Personality in Relation to Culture	332
The Application of Anthropology to Human Relations (1936) . .	335
The Contribution of Psychiatry to an Understanding of Behavior in Society (1937)	343
Why Cultural Anthropology Needs the Psychiatrist (1938)	353
Letter to Philip S. Selznick, 25 October 1938 (1980)	363
Psychiatric and Cultural Pitfalls in the Business of Getting a Living (1939)	367
References, Section One	381

SECTION TWO: THE PSYCHOLOGY OF CULTURE

JUDITH T. IRVINE, EDITOR

Acknowledgements	387
Introduction	389
Outline for <i>The Psychology of Culture</i> (1928)	413
The Psychology of Culture (1927–37)	421
References, Section Two	679

SECTION THREE: ASSESSMENTS OF PSYCHOLOGY AND PSYCHIATRY

REGNA DARNELL AND JUDITH T. IRVINE, EDITORS

Introduction	687
A Freudian Half-Holiday: Review of Sigmund Freud, <i>Delusion and Dream</i> (1917)	695

Psychoanalysis as Pathfinder: Review of Oskar Pfister, <i>The Psychoanalytic Method</i> (1917)	699
A Touchstone to Freud: Review of William H. R. Rivers, <i>Instinct and the Unconscious</i> (1921)	704
Practical Psychology: Review of Frederick Pierce, <i>Our Unconscious Mind and How to Use It</i> (1922)	708
An Orthodox Psychology: Review of Robert S. Woodworth, <i>Psychology</i> (1922)	711
Two Kinds of Human Beings: Review of Carl G. Jung, <i>Psychological Types</i> (1923)	714
Review of George A. Dorsey, <i>Why We Behave Like Human Beings</i> (1926)	719
Review of Knight Dunlap, <i>Old and New Viewpoints in Psychology</i> (1926)	720
Speech and Verbal Thought in Childhood: Review of Jean Piaget, <i>The Language and Thought of the Child</i> (1927)	722
Psychoanalysis as Prophet: Review of Sigmund Freud, <i>The Future of an Illusion</i> (1928)	725
References, Section Three	727

SECTION FOUR: REFLECTIONS ON CONTEMPORARY CIVILIZATION

RICHARD HANDLER, EDITOR

Introduction to Sections Four and Five: Edward Sapir's Aesthetic and Cultural Criticism	731
Culture in the Melting Pot (1916)	749
Review of Paul Abelson, <i>English-Yiddish Encyclopedic Dictionary</i> (1916)	753
God as Visible Personality: Review of Samuel Butler, <i>God the Known and God the Unknown</i> (1918)	756
The Ends of Man: Review of J. M. Tyler, <i>The New Stone Age in Northern Europe</i> ; Stewart Paton, <i>Human Behavior</i> ; and E. G. Conklin, <i>The Direction of Human Evolution</i> (1921)	760

Review of Gilbert Murray, <i>Tradition and Progress</i> (1922)	766
The Epos of Man: Review of Johannes V. Jensen, <i>The Long Journey</i> (1923)	767
Racial Superiority (1924)	770
Are the Nordics a Superior Race? (1925)	784
Let Race Alone (1925)	787
Undesirables - Klanned or Banned (1925)	794
The Race Problem: Review of F. G. Crookshank, <i>The Mongol in Our Midst</i> ; H. W. Siemens, <i>Race Hygiene and Heredity</i> ; Jean Finot, <i>Race Prejudice</i> ; and J. H. Oldham, <i>Christianity and the Race Problem</i> (1925)	799
Is Monotheism Jewish? Review of Paul Radin, <i>Monotheism among Primitive Peoples</i> (1925)	804
Review of Ludwig Lewisohn, <i>Israel</i> (1926)	810
A Reasonable Eugenist: Review of F. H. Hankins, <i>The Racial Basis of Civilization</i> (1927)	816
Observations on the Sex Problem in America (1928; also published as <i>The Discipline of Sex</i> , 1929, 1930)	818
Review of Waldo Frank, <i>The Rediscovery of America</i> (1929)	833
What is the Family Still Good For? (1929; also published 1930)	835
Franz Boas: Review of Franz Boas, <i>Anthropology and Modern Life</i> (1929)	845
The Skepticism of Bertrand Russell: Review of Bertrand Russell, <i>Sceptical Essays</i> (1929)	847
Two Philosophers on What Matters: Review of F. C. S. Schiller, <i>Tantalus, or the Future of Man</i> , and Bertrand Russell, <i>How to Be Free and Happy</i> (n.d., circa 1929)	850
Review of M. E. DeWitt, <i>Our Oral Word as Social and Economic Factor</i> (1929)	853
Our Business Civilization: Review of James Truslow Adams, <i>Our Business Civilization</i> (1930)	855
Review of Thurman W. Arnold, <i>The Folklore of Capitalism</i> (1938)	858
Appendix: John Dewey, "American Education and Culture" (1916)	863

SECTION FIVE: AESTHETICS

RICHARD HANDLER, EDITOR

Percy Grainger and Primitive Music (1916)	867
Literary Realism (1917)	876
Realism in Prose Fiction (1917)	880
The Twilight of Rhyme (1917)	886
“Jean-Christophe”: An Epic of Humanity: Review of Romain Rolland, <i>Jean-Christophe</i> (1917)	891
A Frigid Introduction to Strauss: Review of Henry T. Finck, <i>Richard Strauss, the Man and His Works</i> (1917)	898
Representative Music (1918)	902
Sancho Panza on His Island: Review of G. K. Chesterton, <i>Uto- pias of Usurers and Other Essays</i> (1918)	909
A Note on French Canadian Folk-Songs (1919)	913
The Poet Seer of Bengal: Review of Rabindranath Tagore, <i>Lover’s Gift, Crossing, Mashī and Other Stories</i> (1919)	915
Review of Cary F. Jacob, <i>The Foundations and Nature of Verse</i> (1919)	920
The Heuristic Value of Rhyme (1920)	922
The Poetry Prize Contest (1920)	926
The Musical Foundations of Verse (1921)	930
Maupassant and Anatole France (1921)	945
Gerard Hopkins: Review of Robert Bridges, ed., <i>Poems of Gerard Manley Hopkins</i> (1921)	950
Writing as History and as Style: Review of W. A. Mason, <i>History of the Art of Writing</i> (1921)	955
Poems of Experience: Review of Edward Arlington Robinson, <i>Collected Poems</i> (1922)	958
Maxwell Bodenheim: Review of Maxwell Bodenheim, <i>Introducing Irony</i> (1922)	962
Introducing Irony: Review of Maxwell Bodenheim, <i>Introducing Irony</i> (1922)	964
The Manner of Mr. Masefield: Review of John Masefield, <i>King Cole</i> (1922)	967
Review of John Masefield, <i>Esther and Berenice</i> (1922)	970

Mr. Masters' Later Work: Review of Edgar Lee Masters, <i>The Open Sea</i> (1922; also published as <i>Spoon River Muddles</i> , 1922)	971
Review of Edgar Lee Masters, <i>Children of the Market Place</i> (1922)	974
A Peep at the Hindu Spirit: Review of Ellen C. Babbitt, <i>More Jataka Tales</i> (1922)	976
Heavens: Review of Louis Untermeyer, <i>Heavens</i> (1922)	978
Review of Edward Thomas, <i>Collected Poems</i> (1922)	980
Review of Arthur Davison Ficke, <i>Mr. Faust</i> (1922)	981
Review of George Saintsbury, <i>A Letter Book</i> (1922)	982
Review of Selma Lagerlöf, <i>The Outcast</i> (1922)	983
Review of Edwin Björkman, <i>The Soul of a Child</i> (1923)	984
Mr. Houseman's Last Poems: Review of A. E. Houseman, <i>Last Poems</i> (1923)	987
Twelve Novelists in Search of a Reason: Review of <i>The Novel of Tomorrow and the Scope of Fiction</i> , by Twelve American Novelists (1924)	991
An American Poet: Review of H. D., <i>Collected Poems</i> (1925) . .	998
Emily Dickinson, a Primitive: Review of Emily Dickinson, <i>The Complete Poems of Emily Dickinson</i> , and M. D. Bianchi, <i>The Life and Letters of Emily Dickinson</i> (1925)	1001
The Tragic Chuckle: Review of Edward Arlington Robinson, <i>Dionysus in Doubt</i> (1925)	1007
Preface and Introduction to Marius Barbeau and Edward Sapir, <i>Folk Songs of French Canada</i> (1925)	1009
Review of Harold Vinal, <i>Nor Youth nor Age</i> (n.d., circa 1925) . .	1018
Review of Mabel Simpson, <i>Poems</i> (n.d., circa 1925)	1020
Leonie Adams: Review of Leonie Adams, <i>Those Not Elect</i> (1926)	1023
Review of James Weldon Johnson, ed., <i>The Book of American Negro Spirituals</i> (1928)	1026
When Words are Not Enough: Review of Clarence Day, <i>Thoughts without Words</i> (1928)	1030
Review of Knut Hamsun, <i>The Women at the Pump</i> (1928)	1032
References, Sections Four and Five	1033
* * *	
Index	1037

Preface

Volume III of *The Collected Works of Edward Sapir* is divided into five Sections. Section I, "Culture, Society, and the Individual," edited by Regna Darnell and Judith T. Irvine, contains Sapir's essays on theoretical and conceptual topics in cultural anthropology, psychology, and other social sciences. Most of these essays were published between 1917, the date of the beginning of the debate with Alfred Kroeber on the "superorganic," and Sapir's death in 1939. We are particularly pleased, however, to be able to include two major papers not previously published: Sapir's presentations at the 1926 and 1930 Hanover Conferences sponsored by the Social Science Research Council. Digests of the conference discussions, as well as other supporting materials Sapir offered at these meetings, are included together with his conference presentations.

Section Two, "The Psychology of Culture," prepared by Judith T. Irvine, is an edited version of a book Sapir contracted to write but did not live to put on paper. The manuscript, a shorter edition of which was published by Mouton de Gruyter in 1993, was reconstructed along lines indicated, in part, by Sapir's prospectus sent to Alfred Harcourt in 1928 (q.v.), and correspondence relating to the book. The principal materials for the reconstruction, however, were student notes on the lectures Sapir intended to be the basis for his written text.

Section Three, "Assessments of Psychology and Psychiatry," edited by Regna Darnell and Judith T. Irvine, contains reviews of books in psychology and psychiatry. Sapir published these reviews in the period from 1917 to 1928.

Sections Four and Five, "Reflections on Contemporary Civilization" and "Aesthetics," have been edited by Richard Handler. Section Four contains Sapir's previously-published essays and book reviews on social and political topics of the day. Written primarily for a general audience, they show Sapir taking a role we might now call that of the "public intellectual," bringing the insights of anthropology to bear upon contemporary public issues. Also included is one item, a review of philosophical works, not previously published. Section Five contains essays and reviews on music and contemporary literature. Among Sapir's

works of literary criticism included in this section are a few not previously published.

The reader with a special interest in anthropology should refer to Volume I for Sapir's general studies touching on anthropological linguistics, and to Volume IV for his early papers in ethnology (including the well-known "Time Perspective in Aboriginal American Culture: A Study in Method" [1916]), his essay-length ethnographic studies, his reviews of ethnological works by his contemporaries, and his administrative reports as Chief Ethnologist of the Anthropological Division of the Geological Survey of Canada (1910–1925). Sapir's anthropological monographs and collections of Native American texts appear in volumes VII through XV of *The Collected Works*. They include the following (the roman numeral in brackets indicates the volume number): *Wishram Texts* and *Wishram Ethnography* (with Leslie Spier) [VII]; *Takelma Texts* [VIII]; *Yana Texts* and *Notes on the Culture of the Yana* (with Leslie Spier) [IX]; *Texts of the Kaibab Paiutes and Uintah Utes* (Part II of *The Southern Paiute Language*) [X]; *Nootka Texts: Tales and Ethnological Narratives with Grammatical Notes and Lexical Materials* (with Morris Swadesh), with a group of previously unpublished family origin legends [XI]; *Native Accounts of Nootka Ethnography* (with Swadesh) with an additional group of unpublished Nootka texts [XII]; and *Navaho Texts* (with Harry Hoijer) [XV]. The previously unpublished "Ethnographic Field Notes on the Kaibab Paiute and Northern Ute," edited by Catherine S. Fowler and Robert C. Euler, have appeared in Volume X (1992). Additional previously unpublished materials with ethnographic content will appear as follows: a selection of Yahi texts [IX]; Kutchin and Sarcee texts [XIII]; and Hupa and Yurok texts [XIV].

The reader with a special interest in music should refer to Volume IV, which includes Sapir's papers and reviews in ethnomusicology, as well as a newly-prepared presentation of his Southern Paiute song texts and musical scores (together with a note on the wax cylinder recordings and musical transcriptions).

The editors wish to thank the Sapir family for permission to quote from unpublished materials by Edward Sapir in their possession. The Social Science Research Council gave permission to publish portions of the transcripts of the Hanover Conferences of 1926 and 1930. We are also grateful to the archivists at the Bancroft Library of the University of California at Berkeley for access to the papers of Alfred L. Kroeber and Robert H. Lowie, and to the archivists at the National Museum of

Man, Ottawa (now the Canadian Museum of Civilization) for permission to consult papers relating to Sapir. Portions of the final manuscript for this volume were prepared for publication by Jane McGary.

Additional acknowledgements will be found at the beginning of Section Two of this volume.

Section One
Culture, society, and the individual

Regna Darnell and Judith T. Irvine, editors

Introduction

Sapir is so well remembered for his work in linguistics that his role in cultural anthropology, represented by a much smaller number of publications, has been overshadowed. It is clear, however, that he hoped to make a major contribution to anthropological theory and to the social sciences in general, and that many of his contemporaries looked to him to do so. When Ruth Benedict invited him to address a symposium on anthropological theory in 1938, the invitation reflected Sapir's reputation as cultural anthropologist, and the increasing interest theoretical issues in anthropology and other social sciences had come to have for him in the preceding dozen years. Unfortunately, by 1938, Sapir was too ill to take up the invitation. Many of his ideas remained unpublished at the time of his death in 1939. Although the bibliography of his published writings reflects the importance these subjects held for him in the late 1920's and throughout the 1930's, this output does not represent the sum of what he had planned to produce.

For many readers today, Sapir's status as a cultural anthropologist probably rests on an even smaller corpus: the papers appearing in David Mandelbaum's (1949) *Selected Writings of Edward Sapir*. We are pleased to be able to assemble a more complete set of materials here, including some important items never previously published.

The present volume contains all of Sapir's publications, as well as all of his recorded lectures, not previously published, on the concept of "culture," and on its relationship to the individual as a member of society. These works derive from the second half of his career, when he was less engaged in fieldwork than in earlier years and more engaged in teaching. It was a period in which social scientists and other American academics increasingly interested themselves in psychology and psychiatry. These trends paralleled events in Sapir's personal life as well (see Darnell 1990, Chapter 7). It was a time, too, when the Boas school of anthropology, of which Sapir was without question a core member, began to shift its focus from a strong emphasis on culture history and regional comparisons toward the patterning of culture as an integrated system and the impact of culture on the individual personality. Even the label of the subdiscipline changed, from "ethnology" to "cultural

anthropology.” This volume, therefore, assembles Sapir’s contributions to the emergence of this cultural anthropology.

Sapir’s ethnological studies – which differed from those of his Boasian contemporaries largely in their greater emphasis on indigenous-language labels for cultural concepts – date primarily from the first half of his career. These studies, as well as many of his ethnographic essays, may be found in Volume IV (*Ethnology*) of the *Collected Works of Edward Sapir*.¹ That volume also includes his 1916 monograph on the methodology of culture-historical studies, “Time Perspective in Aboriginal American Culture,” Sapir’s most important statement within the framework of early Boasian anthropology.

As “Time Perspective” shows, Sapir – the paramount linguist among the Boasians – first became a theoretician of culture within the context of historical inference, in which linguistic evidence loomed large. Although this essay includes much discussion of ethnological evidence considered in its own right, Sapir argued that linguistic facts, partly by virtue of their integrative formal framework, maintain their historical character through diffusional processes as no other cultural facts do. Yet, his vision of historical methodology in this essay broadens outward, from the specifically linguistic work he had recently been engaged in (that is, especially, the effort to group the languages of native North America into a small number of linguistic stocks), toward a comprehensive view of culture, within which language is included. His final comments, emphasizing the psychological setting of cultural elements equally with the geographical, anticipate his later concerns.

Although Sapir continued to publish ethnographic reports after 1916, his interests soon expanded well beyond the description and historically-motivated comparison of North American languages and cultures. The present volume opens with his 1917 paper, “Do We Need the ‘Superorganic?’”, Sapir’s first statement on some of the theoretical issues that would occupy much of his later work. This essay, responding to Alfred Kroeber’s paper of the same year on “The Superorganic,” represents one pole of an ongoing debate within the Boasian school about the concept of culture and its relation to the individual. Sapir accepted Kroeber’s argument insofar as it rejected biological explanations for cultural forms. He challenged Kroeber’s cultural determinism, however, because it ignored the role of the creative individual in culture and ignored epistemological problems arising in cultural analysis. These themes recur again and again in Sapir’s work and permeate the writings assembled in this volume.

Beginning with the “Superorganic” paper, the section of this volume entitled “Culture, Society, and the Individual” includes all of Sapir’s essay-length works in cultural anthropology and social psychology from the 1920’s and 1930’s. Two major papers, originally given as conference presentations, are published here for the first time: “Notes on Psychological Orientation in a Given Society” (1926), and “The Cultural Approach to the Study of Personality” (1930). Also previously unpublished are Sapir’s comments in discussion sessions at these conferences; his written presentations at the 1930 meeting; his comments at the Conference on Personality and Culture (1935); and his remarks to a meeting of the Committee on Personality in Relation to Culture (1938). It is worth noting the inclusion of a 1936 essay, “The Application of Anthropology to Human Relations,” which, though published, has been little known, due to its omission from the bibliography of the 1949 Mandelbaum collection (*Selected Writings of Edward Sapir*). Finally, although it has not been possible to edit Sapir’s unpublished letters for this volume,² we do include an important one that was published in 1980: Sapir’s 1938 letter to Philip Selznick.

The next section, *The Psychology of Culture*, represents a book for which Sapir negotiated a publication contract with Alfred Harcourt in 1928. Throughout the 1930’s, Sapir gave a course of lectures that was to be the basis of the book, but he did not live to complete it. Unlike some of his other unpublished work, which existed in full or partial manuscript at his death, no materials in Sapir’s own hand were found for this book apart from the prospectus sent to Harcourt in 1928 and some ensuing correspondence. Nevertheless – following through on an idea initiated by Sapir’s widow, Jean McClenaghan Sapir, and Leslie Spier only three months after Sapir’s death – a book-length text has been reconstructed by Judith T. Irvine from notes taken by students attending various versions of this course of lectures, given by Sapir during his years at the University of Chicago and Yale University. Published separately (by Mouton de Gruyter, 1993) in a shorter version and without the analytical apparatus, this work appears here for the first time in its full form, including annotation of sources and explanations permitting the reader to see how the reconstruction was done.

Finally, a section on *Assessments of Psychology and Psychiatry* assembles Sapir’s published reviews of works in these fields, reviews which appeared between 1917 and 1928. These reviews afforded him an opportunity to acquaint himself with a body of literature outside the usual anthropological domain but eventually influential within it, and to be-

gin working out some of his ideas on psychological topics. These items are grouped separately in this volume because they give a sense of how Sapir read a literature which he first approached as an anthropologist but which he would later adapt to interdisciplinary purposes as well as to a rethinking of anthropology's own theoretical basis. By the late 1920's and the 1930's the effects of his excursions into psychology and psychiatry became evident in his published writing, especially in his efforts to reformulate and refine the concept of culture which stood at the core of anthropology as a discipline.

The first of these excursions dates from 1917, the same year as the response to Kroeber, which had emphasized the need for a theory of culture that would be accountable to individual psychology and individuals' actions. In 1917, however, the study of psychology was far removed from Sapir's job description: he was in Ottawa, a civil servant responsible for the Canadian government's research on the aboriginal peoples of the Dominion. In 1925, he moved to the University of Chicago, where he established effective collaborations with Chicago sociologists and with political scientist Harold D. Lasswell. Although Chicago psychologists also figured among his acquaintances, more important to Sapir's intellectual development in this period was his association with psychiatrist Harry Stack Sullivan. At Chicago, Sapir's working out of his own theoretical position on culture acquired momentum in these interdisciplinary contexts, which found further support in the emergence of an interdisciplinary social science funded by the Rockefeller Foundation.

Sapir's role as an anthropological theorist was already conspicuous in the foundation-sponsored conferences of the late 1920's, and in the newly-founded Social Science Research Council. Indeed, as the only anthropologist who played a central role in these interdisciplinary activities, he had the responsibility of representing the discipline to outsiders. As anthropology's representative, Sapir refused to allow himself to be dismissed as a mere purveyor of the exotic. His writings for this audience persistently chose examples from the everyday behavior of ordinary North Americans. Even when drawing on ethnographic examples, he tried to diminish the aura of exotica, instead showing that the individual in any society behaves in consistent ways, calibrated by the cultural context within which the behavior occurs and within which it is interpreted. And if many of his examples concern linguistic behavior, it is because he saw language as a prime exemplar of cultural patterning, and therefore central to anthropological concerns.

The Rockefeller Foundation, with its sponsorship of a special seminar on "The Impact of Culture on Personality," was largely instrumental in bringing Sapir to Yale University in 1931. There he also took on various administrative and teaching roles in the departments of anthropology and linguistics; and although he continued to attend conferences, the interdisciplinary initiative was plagued by declines in funding during the Depression. Where his theoretical views on culture were concerned, Sapir's efforts later in the 1930's began to focus more on the discipline of anthropology itself, and less on an interdisciplinary social science. Still, he drew a wide audience both within anthropology and outside it. Even at Yale, despite troubles connected with the university's academic politics, Sapir's course offerings in anthropology were well attended. They also served as an important forum for his intellectual development. While he "continued presenting linguistic seminars for his post-doctoral students, his large seminars were devoted to his innovations in anthropological theory" (C. F. Voegelin 1984 [1952]: 36).

At the time of Sapir's death in 1939, the generation of cultural anthropologists influenced by his teaching were still quite junior academics, perhaps too young to coalesce into a "school." What did emerge after World War II was the culture and personality school associated with Margaret Mead, Ruth Benedict, and Abram Kardiner. Although anthropologists today sometimes recall Sapir in connection with that group because of some overlap of interests, his position was actually quite distinct. As their approach became dominant, his became marginalized.

Mead (1959) saw her school's work as marking a new psychological direction which fundamentally reoriented the Boasian paradigm, while Sapir had seen himself as contributing to the theory of culture from within that paradigm. Some of what made the culture and personality group's efforts "new," however, entailed epistemological difficulties for which they were later criticized. Sapir had not tumbled into these pitfalls, and indeed had warned against such errors as confusing cultural norms and patterns with the psychodynamics of actual individuals (see *The Psychology of Culture*, chapter 9). Moreover, he always opposed the label "culture and personality" because it implied that the two terms could be defined contrastively and independently. He preferred to speak of the "psychology of culture," in which anthropology and psychology represented different analytical stances with respect to the same phenomena. In the process of theoretical refinement, as well as in response to interdisciplinary colleagues, Sapir increasingly added the term "soci-

ety” as a concept distinct from “culture.” Whereas society might for some purposes be analytically contrasted with the individual, culture — as a realm of symbolic form, invested with meanings — could not be contrasted with personality.

This conception of culture, at which Sapir had arrived by the mid 1930’s, shows how far he had moved away from the definition of culture as an assemblage of tangible “traits,” a definition that had earlier been conventional in anthropology. That definition had become less and less appropriate to Sapir as he increasingly emphasized the role of the individual in responding to symbolic forms. The shift is documented most clearly in the “Psychology of Culture” lectures (this volume) and the encyclopedia article on symbolism. Unlike the psychologists for whom symbolism and the unconscious were keys to the depth of the human psyche, Sapir was interested in imbuing the anthropological concept of culture with a dynamic and processual character reflecting the actions of the individuals living in a social world.

Sapir remains significant in anthropology not because he founded a school or a particular subfield, but because he explored ideas that continue to occupy the discipline today: the relations of individuals to groups; problems in moving from observation to generalization in anthropological analysis; the role of the creative individual in cultural tradition; the impact of socialization on individual creativity (and vice versa); variation and conflict in culture and society; the relationships between cultural symbolism and the physical world; the emergence of cultural meanings in social interaction; the necessity of relating cultural systems to life histories and individual satisfaction; the essential sameness of so-called “primitive” and “modern” human persons ... and more. His is an ongoing legacy.

Notes

1. Most of Sapir’s shorter ethnographic essays, as well as his Southern Paiute song texts (previously unpublished), have been included in Volume IV (*Ethnology*). A few works in which ethnographic description is included together with linguistic analysis are grouped in those volumes containing Sapir’s linguistic studies of the same peoples. The posthumous ethnography of the Yana, completed by Lesie Spier, is to be included in Volume IX, while a précis of the Nootka field notes, Sapir’s most intensive ethnographic effort, is to accompany the Nootka linguistic and text materials in Volumes XI and XII.
2. Indeed, there is no single source for Sapir’s correspondence. He did not leave behind a personal archive, although much was preserved by colleagues to whom he wrote (e. g., Franz Boas, Alfred Kroeber, Robert Lowie, Berard Haile) and by institutions at which he was employed (Canadian Museum of Civilization, Ottawa; University of Chicago; Yale University).

Do We Need a “Superorganic”? (1917)

Editorial Introduction

Sapir’s first foray into the relationship of culture and the individual was written in response to Alfred L. Kroeber’s “The Superorganic,” which appeared in the *American Anthropologist* in 1917. “Do We Need a Superorganic?” – Sapir’s immediate rhetorical counter – appeared in the next issue, and sparked debate within the Boasian group over how their conception of culture should provide for the study of historical process, individual action, and cognitive patterning. The exchange identified Kroeber and Sapir with the polar positions and, for contemporaries, catapulted Sapir into a critical status as a theoretician of culture. We present the debate here in considerable detail, as context for Sapir’s response to Kroeber’s long and complex essay.

Despite its historical importance, Sapir’s seminal paper was omitted from David Mandelbaum’s 1949 collection, *Selected Writings of Edward Sapir* because it was relatively accessible and because of its overtones of conflict within Boasian ranks. Mandelbaum wrote to his fellow editors Murray Emeneau, Harry Hoijer and Verne Ray (21 July 1947: Sapir family documents) that “the later personality papers make the same points and more incisively without the kind of personal reference that this reply necessarily has.” In terms of Sapir’s oeuvre, however, the paper represents the first codification of his thinking about the nature of culture. It made him the premier theoretician among those anthropologists who looked to individual personality as the locus of culture itself. Among them one would include, at least, Paul Radin, Wilson Wallis and Alexander Goldenweiser (later Ruth Benedict, Margaret Mead, and A. Irving Hallowell).

To a great extent, however, the protagonists in the published debate were talking past one another. Kroeber was not interested in distinguishing between the individual and culture. This reading was imposed by Sapir. Kroeber intended, rather, to legitimize the autonomous disciplinary status of anthropology by virtue of its dependence on the concept of culture.¹ His classic paper staked out a unique claim for the *social* sciences in opposition to both the natural sciences and the hu-

manities.² Its intended audience was outside anthropology. Kroeber spoke less as a theoretician than as an organizational leader of a small but expanding discipline. Sapir, on the other hand, was more interested in theory than in disciplinary autonomy.

Kroeber's overview of anthropology's place among the sciences rested on the assumption that the exact methods of the natural sciences were inapplicable to the data of anthropology; the organic and the social were different kinds of phenomena, requiring different methods of analysis.³ Kroeber portrayed the superorganic distinction as inherent in the nature of reality, as "natural" as the long-established distinction between organic and inorganic. Anthropology had obscured the distinction between social and organic, however, by inappropriately applying principles of natural selection to cultural facts. This reasoning by analogy begged for reexamination through closer definition of the nature of the cultural, which Kroeber called the superorganic.

Unlike organic evolution, the development of civilization⁴ was cumulative. Culture did not operate through heredity; it altered the environment rather than the organism. Human intelligence was a precondition of culture but not equivalent to it. Culture, including language, was learned, a process in which individual differences were of minimal significance. Human and animal speech were of different orders, with the former based on tradition (culture) and the latter on instinct. Kroeber catalogued numerous examples of the essential differences between human and animal behaviour. To biology, man added society and history.

Social psychology was not equipped to distinguish between individual personality and social influences on it, the two being intertwined in any particular case. Tradition operated outside the individual organism. Because of the attached emotional valence, racial or hereditary biological influences on the individual could not be determined discretely. Nonetheless, "a complete and consistent explanation can be given, for all so-called racial differences, on a basis of purely civilizational and non-organic causes" (1917: 182–183). That is, explanation of group differences resided in culture rather than in biology; therefore, anthropology was the discipline which held the key to human nature.

After a highly negative review of the thinking of several social evolutionists (Gustave Le Bon, Herbert Spencer, Lester Ward, Francis Galton, Pearson), Kroeber condemned eugenics as an inappropriate "biological short-cut to moral ends" (1917: 188). Simply because both the psychic and the physical were organically based, it did not follow that heredity maintained civilization. Civilization, according to Kroeber, was

a product of *mental* activity; society was non-individual (and thus non-organic) by definition. Knowledge, a product of culture, was more important than individual variability.

Indeed, Kroeber argued that genius and ability appeared with equal frequency under all cultural conditions.⁵ Johann Sebastian Bach would have created some kind of music even if he had been born in a society with a vastly different musical tradition. Inventions, however, depended directly on their context within a culture. It was no accident that Charles Darwin and Alfred Russell Wallace “discovered” evolution almost simultaneously and without being in direct contact. Likewise, the South Pole was reached twice in the same summer. In contrast, the genetic experiments of Gregor Mendel were meaningless to scientists of his day because he was ahead of his culture; three laboratories independently reached similar conclusions in 1900 when science had developed the concepts to interpret Mendel’s results. Kroeber recognized “an endless chain of parallel instances” (1917: 199–200). He summarized lyrically (1917: 200–201):

When we cease to look upon invention or discovery as some mysterious inherent faculty of individual minds which are randomly dropped in space and time by fate, when we center our attention on the plainer relation of one such advancing step to the others; when, in short, interest shifts from individually biographic elements, which can be only dramatically artistic, didactically moralizing, or psychologically interpretable, and attaches whole heartedly to the social, evidence on this point will be infinite in quantity, and the presence of a majestic order pervading civilization will be irresistibly evident.

In spite of cultivation through education, individual congenital faculties such as memory, interest, and abstraction, were fairly specialized. Regardless of the number of abilities, each individual remained ultimately unique. Flowerings such as occurred in fifth-century Athens could not change heredity and therefore must be attributed to cultural conditions. Kroeber attacked the assumptions of conventional social reform (and the psychology of his day) that all personalities were of essentially equal capacity. There were considerable differences in individual ability to adapt to environment, defined as the “dimly perceived” influence of civilization. Civilization, in turn, determined how much influence the individual might have on it. Thus, the individual and individuality certainly existed, but both lay outside the proper domain of the social sciences. It was on this point that Sapir would take his colleague to task.

Kroeber then turned to the role of history in social science explanation, arguing for the inadequacy of mechanistic explanations based on a faulty organic analogy (1917: 207):

...there may be a third activity, neither science nor art in their strict senses, but history, the understanding of the social, which also has an aim that cannot be denied and whose justification must be sought in its own results and not by the standard of any other activity.

History, therefore, requires methods different from those of science or art. History represents the social without the individual (organism). Therefore, organic and historical or cultural evolution are “two wholly disparate evolutions” (1917: 208; emphasis ours). Social evolution begins later than organic and provides a “missing link,” a new factor, “a leap to another plane” (1917: 209). Once civilization gets going, however, its rate of progress (pace) is much greater than that of organic or inorganic evolution. Complexity of organization becomes more important than content. The historical is unable to explain such qualitative changes in the evolution of human cultures. Having recognized the “crucial gap” in the nature of phenomena, the historian *cum* anthropologist *cum* social scientist must proceed with concepts and methods quite distinct from those of the natural sciences.

Kroeber’s classic paper did not expand on his choice of the label “superorganic” for the new level of evolution he identified. Most of his attention was given to the limitations of biological or organic explanation. Within anthropology, however, the concept of “the superorganic” became a critical theoretical issue. Although many anthropologists took for granted that “culture” was the defining realm of their study, they came to disagree on what the term implied. Those trained by Boas generally accepted Kroeber’s emphasis on the history of particular civilizations (historical particularism). But Sapir was the most articulate among those who believed that “culture” (or civilization) could be the core of a disciplinary theory without being reified as independent of the individuals who were its members.

Privately, Sapir wrote to Robert Lowie (10 July 1917: UCB) that Kroeber’s paper was based on “dogmatism and shaky metaphysics.” He wanted to respond in the *American Anthropologist* but preferred not to be the only challenger. In addition to his personal friendship with Kroeber, Sapir was undoubtedly motivated to demonstrate that other Boasian anthropologists also saw the individual as crucial to cultural analysis. He told Lowie that Kroeber’s “excessive undervaluation” of the role of the individual in history was an “abstractionist fetishism,” psychologizing in the worst possible sense. In print, of course, he was less personally critical.

Sapir began his published critique in a conciliatory fashion, emphasizing his agreement with Kroeber that exact science methods could not

be applied to social phenomena. He insisted that only the individual "really thinks and acts and dreams and revolts" (1917: 442): i. e., culture is manifested exclusively through individual actions. Kroeber's effort to establish the autonomy of social science methods had overemphasized dramatically the degree of social determinism of cultural phenomena. Sapir argued that Kroeber's model could not explain religion, philosophy, aesthetics or free will.

For Sapir, Kroeber drew a false analogy when he claimed that the cultural was as distinct a realm of reality – above and beyond the organic – as the organic itself was in relation to the inorganic. The only objective realities, in Sapir's view, were the organic and inorganic. The cultural, in contrast, was inevitably a construction of the analyst. It drew on processes that were simultaneously organic, inorganic and psychic. Indeed, to study the development of culture, or social inheritance, was to observe the growth of self-consciousness in human history, not to observe an autonomous object.

For both Sapir and Kroeber, the issue was the relationship between the social and the psychic (and where "culture" stood in relation to these). Neither man wished to absolutely reduce the one to the other. Sapir, for his part, saw no necessity for positing a new "superorganic" realm just in order to escape the methodology of the natural sciences. History indeed allowed the social scientist to focus on particulars, and if historical phenomena were unique, the uniqueness of individuals should pose no particular conceptual problems. These are the questions that preoccupied Sapir in all of his later papers in culture theory. While Kroeber never addressed all of them, his formulation of the superorganic first inspired Sapir to articulate his own position.

A much briefer critique by Alexander Goldenweiser appeared alongside Sapir's in the *American Anthropologist*. Goldenweiser acknowledged that Kroeber had made the superorganic concept "peculiarly his own" (1917: 448). He suggested that Kroeber's cultural determinism would break down for any particular civilization because it was based on a theory of probability. Accidental events would always intervene in particular cases. Like Sapir, Goldenweiser believed that the actions of individuals could affect their cultures. The civilizational stream was "not only carried but also fed by individuals;" the "biographical individual" was best understood as a "historic complex *sui generis*." That complex, unique to each individual, was composed of "biological, psychological and civilizational factors" (1917: 448).

In fact, Goldenweiser, who preferred the term “civilization” to “culture,” claimed that the major difference between the history of an American Indian tribe and a modern nation-state was the absence of biography in the former case. In spite of the absence of written historical records, the anthropologist was challenged to put the individual into the culture history – a process incompatible with the definition of culture as superorganic.

Sapir, Goldenweiser and Paul Radin would develop this revision of culture theory in terms of the interaction between culture and the individual. Radin, in particular, developed the life history genre in ethnography to this end (cf. Nyce and Leeds-Hurwitz 1986).

Kroeber responded privately to Sapir’s critique (24 July 1917: UCB) by minimizing the distance between the two positions. He claimed that he had simply codified established Boasian practice:

I’ve left absolutely everything to the individual that anyone can claim who will admit to the social at all... What misleads you is merely that you fall back on the social at such occasional times as you’re through with the individual; whereas I insist on an unqualified place, an actuality, for the social at all times.

Sapir replied (29 October 1917: UCB) that “our common tendency is away from conceptual science and towards history. Both of us seem to want to keep psychology in its place as much as possible.” For Sapir, but not for Kroeber, psychology inevitably overlapped with the study of culture. There was a very real disagreement in Sapir’s view; he did not expect to persuade Kroeber of the importance of emphasizing the individual.

Kroeber became quite irate that Sapir was indifferent to his concern to promote Boasian anthropology (to Sapir, n.d. November 1917: UCB):

I don’t give a red cent whether cultural phenomena have a reality of their own, as long as we treat them as if they had. You do, most of us do largely... If we’re doing anything right, it deserves a place in the world. Let’s take it, instead of being put in a corner. That’s not metaphysics: it’s blowing your own horn.

Sociologist William Fielding Ogburn, whom Sapir met in Berkeley in 1915, responded to his critique of the superorganic (31 December 1917: NMM) that, for him, Kroeber’s formulation provided an ideal model for the social sciences. Sapir, recognizing that sociologists were disinclined by their professional training to study the individual, still tried to explain his point of view. History, ignoring the individual, was “but a passing phase of our hunger for conventional scientific capsules into which to store our concepts.” The various “experiments in massed ac-

tion" would ultimately prove disappointing, leading to a reaction against the superorganic. But Sapir admitted that revisionist vindication of his position on the individual at the basis of social science was likely to lie in the indeterminate future.

For the rest of his life, Sapir continued to define his theoretical position in terms of relationships between culture and the individual. Years later, while planning his book on "The Psychology of Culture" (Part II of this volume), he wrote to Kroeber (24 May 1932: UCB) that he still saw "the dichotomy between culture as an impersonal concern and individual behavior" as a useful myth "for the preliminary clearing of the ground" but as ultimately dangerous in its implications for understanding either culture or personality. Only a few months before his death, he again wrote to Kroeber (25 August 1938: UCB):

Of course, I'm interested in culture patterns, linguistic included. All I claim is that their consistencies and spatial and temporal persistences can be, and ultimately should be, explained in terms of humble psychological formulations with particular emphasis on interpersonal relations.⁶ I have no consciousness whatsoever of being revolutionary or of losing an interest in what is generally phrased in an impersonal way. Quite the contrary. I feel rather like a physicist who believes that immensities of the atom are not unrelated to the immensities of interstellar space. In spite of all you say to the contrary, your philosophy is pervaded by fear of the individual and his reality.

A dichotomy between culture and the individual still seemed unnecessary to Sapir, even misleading, with Kroeber's formulation locking anthropology into intellectual sterility. If Sapir in 1938 had no consciousness of being revolutionary, however, he was overlooking the originality and importance of his 1917 paper and of his particular working-out, in later years, of these complex issues.

* * *

Do We Need a "Superorganic"?

Nothing irritates a student of culture more than to have the methods of the exact sciences flaunted in his face as a salutary antidote to his own supposedly slipshod methods. He feels that he deals with an entirely different order of phenomena, that direct comparison between the two groups of disciplines is to be ruled out of court. It is some such irritation that seems to have served as the emotional impetus of Dr. Kroeber's very interesting discussion of "The Superorganic." Many

anthropologists will be disposed to sympathize with him and to rejoice that he has squarely taken up the cudgel for a rigidly historical and anti-biological interpretation of culture. His analysis of the essential difference between organic heredity and social tradition is surely sound in the main, though doubts suggest themselves on special points in this part of the discussion. The common fallacy of confounding the cultural advancement of a group with the potential or inherent intellectual power of its individual members is also clearly exposed. There is little in Dr. Kroeber's general standpoint and specific statements that I should be disposed to quarrel with. Yet I feel that on at least two points of considerable theoretical importance he has allowed himself to go further than he is warranted in going. I suspect that he may to some extent have been the victim of a too rigidly classificatory or abstractionist tendency.

In the first place, I believe that Dr. Kroeber greatly overshoots the mark in his complete elimination of the peculiar influence of individuals on the course of history, even if by that term is understood culture history, the history of social activities with practically no reference to biographical data as such. All individuals tend to impress themselves on their social environment and, though generally to an infinitesimal degree, to make their individuality count in the direction taken by the never-ceasing flux that the form and content of social activity and inevitably are subject to. It is true that the content of an individual's mind is so overwhelmingly moulded by the social traditions to which he is heir that the purely individual contribution of even markedly original minds is apt to seem swamped in the whole of culture. Furthermore, [442] the dead level of compromise necessitated by the clashing of thousands of wills, few of them of compelling potency, tends to sink the social importance of any one of them into insignificance. All this is true in the main. And yet it is always the individual that really thinks and acts and dreams and revolts. Those of his thoughts, acts, dreams, and rebellions that somehow contribute in sensible degree to the modification or retention of the mass of typical reactions called culture we term social data; the rest, though they do not, psychologically considered, in the least differ from these, we term individual and pass by as of no historical or social moment. It is highly important to note that the differentiation of these two types of reaction is essentially arbitrary, resting, as it does, entirely on a principle of selection. The selection depends on the adoption of a scale of values. Needless to say, the threshold of the social (or historical) *versus* the individual shifts according to the

philosophy of the evaluator or interpreter. I find it utterly inconceivable to draw a sharp and eternally valid dividing line between them. Clearly, then, "individual" reactions constantly spill over into and lend color to "social" reactions.

Under these circumstances how is it possible for the social to escape the impress of at least certain individualities? It seems to me that it requires a social determinism amounting to a religion to deny to individuals all directive power, all culture-moulding influence. Is it conceivable, for instance, that the dramatic events that we summarize under the heading of the Napoleonic Period and which are inextricably bound up with the personality of Napoleon are a matter of indifference from the point of view of the political, economic, and social development of Europe during that period and since? Would the administration of the law in New Orleans be what it now is if there had not existed a certain individual of obscure origin who hailed from Corsica? It goes without saying that in this, as in similar cases, the determining influence of specific personalities is, as a rule, grossly exaggerated by the average historian: but a tendency to deprecate too great an insistence on the individual as such is not the same thing as the attempt to eliminate him as a cultural factor altogether. Shrewdly enough, Dr. Kroeber chooses his examples from the realm of inventions and scientific theories. Here it is relatively easy to justify a sweeping social determinism in view of a certain general inevitability in the course of the acquirement of knowledge. This inevitability, however, does not altogether reside, as Dr. Kroeber seems to imply, in a social "force" but, to a very large extent, in the fixity, conceptually speaking, of the objective world. This fixity [443] forms the sharpest of predetermined grooves for the unfolding of man's knowledge. Had he occupied himself more with the religious, philosophic, aesthetic, and crudely volitional activities and tendencies of man, I believe that Dr. Kroeber's case for the non-cultural significance of the individual would have been a far more difficult one to make. No matter how much we minimize exaggerated claims, I fail to see how we can deny a determining and, in some cases, even extraordinarily determining cultural influence to a large number of outstanding personalities. With all due reverence for social science, I would not even hesitate to say that many a momentous cultural development or tendency, particularly in the religious and aesthetic spheres, is at last analysis a partial function or remote consequence of the temperamental peculiarities of a significant personality. As the social units grow larger and larger, the probabilities of the occurrence of striking and influential

personalities grow vastly. Hence it is that the determining influence of individuals is more easily demonstrated in the higher than in the lower levels of culture. One has only to think seriously of what such personalities as Aristotle, Jesus, Mahomet, Shakespeare, Goethe, Beethoven mean in the history of culture to hesitate to commit oneself to a completely non-individualistic interpretation of history. I do not believe for a moment that such personalities are merely the cat's-paws of general cultural drifts. No doubt much, perhaps even the greater part, of what history associates with their names is merely an individually colored version of what they found ready to hand in their social, philosophic, religious, or aesthetic milieu, *but not entirely*. If such an interpretation of the significance of the individual introduces a repugnant element of "accident" into the history of culture, so much the worse for the social scientists who fear "accident."

The second point in Dr. Kroeber's essay that I find myself compelled to take exception to concerns his interpretation of the nature of social phenomena. If I understand him rightly, he predicates a certain social "force" whose gradual unfolding is manifested in the sequence of socially significant phenomena we call history. The social is builded out of the organic, but is not entirely resolvable into it, hence it implies the presence of an unknown principle which transcends the organic, just as the organic, while similarly builded out of the inorganic, is not resolvable into it but harbors a new and distinctive force that works itself out in organic phenomena. I consider the analogy a false one. Moreover, I do not believe that Dr. Kroeber has rightly seized upon the true nature of the opposition between history and non-historical science. [444]

The analogy is a false one because, while the organic can be demonstrated to consist objectively of the inorganic plus an increment of obscure origin and nature, the social is merely a certain philosophically arbitrary but humanly immensely significant *selection* out of the total mass of phenomena ideally resolvable into inorganic, organic, and psychic processes. The social is but a name for those reactions or types of reaction that depend for their perpetuation on a cumulative technique of transference, that known as social inheritance. This technique, however, does not depend for its operation on any specifically new "force," but, as far as we can tell at present, merely implies a heightening of psychic factors. No doubt the growth of self-consciousness is largely involved in the gradual building up on this technique of social transference. While we may not be able to define satisfactorily the precise nature of self-consciousness or trace its genesis, it is certainly no more mysteri-

ous a development in the history of mind than earlier stages in this most obscure of all evolutions. In short, its appearance involves no new force, merely a refinement and complication of an earlier force or of earlier forces. Hence social activities, which I define as a selected group of reactions dependent at last analysis on the growth of self-consciousness, do not result from the coming into being of a new objective principle of being. The differential characteristic of social science lies thus entirely in a modulus of values, not in an accession of irresolvably distinct subject matter. There seems to be a chasm between the organic and the inorganic which only the rigid mechanists pretend to be able to bridge. There seems to be an unbridgeable chasm, in immediacy of experience, between the organic and the psychic, despite the undeniable correlations between the two. Dr. Kroeber denies this *en passant*, but neither his nor my philosophy of the nature of mind is properly germane to the subject under discussion. Between the psychic and the social there is no chasm in the above sense at all. The break lies entirely in the principle of selection that respectively animates the two groups of sciences. Social science is not psychology, not because it studies the resultants of a superpsychic or superorganic force, but because its terms are differently demarcated.

At this point I begin to fear misunderstanding. It might almost appear that I considered, with certain psychological students of culture, the fundamental problem of social science to consist of the resolution of the social into the psychic, of the unraveling of the tangled web of psychology that may be thought to underlie social phenomena. This conception of social science I have as much abhorrence of [as] Dr. Kroeber [does]. [445] There may be room for a "social psychology," but it is neither an historical nor a social science. It is merely a kind of psychology, of somewhat uncertain credentials, for the present; at any rate, it is, like individual psychology, a conceptual science. It is quite true that the phenomena of social science, as claimed by Dr. Kroeber, are irresolvable into the terms of psychology or organic science, but this irresolvability is not, as Dr. Kroeber seems to imply, a conceptual one. *It is an experiential one.* This type of irresolvability is *toto caelo* distinct from that which separates the psychic and the organic or the organic and the inorganic, where we are confronted by true conceptual incommensurables.

What I mean by "experiential irresolvability" is something that meets us at every turn. I shall attempt to illustrate it by an example from a totally different science. Few sciences are so clearly defined as regards

scope as geology. It would ordinarily be classed as a natural science. Aside from palaeontology, which we may eliminate, it does entirely without the concepts of the social, psychic, or organic. It is, then, a well-defined science of purely inorganic subject matter. As such it is conceptually resolvable, if we carry our reductions far enough, into the more fundamental sciences of physics and chemistry. But no amount of conceptual synthesis of the phenomena we call chemical or physical would, in the absence of previous experience, enable us to construct a science of geology. This science depends for its *raison d'être* on a series of unique experiences, directly sensed or inferred, clustering about an entity, the earth, which from the conceptual standpoint of physics is as absurdly accidental or irrelevant as a tribe of Indians or John Smith's breakfast. The basis of the science is, then, firmly grounded in the uniqueness of particular events. To be precise, geology looks in two directions. In so far as it occupies itself with abstract masses and forces, it is a conceptual science, for which specific instances as such are irrelevant. In so far as it deals with particular features of the earth's surface, say a particular mountain chain, and aims to reconstruct the probable history of such features, it is not a conceptual science at all. In methodology, strange as this may seem at first blush, it is actually nearer, in this aspect, to the historical sciences. It is, in fact, a species of history, only the history moves entirely in the inorganic sphere. In practice, of course, geology is a mixed type of science, now primarily conceptual, now primarily descriptive of a selected chunk of reality. Between the data of the latter aspect and the concepts of the former lies that yawning abyss that must forever, in the very nature of things, divorce the real world of directly experienced phenomena from the ideal world of conceptual science. [446]

Returning to social science, it is clear that the leap from psychology to social science is just of this nature. Any social datum is resolvable, at least theoretically, into psychological concepts. But just as little as the most accurate and complete mastery of physics and chemistry enables us to synthesize a science of geology, does an equivalent mastery of the conceptual science of psychology — which, by the way, nobody possesses or is likely to possess for a long time to come — enable us to synthesize the actual nature and development of social institutions or other historical data. These must be directly experienced and, as already pointed out, selected from the endless mass of human phenomena according to a principle of values. Historical science thus differs from natural science, either wholly or as regards relative emphasis, in its ad-

herence to the real world of phenomena, not, like the latter, to the simplified and abstract world of ideal concepts. It strives to value the unique or individual, not the universal. "Individual" may naturally here mean any directly experienced entity or group of entities – the earth, France, the French language, the French Republic, the romantic movement in literature, Victor Hugo, the Iroquois Indians, some specific Iroquois clan, all Iroquois clans, all American Indian clans, all clans of primitive peoples. None of these terms, *as such*, has any relevancy in a purely conceptual world, whether organic or inorganic, physical or psychic. Properly speaking, "history" includes far more than what we ordinarily call historical or social science. The latter is merely the "historical" (in our wider sense), not conceptual, treatment of certain selected aspects of the psychic world of man.

Are not, then, such concepts as a clan, a language, a priesthood comparable in lack of individual connotation to the ideal concepts of natural science? Are not the laws applicable to these historical concepts as conceptually valid as those of natural science? Logically it is perhaps difficult, if not impossible, to make a distinction, as the same mental processes of observation, classification, inference, generalization, and so on, are brought into play. Philosophically, however, I believe the two types of concepts are utterly distinct. The social concepts are convenient summaries of a strictly limited range of phenomena, each element of which has real value. Relatively to the concept "clan" a particular clan of a specific Indian tribe has undeniable value as an historical entity. Relatively to the concept "crystal" a particular ruby in the jeweler's shop has no relevancy except by way of illustration. It has no intrinsic scientific value. Were all crystals existent at this moment suddenly disintegrated, the science of crystallography would still be valid, provided the physical and chemical forces that make possible the growth [447] of another crop of crystals remain in the world. Were all clans now existent annihilated, it is highly debatable, to say the least, whether the science of sociology, in so far as it occupied itself with clans, would have prognostic value. The difference between the two groups of concepts becomes particularly clear if we consider negative instances. If, out of one hundred clans, ninety-nine obeyed a certain sociological "law," we would justly flatter ourselves with having made a particularly neat and sweeping generalization; our "law" would have validity, even if we never succeeded in "explaining" the one exception. But if, out of one million selected experiments intended to test a physical law, 999,999 corroborated the law and one persistently refused to do so, after all disturbing

factors had been eliminated, we would be driven to seek a new formulation of our law. There is something deeper involved here than relative accuracy. The social "law" is an abbreviation or formula for a finite number of evaluated phenomena, and rarely more than an approximately accurate formula at that; the natural "law" is a universally valid formulation of a regular sequence observable in an indefinitely large number of phenomena selected at random. With the multiplication of instances social "laws" become more and more blurred in outline, natural "laws" become more rigid. However, the clarification of the sphere and concepts of social science in its more generalized aspects is a difficult problem that we can not fully discuss here.

I strongly suspect that Dr. Kroeber will not find me to differ essentially from him in my conception of history. What I should like to emphasize, however, is that it is perfectly possible to hold this view of history without invoking the aid of a "superorganic." Moreover, had the uniqueness of historical phenomena been as consistently clear to him as he himself would require, it would be difficult to understand why he should have insisted on eliminating the individual in the narrow sense of the word.

Editorial Note

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Notes

1. This remained a persistent concern throughout his lifetime. Kroeber and Kluckhohn (1952) present the range of definitions of the culture concept used by anthropologists throughout the history of the discipline as a metaphor for the theoretical territory staked out by anthropology.
2. In 1956, at the end of his long career, Kroeber wrote two papers dealing with the historical roots of anthropology. He argued that both the natural sciences and humanities had more influence on the emergence of the discipline than did the more recent affiliation of anthropology with other social sciences. The tenuous link of anthropology to social science still required theoretical justification.
3. The argument is parallel to that of Franz Boas in "The Study of Geography" (1887 [1940]).
4. Kroeber used the term "civilization" here as in the classic definition of culture by Edward B. Tylor (1871: 1) in which it is equated with "culture." "Culture or civilization, taken in its widest ethnographic sense, is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief,

art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society." The discourse of Kroeber's paper is situated in an older vocabulary which is largely irrelevant to Sapir's critique.

5. He was to pursue this argument throughout his career. Compare *Configurations of Culture Growth* (1944) and the more popularized *Culture and Civilization* (1952).
6. The term "interpersonal relations" was used by Sapir's friend and collaborator, inter-
national psychiatrist Harry Stack Sullivan. Sapir's later formulations of culture theory drew heavily on this collaboration, beginning in 1926.

Culture, Genuine and Spurious (1924)

Editorial Introduction

Despite the 1924 date usually cited for it today, "Culture, Genuine and Spurious" was written years earlier, probably no later than 1918. Part I, entitled "Civilization and Culture," appeared in a literary magazine, *The Dial*, in 1919. In 1922, that text was published without modification in *The Dalhousie Review*, with promises of a sequel discussing "the new problem of cultured individuality in the countries called 'new'." The continuation – Part II of the essay in the present volume – accordingly appeared in the next *Dalhousie Review* issue under the title "Culture in New Countries." This part had two sections, dealing (respectively) with "the cultured individual and the cultural group" and "the geography of culture." The whole paper was first published for a scholarly audience in the social sciences in 1924, in the *American Journal of Sociology*. This version, whose only new text was an initial paragraph as the beginning of section III, is the one reproduced here.

Sapir's concern with the variable uses of the term culture was initially directed at establishing for the general educated public, especially those who read literary magazines, that the anthropological concept of culture was properly distinguished from culture as civilization and from culture as the achievements of the cultured (or "cultivated" – that is, specially educated) individual. His essay had relevance within the social sciences as well, however, as its publication venues attest. The relevance for anthropology is perhaps most clearly evidenced in the first chapter of *The Psychology of Culture* (this volume). There, drawing heavily on the 1924 paper for the opening of his course and book, Sapir compared three uses of the term culture – as "cultivation," as *Kultur* (the German concept), and as social inheritance – in order to develop the anthropological conception of culture in new ways. The first two uses of the term should not be jettisoned, he suggested; instead, their emphases on individual variability and on value should be incorporated into the anthropologist's usage.

As part of this argument, the contrast between "genuine" and "spurious" was similarly double-faceted. On the one hand, it concerned estab-

lishing, for the general audience, the importance of the anthropological concept. What was spurious was the popular belief that only high civilizations, or only the activities of an elite within them, could properly be called culture. Genuine culture existed at *any* level of civilization and societal complexity. On the other hand, the opposition of genuine and spurious also concerned the ability of any particular cultural system to satisfy the intellectual, emotional, and aesthetic needs of individuals living under its sway. This second theme, directed at both the general and the social science audiences, also appears again in Sapir's later anthropological writings (see, e. g., chapters 9 and 10 of *The Psychology of Culture*, and Sapir 1939c).

Pursuing the second theme for the original audience, Sapir turned his cross-culturally conditioned attention to exploring the "spiritual maladjustments" of his own society (1924: 410). The modern American individual had been reduced to a cog in society, a mere machine, he argued, thereby stifling creative and emotional development. Sapir's argument here is part of a critique of contemporary North American society, a critique in which Boas and many of his students engaged and which continued through the interwar years and after (cf. Geertz 1988 on Ruth Benedict, for example). Most of Sapir's other contributions to public debates can be found in a separate section of this volume, entitled "Reflections on Contemporary Civilization." Comments on specific aspects of his own society were not, however, an effort utterly distinct from Sapir's sense of his anthropological work. As we have noted elsewhere, he was persistently concerned to minimize the association of anthropology with exotica; to argue that there was no essential difference between the psychologies of "primitive" and "modern" persons; to apply anthropological insights to contemporary life; and to draw upon contemporary life for examples illustrating theoretical points.

Although Boasian cultural relativism opposed external moral judgment or ranking of ethnographically known cultures, Sapir's attention to a link between aesthetic and emotional needs, and his focus on the individual's assessment of "genuine" value in his/her own culture, returns humanistic ideals to cross-cultural comparison. This adroit move allowed Sapir to criticize the "sterile externality" of American culture (1924: 412) by contrast with the less specialized social and economic forms of simpler societies. Idealizing the salmon fishermen of the Pacific Northwest as spiritually-satisfied exemplars, the essay suggested that modern North Americans could still seek cultural genuineness through the "spiritual heightening" of functions that still remained to the indivi-

dual (1924: 412). To this end, art, science and religion would all require reassessment. These were themes to which Sapir would return as he developed his position on culture, society and the individual. (In this volume, see, for example, "The Meaning of Religion" [1928], and the discussions of "progress" and of society as unconscious artist, in *The Psychology of Culture*; see also the discussion of "form" and aesthetics in *Language* [1921].)

There is much of Sapir's own biography in "Culture, Genuine and Spurious." It took part of its direction from Sapir's own aesthetic efforts at poetry, literary criticism and music (see Darnell 1986, 1988), efforts he seriously attempted to integrate with his social science. In this essay his emphasis on the creative individual recalls the theoretical issues he had begun to engage in his 1917 debate with Kroeber. The critique of American culture reflects his disenchantment with the American dream, as well as his highly unpopular pacifism during World War I. His prospectus for the future involved creative activities in which he himself was already engaged between about 1917 and his move from Ottawa to Chicago in 1925.

Professional colleagues were uncertain how to respond to this humanities-oriented argument. Fellow anthropologist Robert Lowie (1965) considered this paper irrelevant to Sapir's professional work. Sociologist William Fielding Ogburn wrote to Sapir (31 August 1922: NMM) that he had gained a real sense of what was genuine and what was spurious, although he preferred more overtly sociological language, such as might be expressed in terms of "varying parts of culture, correlation, original nature, and adaptation." To the extent that Sapir's method failed to separate art and science, Ogburn found it "unscientific" and almost mystical: "You seem to be struggling to articulate something that you feel emotionally rather than coldly and scientifically." Sapir's point that social science must address emotional and humanistic issues was largely lost on Ogburn, as was the idea that such issues were appropriately addressed through the aesthetic dimensions of form. Sapir's notion of form in language resulted in grammatical statements; but in his consideration of the genuineness of culture's "form" more conspicuously relates to the aesthetic values from which individuals take satisfaction.

In 1924, the literary audience was more responsive than the professional audience. Both anthropology and sociology were then dominated by something much closer to Kroeber's superorganic concept of culture than to Sapir's concept of the creative individual defining and modify-

ing his/her own tradition. Indeed, for many decades this paper appeared, to many anthropologists, to be anomalous in Sapir's oeuvre — a primarily literary move, outside the domain of his scholarly writing. Today, however, many anthropologists have taken up concerns with cultural aesthetics, with individual creativity and agency, and with the analysis — and need to revitalize — contemporary American society. The links between this essay and Sapir's anthropology should be more evident to today's readership than formerly.

* * *

Culture, Genuine and Spurious

ABSTRACT

Varying definitions of culture. The ethnologist's or culture-historian's use of the term. Individual culture as a traditional ideal. The general spirit or the "genius" of a national civilization; France and Russia as examples. Genuine culture, as here defined, possible on all levels of civilization; culture may be but a spurious thing in the most sophisticated or progressive of societies. Efficiency no measure of culture. Maladjustments between cultural values and new economic conditions. Immediate ends and remoter ends of human activity. Tendency toward a gradual shift of emphasis, the immediate ends coming to be felt as means toward the remoter ends, which originally resulted from the play of surplus energy. Necessity of the psychological shift owing to modern man's inability to arrive at individual mastery within the sphere of direct ends. The relation of the individual to the culture of the group. A rich cultural heritage needed to enable the individual to find himself. The relativity of cultural values. The cultural utilization of the past. The self, finding itself in its cultural environment, must be granted a primary reality. The significance of art for culture. The danger of spreading a culture over a large territory. The independence of economic-political and cultural bounds. The intensive development of culture within a restricted area no bar to internationalism. The unsatisfactory condition of contemporary America from the point of view of a genuine culture.

I. The varying conceptions of culture

There are certain terms that have a peculiar property. Ostensibly, they mark off specific concepts, concepts that lay claim to a rigorously objective validity. In practice, they label vague terrains of thought that shift or narrow or widen with the point of view of whoso makes use of them, embracing within their gamut of significances conceptions that not only do not harmonize but are in part contradictory. An analysis

of such terms soon discloses [402] the fact that underneath the clash of varying contents there is a unifying feeling-tone. What makes it possible for so discordant an array of conceptions to answer to the same call is, indeed, precisely this relatively constant halo that surrounds them. Thus, what is "crime" to one man is "nobility" to another, yet both are agreed that crime, whatever it is, is an undesirable category; that nobility, whatever it is, is an estimable one. In the same way, such a term as art may be made to mean divers things, but whatever it means, the term itself demands respectful attention and calls forth, normally, a pleasantly polished state of mind, an expectation of lofty satisfactions. If the particular conception of art that is advanced or that is implied in a work of art is distasteful to us, we do not express our dissatisfaction by saying, "Then I don't like art." We say this only when we are in a vandalic frame of mind. Ordinarily we get around the difficulty by saying, "But that's not art, it's only pretty-pretty conventionality," or "It's mere sentimentality," or "It's nothing but raw experience, material for art, but not art." We disagree on the value of things and the relations of things, but often enough we agree on the particular value of a label. It is only when the question arises of just where to put the label, that trouble begins. These labels — perhaps we had better call them empty thrones — are enemies of mankind, yet we have no recourse but to make peace with them. We do this by seating our favorite pretenders. The rival pretenders war to the death; the thrones to which they aspire remain serenely splendid in gold.

I desire to advance the claims of a pretender to the throne called "culture." Whatever culture is, we know that it is, or is considered to be, a good thing. I propose to give my idea of what kind of a good thing culture is.

The word "culture" seems to be used in three main senses or groups of senses. First of all, culture is technically used by the ethnologist and culture-historian to embody any socially inherited element in the life of man, material and spiritual. Culture so defined is coterminous with man himself, for even the lowliest savages live in a social world characterized by a complex network of traditionally conserved habits, usages, and attitudes. The South African Bushman's method of hunting game, the belief of the [403] North American Indian in "medicine," the Periclean Athenian's type of tragic drama, and the electric dynamo of modern industrialism are all, equally and indifferently, elements of culture, each being an outgrowth of the collective spiritual effort of man, each being retained for a given time not as the direct and automatic resultant of

purely hereditary qualities but by means of the more or less consciously imitative processes summarized by the terms "tradition" and "social inheritance." From this standpoint all human beings or, at any rate, all human groups are cultured, though in vastly different manners and grades of complexity. For the ethnologist there are many types of culture and an infinite variety of elements of culture, but no values, in the ordinary sense of the word, attach to these. His "higher" and "lower," if he uses the terms at all, refer not to a moral scale of values but to stages, real or supposed, in a historic progression or in an evolutionary scheme. I do not intend to use the term "culture" in this technical sense. "Civilization" would be a convenient substitute for it, were it not by common usage limited rather to the more complex and sophisticated forms of the stream of culture. To avoid confusion with other uses of the word "culture," uses which emphatically involve the application of a scale of values, I shall, where necessary, use "civilization" in lieu of the ethnologist's "culture."

The second application of the term is more widely current. It refers to a rather conventional ideal of individual refinement, built up on a certain modicum of assimilated knowledge and experience but made up chiefly of a set of typical reactions that have the sanction of a class and of a tradition of long standing. Sophistication in the realm of intellectual goods is demanded of the applicant to the title of "cultured person," but only up to a certain point. Far more emphasis is placed upon manner, a certain preciousness of conduct which takes different colors according to the nature of the personality that has assimilated the "cultured" ideal. At its worst, the preciousness degenerates into a scornful aloofness from the manners and tastes of the crowd; this is the well-known cultural snobbishness. At its most subtle, it develops into a mild and whimsical vein of cynicism, an amused skepticism that would not for the world find itself betrayed into an unwonted enthusiasm; [404] this type of cultured manner presents a more engaging countenance to the crowd, which only rarely gets hints of the discomfiting play of its irony, but it is an attitude of perhaps even more radical aloofness than snobbishness outright. Aloofness of some kind is generally a *sine qua non* of the second type of culture. Another of its indispensable requisites is intimate contact with the past. Present action and opinion are, first and foremost, seen in the illumination of a fixed past, a past of infinite richness and glory; only as an afterthought, if at all, are such action and opinion construed as instrumentalities for the building of a future. The ghosts of the past, preferably of the remote past, haunt the cultured

man at every step. He is uncannily responsive to their slightest touch; he shrinks from the employment of his individuality as a creative agency. But perhaps the most extraordinary thing about the cultured ideal is its selection of the particular treasures of the past which it deems worthiest of worship. This selection, which might seem bizarre to a mere outsider, is generally justified by a number of reasons, sometimes endowed with a philosophic cast, but unsympathetic persons seem to incline to the view that these reasons are only rationalizations *ad hoc* that the selection of treasures has proceeded chiefly according to the accidents of history.

In brief, this cultured ideal is a vesture and an air. The vesture may drape gracefully about one's person and the air has often much charm, but the vesture is a ready-made garment for all that and the air remains an air. In America the cultured idea, in its quintessential classical form, is a more exotic plant than in the halls of Oxford and Cambridge, whence it was imported to these rugged shores, but fragments and derivatives of it meet us frequently enough. The cultured ideal embraces many forms, of which the classical Oxonian form is merely one of the most typical. There are also Chinese and talmudic parallels. Wherever we find it, it discloses itself to our eyes in the guise of a spiritual heirloom that must, at all cost, be preserved intact.

The third use made of the term is the least easy to define and to illustrate satisfactorily, perhaps because those who use it are so seldom able to give us a perfectly clear idea of just what they themselves mean by culture. Culture in this third sense shares [405] with our first, technical, conception an emphasis on the spiritual possessions of the group rather than of the individual. With our second conception it shares a stressing of selected factors out of the vast whole of the ethnologist's stream of culture as intrinsically more valuable, more characteristic, more significant in a spiritual sense than the rest. To say that this culture embraces all the psychic, as contrasted with the purely material, elements of civilization would not be accurate, partly because the resulting conception would still harbor a vast number of relatively trivial elements, partly because certain of the material factors might well occupy a decisive place in the cultural ensemble. To limit the term, as is sometimes done, to art, religion, and science has again the disadvantage of a too rigid exclusiveness. We may perhaps come nearest the mark by saying that the cultural conception we are now trying to grasp aims to embrace in a single term those general attitudes, views of life, and specific manifestations of civilization that give a particular people its dis-

inctive place in the world. Emphasis is put not so much on what is done and believed by a people as on how what is done and believed functions in the whole life of that people, on what significance it has for them. The very same element of civilization may be a vital strand in the culture of one people, and a well-nigh negligible factor in the culture of another. The present conception of culture is apt to crop up particularly in connection with problems of nationality, with attempts to find embodied in the character and civilization of a given people some peculiar excellence, some distinguishing force, that is strikingly its own. Culture thus becomes nearly synonymous with the "spirit" or "genius" of a people, yet not altogether, for whereas these loosely used terms refer rather to a psychological, or pseudo-psychological, background of national civilization, culture includes with this background a series of concrete manifestations which are believed to be peculiarly symptomatic of it. Culture, then, may be briefly defined as civilization in so far as it embodies the national genius.

Evidently we are on peculiarly dangerous ground here. The current assumption that the so-called "genius" of a people is ultimately reducible to certain inherent hereditary traits of a biological and psychological nature does not, for the most part, bear [406] very serious examination. Frequently enough what is assumed to be an innate racial characteristic turns out on closer study to be the resultant of purely historical causes. A mode of thinking, a distinctive type of reaction, gets itself established, in the course of a complex historical development, as typical, as normal; it serves then as a model for the working over of new elements of civilization. From numerous examples of such distinctive modes of thinking or types of reaction a basic genius is abstracted. There need be no special quarrel with this conception of a national genius so long as it is not worshipped as an irreducible psychological fetich. Ethnologists fight shy of broad generalizations and hazily defined concepts. They are therefore rather timid about operating with national spirits and geniuses. The chauvinism of national apologists, which sees in the spirits of their own peoples peculiar excellences utterly denied to less blessed denizens of the globe, largely justifies this timidity of the scientific students of civilization. Yet here, as so often, the precise knowledge of the scientist lags somewhat behind the more naïve but more powerful insights of non-professional experience and impression. To deny the genius of a people an ultimate psychological significance and to refer it to the specific historical development of that people is not, after all is said and done, to analyze it out of existence. It remains true that large

groups of people everywhere tend to think and to act in accordance with established and all but instinctive forms, which are in large measure peculiar to it. The question as to whether these forms, that in their interrelations constitute the genius of a people, are primarily explainable in terms of native temperament, of historical development, or of both is of interest to the social psychologist, but need not cause us much concern. The relevance of this question is not always apparent. It is enough to know that in actual fact nationalities, using the word without political implication, have come to bear the impress in thought and action of a certain mold and that this mold is more clearly discernible in certain elements of civilization than in others. The specific culture of a nationality is that group of elements in its civilization which most emphatically exhibits the mold. In practice it is sometimes convenient to identify the national culture with its genius. [407]

An example or two and we shall have done with these preliminary definitions. The whole terrain through which we are now struggling is a hotbed of subjectivism, a splendid field for the airing of national conceits. For all that, there are a large number of international agreements in opinion as to the salient cultural characteristics of various peoples. No one who has even superficially concerned himself with French culture can have failed to be impressed by the qualities of clarity, lucid systematization, balance, care in choice of means, and good taste, that permeate so many aspects of the national civilization. These qualities have their weaker side. We are familiar with the overmechanization, the emotional timidity or shallowness (quite a different thing from emotional restraint), the exaggeration of manner at the expense of content, that are revealed in some of the manifestations of the French spirit. Those elements of French civilization that give characteristic evidence of the qualities of its genius may be said, in our present limited sense, to constitute the culture of France; or, to put it somewhat differently, the cultural significance of any element in the civilization of France is in the light it sheds on the French genius. From this standpoint we can evaluate culturally such traits in French civilization as the formalism of the French classical drama, the insistence in French education on the study of the mother-tongue and of its classics, the prevalence of epigram in French life and letters, the intellectualist cast so often given to aesthetic movements in France, the lack of turgidity in modern French music, the relative absence of the ecstatic note in religion, the strong tendency to bureaucracy in French administration. Each and all of these and hundreds of other traits could be readily paralleled from the civilization

of England. Nevertheless, their relative cultural significance, I venture to think, is a lesser one in England than in France. In France they seem to lie more deeply in the grooves of the cultural mold of its civilization. Their study would yield something like a rapid bird's-eye view of the spirit of French culture.

Let us turn to Russia, the culture of which has as definite a cast as that of France. I shall mention only one, but that perhaps the most significant, aspect of Russian culture, as I see it — the tendency of the Russian to see and think of human beings not as representatives [408] of types, not as creatures that appear eternally clothed in the garments of civilization, but as stark human beings existing primarily in and for themselves, only secondarily for the sake of civilization. Russian democracy has as its fundamental aim less the creation of democratic institutions than the effective liberation of personality itself. The one thing that the Russian can take seriously is elemental humanity, and elemental humanity, in his view of the world, obtrudes itself at every step. He is therefore sublimely at home with himself and his neighbor and with God. Indeed, I have no doubt that the extremest of Russian atheists is on better speaking terms with God than are the devout of other lands, to whom God is always something of a mystery. For his environment, including in that term all the machinery of civilization, the Russian has generally not a little contempt. The subordination of the deeps of personality to an institution is not readily swallowed by him as a necessary price for the blessings of civilization. We can follow out this sweeping humanity, this almost impertinent prodding of the real self that lies swathed in civilization, in numberless forms. In personal relations we may note the curious readiness of the Russian to ignore all the institutional barriers which separate man from man; on its weaker side, this involves at times a personal irresponsibility that harbors no insincerity. The renunciation of Tolstoi was no isolated phenomenon, it was a symbol of the deep-seated Russian indifference to institutionalism, to the accreted values of civilization. In a spiritual sense, it is easy for the Russian to overthrow any embodiment of the spirit for institutionalism; his real loyalties are elsewhere. The Russian preoccupation with elemental humanity is naturally most in evidence in the realm of art, where self-expression has freest rein. In the pages of Tolstoi, Dostoyevski, Turgenyev, Gorki, and Chekhov personality runs riot in its morbid moments of play with crime, in its depressions and apathies, in its generous enthusiasms and idealisms. So many of the figures in Russian literature look out upon life with a puzzled and incredulous gaze. "This thing

that you call civilization — is that all there is to life?" we hear them ask a hundred times. In music too the Russian [409] spirit delights to unmask itself, to revel in the cries and gestures of man as man. It speaks to us out of the rugged accents of a Moussorgski as out of the well-nigh unendurable despair of a Tschaikovski. It is hard to think of the main current of Russian art as anywhere infected by the dry rot of formalism; we expect some human flash or cry to escape from behind the bars.

I have avoided all attempt to construct a parallel between the spirit of French civilization and that of Russian civilization, between the culture of France and the culture of Russia. Strict parallels force an emphasis on contrasts. I have been content merely to suggest that underlying the elements of civilization, the study of which is the province of the ethnologist and culture-historian, is a culture, the adequate interpretation of which is beset with difficulties and which is often left to men of letters.

II. The genuine culture

The second and third conceptions of the term "culture" are what I wish to make the basis of our genuine culture — the pretender to the throne whose claims to recognition we are to consider. We may accept culture as signifying the characteristic mold of a national civilization, while from the second conception of culture, that of a traditional type of individual refinement, we will borrow the notion of ideal form. Let me say at once that nothing is farther from my mind than to plead the cause of any specific type of culture. It would be idle to praise or blame any fundamental condition of our civilization, to praise or blame any strand in the warp and woof of its genius. These conditions and these strands must be accepted as basic. They are slowly modifiable, to be sure, like everything else in the history of man, but radical modification of fundamentals does not seem necessary for the production of a genuine culture, however much a readjustment of their relations may be. In other words, a genuine culture is perfectly conceivable in any type or stage of civilization, in the mold of any national genius. It can be conceived as easily in terms of a Mohammedan polygamous society, or of an American Indian "primitive" non-agricultural society, as in those of our familiar occidental societies. On the [410] other hand, what may by

contrast be called "spurious" cultures are just as easily conceivable in conditions of general enlightenment as in those of relative ignorance and squalor.

The genuine culture is not of necessity either high or low; it is merely inherently harmonious, balanced, self-satisfactory. It is the expression of a richly varied and yet somehow unified and consistent attitude toward life, an attitude which sees the significance of any one element of civilization in its relation to all others. It is, ideally speaking, a culture in which nothing is spiritually meaningless, in which no important part of the general functioning brings with it a sense of frustration, of misdirected or unsympathetic effort. It is not a spiritual hybrid of contradictory patches, of water-tight compartments of consciousness that avoid participation in a harmonious synthesis. If the culture necessitates slavery, it frankly admits it; if it abhors slavery, it feels its way to an economic adjustment that obviates the necessity of its employment. It does not make a great show in its ethical ideals of an uncompromising opposition to slavery, only to introduce what amounts to a slave system into certain portions of its industrial mechanism. Or, if it builds itself magnificent houses of worship, it is because of the necessity it feels to symbolize in beautiful stone a religious impulse that is deep and vital; if it is ready to discard institutionalized religion, it is prepared also to dispense with the homes of institutionalized religion. It does not look sheepish when a direct appeal is made to its religious consciousness, then make amends by furtively donating a few dollars toward the maintenance of an African mission. Nor does it carefully instruct its children in what it knows to be of no use or vitality either to them or in its own mature life. Nor does it tolerate a thousand other spiritual maladjustments such as are patent enough in our American life of today. It would be too much to say that even the purest examples yet known of a genuine culture have been free of spiritual discords, of the dry rot of social habit, devitalized. But the great cultures, those that we instinctively feel to have been healthy spiritual organisms, such as the Athenian culture of the Age of Pericles and, to a less extent perhaps, the English culture of Elizabethan days, have at least tended to such harmony. [411]

It should be clearly understood that this ideal of a genuine culture has no necessary connection with what we call efficiency. A society may be admirably efficient in the sense that all its activities are carefully planned with reference to ends of maximum utility to the society as a whole, it may tolerate no lost motion, yet it may well be an inferior organism as a culture-bearer. It is not enough that the ends of activities

be socially satisfactory, that each member of the community feel in some dim way that he is doing his bit toward the attainment of a social benefit. This is all very well so far as it goes, but a genuine culture refuses to consider the individual as a mere cog, as an entity whose sole *raison d'être* lies in his subservience to a collective purpose that he is not conscious of or that has only a remote relevancy to his interests and strivings. The major activities of the individual must always be something more than means to an end. The great cultural fallacy of industrialism, as developed up to the present time, is that in harnessing machines to our uses it has not known how to avoid the harnessing of the majority of mankind to its machines. The telephone girl who lends her capacities, during the greater part of the living day, to the manipulation of a technical routine that has an eventually high efficiency value but that answers to no spiritual needs of her own is an appalling sacrifice to civilization. As a solution of the problem of culture she is a failure — the more dismal the greater her natural endowment. As with the telephone girl, so, it is feared, with the great majority of us, slave-stokers to fires that burn for demons we would destroy, were it not that they appear in the guise of our benefactors. The American Indian who solves the economic problem with salmon-spear and rabbit-snare operates on a relatively low level of civilization, but he represents an incomparably higher solution than our telephone girl of the questions that culture has to ask of economics. There is here no question of the immediate utility, of the effective directness, of economic effort, nor of any sentimentalizing regret as to the passing of the "natural man." The Indian's salmon-spearing is a culturally higher type of activity than that of the telephone-girl or mill hand simply because there is normally no sense of spiritual frustration [412] during its prosecution, no feeling of subservience to tyrannous yet largely inchoate demands, because it works in naturally with all the rest of the Indian's activities instead of standing out as a desert patch of merely economic effort in the whole of life. A genuine culture cannot be defined as a sum of abstractly desirable ends, as a mechanism. It must be looked upon as a sturdy plant growth, each remotest leaf and twig of which is organically fed by the sap at the core. And this growth is not here meant as a metaphor for the group only; it is meant to apply as well to the individual. A culture that does not build itself out of the central interests and desires of its bearers, that works from general ends to the individual, is an external culture. The word "external," which is so often instinctively chosen to

describe such a culture, is well chosen. The genuine culture is internal, it works from the individual to ends.

We have already seen that there is no necessary correlation between the development of civilization and the relative genuineness of the culture which forms its spiritual essence. This requires a word of further explanation. By the development of civilization is meant the ever increasing degree of sophistication of our society and of our individual lives. This progressive sophistication is the inevitable cumulative result of the sifting processes of social experience, of the ever increasing complications of our innumerable types of organization; most of all our steadily growing knowledge of our natural environment and, as a consequence, our practical mastery, for economic ends, of the resources that nature at once grants us and hides from us. It is chiefly the cumulative force of this sophistication that gives us the sense of what we call "progress." Perched on the heights of an office building twenty or more stories taller than our fathers ever dreamed of, we feel that we are getting up in the world. Hurling our bodies through space with an ever increasing velocity, we feel that we are getting on. Under sophistication I include not merely intellectual and technical advance, but most of the tendencies that make for a cleaner and healthier and, to a large extent, a more humanitarian existence. It is excellent to keep one's hands spotlessly clean, to eliminate smallpox, to administer anesthetics. Our growing sophistication, our ever [413] increasing solicitude to obey the dictates of common sense, make these tendencies imperative. It would be sheer obscurantism to wish to stay their progress. But there can be no stranger illusion — and it is an illusion we nearly all share — than this, that because the tools of life are today more specialized and more refined than ever before, that because the technique brought by science is more perfect than anything the world has yet known, it necessarily follows that we are in like degree attaining to a profounder harmony of life, to a deeper and more satisfying culture. It is as though we believed that an elaborate mathematical computation which involved figures of seven and eight digits could not but result in a like figure. Yet we know that one million multiplied by zero gives us zero quite as effectively as one multiplied by zero. The truth is that sophistication, which is what we ordinarily mean by the progress of civilization, is, in the long run, a merely quantitative concept that defines the external conditions for the growth or decay of a culture. We are right to have faith in the progress of civilization. We are wrong to assume that the maintenance or even advance of culture is a function of such progress. A reading of

the facts of ethnology and culture history proves plainly that maxima of culture have frequently been reached in low levels of sophistication; that minima of culture have been plumbed in some of the highest. Civilization, as a whole, moves on; culture comes and goes.

Every profound change in the flow of civilization, particularly every change in its economic bases, tends to bring about an unsettling and readjustment of culture values. Old culture forms, habitual types of reaction, tend to persist through the force of inertia. The maladjustment of these habitual reactions to their new civilizational environment brings with it a measure of spiritual disharmony, which the more sensitive individuals feel eventually as a fundamental lack of culture. Sometimes the maladjustment corrects itself with great rapidity, at other times it may persist for generations, as in the case of America, where a chronic state of cultural maladjustment has for so long a period reduced much of our higher life to sterile externality. It is easier, generally speaking, for a genuine culture to subsist on a lower lever of civilization; the differentiation of individuals as regards their social and economic functions is so much less than in [414] the higher levels that there is less danger of the reduction of the individual to an unintelligible fragment of the social organism. How to reap the undeniable benefits of a great differentiation of functions, without at the same time losing sight of the individual as a nucleus of live cultural values, is the great and difficult problem of any rapidly complicating civilization. We are far from having solved it in America. Indeed, it may be doubted whether more than an insignificant minority are aware of the existence of the problem. Yet the present world-wide labor unrest has as one of its deepest roots some sort of perception of the cultural fallacy of the present form of industrialism.

It is perhaps the sensitive ethnologist who has studied an aboriginal civilization at first hand who is most impressed by the frequent vitality of culture in less sophisticated levels. He cannot but admire the well-rounded life of the average participant in the civilization of a typical American Indian tribe; the firmness with which every part of that life — economic, social, religious, and aesthetic — is bound together into a significant whole in respect to which he is far from a passive pawn; above all, the molding role, oftentimes definitely creative, that he plays in the mechanism of his culture. When the political integrity of his tribe is destroyed by contact with the whites and the old cultural values cease to have the atmosphere needed for their continued vitality, the Indian finds himself in a state of bewildered vacuity. Even if he succeeds in

making a fairly satisfactory compromise with his new environment, in making what his well-wishers consider great progress toward enlightenment, he is apt to retain an uneasy sense of the loss of some vague and great good, some state of mind that he would be hard put to it to define, but which gave him a courage and joy that latter-day prosperity never quite seems to have regained for him. What has happened is that he has slipped out of the warm embrace of a culture into the cold air of fragmentary existence. What is sad about the passing of the Indian is not the depletion of his numbers by disease nor even the contempt that is too often meted out to him in his life on the reservation, it is the fading away of genuine cultures, built though they were out of the materials of a low order of sophistication. [415]

We have no right to demand of the higher levels of sophistication that they preserve to the individual his manifold functioning, but we may well ask whether, as a compensation, the individual may not reasonably demand an intensification in cultural value, a spiritual heightening, of such functions as are left him. Failing this, he must be admitted to have retrograded. The limitation in functioning works chiefly in the economic sphere. It is therefore imperative, if the individual is to preserve his value as a cultured being, that he compensate himself out of the non-economic, the non-utilitarian spheres — social, religious, scientific, aesthetic. This idea of compensation brings to view an important issue, that of the immediate and the remoter ends of human effort.

As a mere organism, man's only function is to exist; in other words, to keep himself alive and to propagate his kind. Hence the procuring of food, clothing, and shelter for himself and those dependent on him constitutes the immediate end of his effort. There are civilizations, like that of the Eskimo, in which by far the greater part of man's energy is consumed in the satisfaction of these immediate ends, in which most of his activities contribute directly or indirectly to the procuring and preparation of food and the materials for clothing and shelter. There are practically no civilizations, however, in which at least some of the available energy is not set free for remoter ends, though, as a rule, these remoter ends are by a process of rationalization made to seem to contribute to the immediate ones. (A magical ritual, for instance, which, when considered psychologically, seems to liberate and give form to powerful emotional aesthetic elements of our nature, is nearly always put in harness to some humdrum utilitarian end — the catching of rabbits or the curing of disease.) As a matter of fact, there are very few "primitive" civilizations that do not consume an exceedingly large share

of their energies in the pursuit of the remoter ends, though it remains true that these remoter ends are nearly always functionally or pseudo-functionally interwoven with the immediate ends. Art for art's sake may be a psychological fact on these less sophisticated levels; it is certainly not a cultural fact.

On our own level of civilization the remoter ends tend to split off altogether from the immediate ones and to assume the form of a [416] spiritual escape or refuge from the pursuit of the latter. The separation of the two classes of ends is never absolute nor can it ever be; it is enough to note the presence of a powerful drift of the two away from each other. It is easy to demonstrate this drift by examples taken out of our daily experience. While in most primitive civilizations the dance is apt to be a ritual activity at least ostensibly associated with purposes of an economic nature, it is with us a merely and self-consciously pleasurable activity that not only splits off from the sphere of the pursuit of immediate ends but even tends to assume a position of hostility to that sphere. In a primitive civilization a great chief dances as a matter of course, oftentimes as a matter of exercising a peculiarly honored privilege. With us the captain of industry either refuses to dance at all or does so as a half-contemptuous concession to the tyranny of social custom. On the other hand, the artist of a Ballet Russe has sublimated the dance to an exquisite instrument of self-expression, has succeeded in providing himself with an adequate, or more than adequate, cultural recompense for his loss of mastery in the realm of direct ends. The captain of industry is one of the comparatively small class of individuals that has inherited, in vastly complicated form, something of the feeling of control over the attainment of direct ends that belongs by cultural right to primitive man; the ballet dancer has saved and intensified for himself the feeling of spontaneous participation and creativeness in the world of indirect ends that also belongs by cultural right to primitive man. Each has saved part of the wreckage of a submerged culture for himself.

The psychology of direct and indirect ends undergoes a gradual modification, only partly consummated as yet, in the higher levels of civilization. The immediate ends continue to exercise the same tyrannical sway in the ordering of our lives, but as our spiritual selves become enriched and develop a more and more inordinate craving for subtler forms of existence, there develops also an attitude of impatience with the solution of the more immediate problems of life. In other words, the immediate ends cease to be felt as chief ends and gradually become necessary

means, but only means, toward the attainment of the more remote ends. These remoter ends, in turn, so far from being looked upon as purely [417] incidental activities which result from the spilling over of an energy concentrated almost entirely on the pursuit of the immediate ends, become the chief ends of life. This change of attitude is implied in the statement that the art, science, and religion of a higher civilization best express its spirit or culture. The transformation of ends thus briefly outlined is far from an accomplished fact; it is rather an obscure drift in the history of values, an expression of the volition of the more sensitive participants in our culture. Certain temperaments feel themselves impelled far along the drift, others lag behind.

The transformation of ends is of the greatest cultural importance because it acts as a powerful force for the preservation of culture in levels in which a fragmentary economic functioning of the individual is inevitable. So long as the individual retains a sense of control over the major goods of life, he is able to take his place in the cultural patrimony of his people. Now that the major goods of life have shifted so largely from the realm of immediate to that of remote ends, it becomes a cultural necessity for all who would not be looked upon as disinherited to share in the pursuit of these remoter ends. No harmony and depth of life, no culture, is possible when activity is well-nigh circumscribed by the sphere of immediate ends and when functioning within that sphere is so fragmentary as to have no inherent intelligibility or interest. Here lies the grimmest joke of our American civilization. The vast majority of us, deprived of any but an insignificant and culturally abortive share in the satisfaction of the immediate wants of mankind, are further deprived of both opportunity and stimulation to share in the production of non-utilitarian values. Part of the time we are dray horses; the rest of the time we are listless consumers of goods which have received no least impress of our personality. In other words, our spiritual selves go hungry, for the most part, pretty much all of the time.

III. The cultured individual and the cultural group

There is no real opposition, at last analysis, between the concept of a culture of the group and the concept of an individual culture. The two are interdependent. A healthy national culture is never a passively accepted heritage from the past, but implies [418] the creative participation of the members of the community; implies, in other words, the

presence of cultured individuals. An automatic perpetuation of standardized values, not subject to the constant remodeling of individuals willing to put some part of themselves into the forms they receive from their predecessors, leads to the dominance of impersonal formulas. The individual is left out in the cold; the culture becomes a manner rather than a way of life, it ceases to be genuine. It is just as true, however, that the individual is helpless without a cultural heritage to work on. He cannot, out of his unaided spiritual powers, weave a strong cultural fabric instinct with the flush of his own personality. Creation is a bending of the form to one's will, not a manufacture of form *ex nihilo*. If the passive perpetuator of a cultural tradition gives us merely a manner, the shell of a life that once was, the creator from out of a cultural waste gives us hardly more than a gesture or a yawn, the strident promise of a vision raised by our desires.

There is a curious notion afloat that "new" countries are especially favorable soil for the formation of a virile culture. By new is meant something old that has been transplanted to a background devoid of historical associations. It would be remarkable if a plant, flourishing in heavy black loam, suddenly acquired new virility on transplantation into a shallow sandy soil. Metaphors are dangerous things that prove nothing, but experience suggests the soundness of this particular metaphor. Indeed, there is nothing more tenuous, more shamelessly imitative and external, less virile and self-joyous, than the cultures of so-called "new countries." The environments of these transplanted cultures are new, the cultures themselves are old with the sickly age of arrested development. If signs of a genuine blossoming of culture are belatedly beginning to appear in America, it is not because America is still new; rather is America coming of age, beginning to feel a little old. In a genuinely new country, the preoccupation with the immediate ends of existence reduces creativeness in the sphere of the more remote ends to a minimum. The net result is a perceptible dwarfing of culture. The old stock of non-material cultural goods lingers on without being subjected to vital remodelings, becomes [419] progressively impoverished, and ends by being so hopelessly ill-adjusted to the economic and social environment that the more sensitive spirits tend to break with it altogether and to begin anew with a frank recognition of the new environmental conditions. Such new starts are invariably crude; they are long in bearing the fruits of a genuine culture.

It is only an apparent paradox that the subtlest and the most decisive cultural influences of personality, the most fruitful revolts, are discerni-

ble in those environments that have long and uninterruptedly supported a richly streaming culture. So far from being suffocated in an atmosphere of endless precedent, the creative spirit gains sustenance and vigor for its own unfolding, and, if it is strong enough, it may swing free of that very atmosphere with a poise hardly dreamed of by the timid iconoclasts of unformed cultures. Not otherwise could we understand the cultural history of modern Europe. Only in a mature and richly differentiated soil could arise the iconoclasms and visions of an Anatole France, a Nietzsche, an Ibsen, a Tolstoi. In America, at least in the America of yesterday, these iconoclasms and these visions would either have been strangled in the cradle, or, had they found air to breathe, they would have half-developed into a crude and pathetic isolation. There is no sound and vigorous individual incorporation of a cultured ideal without the soil of a genuine communal culture; and no genuine communal culture without the transforming energies of personalities at once robust and saturated with the cultural values of their time and place. The highest type of culture is thus locked in the embrace of an endless chain, to the forging of which goes much labor, weary and protracted. Such a culture avoids the two extremes of "externality" — the externality of surfeit, which weighs down the individual, and the externality of barrenness. The former is the decay of Alexandrianism, in which the individual is no more; the latter, the combined immaturity and decay of an uprooted culture, in which the individual is not yet. Both types of externality may be combined in the same culture, frequently in the same person. Thus, it is not uncommon to find in America individuals who have had engrafted on a barren and purely utilitarian culture a [420] cultural tradition that apes a grace already embalmed. One surmises that this juxtaposition of incongruous atmospheres is even typical in certain circles.

Let us look a little more closely at the place of the individual in a modern sophisticated culture. I have insisted throughout that a genuine culture is one that gives its bearers a sense of inner satisfaction, a feeling of spiritual mastery. In the higher levels of civilization this sense of mastery is all but withdrawn, as we have seen, from the economic sphere. It must, then, to an even greater extent than in more primitive civilizations, feed on the non-economic spheres of human activity. The individual is thus driven, or should be if he would be truly cultured, to the identification of himself with some portion of the wide range of non-economic interests. From the standpoint adopted in this study, this does not mean that the identification is a purely casual and acquisitive

process; it is, indeed, made not so much for its own sake as in order to give the self the wherewithal to develop its powers. Concretely considered, this would mean, for instance, that a mediocre person moderately gifted with the ability to express his aesthetic instincts in plastic form and exercising that gift in his own sincere and humble way (to the neglect, it may be, of practically all other interests) is *ipso facto* a more cultured individual than a person of brilliant endowments who has acquainted himself in a general way with all the "best" that has been thought and felt and done, but who has never succeeded in bringing any portion of his range of interests into direct relation with his volitional self, with the innermost shrine of his personality. An individual of the latter type, for all his brilliance, we call "flat." A flat person cannot be truly cultured. He may, of course, be highly cultured in the conventional sense of the word "culture," but that is another story. I would not be understood as claiming that direct creativeness is essential, though it is highly desirable, for the development of individual culture. To a large extent it is possible to gain a sense of the required mastery by linking one's own personality with that of the great minds and hearts that society has recognized as its significant creators. Possible, that is, so long as such linking, such vicarious experience, is attended by some portion of the effort, the fluttering toward [421] realization that is inseparable from all creative effort. It is to be feared, however, that the self-discipline that is here implied is none too often practiced. The linking, as I have called it, of self with master soul too often degenerates into a pleasurable servitude, into a facile abnegation of one's own individuality, the more insidious that it has the approval of current judgment. The pleasurable servitude may degenerate still further into a vice. Those of us who are not altogether blind can see in certain of our acquaintances, if not in ourselves, an indulgence in aesthetic or scientific goods that is strictly comparable to the abuse of alcoholic intoxicants. Both types of self-ignoring or self-submerging habit are signs of a debilitated personality; both are antithetical to the formation of culture.

The individual self, then, in aspiring to culture, fastens upon the accumulated cultural goods of its society, not so much for the sake of the passive pleasure of their acquirement, as for the sake of the stimulus given to the unfolding personality and of the orientation derived in the world (or better, a world) of cultural values. The orientation, conventional as it may be, is necessary if only to give the self a *modus vivendi* with society at large. The individual needs to assimilate much of the cultural background of his society, many of the current sentiments of

his people, to prevent his self-expression from degenerating into social sterility. A spiritual hermit may be genuinely cultured, but he is hardly socially so. To say that individual culture must needs grow organically out of the rich soil of a communal culture is far from saying that it must be forever tied to that culture by the leading strings of its own childhood. Once the individual self has grown strong enough to travel in the path most clearly illuminated by its own light, it not only can but should discard much of the scaffolding by which it has made its ascent. Nothing is more pathetic than the persistence with which well-meaning applicants to culture attempt to keep up or revive cultural stimuli which have long outlived their significance for the growth of personality. To keep up or brush up one's Greek, for example, in those numerous cases in which a knowledge of Greek has ceased to bear a genuine relation to the needs of the spirit, is almost a spiritual crime. It is acting "the dog in the manger" with one's own soul. If the traveling in the path of the [422] self's illumination leads to a position that is destructive of the very values the self was fed on, as happened, though in very different ways, with Nietzsche and with Tolstoi, it has not in the slightest lost touch with genuine culture. It may well, on the contrary, have arrived at its own highest possible point of cultural development.

Nietzsche and Tolstoi, however, are extreme types of personality. There is no danger that the vast army of cultured humanity will ever come to occupy spiritual positions of such rigor and originality. The real danger, as is so abundantly attested by daily experience, is in submitting to the remorselessly leveling forces of a common cultural heritage and of the action of average mind on average mind. These forces will always tend to a general standardization of both the content and the spirit of culture, so powerfully, indeed, that the centrifugal effect of robust, self-sustaining personalities need not be feared. The caution to conformity with tradition, which the champions of culture so often feel themselves called upon to announce, is one that we can generally dispense with. It is rather the opposite caution, the caution to conformity with the essential nature of one's own personality, that needs urging. It needs to be urged as a possible counter-irritant to the flat and tedious sameness of spiritual outlook, the anemic make-believe, the smug intolerance of the challenging, that so imprison our American souls.

No greater test of the genuineness of both individual and communal culture can be applied than the attitude adopted toward the past, its institutions, its treasures of art and thought. The genuinely cultured individual or society does not contemptuously reject the past. They

honor the works of the past, but not because they are gems of historical chance, but because, being out of our reach, they must needs be looked at through the enshrining glass of museum cases. These works of the past still excite our heartfelt interest and sympathy because, and only in so far as, they may be recognized as the expression of a human spirit warmly akin, despite all differences of outward garb, to our own. This is very nearly equivalent to saying that the past is of cultural interest only when it is still the present or may yet become the future. Paradoxical as it may seem, the historical spirit has always been something of an anticultural force, has always acted in some measure as an unwitting deterrent of the cultural utilization of the past. The historical [423] spirit says, "Beware, those thoughts and those feelings that you so rashly think to embody in the warp and woof of your own spirit — they are of other time and of other place and they issue from alien motives. In bending over them you do but obscure them with the shadow of your own spirit." This cool reserve is an excellent mood for the making of historical science; its usefulness to the building of culture in the present is doubtful. We know immensely more about Hellenic antiquity in these days than did the scholars and artists of the Renaissance; it would be folly to pretend that our live utilization of the Hellenic spirit, accurately as we merely know it, is comparable to the inspiration, the creative stimulus, that those men of the Renaissance obtained from its fragmentary and garbled tradition. It is difficult to think of a renaissance of that type as thriving in the critical atmosphere of today. We should walk so gingerly in the paths of the past for fear of stepping on anachronisms, that, wearied with fatigue, we should finally sink into a heavy doze, to be awakened only by the insistent clatter of the present. It may be that in our present state of sophistication such a spirit of criticism, of detachment, is not only unavoidable but essential for the preservation of our own individualities. The past is now more of a past than ever before. Perhaps we should expect less of it than ever before. Or rather expect no more of it than it hold its portals wide open, that we may enter in and despoil it of what bits we choose for our pretty mosaics. Can it be that the critical sense of history, which galvanizes the past into scientific life, is destined to slay it for the life of culture? More probably, what is happening is that the spiritual currents of today are running so fast, so turbulently, that we find it difficult to get a culturally vital perspective of the past, which is thus, for the time being, left as a glorified mummy in the hands of the pundits. And, for the time being, those others of us who take their culture neither as knowledge nor as

manner, but as life, will ask of the past not so much "what?" and "when?" and "where?" as "how?" and the accent of their "how" will be modulated in accordance with the needs of the spirit of each, a spirit that is free to glorify, to transform, and to reject.

To summarize the place of the individual in our theory of culture, we may say that the pursuit of genuine culture implies two types [424] of reconciliation. The self seeks instinctively for mastery. In the process of acquiring a sense of mastery that is not crude but proportioned to the degree of sophistication proper to our time, the self is compelled to suffer an abridgment and to undergo a molding. The extreme differentiation of function which the progress of man has forced upon the individual menaces the spirit; we have no recourse but to submit with good grace to this abridgment of our activity, but it must not be allowed to clip the wings of the spirit unduly. This is the first and most important reconciliation – the finding of a full world of spiritual satisfactions within the straight limits of an unwontedly confined economic activity. The self must set itself at a point where it can, if not embrace the whole spiritual life of its group, at least catch enough of its rays to burst into light and flame. Moreover, the self must learn to reconcile its own strivings, its own imperious necessities, with the general spiritual life of the community. It must be content to borrow sustenance from the spiritual consciousness of that community and of its past, not merely that it may obtain the wherewithal to grow at all, but that it may grow where its power, great or little, will be brought to bear on a spiritual life that is of intimate concern to other wills. Yet, despite all reconciliations, the self has a right to feel that it grows as an integral, self-poised, spiritual growth, whose ultimate justifications rest in itself, whose sacrifices and compensations must be justified to itself. The concentration of the self as a mere instrument toward the attainment of communal ends, whether of state or other social body, is to be discarded as leading in the long run to psychological absurdities and to spiritual slavery. It is the self that concedes, if there is to be any concession. Spiritual freedom, what there is of it, is not alms dispensed, now indifferently, now grudgingly, by the social body. That a different philosophy of the relation of the individual to his group is now so prevalent, makes it all the more necessary to insist on the spiritual primacy of the individual soul.

It is a noteworthy fact that wherever there is discussion of culture, emphasis is instinctively placed upon art. This applies as well to individual as to communal culture. We apply the term "cultured" only with reserve to an individual in whose life the [425] aesthetic moment plays

no part. So also, if we would catch something of the spirit, the genius, of a bygone period or of an exotic civilization, we turn first and foremost to its art. A thoughtless analysis would see in this nothing but the emphasis on the beautiful, the decorative, that comports with the conventional conception of culture as a life of traditionally molded refinement. A more penetrative analysis discards such an interpretation. For it the highest manifestations of culture, the very quintessence of the genius of a civilization, necessarily rest in art, for the reason that art is the authentic expression, in satisfying form, of experience; experience not as logically ordered by science, but as directly and intuitively presented to us in life. As culture rests, in essence, on the harmonious development of the sense of mastery instinctively sought by each individual soul, this can only mean that art, the form of consciousness in which the impress of the self is most direct, least hampered by outward necessity, is above all other undertakings of the human spirit bound to reflect culture. To relate *our* lives, *our* intuitions, *our* passing moods to forms of expression that carry conviction to others and make us live again in these others is the highest spiritual satisfaction we know of, the highest welding of one's individuality with the spirit of his civilization. Were art ever really perfect in expression, it would indeed be immortal. Even the greatest art, however, is full of the dross of conventionality, of the particular sophistications of its age. As these change, the directness of expression in any work of art tends to be increasingly felt as hampered by something fixed and alien, until it gradually falls into oblivion. While art lives, it belongs to culture; in the degree that it takes on the frigidity of death, it becomes of interest only to the study of civilization. Thus all art appreciation (and production, for that matter) has two faces. It is unfortunate that the face directed to civilization is so often confounded with that which is fixed on culture.

IV. The geography of culture

An oft-noted peculiarity of the development of culture is the fact that it reaches its greatest heights in comparatively small, autonomous groups. In fact, it is doubtful if a genuine culture [426] ever properly belongs to more than such a restricted group, a group between the members of which there can be said to be something like direct intensive spiritual contact. This direct contact is enriched by the common cultural heritage on which the minds of all are fed; it is rendered swift and

pregnant by the thousands of feelings and ideas that are tacitly assumed and that constantly glimmer in the background. Such small, culturally autonomous groups were the Athens of the Periclean Age, the Rome of Augustus, the independent city-states of Italy in late medieval times, the London of Elizabethan days, and the Paris of the last three centuries. It is customary to speak of certain of these groups and of their cultures as though they were identical with, or represented, widely extended groups and cultures. To a curiously large extent such usages are really figures of speech, substitutions of a part for the whole. It is astonishing, for instance, how much the so-called "history of French literature" is really the history of literary activity in the city of Paris. True enough, a narrowly localized culture may, and often does, spread its influence far beyond its properly restricted sphere. Sometimes it sets the pace for a whole nationality, for a far-flung empire. It can do so, however, only at the expense of diluting in spirit as it moves away from its home, of degenerating into an imitative attitudinizing. If we realized more keenly what the rapid spread or imposition of a culture entails, to what an extent it conquers by crushing the germs of healthier autonomous growth, we would be less eager to welcome uniformizing tendencies, less ready to think of them as progressive in character. A culture may well be quickened from without, but its supersession by another, whether superior or not, is no cultural gain. Whether or not it is attended by a political gain does not concern us here. That is why the deliberate attempt to impose a culture directly and speedily, no matter how backed by good will, is an affront to the human spirit. When such an attempt is backed, not by good will, but by military ruthlessness, it is the greatest conceivable crime against the human spirit, it is the very denial of culture.

Does this mean that we must turn our back on all internationalistic tendencies and vegetate forever in our nationalisms? Here we are confronted by the prevalent fallacy that internationalism is [427] in spirit opposed to the intensive development of autonomous cultures. The fallacy proceeds from a failure to realize that internationalism, nationalism, and localism are forms that can be given various contents. We cannot intelligently discuss internationalism before we know what it is that we are to be internationalistic about. Unfortunately we are so obsessed by the idea of subordinating all forms of human association to the state and of regarding the range of all types of activity as conterminous with political boundaries, that it is difficult for us to reconcile the idea of a local or restrictedly national autonomy of culture with a purely

political state-sovereignty and with an economic-political internationalism.

No one can see clearly what is destined to be the larger outcome of the present world conflicts. They may exacerbate rather than allay national-political animosities and thus tend to strengthen the prestige of the state. But this deplorable result cannot well be other than a passing phase. Even now it is evident that the war has, in more ways than one, paved the way for an economic and, as a corollary, a semi-political internationalism. All those spheres of activity that relate to the satisfaction of immediate ends, which, from the vantage point that we have gained, are nothing but means, will tend to become international functions. However the internationalizing processes will shape themselves in detail, they will at bottom be but the reflection of that growing impatience of the human spirit with the preoccupation with direct ends, which I spoke of before. Such transnational problems as the distribution of economic goods, the transportation of commodities, the control of highways, the coinage, and numerous others, must eventually pass into the hands of international organizations for the simple reason that men will not eternally give their loyalty to the uselessly national administration of functions that are of inherently international scope. As this international scope gets to be thoroughly realized, our present infatuations with national prestige in the economic sphere will show themselves for the spiritual imbecilities that they are.

All this has much to do with the eventual development of culture. As long as culture is looked upon as a decorative appendage of large [428] political units, one can plausibly argue that its preservation is bound up with the maintenance of the prestige of these units. But genuine culture is inconceivable except on the basis of a highly individual spiritual consciousness, it rarely remains healthy and subtle when spread thin over an interminable area, and in its higher reaches it is in no mood to submit to economic and political bonds. Now a generalized international culture is hardly thinkable. The national-political unit tends to arrogate culture to itself and up to a certain point it succeeds in doing so, but only at the price of serious cultural impoverishment of vast portions of its terrain. If the economic and political integrity of these large state-controlled units becomes gradually undermined by the growth of international functions, their cultural *raison d'être* must also tend to weaken. Culture must then tend with ever increasing intensity to cling to relatively small social and to minor political units, units that are not too large to incorporate the individuality that is to culture as

the very breath of life. Between these two processes, the integration of economic and political forces into a world sovereignty and the disintegration of our present unwieldy culture units into small units whose life is truly virile and individual, the fetish of the present state, with its uncontrolled sovereignty, may in the dim future be trusted to melt away. The political state of today has long been on trial and has been found wanting. Our national-political units are too small for peace, too large for safety. They are too small for the intelligent solution of the large problems in the sphere of direct ends; they are too large for the fruitful enrichment of the remoter ends, for culture.

It is in the New World, perhaps more than in any other part of the globe, that the unsatisfactory nature of a geographically widespread culture, of little depth or individuality to begin with, is manifest. To find substantially the same cultural manifestations, material and spiritual, often indeed to the minutest details, in New York and Chicago and San Francisco is saddening. It argues a shallowness in the culture itself and a readiness to imitation in its bearers that is not reassuring. Even if no definite way out of the flat cultural morass is clearly discernible for the present, there is no good basking forever in self-sufficiency. It can only be of benefit [429] to search out the depths of our hearts and to find wherein they are wanting. If we exaggerate our weakness, it does not matter; better chastening than self-glorification. We have been in the habit of giving ourselves credit for essentially quantitative results that are due rather to an unusually favoring nature and to a favoring set of economic conditions than to anything in ourselves. Our victories have been brilliant, but they have also too often been barren for culture. The habit of playing with loaded dice has given us a dangerous attitude of passivity — dangerous, that is, for culture. Stretching back opulently in our easy chairs, we expect great cultural things to happen to us. We have wound up the machinery, and admirable machinery it is; it is “up to” culture to come forth, in heavy panoply. The minute increment of individuality which alone makes culture in the self and eventually builds up a culture in the community seems somehow overlooked. Canned culture is so much easier to administer.

Just now we are expecting a great deal from the European war. No doubt the war and its aftermath will shake us out of some part of our smugness and let in a few invigorating air currents of cultural influence, but, if we are not careful, these influences may soon harden into new standardizations or become diluted into another stock of imitative attitudes and reactions. The war and its aftermath cannot be a sufficient

cultural cause, they are at best but another set of favoring conditions. We need not be too much astonished if a Periclean culture does not somehow automatically burst into bloom. Sooner or later we shall have to get down to the humble task of exploring the depths of our consciousness and dragging to the light what sincere bits of reflected experience we can find. These bits will not always be beautiful, they will not always be pleasing, but they will be genuine. And then we can build. In time, in plenty of time – for we must have patience – a genuine culture – better yet, a series of linked autonomous cultures – will grace our lives. And New York and Chicago and San Francisco will live each in its own cultural strength, not squinting from one to another to see which gets ahead in a race for external values, but each serenely oblivious of its rivals because growing in a soil of genuine cultural values.

Editorial Notes

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Notes on Psychological Interpretation in a Given Society (1926)

The Social Science Research Council (SSRC), founded in 1925 by University of Chicago political scientist Charles Merriam, began in the following year to sponsor annual conferences for prominent scholars in the emerging interdisciplinary social sciences. The conferences were held at Dartmouth College in Hanover, New Hampshire (For further information on these conferences and the interdisciplinary social science movement during this period, see Darnell 1990.)

Sapir's talk at the first of these "Hanover Conferences" in 1926 modestly referred to "notes on" his chosen topic; nonetheless, the paper summarized his thinking on what would later be called differences in national character. Sapir preferred other labels, such as "as-if personality," a concept he developed further in preparing his lectures on *The Psychology of Culture*. Sapir published little on these ideas during his lifetime, however, instead, anthropological conceptions of national character reached their culmination in the work of Margaret Mead and Ruth Benedict — both of whom were substantially influenced by Sapir's thinking up to this period (1926) but were not in such close contact with him thereafter. The culture-and-personality school which the latter two scholars developed within anthropology was quite different from Sapir's subsequent work on personality, work which was influenced by Sapir's association with the psychiatrist Harry Stack Sullivan.

Although copies of this 1926 paper were circulated, along with transcripts of other portions of the conference proceedings, among the conference participants, Sapir never published it. It appears in this volume for the first time. The text is taken from the transcripts of the conference and was evidently never prepared in any other form. Apparently, most participants in the conference spoke extemporaneously and were recorded by SSRC stenographers.

The 1926 conference lasted from August 9 to September 3 and included 19 plenary lectures, as well as other activities. The transcripts of discussion of other lectures record only a few remarks by Sapir, none particularly extensive. Accordingly, we present here only the session of August 19, 1926, which began with Sapir's paper and continued with a discussion, which we represent in abbreviated form. In order to preserve something of the oral and spontaneous quality of the occasion, and because the transcript itself is the only record of what was said, we have not attempted to edit the portions we present verbatim, other than in punctuation and spelling.

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Notes on Psychological Orientation in a Given Society

I am afraid this particular subject falls outside the general rubric of the proceedings of this week. The discussions that have preceded this

have all been very special and detailed studies which were intended, I believe, to illustrate method. A paper which is not special in detail is supposed to illustrate method. Unfortunately, I am not aware of having any method or illustrations of method, inasmuch as my paper is going to contain little of factual interest. I hope however that the discussions will give some body to what I was going to say.

In order to reassure apprehensive members, I was asked if I was going to say anything improper. I hasten to assure you that all of my illustrations are chaste.

The subject of social psychology is one that has interested all of us, but as far as I myself am concerned, I find myself redefining it every time I use the term, and very much up in the air as to what it really means. As soon as I try to give it a definite connotation, I find I ask myself the same old questions over again. I sometimes wonder whether I am any the wiser for all the cogitations.

Perhaps the best way to get at this concept of social psychology, which will be the setting of the remarks which I wish to make later, is to ask ourselves a few questions and answer them yea or nay.

In the first place, there is a certain notion which used to be current that social psychology is a kind of psychology that inhered in a mind different from the ordinary mind, supposed to be some sort of super-mind, which carried on somehow and which was lodged in fragmentary fashion in individual minds. That old-fashioned, metaphysical notion lingers on in the Jung psychology, and of course it is one of the criticisms of that psychology that it operates so much with this super-personal mind in which social phenomena, social values, are supposed to inhere. I think all of us have got away from that, it is so utterly metaphysical.

There is a second conception which I think is even more mischievous because it is more plausible. It is a very current conception, and my private opinion is that it is the most pernicious difficulty that students of social science have to deal with. This definition or conception of social psychology I am going to try to define. I may be all wrong; if so, I would like to have it come out in the discussion. If you will not profit by my remarks, I shall by yours.

It seems to me a great deal of the discussion I have listened to in regard to the social sciences, which social psychology is supposed to clear up for us, rests on the assumption that these social sciences are the direct functions of the group, of society, as such, the solidarity of human beings getting together and doing things. Therefore, if you only

knew how the group functions psychologically, you would have a lever to the understanding of social science; in fact, you would have social science. It sounds plausible, but I think it is wrong. It is so very nearly self-evident as to be pernicious. I will try to explain as best I can why I think it is wrong, and why it has caused confusion in our minds.

In the first place, if we take up the social sciences and study their subject matter without preconceptions, we find they are not built up of all those reactions that are due to the interaction of human beings as groups — manifestly not. If A and B come together and hit each other on the head with sticks they happen to pick up, that is communal activity of a definite sort, but the laws of that kind of activity are of no special interest, so far as I can see, for the social sciences. At any rate, that type of behavior is not the subject matter of social science. I think that is evident. I am not interested in activities of that kind. Why not? If social science were the collectivity of studies devoted to all those reactions that grow out of communal human conduct, that kind of activity — the hitting of A by B in this random way — should be of supreme interest to us, but it just isn't, which shows we have neglected one very important factor in the definition of the subject matter of social science. There is something there we haven't clearly envisaged. What is that something?

Anthropologists (and, in their wake, a great many sociologists) have gradually become clear what that something is. It is a very simple thing but it is easy to ignore it. It is the fact that we have a cumulative tradition of patterns of behavior which we do not lose sight of from generation to generation, and only those kinds of human behavior are of interest to the social scientists that run in the grooves of those patterns. A hitting B in the manner described was not following any very special pattern that was of that kind of interest. It was of group interest. It illustrated nicely the action of mind on mind, and body on body, but it did not illustrate the operation of any socially significant pattern. Therefore, it fell outside of the rubric of social science. It is a simple example but possibly clear enough for our purpose.

We see, then, that we are justified in skepticism at the outset as to the possibility of defining any psychology that is to help us in social science in terms of a "group psychology," in the simplest, most elementary sense of the term. If we don't hold to that, we are going to flounder helplessly in any methodology we may construct, and I am quite sure I have seen many such flounderings.

Let us give another example in order to clarify our minds on this point. I am going to take a more dubious example. I invite a friend of mine to a meal. We sit down at the Hanover Inn to eat a very good meal. From one standpoint, the behavior that results in the eating of the meal is social, and from another standpoint it is individual. It depends entirely on how I look at it. (I am using the term "social" this time with reference to the social sciences; it is an ambiguous term, I admit.) It is social in so far as my meal is a ritual, following a pattern. I am not spurred on by hunger necessarily, or not very greatly. I don't react as an "original man" might react. I am heavily conditioned. But from an anthropological standpoint I am something else, not merely conditioned, but following out patterns worked out by my ancestors or those who set the pace in my society. But in so far as I am satisfying the cravings of hunger, I am illustrating certain truths of individual psychology. This is a very complicated substitute for a simple pattern the individual psychologist can work out. In the first example, there was no social significance in the act. There probably *was*, as we will see in a moment, but in a rough way there wasn't. In the second example, there was some social significance.

Now all these very self-evident remarks I have made have a very important corollary. They show that there is no contrast, properly speaking, from the psychologist's viewpoint, between individual psychology and social psychology. That is an unfortunate and most fictitious contrast, it seems to me. But there is a difference from the standpoint of the social scientist between socially unvalidated or individual conduct and socially validated or cultural conduct. But that is a distinction the psychologist has no use for, as I see it — none whatever. The psychologist is interested in reactivities as such. He is not interested in the fact that some of these methods of conditioning reactions need an historical tradition to explain them. As a psychologist pure and simple, he is not really interested.

Let us look a little more closely at the distinction made between individual and social conduct. Personally, I think it is an unfortunate one, because it is hard for me to think of any activity which is not social in the simple, primitive sense of group activity, which is not the kind of social activity we are really interested in, in social science. If you stop to think of it, there isn't any activity that is not in a communal matrix of some kind. Theoretically, we abstract from our fellow-men, parents, brothers and sisters, from all the thousands of human beings that surround us, but actually there is very little of which we are conscious in

psychology, or, to put it more accurately, in actual human behavior, which does not presuppose the existence of this society we are living in.

It is as much a fiction to speak of individual psychology as to speak of social psychology. It is true that we have the illusion that any particular human reaction we engage in is carried by the individual in some kind of environment that has to be defined. But inasmuch as that reactivity is always directed toward or presupposes other individuals, it is just as logical to start with social psychology and, by process of abstraction, to work out an individual, theoretical psychology, which I think is going to be done. Individual psychology is a secondary thing which has to be arrived at by the process of abstraction and elimination.

I am not so specially interested in that distinction, but leave that to the psychologists. All I am interested in is blurring the distinction between social and individual psychology. It may be useful to make it, but take behavior as it is, not as it is arrived at by a process of elimination, and there is no real difference. You will realize I do not jump at the conclusion, therefore, that this psychology, call it individual or social or both, is necessarily capable of direct application to the understanding of patterned human conduct.

In the first place, this patterned human conduct is a sort of arbitrary selection; certainly it is from the psychologist's standpoint. There is no earthly reason why such activity as the dance, the symphony, or the actions in a political campaign, or any of the dozens and hundreds and thousands of patterns of activity we study in social science, so far as the psychologist can see, should have been taken out as of special interest and codified in the types of behavior in which the social scientist is interested.

I don't see why the psychologist should contentedly assume that the science of economics envisages a type of behavior naturally distinct from the kind I defined in the case of A hitting B on the head. But economic behavior *is* of interest to us in the social sciences.

The concept of culture has been defined carefully. At the risk of carrying coals to Newcastle, I am going to say a few words about it. If I pick up a stick and hit a man on the head with it, and somebody else sees me doing this, takes note of it, and hits somebody else on the head in the same way, and thus starts a cumulative process, so that *that* becomes the accepted way in which you express your anger, always to hit somebody on the head, then I have started something. I have started a tradition, a patterned type of behavior. So far as the psychologist is concerned, it makes no difference how you envisage this sequence histori-

cally; it is always the same kind of process. It is what it was to begin with, spontaneous. So far as individual psychology is concerned, you never get away from the starting point. So far as the culture student is concerned, that type of behavior has to be studied as a pattern, with definite historical sequence, tending in a certain direction.

It means, therefore, that as students of social science, we study not only the reactions of the individual which have social significance, but that we also use the imponderable cultural stimuli themselves of such reactions, which are laid down in the form of patterns, carried on from generation to generation. We never dare lose sight of the fact that the conduct is envisaged historically.

You may say history is bunk, with our friend, Henry Ford, but you dare not lose sight of the fact that your method of envisaging social behavior is that of a series of cross-sections in history. You may be interested only in the mechanics of social activity in the present, but actually you are simply defining one of the cross-sections in the historical current.

I want to say a few words about the conception of drift or direction in this historical stream of patterned activities. It has often been noticed that historical events have a sequential logic. Even if you take so apparently spontaneous and personal a thing as the writing of dramas, you find that there is a certain definite drift that takes place. You see how the Elizabethan drama grew up. It went through the early blood and thunder stage with Kidd and Greene, and then you see how this technique was worked up to the magnificent achievement of Shakespeare, then how certain principles involved became over-elaborated and led to a luxuriance of expression, a lack of vitality, and a decline. That is a short span, but the Elizabethan drama went through a certain gamut of stages.

While we know it is only a figure of speech to say that there was a certain history of this drama which can be defined impersonally, we do feel there is some truth in that way of putting it. It means that if Shakespeare had come a little earlier, he would not have been Shakespeare. Marlowe a little later might have been greater than Shakespeare. We don't envisage these particular types of cultural activity as conditioned entirely by the personalities that carry them. They have to occupy strategic points in the historical stream. We see again that we cannot understand social activity as a series of personal reactions to which the technique of a supposed social psychology has been applied. We have to see

these activities, whether we are explicit about them or not, as historical sequences although we may only envisage one moment in that sequence.

Let us take an entirely different example, the example of language. Our English language has certain peculiarities. You can define them without reference to the idiosyncrasies of a particular person. It is my organs that articulate, my emotionality that colors the articulation, I can't really abstract from my particular reactions and arrive at a notion which is of any particular value psychologically. Nevertheless, I can define my speech in institutional terms so as to make it a concept of value for social science. It is a bit of a crux. How are we going to use any kind of psychology for the understanding of a phenomenon which is depersonalized? Perhaps I had better elaborate, as it seems a bit cryptic.

Suppose I say such a thing as "Get out of here." Well, that has a certain emotional charge, certain peculiarities of articulation of mine. If I wanted to understand the complete psychology of that utterance, I couldn't neglect any of those factors. That is exactly what I don't do. I don't care about my particular emotional charge. I can study my particular reactions, and others like them, until I am blue in the face and know mighty little about the English language as an institution. I can study all the psychology I have a mind to, so far as it is illustrated by this pattern of activity, and know nothing about it, as the result of my laborious studies. That is my conviction. I can be as unpsychological-minded as you like, but if I go about the historical study of English in the right spirit and with the right technique, I can arrive at very valid conclusions as to what the English language is like, what kind of form it has, how it has developed, and what its tendency is in the future. It is a bit of a paradox, but it is true.

Here is the peculiar thing about it all: If I abstract from the purely personal peculiarities of this sentence, this utterance, and have a sort of residuum left involving certain average types of articulation, certain general morphological principles, and so on, I can eventually make statements that seem to envisage some kind of psychology, paradoxically enough.

Here's what I mean. This sentence, "Get out of here," is an example of a million articulations involving certain principles of historical process. If I have the proper documentary evidence, I can set this in relation to millions that have preceded it in the past, and I can show there has been in the course of time a series of complicated changes in the pattern. I can show how certain consonants change, how certain forms change

I can show how this institution that we call the English language, as exemplified in this sentence, was shifting in form. I can show that those changes have a kind of logic of their own and a psychology of their own apparently. There is a certain consistency of change, a certain direction of drift. If I gather all the changes that have taken place in the English language, expressed in general terms, I can show that they are not helter-skelter changes, but that they happened according to principles that can be formulated. I can show, for instance, that there was a tendency for final syllables to be unaccented, and I can show that all the vocalic changes follow certain laws; the tongue tended to move up, say, and affected the set of vowel sounds in certain ways.

It is very much as though we had a person slipping away from some habit he had formed. You know how when you abbreviate a process, through repeated activity, you tend to slur it. Something happens in the deformation of the pattern of activity. I have got away from the person himself in socialized activity, and yet, I am able to show that in the historical changes there is a kind of process which looks superficially like the kind of process that takes place in the individual.

So we have allowed a certain kind of social psychology to slip in by the back door, but it is a metaphorical psychology or unreal kind of social psychology. How can we explain that? Evidently there is some kind of a cumulative process, some principle of selection, according to which certain tendencies to change human activities are allowed unconsciously by society, in so far as it patterns its conduct, and certain others are not allowed. That is, any individual varies the pattern pretty much at random. If his variations are in the direction of certain drifts or tendencies, they will somehow (I can't give the philosophy of it) have a greater potency than if their drift or tendency were in an opposite direction. It can be shown by historical evidence that if an individual pronounces a certain vowel or consonant in a direction opposite to the accumulated drift up to that point, his particular variation will have no value. It will fall by the wayside so far as the historical current is concerned. He may be the King of England — it just doesn't count. But if his pronunciation seems to reaffirm the accumulated drift, it is accepted.

I don't think any of us are powerful enough to quite understand what that means, but the actuality of these drifts, these cumulative processes, cannot be doubted by anyone who has studied history, language, or whatever type of patterned activity he may take up. In so far as the psychologist has never worked out a methodology of cumulative drifts in human behavior, he is not at present of much value in the major

problems of social science. That is the way it seems to me. Therefore, too much must not be expected from psychology at the present time in the clearing up of our particular problems. I think indeed we may have more to offer, through the establishment of historical sequences, to the psychologist than he has to offer to us. I have noticed a great many formulations in configurative psychology which have been familiar in other terms to philologists for generations. It would be interesting to develop that point in a special study.

We have arrived at the conception of a drift in patterns of human conduct that has some kind of psychological value. It can't be the ordinary type. It is a type of disembodied psychology that we have here. Let me jump a bit and take up something different; you will see how it hitches on later.

Suppose I take up such a phenomenon as war. There are two ways of looking at war from a psychological standpoint. I can look upon war as directly expressive of the kind of simple emotional response that war is supposed to be expressive of, call it whatever you like. On the other hand, I can refuse to look upon war in any such way and consider it cold-bloodedly as a patterned institution. The two points of view are rather different. There is a problem here: on the one hand, war does, surely, if we are honest, express, in a highly complicated social stylized form, an emotion of hostility. I don't think we can deny that categorically. You can't altogether conceive of war as a peaceful pursuit that happens to kill certain people. That isn't quite the whole story, in spite of the cynical remarks often made about the nature of war. You have to feel hot and angry to carry on war successfully. Here is a pretty problem, it seems to me, of the relation between the individual and society.

If you look at the actual facts, you discover many individuals who are not warlike. Such an individual does not feel angry about a particular war. He doesn't care a rap who caused it. He doesn't hate his technical enemy. He feels as though he were playing a game of poker or chess. There are such people. A general, one of the prime movers in the conduct of the war, might have a psychology of just that type. If you get hold of that person and study him with your laboratory technique, you don't find out anything about the supposed psychological motivation of war. So far as you can see, what led to his warlike activity was a desire to work out the tactics of strategy, or the desire to get ahead of somebody else who was in a similar position as himself, and he wants to get ahead so as to win a medal, to be proud of the medal. So far

as this individual is concerned, warlike activity has no psychological experience previsited for him at all. It is a design which society has wrought for his delectation. He gives it a psychological meaning, but it is a psychological meaning that isn't supposed to be the same as the kind of psychological significance we believe to be inherent in warlike conduct.

It seems, then, that no matter what your psychological origin may be, or complex of psychological origins, of a particular type of patterned conduct, the pattern itself will linger on by sheer inertia, which is a rather poor term for the accumulated force of social tradition; and entirely different principles of psychology come into play which may even cancel those which originally motivated the nucleus of the pattern of activity. Patterns of activity are continually getting away from their original psychological incitation. There are many kinds of patterned activity which need to be revalidated from time to time in order to have them retain their significance, unless we can give them a new significance by putting a new psychology into them, as it depends on what the pattern is, as to whether revalidation takes place or not.

War can persist out of sheer inertia of the pattern of war, and it does so persist, but it needs, somewhere or other, to have a revalidation in the original terms, psychologically speaking.

Contrast two individuals: one, the general, who perhaps moves the springs of warfare, but has little of the feeling of hatred, and another, a patriot perhaps, who feels bitterly about the aggressor and puts punch into his warlike reactions. For whom has the warlike activity a greater significance? From the standpoint of the original motivation of war, it is for the latter that war means more.

We see, then, that we have two kinds, roughly speaking, of psychological validation for any particular pattern: an individual validation which may not correspond to the original one, and a revalidation in terms of the original one, more or less.

That is badly stated, I believe, but you will see pretty much what I mean. This is a somewhat disturbing point of view because it means that there can't be any general psychology for the patterned conduct which alone we really know. In the back of our minds we know pretty well that any particular type of patterned conduct means different things to different people, but we are constantly forgetting it or pretending to forget it, in order that we may conceive of humanity as banded together in groups that carry on under the influence of communal stimuli. The latter formulation doesn't adequately represent the true state

of affairs. If we could have a true record of the individual psychology of patterned conduct, we would find that it meant different things to different people. Religious conduct means quite different things for different people. We are getting far away, then, from the possibility of applying any kind of social psychology to cultural behavior, because there isn't anything in society to psychologize. We are dealing with the evolution of forms in social science which incidentally receive individual psychological validation. When you so validate, you have your social psychology, or individual psychology, call it what you like.

Now this matter of revalidation in original terms that I spoke of is very important, it seems to me, because it appears that owing to the consistent direction of the drifts of change, there are certain kinds of psychological significance that are more orthodox, as it were, in terms of the patterns themselves than other kinds of validation.

Let me give a simple example. I gave war before; I will give one which is perhaps a little clearer. Let us take religious activity. A man goes to church. He goes through all the motions, sits in the pew, reads his prayers, sings the hymns, but he is thinking of something different — for instance, the game of golf that he is going to play afterwards. He is simply going through certain forms. So far as the psychology of *religion* is concerned, there isn't any. You aren't going to get information of much value out of his mental experience, but from the standpoint of social science, he is a good subject for the study of "religious" *behavior*. We have no right to rule him out.

But there happen to be some individuals who are very fervent, even at this late date. They really *do* believe. They have certain emotions that might appropriately be called religious. They are fervent, address their prayers with conviction, are in a state of ecstasy, so that they are undergoing reactions that are like those that the speculative psychologist has in mind when he deals with the origins of religious conduct. These may be as he determines them, or not; that is another story. The conduct of the second individual is more nearly like the conduct the student has in mind when he speculates psychologically about these origins. You might say that the second type of religious conduct is more "valuable," although the *pattern* of religious behavior as such may be more poorly represented by it.

In other words, we would say that the second individual is "living" the pattern, giving it vitality, and helping to carry on the psychological drift of significance of the pattern. If there were not a great number of individuals like him, the pattern would have to be "revalued" or become

extinct. It would have to lose its vitality, as patterns do, and maybe wait for something of an entirely different nature to take its place.

Here's what I want to point out: that we can say of all individuals who go through the forms of religious conduct that they are acting *as if* they were inspired by the feelings of those who really feel religiously, whether they really are or not. For the moment, we don't care whether they are or not. They are leading a life which, to be understood in "maximum" psychological terms, has to be interpreted as *religious conduct in a psychological sense*, even though it doesn't really illustrate it for a moment. It means that certain people are undergoing types of behavior that *suggest* a psychology that they don't experience. In other words, we can look upon socialized behavior as *symbolic of psychological processes* not illustrated by the individuals themselves.

There is, then, room for a new kind of "social psychology." I think it is a very real study. Psychoanalysts have vaguely got a slant on that kind of social psychology, but poorly in their actual instances. But by looking upon patterns as symbols of real or supposed psychological processes, they have done something of service, something which the anthropologists also have worked out in a crude, elementary way. I think psychologists have a great deal to learn from the social sciences of that kind of validation of readily accepted and maintained symbols.

Now I am going to take another leap in order that you may see what I mean by the term "orientation." We are all familiar with the concept of the "spirit" of a given culture. Of course, we pooh-pooh it in careful scientific work, but we have a hunch that there is something there. We are all familiar with the metaphor of handling a whole society as though it were a kind of individual with a certain mentality. We know it isn't "true," but we know there is some *kind of truth* there. We say, for instance, that there is a certain psychological slant in Russian culture. We can't put our finger on it but we know there is something of real truth involved in phrases of this sort. Let's see what kind of truth it is. I'll say something about French culture, true or not. I'll say French culture is characterized by a spirit of extreme formalism. I see it in all kinds of ways. I see it in the bureaucracy of French government, the over-clarity of human conduct. I see it in the tendencies to over-stylized activity in the graces of life. I see it in their art. I notice that French poetry is very formal. It chooses its words with great meticulousness. To choose a wrong word counts for a more deplorable slip in French than in English. I see it in their music, which is always well-formalized even where it seems "formless"; it is just as stylized, just as patterned, as the older

classical music. The French novel is known to be well constructed even where it is poor in content; such crude formless writers as Dickens and Wells are impossible in French. It was not accidental that the French called Shakespeare a "barbarian."

All these isolated remarks aim to point out that the French genius or spirit has aimed unconsciously to express itself in very definitely stylized form, that it has sacrificed intensity to lucidity. Does that mean that your Frenchman as an individual is possessed of a psychology that necessarily gives rise to that kind of expression? It is too often assumed that he is. But if you deal with actual Frenchmen, flesh-and-blood Frenchmen, you don't find that to be true. You know the Frenchman is just as irrational, just as temperamental as the Englishman; in fact, some people think he is more so because he gesticulates more. Yet we can understand the spirit of lucidity in French culture without reference to some kind of peculiar psychology lurking somewhere or other. The point is, the psychological slant given at some time or other in the general configurations we call French culture by particular individuals became dissociated, acted as a sort of symbol or pattern so that all following have to act *as though* they were inspired by the original motivation, as though they were acting in such or such a psychological sense, whether they temperamentally were or not. They in a sense dissociated themselves: into cultural beings, and into individuals pure and simple. I think it is important to understand that.

Therefore, any particular Frenchman who comes in at a certain time and wishes to make a dent on the patterns of French culture will not succeed unless he somehow falls in line with the general drift of French culture. If he is too individual and acts in a manner which is entirely at variance with the general spirit of French culture, he won't have much influence. He may be a very much less talented individual, but if he gives quite the right turn to the general cultural drift, he might be a potent personality, because culture tends to preserve itself in measurable stable form.

So we can characterize whole cultures psychologically without predicating those particular psychological reactions of the individuals who carry on the culture. That is somewhat uncanny, but I think it is a reasonably correct view to take of society.

The particular application I really had it in mind to make in this whole conception of orientation was the contrast between the introvert and the extravert. Suppose I contrast the Hindu with the Chinese. We know that Hindus differ from each other, and that is likewise true of

the Chinese. There is not the slightest reason to believe that Hindus are extraverted or introverted as a group. There is not the slightest reason to believe the Chinese are extraverted or introverted as a group. Both undoubtedly run the usual gamut of individual variation, such as we run ourselves. I think that it is impossibly, unless one refuses to follow "hunches," to avoid the conviction, after some kind of study, however superficial, that the Hindu culture is relatively introverted and the Chinese culture is relatively extraverted. I don't know how it is possible to avoid it. While that kind of formulation may not seem valuable for particular purposes, I think that it has some value. Let me point out a few of the reasons that lead me to make that statement.

I won't define introvert and extravert. We may as well take these terms for granted. Just take this question: Will the introverted person or extraverted person attach more importance to the documentation of the history of his own people? What is the type of personality that is very particular about the gathering of documents and their evaluation? The extravert, I should say, because he lives in the real world of time and place. If he abstracts from that world, he doesn't exist. The introvert has to be timeless, so to speak. He constructs formulations that have value regardless of time and place. He doesn't need the environment of maximal color.

What is one of the outstanding facts about Hindu culture? The fact that it is hard to find dates in Hindu literature. One of the great problems that historians of Hindu culture have to contend with is the finding of dates. We don't know when the great Hindu epics were written. Why? Because the dating of a document is not a matter of any value to the Hindu. The *Mahabharata* is something that exists in a timeless world. He conceives the sacred writings, the Vedas, as existing in a timeless world. It doesn't occur to him to ask when they were composed. Of course, we have beliefs somewhat similar to these, but nowhere have such formulations gone to such extremes as in India.

The Chinaman is different. He is tremendously interested in the documentation of his own history. He is interested in telling you that in the year 462 A. D. turnips were imported from Turkestan. Trivial facts of that kind are constantly being reported in Chinese history. You can't conceive of a greater contrast than the tone and spirit in which Hindu literature is conducted and that in which Chinese literature is conducted. The Chinese are extraverted on that point, and the Hindus are introverted.

Take another example, poetry. I am purposely taking very random examples, so you may see that they all tend to point the same way. Chinese poetry is very sober. That is why there is a great fad for it now. We try to live in a world of flesh and blood, a world of reality, as contrasted with a world of formulated fancies. That is one of the charms of Chinese poetry. Chinese poetry is interested in friendship more than in love, because friendship is more of a reality perhaps. Chinese poetry is never extravagant. The Chinese poet represents what he has himself experienced. He holds on to the modest things that have meaning to him.

Hindu poetry is exceedingly extravagant. The love poetry of India abounds in far-fetched, and, to us, rather absurd metaphors; that is, the Hindu is content to formalize his emotions and his imagery in this particular realm of activity, perfectly content to look away from the world of experience and live in an inner world of fancy that takes the place of the world of experience.

Let us take another facet of cultural activity, philosophy and religion. What is characteristic of Chinese religion? It is extremely sober. The great religious teacher, Confucius, was really an ethical philosopher. He simply took the maxims of his people and their patterns of religious and ethical conduct and formulated them. He was close to the actual humble life of the people. There is very little in his philosophy that we can't understand today.

What is characteristic of the Hindu in respect to philosophy and religion? It gets clean away from the world of experience. It formulates a whole lot of remote conceptions, puts them into elaborate systems which have little body, but which are held to with a frenzy of adoration by the Hindu.

At this point I want to tell you a funny little anecdote of an experience I had with a Hindu student visiting in the United States. At a scientific meeting I pointed out that there were a great many variations in the pronunciation of consonants of the class *b:p*, a gamut of variations in which we could select various points, and specify a series of consonants pronounced with the lips. Then the contrast of *b* to *p* was seen to be in a sense artificial. Those were merely selected types of articulation. A Hindu was present, an engineer, a practical man. He was very much interested because he had a certain linguistic hobby. He couldn't understand me. He said, "But you don't really mean that there isn't a real *b* and a real *p*, do you? There is a real *b*, only some people pronounce it correctly and some do not." You see, he was relying these

experiences. Isn't it rather interesting? I don't know whether he was a typical Hindu, but isn't it rather interesting that he found it hard to see what I meant by my statement? You'd think he might with his mathematical training have understood; but he couldn't, because on the basis of Hindu culture, he had learned there were certain supernatural letters – consonants – embodied in the Sanskrit language, and there wasn't any question what was *b* and what was *p*. I am sure another friend of mine, a Chinaman, would not make a remark like that. I found he was uninterested in abstractions. I found he was tolerant of anything I could say about his language, whereas I am sure the Hindu wouldn't have been. Those are significant differences, it seems to me, and one might go on multiplying them. There is meaning in the statement that Hindu culture has an introverted slant. There is meaning in the statement that the Chinese culture has an extraverted slant. Our American culture also has an extraverted slant.

I want further to make very emphatically the point that it does not follow from these statements that every Hindu is an introvert, and that every Chinaman is an extravert, but in so far as your Hindu acts in patterned form, he acts as if he were animated more or less by an introverted psychology, whether he is or is not; and the Chinaman acts as if he were actuated by an extraverted psychology. You see that brings up problems of conflict. You can ask yourself the question, can a culture which prevails in a given society, be satisfactory to a natural introvert and a natural extravert? I think it is a real problem. I think that one can say that particular individuals are more at home in certain cultures than in others. I think one can go so far as to say that certain maladjustments, even psychoses, are helped along by the fact that there is a subtle disaccord between the orientation of an individual and the orientation of the culture itself with its psychological potentiality, depersonalized though patterned conduct is. It has a psychological suggestiveness. It is a series of symbols that suggest psychological significance.

In order to indicate more clearly the reality of this point of view, I am going to contrast the culture of the Eskimo with the culture of the Mojave Indians. Eskimo culture I think of as extraverted culture, and Mojave culture I think of as introverted culture. I do not mean that every Eskimo is an extravert. One of the characteristic things about Eskimo culture is its extreme sobriety. They have to use every help the environment gives them. Their myths are hero tales rather than myths. There is very little that is incredible in Eskimo mythology. There is a certain air about them of being at home in the real world. The Eskimo

has evolved a technology that is superbly adapted to his environment. His floats, sleds, tents, everything that he has constructed has a maximum value for his preservation in a forbidding environment: it is almost as though he took an inventory of the environment and studied its possibilities. He has gradually become adapted to the environment.

The Indians directly to the south you find are uncomfortable in the same environment; they shiver, where the Eskimo almost roasts. They have a very much harder time of it. It probably means that they are not so well adapted to the environment, but it also means that they have not developed the extreme extraversion the Eskimo has. They have values, orientations in their values, that are not of so much service to them in their forbidding environment. Presumably they were originally more at home in an environment in which that orientation was not so inimical, and later moved on into a less friendly environment.

Take such a thing now as the habits of life of the Eskimo, in villages. You find the Eskimo doesn't plague himself with imponderable values. A man may take residence in any village. His forms of marriage are not very well fixed. You have a very slight development of polygamy, a little polyandry, but, on the whole, monogamy. Their whole spirit is one of casual adaptation, an extraverted manner of looking at things. He thinks, "Oh, wait till I get there; then I'll see what is best to be done." The Eskimo culture has the sort of spirit as though in its evolution people had acted in accordance with that formula, not that they did, but that this is the slant of Eskimo culture. One of the striking things about Eskimo culture is the colorfulness of it. Eskimo art is far from despicable. The patterning of Eskimo clothing is carefully worked out. There is a certain buoyance, a certain jubilant spirit, in Eskimo culture that is unmistakable, as though these people were very much at home in the world about them, and wanted to have the best of themselves exteriorized in what they produced. I realize that I am speaking in rather vague terms, but I want this to be rather a hint than a demonstration.

Mojave culture is a pretty drab-looking thing. There is no superb development of basketry. The material arts are not well advanced. It is very hard to say what those people are doing. You get the idea that they are a sorry lot, but those who have studied the culture of the Mojave Indians know they have an ideology very much more complex than that of the Eskimo. Their values are not so well exteriorized. They have more remote, more indirect, formulations of patterns of conduct

than those you find among the Eskimo. Their reality is more subjectively colored than the reality of the Eskimo.

I will give you one very striking type of conduct which I think you will admit is as introverted as the Hindu's contempt for dates, and it is all the more striking because we have so many preconceived notions about primitive mentality. How does the mythology of the Mojave contrast with the mythology of the Eskimo, which deals with a quasi-real world and which is carried on by the tradition of the group?

You have a theory among the Mojave of an individually constructed mythology. If you want to find out about the creation of the world, how do you do it? You are not supposed to listen to what somebody else says about it, or has said about it. You are supposed to find out from your inner consciousness because your inner consciousness is the court of last appeal. That is what the introvert does. The introvert will tell you that you must first construct a theory and then see if it fits. That is what the Mojave Indian does. He does nothing less than go into a dream state, because he thinks that dreams are more real than waking realities. In his dream, he is transported back to the creation of the world. As an individual, then, brought back in this dream to the origin of things, he sees certain things happen. He sees how certain supernatural beings act and how they ascend a fabulous mountain. He wakes from the trance-like condition and composes a long chant in which he details these events, and he says, "I saw these things. This is the truth."

He didn't invent this myth. The same myth others have told before him. He has dreamed himself into the same kind of incidents that he has heard others tell. It is as though you had two versions of the gospel of St. Matthew, or as if the life of Christ as given by St. Matthew were remodeled in the gospel of St. Luke. He has that kind of feeling about it: "I was there, I saw it. Maybe my sight is keener and therefore I am more correct."

These are the materials of truth for the Mojave Indian. That is a queer mythology, highly introverted. I could go on giving other details. It is *as though* the individuals were of introverted types, but if you were to go and take them to the laboratory and apply tests for introversion and extraversion, you would not find they are more or less introverted or extraverted than anybody else, but in so far as they were carrying out patterns, they fell into their cultural orientation.

We have a very much more difficult problem in this domain of social psychology than most of us have been aware of. How best to solve it, I prefer to leave to cultural students and psychologists. I don't think

we are ripe for these problems at present, but if I have succeeded in making their reality somewhat clearer by giving you a "hunch" there may be a psychological orientation without any correlated peculiarities of psychology in the individual, I will have done all I wish to do. It bears on the whole question of the supposed mentality of races. You can't conclude anything from their patterned conduct, for reasons which are obvious in what I have said. It doesn't follow that because we are extraverted in conduct today for the most part, we are as individuals extravert or introvert. That remains to be discovered. I submit, further, for each individual this point of view makes a little more significant the whole psychology of conflict both in individuals and in society and as between individuals and society. Thus very much of what we have to say about neuroses and psychoses is implicitly involved with cultural conceptions of the type I am trying to advance. I find some psychoanalysts have more or less stumbled, in a rather feeble way, on concepts of this type. Burrow puts forward notions that are familiar, but in peculiar terms. So one sees a kind of convergence of hunches along the line I have been pointing out to you. Perhaps I haven't put these individual hunches at all clearly, but I hope the discussion that follows will correct me where I need to be corrected.

I may say this whole matter bears on the problems of compensation that many psychologists are interested in. If you are brought up in a culture that has an introverted slant, and you are rather extraverted, you will have to compensate in the introverted direction. That is what compensation means. You have to pretend to be extraverted if you are living in an extraverted culture and are natively an introvert. In abstract formulations of all kinds, you have to tie up somehow with the technological world we are living in and what you have to do is make applications of your particular kind of ideology. But if you are honest, you find you are more interested in the subjective formulations than you are in the applications. That is your way of compensating, ironing out the conflict of orientations.

It means, then, you can't tell whether a person is extraverted or introverted by a simple study of overt behavior. That is where many make drastic mistakes. If your whole culture is extraverted, it has a bias. Any individual has to be very extraverted in order to count as extraverted. Kinds of compensations that are habitual will need to be of different types in different individuals. I have sometimes arrived at conclusions that are different than those overtly suggested. I am thinking of a certain individual who would generally be considered an introvert. I am

convinced he is an extravert. He is playing up to an introverted society, to an introverted orientation familiar to him in childhood. His compensations are of a kind that need a certain kind of cultural knowledge to understand. If you carry these ideas to a logical conclusion, you will see, alarmingly enough, that psychology, psychiatry, all practical things we are interested in as to personality, are very much more involved with the problems of social science than we had thought.

Perhaps we social scientists who are always asking psychologists to aid us can be of assistance to them in suggesting reformulations of psychological problems. I don't think it is too supercilious to suggest that the borrowing need not be all on one side.

* * *

Following Sapir's presentation, the meeting was opened for discussion. Besides Sapir, participants in the discussion were:

G. V. Hamilton (practicing psychiatrist, New York City)

Truman L. Kelley (Professor of Education and Psychology, Stanford University)

G. Elton B. Mayo (industrial psychologist; Associate Professor of Industrial Research, Graduate School of Business Administration, Harvard University)

Harold G. Moulton (economist; Director of the Institute of Economics, Washington, D. C., and chair of the session)

Leonard Outhwaite (Berkeley-trained anthropologist, staff member of the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial)

Frederic L. Wells (psychologist; chief of the Psychology Laboratory, Boston Psychopathic Hospital)

Robert S. Woodworth (Professor of Psychology, Columbia University)

Clarence S. Yoakum (psychologist; Professor of Personnel Management and Director of the Bureau of University Research, University of Michigan)

The discussion proceeded as follows:

YOAKUM. — Would you take for the moment the interest of the anthropologist in skulls and bones and contrast it with his interest in cultures?

SAPIR. — The anthropologist is interested in both. It is a verbalism that we use the term anthropology for both. We started out with the idea in evolution that primitive man was somehow at the beginning of things — [that] we can understand the beginnings of both races and institutions by studying primitive man. The term anthropology is a bad one, in my personal opinion. There is no reason why physical anthropology should be used. I think it would be better if we had a general term for the study of the form of society, whether advanced or primitive, and subdivided into primitive sociology and advanced sociology, and allowed physical anthropology to go off by itself.

YOAKUM. — Am I correct in assuming that you believe that variability of the individuals is practically infinite?

SAPIR — I don't know what infinite means. You have continuous variation but I don't know whether you would call it infinite.

YOAKUM. — If it happened to be finite, you might examine a sufficient number of individuals and so formulate that examination that we could generalize and make something in the form of a proposition. Would that proposition arrived at in such a way ever by any chance conform to some cultural plane?

SAPIR — Could you give me an example of the sort of thing you have in mind?

YOAKUM. — The conception of the introvert which we think we can arrive at by examination of a series of individuals. We think we can make certain generalizations by that process. As I understand, it is not arrived at by that process but in a different way. That is, I can't take Jones in the laboratory and examine him and then take Smith in, [and] so on through the series, and arrive at the conclusion of who is an introvert. Yet I believe we think we have done that.

SAPIR. — I think we might show he was on the whole of the introverted type. I think theories could be done but I think it is very difficult to do. I think, as a matter of fact, one's judgement as to whether one is introvert or extravert has to look away from what seem to be the best indications of that.

Suppose I were a personality student. My idea would be this. I wanted to know whether Jones was an introvert. I would eliminate those indications that led in that direction. I would have to get at the unconscious leakage of his orientation, not so heavily stylized, to know what he is. It might be less significant, colorful reactions which are indicative of it. Where your activity is definitely stylized and censored, it has no value for the study of personality.

When you want to get at the individual, you have to take out what is of least importance in the conventional sense. What is of maximum importance is a mask.

WELLS. — Mr. Yoakum, are you alluding to such lists of traits as those gotten up by Freud? I think one can in most cases agree those represent introvert and extravert patterns in so far as those terms can be satisfactorily defined, but whether those actions are fundamental or compensatory in the individual, I don't know. I think Dr. Sapir made that point. We may say this individual acting in these ways shows superficially the characteristics of an introvert. Whether with slightly different environmental and genetic setting he would have shown those characteristics is another matter.

YOAKUM — Take the case cited by Dr. Sapir of the two different men in church, that is a case in which we shall never know whether Smith is the one going through the form or with the proper spirit.

WELLS — We can infer from other factors in their lives.

YOAKUM — I don't know how we can use the lives.

SAPIR — Surely we find out something about the subjective outcomes by direct inquiry. We make certain inferences from more or less self-revealing gestures. You intuitively know when a person is telling you a lie although what he says is rational and taken at face value.

YOAKUM. — What I am interested in, in those two cases, there must be something in their behavior to indicate the difference, one having the spirit and the other not.

SAPIR. — One never behaves according to behavior. I gave you an example of the expression, "Get out of here." There are a great many things about that individually characteristic of myself. Here is the point (and psychologists ignore it): I have to know what is the formalized cultural pattern of that reaction before I can say anything about what is individual reaction.

Let me give you an example: How do you know that the fact that I accented the word "out" a little more heavily is significant? You know it because you know that as a matter of stylized activity, the syllable "out" has a slight accent as compared with the preceding syllable and the two following. The plus is indicative of certain individual reaction[s]. In some unknown language you wouldn't at all know from experience in the laboratory whether one were emotional or not. He might be jocose. You couldn't tell until you knew what the social background was, until you could relate individual expression to the cultural pattern.

Take an interrogation like, "Isn't that so?" We know how to interpret that in emotional terms, terms of attitude, because we have certain habits. We have a sort of social form which allows us to recognize that, and a certain plus of individual significance. Suppose we had a language that stylized these intonational differences; such a statement as "Isn't that so?" might mean, "I took a walk yesterday." You have no right to assume that you understand the individual connotation of such a reaction until you see what immense significance that has if you carry it to its logical conclusion, in tests of people whose cultural activities we are not familiar with.

We often say Frenchmen or Italians are very emotional. It may be they cannot be a member of their community until they act as if they were very much excited. Your psychological experiments aren't worth anything until you have a cultural gauge.

HAMILTON. — I was thinking you might facilitate in clarifying this discussion by agreeing on what you mean by extravert and introvert. It seems to me the situation is a little simpler than it sounds when we consider, I believe, that we say of a person whose preponderance of interest is in direct experience rather than external provocatives, he is an introvert. On the other hand if we may say of a person his preponderance of interest is in the external provocatives rather than in direct experience, then we may call him an extravert. I think if you take that perhaps rather acceptable definition of extravert and introvert, a good deal of difficulty in determining to what extent behavior is following some traditional behavior which may have subjective characteristics of introversional behavior, the difficulty in allowing that won't be so great.

SAPIR. — I think it is a matter that needs to be stressed, a point of view a little unfamiliar. It is not often allowed for. I think it is too often assumed an individual, in reacting, illustrates, so to speak, his native trends. I think it is not enough envisaged to what extent that becomes an important differential, because we are in the habit of comparing the reactions of people as such. You have to apply superficial corrections.

Hamilton then asked the clinicians Mayo and Wells to comment on whether they encountered difficulties in assessing introversion and extraversion in relation to patterned behavior. Both Mayo and Wells indicated that they did not find the terms introvert and extravert could apply in the same ways to clinical settings and to society at large. The sense of the terms as used tonight did not seem to be of value for the clinic.

HAMILTON. — I am not personal in what I am going to say to Dr Sapir, but I am thinking of anthropologists in general: What training have anthropologists to qualify them to sort people out as extraverts and introverts? Of what value are the concepts extravert and introvert to them? ...

SAPIR. — The important thing to bear in mind is that this contrast was merely an illustration. It may be this particular illustration that I took of the psychological slant, as I call it, was a poor one. One might show that there was more emotion latent, as it were, in the pattern of conduct. The onus of proof rests with those who invented the terminology, the psychologists themselves. The anthropologists like to use the terms for what they are worth. If psychoanalysts see they are not of much value, they will have to discard them.

OUTHWAITE. — It seems to me it is just possible a rather interesting point is getting by ... that is, this point about significant behavior, perhaps particularly psychoneurotic behavior or aberrant behavior of one form or other in connection with the social context or background of the individual who manifests it. ...

As an example, Outhwaite raised the problem of psychiatric assessment in "the case of the American negro." Given the unequal availability of hospitalization in North and South, the cultural differences between regions, and the cultural differences between negro and white, psychiatric assessments would be subject to considerable error.

SAPIR. — We know our own culture; we are not conscious of it, however, and that is where the differential error comes in. I wanted to give an example bearing that out. We find among the Eskimo the shaman or medicine man acts as if he were a hysteric. He goes through all the motions of hysteria, and perhaps he is, I don't know, I am not a psychiatrist. Their pattern of medicine-man activity demands hysterical conduct. He autosuggests hysteria complex. I am not in a position to disentangle what happens. The diagnosis of that hysteria is not the same as that of hysteria among ourselves, because the cultural background is notably different in the two cases.

I will give you another example, even more melodramatic, that is, that homosexuality has been patterned as the social type of activity among certain people. Sometimes the medicine-men are recruited from that group. It isn't necessary to suppose that you are really dealing with types of personality that lead to that kind of behavior naturally. You have a certain propulsion in the very patterns of the groups. I think they are drastic. My point is, you have no right to treat the psychopathology in those settings in exactly the same way as you would in our own setting.

That has in it quite definitely a criticism of a great deal of psychoanalysis, that is, the attempt to interpret symbols from cultures.

Chairman Moulton called on the psychologists Woodworth and Kelley to comment. Both indicated substantial agreement with Sapir. Kelley remarked, "It seems to me the most important point of view Mr. Sapir has expressed is the idea that the expression of a person might be attributed to a culture situation and not to an original difference in his makeup." As an example, he mentioned a study of Chinese and Japanese children born in California. The study showed, he suggested, that superior mathematical ability among the Japanese, and superior verbal ability among the Chinese, were not attributable to cultural differences as they might have been had the children been studied in China and Japan.

Sapir questioned the study and suggested that "at that time they would be heavily conditioned by cultural stimuli." Kelley thought "those encouragements are solely limited to the school."

SAPIR. — Verbalism is so highly derivative, it is a cultural concept in itself. I don't see how you could have [an] original difference in concept that involves the concept. You would have to reduce it to something simpler, on a lower level. ... Some anthropologists will say they have a hunch there may be emotional differences, but differences of any such derived or secondary type as you speak of, would be looked on with general skepticism. You may be right.

Woodworth and Sapir then discussed possible racial differences in cognitive abilities. Sapir pointed out the difficulty of devising tests that would reveal differences in inherent ability rather than cultural differences. Referring to experiments made by Bruner at the World's Fair at St. Louis, he noted:

SAPIR. — Experiments are made as to higher faculties, and there is often the difficulty of technique in getting the kind of stimulus to reach the native.

WELLS. — Porteus had some material in which they compared some white and aboriginal children. It is my impression that the children were equal during the earlier years, and that there was considerable disparity later.

SAPIR. — Suppose our culture is the kind of culture that demands certain types of relations, wouldn't that be a selective factor?

WOODWORTH. — It looks as if it would be. Putting forms in little holes, that is a thing that would be uniform in different cultures.

SAPIR. — Take one of the performance tests: You have a certain kind of machine, a simple thing, with a part missing, and you are supposed to point out what part is missing. To recognize the missing part is to know the cultural use of the thing.

WOODWORTH. — We can't get the Indians to come and test us, so we get the anthropologists to do the next best thing to test us.

SAPIR. — I am very much interested in this problem: Would you think it probable that an Indian woman who spoke English imperfectly but her own language well, would or could by the intuitivity of suggestion, when you work with her, get a hunch in a short time of facts in grammatical structure, abstract from particular cases, and make more or less imaginary forms which would be true, or show a recognition of formal relations pure and simple?

WOODWORTH. — Yes.

SAPIR. — That is what actually happened.

WOODWORTH. — They will take a new word and put it in the right form, such forms as they have.

SAPIR. — That isn't what I mean. I am speaking of the more explicit recognition of formal relationships: Suppose for instance I put a series of words in certain conventional form, according to my grammatical idea, first, second and third person, singular and plural, as we are taught. There is no reason why the Indian should formalize, but if you have done that to any extent with an Indian, he will, without suggestion sometimes, comply, showing he acquires the ability to exceed his own language in point of view.

WOODWORTH. — No psychologist would expect the Indian would be deprived of any of the abilities that the white man has, but to those who believe the Indian to be inferior, there would be a small degree of doubt.

SAPIR. — I don't believe we know very much about these racial differences anyway.

The transcript records nothing further, except that the meeting adjourned at ten o'clock.

Editorial Note

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Anthropology and Sociology (1927)

Editorial Introduction

Sapir's increasing stature in interdisciplinary social science was illustrated by his invitation in 1927 to contribute to *The Social Sciences and Their Interrelations*, a volume on the social science disciplines and their potential collaborations. The senior editor, William Fielding Ogburn, had just joined Sapir in the Department of Sociology and Anthropology at the University of Chicago. The co-editor was anthropologist Alexander Goldenweiser, like Sapir a former student of Boas. The volume's aim was to orient social scientists toward the range of available methods and theoretical problems other disciplines might offer their own, but which no single individual could possibly explore for each of the relevant disciplinary combinations.

Anthropology, the editors felt, had remained outside the emerging social science framework because it lacked syntheses to communicate its perspective to colleagues in other disciplines. Sapir was their choice to remedy this unfortunate state of affairs. He was to write on the relationship between anthropology and sociology.

In addition to sociology, anthropology was also discussed in relation to economics, history, law (by Robert Lowie), political science, psychology (by Goldenweiser), religion and statistics (by Boas, who consistently taught this subject to would-be professional anthropologists at Columbia). There were five papers linking economics with various disciplines, five on history (including a paper by Wilson Wallis on history and psychology), three on political science, and seven on sociology (including Ogburn's own piece on statistics, his specialization). Four papers discussed social sciences in relation to more distant fields: biology (Frank Hankins), education (William Kilpatrick), the natural sciences (Morris R. Cohen), and philosophy (William P. Montague).

In their introduction, Goldenweiser and Ogburn lamented the isolation resulting from the increased specialization of the social sciences, such that their "common philosophical matrix" could no longer be taken for granted (1927: 3). An urgent need for practical applications, however, argued for dissolving arbitrary boundaries of theory and

method. The editors called for a conception of social evolution independent of biology, and for the integration of psychology with the social sciences. With these points Sapir would doubtless have agreed; their lyrical defense of the need for statistics would, however, have failed to inspire him.

Sociology was the most prestigious of the social sciences at this time, particularly at Chicago, and Sapir's topic allowed him a crucial forum for his own message, with the implicit understanding that it would be representative of anthropology. Many anthropological colleagues would not have recognized themselves here, however.

Sapir argued that although the proper subject matter of anthropology was "primitive sociology," this subject matter could not be interpreted in social evolutionary terms. The new anthropology, in contrast, would lead to "insight into the essential patterns and mechanisms of social behavior" (1927: 336). This insight into *society* might be supplemented by historical reconstruction of *culture*. Such historical work, however, would have to proceed ethnographically, as "strictly localized social history," involving the gradual diffusion of cultural patterns (not, he emphasized, the distribution of unrelated elements). The psychological dimensions of these patterns were not accessible to individual awareness within a culture. This concept of the "basic and largely unconscious concepts or images that underlie social forms" (1927: 238) was developed more elaborately in the paper for the symposium on the unconscious (also 1927; this volume). In short, after considering society, culture, and individual psychology, Sapir defined culture in cognitive terms, as a realm of concepts and symbolic forms.

Sapir's theoretical vision distinguished social pattern, cultural function (an analyst's construct), and an "associated mental attitude" deriving from individual psychology. These were independent variables, whose investigation promised "a social philosophy of values and transfers," the latter including culture change (1927: 323). Much of the imagery in which he described this programmatic agenda was drawn from psychiatry, including the idea of emotional transfer. Modern psychology, he suggested, studied "the *projection* of formal or rhythmic *configurations* of the psyche and ... the concrete *symbolism* of values and social relations" (1927: 343; emphasis ours). Because such factors were obscured in complex modern society by conscious rationalizations, the anthropological cross-cultural perspective would rescue the psychologist and the traditional sociologist from their inability to take an analyst's stance; that stance required an outsider's perspective.

Anthropology, Sapir concluded, might be defined as "the social psychology of the symbol" (1927: 345). Historical explanations of ethnographic data from so-called primitive societies, characteristic of American anthropology up until that time, would give way to a new vision of integration at the formal or symbolic level. Sapir did not acknowledge how far he had come from the particularist ethnography of his own training or how few fellow anthropologists, in 1927, would have shared his enthusiastic revisionism.

* * *

Anthropology and Sociology

Primitive Society: the Evolutionary Bias

Just as unlettered and primitive peoples have an economic basis of life that, however simple in its operation, is strictly comparable to the economic machinery that so largely orders the life of a modern civilized society; and just as they have attained to a definite system of religious beliefs and practices, to traditionally conserved modes of artistic expression, to the adequate communication of thought and feeling in terms of linguistic symbols, so also they appear everywhere as rather clearly articulated into various types of social grouping. No human assemblage living a life in common has ever been discovered that does not possess some form of social organization. Nowhere do we find a horde in which the relations between its individuals is completely anarchic.

The sexual promiscuity, for instance, that was such a favorite topic of discussion in the speculative writings of the earlier anthropologists seems to be confined to their books. Among no primitive people that has been adequately studied and that conforms to its own traditional patterns of conduct is there to be found such a thing as an unregulated sexual commerce. The "license" that has been so often reported is either condemned by the group itself as a transgression, as is the case on our own level, or is no license at all, but, as among the Todas of India and a great many Australian tribes that are organized into marriage classes, is an institutionally fixed mode of behavior that flows naturally from the division of the group into smaller units between only certain ones of which are marital relations allowed. Hence "group marriage," a none too frequent phenomenon at best, is nowhere an index of social anar-

chy. On the contrary, it is but a specialized example of the fixity of certain traditional modes of social classification and is psychologically not at all akin to the promiscuity of theory or of the underground life of civilized societies.

If it be objected that intermarrying sub-groups do, as a matter of [98] fact, argue a certain social anarchy because they disregard the natural distinctiveness of the individual, we need but point out that there are many other intercrossing modes of social classification, the net result of which is to carve out for the biological individual a social individuality while securing him a varied social participation. Not all the members of the same marriage class, for instance, need have the same totemic affiliations; nor need their kinship relations, real or supposed, toward the other members of the tribe be quite the same; nor need they, whether as hunters or as votaries in ancestral cults, have the same territorial associations; nor need their social ranking, based perhaps on age and on generally recognized ability, be at all the same; the mere difference of sex, moreover, has important social consequences, such as economic specialization, general inferiority of social status of the women, and female exclusion from certain ceremonial activities. The details vary, naturally, from tribe to tribe and from one geographical province to another.

All this is merely to indicate that a large and an important share of anthropological study must concern itself with primitive types of social organization. There is such a thing as primitive sociology, and the sociologist who desires a proper perspective for the understanding of social relations in our own life cannot well afford to ignore the primitive data. This is well understood by most sociologists, but what is not always so clearly understood is that we have not the right to consider primitive society as simply a bundle of suggestions for an inferred social prehistory of our own culture. Under the powerful aegis of the biological doctrine of evolution the earlier, classical anthropologists tacitly assumed that such characteristic features of primitive life as totemism or matrilineal kinship [99] groups or group marriage might be assigned definite places in the gradual evolution of the society that we know today.

There is no direct historical evidence, for instance, that the early Teutonic tribes which give us the conventionally assumed starting point for the Anglo-Saxon civilization had ever passed through a stage of group marriage, nor is the evidence for a totemistic period in the least convincing, nor can we honestly say that we are driven to infer an older organ-

ization into matrilineal clans for these peoples. Yet so convinced were some of the most brilliant of the earlier anthropologists that just such social phenomena could be inferred on comparative evidence for the cruder peoples as a whole, and so clear was it to them that a parallel evolutionary sequence of social usages might be assumed for all mankind, that they did not hesitate to ascribe to the prehistoric period of Anglo-Saxon culture customs and social classifications that were familiar to them from aboriginal Australia or Africa or North America. They were in the habit of looking for "survivals" of primitive conditions in the more advanced levels, and they were rarely unsuccessful in finding them.

Critique of Classical Evolution

The more critical schools of anthropology that followed spent a great deal of time and effort in either weakening or demolishing the ingenious speculative sequences that their predecessors had constructed. It gradually appeared that the doctrine of social stages could not be made to fit the facts laboriously gathered by anthropological research. One of the favorite dogmas of the evolutionary anthropologists was the great antiquity of the sib (clan) or corporate kinship group. The earliest form of this type of organization was believed to be based on a matrilineal mode of reckoning descent. Now while it is true that a large number of fairly primitive tribes are organized into matrilineal sibs, such as many of the tribes of Australia, it proved to be equally true that other tribes no whit their superior in general cultural advance counted clan (gens) descent in the paternal line.

Thus, if we consider the distribution of sib institutions in aboriginal North America, it is not in the least obvious that the buffalo-hunting Omaha of the American Plains, organized into patrilineal sibs (*gentes*), were culturally superior to, or represented a more evolved type of social organization than, say, the Haida or Tlingit or Tsimshian of the west coast of British Columbia and southern [100] Alaska, who possessed an exceedingly complex system of caste and privilege, had developed a very original and intricate art that was far beyond the modest advances made by any of the tribes of the Plains, and lived as fishermen in definitely localized villages, yet whose sibs (clans) were of the matrilineal type. Other American evidence could easily be adduced to prove that on the whole the matrilineally organized tribes represented a later period of

cultural development than the patrilineal ones, whatever might be the facts in aboriginal Australia or Melanesia or other quarters of the primitive world. It was remarkable, for instance, that the confederated Iroquois tribes and the town-dwelling Creeks of the Gulf region and many of the Pueblos (for example, Zuni and Hopi) of the Southwest, all three agricultural and all three obviously less primitive in mode of life and in social polity than our Omaha hunters, were classical examples of societies based on the matrilineal clan. Criticism could go farther and show that the most primitive North American tribes, like the Eskimo, the Athabaskan tribes of the Mackenzie Valley and the interior of Alaska, and the acorn-eating peoples of California, were not organized into sibs at all, whether of the matrilineal or the patrilineal type.

Countless other examples might be enumerated, all tending to show that it was vain to set up unilinear schemes of social evolution, that supposedly typical forms of archaic society had probably never developed in certain parts of the globe at all, and that in any event the sequence of forms need not everywhere have been in the same sense. The older schematic evolution thus relapsed into the proverbial chaos of history. It became ever clearer that the culture of man was an exceedingly plastic process and that he had developed markedly distinct types of social organization in different parts of the world as well as interestingly convergent forms that could not, however, be explained by any formula of evolutionary theory.

At first blush critical anthropology seems to have demolished the usefulness of its own data for a broader sociology. If anthropology could not give the sociologist a clear perspective into social origins and the remoter social developments that were consummated before the dawn of history, of what serious consequence was its subject-matter for a general theory of society? Of what particular importance was it to study such social oddities, charming or picturesque though they might be, as the clan totemism or the clan exogamy of [101] Australian blacks or American redskins? It is true that anthropology can no longer claim to give us a simple scaffolding for the building of the social history of man, but it does not follow that its data are a rubbish heap of oddments. It may be and probably is true that anthropology has more to tell us than ever before of the nature of man's social behavior; but we must first learn not to expect its teachings to satisfy any such arbitrary demands as were first made of it.

The primary error of the classical school of anthropology was (and of much anthropological theory still is) to look upon primitive man as

a sort of prodromal type of cultured humanity. Thus, there was an irresistible tendency to see his significance not in terms of unfolding culture, with endless possibilities for intricate development along specialized lines, not in terms of place and of environing circumstance, but always in terms of inferred and necessarily distorted time. The present anthropological outlook is broader and far less formalized. What the sociologist may hope to get from the materials of social anthropology is not predigested history, or rather the pseudo-history that called itself social evolution, but insight into the essential patterns and mechanisms of social behavior. This means, among other things, that we are to be at least as much interested in the many points of accord between primitive and sophisticated types of social organization as in their sensational differences.

The Family as Primary Social Unit

We can perhaps best illustrate the changing point of view by a brief reference to the family. The earlier anthropologists were greatly impressed by the importance and the stability of the family in modern life. On the principle that everything that is true of civilized society must have evolved from something very different or even opposed in primitive society, the theory was formulated that the family as we understand it today was late to arrive in the history of man, that the most primitive peoples of today have but a weak sense of the reality of the family, and that the precursor of this social institution was the more inclusive sib (clan). Thus the family appeared as a gradually evolved and somewhat idealized substitute of, or transfer from, a more cumbersome and tyrannically bound group of kinsfolk.

A more careful study of the facts seems to indicate that the family [102] is a well-nigh universal social unit, that it is the nuclear type of social organization *par excellence*. So far from a study of clans, gentes, and other types of enlarged kinship group giving us the clue to the genesis of the family, the exact opposite is true. The family, with its maternal and paternal ties and its carefully elaborated kinship relations and kinship terminology, is the one social pattern into which man has ever been born. It is the pattern that is most likely to serve as the nucleus for, or as model of, other social units. We can, then, understand the development of sib and kindred institutions as proliferations of the universal family image. The terminology of clan affiliation or non-affili-

ation is simply an extension of the terminology of specific familial and extra-familial relationships. The modern family represents the persistence of an old social pattern, not the emergence of a new one. Clan and gentile organizations blossomed here and there on a stem that is still living. What is distinctive of practically all primitive societies is not the clan or gens or moiety as such, but the tremendous emphasis on the principle of kinship. One of the indirect consequences of this emphasis may be the gradual overshadowing, for a certain period, of the family by one or more of its derivatives.

Diffusion and Inferred History

Such an example as this illustrates the value of anthropological data for the fixing of formal perspectives in social phenomena. Meanwhile, if anthropology no longer indulges in the grand panorama of generalized prehistory, it has by no means given up all attempts at reconstructing the history of primitive societies. On the contrary, there is more inferential history being built out of the descriptive data of primitive life than ever before; but it is not a pan-human history, finely contemptuous of geography and local circumstance. Social institutions are no longer being studied by ethnologists as generalized phenomena in an ideal scheme, with the specific local details set down as incidental avatars of the spirit. The present tendency among students of primitive society is to work out the details of any given institution or social practice for a selected spot, then to study its geographical distribution or, if it is a composite of various elements, the distribution of each of these elements, and gradually to work out by inferences of one kind and another a bit of strictly localized social history. The greatest importance is attached to the discovery of continuities in these distributions, [103] which are felt to be most intelligibly explained by the gradual diffusion of a given social feature from one starting point.

Today we are not satisfied, for instance, to note the existence of maternal clans among the Haida, of Queen Charlotte Islands, and to compare them, say, with the maternal clans of the Zunī and Hopi in the Southwest. Nothing can be done with these isolated facts. Should it appear that the clans of the two areas are strikingly similar in the details of their structure and functioning and that the areas are connected by a continuous series of intermediate tribes possessing maternal clans, there would be good reason to believe that the Haida and Zunī-Hopi

organizations are derivatives of a single historical process. But this is not the case. The clan organizations are very different and the clan areas are separated by a vast territory occupied by clanless tribes. The American ethnologist concludes that the general similarity in the social structures of the separated areas is not due to a common history but to a formal convergence; he has no notion that the antecedents of clan development were necessarily the same in the two cases. On the other hand, the Haida clan system is strikingly similar in structure, type of localization, totemic associations, privileges, and functions to the clan systems of a large number of neighboring tribes (Tlingit, Nass River, Tsimshian, Bella Bella, Kitamat), so that one is irresistibly led to believe that the social system arose only once in this area and that it was gradually assimilated by peoples to whom it was originally foreign.

Analogous cases of the diffusion of social features over large and continuous but strictly limited areas can be cited without end (for example, Australian maternal clans; Australian marriage classes; men's clubs in Melanesia; age societies in the North American Plains; caste institutions in India), and in nearly all of these cases one may legitimately infer that their spread is owing chiefly to the imitation of a pattern that was restricted in the first place to a very small area.

The Reality of Parallel Social Developments

The recent tendency has been to emphasize diffusion and historical inferences from the facts of diffusion at the expense of convergences in social structure, certain extremists even going so far as to deny the possibility of the latter. It is important for students of the structural variations and the history of society to realize the [104] important part that the borrowing of social patterns has played at all times and on all levels of culture; but the reality and the significance of formal parallels should never be lost sight of. At present anthropologists are timid about the intensive, non-historical study of typical social forms. The "evolutionary" fallacies are still fresh in their minds, and the danger of falling into any one of a variety of facile "psychological" modes of interpretation is too obvious. But anthropology cannot long continue to ignore such stupendous facts as the independent development of sibs in different parts of the world, the widespread tendency toward the rise of religious or ceremonial societies, the rise of occupational castes, the attachment of differentiating symbols to social units, and a host of oth-

ers. Such classes of social phenomena are too persistent to be without deep significance. It is fair to surmise that in the long run it is from their consideration that the sociologist will have the most to learn.

Few anthropologists have probed deeply into these problems. Hasty correlations between various types of social phenomena have been made in plenty, such as Rivers's brilliant and unconvincing attempt to derive systems of kinship terminology from supposedly fundamental forms of social organization; but the true unraveling of the basic and largely unconscious concepts or images that underlie social forms has hardly been begun. Hence the anthropologist is in the curious position of dealing with impressive masses of material and with a great number of striking homologies, not necessarily due to historical contact, that he is quite certain have far-reaching significance, but the nature of whose significance he is not prepared to state. Interpretative anthropology is under a cloud, but the data of primitive society need interpretation none the less. The historical explanations now in vogue, often exceedingly dubious at best, are little more than a clearing of the ground toward a social interpretation; they are not the interpretation itself. We can only glance at a few of those formal convergences or underlying tendencies in primitive social organization which we believe to be of common interest to anthropology, to sociology, and to a social psychology of form which has hardly been more than adumbrated.

The Kinship "Image"

It has frequently been noted that the kinship principle tends to take precedence in primitive life over other principles of social classification. [105] A good example of this is afforded by the West Coast tribes of Canada. Here the integrity of the local group, the village, with a recognized head chief, is pretty solidly established. Nevertheless we are constantly hearing in the legends of a particular family or clan, if feeling itself aggrieved for one reason or another, moving off with its house boards and canoes either to found a new village or to join its kinsmen in an old one. There is also direct historical evidence to show that the clan or family constitution of the villages was being reassorted from time to time because of the great inner coherence and the relative mobility of the kinship groups. Among the Nagas of Assam the villages as such had little of the spirit of community and mutual helpfulness, but were split up into potentially hostile clans which lived apart from one

another and were constantly on guard against attack from fellow villagers. Here the feeling of kinship solidarity, stimulated, it is true, by ceremonial ideas with regard to feuds and head-hunting, actually turned the village into a congeries of beleaguered camps. The significance of such facts is that they show with dramatic clarity how a potent social pattern may fly in the face of reason, of mutual advantage, and even of economic necessity.

The application to modern conditions is obvious enough. The ideology which prevents a Haida clan from subordinating its petty pride to the general good of the village is precisely the same as that which today prevents a nation from allowing a transnational economic unit, say the silk industry, from functioning smoothly. In each case a social group-pattern — or formal “image,” in psychological terms (clan; nation) — so dominated feeling that services which would naturally flow in the grooves of quite other intercrossing or more inclusive group-patterns (mutual defense in the village; effective production and distribution of a class of goods by those actively engaged in handling it) must suffer appreciable damage.

Function and Form in Sociology

This brings us to the question of the functional nature of social groups. Our modern tendency is to see most associations of human beings in terms of function. Thus, it is obvious that boards of trade, labor unions, scientific societies, municipalities, political parties, and thousands of other types of social organization are most easily explained as resulting from the efforts of like-minded or similarly interested individuals to compass certain ends. As we go [106] back to the types of organization which we know to be more deeply rooted in our historic past, such as the family, the nationality, and the political state, we find that their function is far less obvious. It is either all but absent from consciousness, as in the case of the family, or inextricably intertwined with sentiments and loyalties that are not explicable by the mere function, real or supposed, of the social unit. The state might be defined in purely territorial and functional terms, but political history is little more than an elaborate proof that the state as we have actually known it refuses either to “stay put” or to “stick to business.” However, it is evident that the modern state has tended more and more in the direction of a clearer functional definition, by way both of restriction and of

extension. The dynastic and religious entanglements, for instance, which were at one time considered inseparable from the notion of a state, have loosened or disappeared. Even the family, the most archaic and perhaps the most stubborn of all social units, is beginning to have its cohesiveness and its compulsions questioned by the intercrossing of functional units that lie outside of itself.

When we compare primitive society with our own, we are at once impressed by the lesser importance of function as a determinant of organization. Functional groupings there are, of course, but they are subsidiary, as a rule, to kinship, territorial, and status groups. There is a very definite tendency for communal activities of all sorts to socialize on the lines suggested by these groups. Thus, among the West Coast Indians, membership in the ceremonial or secret societies, while theoretically dependent upon the acquirement of power from the initiating guardian spirits, is in reality largely a matter of privilege inhering in certain lines of descent. The Kwakiutl Cannibal Society, for instance, is not a spontaneous association of such men and women as possess unusual psychic suggestibility, but is composed of individuals who have family traditions entitling them to dance the Cannibal dance and to perform the rituals of the Society. Among the Pueblo Indians there is a marked tendency for the priesthood of important religious fraternities to be recruited from particular clans. Among the Plains tribes the policing of the camp during the annual buffalo hunt was entrusted not to a group expressly constituted for the purpose but to a series of graded age societies, each serving in turn, as among the Arapaho, to the sibs, as among the Omaha, or to some other set of social units that had other grounds for existence. [107]

We must be careful not to exaggerate the importance of facts such as these, for undoubtedly there is much intercrossing in primitive society of the various types of social organization; yet it remains true that, by and large, function tends to wait on alien principles, particularly kinship. In course of time, as numbers grow and pursuits become more specialized, the functional groups intercross more freely with what may be called the natural status groups. Finally, with the growing complexity of the mechanism of life the concept of the purpose of a given group forces itself upon the social consciousness, and if this purpose is felt to be compelling enough, the group that it unifies may reduce to a secondary position social units built on other principles. Thus, the clan tends to atrophy with the growth of political institutions, precisely as today

state autonomy is beginning to weaken in the face of transnational functions.

Yet it is more than doubtful if the gradual unfolding of social patterning tends indefinitely to be controlled by function. The pragmatic temper of present-day thinking makes such an assumption seem natural. Both anthropology and history seem to show, however, that any kind of social grouping, once established, tends to persist, and that it has a life only partly conditioned by its function, which may be changed from age to age and from place to place. Certainly anthropology has few more impressive hints for sociological theory than the functional equivalence of different types of social units.

Among the Indians of the Plains, whether organized into sibs or merely into territorial bands, the decoration of articles of clothing, in so far as it does not involve a symbolic reference to a vision, in which case it becomes a matter of intimate personal concern, is neither vested in particular women nor differentiated according to sib or territorial units. The vast majority of decorative motives are at the free disposal of all the women of the tribe. There is evidence that in certain of the Plains tribes the women had developed industrial guilds or sororities for the learning of moccasin techniques and similar items, but if these sex-functional groups specialized in any way in the use of particular designs, it would only emphasize the point that the decoration of clothing had nothing to do with the basic organization of the tribe. The facts read quite differently for such West Coast tribes as the Haida and Tsimshian. Here, owing to the fact that the clans had mythological crests and to the further fact that these crests were often represented on articles of [108] clothing in highly conventionalized form, artistic expression was necessarily intertwined with social organization. The representation of a conventionalized beaver or killer-whale on a hat or dancing apron thus actually becomes a clan privilege. It helps to define or objectify the clan by so much.

Another example of an identical or similar function applied to different social units is afforded by the ceremonial playing of lacrosse among several eastern tribes of the North American aborigines. Both the Iroquois and the Yuchi, of the Southeastern area, were organized into clans (matrilineal sibs), but while the Iroquois pitted their two phratries, or clan aggregations, against each other, among the Yuchi the game was not a clan or phratric function at all but was played by the two great status groups, "Chiefs" and "Warriors," membership in which depended on patrilineal, not matrilineal, descent.

The Transfer of Social Patterns

Such instances are not exceptions or oddities. They may be multiplied indefinitely. Any student who has worked through a considerable body of material of this kind is left with a very lively sense of the reality of types of organization to which no absolutely constant functions can be assigned. Moreover, the suspicion arises that many social units that now seem to be very clearly defined by their function may have had their origin in patterns which the lapse of time has reinterpreted beyond recognition. A very interesting problem arises — that of the possible transfer of a psychological attitude or mode of procedure which is proper to one type of social unit to another type of unit in which the attitude or procedure is not so clearly relevant. Undoubtedly such transfers have often taken place both on primitive and on sophisticated levels.

A striking example of the transfer of a “pattern of feeling” to a social function to which it is glaringly inapplicable is the following, again quoted from the West Coast Indians: The psychic peculiarity that leads certain men and women to become shamans (“medicine-men” and “medicine-women”) is so individual that shamanism shows nearly everywhere a marked tendency to resist grooving in the social patterns of the tribe. Personal ability or susceptibility counts far more than conventional status. Nevertheless, so powerful is the concept of rank and of the family inheritance of privilege of every conceivable type among the West Coast people [109] that certain tribes of this area, such as the Tlingit and Nootka, have actually made of shamanistic power an inheritable privilege. In actual practice, of course, theory has to yield to compromise. Among the Nootka, for instance, certain shamanistic offices are supposed to be performed by those who have an inherited right to them. Actually, however, these offices necessitate the possession of supernatural power that the incumbent may not happen to possess. He is therefore driven to the device of deputing the exercise of his office to a real shaman whom he pays for his services but who does not acquire the titular right to the office in question. The psychology of this procedure is of course very similar to the more sophisticated procedure of rubber-stamping documents in the name of a king who is profoundly ignorant of their contents.

A very instructive example of pattern transfer on a high level of culture is the complex organization of the Roman Catholic Church. Here we have a bureaucratic system that neither expresses the personal

psychology of snobbery and place-hunting nor can be seriously explained as due to the exigencies of the religious spirit which the organization serves. There is, of course, reason to believe that this organization is to a large extent a carry-over of the complex structure of Roman civil administration. That the Jews and the evangelical Protestant sects have a far looser type of church organization does not prove that they are, as individuals, more immediately swayed by the demands of religion. All that one has a right to conclude is that in their case religion has socialized itself on a less tightly knit pattern, a pattern that was more nearly congruent with other habits of their social life.

Nor can there be a serious doubt that some of our current attitudes toward social units are better suited to earlier types of organization than to the social units as they actually function today. A dispassionate analysis of the contemporary state and a full realization of the extent to which its well-being depends upon international understandings would probably show that the average individual views it with a more profound emotion than the facts warrant. To the state, in other words, are carried over feelings that seem far more appropriate for more nearly autonomous social bodies, such as the tribe or the self-supporting nationality. It is not unreasonable to maintain that a too passionate state loyalty may hinder the comfort of its object in precisely the same way that an overzealous mother, wrapped up in the family image, may hinder the social [110] functioning of her beloved son. It is difficult to view social and political problems of practical importance with a cool eye. One of the most subtle and enlightening of the fruits of anthropological research is an understanding of the very considerable degree to which the concepts of social pattern, function, and associated mental attitude are independently variable. In this thought lies the germ of a social philosophy of values and transfers that joins hands in a very suggestive way with such psychoanalytic concepts as the "image" and the transfer of emotion.

Rhythmic Configurations in Society

Modern psychology is destined to aid us in our understanding of social phenomena by its emphasis on the projection of formal or rhythmic configurations of the psyche and on the concrete symbolization of values and social relations. We can do no more than suggest here that both of these kinds of mental functioning are plentifully illustrated in

primitive society, and that for this reason anthropology can do much to give their consideration an adequate place in sociological theory. They are just as truly operative in our more sophisticated culture, but they seem here to be prevented from a clear-cut expression along the lines of social organization by the interference of more conscious, rational processes and by the leveling and destructive influence of a growing consciousness of purpose.

The projection in social behavior of an innate sense of form is an intuitive process and is merely a special phase of that mental functioning that finds its clearest voice in mathematics and its most nearly pure aesthetic embodiment in plastic and musical design. Now it has often been observed how neatly and symmetrically many primitive societies arrange their social units and with how perfect, not to say pedantic, a parallelism functions are distributed among these units. An Iroquois or Pueblo or Haida or Australian clan is closely patterned on the other clans, but its distinctive content of behavior is never identical with that of any of these. Then, too, we find significantly often a tendency to exteriorize the feeling for social design in space or time. The Omaha clans or Blackfoot bands, for instance, took up definite positions in the camp circle; the septs of a Nootka or Kwakiutl tribe were ranked in a certain order and seated according to definite rule in ceremonial gatherings; each of the Hopi clans was referred to one of the four cardinal points; the Arapaho age societies were graded in a temporal series [111] and took their turn from year to year in policing the camp; among some of the Western Bantu tribes of Africa the year was divided into segments correlated with territorial groupings. The significance of such social phenomena as these, which could easily be multiplied, is probably far greater than has generally been assumed. It is not claimed that the tendency to rhythmic expression is their only determinant, but it is certainly a powerful underlying factor in the development of all social parallelisms and symmetries.

Symbolical Associations

The importance of symbolical associations with social groupings is well known. Party slogans, national flags, and lodge emblems and regalia today can give only a diluted idea of what power is possessed by the social symbol in primitive life. The best-known example of the socialization of symbols among primitive people is of course that complicated,

indefinitely varied, and enormously distributed class of phenomena that is conveniently termed totemism. The central importance of totemism lies not so much in a mystic identification of the individual or group with an animal, a plant, or other classes of objects held in religious regard (such identifications are by no means uncommon in primitive cultures, but are not necessary to, or even typical of, totemism) as in the clustering of all kinds of values that pertain to a social unit around a concrete symbol. This symbol becomes surcharged with emotional significance not because of what it merely is or is thought to be in rational terms, but because of all the vital experiences, inherited and personal, that it stands for. Totemism is, on the plane of primitive sociology, very much the same kind of psychological phenomenon as the identification in the mind of the devout Christian of the cross with a significant system of religious practices, beliefs, and emotions.

When a Haida Indian is a member of a clan that possesses, say, the Killer-whale crest, it is very difficult for him to function in any social way without being involved in an explicit or implicit reference to the Killer-whale crest or some other crest or crests with which it is associated. He cannot be born, come of age, be married, give feasts, be invited to a feast, take or give a name, decorate his belongings, or die as a mere individual, but always as one who shares in the traditions and usages that go with the Killer-whale or associated crests. Hence the social symbol is not in any sense a [112] mere tag; it is a traditional index of the fullness of life and of the dignity of the human spirit which transcends the death of the individual. The symbol is operative in a great many types of social behavior, totemism being merely one of its most articulate group expressions. The symbol as unconscious evaluator of individual experience has been much discussed in recent years. It needs no labored argument to suggest how much light anthropology may throw on the social psychology of the symbol.

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Editorial Notes

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Speech as a Personality Trait (1927)

Editorial Introduction

In response to the experimental evidence presented by his interdisciplinary colleagues, especially in psychology, Sapir turned to what he called “language psychology” to clarify his intuitions about individual personality.¹ He argued that people unconsciously extracted information about the personality of others from the stream of behavior. Personality was not accessible through the isolated individual but only with the mediation of culture (cf. Sapir’s 1926 Hanover Conference paper, this volume). Although people were only minimally aware of their own cultural patterns, they regularly recognized deviations from the patterns they expected. Thus, their intuitions could shed light on the relationships between individual and culture.

Sapir’s quasi-experimental variables included voice (closest to biological heredity), the socially expressive parameters of voice dynamics, pronunciation and vocabulary, and style (the most culturally experiential).² Although Sapir did not pursue this experimental effort very far, there are echoes of his foray in “The Psychological Reality of the Phoneme” (1933) and in his paper on phonetic symbolism (1929).

The essay’s emphasis on cultural convention, as mediating between the individual personality and the behaviors through which that personality finds expression, ran counter to many currents in the intellectual context of the time. Many psychologists and even anthropologists assumed that personality could be inferred directly from behavior, and that insofar as cultures differed in the behaviors they fostered, so also did peoples differ in their essential personality. Attributing typical personality to entire social groups — especially nations — on the basis of behavioral details judged according to what they would mean in Anglo-American contexts was, in those days, intellectually respectable. Sapir’s essay counters those prevailing notions, both in its interposing of cultural convention and in its insistence on the variability of individuals’ personalities, and expressive behaviors, within a community.

Speech as a Personality Trait

ABSTRACT

Speech is intuitively interpreted by normal human beings as an index of personal expression. Its actual analysis, however, from this standpoint is difficult. Several distinct strands may be detected in what looks at first sight like an integral phenomenon. The social norm is always to be distinguished from the individual increment of expression, which is never discernible in itself, but only as measured against this norm. Moreover, "speech" consists of at least five levels of behavior, the expressive value of any one of which need not be confirmed by all the others. These levels are the voice as such, speech dynamics, the pronunciation, the vocabulary, and the style of connected utterance. Owing to the possibility of detecting conflict and other symptomatic reactions in speech, language behavior becomes a suggestive field for research in problems of personality.

If one is at all given to analysis, one is impressed with the extreme complexity of the various types of human behavior, and it may be assumed that the things that we take for granted in our ordinary, everyday life are as strange and as unexplainable as anything one might find. Thus, one comes to feel that the matter of speech is very far from being the self-evident or simple thing that we think it to be; that it is capable of a very great deal of refined analysis from the standpoint of human behavior; and that one might, in the process of making such an analysis, accumulate certain ideas for the research of personality problems.

There is one thing that strikes us as interesting about speech: on the one hand, we find it difficult to analyze; on the other hand, we are very much guided by it in our actual experience. That is perhaps something of a paradox, yet both the simple mind and the keenest of scientists know very well that we do not react to the suggestions of the environment in accordance with our specific knowledge alone. Some of us are more intuitive than others, it is true, but none is entirely lacking in the ability to gather and be guided by speech impressions in the intuitive exploration of personality. We are taught that when a man speaks he says something that he [893] wishes to communicate. That, of course, is not necessarily so. He intends to say something, as a rule, yet what he actually communicates may be measurably different from what he started out to convey. We often form a judgment of what he is by what he does not say, and we may be very wise to refuse to limit the evidence for judgment to the overt content of speech. One must read between the lines, even when they are not written on a sheet of paper.

In thinking over this matter of the analysis of speech from the point of view of personality study, the writer has come to feel that we might

have two quite distinct approaches: two quite distinct analyses might be undertaken that would intercross in a very intricate fashion. In the first place, the analysis might differentiate the individual and society, in so far as society speaks through the individual. The second kind of analysis would take up the different levels of speech, starting from the lowest level, which is the voice itself, clear up to the formation of complete sentences. In ordinary life we say that a man conveys certain impressions by his speech, but we rarely stop to analyse this apparent unit of behavior into its superimposed levels. We might give him credit for brilliant ideas when he merely possesses a smooth voice. We are often led into misunderstandings of this sort, though we are not generally so easily fooled. We can go over the entire speech situation without being able to put our finger on the precise spot in the speech complex that leads to our making this or that personality judgment. Just as the dog knows whether to turn to the right or to the left, so we know that we must make certain judgments, but we might well be mistaken if we tried to give the reason for making them.

Let us look for a moment at the justification for the first kind of analysis, the differentiation between the social and the purely individual point of view. It requires no labored argument to prove that this distinction is a necessary one. We human beings do not exist out of society. If you put a man in a cell, he is still in society, because he carries his thoughts with him, and these thoughts, pathologic though they be, were formed with the help of society. On the other hand, we can never have experience as such, however greatly we may be interested in them. Take so simple a social pattern as the word "horse." A horse is an animal with [894] four legs, a mane, and a neigh; but, as a matter of fact, the social pattern of reference to this animal does not exist in its purity. All that exists is my saying "horse" today, "horse" yesterday, "horse" tomorrow. Each of the events is different. There is something peculiar about each of them. The voice, for one thing, is never quite the same. There is a different quality of emotion in each articulation, and the intensity of the emotion, too, is different. It is not difficult to see why it is necessary to distinguish the social point of view from the individual, for society has its patterns, its set ways of doing things, its distinctive "theories" of behavior, while the individual has his method of handling those particular patterns of society, giving them just enough of a twist to make them "his" and no one else's. We are so interested in ourselves as individuals and in others who differ, however slightly, from us that we are always on the alert to mark the variations from the nuclear

pattern of behavior. To one who is not accustomed to the pattern, these variations appear so slight as to be all but unobserved. Yet they are of maximum importance to us as individuals; so much so that we are liable to forget that there is a general social pattern to vary from. We are often under the impression that we are original or otherwise aberrant when, as a matter of fact, we are merely repeating a social pattern with the very slightest accent of individuality.

To proceed to the second point of view, the analysis of speech on its different levels: If we were to make a critical survey of how people react to voice and what the voice carries, we should find them relatively naive about the different elements involved in speech. A man talks and makes certain impressions, but, as we have seen, we are not clear as to whether it is his voice which most powerfully contributes to the impression, or the ideas which are conveyed. There are several distinct levels in speech behavior which to linguists and psychologists are, each of them, sets of real phenomena, and we must now look at these in order to obtain some idea of the complexity of normal human speech. I will take up these various levels in order, making a few remarks about each of them as I proceed.

The lowest or most fundamental speech level is the voice. It is closest to the hereditary endowment of the individual, considered [895] out of relation to society, "low" in the sense of constituting a level that starts with the psychophysical organism given at birth. The voice is a complicated bundle of reactions and, so far as the writer knows, no one has succeeded in giving a comprehensive account of what the voice is and what changes it may undergo. There seems to be no book or essay that classifies the many different types of voice, nor is there a nomenclature that is capable of doing justice to the bewildering range of voice phenomena. And yet it is by delicate nuances of voice quality that we are so often confirmed in our judgment of people. From a more general point of view, voice may be considered a form of gesture. If we are swayed by a certain thought or emotion, we may express ourselves with our hands or some other type of gesturing, and the voice takes part in the total play of gesture. From our present point of view, however, it is possible to isolate the voice as a functional unit.

Voice is generally thought of as a purely individual matter, yet is it quite correct to say that the voice is given us at birth and maintained unmodified throughout life? Or has the voice a social quality as well as an individual one? I think we all feel, as a matter of fact, that we imitate each other's voices to a not inconsiderable extent. We know very well

that if, for some reason or other, the timbre of the voice that we are heir to has been criticized, we try to modify it, so that it may not be a socially unpleasant instrument of speech. There is always something about the voice that must be ascribed to the social background, precisely as in the case of gesture. Gestures are not the simple, individual things they seem to be. They are largely peculiar to this or that society. In the same way, in spite of the personal and relatively fixed character of the voice, we make involuntary adjustments in the larynx that bring about significant modifications in the voice. Therefore, in deducing fundamental traits of personality from the voice we must try to disentangle the social element from the purely personal one. If we are not careful to do this, we may make a serious error of judgment. A man has a strained or raucous voice, let us say, and we might infer that he is basically "coarse-grained." Such a judgment might be entirely wide of the mark if the particular society in which he lives is an out-of-doors society that indulges in a good deal of swearing and [896] rather rough handling of the voice. He may have had a very soft voice to begin with, symptomatic of a delicate psychic organization, which gradually toughened under the influence of social suggestion. The personality which we are trying to disentangle lies hidden under its overt manifestations, and it is our task to develop scientific methods to get at the "natural," theoretically unmodified voice. In order to interpret the voice as to its personality value, one needs to have a good idea of how much of it is purely individual, due to the natural formation of the larynx, to peculiarities of breathing, to a thousand and one factors that the anatomist and the physiologist may be able to define for us. One might ask at this point: Why attach importance to the quality of the voice? What has that to do with personality? After all is said and done, a man's voice is primarily formed by natural agencies, it is what God has blessed him with. Yes, but is that not essentially true of the whole of personality? Inasmuch as the psychophysical organism is very much of a unit, we can be quite sure on general principles that in looking for the thing we call personality we have the right to attach importance to the thing we call voice. Whether personality is expressed as adequately in the voice as in gesture or in carriage, we do not know. Perhaps it is even more adequately expressed in the voice than in these. In any event, it is clear that the nervous processes that control voice production must share in the individual traits of the nervous organization that condition the personality.

The essential quality of the voice is an amazingly interesting thing to puzzle over. Unfortunately we have no adequate vocabulary for its endless varieties. We speak of a high-pitched voice. We say a voice is "thick," or it is "thin"; we say it is "nasal" if there is something wrong with the nasal part of the breathing apparatus. If we were to make an inventory of voices, we should find that no two of them are quite alike. And all the time we feel that there is something about the individual's voice that is indicative of his personality. We may even go so far as to surmise that the voice is in some way a symbolic index of the total personality. Some day, when we know more about the physiology and psychology of the voice, it will be possible to line up our intuitive judgments as to voice quality with a scientific analysis of voice formation. We do not know [897] what it is precisely that makes the voice sound "thick," or "vibrant," or "flat," or what not. What is it that arouses us in one man's voice, when another's stirs us not at all? I remember listening many years ago to an address by a college president and deciding on the spur of the moment that what he said could be of no interest to me. What I meant was that no matter how interesting or pertinent his remarks were in themselves, his personality could not touch mine because there was something about his voice that did not appeal to me, something revealing as to personality. There was indicated — so one gathered intuitively — a certain quality of personality, a certain force, that I knew could not easily integrate with my own apprehension of things. I did not listen to what he said; I listened only to the quality of his voice. One might object that that was a perfectly idiotic thing to do. Perhaps it was, but I believe that we are all in the habit of doing just such things and that we are essentially justified in so doing — not intellectually, but intuitively. It therefore becomes the task of an intellectual analysis to justify for us on reasoned grounds what we have knowledge of in pre-scientific fashion.

There is little purpose in trying to list the different types of voice. Suffice it to say that on the basis of his voice one might decide many things about a man. One might decide that he is sentimental; that he is cruel — one hears voices that impress one as being intensely cruel. One might decide on the basis of his voice that a person who uses a very brusque vocabulary is nevertheless kind-hearted. This sort of comment is part of the practical experience of every man and woman. The point is that we are not in the habit of attaching scientific value to such judgments.

We have seen that the voice is a social as well as an individual phenomenon. If one were to make a profound enough analysis, one might, at least in theory, carve out the social part of the voice and discard it — a difficult thing to do. One finds people, for example, who have very pleasant voices, but it is society that has made them pleasant. One may then try to go back to what the voice would have been without its specific social development. This nuclear or primary quality of voice has in many, perhaps in all, cases a [898] symbolic value. The unconscious symbolisms are of course not limited to the voice. If you wrinkle your brow, that is a symbol of a certain attitude. If you act expansively by stretching out your arms, that is a symbol of a changed attitude to your immediate environment. In the same manner the voice is to a large extent an unconscious symbolization of one's general attitude.

Now all sorts of accidents may happen to the voice and deprive it, apparently, of its "predestined form." In spite of such accidents, however, the voice will be there for our discovery. These factors that spoil the basic picture are found in all forms of human behavior, and we must make allowances for them here as everywhere else in behavior. The primary voice structure is something that we cannot get at immediately, but must uncover by hacking away the various superimposed structures, social and individual.

What is the next level of speech? What we ordinarily call voice is voice proper plus a great many variations of behavior that are intertwined with voice and give it its dynamic quality. This is the level of voice dynamics. Two speakers may have very much the same basic quality of voice, yet their "voices," as that term is ordinarily understood, may be very different. In ordinary usage we are not always careful to distinguish the voice proper from voice dynamics. One of the most important aspects of voice dynamics is intonation, a very interesting field of investigation for both linguist and psychologist. Intonation is a much more complicated matter than is generally believed. It may be divided into three distinct levels, which intertwine into the unit pattern of behavior which we may call "individual intonation." In the first place, there is a very important social element in intonation which has to be kept apart from the individual variation; in the second place, this social element of intonation has a twofold determination. We have certain intonations which are a necessary part of our speech. If I say, for example, "Is he coming?" I raise the pitch of the voice on the last word. There is no sufficient reason in nature why I should have an upward inflection of the voice in sentences of this type. We are apt to assume that this

habit is natural, even self-evident, but a comparative study of the dynamic habits of many diverse [899] languages convinces one that this assumption is on the whole unwarranted. The interrogative attitude may be expressed in other ways, such as the use of particular interrogative words or specific grammatical forms. It is one of the significant patterns of our English language to elevate the voice in interrogative sentences of a certain type, hence such elevation is not expressive in the properly individual sense of the word, though we sometimes feel it to be so.

But more than that, there is a second level of socially determined variation in intonation, the musical handling of the voice generally, quite aside from the properly linguistic patterns of intonation. It is understood in a given society that we are not to have too great an individual range of intonation. We are not to rise to too great a height in our cadences; we are to pitch the voice at such and such an average height. In other words, society tells us to limit ourselves to a certain range of intonation and to certain characteristic cadences, that is, to adopt certain melody patterns peculiar to itself. If we were to compare the speech of an English country gentleman with that of a Kentucky farmer, we should find the intonational habits of the two to be notably different, though there are certain important resemblances, due to the fact that the language they speak is essentially the same. Neither dares depart too widely from his respective social standard of intonation. Yet we know no two individuals who speak exactly alike so far as intonation is concerned. We are interested in the individual as the representative of a social type when he comes from some far place. The southerner, the New Englander, the middle-wester — each has a characteristic intonation. But we are interested in the individual as an individual when he is merged in, and is a representative of, our own group. If we are dealing with people who have the same social habits, we are interested in the slight intonational differences which the individuals exhibit, for we know enough of their common social background to evaluate these slight differences. We are wrong to make any inferences about personality on the basis of intonation without considering the intonational habit of one's speech community or that carried over from a foreign language. We do not really know what a man's speech is until we have evaluated his social background. If a Japanese talks in a monotonous voice, we [900] have not the right to assume that he is illustrating the same type of personality that one of us would be if we talked with his sentence

melody. Furthermore, if we hear an Italian running through his whole possible gamut of tone we are apt to say that he is temperamental or that he has an interesting personality. Yet we do not know whether he is in the least temperamental until we know what are the normal Italian habits of speech, what Italian society allows its members in the way of melodic play. Hence a major intonation curve, objectively considered, may be of but minor importance from the standpoint of individual expressiveness.

Intonation is only one of the many phases of voice dynamics. Rhythm, too, has to be considered. Here again there are several layers that are to be distinguished. First of all, the primary rhythms of speech are furnished by the language one is brought up in, and are not due to our individual personality. We have certain very definite peculiarities of rhythm in English. Thus, we tend to accent certain syllables strongly and to minimize others. That is not due to the fact that we wish to be emphatic. It is merely that our language is so constructed that we must follow its characteristic rhythm, accenting one syllable in a word or phrase at the expense of the others. There are languages that do not follow this habit. If a Frenchman accented his words in our English fashion, we might be justified in making certain inferences as to his nervous condition. Furthermore, there are rhythmic forms which are due to the socialized habits of particular groups, rhythms which are over and above the basic rhythms of the language. Some sections of our society will not allow emphatic stresses; others allow or demand a greater emphasis. Polite society will allow far less play in stress and intonation than a society that is constituted by attendance at a baseball or football game. We have, in brief, two sorts of socialized rhythm; the rhythms of language and the rhythms of social expressiveness. And, once more, we have individual dynamic factors. Some of us tend to be more tense in our rhythms, to accent certain syllables more definitely, to lengthen more vowels, to shorten unaccented vowels more freely. There are, in other words, individual rhythmic variations in addition to the social ones.

There are still other dynamic factors than intonation and [901] rhythm. There is the relative continuity of speech. A great many people speak brokenly, in uneasy splashes of word groups; others speak continuously, whether they have anything to say or not. With the latter type it is not a question of having the necessary words at one's disposal, it is a question of mere continuity of linguistic expression. There are social

speeds and continuities and individual speeds and continuities. We can be said to be slow or rapid in our utterances only in the sense that we speak above or below certain socialized speeds. Here again, in the matter of speed, the individual habit and its diagnostic value for the study of personality can be measured only against accepted social norms.

To summarize the second level of language behavior, we have a number of factors, such as intonation, rhythm, relative continuity, and speed, which have to be analyzed, each of them, into two distinct levels: the social and the individual. The social level, moreover, has generally to be divided into two levels, the level of that social pattern which is language and the level of the linguistically irrelevant habits of speech manipulation that are characteristic of a particular group.

The third level of speech analysis is pronunciation. Here again one often speaks of the "voice" when what is really meant is an individually nuanced pronunciation. A man pronounces certain consonants or vowels, say, with a distinctive timbre or in an otherwise peculiar manner, and we tend to ascribe such variations of pronunciation to his voice; yet they may have nothing at all to do with the quality of his voice. In pronunciation we again have to distinguish the social from the individual patterns. Society decrees that we pronounce certain selected consonants and vowels, which have been set aside as the bricks and mortar, as it were, for the construction of a given language. We cannot depart very widely from this decree. We know that the foreigner who learns our language does not at once take over the sounds that are peculiar to us. He uses the nearest pronunciation that he can find in his own language. It would manifestly be wrong to make inferences of a personal nature from such mispronunciations. But all the time there are also *individual* variations of sound which are highly important and which in many cases have a symptomatic value for the study of personality. [902]

One of the most interesting chapters in linguistic behavior, a chapter which has not yet been written, is the expressively symbolic character of sounds quite aside from what the words in which they occur mean in a referential sense. On the properly linguistic plane, sounds have no meaning; yet if we were to interpret them psychologically we should find that there is a subtle, though fleeting, relation between the "real" value of words and the unconscious symbolic value of sounds as actually pronounced by individuals. Poets know this in their own intuitive way. But what the poets are doing rather consciously by means of art-

istic devices, we are doing unconsciously all of the time on a vast, if humble, scale. It has been pointed out, for instance, that there are certain expressive tendencies toward diminutive forms of pronunciation. If you are talking to a child, you change your "level of communication" without knowing it. The word "tiny" may become "teeny." There is no rule of English grammar that justifies the change of vowel, but the word "teeny" seems to have a more directly symbolic character than "tiny," and a glance at the symbolism of phonetics gives us the reason for this. When we pronounce the *ee* of "teeny," there is very little space between the tongue and the roof of the mouth; in the first part of the *i* of "tiny" there is a great deal of space. In other words, the *ee* variation has the value of a gesture which emphasizes the notion, or rather feeling, of smallness. In this particular case the tendency to symbolize diminutiveness is striking because it has caused one word to pass over to an entirely new word, but we are constantly making similar symbolic adjustments in a less overt way without being aware of the process. Some people are much more symbolic in their use of sounds than others. A man may lisp, for instance, because he is unconsciously symbolizing certain traits which lead those who know him to speak of him as a "sissy." His pronunciation is not due to the fact that he cannot pronounce the sound of *s* properly; it is due to the fact that he is driven to reveal himself. He has no speech defect, though there is of course also a type of lispng that is a speech defect and that has to be kept apart from the symbolic lisp. There are a great many other unconsciously symbolic habits of articulation for which we have no current terminology. But we cannot discuss such variation fruitfully until [903] we have established the social norm of pronunciation and have a just notion of what are the allowable departures within this social norm. If one goes to England or France or any other foreign country and sets down impressions on the interpretative significance of the voices and pronunciations perceived, what one says is not likely to be of value unless one has first made a painstaking study of the social norms of which the individual phenomena are variants. The lisp that one notes may be what a given society happens to require, hence it is no psychological lisp in our sense. One cannot draw up an absolute psychological scale for voice, intonation, rhythm, speed, or pronunciation of vowels and consonants without in every case ascertaining the social background of speech habit. It is always the individual variation that matters, never the objective behavior as such.

The fourth speech level, that of vocabulary, is a very important one. We do not all speak alike. There are certain words which some of us never use. There are other, favorite, words, which we are always using. Personality is largely reflected in the choice of words; but here too we must distinguish carefully the social vocabulary norm from the more significantly personal choice of words. Certain words and locutions are not used in certain circles; others are the hall-mark of locale, status, or occupation. We listen to a man who belongs to a particular social group and are intrigued, perhaps attracted, by his vocabulary. Unless we are keen analysts, we are likely to read personality out of what is merely the current diction of his society. Individual variation exists, but it can properly be appraised only with reference to the social norm. Sometimes we choose words because we like them; sometimes we slight words because they bore or annoy or terrify us. We are not going to be caught by them. All in all, there is room for much subtle analysis in the determination of the social and individual significance of words.

Finally, we have style as a fifth speech level. Many people have an illusion that style is something that belongs to literature. Style is an everyday facet of speech that characterizes both the social group and the individual. We all have our individual styles in both conversation and considered address, and they are never the [904] arbitrary and casual things we think them to be. There is always an individual method, however poorly developed, of arranging words into groups and of working these up into larger units. It would be a very complicated problem to disentangle the social and individual determinants of style, but it is a theoretically possible one.

To summarize, we have the following materials to deal with in our attempt to get at the personality of an individual in so far as it can be gathered from his speech. We have his voice. We have the dynamics of his voice, exemplified by such factors as intonation, rhythm, continuity, and speed. We have pronunciation, vocabulary, and style. Let us look at these materials as constituting so and so many levels on which expressive patterns are built. One may get a sense of individual patterning on one of these levels and use this sense to interpret the other levels. Objectively, however, two or more levels of a given speech act may produce either a similarity of expressive effect or a contrast. We may illustrate from a theoretical case. We know that many of us, handicapped by nature or habit, work out compensatory reactions. In the case of the man with a lisp whom we termed a "sissy," the essentially feminine type of articulation is likely to remain, but other aspects of his speech,

including his voice, may show something of his effort to compensate. He may affect a masculine type of intonation or, above all, consciously or unconsciously, he may choose words that are intended to show that he is really a man. In this case we have a very interesting conflict, objectified within the realm of speech behavior. It is here as in all other types of behavior. One may express on one level of patterning what one will not or cannot express on another. One may inhibit on one level what one does not know how to inhibit on another, whence results a "dissociation" —which is probably, at last analysis, nothing but a notable divergence in expressive content of functionally related patterns.

Quite aside from specific inferences which we may make from speech phenomena on any one of its levels, there is a great deal of interesting work to be done with the psychology of speech woven out of its different levels. Perhaps certain elusive phenomena of voice are the result of the interweaving of distinct patterns of expression. We sometimes get the feeling that there are two things [905] being communicated by the voice, which may then be felt as splitting itself into an "upper" and a "lower" level.

It should be fairly clear from our hasty review that if we make a level-to-level analysis of the speech of an individual and if we carefully see each of these levels in its social perspective, we obtain a valuable level for psychiatric work. It is possible that the kind of analysis which has here been suggested, if carried far enough, may enable us to arrive at certain very pertinent conclusions regarding personality. Intuitively we attach an enormous importance to the voice and to the speech behavior that is carried by the voice. We have not much to say about it as a rule, not much more than an "I like that man's voice," or "I do not like the way he talks." Individual speech analysis is difficult to make, partly because of the peculiarly fleeting character of speech, partly because it is especially difficult to eliminate the social determinants of speech. In view of these difficulties there is not as much significant speech analysis being made by students of behavior as we might wish, but the difficulties do not relieve us of the responsibility of making such researches.

Editorial Notes

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Notes

1. An abstract of this paper appeared in the December 1926 issue of *Health Bulletin*, published by the Illinois Society for Mental Hygiene.
2. Sapir's student, Stanley Newman, pursued this line of research through much of the 1930's, partly in collaboration with psychiatrist Harry Stack Sullivan.

The Meaning of Religion (1928)

Editorial Introduction

Sapir's claim that religion was universal, albeit elaborated into a religious system only in developed society, originally appeared in *The American Mercury* and was directed toward a popular audience assumed to be unaware of the functional equivalence of diverse cultural forms. Every human society provides the religious person with conventional symbols to attain "spiritual serenity" in dealing with the perplexities of everyday life. Sapir worried, however, about his inability to distinguish religious behavior from the religious sentiment which he assumed to underlie it. He considered the formal features of religion, e. g., gods and spirits, as mere rationalizations for the religious behavior of individuals. This behavior was external to the true function of religion as providing emotional security to the individual through a coherent philosophy of life (cf. "Culture, Genuine and Spurious," this volume).

The ethnographic record documented multiple forms of religious behavior as well as different psychological interpretations of those forms. Amerindian peoples of the plains and the pueblos, for example, shared many religious forms; but the former stressed the loneliness of the individual and the latter depersonalized ritual. Moreover, religion was integrated with other parts of culture and could not be fully separated from them. The same behavioral act could have multiple functions. Sapir's recurrent concern with the cultural form and its function for the individual pervades both his crosscultural comparative framework and his theory of culture.

This essay was published again in 1929, under the title "Religion and Religious Phenomena," in a twelve-volume series, *Man and His World: Northwestern University Essays in Contemporary Thought*, assembled under the editorship of the philosopher Baker Brownell. Contributors included such notables as Clarence Darrow, Bertrand Russell, Charlotte Perkins Gilman, and Stuart Chase, among many others. Most of the anthropologists in the group were represented in volume 4, *Making Mankind*, which included papers by Clark Wissler, Sapir's Chicago colleague Fay-Cooper Cole, Melville J. Herskovits, William M. McGov-

ern, and the historian Ferdinand Schevill. Sapir's contribution, however, was placed in volume 11, *Religious Life*, along with papers by Shailer Mathews, Ernest F. Tittle, Rufus M. Jones, and Francis J. McConnell.

* * *

The Meaning of Religion

A very useful distinction can be made between "a religion" and "religion." The former appears only in a highly developed society in which religious behavior has been organized by tradition; the latter is universal.

The ordinary conception of a religion includes the notions of a self-conscious "church," of religious officers whose functions are clearly defined by custom and who typically engage in no other type of economic activity, and of carefully guarded rituals which are the symbolic expression of the life of the church. Generally, too, such a religion is invested with a certain authority by a canonical tradition which has grown up around a body of sacred texts, supposed to have been revealed by God or to have been faithfully set down by the founder of the religion or by followers of His who have heard the sacred words from His own lips.

If we leave the more sophisticated peoples and study the social habits of primitive and barbaric folk, we shall find that it is very difficult to discover religious institutions that are as highly formalized as those that go under the name of the Roman Catholic Church or of Judaism. Yet religion in some sense is everywhere present. It seems to be as universal as speech itself and the use of material tools. It is difficult to apply a single one of the criteria which are ordinarily used to define a religion to the religious behavior of primitive peoples, yet neither the absence of specific religious officers nor the lack of authoritative religious texts nor any other conventional lack can seriously mislead the student into denying them true religion. Ethnologists are unanimous in ascribing religious behavior to the very simplest of known societies. So much of a commonplace, indeed, is this assumption of the presence of religion in every known community — barring none, not even those that flaunt the banner of atheism — that one needs to reaffirm and justify the assumption.

How are we to define religion? Can we get behind priests and prayers and gods and rituals and discover a formula that is not too broad to be meaning[ful] nor so specific as to raise futile questions of exclusion or inclusion? I believe it is possible to do this if we ignore for a moment the special forms of behavior deemed religious and attend to the essential meaning and function of such behavior. Religion is precisely one of those words that belong to the more intuitive portion of our vocabulary. We can often apply it safely and unexpectedly without the slightest concern for whether the individual or group termed religious is priest-ridden or not, is addicted to prayer or not, or believes or does not believe in a god. Almost unconsciously the term has come to have for most of us a certain connotation of personality. Some individuals are religious and others are not, and all societies have religion in the sense that they provide the naturally religious person with certain ready-made symbols for the exercise of his religious need.

The formula that I would venture to suggest is simply this: Religion is man's never-ceasing attempt to discover a road to spiritual serenity across the perplexities and dangers of daily life. How this serenity is obtained is a matter of infinitely varied [73] detail. Where the need for such serenity is passionately felt, we have religious yearning; where it is absent, religious behavior is no more than socially sanctioned form or an aesthetic blend of belief and gesture. In practice it is all but impossible to disconnect religious sentiment from formal religious conduct, but it is worth divorcing the two in order that we may insist all the more clearly on the reality of the sentiment.

What constitutes spiritual serenity must be answered afresh for every culture and for every community — in the last analysis, for every individual. Culture defines for every society the world in which it lives, hence we can expect no more of any religion than that it awaken and overcome the feeling of danger, of individual helplessness, that is proper to that particular world. The ultimate problems of an Ojibwa Indian are different as to content from those of the educated devotee of modern science, but with each of them religion means the haunting realization of ultimate powerlessness in an inscrutable world, and the unquestioning and thoroughly irrational conviction of the possibility of gaining mystic security by somehow identifying oneself with what can never be known. Religion is omnipresent fear and a vast humility paradoxically turned into bedrock security, for once the fear is imaginatively taken to one's heart and the humility confessed for good and all, the triumph of human consciousness is assured. There can be neither fear nor humilia-

tion for deeply religious natures, for they have intuitively experienced both of these emotions in advance of the declared hostility of an overwhelming world, coldly indifferent to human desire.

Religion of such purity as I have defined it is hard to discover. That does not matter: it is the pursuit, conscious or unconscious, of ultimate serenity following total and necessary defeat that constitutes the core of religion. It has often allied itself with art and science, and art at least has gained from the alliance, but in crucial situations religion has always shown itself indifferent to both. Religion seeks neither the objective enlightenment of science nor the strange equilibrium, the sensuous harmony, of aesthetic experience. It aims at nothing more nor less than the impulsive conquest of reality, and it can use science and art as little more than stepping stones toward the attainment of its own serenity. The mind that is intellectualist through and through is necessarily baffled by religion, and in the attempt to explain it makes little more of it than a blind and chaotic science.

Whether or not the spirit of religion is reconcilable with that of art does not concern us. Human nature is infinitely complex and every type of reconciliation of opposites seems possible, but it must be insisted that the nucleus of religious feeling is by no means identical with aesthetic emotion. The serenity of art seems of an utterly different nature from that of religion. Art creates a feeling of wholeness precipitating the flux of things into tangible forms, beautiful and sufficient to themselves; religion gathers up all the threads and meaninglessnesses of life into a wholeness that is not manifest and can only be experienced in the form of a passionate desire. It is not useful and it is perhaps not wise to insist on fundamental antinomies, but if one were pressed to the wall one might perhaps be far from wrong in suspecting that the religious spirit is antithetical to that of art, for religion is essentially ultimate and irreconcilable. Art forgives because it values as an ultimate good the here and now; religion forgives because the here and now are somehow irrelevant to a desire that drives for ultimate solutions.

II

Religion does not presuppose a definite belief in God or in a number of gods or spirits, though in practice such beliefs are generally the rationalized background for religious behavior. [74]

Belief, as a matter of fact, is not a properly religious concept at all, but a scientific one. The sum total of one's beliefs may be said to constitute one's science. Some of these beliefs can be sustained by an appeal to direct personal experience, others rest for their warrant on the authority of society or on the authority of such individuals as are known or believed to hold in their hands the keys of final demonstration. So far as the normal individual is concerned, a belief in the reality of molecules or atoms is of exactly the same nature as a belief in God or immortality. The true division here is not between science and religious belief, but between personally verifiable and personally unverifiable belief. A philosophy of life is not religion if the phrase connotes merely a cluster of rationalized beliefs. Only when one's philosophy of life is vitalized by emotion does it take on the character of religion.

Some writers have spoken of a specifically religious emotion, but it seems quite unnecessary to appeal to any such hypothetical concept. One may not rest content to see in religious emotion nothing more nor less than a cluster of such typical emotional experiences as fear, awe, hope, love, the pleading attitude, and any others that may be experienced, in so far as these psychological experiences occur in a context of ultimate values. Fear as such, no matter how poignant or ecstatic, is not religion. A calm belief in a God who creates and rewards and punishes does not constitute religion if the believer fails to recognize the necessity of the application of this belief to his personal problems. Only when the emotion of fear and the belief in a God are somehow integrated into a value can either the emotion or the belief be said to be of a religious nature. This standpoint allows for no specific religious emotions nor does it recognize any specific forms of belief as necessary for religion. All that is asked is that intensity of feeling join with a philosophy of ultimate things into an unanalyzed conviction of the possibility of security in a world of values.

One can distinguish, in theory if not in practice, between individual religious experience and socialized religious behavior. Some writers on religion put the emphasis on the reality and intensity of the individual experience, others prefer to see in religion a purely social pattern, an institution on which the individual must draw in order to have religious experience at all. The contrast between these two points of view is probably more apparent than real. The suggestions for religious behavior will always be found to be of social origin; it is the validation of this behavior in individual or in social terms that may be thought to vary. This is equivalent to saying that some societies tend to seek the most

intense expression of religious experience in individual behavior (including introspection under that term), while others tend toward a collective orthodoxy, reaching an equivalent intensity of life in forms of behavior in which the individual is subordinated to a collective symbol. Religions that conform to the first tendency may be called evangelistic, and those of the second type ritualistic.

The contrast invites criticism, as everyone who has handled religious data knows. One may object that it is precisely under the stimulation of collective activity, as in the sun dance of the Plains Indians or in the Roman Catholic mass, that the most intense forms of individual experience are created. Again, one may see in the most lonely and self-centered of religious practices, say the mystic ecstasies of a saint or the private prayer of one lost to society, little more than the religious behavior of society itself, disconnected, for the moment, from the visible church. A theorist like Durkheim sees the church implicit in every prayer or act of ascetic piety. It is doubtful if the mere observation of religious behavior quite justifies the distinction that I have made. A finer psychological analysis would probably show that the distinction is none the less valid — that societies differ or tend to differ according [75] to whether they find the last court of appeal in matters religious in the social act or in the private emotional experience.

Let one example do for many. The religion of the Plains Indians is different in many of its details from that of the Pueblo Indians of the Southwest. Nevertheless there are many external resemblances between them, such as the use of shrines with fetishistic objects gathered in them, the color symbolism of cardinal points, and the religious efficacy of communal dancing. It is not these and a host of other resemblances, however, that impress the student of native American religion; it is rather their profound psychological difference. The Plains Indians' religion is full of collective symbols; indeed, a typical ethnological account of the religion of a Plains tribe seems to be little more than a list of social stereotypes — dances and regalia and taboos and conventional religious tokens. The sun dance is an exceedingly elaborate ritual which lasts many days and in which each song and each step in the progress of the ceremonies is a social expression. For all that, the final validation of the sun dance, as of every other form of Plains religion, seems to rest with the individual in his introspective loneliness. The nuclear idea is the "blessing" or "manitou" experience, in which the individual puts himself in a relation of extreme intimacy with the world of supernatural power or "medicine."

Completely socialized rituals are not the primary fact in the structure of Plains religion; they are rather an extended form of the nuclear individual experience. The recipient of a blessing may and does invite others to participate in the private ritual which has grown up around the vision in which power and security have been vouchsafed to him; he may even transfer his interest in the vision to another individual; in the course of time the original ritual, complicated by many accretions, may become a communal form in which the whole tribe has the most lively and anxious interest, as is the case with the beaver bundles or medicine pipe ceremonies of the Blackfoot Indians. A non-religious individual may see little but show and outward circumstance in all this business of vision and bundle and ritual, but the religious consciousness of the Plains Indians never seems to have lost sight of the inherently individual warrant of the vision and of all rituals which may eventually flow from it. It is highly significant that even in the sun dance, which is probably the least individualized kind of religious conduct among these Indians, the high-water mark of religious intensity is felt to reside, not in any collective ecstasy, but in the individual emotions of those who gaze at the center pole of the sun dance lodge and, still more, of the resolute few who are willing the experience the unspeakably painful ecstasy of self-torture.

The Pueblo religion seems to offer very much of a contrast to the religion of the Plains. The Pueblo religion is ritualized to an incredible degree. Ceremony follows relentlessly on ceremony, clan and religious fraternity go through their stately symbolism of dance and prayer and shrine construction with the regularity of the seasons. All is anxious care for the norm and detail of ritual. But it is not the mere bulk of this ritualism which truly characterizes the religion of the Hopi or Zuni. It is the depersonalized, almost cosmic, quality of the rituals, which have all the air of pre-ordained things of nature which the individual is helpless either to assist or to thwart, and whose mystic intention he can only comprehend by resigning himself to the traditions of his tribe and clan and fraternity. No private intensity of religious experience will help the ritual. Whether the dancer is aroused to a strange ecstasy or remains as cold as an automaton is a matter of perfect indifference to the Pueblo consciousness. All taint of the orgiastic is repudiated by the Pueblo Indian, who is content with the calm constraint and power of things ordained, seeing in himself no discoverer of religious virtue, but only a correct and [76] measured transmitter of things perfect in themselves. One might teach Protestant revivalism to a Blackfoot or a Sioux; a Zuni would smile uncomprehendingly.

III

Though religion cannot be defined in terms of belief, it is none the less true that the religions of primitive peoples tend to cluster around a number of typical beliefs or classes of belief. It will be quite impossible to give even a superficial account of the many types of religious belief that have been reported for primitive man, and I shall therefore be content with a brief mention of three of them: belief in spirits (animism), belief in gods and belief in cosmic power (mana).

That primitive people are animistic — in other words, that they believe in the existence in the world and in themselves of a vast number of immaterial and potent essences — is a commonplace of anthropology. Tylor attempted to derive all forms of religious behavior from animistic beliefs, and while we can no longer attach as great an importance to animism as did Tylor and others of the classical anthropologists, it is still correct to say that few primitive religions do not at some point or other connect with the doctrine of spirits. Most peoples believe in a soul which animates the human body; some believe in a variety of souls (as when the principle of life is distinguished from what the psychologists would call consciousness or the psyche); and most peoples also believe in the survival of the soul after death in the form of a ghost.

The experiences of the soul or souls typically account for such phenomena as dreams, illness, and death. Frequently one or another type of soul is identified with such insubstantial things as the breath, or the shadow cast by a living being, or, more materially, with such parts of the human body as the heart or diaphragm; sometimes, too, the soul is symbolized by an imaginary being, such as a mannikin, who may leave the body and set out in pursuit of another soul. The mobile soul and the ghost tend to be identified, but this is not necessarily the case.

In all this variety of primitive belief we see little more than the dawn of psychology. The religious attitude enters in only when the soul or ghost is somehow connected with the great world of non-human spirits which animates the whole of nature and which is possessed of a power for good or ill which it is the constant aim of human beings to capture for their own purposes. These "spirits," which range all the way from disembodied human souls, through animals, to god-like creatures, are perhaps more often feared than directly worshipped. On the whole, it is perhaps correct to say that spirits touch humanity through the individual rather than through the group and that access is gained to them rather through the private, selfish ritual of magic than through religion.

All such generalizations, however, are exceedingly dangerous. Almost any association of beliefs and attitudes is possible.

Tylor believed that the series: soul, ghost, spirit, god, was a necessary genetic chain. "God" would be no more than the individualized totality of all spirits, localized in earth or air or sea and specialized as to function or kind of power. The single "god" of a polytheistic pantheon would be the transition stage between the unindividualized spirit and the Supreme Being of the great historical religions. These simple and plausible connections are no longer lightly taken for granted by the anthropologists. There is a great deal of disturbing evidence which seems to show that the idea of a god or of God is not necessarily to be considered as the result of an evolution of the idea of soul or spirit. It would seem that some of the most primitive peoples we know of have arrived at the notion of an all-powerful being who stands quite outside the world of spirits and who tends to be identified with such cosmic objects as the sun or the sky. [77]

The Nootka Indians of British Columbia, for instance, believe in the existence of a Supreme Being whom they identify with daylight and who is sharply contrasted both with the horde of mysterious beings ("spirits") from whom they seek power for special ends and with the mythological beings of legend and ritual. Some form of primitive monotheism not infrequently co-exists with animism. Polytheism is not necessarily the forerunner of monotheism, but may, for certain cultures, be looked upon as a complex, systematized product of several regional ideas of God.

The idea of "mana," or diffused, non-individualized power, seems to be exceedingly widespread among primitive peoples. The term has been borrowed from Melanesia, but it is as applicable to the Algonkian, Iroquois, Siouan, and numerous other tribes of aboriginal America as to the Melanesians and Polynesians. The whole world is believed to be pervaded by a mysterious potency that may be concentrated in particular objects or, in many cases, possessed by spirits or animals or gods. Man needs to capture some of this power in order to attain his desires. He is ever on the lookout for blessings from the unknown, which may be vouchsafed to him in unusual or uncanny experiences, in visions, and in dreams. The notion of immaterial power often takes curious forms. Thus the Hupa Indians of Northwestern California believe in the presence of radiations which stream to earth from mysterious realms beyond, inhabited by a supernatural and holy folk who once lived upon earth but vanished with the coming of the Indians. These radiations

may give the medicine-woman her power or they may inspire one with the spirit of a ritual.

I can hardly do more than mention some of the typical forms of religious behavior, as distinguished from belief, which are of universal distribution. Prayer is common, but it is only in the higher reaches of culture that it attains its typically pure and altruistic form. On lower levels it tends to be limited to the voicing of selfish wants, which may even bring harm to those who are not members of one's own household. It is significant that prayers are frequently addressed to specific beings who may grant power or withhold ill rather than to the Supreme Being, even when such a being is believed to exist.

A second type of religious behavior is the pursuit of power or "medicine." The forms which this pursuit takes are exceedingly varied. The individual "medicine" experience is perhaps illustrated in its greatest purity among the American aborigines, but it is of course plentifully illustrated in other parts of the world. Among some tribes the receipt of power, which generally takes place in the form of a dream or vision, establishes a very personal relation between the giver of the blessing and the suppliant.

This relation is frequently known as individual totemism. The term totemism, indeed, is derived from the Ojibwa Indians, among whom there is a tendency for the individual to be "blessed" by the same supernatural beings as have already blessed his paternal ancestors. Such an example as this shows how the purely individual relation may gradually become socialized into the institution typically known as totemism, which may be defined as a specific relation, manifested in a great variety of ways, which exists between a clan or other social group and a supernatural being, generally, but by no means exclusively, identified with an animal. In spite of the somewhat shadowy borderland which connects individual totemism with group totemism, it is inadvisable to think of the one institution as necessarily derived from the other, though the possibility of such a development need not be denied outright.

Closely connected with the pursuit of power is the handling of magical objects or assemblages of such objects which contain or symbolize the power that has been bestowed. Among some of the North American Indian tribes, as we have seen, the "medicine bundle," with its associated [78] ritual and taboos, owes its potency entirely to the supernatural experience which lies back of it. Classical fetishism, however, as we find it in West Africa, seems not to be necessarily based on an individual vision. A fetish is an object which possesses power in its own right and

which may be used to effect desired ends by appropriate handling, prayer, or other means. In many cases a supernatural being is believed to be actually resident in the fetish, though this conception, which most nearly corresponds to the popular notion of "idol," is probably not as common as might be expected. The main religious significance of medicine bundles, fetishes and other tokens of the supernatural is the reassuring power exerted on the primitive mind by a concrete symbol which is felt to be closely connected with the mysterious unknown and its limitless power. It is of course the persistence of the suggestibility of visual symbols which makes even the highest forms of religion tend to cluster about such objects as temples, churches, shrines, crucifixes, and the like.

The fourth and perhaps the most important of the forms of religious behavior is the carrying out of rituals. Rituals are typically symbolic actions which belong to the whole community, but among primitive peoples there is a tendency for many of them to be looked upon as the special function of a limited group within the whole tribe. Sometimes this group is a clan or gens or other division not based on religious concepts; at other times the group is a religious fraternity, a brotherhood of priests, which exists for the sole purpose of seeing to the correct performance of rituals which are believed to be of the utmost consequence for the safety of the tribe as a whole. It is difficult to generalize about primitive ritual, so varied are the forms which it assumes. Nearly everywhere the communal ritual whips the whole tribe into a state of great emotional tension, which is interpreted by the folk as a visitation from the supernatural world. The most powerful means known to bring about this feeling is the dance, which is nearly always accompanied by singing.

Some ethnologists have seen in primitive ritual little more than the counterpart of our own dramatic and pantomimic performances. Historically there is undoubtedly much truth in this, but it would be very misleading to make of a psychology of primitive ritual a mere chapter in the psychology of aesthetic experience. The exaltation of the Sioux sun dancer or of a Northwest Coast Indian who impersonates the Cannibal Spirit is a very different thing from the excitement of the performing artist. It seems very much more akin to the intense reverie of the mystic or ascetic. Externally, the rituals may be described as a sacred drama; subjectively, it may bring the participant to a realization of mystery and power for which the fetish or other religious object is but an external token. The psychological interpretation of ritual naturally differs with the temperament of the individual.

IV

The sharp distinction between religious and other modes of conduct to which we are accustomed in modern life is by no means possible on more primitive levels. Religion is neither ethics nor science nor art, but it tends to be inextricably bound up with all three. It also manifests itself in the social organization of the tribe, in ideas of higher or lower status, in the very form and technique of government itself. It is sometimes said that it is impossible to disentangle religious behavior among primitive peoples from the setting in which it is found. For many primitives, however, it seems almost more correct to say that religion is the one structural reality in the whole of their culture and that what we call art and ethics and science and social organization are hardly more than the applications of the religious point of view to the functions of daily life.

In concluding, attention may be called [79] to the wide distribution of certain sentiments or feelings which are of a peculiarly religious nature and which tend to persist even among the most sophisticated individuals, long after they have ceased to believe in the rationalized justification for these sentiments and feelings. They are by no means to be identified with simple emotions, though they obviously feed on the soil of all emotions. A religious sentiment is typically unconscious, intense, and bound up with a compulsive sense of values. It is possible that modern psychology may analyze them all away as socialized compulsion neuroses, but it is exceedingly doubtful if a healthy social life or a significant individual life is possible without these very sentiments. The first and most important of them is a "feeling of community with a necessary universe of values." In psychological terms, this feeling seem to be a blend of complete humility and a no less complete security. It is only when the fundamental serenity is as intense as fear and as necessary as any of the simpler sentiments that its possessor can be properly termed a mystic.

A second sentiment, which often grows out of the first, is a feeling for sacredness or holiness or divinity. That certain experiences or ideas or objects or personalities must be set apart as symbols of ultimate value is an idea which is repellent to the critical modern mind. It is none the less a necessary sentiment to many, perhaps to most, human beings. The consciously justified infraction of sentiments of holiness, which cannot be recognized by the thinking mind, leads frequently to an inexplicable personal unhappiness.

The taboos of primitive peoples strike us as very bizarre and it is a commonplace of psychoanalysis that many of them have a strange kinship with the apparently self-imposed taboos of neurotics. It is doubtful if many psychologists or students of culture realize the psychological significance of taboo, which seems nothing more nor less than an unconscious striving for the strength that comes from any form of sacrifice or deferment of immediate fulfillments. Certainly all religions have insisted on the importance of both taboo, in its narrower sense of specific interdiction, and sacrifice. It may be that the feeling of the necessity of sacrifice is no more than a translation into action of the sentiment of the holy.

Perhaps the most difficult of the religious sentiments to understand is that of sin, which is almost amusingly abhorrent to the modern mind. Every constellation of sentiments holds within itself its own opposites. The more intense a sentiment, the more certain is the potential presence of a feeling which results from the flouting or thwarting of it. The price for the reality and intensity of the positive sentiments that I have mentioned, any or all of which must of necessity be frequently violated in the course of daily life, is the sentiment of sin, which is a necessary shadow cast by all sincerely religious feeling.

It is, of course, no accident that religion in its most authentic moments has always been prepared to cancel a factual shortcoming in conduct if only it could assure itself that this shortcoming was accompanied by a lively sense of sin. Good works are not the equivalent of the sentiment of ultimate value which religion insists upon. The shadow cast by this sentiment, which is a sense of sin, may be intuitively felt as of more reassuring value than a benevolence which proceeds from mere social habit or from personal indifference. Religion has always been the enemy of self-satisfaction.

Editorial Note

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A. P. A. I (1928, published 1929)

Proceedings, First Colloquium on Personality Investigation, Held under the Auspices of the American Psychiatric Association, Committee on relations with the Social Sciences, December 1–2, 1928, New York City. Baltimore: Lord Baltimore Press

Sapir's associate, psychiatrist Harry Stack Sullivan, was the organizing force behind a colloquium on personality investigation sponsored by the American Psychiatric Association through its committee on the relations of psychiatry to the social sciences. The committee's chair, William Alanson White, was a close colleague of Sullivan. Held in December 1928, the colloquium brought together a group of some 24 social scientists, psychologists, psychiatrists, and physicians (21 invited participants and 3 representatives of the committee). Some of the participants were already acquainted with each other from earlier conferences, including the 1926 Hanover Conference, where Sapir had presented a paper.

Interdisciplinary collaboration proved elusive at the A. P. A. Colloquium's discussions, with some participants emphasizing the differences between approaches rather than their potential connections. The widest gulf was that which separated proponents of qualitative approaches from proponents of quantitative methods and non-symbolic perspectives. Sapir, Sullivan, and their conference allies (including Chicago sociologist Robert Park) emphasized conceptual patterns and systems of ideas, as against participants representing such disciplines as behaviorist psychology and psychometrics. Sapir's most substantial comments – remarks anticipating his 1934 encyclopedia article on "Personality," and chapter 7 of *The Psychology of Culture* – attempted to bridge the divide.

In this meeting Sapir was seen not just as a representative of anthropology or linguistics, but – at least by some participants – as leading the way to interdisciplinary cooperation. The colloquium organizers evidently thought the prospects for productive interaction sufficiently promising to organize a second A. P. A. colloquium the following year.

A complete transcript of the colloquium was published in 1929. We reproduce here only those portions of the discussion in which Sapir participated (pp. 11–12, 52–77–80), and summarize the rest.

Besides Sapir, participants quoted or mentioned herein include

Allport, Floyd (Professor of Social and Political Psychology, Syracuse University)

Burgess, Ernest W. (Professor of Sociology, University of Chicago)

Dickinson, Z. Clark (Professor of Economics, University of Michigan)

Draper, George (practicing physician, Columbia-Presbyterian Medical Center)

Frank, Lawrence (educational psychologist, staff member, Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial)

Glueck, Sheldon (criminologist; Instructor in Criminology and Penology, Department of Social Ethics, Harvard University)

- Healy, William (physician and child psychologist; Director, Judge Baker Foundation, Boston)
- Knight, Frank H. (Professor of Economics, University of Chicago)
- May, Mark (Professor of Educational Psychology, Yale University)
- Outhwaite, Leonard (Berkeley-trained anthropologist; staff member, Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial)
- Park, Robert (Professor of Sociology, University of Chicago)
- Shaw, Clifford (sociologist, Institute for Juvenile Research, Chicago)
- Sullivan, Harry Stack (psychiatrist; Director of Clinical Research, Sheppard and Enoch Pratt Hospital, Baltimore)
- Thomas, William I. (sociologist; Lecturer, New School for Social Research)
- Thurstone, Louis L. (Professor of Psychology, University of Chicago)
- Wells, Frederic Lyman (psychologist; Chief of Psychology Laboratory, Boston Psychiatric Hospital)
- White, William Alanson (neurologist and psychiatrist; Superintendent, St. Elizabeth's Hospital, Washington, D. C.)
- Young, Kimball (Professor of Social Psychology, University of Wisconsin)

Other participants included Gordon W. Allport (social psychologist, then at Dartmouth College), E. R. Groves (sociologist, University of North Carolina), Elton Mayo (industrial psychologist, Graduate School of Business Administration, Harvard University), G. E. Partridge (psychologist, Sheppard and Enoch Pratt Hospital), and — representing the A. P. A., along with Sullivan and White — psychiatrists George M. Kline, Edward J. Kempf, and Arthur Ruggles.

* * *

Chairman William A. White introduced the conference as “informal *conversazione*” in which psychiatrists and social scientists could discuss questions of overlapping and joint interest. The principal problem concerned the relationship between the individual and society — between part and whole.

William I. Thomas, a sociologist, opened with a presentation of “Proposals for the Joint Application of Technique as between Psychiatry and the Social Sciences.” The presentation mentioned several areas of relevant ongoing research, such as studies of the effects of adoption on intelligence, delinquency and psychopathology; studies of dominance and subordination among children; studies of mental disturbance among different races and nationalities; and studies on the relationships among crime, psychopathology, and occupations. Thomas argued for sociological approaches rather than biological ones (a point tacitly agreed on by all conference participants), and called for better life histories and records. The discussion then proceeded as follows:

EDWARD SAPIR. — I was very much interested in Professor Thomas' proposal that we take up the question of behavior monographs. It has always seemed to me that was one of the prime needs of all personality studies. I, myself, am only an amateur and dabbler in the question of personality but I have always wished that there were some place where one could go in order to get acquainted with life personality. I should like to see someone found a series of behavior monographs in which the cases, after revealing themselves as far as possible, are minutely discussed by a number of people interested in personality from different points of view, [so] that we

would all get acquainted more or less with a few dozen typical persons, as it were, in our community, and be able to talk of Case A, B, or C, and be familiar with the interpretations of the various reactions [to] those cases. It seems to me if we could have a series of monographs of behavior of personalities and a careful analysis of what seems to be relevant in these various cases, we might discover how widely different could be our conception of what might be a difference in personality.

FREDERIC L. WELLS. — What sorts of persons would be the subjects of the behavior monographs which are under consideration here, and how would the factual material be gathered? It is possible to gather material of this kind in a very close way through psychological settings. What Dr. Sapir has in mind is normal individuals. How, under the conditions of our present culture, is material of the sort he has in mind to be gathered?

SAPIR. — I can't say that I had in mind entirely normal personalities. I had in mind both normal and abnormal. There are various methods of obtaining case histories. Dr. Kimball Young and Dr. Shaw can probably illuminate us, and Dr. Thomas himself. I am not at all clear in my own mind as to in what form case histories of this kind should be presented. It might be better to experiment with different kinds of presentations and subject those to criticisms, as well as the analyses of them, but it seems to me that my own personal difficulty in considering the question of personality was that I was never quite sure whether my private definition of "personality" corresponds to the other person's definition of "personality." I think we can't get very far by discussing these concepts of ours in the abstract, but that we must work through, experimentally, the usual definitions and concepts via the actual handling of the material.

We have to be, as it were, driven to the wall to accept fairly elaborate working patterns of personality from the case material itself, and that is a very elaborate but I think decidedly worth while idea. I would like to see someone develop techniques for presenting and collecting cases, both normal and abnormal.

Comments by William Healy, Kimball Young, and Frank H. Knight then explored the question of what is meant by "abnormal personality." Ideational content, the psychology of symbolism, and cultural background should be emphasized, they suggested, and subjects should not come only from hospital or penal institutions. Lawrence Frank proposed that the social history and ecology of psychiatric patients was a place for immediate interdisciplinary cooperation. Arthur Ruggles and Robert Park noted the difficulties of translating analytical vocabularies across disciplines. "A fact is a fact only in a universe of discourse," commented Park.

Chairman White then called for each participant to state his position on the problem of interdisciplinary cooperation.

Lawrence Frank suggested some central questions: the relationship between individual and aggregate (or institutional) behavior, and the relationship between conventional (or modal) behavior and deviance. All the disciplines present share some common problems, such as developing a conception of human nature, and investigating how individuals adjust to norms, sanctions, and material conditions.

Clifford Shaw reported on sociological research on delinquency in Chicago. In response to questions, Shaw emphasized "culture" as a factor in the frequency of delinquency in certain areas of the city. Sapir enquired

SAPIR. — I have just one difficulty, Mr. Shaw, with your conception of the cultural nature of these areas. I think I follow you in the main sympathetically, but there is just one question in my mind. Do you mean essentially that the populations in these zones value delinquent conduct as such, and that the intensity of the valuation diminishes as you proceed away from the Loop,¹ or do you mean that the cultural conditions of conflict are such as to bring about in decreasing proportions those deviations of conduct?

SHAW. — I should say the latter was true.

SAPIR. — If that is so, it isn't so much the case of cultural mapping as the mapping of lack of functioning of a culture.

SHAW. — Yes, or the disintegration of a given culture.

SAPIR. — If I felt, for instance, that the people right on the inside of the Loop made a kind of heroic code of certain types of shoplifting or homosexual misdemeanor, that would give me an entirely different point of view.

SHAW. — That may be true.

SAPIR. — For instance, horse stealing is the result of delinquent conduct, but if you are studying the life of the Black[foot] Indians, it is a sort of delinquent conduct looped up with all sorts of supernatural ideas. You would therefore have to know how to interpret that delinquent conduct.

Other participants then reported on their research. Ernest W. Burgess and Sheldon Glueck discussed research on parole violators and reformatory inmates, respectively. George Draper, a physician, raised the problem of how clinical manifestations of disease relate to a patient's personality. Lewis L. Thurstone and Floyd Allport discussed psychometric measurements and analysis, a topic also taken up by Frederic Wells. Mark May mentioned his research on children's honesty and deceptiveness. Z. Clark Dickinson pointed out several intersections between psychology and economics, suggesting that some important theoretical connections had yet to be very well developed.

Discussion on the following day tended to focus on the disciplines' differences: differences in object of interest (groups and generalizations *vs.* individuals and differences), and differences in technique (quantitative *vs.* qualitative). Harry Stack Sullivan started this discussion off, arguing that the participants might merely end up raiding each other's vocabulary without actually understanding each other's conceptions. How was something practical to be achieved, rather than just extending the range of one's inefficiency?

The comments of some participants (such as L. L. Thurstone and Mark May) became quite critical, interpreting methodological differences as deficiencies. Other participants attempted to bring about a *rapprochement* by re-focusing the interdisciplinary objectives of the conference. Among these was Sapir:

EDWARD SAPIR. — I have been disturbed by the obvious unwillingness or hesitation of most of us to throw bridges across the chasms which separate our respective disciplines. We have hesitated to integrate our interests but it is the very purpose of a conference of this kind that we throw away all modesty and hesitation, and hazard the difficult task of seeing our various interests from a common viewpoint.

Thinking over this caution which we all share, I seem to find that the sticking point is that we will not admit what we tacitly accept at every stage, and that is this:

Whether we talk about an individual as a physiological organism or about society, at the other end of the behavior gamut, what we are really talking about is *systems of ideas*. These ideas may be re-interpreted in terms of emotion or any other physiological or psychological terms we please. Even if we describe a human being from what seems to be a physiological standpoint, pure and simple, we are not really especially interested in the mere process of thus analyzing him into his lowest biological terms. If he lifts his arm, that means that he is going to strike somebody or throw a stone, and he does that because he wants to break the window of some person whom he dislikes, or he wants to strike him directly. We get down, in other words, to a specific motive, say, of revenge. So that even if we study personality from the very coldest and most objective point of view, we are more or less tacitly admitting that we are interested in some system of ideas.

Now let us take society, at the other end. As social students, we have been in the habit of stressing the idea that, when all is said and done, an individual is helpless as an individual, in the flux of cultural history. At the beginning of the course that I am in the habit of giving, for example I try to destroy all confidence in the meaning of the "individual," only to find that I must let the individual in by the back door, as it were, toward the end of the course. But society, whatever we may say about it in our books, is actually nothing more nor less than a system of ideas, or several intercrossing systems. We may talk our head off about marriage, for instance, but if we do not see marriage as somehow connected with the process of earning a living, being born and dying, having children, living in peace with our neighbors, becoming personally significant in some little circle that we can call our enlarged ego, if we cannot see marriage in such a complex of meanings, it is not anything real. So that, whether we like it or not, we are really always dealing with systems of ideas, not with mere reactions, or institutions as such. Here is where the psychiatrist comes in. He is the intuitive scientist who is more keenly interested in these systems of human ideas than any other student of behavior. Therefore, I would say that while the psychiatrist probably commits more sins against common sense and fact than any other known scientist, he has the most valuable hunch of any of them, and that many a sociologist and anthropologist, while he has at his disposal the most valuable facts of all facts, frequently commits the most unpardonable sin of all sins, which is not to see those facts as constitutive of a real "personality" or "personalities."

We are all dealing, in some fashion or other, with the concept of personality. But we were careful at the start not to define personality, and perhaps it would have been a good thing if we had defined it. One may give at least five distinct definitions of personality, which are so different from each other that any one of them would have given a distinct slant to our proceedings. It is our job as a group to find out what is the working definition of personality that the psychiatrist brings us. Whether that is the same definition of personality as the sociologist finds most useful for his own purposes is quite another question. It is perfectly possible and useful to have different conceptions of personality. Let the sociologist's "personality," for instance, be what certain psychiatrists call a "persona," an individual conceived of as the mere carrier of social institutions. That is a perfectly good concept, abstracted from the whole of behavior, but it has little to do with what the psychiatrist is interested in. He is thinking of a connected system of ideas which is carried by an individual organism and which is somehow being interpreted in divers ways by other individ-

uals, each swayed by a system of ideas which both resembles and differs from the first.

From the standpoint of the psychiatrist, society as such is not of paramount importance. Society is simply that external human force that cramps the individual. If you read Freud's work, you are always being told that society is the "censor," in other words, the thing that you have got to resist in order to realize yourself. That may be an unscientific, even an irrational, point of view, but it is a significant one for all that. In any case it shows the psychiatrist's bias, which we have to recognize. On the other hand, the sociologist and the anthropologist, and I confess I sympathize with them in many ways, look upon the individual as nothing. "Who are you?" they conceive society to say to the unformed individual. "You are just a set of muscular, endocrine, and other physiological possibilities, and I, society, possess all possible meanings and values. I am going to make you into some kind of representative of the total system of ideas which constitutes my being." Obviously enough, neither point of view expresses more than a useful fiction. There is, therefore, it seems to me, a common ground of discussion in "personality," and whether we call personality that part of the individual's functioning which has meaning, or, on the other hand, we call personality that in society's behavior patterns which can some day be translated into terms of meaning for the individual, is essentially indifferent. We arrive, therefore, at this somewhat curious, yet really necessary, conception that in the last analysis there is no conflict between the concept of "culture" and the concept of "personality," if only we make our abstractions correctly. I would say that what really happens is that every individual acquires and develops his own "culture" and that "culture," as ordinarily handled by the student of society, is really an environmental fact that has no psychological meaning until it is interpreted by being referred to personalities or, at the least, a generalized personality conceived as typical of a given society.

"Why do people resemble each other so much?" asks the psychiatrist. "Because they have all been formed out of common terms in the common matrix of socialized behavior," answers the sociologist. Why does the psychiatrist always feel dissatisfied with the sociologist when he is given this information? Because he wants to brush away all of those factors of human behavior that make the human beings of a society measurably alike, in order to find out to what extent the *given* individual is "integral," true to a certain something — he does not quite know what — that is himself. If the psychiatrist is a behaviorist, he believes that he can prove all of his theories of personality in terms of behaviorism; if, like Jung, he is a philosopher, he may read in types of personality all manner of uncanny revelation; if he is a sociologist, he has a sociological slant. But whatever he is, I think the psychiatrist deals with an unformulated conception of personality which is something like this: Here is a person who, in ways to be defined by the geneticist, by the physiologist, by the psychologist, and by the sociologist, has a definite "form." We do not really see him, we see him only as society declares him to be. We see the mask that he wears. The psychiatrist would like to take that mask off and discover what he really "is."

Obviously, we cannot get hold of the individual immediately on the fertilization of the egg. We must assume as given all the genetic determinants of personality; we will also assume all the prenatal factors; and we will assume, further, all the conditioning factors of, say, the first year or year and a half or two years of life which we

cannot put our fingers on at present but which we feel are of the utmost importance. In other words, as psychiatrists, we are dealing with a human being who is essentially "formed" at the moment that society first gets hold of him. Let us, at this stage, call him the "sub-cultural personality." That is the personality, it seems to me, that the psychiatrist is essentially interested in, all later aspects of "personality" being seen as socially determined modifications of a behavior configuration which persists in maintaining itself as best it can. The psychiatrist and the social scientist, therefore, can best get together not by scolding each other, but by telling each other what aspects of behavior to consider as eliminated in their respective views. Each must teach the other what to avoid as irrelevant, and what to call the "essential personality." We must get together, whether we like it or not, because we are already eliminating, well or badly, in ways which seem to be demanded for our particular purposes. Why not frankly recognize this differing process of elimination in the field of behavior, in order that we may steer clear of each other, recognizing the distinctiveness and the legitimacy of each other's problems?

I think that if the psychiatrist will admit that he is not so much interested, so far as his nuclear concept of personality is concerned, in what people do as in what they are, in their early-formed latencies of behavior rather than in their socially interpreted conduct, and if, furthermore, the psychiatrist will admit in speaking to the sociologist that what the sociologist is interested in is a different conception of personality, there ought to be no special difficulty of mutual understanding. I would plead for the study of actual case histories from the standpoint of an analysis from every possible point of view, ranging from the purely organismal type of interpretation up to the impersonal and abstract formulations of the theoretical sociologist and the philosopher.

Frederic Wells remarked that "Sapir has just crystallized the wide range of topics covered in the conference." He then returned to the problems of psychometrics, however, and the discussion returned to methodological debates. Finally Leonard Outhwaite, referring to Sapir's 1926 Hanover Conference presentation as an example of the interdisciplinary middle-ground, argued that the A. P. A. participants had "created unreal difficulties." Chairman White suggested that there was "already a situation of *rapprochement*, whether we want it or not."

Note

1. "The Loop" is the downtown district of Chicago.

The Unconscious Patterning of Behavior in Society (1928)

Editorial Introduction

Sapir's ideas about the unconscious nature of cultural patterning were elaborated for a conference on the concept of the unconscious in various social science disciplines. Held April 29 – May 1, 1927, under the auspices of the Illinois Society for Mental Hygiene, the conference was organized by W. I. Thomas, the preeminent theoretician of the first generation of Chicago sociologists,¹ and financed by Chicago socialite Ethel Dummer. The proceedings were published the following year, under Dummer's editorship.

Distinguished participants in this interdisciplinary critique of the Freudian concept of the unconscious included Kurt Koffka, a founder of gestalt psychology whose work Sapir discovered in 1924, who discussed the psychological reformulation. Behaviorist experimental psychology was represented by its primary American proponent, John B. Watson.

Thomas was intrigued by personality configuration as understood by the social sciences. Sapir's interest in testing the psychological concept against social science data was directly in line with Thomas's program. Language, representative of culture more generally, provided Sapir with evidence for the "unconscious patterning of behavior," a process he clearly distinguished from the Freudian unconscious as a distinct mechanism of the human mind. Sapir sought a concept of the unconscious which would strengthen his anthropological theory of culture.

Participation in this symposium brought Sapir's formulation of the individual in culture and society to the wide attention of colleagues in other social sciences for the first time. The symposium, and the resulting publication, involved a high-powered collection of individuals and ideas. The intellectual prestige of W. I. Thomas solidified Sapir's role as a spokesman for the emerging interdisciplinary audience. Indeed, Sapir was the only anthropologist who participated actively in the interdisciplinary efforts of the twenties and thirties. In those efforts he functioned

as a mediator between the group emphasis of the sociologists and the individual emphasis of the psychologists, and in that mediating capacity he played a more significant role than he might have done solely as a representative of anthropology as such.

Both in the study of culture and in the study of the individual personality, Sapir emphasized meaning contextualized in symbolic systems, as against the broad current toward behaviorism in the social sciences. The latter was to dominate in the post-war period after Sapir's death; Sapir's semantic and symbolic approach has, however, had considerable resurgence in recent disciplines almost as diverse as those of the interdisciplinarians of the interwar period.

The Unconscious Patterning of Behavior in Society

We may seem to be guilty of a paradox when we speak of the unconscious in reference to social activity. Doubtful as is the usefulness of this concept when we confine ourselves to the behavior of the individual, it may seem to be worse than doubtful when we leave the kinds of behavior that are strictly individual and deal with those more complex kinds of activity which, rightly or wrongly, are supposed to be carried on, not by individuals as such, but by the associations of human beings that constitute society. It may be argued that society has no more of an unconscious than it has hands or legs.

I propose to show, however, that the paradox is a real one only if the term "social behavior" is understood in the very literal sense of behavior referred to groups of human beings which act as such, regardless of the mentalities of the individuals which compose the groups. To such a mystical group alone can a mysterious "social unconsciousness" be ascribed. But as we are very far from believing that such groups [115] really exist, we may be able to persuade ourselves that no more especial kind of unconsciousness need be imputed to social behavior than is needed to understand the behavior of the individual himself. We shall be on much safer ground if we take it for granted that all human behavior involves essentially the same types of mental functioning, as well conscious as unconscious, and that the term "social" is no more exclusive of the concept "unconscious" than is the term "individual," for the very simple reason that the terms "social" and "individual" are contrastive in only a limited sense. We will assume that any kind of psychology that explains the behavior of the individual also explains the beha-

viator of society, in so far as the psychological point of view is applicable to and sufficient for the study of social behavior. It is true that for certain purposes it is very useful to look away entirely from the individual and to think of socialized behavior as though it were carried on by certain larger entities which transcend the psycho-physical organism. But this viewpoint implicitly demands the abandonment of the psychological approach to the explanation of human conduct in society.

It will be clear from what we have said that we do not find the essential difference between individual and social behavior to lie in the psychology of the behavior itself. Strictly speaking, each kind of behavior is individual, the difference in terminology being entirely due to a difference in the point of view. If our attention is focussed on the actual, theoretically [116] measurable behavior of a given individual at a given time and place, we call it "individual behavior," no matter what the physiological or psychological nature of that behavior may be. If, on the other hand, we prefer to eliminate certain aspects of such individual behavior from our consideration and to hold on only to those respects in which it corresponds to certain norms of conduct which have been developed by human beings in association with one another and which tend to perpetuate themselves by tradition, we speak of "social behavior." In other words, social behavior is merely the sum or, better, arrangement of such aspects of individual behavior as are referred to culture patterns that have their proper context, not in the spatial and temporal continuities of biological behavior, but in historical sequences that are imputed to actual behavior by a principle of selection.

We have thus defined the difference between individual and social behavior, not in terms of kind or essence, but in terms of organization. To say that the human being behaves individually at one moment and socially at another is as absurd as to declare that matter follows the laws of chemistry at a certain time and succumbs to the supposedly different laws of atomic physics at another, for matter is always obeying certain mechanical laws which are at one and the same time both physical and chemical according to the manner in which we choose to define its organization. In dealing with human beings, we simply find it more convenient for certain purposes to refer a given act to [117] the psycho-physical organism itself. In other cases the interest happens to lie in continuities that go beyond the individual organism and its functioning, so that a bit of conduct that is objectively no more and no less individual than the first is interpreted in terms of the non-individual patterns that constitute social behavior or cultural behavior.

It would be a useful exercise to force ourselves to see any given human act from both of these points of view and to try to convince ourselves in this way that it is futile to classify human acts as such as having an inherently individual or social significance. It is true that there are a great many organismal functions that it is difficult to think of in social terms, but I think that even here the social point of view may often be applied with success. Few social students are interested, for instance, in the exact manner in which a given individual breathes. Yet it is not to be doubted that our breathing habits are largely conditioned by factors conventionally classified as social. There are polite and impolite ways of breathing. There are special attitudes which seem to characterize whole societies that undoubtedly condition the breathing habits of the individuals who make up these societies. Ordinarily the characteristic rhythm of breathing of a given individual is looked upon as a matter for strictly individual definition. But if, for one reason or another, the emphasis shifts to the consideration of a certain manner of breathing as due to good form or social tradition or some other principle that is usually [118] given a social context, then the whole subject of breathing at once ceases to be a merely individual concern and takes on the appearance of a social pattern. Thus, the regularized breathing of the Hindu Yogi, the subdued breathing of those who are in the presence of a recently deceased companion laid away in a coffin and surrounded by all the ritual of funeral observances, the style of breathing which one learns from an operatic singer who gives lessons on the proper control of the voice, are, each and every one of them, capable of isolation as socialized modes of conduct that have a definite place in the history of human culture, though they are obviously not a whit less facts of individual behavior than the most casual and normal style of breathing, such as one rarely imagines to have other than purely individual applications. Strange as it may seem at first blush, there is no hard and fast line of division as to class of behavior between a given style of breathing, *provided that it be socially interpreted*, and a religious doctrine or a form of political administration. This is not to say that it may not be infinitely more useful to apply the social mode of analysis of human conduct to certain cases and the individual mode of analysis to others. But we do maintain that such differences of analysis are merely imposed by the nature of the interest of the observer and are not inherent in the phenomena themselves.

All cultural behavior is patterned. This is merely a way of saying that many things that an individual [119] does and thinks and feels may be

looked upon not merely from the standpoint of the forms of behavior that are proper to himself as a biological organism but from the standpoint of a generalized mode of conduct that is imputed to society rather than to the individual, though the personal genesis of conduct is of precisely the same nature, whether we choose to call the conduct individual or social. It is impossible to say what an individual is doing unless we have tacitly accepted the essentially arbitrary modes of interpretation that social tradition is constantly suggesting to us from the very moment of our birth. Let anyone who doubts this try the experiment of making a painstaking report of the actions of a group of natives engaged in some form of activity, say religious, to which he has not the cultural key. If he is a skilful writer, he may succeed in giving a picturesque account of what he sees and hears, or thinks he sees and hears, but the chances of his being able to give a relation of what happens in terms that would be intelligible and acceptable to the natives themselves are practically nil. He will be guilty of all manner of distortion. His emphasis will be constantly askew. He will find interesting what the natives take for granted as a casual kind of behavior worthy of no particular comment, and he will utterly fail to observe the crucial turning points in the course of action that give formal significance to the whole in the minds of those who do possess the key to its understanding. This patterning or formal analysis of behavior is to a surprising degree [120] dependent on the mode of apprehension which has been established by the tradition of the group. Forms and significances which seem obvious to an outsider will be denied outright by those who carry out the patterns; outlines and implications that are perfectly clear to these may be absent to the eye of the onlooker. It is the failure to understand the necessity of grasping the native patterning which is responsible for so much unimaginative and misconceiving description of procedures that we have not been brought up with. It becomes actually possible to interpret as base what is inspired by the noblest and even holiest of motives, and to see altruism or beauty where nothing of the kind is either felt or intended.

Ordinarily a cultural pattern is to be defined both in terms of function and of form, the two concepts being inseparably intertwined in practice, however convenient it may be to dissociate them in theory. Many functions of behavior are primary in the sense that an individual organic need, such as the satisfaction of hunger, is being fulfilled, but often the functional side of behavior is either entirely transformed or, at the least, takes on a new increment of significance. In this way new functional

interpretations are constantly being developed for forms set by tradition. Often the true functions of behavior are unknown and a merely rationalized function may be imputed to it. Because of the readiness with which forms of human conduct lose or modify their original functions and take on entirely new ones, it becomes necessary [121] to see social behavior from a formal as well as from a functional point of view, and we shall not consider any kind of human behavior as understood if we can merely give, or think we can give, an answer to the question "For what purpose is this being done?" We shall have also to know what is the precise manner and articulation of the doing.

Now it is a commonplace of observation that the reasoning intelligence seeks to attach itself rather to the functions than to the forms of conduct. For every thousand individuals who can tell with some show of reason why they sing or use words in connected speech or handle money, there is barely one who can adequately define the essential outlines of these modes of behavior. No doubt certain forms will be imputed to such behavior if attention is drawn to it, but experience shows that the forms discovered may be very seriously at variance with those actually followed and discoverable on closer study. In other words, the patterns of social behavior are not necessarily discovered by simple observation, though they may be adhered to with tyrannical consistency in the actual conduct of life. If we can show that normal human beings, both in confessedly social behavior and often in supposedly individual behavior, are reacting in accordance with deep-seated cultural patterns, and if, further, we can show that these patterns are not so much known as felt, not so much capable of conscious description as of naive practice, then we have the right to speak of the "unconscious patterning of [122] behavior in society." The unconscious nature of this patterning consists not in some mysterious function of a racial or social mind reflected in the minds of the individual members of society, but merely in a typical unawareness on the part of the individual of outlines and demarcations and significances of conduct which he is all the time implicitly following. Jung's "racial unconscious" is neither an intelligible nor a necessary concept. It introduces more difficulties than it solves, while we have all we need for the psychological understanding of social behavior in the facts of individual psychology.

Why are the forms of social behavior not adequately known by the normal individual? How is it that we can speak, if only metaphorically, of a social unconscious? I believe that the answer to this question rests in the fact that the relations between the elements of experience which

serve to give them their form and significance are more powerfully "felt" or "intuited" than consciously perceived. It is a matter of common knowledge that it is relatively easy to fix the attention on some arbitrarily selected element of experience, such as a sensation or an emotion, but that it is far from easy to become conscious of the exact place which such an element holds in the total constellations of behavior. It is easy for an Australian native, for instance, to say by what kinship term he calls so and so or whether or not he may undertake such and such relations with a given individual. It is exceedingly difficult for him to give a general rule [123] of which these specific examples of behavior are but illustrations, though all the while he acts as though the rule were perfectly well known to him. *In a sense it is well known to him.* But this knowledge is not capable of conscious manipulation in terms of word symbols. It is, rather, a very delicately nuanced feeling of subtle relations, both experienced and possible. To this kind of knowledge may be applied the term "intuition," which, when so defined, need have no mystic connotations whatever. It is strange how frequently one has the illusion of free knowledge, in the light of which one may manipulate conduct at will, only to discover in the test that one is being impelled by strict loyalty to forms of behavior that one can feel with the utmost nicety but can state only in the vaguest and most approximate fashion. It would seem that we act all the more securely for our unawareness of the patterns that control us. It may well be that, owing to the limitations of the conscious life, any attempt to subject even the higher forms of social behavior to purely conscious control must result in disaster. Perhaps there is a far-reaching moral in the fact that even a child may speak the most difficult language with idiomatic ease but that it takes an unusually analytical type of mind to define the mere elements of that incredibly subtle linguistic mechanism which is but a plaything of the child's unconscious. Is it not possible that the contemporary mind, in its restless attempt to drag all the forms of behavior into consciousness and to apply the results of [124] its fragmentary or experimental analysis to the guidance of conduct, is really throwing away a greater wealth for the sake of a lesser and more dazzling one? It is almost as though a misguided enthusiast exchanged his thousands of dollars of accumulated credit at the bank for a few glittering coins of manifest, though little, worth.

We shall now give a number of examples of patterns of social behavior and show that they are very incompletely, if at all, known by the normal, naive individual. We shall see that the penumbra of uncon-

scious patterning of social behavior is an extraordinarily complex realm, in which one and the same type of overt behavior may have altogether distinct significances in accordance with its relation to other types of behavior. Owing to the compelling, but mainly unconscious, nature of the forms of social behavior, it becomes almost impossible for the normal individual to observe or to conceive of functionally similar types of behavior in other societies than his own, or in other cultural contexts than those he has experienced, without projecting into them the forms that he is familiar with. In other words, one is always unconsciously finding what one is in unconscious subjection to.

Our first example will be taken from the field of language. Language has the somewhat exceptional property that its forms are, for the most part, indirect rather than direct in their functional significance. The sounds, words, grammatical forms, syntactic constructions, and other linguistic forms that we assimilate in [125] childhood have only value in so far as society has tacitly agreed to see them as symbols of reference. For this reason language is an unusually favorable domain for the study of the general tendency of cultural behavior to work out all sorts of formal elaborations that have only a secondary, and, as it were, "after the event" relevance to functional needs. Purely functional explanations of language, if valid, would lead us to expect either a far greater uniformity in linguistic expression than we actually find, or should lead us to discover strict relations of a functional nature between a particular form of language and the culture of the people using it. Neither of these expectations is fulfilled by the facts. Whatever may be true of other types of cultural behavior, we can safely say that the forms of speech developed in the different parts of the world are at once free and necessary, in the sense in which all artistic productions are free and necessary. Linguistic forms as we find them bear only the loosest relation to the cultural needs of a given society, but they have the very tightest consistency as aesthetic products.

A very simple example of the justice of these remarks is afforded by the English plural. To most of us who speak English the tangible expression of the plural idea in the noun seems to be a self-evident necessity. Careful observation of English usage, however, leads to the conviction that this self-evident necessity of expression is more of an illusion than a reality. If the plural were to be understood [126] functionally alone, we should find it difficult to explain why we use plural forms with numerals and other words that in themselves imply plurality. "Five man" or "several house" would be just as adequate as "five men" or

"several houses." Clearly, what has happened is that English, like all of the other Indo-European languages, has developed a feeling for the classification of all expressions which have a nominal form into singulars and plurals. So much is this the case that in the early period of the history of our linguistic family even the adjective, which is nominal in form, is unusable except in conjunction with the category of number. In many of the languages of the group this habit still persists. Such notions as "white" or "long" are incapable of expression in French or Russian without formal commitments on the score of whether the quality is predicated of one or several persons or objects. Now it is not denied that the expression of the concept of plurality is useful. Indeed, a language that is forever incapable of making the difference between the one and the many is obviously to that extent hampered in its technique of expression. But we must emphatically deny that this particular kind of expression need ever develop into the complex formal system of number definition that we are familiar with. In many other linguistic groups the concept of number belongs to the group of optionally expressible notions. In Chinese, for instance, the word "man" may be interpreted as the English equivalent of either "man" or "men," according to the [127] particular context in which the word is used. It is to be carefully noted, however, that this formal ambiguity is never a functional one. Terms of inherent plurality, such as "five," "all," or "several," or of inherent singularity, such as "one" or "my" in the phrase "my wife," can always be counted upon to render factually clear what is formally left to the imagination. If the ambiguity persists, it is a useful one or one that does not matter. How little the expression of our concept of number is left to the practical exigencies of a particular case, how much it is a matter of consistency of aesthetic treatment, will be obvious from such examples as the editorial "we are in favor of prohibition," when what is really meant is "I, John Smith, am in favor of prohibition."

A complete survey of the methods of handling the category of number in the languages of the world would reveal an astonishing variety of treatment. In some languages number is a necessary and well-developed category. In others it is an accessory or optional one. In still others, it can hardly be considered as a grammatical category at all but is left entirely to the implications of vocabulary and syntax. Now the interesting thing psychologically about this variety of forms is this, that while everyone may learn to see the need of distinguishing the one from the many and has some sort of notion that his language more or less

adequately provides for this necessity, only a very competent philologist has any notion of the true formal outlines of the expression of plurality, of [128] whether, for instance, it constitutes a category comparable to that of gender or case, whether or not it is separable from the expression of gender, whether it is a strictly nominal category or a verbal one or both, whether it is used as a level for syntactic expression, and so on. Here are found determinations of a bewildering variety, concerning which few even among the sophisticated have any clarity, though the lowliest peasant or savage head-hunter may have control of them in his intuitive repertoire.

So great are the possibilities of linguistic patterning that the languages actually known seem to present the whole gamut of possible forms. We have extremely analytic types of speech, such as Chinese, in which the formal unit of discourse, the word, expresses nothing in itself but a single notion of thing or quality or activity or else some relational nuance. At the other extreme are the incredibly complex languages of many American Indian tribes, languages of the so-called polysynthetic type, in which the same formal unit, the word, is a sentence microcosm full of delicate formal elaborations of the most specialized type. Let one example do for many. Anyone who is brought up in English, even if he has had the benefit of some familiarity with the classical languages, will take it for granted that in such a sentence as "Shall I have the people move across the river to the east?" there is rather little elbow room for varieties of formal expression. It would not easily occur to us, for instance, that the notion of "to the east" might be [129] conveyed not by an independent word or phrase but by a mere suffix in a complex verb.

There is a rather obscure Indian language in northern California, Yana, which not only can express this thought in a single word, but would find it difficult to express it in any other way. The form of expression which is peculiar to Yana may be roughly analyzed as follows. The first element in the verb complex indicates the notion of several people living together or moving as a group from place to place. This element, which we may call the "verb stem," can only occur at the beginning of the verb, never in any other position. The second element in the complete word indicates the notion of crossing a stream or of moving from one side of an area to the other. It is in no sense an independent word, but can only be used as an element attached to a verb stem or to other elements which have themselves been attached to the verb stem. The third element in the word is similarly suffixed and conveys the notion of movement toward the east. It is one of a set of eight elements which

convey the respective notions of movement toward the east, south, west, and north. None of these elements is an intelligible word in itself but receives meaning only in so far as it falls into its proper place in the complexly organized verb. The fourth element is a suffix that indicates the relation of causality, that is, of causing one to do or be something, bringing it about that one does or is in a certain way, treating one in such [130] and such an indicated manner. At this point the language indulges in a rather pretty piece of formal play. The vowel of the verb stem which we spoke of as occupying the first position in the verb symbolized the intransitive or static mode of apprehension of the act. As soon as the causative notion is introduced, however, the verb stem is compelled to pass to the category of transitivized or active notions, which means that the causative suffix, in spite of the parenthetical inclusion of certain notions of direction of movement, has the retroactive effect of changing the vowel of the stem. Up to this point, therefore, we get a perfectly unified complex of notions which may be rendered "to cause a group to move across a stream in an easterly direction."

But this is not yet a word, at least not a word in the finished sense of the term, for the elements that are still to follow have just as little independent existence as those we have already referred to. Of the more formal elements that are needed to complete the word, the first is a tense suffix referring to the future. This is followed by a pronominal element which refers to the first person singular, and is different in form from the suffixed pronoun used in other tenses and modalities. Finally, there is an element consisting of a single consonant which indicates that the whole word, which is a complete proposition in itself, is to be understood in the interrogative sense. Here again the language illustrates an interesting kind of specialization of form. Nearly all words of the language [131] differ slightly in form according to whether the speaker is a man speaking to a man or, on the other hand, is a woman or is a man speaking to a woman. The interrogative form that we have just discussed can only be used by a man speaking to a man. In the other three cases the suffix in question is not used, but the last vowel of the word, which in this particular case happens to be the final vowel of the pronominal suffix, is lengthened in order to express the interrogative modality.

We are not in the least interested in the details of this analysis, but some of its implications should interest us. In the first place, it is necessary to bear in mind that there is nothing arbitrary or accidental or even curious about the structure of this word. Every element falls into

its proper place in accordance with definitely formulable rules which can be discovered by the investigator but of which the speakers themselves have no more conscious knowledge than of the inhabitants of the moon. It is possible to say, for instance, that the verb stem is a particular example of a large number of elements which belong to the same general class, such as "to sit," "to walk," "to run," "to jump," and so on; or that the element which expresses the idea of crossing from one side to another is a particular example of a large class of local elements of parallel function, such as "to the next house," "up the hill," "into a hollow," "over the crest," "down hill," "under," "over," "in the middle of," "off," "hither," and so on. We may quite [132] safely assume that no Yana Indian ever had the slightest knowledge of classifications such as these or ever possessed even an inkling of the fact that his language neatly symbolized classifications of this sort by means of its phonetic apparatus and by rigid rules of sequence and cohesion or formal elements. Yet all the while we may be perfectly certain that the relations which give the elements of the language their significance were somehow felt and adhered to. A mistake in the vowel of the first syllable, for instance, would undoubtedly feel to a native speaker like a self-contradictory form in English, for instance "five house" instead of "five houses" or "they runs" instead of "they run." Mistakes of this sort are resisted as any aesthetic transgression might be resisted — as being somehow incongruous, out of the picture, or, if one chooses to rationalize the resistance, as inherently illogical.

The unconscious patterning of linguistic conduct is discoverable not only in the significant forms of language but, just as surely, in the several materials out of which language is built, namely the vowels and consonants, the changes of stress and quantity, and the fleeting intonations of speech. It is quite an illusion to believe that the sounds and the sound dynamics of language can be sufficiently defined by more or less detailed statements of how the speech articulations are managed in a neurological or muscular sense. Every language has a phonetic scheme in which a given sound or a given dynamic treatment of a [133] sound has a definite configured place in reference to all the other sounds recognized by the language. The single sound, in other words, is in no sense identical with an articulation or with the perception of an articulation. It is, rather, a point in a pattern, precisely as a tone in a given musical tradition is a point in a pattern which includes the whole range of aesthetically possible tones. Two given tones may be physically distinguished but aesthetically identical because each is heard or understood

as occupying the same formal position in the total set of recognized tones. In a musical tradition which does not recognize chromatic intervals "C sharp" would have to be identified with "c" and would be considered as a mere deviation, pleasant or unpleasant, from "C." In our own musical tradition the difference between "C" and "C sharp" is crucial to an understanding of all our music, and, by unconscious projection, to a certain way of misunderstanding all other music built on different principles. In still other musical traditions there are recognized still finer intervallic differences, none of which quite corresponds to our semitone interval. In these three cases it is obvious that nothing can be said as to the cultural and aesthetic status of a given tone in a song unless we know or feel against what sort of general tonal background it is to be interpreted.

It is precisely so with the sounds of speech. From a purely objective standpoint the difference between the *k* of "kill" and the *k* of "skill" is as easily [134] definable as the, to us, major difference between the *k* of "kill" and the *g* of "gill" (of a fish). In some languages the *g* sound of "gill" would be looked upon, or rather would be intuitively interpreted, as a comparatively unimportant or individual divergence from a sound typically represented by the *k* of "skill," while the *k* of "kill," with its greater strength of articulation and its audible breath release, would constitute an utterly distinct phonetic entity. Obviously the two distinct *k* sounds of such a language and the two ways of pronouncing the *k* in English, while objectively comparable and even identical phenomena, are from the point of view of patterning utterly different. Hundreds of interesting and, at first blush, strangely paradoxical examples of this sort could be given, but the subject is perhaps too technical for treatment in this paper.

It is needless to say that no normal speaker has an adequate knowledge of these submerged sound configurations. He is the unconscious and magnificently loyal adherent of thoroughly socialized phonetic patterns, which are simple and self-evident in daily practice, but subtly involved and historically determined in actual fact. Owing to the necessity of thinking of speech habits not merely in overt terms but as involving the setting up of intuitively mastered relations in suitable contexts, we need not be surprised that an articulatory habit which is perfectly feasible in one set of relations becomes subjectively impossible when the pattern in which it is to be fitted is changed. [135] Thus, an English-speaking person who is utterly unable to pronounce a French nasalized vowel may nevertheless be quite able to execute the necessary articula-

tion in another context, such as the imitation of snoring or of the sound of some wild animal. Again, the Frenchman or German who cannot pronounce the “wh” of our American-English “why” can easily produce the same sound when he gently blows out a candle. It is obviously correct to say that the acts illustrated in these cases can only be understood as they are fitted into definite cultural patterns concerning the form and mechanics of which the normal individual has no adequate knowledge.

We may summarize our interpretation of these, and thousands of other, examples of language behavior by saying that in each case an unconscious control of very complicated configurations or formal sets is individually acquired by processes which it is the business of the psychologist to try to understand but that, in spite of the enormously varied psychological predispositions and types of conditioning which characterize different personalities, these patterns in their completed form differ only infinitesimally from individual to individual, in many cases from generation to generation. And yet these forms lie entirely outside the inherited biological tendencies of the race and can be explained only in strictly social terms. In the simple facts of language we have an excellent example of an important network of patterns of behavior, each of them exceedingly complex and, [136] to a large extent, only vaguely definable functions, which is preserved and transmitted with a minimum of consciousness. The forms of speech so transmitted seem as necessary as the simplest reflexes of the organism. So powerfully, indeed, are we in the grip of our phonetic habits that it becomes one of the most delicate and difficult tasks of the linguistic student to discover what is the true configuration of sounds in languages alien to his own. This means that the average person unconsciously interprets the phonetic material of other languages in terms imposed upon him by the habits of his own language. Thus, the naive Frenchman confounds the two sounds “s” of “sick” and “th” of “thick” in a single pattern point – not because he is really unable to hear the difference, but because the setting up of such a difference disturbs his feeling for the necessary configuration of linguistic sounds. It is as though an observer from Mars, knowing nothing of the custom we call war, were intuitively led to confound a punishable murder with a thoroughly legal and noble act of killing in the course of battle. The mechanism of projection of patterns is as evident in the one case as in the other.

Not all forms of cultural behavior so well illustrate the mechanics of unconscious patterning as does linguistic behavior, but there are few, if

any, types of cultural behavior which do not illustrate it. Functional considerations of all kinds, leading to a greater degree of conscious control, or apparent control, of the patterns of behavior, tend to obscure the unconscious [137] nature of the patterns themselves, but the more carefully we study cultural behavior, the more thoroughly we become convinced that the differences are but differences of degree. A very good example of another field for the development of unconscious cultural patterns is that of gesture. Gestures are hard to classify and it is difficult to make a conscious separation between that in gesture which is of merely individual origin and that which is referable to the habits of the group as a whole. In spite of these difficulties of conscious analysis, we respond to gestures with an extreme alertness and, one might almost say, in accordance with an elaborate and secret code that is written nowhere, known by none, and understood by all. But this code is by no means referable to simple organic responses. On the contrary, it is as finely certain and artificial, as definitely a creation of social tradition, as language or religion or industrial technology. Like everything else in human conduct, gesture roots in the reactive necessities of the organism, but the laws of gesture, the unwritten code of gestured messages and responses, is the anonymous work of an elaborate social tradition. Whoever doubts this may soon become convinced when he penetrates into the significance of gesture patterns of other societies than his own. A Jewish or Italian shrug of the shoulders is no more the same pattern of behavior as the shrug of a typical American than the forms and significant evocations of the Yiddish or Italian sentence are identical with those of any thinkable English [138] sentence. The differences are not to be referred to supposedly deep-seated racial differences of a biological sort. They lie in the unconsciously apprehended builds of the respective social patterns which include them and out of which they have been abstracted for an essentially artificial comparison. A certain immobility of countenance in New York or Chicago may be interpreted as a masterly example of the art of wearing a poker face, but when worn by a perfectly average inhabitant of Tokyo, it may be explainable as nothing more interesting or important than the simplest and most obvious of good manners. It is the failure to understand the relativity of gesture and posture, the degree to which these classes of behavior are referable to social patterns which transcend merely individual psychological significances, which makes it so easy for us to find individual indices of personality where it is only the alien culture that speaks.

In the economic life of a people, too, we are constantly forced to recognize the pervasive influence of patterns which stand in no immediate relation to the needs of the organism and which are by no means to be taken for granted in a general philosophy of economic conduct but which must be fitted into the framework of social forms characteristic of a given society. There is not only an unconscious patterning of the types of endeavor that are classed as economic, there is even such a thing as a characteristic patterning of economic motive. Thus, the acquirement of [139] wealth is not to be lightly taken for granted as one of the basic drives of human beings. One accumulates property, one defers the immediate enjoyment of wealth, only in so far as society sets the pace for these activities and inhibitions. Many primitive societies are quite innocent of an understanding of the accumulation of wealth in our sense of the phrase. Even where there is a definite feeling that wealth should be accumulated, the motives which are responsible for the practice and which give definite form to the methods of acquiring wealth are often signally different from such as we can readily understand.

The West Coast Indians of British Columbia have often been quoted as a primitive society that has developed a philosophy of wealth which is somewhat comparable to our own, with its emphasis on "conspicuous waste" and on the sacrosanct character of property. The comparison is not essentially sound. The West Coast Indian does not handle wealth in a manner which we can recognize as our own. We can find plenty of analogies, to be sure, but they are more likely to be misleading than helpful. No West Coast Indian, so far as we know, ever amassed wealth as an individual pure and simple, with the expectation of disposing of it in the fullness of time at his own sweet will. This is a dream of the modern European and American individualist, and it is a dream which not only brings no thrill to the heart of the West Coast Indian but is probably almost meaningless to him. The concepts of wealth and the display of honorific [140] privileges, such as crests and dances and songs and names, which have been inherited from legendary ancestors, are inseparable among these Indians. One cannot publicly exhibit such a privilege without expending wealth in connection with it. Nor is there much object in accumulating wealth except to reaffirm privileges already possessed, or, in the spirit of a parvenu, to imply the possession of privileges none too clearly recognized as legitimate by one's fellow tribesmen. In other words, wealth, beyond a certain point, is with these people much more a token of status than it is a tool for the fulfillment

of personal desires. We may go so far as to say that among the West Coast Indians it is not the individual at all who possesses wealth. It is primarily the ceremonial patrimony of which he is the temporary custodian that demands the symbolism of wealth. Arrived at a certain age, the West Coast Indian turns his privileges over to those who are by kin or marriage connection entitled to manipulate them. Henceforth he may be as poor as a church mouse, without loss of prestige. I should not like to go so far as to say that the concepts of wealth among ourselves and among the West Coast Indians are utterly different things. Obviously they are nothing of the kind, but they are measurably distinct and the nature of the difference must be sought in the total patterning of life in the two communities from which the particular pattern of wealth and its acquirement has been extracted. It should be fairly clear that where the patterns of manipulation [141] of wealth are as different as they are in these two cases, it would be a mere exercise of the academic imagination to interpret the economic activities of one society in terms of the general economy which has been abstracted from the mode of life of the other.

No matter where we turn in the field of social behavior, men and women do what they do, and cannot help but do, not merely because they are built thus and so, or possess such and such differences of personality, or must needs adapt to their immediate environment in such and such a way in order to survive at all, but very largely because they have found it easiest and aesthetically most satisfactory to pattern their conduct in accordance with more or less clearly organized forms of behavior which no one is individually responsible for, which are not clearly grasped in their true nature, and which one might almost say are as self-evidently imputed to the nature of things as the three dimensions are imputed to space. It is sometimes necessary to become conscious of the forms of social behavior in order to bring about a more serviceable adaptation to changed conditions, but I believe it can be laid down as a principle of far-reaching application that in the normal business of life it is useless and even mischievous for the individual to carry the conscious analysis of his cultural patterns around with him. That should be left to the student whose business it is to understand these patterns. A healthy unconsciousness of the forms of socialized behavior to which we are subject is as necessary to [142] society as is the mind's ignorance, or better unawareness, of the workings of the viscera to the health of the body. In great works of the imagination form is significant only in so far as we feel ourselves to be in its grip.

It is unimpressive when divulged in the explicit terms of this or that simple or complex arrangement of known elements. So, too, in social behavior, it is not the overt forms that rise readily to the surface of attention that are most worth our while. We must learn to take joy in the larger freedom of loyalty to thousands of subtle patterns of behavior that we can never hope to understand in explicit terms. Complete analysis and the conscious control that comes with a complete analysis are at best but the medicine of society, not its food. We must never allow ourselves to substitute the starveling calories of knowledge for the meat and bread of historical experience. This historic experience may be theoretically knowable, but it dare never be fully known in the conduct of daily life.

Editorial Notes

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Note

1. His influence persisted even after he left the University of Chicago in 1918.

American Psychiatric Association II (1929, published 1930)

Proceedings, Second Colloquium on Personality Investigation, Held under the Joint Auspices of the American Psychiatric Association Committee on the Relations of Psychiatry and the Social Sciences, and of the Social Science Research Council, November 29-30, 1929, New York City. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins Press.

The second A. P. A. colloquium on personality investigation, held in November 1929, was sponsored jointly with the Social Science Research Council. Seven of the participants had been present at the first colloquium. Prior to the meeting, the organizers had asked each participant to submit a statement explaining his conception of "personality," so that the statements could be mimeographed and distributed to all. Participants were also requested to prepare presentations on studies they were now conducting that related to personality, and to mention the kinds of information they believed other investigations might supply for them. In addition, they provided bibliographies of their own publications and lists of recommended readings in their particular fields.

Unlike the colloquium of the previous year, this A. P. A. meeting was dominated by qualitative, meaning-based approaches to personality. Although representatives of quantitative, nonsymbolic approaches in psychology were present, including some who (in 1928) had criticized the qualitative perspective, they did not participate on an equal footing. The table of contents for the colloquium's *Proceedings* reflects this disparity, showing distinctive entries for presentations by Sullivan, Sapir, and Lasswell, while other participants are not specially singled out.

After the initial discussion of participants' current projects, Sullivan presented a statement on schizophrenic individuals as a source of data for comparative investigation of personality. Later in the meeting Sullivan, Sapir, and Lasswell offered proposals for future interdisciplinary research. Sullivan again led off, with his brief "Proposal for research in personality investigation by the personality document (life history) method." This was followed immediately by Sapir's contribution, "A proposal for three-fold inquiry into personality." Finally, Lasswell spoke on the training of research personnel, a theme Sapir was later to take up in committee meetings of the Social Science Research Council.

At first, the colloquium participants seem to have looked to Sapir to provide exotic examples from "primitive cultures" as "marginal situations" comparable to the communities formed by psychiatric patients and their attendants (p. 48). Although Sapir did offer several examples of cultural settings illustrating different environments for personality adjustment, his research proposal argued that culture as such was outside the purview of the colloquium's concerns. To study personality was to study individuals; culture was but the background against which the individual appeared. The research he advocated emphasized life histories of specific individuals, starting with contempo-

rary urban America and "normal" cases, then comparing these with a study of American schizophrenics, on the one hand, and studies of individuals in other societies, on the other.

This research proposal is sketched only in very general terms. Sapir himself never actually undertook serious research of this type. Although he had experimented with the life history as a genre for presenting ethnography to a popular audience (1918i, 1922y), its possible role as the focus of research did not crystallize for him until after he had met Sullivan. By the 1930's, he was encouraging students to work along these lines. Walter Dyk's *Son of Old Man Hat*, to which Sapir contributed a Foreword (1938a), became an anthropological classic of the genre.

A full transcript of the A. P. A. meeting was published in 1930. We reproduce here only those portions of the discussion that include substantive comments by Sapir (pp. 37-39, 48-54, 60-61, 64, 67, 84-87, 96-97, 122-27, 153), with a digest of the remainder to provide context. A few queries and minor comments Sapir addressed to other participants are omitted.

Appended to the transcript of the colloquium (as Appendix A) are the participants' formulations of their conceptions of personality, submitted before the meeting. Sapir's contribution recalls his brief comments at the A. P. A. meeting of the previous year. It was later to be further developed in his encyclopedia article on "Personality" and in chapter 7 of *The Psychology of Culture*. In a second Appendix, colloquium participants provided bibliographies of their own writings, with asterisks indicating those works they considered to be most relevant to the problem of personality investigation. Sapir's bibliography includes most of his substantive academic publications in anthropology and linguistics through 1929 (brief contributions, administrative reports, writings on contemporary literature, and reviews are omitted). Our summary lists the marked items by date, within the headings Sapir provided. Finally, a third Appendix presented a set of annotated bibliographies (a "reading list") prepared by the colloquium participants. Sapir contributed most of the bibliographic entries in anthropology and linguistics. A few other entries in those categories, such as the entries for Sapir's own "Time Perspective" essay and his book *Language*, were offered by Sullivan and Thomas, but we reproduce only the ones Sapir himself annotated.

Colloquium participants quoted or mentioned herein, besides Sapir, include:

- Anderson, John E. (Professor of Psychology and Director of the Institute of Child Welfare, University of Minnesota)
- Blatz, William A. (psychologist, University of Toronto; member, National Committee for Mental Hygiene, Canada)
- Blumer, Herbert (Professor of Sociology, University of Chicago)
- Burgess, Ernest W. (Professor of Sociology, University of Chicago)
- Casamajor, Louis (physician and psychiatrist, Columbia University)
- Field, Henry E. (anthropologist, University of New Zealand)
- Frank, Lawrence K. (educational psychologist; staff member, Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial)
- Gesell, Arnold (clinical psychologist; Yale Psycho-Clinic, Yale University)
- Healy, William (physician and psychologist; Director, Judge Baker Foundation, Boston)
- Kelley, Truman L. (Professor of Education and Psychology, Stanford University)
- Lasswell, Harold (political scientist, University of Chicago)

Levy, David (psychiatrist, Institute for Child Guidance)
Lowrey, Lawson G. (psychiatrist, Institute for Child Guidance)
May, Mark (Professor of Educational Psychology, Yale University)
Plant, James S. (psychiatrist, Essex County Juvenile Clinic)
Slawson, John S. (social psychologist, Jewish Welfare Foundation of Detroit)
Sullivan, Harry Stack (psychiatrist, Sheppard and Enoch Pratt Hospital, Baltimore)
Thomas, Dorothy S. (sociologist, Columbia and Yale Universities)
Thomas, William I. (sociologist, ex-lecturer, New School for Social Research, New York City)

As in the previous year, the A. P. A. was represented by psychiatrists White, Sullivan, George M. Kline, Arthur H. Ruggles, and C. Floyd Haviland (replacing Edward J. Kempf).

* * *

William A. White being absent, the colloquium was opened by another A. P. A. committee member, George M. Kline, who read an introductory statement inviting interdisciplinary cooperation, disparaging disciplinary "imperialism," and highlighting the importance of investigations of childhood personality development and socialization. The remainder of the meeting was jointly chaired by the psychiatrist Harry Stack Sullivan and the political scientist Harold D. Lasswell.

The first part of the meeting focused on reports of work in progress, presented by each participant. The majority of the projects concerned personality development in children or adolescents. John E. Anderson, Dorothy Thomas, and Lawrence K. Frank each reported on observations of children's play activities, mainly in nursery schools. Frank's report also emphasized relationships between social functioning and physical growth. Louis Casamajor, Arnold Gesell, and Lawson G. Lowrey described research in clinical settings, while William Healy reported on European work, especially from researchers he had visited in Germany and Switzerland. Lowrey, Healy, and John S. Slawson were particularly concerned with deviant or pathological personalities, as was James S. Plant, who discussed cultural and social-situational factors in a study of psychiatric case-histories. David M. Levy described studies of mothers' influence on children, using a combination of methods. Emphasizing quantitative methods were Truman L. Kelley, who reported on the development of testing measures for various cognitive abilities, and Mark May, who discussed questionnaire studies of students in professional graduate schools.

Projects not specially focused on developmental issues included those reported by Ernest W. Burgess (a sociologist describing criminology research in Chicago), Harold D. Lasswell (reporting on community studies), William I. Thomas (discussing a sociological study comparing behavior problems among Swedes and Italians), and Harry Stack Sullivan (describing his experiences with adult schizophrenics). Sapir's report fell in this group:

SAPIR. — I am rather an outsider in many respects in this conference. The particular problems that I have been interested in, and which I hope to continue to be interested in, are in the field of speech. The experiments, which are only in an embryonic stage at present, are of two sorts. One of them has grown out of some work that I did for the Institute of Juvenile Research in Chicago; another is one that has not yet been

started and which I wish to say a word about a little later. As to the first of these, I may describe it as constituting a study of individual symbolism in the domain of speech.

The gist of this type of work is reported on in a paper entitled "The Study of Symbolism," in the June, 1929 number of the *Journal of Experimental Psychology*.¹ I do not need to enlarge upon that here, but I should like to read a few extracts from the paper. Before doing so let me briefly explain the sort of thoughts that I had in mind when I instituted this somewhat peculiar experiment.

I have wanted to find some sort of evidence for the existence of preferential responses in individuals in the domain of word investigation *aside from actual social experience*. "Word investigation" sounds somewhat paradoxical; it is, in a sense, and yet it has, I think, a certain significance in practice. We know from experience that words have a meaning or a modicum of meaning that is over and above the official meaning that attaches to the word in actual social usage and that comes out in slight variations of emphasis or feeling-tone or what not. It seemed to me that the personality was expressing itself in all individuals in these increments of meaning to a certain varying extent difficult to detect. In this particular set-up I tried to eliminate as well as I could the social determinants of speech and to remove the whole problem to an artificial context.

"In this experiment," as I proceed to explain in the paper, "an artificial word was taken as a starting point and assigned an arbitrary meaning by either the investigator or the subject. The subject was asked to hold on to this arbitrary meaning and to try to establish as firm an association as possible between the imaginary word and its given meaning. Some phonetic element in the word, a vowel or a consonant, was then changed and the subject asked to say what difference of meaning seemed naturally to result. The answer was to be spontaneous, unintellectualized.

"The process was kept on for as long a period as seemed worth while, the saturation point of meaningful and interested responses being reached very soon in some cases, very late in others. In the case of certain individuals, more than fifty distinct words were found to build up a constellated system in which the meanings were rather obviously the results of certain intuitively felt symbolic relations between the varied sounds. In the case of other individuals, actual word associations tended to creep in, but on the whole there was surprisingly little evidence of this factor. The subjects were found to differ a great deal in their ability to hold on without effort to a constellation once formed and to fit new meanings into it consistently with the symbolisms expressed in previous responses. Some would give identically the same responses for a stimulus word that had been — so it was claimed — forgotten as such. In its imaginary, constellated context it evoked a consistent response. Others lost their moorings very rapidly.

"It is hoped to discuss these interesting variations of sensitivity to sound symbolism, *i. e.*, to the potential meaningfulness of relations in sound sets, in the final report of these investigations."

These response groups have, I am convinced, a very real significance from the standpoint of personality. We can probably show that there are symbolic sets in any type of behavior, say auditory, visual, or kinaesthetic. We may find that there are very striking differences in individuals. In the case of some individuals, for instance, we will probably find that self-developed symbolism sets can be broken up very rapidly

and adjusted to the functional needs of the social environment. In the case of other individuals we might have what may be termed personal constellations of meaning that can be eliminated by the individual only with some difficulty, though slight and unconscious before he adjusts socially. I may refer to a particular case that interested me. One of the subjects from whom I got a set of responses had the reputation of being rather unreasonable. She said herself that the reasons for things often seemed perfectly clear to her but that there were not understood by others. The interesting thing about her responses was that they were, as a matter of fact, extraordinarily "logical" in their given setting. It will be well to go into a little detail in regard to them. We were investigating a set of imaginary words beginning with a certain word for which she gave the meaning "eucalyptus tree." As I changed certain vowels and consonants in this word, she kept on to the idea of some kind of tree, but as the sound changed, the tree changed. She would come to certain points in the series where she would say, "I don't know enough about botany to tell you what this particular tree is, but I can see it. It is short and shady," for instance, and her response would fit in nicely with the terms and meanings which preceded and followed. The point of all this is that she was carrying around with her a tendency to systematization of symbols regardless of overt experience, or, at least, the experience was deeply hidden and very indirectly related to its symbolization. There were plenty of other subjects, however, that did not react in this way at all. Some of them could keep the symbol sequence up for only two or three responses. It seemed to me that here was illustrated a very interesting difference in individuals in what might be called the tendency to constellate symbolisms.

This is a type of experiment that we might carry over into many different realms of sensory behavior. I am hoping, with the help of some of our graduate students to go on with this type of work.

The second type of research in which I shall be interested, and of which I know little and have everything to learn, is the personality value of the voice itself. I essayed a couple of years ago to write a little preliminary statement in the *American Journal of Sociology* on this matter in a paper entitled "Speech as a Personality Trait." In this I attempted to show that there were four or five relatively distinct "layers of expression" in speech, starting from the physiological or the laryngeal basis up to a highly socialized strata, such as facts of form and diction in the actual sentence, and that in these different layers one expresses certain more or less symptomatic personality tendencies.

We are hoping, at the University of Chicago, in the set-up which Dr. Lasswell referred to this morning, to install a device for the exact recording of speech which can then be studied at leisure in order that we may work out some of the more obvious traits of personality which are revealed in speech. The only way to do this is to study the voice apart from other behavior studies and then later to try to check up with the case records or other types of personality studies of the subjects. As a matter of fact, we react to speech keenly in ordinary life. It is perfectly obvious that our judgments of people and of situations are, to a large extent, due to such phenomena as tone of voice, chronic hesitation in speech, and all the rest of the voice and speech characters, only these impressions are never formulated in so many words. Indeed our vocabulary for peculiarities of voice and for ways of handling speech is strangely limited. One of the things we should like to do is develop such a vocabulary

on the basis of almost microscopic study of actual speech records. As I say, I have no results at all; I have everything to learn.

After the reports, Chairman Lasswell called for discussion, asking Sapir to comment as a representative of anthropology:

CHAIRMAN LASSWELL. — So far this discussion has summarized the projects on which everyone is engaged. I take it that one of the most unique and valuable things that could happen in a conference of specialists would be the stimulation of creative fantasy. What are the opportunities for personality study which are left ungrasped? What, in particular, are the situations which offer the greatest contrast to those with which we are most familiar?

Dr. Sullivan has used the instance of the community formed by psychiatrist, attendant, and schizophrenic patient for the purpose of suggesting that a somewhat extraordinary social situation might reveal factors about every social situation which we have failed to see. I wonder whether it would be possible for those present to detach themselves in some measure from their preoccupations with the details of their own research enterprises, as was suggested in the President's opening discussion, and think somewhat at large about the kinds of marginal situations which we would like to be able to study or to have studied in the modern world. One sees, in this group Dr. Sapir, representing those who study primitive cultures, and it might be advisable (as a follow-up to Dr. Sullivan's suggestion) to ask Dr. Sapir to improvise at some length about the situations which one finds in certain types of primitive societies, and which would seem to offer special possibilities for the exposure of some neglected aspects of social relationships.

I wonder if Dr. Sapir is in a position to indicate some of these possibilities, placing them side by side with the suggestions which Dr. Sullivan made for the study of another group which lives in a world of unusual presuppositions.

SAPIR. — You mean, I presume, with reference to our basic interest. The first thing that occurs to me in connection with a study of primitive society — the major interest being personality — is simply this: that every society presents the individual with well-developed patterns of behavior, entirely conditioned in character, that either favor or do not favor certain of his innate tendencies. To rephrase this somewhat awkward statement, I do not think that it is quite as correct as it is often assumed to be that an individual, taken at random, has quite the same chance of success or failure in all societies. I think that there are certain preferential differences owing to the fact that characteristic behavior patterns get socialized in different ways in different societies.

To give an example of the sort of thing I have in mind. In our modern American community there is little tendency to indulge in visions. To prophesy out of a spirit of conviction not based on hard facts is to be considered pretty much of a loss on the whole. One would have to indulge in one's prophetic fancies in some very indirect ways, via all kinds of academic techniques, via the use of an accredited jargon and all that sort of thing. This social cramping, necessary in our society, would deprive the expression of the "visionary tendency" of much of its value to the individual possessed of it. But there are a good many primitive societies that are somewhat favorably disposed to individuals of that kind. Such individuals could more easily be made to fit into a social groove, because their society encourages, rather than

discourages a man possessed of "the spirit," one who can look into the future and lead others on to important types of activity. To that extent the chances of his breaking with his society and developing what our society would call a psychosis are somewhat less than they would be among ourselves. We might say that the potential psychosis is capitalized by his society and given an evaluated name, which makes such an individual less abnormal in his social environment than he would be with us.

A good actual example of this sort of thing would be the incidence of hysteria among the Eskimo and some of the peoples of Siberia. The calling of the medicine-man is, as a matter of fact, one that requires the ability to put one's self into a hysterical trance. Those who are by nature pre-disposed to that kind of conduct have a better chance of being significant as medicine-men than others. In other words, it would seem that it is not altogether a question of an individual's adjustment to society as such; it is not altogether a matter of society's standing for a generalized act of human values which either make or break the individual. That is looking at the question of adjustment too broadly. It is a question of one's preferential pattern of expression or behavior fitting in or not fitting in so well into the socially transmitted patterns of behavior.

I feel very strongly that the type of work that Professor Thomas has in mind is eminently worthy of prosecution and I hope that he will have a great measure of success in working out the social differentials in their relation to the development of behavior problems in the individual. I believe that the proper adjustment of an individual to society is not a single problem, but a multiple one, depending on the society that the individual is brought up in.

LASSWELL. — Is it true, Dr. Sapir, that in certain societies you find that individuals are able to contribute a long account of their own inner experience or inner life, an autobiography; while in other societies it is highly improbable that the individual can contribute an introspective account of his experience?

SAPIR. — Yes, I think that is true. We find that there are some societies that do not value the purely individual experience in fantasy or speculation, while other societies value them most highly. I should think that the Pueblo group, for instance, would have very little interest in the private, non-socialized dreams or mystic revelations of an individual. Public rituals would carry the burden of mystic meaning for the group. An individual who interpolated meanings not thoroughly in conformity with the tribal ones would have small chance of being a significant individual. But with an individualistic and autistic type of society, such as we have among the Plains Indians, I think an entirely different mode of social reaction is to be expected.

You may examine the history of certain new prophetic American Indian religions — the Ghost Dance and the Peyote cult. Both failed to interest the Pueblo Indians but spread like wildfire among the Plains Indians. In the case of the Pueblo Indians, a purely individual expression could not readily become specialized because there was no special formula of value attaching to individual mystic experience; whereas in the latter case such experience, if properly presented in accordance with traditional patterns of symbolism and emotion, could influence the fellowman in the tribe. Does that answer your question?

LASSWELL. — The point, here, seems of such importance that, if you permit, I will reformulate my questions: It seems that those of us who are engaged in eliciting life

stories from individuals are employing a technique of investigation which presupposes certain cultural sets; the investigator is unaware of these cultural sets and so, of their effects on the results that he obtains; is that the implication of what you are saying?

SAPIR. — I think your answer will depend very largely on the kind of values that are peculiar to various societies. If you ask the successful American business man to give an account of his life, the chances are he will tell you a good deal about his ambitions, his overt failures and successes, but he is not likely to bother very much about certain uneasy spells that he may have had from time to time, though they are psychologically significant, because he would consider them too private and irrelevant for mention.

ANDERSON. — If you took the unsuccessful individual, those very things would become the prominent part of the story.

SAPIR. — Yes.

THOMAS. — Dr. Sapir referred to the Arctic sickness. There is too, a similar one among the Malays. One is of the arctic and one is of the tropics. Would one find in the two situations any common element other than the rigor of the climates?

I was asking whether there is a predisposition — perhaps climatic — in those regions, or is it a behavior pattern developed by some incident in connection with which individuals became conspicuous in both countries, not necessarily on the basis of the same behavior; whether it is a socialization of an occasional form of behavior which assumes considerable magnitude.

SAPIR. — I take it rather for granted that we have a socialized form of behavior in both cases. I should always consider it highly probable that the socialization is important in fixing a pattern of that sort.

THOMAS. — Those reactions are quite different from the one Dr. Sullivan was elaborating, that is, running amuck and killing somebody. Do we have to assume some constitutional base?

SAPIR. — I don't imagine for one minute that it is the purely constitutional factor that keeps a pattern of this sort going; once it becomes socialized, it may be perpetuated quite aside from the distribution of personality traits. I shouldn't imagine that a statistical psychiatric survey would show very many more hysterics among the Eskimos, for instance, than among ourselves. There may be more, but the real point is that our society has relatively little use for hysterics.

THOMAS. — Take the Crazy Dog society; what can you say about the severity of exaction of conformity among these ethnological groups in comparison with modern life? Is the strain greater among the groups that you worked with?

SAPIR. — That is rather a large order. I don't quite see how we are going to measure the strain that society imposes upon us. We may feel ourselves living a rather soft and contented and passive life and yet the actual strains will be much greater than we realize. On the other hand, I am not at all sure that even these excessive demands, as we would call them, are felt as severe by the Crazy Dogs of the Plains Indians. Much depends, of course, on the social background. You can project your own estimate of strain of course.

THOMAS. — If it is not felt as strain, it is not strain.

SAPIR. — On the other hand, I don't think it is quite as simple as that either, because undoubtedly there is a very definite tendency to preserve one's life at all costs. There must be a strain caused by the threat of death under set social conditions; otherwise we wouldn't have the neurotic and psychotic breakdown we do have in our own wars, for instance. I think, by the way, that it would be a very interesting thing to study just such crisis situations among primitive people from the psychiatric viewpoint.

LOWERY. — Do I understand correctly that in those social groups in which there is this seeking of death, there is a strong belief that in that way the individual chiefs have them without further difficulty, so to speak? Is there another complex system that is easily submerged completely in a desire to drive for self-preservation?

SAPIR. — It may be in particular cases.

In the case of the Crazy Dogs of the Plains, I am sure there is no belief in happiness in heaven beyond the happiness accorded to any individual, but simply the feeling of loyalty to one's comrade. Perhaps I ought to explain that in the Crazy Dogs fraternity two or three individuals go out on the warpath, risk the utmost and vow to come back as a group or to stay behind dead as a group; if one dies, the other one or two have to die as well. It seems to me that before you can estimate custom of that kind psychologically, you have to know how strong is the underlying sentiment.

LOWERY. — In both instances however, you have to do with very strong emotional conditions, which easily have greater value than the single value of life itself.

SAPIR. — Certainly. There would have to be some great value to overcome the mere value of self-preservation.

SULLIVAN. — Dr. Sapir, you speak of this formation among these particular Indians, of groups of two and three who are sufficiently close knit that a survivor would prefer death. That seems to me significant indeed for the understanding of many phenomena with which I deal. As it has appeared to me, so also it seems from some of Dr. Shaw's studies that the magnitude of intimate social groups is distinctly limited. I wonder if it would not be valuable to have your views as to just what constitutes these groups: by that I mean the forces, how can we talk about that which constitutes these groups in which survival of the remaining one is not worth the trouble. What binds them together? How do they happen? What has been done to investigate that?

SAPIR. — In the case of the Plains Indians, I think the social background is comparatively easy to understand. The man becomes a man of real importance insofar as he distinguishes himself in war. The greatest value that the Blackfoot or the Sioux Indians recognized was the value of being a distinguished warrior, particularly from the point of view of having been caught in danger, whether actually escaping from it or not. It is rather important that the taking of a scalp isn't really the important thing that it is supposed to be, among these Indians at least. It is rather having been in contact with a live enemy, risking a very great danger. The so-called touching of the enemy with a coupstick is really a sign of greater honor than the getting of the scalp. The getting of the scalp might mean that you simply scalped a slain enemy. There is no particular credit in that as compared with the other. That is, these Indians

have constructed for themselves a real value in the courting of danger, regardless of whether they individually survive or not in the pursuit of war.

With that as a sort of obsessive background, and with constant horse raids and other military expeditions undertaken, often, by just a handful of people for the sake of going through this dangerous process, it isn't so difficult to go further and develop the extreme form of military prowess which the Crazy Dogs illustrate. Of course there is much more than that to it.

I am afraid we don't know enough about the social psychology of these patterns of behavior. The meaning of friendship among males, for instance, is a thing that suggests itself as highly important in this society, just as it undoubtedly was in the society of the Spartans and among some of the feudal classes of Japanese. It seems to me this would be well worth looking into.

As to the question to what extent the primary psychology has gone out of the fixed behavior and to what extent it is being revalidated all the time in the lives of particular individuals, I suspect you would find very great differences as you went from individual to individual. Some would follow the pattern very blindly, in a sense unemotionally and unintending, others would realize themselves much more fully in these patterns. It is the same story that we find illustrated among ourselves in religion, for instance. We are all given the opportunity, as it were, for certain typical kinds of religious expression, but few avail themselves significantly of these opportunities.

SULLIVAN. — Now you touch upon a problem which seems to be identical, except in matter of approach, with one of the conspicuous situations in the psychiatry of schizophrenia. The sort of rebuff which most of my patients seem to have suffered is in that very field of affection among males. They have not been able to establish the little group that they felt, for a reason that someone might tell us, they should establish. What is the anthropologist's approach to the understanding of that situation in American culture, let us say? How can we arrange any experiment for elucidating that matter?

SAPIR. — Possibly the psychiatrist could contribute much to the enrichment of the anthropologist's study. It looks almost as though there were certain types of human association which crave certain tokens of personal intimacy, and as though there were some societies that granted these tokens more freely than others. One of the very distinctive things about modern American culture is the relative difficulty of establishing highly emotional friendships between males, and between females for that matter. The emphasis is rather on the disruption of too great intimacies of these types. But where society, with a complete distinction of the roles of male and female, rather favors that type of expression, certain individuals at least are provided with an outlet that perhaps saves them from the schizophrenic debauch, it is perfectly possible.

SULLIVAN. — In turn the parallelism increases because that is precisely what we do in the mental hospital. We lead to complete distinction of the roles of the male and female and try to set up groupings between intelligent and sensitive employees and psychotic and sensitive patients of the same sex, and it seems to be remarkably successful in reducing the stress and strain of living, and thus in reducing the necessity for psychotic behavior.

SAPIR. — I may mention another detail in regard to the military expeditions of the Plains Indians. It was necessary for those who entered on an expedition to confess all sexual irregularities. If one of the followers had committed adultery with the wife of the leader, he would have to admit that publicly, and no redress could be taken.

SULLIVAN. — In the mental hospitals we again parallel these more or less primitive people in that while there is not any public confession, one of the most helpful things about treatment is the acceptance as having occurred of the sort of thing that your Indians might be confessing. In other words, in my particular group it becomes common property by tradition that presumably these irregularities happen, and what of it? That situation certainly facilitates the thing that the Indian is required to do, to-wit: more or less direct confession; and in psychiatric material it seems to relieve a vast amount of tension, with marked improvement of the patient's adaptability.

THOMAS. — May I ask whether this confession is made in order to assure group solidarity, or as a device for efficiency in the spiritual sense; in a sense, perhaps that if one carried a load of guilt one might not have spiritual cooperation or personal confidence in oneself?

SAPIR. — I am afraid that isn't very easy to answer. The ethnologist is glad to get enough facts together to establish some sort of a case. You can't always get behind the facts and find out the ultimate motivations. Very often questions which are intended to elicit such information are not answered cooperatively, or are not fully understood. Then again you have to deal with the question of tribal rationalization. I think you have a number of problems there that need to be looked into.

THOMAS. — How widespread is confession?

SAPIR. — I couldn't say offhand; it is pretty common among a great many primitive peoples. The Eskimo have it in another form. I think the point is worth looking into. It may have escaped us in many cases. The opportunities for public confession of transgressions, whether sexual or otherwise, is a real ethnological problem. It might very well be worked on in connection with these problems of psychiatry that we are interested in here. We don't know the full extent of the confession pattern, but I think it is widespread in one form or other.

The discussion then shifted toward child psychology. Anderson described observations of a particular young child who, among other characteristics, had habits of tidiness that contrasted with the behavior of the rest of her family. Sapir inquired:

SAPIR. — What of the girl's habit of neatness; putting her shoes away, and all that. Are there other kinds of behavior that seem to link up with that? Are there other things linked up with it in such a way that it might be considered a symbol or is it an isolated fact?

ANDERSON. — One of the most interesting reports we obtained concerned the general manner in which she handled objects about the house. For instance, she did not attempt to tear books or papers. On being given an object she would run her fingers over it very gently. Her general attitude was one of care and delicacy in the handling of objects and toys.

SAPIR. — How does she react if she is thwarted in any of these soothing situations? Suppose someone messes up her nicely arranged shoes?

ANDERSON. — It doesn't bother her particularly. She just rearranges them.

SAPIR. — Suppose she had the attitude toward society of considering them as play-things, which she would be handling caressingly and soothingly, and somebody "dis-arranged" them and society wouldn't let her "rearrange" them. If you took the whole thing as a subtle kind of symbolization, wouldn't that perhaps help?

You spoke before of social adjustment. It occurred to me that perhaps the term "social adjustment" was ambiguous. I imagine from what I have been able to see of people that one kind of social adjustment consists in feeling with the other person, that is, putting your own claims on the attention of others in abeyance for a while. Another type is one that seems unconscious of the fact that your environment is distinct from yourself; you handle your environment as though it were your property, as though it were yours to play with. I am not at all sure whether these two kinds of social adjustment would look identical or different.

ANDERSON. — I remember talking with a very successful man about the traits which led to success. He characterized a degree of ruthlessness in situations as one of these traits. This may be a description of what Dr. Sapir means by his second type. It is characterized by a lack of social sensitivity and the maintenance of a relatively aggressive attitude toward the environment.

SAPIR. — Some measure of symbolic consistency, as it were. It would seem very strange that in one social situation an individual adjusted in a perfectly normal way, but in another situation that did not seem to be of a very different nature did exactly the reverse. I would like another formula to iron out the difference.

ANDERSON. — This child may be an extraordinarily sensitive youngster.

A little later, William Healy described a woman patient who was angry at her mother for giving her an enema as a child. Sapir commented:

SAPIR. — Isn't there another point involved in this situation? Retrospectively events that have happened to us take on new meaning with the growth of our vocabulary. It is conceivable that when the enema was administered the shock was not as great as it is later represented to be, as a result of reorganization of past experiences.

Discussion for the rest of the day ranged over many of the research reports, especially those concerning children. Slawson's report on a study of delinquency led to debate on the relationship between social and "constitutional" factors in personality formation:

THOMAS. — I would like to ask this question of Dr. Slawson and in general: There is such a thing as a reading disability or a mathematical disability or a memory span disability. You would assume that these are not invariably wholly social, wouldn't you?

SLAWSON. — Yes.

THOMAS. — This judgment as to what is important and unimportant, what is moral and not moral — for instance, a man murders a woman and then feeds the canary before he leaves; or, when Wainwright killed a lady he was asked why he did it and he said, "For the life of me I don't know, unless it was because she had thick legs," and the story of the man who murdered his father and then spoke of him as "my late father," always with great equanimity. Couldn't there be a disability in the

region of such discriminations? Thus, a little German girl pushed a girl out of a window in order to get a bracelet that she had, and thereafter showed no emotion except to complain that they gave her dry bread without any drippings. Her eyes blazed at that. Isn't it possible that we have something fundamental constitutional, in such cases?

SAPIR. — I would suggest that we are oversimplifying when we think that we can define a certain bit of behavior in purely objective terms. If one first considers the important factor of symbolic meaning of the behavior, one must in each case ask whether or not a given bit of behavior can be the same thing for all individuals. Murdering one's father under certain circumstances and in certain contexts, whether in actual life or a fantasy, might be no more than kicking a cat out of a window. On the other hand, depriving one's canary bird of a morsel of cake might be extraordinarily tragic. We must learn to see each bit of behavior as not only what it is in measurable terms or as roughly estimated by society at large, but also as, in the individual case, something distinctly other than what it seems to be. There is the necessity of evaluating any type symbolically. I think we should get into the habit of thinking of this as a step in our procedure.

The following morning, Chairman Lasswell turned the discussion toward proposals for future research:

LASSWELL. — As was said in the opening statement, it is hoped that this group will be fertile in the invention of lines of research which promise to provide useful controls upon the type of work which is already under way. Yesterday afternoon several types of investigations were hinted at, as rather crucial for the issues which were discussed, but relatively few specific proposals actually went into the record, so I am wondering whether we might not retrace our steps, and ask Dr. Sapir to indicate rather more specifically what might be studied in primitive culture which would seem to have some pertinence to the matter in hand.

SAPIR. — I haven't outlined in my mind any program at all that would be intended to integrate what we know about primitive culture for personality studies, but it seems fairly obvious that something might be devised.

Have you any particular direction in mind, Dr. Lasswell?

LASSWELL. — Yes. For example, you have somewhere said that in certain cultures there is relatively little introversion; if you approached individuals in that culture asking them for life histories, the document would be very thin and commonplace. Does this relatively non-introverted culture survive sufficiently intact to make possible a study which would indicate how it happens that such a state of affairs can come to pass?

SAPIR. — It seems to me that the sort of work you have in mind would combine all the difficulties and expense of a normal ethnological field trip with the other difficulties which we are all aware of, of getting reliable first-hand material from individuals in our own culture. That type of investigation would be very difficult. You would have to work with interpreters very largely, or, if you were well enough acquainted with the language to work with direct native testimony, in most cases you would have to content yourself with the labor of taking down texts, which would then have to be translated.

I don't say that the task is impossible at all, but if you want to undertake anything like a serious study of the actual significance of an alien culture, you have an enormous problem. You have the problem of selection of adequate cultures, and you have technical problems in the field, which transcend very definitely the difficulties normally recognized.

Personally I think it is worth while meeting these difficulties. It simply means that work of this type, which is a rather new thing, would have to be generously provided for if it is to be a success at all. We might make a few exploratory researches here and there. I find that a great many anthropologists are interested in just these problems, but they don't as a rule get very far, because it takes so very long to get acquainted with the native in other than a superficial sense. There is a very definite wall between you and the average primitive, even if you have got to the state of normal friendliness with them. They are not in the habit, perhaps, of being any too free with each other; there is jealousy from house to house, and it would be none too easy to get life histories that would be of interest to psychiatrists.

LEVY. — I was talking to one of your students, who told me of a certain Indian tribe, which she was acquainted with, the children of which differ from the children observed about the University of Chicago in not being at all shy in the presence of adults. She tried to explain that on the basis that children in this tribe enter into communal dancing from the very early ages and were quite used to dancing with adults.

SAPIR. — How many children had she known?

LEVY. — This was a general observation. She had made that interesting suggestion for the possibility of studying children and the influence of such customs upon them. If the observation is correct, it is interesting. We observe among our children that in the case of those who associate with adults there is a different vocabulary and type of behavior from the others, the difference being due to this association with adults.

SAPIR. — I don't know what particular tribe was referred to; I don't know how many children there were — perhaps there were only one or two children that she had an impression of; I don't know whether they were truly representative of their own tribal culture or had become pretty well assimilated to the white man's culture. There are a number of questions that one would have to ask in order to be clear about her point. I should think that the study of the children of primitives would be very interesting but, as a matter of fact, I think most primitive groups, as they actually are today, would present even greater difficulties than adults, because it is precisely the children that are in the very ticklish and difficult and interesting twilight zone between the old culture and the new, so that new problems come up in dealing with them.

This whole type of work is difficult wherever you touch it. And, by the way, in speaking of primitive cultures we must be clearer as to the realities of the facts. Much of what is presented in ethnological books is a reconstruction based on the statements of a few old men and women; much, on the other hand, is suggested by traits that one actually does see, for integration of the old with the new has taken place at varying rates. Some things are absolutely gone, others are kept intact.

I suppose that if you went to the Blackfoot Indians today in Montana you would find that a great deal of the old mythology might be recovered for the asking; and

if you selected your informants from the conservative element in the tribe, you would find them wearing moccasins decorated with good old tribal patterns. On the other hand, if you wanted to learn about the old military societies, you would find that the whole thing has gone absolutely to pot and you would have to fish up a few old men who still remember the facts, though hardly in all their completeness. Such information as this you would piece together with what you actually observe, and in this way you get what looks like a unified account on the printed page but it is an account that has to be weighted differently at different points so far as the realities of life are concerned. So that for this type of work you have got to get back of the ethnologists' field accounts and weigh every single fact with reference to its personal, not merely tribal, reality. That is a big job.

FRANK. — I wonder if we could broaden that and ask if there would be any particular virtue in considering a program of personality research which contemplated the study in a variety of contemporary cultures, French, English, German, and so on, either in the native countries or to a certain extent for preliminary reconnaissance by approach through the representatives here.

SAPIR. — That doesn't contradict the other in any way.

FRANK. — Could we broaden the original proposal so we would be discussing not only primitive peoples but those that might be more immediately accessible to this group?

SAPIR. — I think the selected primitive groups would be all right, but the preliminary work is very considerable. But then I don't think that even a fragmentary study of the personal problem in primitive groups is without value. I think that a careful record of the life experiences of the older men and women would be decidedly worth while, provided you had enough knowledge and imagination to reconstruct the background.

I don't think it is possible to sail into an ethnological field with a few generalities in one's mind, ask a few questions and expect to get anything that is worthy of serious consideration. The work will require years of careful approach.

FRANK. — What I am trying to bring out is a rather explicit question as to how far this group considers it necessary to make what might be called a cultural study as either a preliminary to or as contemporary with the personality study of other groups. In other words, are we facing the problem here of what such a study would involve in terms of either a clinical approach to a few selected individuals or/and a careful investigation of the whole cultural contrast as we see it in the larger studies which the social scientists are concerned with.

That is a very real question that ought to be considered explicitly, because in suggesting new types of approach, we ought to decide whether we consider that type of investigation really important and necessary to personality. I take it you agree that it is.

SAPIR. — I certainly do. I think it is decidedly worth while to get into some relatively intact culture, such as that of the Hopi, or into a culture that has apparently gone to seed, like that, say, of the Tlingit in Southern Alaska, but which is alive psychologically because it still forms a large part of the mental content of the men and women. I think it is decidedly worth while getting personal data from such cultures before it is too late. Now is the time to do the work if it is to be done at

all. I think that such work should be undertaken as a joint enterprise of well trained field ethnologists, primitive linguists, psychologists, psychiatrists, economists, and other social scientists.

FRANK. — Would you be willing to go further and say if we were to approach a contemporary culture such as the European, the same thing would obtain?

SAPIR. — I think we ought to have a three-step program; we should study individual variations, as we are doing within our own culture, remembering that we cannot easily define our own culture objectively because we are immersed in it. We should then go on to the alien but not too distant cultures, such as the Italian, Swedish, and Russian cultures. We should then use the experience of field ethnologists and integrate with their work for the study of personality in primitive cultures. I consider that the most important and likely to lead the most thankless results here and there, but I am sure that we should get very illuminating results by such parallel studies of the individual in differing cultures.

FRANK. — Haven't we at our very doorstep certain opportunities in the sense that we have the French Canadian culture just across the border, the Spanish Latin culture just across the border on the other side, so that if we were disposed to start something along these lines in this country, we might by some preliminary work bring out some of the difficulties and some of the relevant factors, before launching a more ambitious program.

SAPIR. — There is a good deal that could be done in a preliminary way at comparatively little expense. For instance, there are a great many Indians drifting around in our cities here that are none too well adjusted to modern life and who know quite a little about the old life. If you could make it clear to them that you wanted frank autobiographic statements, going into as much detail as possible as to their difficulties of adjustment, at so much per page, I think one could get a great deal of very valuable material.

Later, after a discussion of urban problems and children's need for intimacy, Lasswell again called on Sapir:

LASSWELL. — I wonder, Dr. Sapir, if one is well advised to say that all primitive children have greater opportunities for intimacy than children reared in Western European culture?

SAPIR. — I think that is true to a very large extent. The whole question of intimacy in various groups of human beings seems to me to be a very involved one. I was thinking a good deal about what Mr. Plant said as he spoke. I envisage the problem which he implies to be something like this: Assuming that all normal human beings, whether primitive or civilized, whether living in congested districts or in scattered rural districts, have certain basic needs of a psychological nature, what particular means does their culture possess for the fulfillment of these needs? Some intimacy must be found, either actual or symbolic; the ego must be maintained; and so forth. What form does the yearning for intimate relations take in a given culture? What constitutes for it a healthy maintenance of the ego?

What surprises Mr. Plant, apparently, starting, as he does, with the presumption of our traditional culture, is that, as conditions change rapidly in the economic ordering of our lives, human beings turn out to be more plastic than he had any idea

they might be. I should say his error, in so far as it was an error of expectation, was due to the fact that he was taken in, as we all are, by the overt character of the materials of culture. One should try to see these materials symbolically. It doesn't seem to make so very much difference, so far as psychological intimacy is concerned, whether you live in an immensely scattered community, like that of the Navajo Indians, where you have to travel miles in order to meet your neighbor, or live in a pueblo, where you are massed even more tightly than we are in the apartments of New York City, in an American rural district or in a small town or in a congested district like New York. There are certain differences, of course; conditions will affect the forms that intimacy will take, but they are not likely to affect materially the psychological fact of intimacy.

It seems to me our problem is one of the adjustment by people to an almost infinite variety of social forms. Different types of neurotics and psychotics are produced on the basis of differing social determinations, but the essentially normal person will accommodate himself to practically any kind of condition that has the warrant of society. That is about as much as we need to know, as normal people. It isn't for us, as individuals, to ask whether this or that social feature constitutes a good condition or a bad condition, whether it is a possible or an impossible condition. We know, as members of our society, that it is a potentially good condition if only because people say it is.

The subsequent discussion included a lengthy report by William A. Blatz, who had just joined the group, on field observations of children's interactions in Toronto. After lunch, the conversation centered on Sullivan's work with schizophrenics, and the role of patients' cultural background and social environment. Sullivan called for commentary from Sapir:

SAPIR. — I am rather impressed, Mr. Chairman, by the small amount of dissent that is aroused in my own mind as I hear these various proposals, some of them apparently proceeding from very different horizons. It seems to me that the essential problem we have before us is not so much one of hospitality to all sorts of interesting suggestions and possibilities as one of concentration. I am trying to think realistically from two points of view: first, from the point of view of general scientific activity in human behavior, and secondly, from the point of view of the constitution of this particular group as a partly psychiatric and a partly social science group. I think if we bear these two external factors in mind it will help us to crystallize our program somewhat.

First, as to the former, we must not lose sight of the fact that there are a good many agencies at present that are prosecuting valuable work of many different sorts in the general field of social science, ranging all the way from individual human behavior or collective human behavior or statistically controlled human behavior to impersonally conceived social activity, that is, cultural studies. There is so much of that kind of work going on that if we are merely going to dabble here and there within this tremendous terrain we are not likely to constitute ourselves into a distinctive body. We all hope, more or less, to do just that, however.

I should therefore suggest in a surgical, but not hostile, spirit that we consider as not coming within the purview of this particular group the study of culture as such. Secondly, that we do not consider as coming within the purview of this group the

study of social processes as such, although we shall have plenty of opportunity, of course, to illustrate many social processes as they affect individuals. Thirdly, that we take no very special interest in statistical methods as such, though it goes without saying that we are not to be so foolish as to scorn them where they are helpful to us.

From the second point of view, as regards the participation of psychiatrists and social scientists in a common endeavor, it seems to me that we are driven by the very terms of our association to the problem of personality. The psychiatrist starts from the deranged individual and, whatever he may think about the existence or non-existence of personality, he has to deal with individuals who are either getting along pretty well in life or who are not getting along. The psychiatrist starts, then, from the individual and is rather curious, sometimes hopefully and sometimes skeptically, about where society comes in. The social scientist, on the other hand, has worked out certain official patterns of behavior and is inclined to wonder whether there is any "individual" to speak of. There is, then, a common terrain carved out by implication for us all here, that of personality in society.

We have had many skeptical remarks made about what constitutes personality, but I think no one every really loses sight of the concept. I suppose it is the only thing we really know anything about, inasmuch as we have a conception of ourselves and project that conception into all other bodies that we see about us. Practically, then, we are not going to succeed in getting away from the concept of personality. I would suggest, therefore, that we take the bull by the horns and admit that the one thing we are really interested in and yet tend to neglect is precisely personality, what the individual is, how he appears against various backgrounds, what kind of trouble he may get into in the terms of a given background, how he may get out of that trouble and reintegrate himself in the terms of that background, and so on. That is the psychiatric point of view, I take it, and it is not one which is in the least inimical or unfavorable to the standpoint of the social scientists. I think we have that much in common.

I would say, then, that the guiding point of view that clearly differentiates us from other groups and institutions is that we are only secondarily interested in social phenomena or in group behavior or in physiological processes as such, that we are primarily interested, as our starting point, in given individuals and in where they belong, from the somatic to the cultural, but always with a frank emphasis on the individual. If we bear this clearly in mind it seems to me that we cannot take very much interest in mass data or in statistical data as such, however much we value them for purposes of preliminary differentiation. We must hold fast to individual differentials as our main interest; that is, whether we admit it or not, we are interested in what, for want of a better term, we call types. Whether there are innumerable types of individuals or only a few fundamental types is a secondary question.

The life history must be the document *par excellence* which interests us, not because it is an interesting document, but because we hope by its means to get together in order that we may clarify the concept of personality. As far as an actual program is concerned, one might suggest dozens and dozens of interesting ones, but in view of the constitution of this group, I would suggest that we proceed in some such way as this: being interested, first of all, in individuals and in the problem of personality but feeling in the light of everything that has been said that these personalities cannot

be conceived as isolated entities but must be thought of against given backgrounds, we frame our program with primary reference to types of cultural background.

Roughly speaking, we have three kinds of background that we are more or less familiar with. The background of daily experience here in New York City, for instance, which we have an intimate intuitive knowledge of but which we are often unable to delimit in properly scientific terms, we may consider as known, more or less. We, as a personality group, need not encourage studies of the Middletown type but we cannot but use studies of this sort and whatever others may be prepared by other agencies.

Secondly, there are backgrounds for which we have a kind of friendly feeling and of which we have a good measure of understanding but which we do not know in "intuit" in any detail. Such, for instance, is the life of the Scandinavians or the Sicilians referred to by Dr. Thomas. In some cases there is a considerable amount of literature on these cultures, which can be digested as a preparation for personality studies; in other cases there is much to be done as a preliminary to such studies, but these cultural explorations should be left to other agencies.

Thirdly, there is the remote but extremely valuable type of background which has been often referred to in these meetings, that of primitive man. I would not at all suggest, though I am personally much interested in ethnological studies, that we, as a group, engage in cultural studies of primitive folk in the field, but rather that we try, through certain spokesmen that we might select, to acquaint ourselves with what has been done on the culture of selected primitive groups, say two or three selected primitive groups, in order that we may then set about the work of studying personality in these given environments.

As to just exactly what a personality study should consist of in these three cases, that is a matter for further thought. It seems to me that the interest that has been brought to light in this conference suggests that there are two rather distinct types of approach. First, the discovery of significant personality types and corresponding personality adaptations to different backgrounds. That is a large problem. Secondly, the special problems of maladjustment, leading to mental disorders of various sorts. It seems to me that we would be well advised to capitalize both of these types of interest, and — not because I wish to force a program in any sense but because I should like to have something tangible put before us for discussion — I would suggest that these various programs be envisaged in the following terms. First, that a very careful study be made of a rather small number of selected cases in our own culture, which would throw light on personality differentials, these cases to be normal or not very far from the normal. That this study be made from every possible point of view, ranging from the somatic to the cultural, by a scientific group that has enough interest, each and every one of the group, in intimate problems of personality to follow in more or less detail and participation the various types of personality study made of these selected individuals. This is very much the kind of study that was suggested before for schizophrenics. That we do that particularly with members of our own culture. Secondly, that we carry on the same type of study with a selected group of schizophrenics, the two studies more or less controlling each other. And, further, I would suggest that we extend the schizophrenic study into the field of the near cultures, such as that of the Sicilians and of the Scandinavians and into the primitive cultures. It seems to me that one of the crying needs in the whole field

of human behavior is to discover what maladjustment means in the remoter cultures. We have raised that particular point over and over again. There isn't a man alive who has much of real value to say about that. We are not familiar with mental disorders as distinct entities in any other levels than our own, but I think that a really profound attack on the problem of neurosis and psychosis in two or three selected primitive cultures is by no means hopeless. How to go about it is a question of tactics. I would suggest that a psychiatrist acquaint himself very fully with all the pertinent cultural material, which should be brought to his attention before he begins work, and that he then go to the field himself and reinterpret what he has learned in the light of his own experience with other subjects. That will at least give us a point of departure.

These three studies – and I might include Professor Thomas', but Professor Thomas, I understand, is planning for his work another type of support – are the ones I would plead for. To summarize briefly: first, the very careful study of a rather small number of selected normal types, illustrative, one hopes, of several distinct types and studied exhaustively by a group of people interested in personality as such. Secondly, a similar study of a schizophrenic group. And thirdly, the extension of the second study to alien cultures, including the primitive.

ANDERSON. – I have one question in which I am not quite clear in Dr. Sapir's presentation, that is his determination of these personality differentials. It seems to me that any study of personality differentials implies to some extent at least a study of trends, and that you immediately get over into at least some statistical considerations.

SAPIR. – I agree fully with you. I don't want to be interpreted, or rather misinterpreted, as implying a lack of interested in, or theoretical hostility to, any other types of interest than those indicated. I think we are going to be driven inevitably to a certain amount of statistical work, to a certain amount of preoccupation with cultural problems and definitions, to a study of social processes as such, to somatic classification, and so on. I take that for granted, but we should never lose sight of the fact that the center of our interest is the actual individual studied.

I think it is important to have a general objective in mind and to be swayed by that objective.

BURGESS. – Might you take care of that interest by a phrase in these case studies that we hoped they would give criteria for studies?

GESELL. – May I ask is this a cross sectional type of study of the normal group of individuals?

SAPIR. – Cross sectional in what sense?

GESELL. – Time sense or what is the individual chronologically?

SAPIR. – That I should prefer to leave for further discussion. I wasn't thinking of crystallizing a program quite to that extent.

LEVY. – Did you have an age group?

SAPIR. – I didn't have a particular age group in mind.

ANDERSON. – Personally I am tremendously in sympathy with the first part of Dr. Sapir's suggestion, because it seems to me that the place where we have fallen down most decidedly is in our study of adjusted individuals, that we really, with

reference to many of these problems, have no frame of reference — to speak, and that perhaps the most helpful thing we could do to throw certain problems into clear relief with reference to both sociological aspect and psychiatric aspect would be to project some sort of study in which essentially the same complete methodology was applied to normal or successful or well adjusted individuals as is now applied to maladjusted or schizophrenic or psychiatric cases.

KELLEY. — If I might add a word about the statistical cases, I can follow directly in the thought that Dr. Anderson has advanced. It seems to me that the function of the statistical work is to provide a frame of reference. Personally I don't see any interest in that frame as a frame; it is valuable only because it works in interpreting individual cases. In this sense I agree completely with Dr. Sapir. I don't have any interest in a statistical study as such. In the use of that term by Dr. Sapir, I was quite at a loss to know what that might be.

The only thing I can see in the accumulation of statistical data is the value that it gives in enabling the handling of the individual issue, so I do not believe there is any need for a great amount.

SAPIR. — In self-defense I ought to clarify my statement a little. Theoretically, I don't suppose there is a single statistician living who would say he was interested in statistics as such. He is always interested in whatever problems statistics are supposed to throw light on, but in the sad actuality of experience we know that if one happens to have a specialist's interest in the statistical method he tends to select those particular problems which yield or seem to yield to statistical treatment. I think that is a matter of common observation.

I was merely pleading for the guarding against that particular kind of danger which I think is a very real danger in the social science world today. I see a tremendous number of studies being made that are only mildly interesting to social science but what appeals to me as significant about them is that they are the kind of studies that can be handled statistically.

When you turn around and suggest another problem which is of crucial importance to the understanding of the individual in society, you are likely to be told by the statistical social scientist that you can't do much with it because the only safe method is the quantitative method and it seems not to be applicable in the suggested study. There is some kind of statistical magic circle that seems to form itself at some point or other in the field of social science, and I think we ought to be very clear in our minds that in spite of the obvious difficulties of understanding individuals, we are interested precisely in the individual and all the difficulties that he presents and that in most cases statistics won't help us to any significant extent.

We are not to idolize statistical techniques merely because they give us clear, neatly handled "results" of minor interest, if indeed they have interest at all.

KELLEY. — If they do that, they merely become measurements of unessential features.

SAPIR. — Yes, but it seems to me that a great deal of the statistical work in vogue today gives us material that is of rather little essential interest. We are thankful for what it does give us, but it does not help us very much in its understanding of either a given individual or of society as a whole.

THOMAS — Dr. Sullivan, what is the relation of Dr. Sapir's statement to your proposal of study? What would be the scope, in other words, of the study that you propose in the light of what Dr. Sapir has said?

SULLIVAN. — It strikes me that it would require very little effort to bring the two into identity, much less agreement. Dr. Sapir has included everything of which I had thought and more. It seems to me that in Dr. Sapir's suggestions we have an actual basis for beginning something of very great importance.

Some discussion of Sapir's and Sullivan's proposals followed. Chairman Sullivan then called upon Harold Lasswell, whose comments centered on the development of a training program for the study of personality along the lines proposed in the colloquium. Other participants commented from the perspective of their disciplines and institutions. Finally, the two guests, Henry E. Field and Herbert Blumer, were called upon for remarks, and the meeting adjourned.

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Appendix A: Formulations of Personality

SAPIR. — "Personality" can be defined from various points of view: first, as a philosophical concept, the subjective awareness of the self as distinct from other objects of observation; second, as a purely physiological one, the individual human organism, with emphasis on those behavior aspects which differentiate it from other human organisms; third, as a descriptive psycho-physical one, the human being conceived as a given totality, at any one time, of physiological and psychological reaction systems; fourth, as a sociological or symbolic one, those aspects of behavior which give "meaning" to an individual in society and differentiate him from other members of the community, each of whom embodies countless cultural patterns in a unique configuration; fifth, as a psychiatric one, the individual abstracted from the actual psychophysical whole and conceived of as a comparatively stable system of reactivity — cognitive, affective and conative. The first concept treats "personality" as an invariant point of experience; the second and third, as an indefinitely variable reactive system, the relation between the sequence of states being one of continuity, not identity; the fourth, as a gradually cumulative entity; the fifth, as an essentially invariable reactive system.

It is the last concept which it seems most important to stress. The psychiatrist does not deny that the little child, Tommy, who rebels against his father is, in many significant ways, "different from" the middle-aged Prof. Thomas Jones who has a penchant for subversive theories, but he is primarily interested in noting that the same reactive ground-plan, physical and psychic, can be isolated from the behavior totalities known as Tommy and Prof. Jones. He establishes his "invariance of personality" by a complex system of concepts of behavior equivalences, such as sublimation, affective transfer, rationalization, libido and ego relations.

The question arises at what stage in the history of a human organism is it most convenient to consider the "personality" as an achieved system, from which all subsequent cross-sections of the individual's psychophysical history may be measured as minor, or even irrelevant, variations. It is suggested that this stage be that of the

"pre-cultural" child, the human organism as determined, in many ways by heredity, by pre-natal conditioning, and by post-natal conditioning up to the point where culture patterns are consciously modifying his behavior.

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Appendix B: Select Bibliographies Submitted by Members of the Second Colloquium

In a list of his own publications, Sapir marked the following items with asterisks (headings are his):

General Linguistics. Sapir 1911b, 1921d, 1925p, 1927c, 1929m.

American Indian Linguistics. Sapir 1912h, 1921a, 1929a, 1929d.

Ethnology and Social Psychology. Sapir 1915g, 1915h, 1916g, 1916h, 1924b, Barbeau and Sapir 1925, 1926i, 1927a, 1928a, 1928j, 1928b, 1921g.

Appendix C: Annotated Reading List Prepared by Members of the Second Colloquium and Others

Sapir's contributions are as follows:

ANTHROPOLOGY

Boas, Franz:

The Mind of Primitive Man. New York: Macmillan; 1911.

This book comes the nearest of all Boas' writings to expressing his general point of view in studying human culture. Important because it shakes us free from exclusively Occidental values, shows the unimportance of race (as a biological concept) in the understanding of culture, and stresses the necessity of studying the historical or the psychological background of custom if we are to understand human behavior.

E. S.

Goldenweiser, A. A.:

Early Civilization. New York: Knopf; 1922.

A convenient introduction to cultural anthropology. Gives bird's-eye view of a few selected primitive cultures, outlines the essentials of various aspects of primitive culture in general, and gives a convenient summary of ethnological theories.

E. S.

Kroeber, A. L.:

Anthropology. New York: Harcourt, Brace; 1923.

A very readable introduction to the whole field of anthropology. Impressively stresses the unity of the whole historical process of the development of culture.

E. S.

Levy-Bruhl, L.:

How Natives Think. (Tr. Lillian A. Clare, from "Les Fonctions Mentales Dans Les Sociétés Inférieures"). New York: Knopf; 1925.

An attempt to show that primitive man is controlled by a "prelogical mentality" that differs in character from the mentality of civilized man. Suggestive rather than convincing.

E. S.

Lowie, R. H.:

Are We Civilized? New York: Harcourt, Brace; 1929.

A light but informative introduction to the vagaries and inconsequences of the development of human culture.

E. S.

Primitive Society. New York: Boni & Liveright; 1920.

An excellent analytical study of the varieties of association and social differentiation among primitive peoples. Lays several evolutionary ghosts.

E. S.

Malinowski, Bronislaw:

Crime and Custom in Savage Society. New York: Harcourt, Brace; 1926.

A brilliant study of the clash in a primitive society (Trobriand Islanders) between incest custom and the surges of individual impulse and sentiment. A good antidote to the uniformitarianism of most anthropological writing.

E. S.

Sex and Repression in Savage Society. New York: Harcourt, Brace; 1927.

A valuable, if somewhat thinned out, contribution to the reinterpretation of psychoanalytic doctrines in the light of data from a selected primitive community.

E. S.

Radin, Paul:

Primitive Man as Philosopher. New York: Appleton; 1927.

Stresses the higher life of the primitive. Contains a convenient anthology of primitive literature.

E. S.

Rivers, W. H. R.:

Psychology and Ethnology. New York: Harcourt, Brace; 1926.

A set of interesting contributions to the study of various phases of primitive culture. Rivers' work is important because, starting as a psychologist, he was led to evaluate the purely historical factors in the growth of custom.

E. S.

Tylor, E. B.:

Primitive Culture. New York: Putnam; 1924

Classical treatment continuing to have real importance.

E. S.

Wissler, Clark:

Man and Culture. New York: Crowell; 1923.

An excellent and simple analysis of the nature of human culture and of its geographical spread. The treatment of the "universal pattern" of culture as an innate tendency at the end of the book needs to be viewed skeptically.

E. S.

LANGUAGE

Dominian, Leon:

The Frontiers of Language and Nationality in Europe. New York: 1917

A splendid object lesson in the independence of linguistic, cultural, and racial lines and in the importance of language as a symbol of nascent nationalism

E. S.

Jespersen, Otto:

Language. New York: Hold; 1922.

A readable treatment of fundamental problems of language, the emphasis being on the modern languages of Europe and the spirit of the book practical rather than penetratingly analytical.

E. S.

Vendryes, J.:

Language: A Linguistic Introduction to History. (Tr. Paul Radin.) New York: Knopf, 1925.

A good presentation of the dynamics of linguistic development from the standpoint of an Indo-Europeanist.

E. S.

Note

1. Sapir 1929m. "A Study in Phonetic Symbolism." — ED.

The Cultural Approach to the Study of Personality (1930)

Contents:

1. Introduction: the Hanover Conference, August 29-September 2, 1930	199
2. Daytime sessions: excerpts from discussion	202
3. "The Cultural Approach to the Study of Personality" (lecture and discussion, evening of August 31, 1930)	207
4. Other evening sessions: excerpts from discussion	235
5. "Original Memorandum to the Social Science Research Council from the Conference on Acculturation and Personality," Hanover, September 2, 1930	243
6. "A Project for the Study of Acculturation among the American Indians, with Special Reference to the Investigation of Problems of Personality," ms. presented to the Social Science Research Council, September 2, 1930	246
7. "The Proposed Work of the Committee on Personality and Culture"	249
a. Outline, September 2, 1930	249
b. Revised version, February 18, 1932	250

I. Introduction: the Hanover Conference, August 29 – September 2, 1930

The Social Science Research Council (SSRC) continued for several years to hold annual conferences at Hanover, New Hampshire. After his 1926 address, however, Sapir offered only one other major presentation: "The Cultural Approach to the Study of Personality," a paper delivered at the Hanover Conference on Personality and Culture in 1930.¹

In this presentation Sapir continued to develop his theory of culture, but he now linked it crucially with a psychiatric approach to personality. From an anthropological standpoint, psychiatric understandings about personality development and integration

were drawn into culture theory; from an interdisciplinary standpoint, he added a cultural dimension to personality. Characteristically, Sapir argued that personality and culture were distinguishable solely in the analyst's point of view. Rather than two separate orders of phenomena, each one if properly studied led inevitably toward a consideration of the other. It was the meeting-point of culture and personality, therefore, that most demanded attention.

Psychiatric concepts, Sapir argued, required considerable broadening to incorporate cross-cultural variability. Even within our own society, nuclear personality was inaccessible to the analyst except against the background of cultural (and subcultural) convention and social personae. The psychiatrist should pay attention to the individual's unconscious adjustment to that background, while the anthropologist should pay attention to the variability of individuals' experiences and orientations even within a supposedly homogeneous group. Unlike some other anthropologists of his day, Sapir expected as much behavioral variation across individuals in so-called primitive societies as in American society. Looking ahead to interdisciplinary collaboration, he envisioned anthropologists focusing on culture and psychiatrists focusing on the individual as meeting in the middle, their insights merging.

This was the first time Harry Stack Sullivan was at Hanover, and he echoed Sapir's version of the potential collaboration. Senior psychiatrist Adolf Meyer protested, however, that his "common sense psychiatry" did not have to separate culture and individual. While Meyer seems to have felt sympathetic to some of Sapir's goals, he missed Sapir's problematic in relation to culture theory — and so, he also missed the way Sapir's proposed research program spoke to this two-pronged rationale.

As with his 1926 Hanover presentation, Sapir never published the text of his lecture, although the ideas he developed in it are closely related to those in his publications on culture and personality in the early 1930's, as well as his course on *The Psychology of Culture*. The 1930 lecture was recorded by SSRC stenographers and the transcripts were circulated to the Conference participants, but no other written version has ever appeared until now. Published here for the first time, the text is taken from the conference transcripts.

Sapir gave his lecture in the evening of August 31, 1930. The conference extended over several days, however (August 29 — September 3), and included several types of sessions. SSRC committees, each devoted to a particular subject area, met concurrently in the mornings; Sapir participated in the newly-formed Committee on Personality and Culture. In the evenings all conference participants gathered for a plenary lecture.

The Committee on Personality and Culture had been organized because several project proposals recently presented to the SSRC seemed to have this interdisciplinary theme in common. The morning sessions of August 29 and 30 were taken up with the presentation and discussion of four such proposals: projects by William I. Thomas, Lawrence Frank, Edward Sapir, and Robert Redfield. Besides Sapir's own project (on American Indian acculturation), Frank's proposal is of particular interest since it concerned what became the Rockefeller Seminar on the Impact of Culture on Personality, held at Yale under Sapir's direction in 1932–33. (For more detail, see Darnell 1990 and the editorial introduction to *The Psychology of Culture*, this volume.)

For the remaining morning sessions, other members of the committee each made some presentation of issues relevant to their research. Finally, the committee members considered and adopted a report of their recommendations to the SSRC. This report,

reprinted here as the "Original Memorandum to the Social Science Research Council...." was presented under Sapir's signature, although it was Harry Stock Sullivan who read it aloud to the conference participants.

The program of evening lectures was as follows:

- Frederick P. Keppel (Carnegie Foundation), "Foundation Problems and the Social Sciences" (August 29)
- Isaiah Bowman (American Geographical Society, New York), "Geography as a Social Science" (August 30)
- Edward Sapir (University of Chicago), "The Cultural Approach to the Study of Personality" (August 31)
- C. M. Hincks (Canadian National Committee for Mental Hygiene), "Mental Hygiene and Social Science" (September 1)
- Beardsley Ruml (Rockefeller Foundation), "Each According to the Nature of his Experience" (September 2)
- Carlton J. H. Hays (Columbia), "Research Problems in the Field of International Relations" (September 3).

Except for the evening lecturers, most of the participants at the Hanover Conference are identified in the transcripts only by surname. Nevertheless, from correspondence and other sources we have reconstructed the following lists of conference attendees, with their affiliations in 1930:

Committee on Personality and Culture:

- Allport, Gordon (social psychologist, Harvard University)
- Anderson, John (Professor of Psychology, University of Minnesota and Institute of Child Welfare)
- Frank, Lawrence (staff member, Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial)
- May, Mark (Professor of Educational Psychology, Yale University)
- Murphy (probably Gardner Murphy, Assistant Professor of Psychology, Columbia University)
- Redfield, Robert (Associate Professor of Anthropology, University of Chicago)
- Sapir, Edward (Professor of Anthropology, University of Chicago)
- Sutherland (probably Edwin H. Sutherland, a criminologist at the University of Chicago; but possibly Robert Lee Sutherland, Professor of Sociology at Bucknell University)
- Tozzer, Alfred M. (Professor of Anthropology, Harvard University)
- Young (probably Kimball Young, Professor of Social Psychology, University of Wisconsin)

Other participants, some of whom visited committee meetings as guests, included

- Anderson, William (Professor of Political Science, University of Minnesota)
- Bott, Edward A. (Professor of Psychology, University of Toronto)
- Bowman, Isaiah (Director, American Geographical Society, New York)
- Chapin, F. Stuart (Professor of Sociology, University of Minnesota)
- Cobb, Stanley (Professor of Neuropathology, American Academy of Arts and Sciences)
- Ford, Guy S. (Professor of History, University of Minnesota)
- Hayes, Carleton J. H. (Professor of History, Columbia University)

- Hincks, C. M. (Canadian National Committee for Mental Hygiene)
 Judd, Charles H. (Professor of Education, University of Chicago)
 Keppel, Frederick (President, Carnegie Foundation)
 Linton, Ralph (Associate Professor of Anthropology, University of Wisconsin)
 Lynd, Robert (Commonwealth Fund, New York; from 1931, Professor of Sociology, Columbia University)
 Mann, Albert R. (Dean, New York State College of Agriculture at Cornell University; also Dean, New York State College of Home Economics, Cornell University)
 Meyer, Adolf (Professor of Psychiatry, Johns Hopkins University; Director, Phipps Psychiatric Clinic)
 Rice, Stuart A. (Professor of Sociology and Statistics, University of Pennsylvania)
 Ruml, Beardsley (Executive Officer, Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial)
 Schlesinger, Arthur M. (Professor of History, Harvard University)

Among others present, but about whom we have no further information, were F. M. Anderson and two persons surnamed Hart and Wright.

2. Daytime Sessions: Excerpts from Discussion

From the unpublished minutes of the morning meetings of the Committee on Personality and Culture, we reproduce excerpts that include Sapir's substantive contributions, and we briefly summarize the rest of the discussion.

August 29, 1930

Mr. Sapir explained the circumstances that had led to the organization of the Committee. Three projects (the Frank, W. I. Thomas, and Sapir projects) seemed to have enough in common, in their consideration of the problem field marginal to both culture and personality, to suggest a conference on problems in this field.

...

Mr. Sutherland [representing the Thomas project] stated the essential features of the proposed research on "Crime and Insanity in Scandinavia [and Sicily]". Mr. Sapir then recalled an objection made to the project when it had been brought before the Council, to the effect that it might not be justified to treat a study of crime and insanity as equivalent to a study of personality in a cultural setting.

Mr. Sutherland replied that it was felt that these two aspects of behavior (crime and insanity) were foci of activity, a study of which would necessarily involve a wide range of factors (e. g., the family).

... Mr. Sapir asked what hypothesis lay behind the proposal. Mr. Sutherland replied: "How does a variation in the culture affect the behavior of peoples?"

Mr. Sapir: "Does Mr. Thomas think that perhaps certain types of solution of emotional strain are more likely in Scandinavia than in Sicily?"

Mr. Sutherland assented.

[Mr. Young asked about the role of the Mafia and other institutions in Sicily.] Mr. Sapir stated the hypothesis as follows: Where institutional controls (feud, Mafia, etc.) are lacking, there the ground is prepared for psychoses.

... [A methodological discussion ensued. Intelligence tests were mentioned.] Mr. Sutherland said the plans of the Committee included securing such and other tests. Mr. Sapir suggested that the tests themselves might be reintroducing the important cultural factors.

... [Discussion of the proposal's concern with Scandinavians and Sicilians as immigrant groups.] ... Mr. Sapir pointed out that the double parallelism (North Europe vs. South Europe, old loved environment vs. immigrant community) added to the likelihood of fruitful results.

...

Mr. Frank then presented the projects for a "Proposed Seminar for Foreign Students on the Impact of Culture on Personality". The purpose is to find persons from a variety of cultures interested in problems of culture and personality, bring them together and organize a systematic endeavor, using all specialists interested in these problems, to formulate an inventory or schedule for the study of contemporary cultures in the countries represented. After this training they would be set to studying the lives of their nationals in America. A second period of association would bring about a further clarification of the situation. Finally, these persons would be sent back to their own countries for simultaneous study of their own cultures. The essential desideratum is to develop a pattern of cultural research.

Mr. Young asked if native American [i. e., Anglo-American] students were to be included; the American student might thereby be helped.

Mr. Sapir suggested the objectivity of the atmosphere might thereby be curbed by a feeling of sensitiveness or apology on the part of the foreign students.

In response to questions, Mr. Frank stated that although some foreign lecturers might be included, most would probably be Americans. Their function would be to act as critics, presenting an organized point of view.

Mr. Sapir pointed out four aspects of the proposal:

- 1) A possibility of seeing the morphology of culture.
- 2) A possibility of seeing what are the fundamental needs of human beings.
- 3) Of seeing how these human needs get patterned, socialized.
- 4) The problem of what are the individual variations (maladjustments, etc.) in the different cultures.

...

August 30, 1930

The session opened with a brief discussion of a proposed symposium on *acculturation* between European and native peoples in the Pacific area.

... Mr. Sapir then presented the project for the "Study of Acculturation and Personality among the American Indians." In primitive life as in our own life, there is a distinction between fundamental human behavior, expressed in personality, and the "official" patterns of culture. The ethnographical account is often no more than an inventory of, to us, bizarre forms. One way of coming to understand what these old forms meant is to investigate what they mean today; fundamental ideological patterns often persist over changes in material culture. Indian-white contacts involve not simply a substitution of new customs for old, but rather adaptation of the old.

culture to new conditions. It is important to get some hint as to how much of this old culture may persist. It may be that many contemporary patterns go back to very early patterns that have merely been adjusted to new institutions. We have two types of problems: (1) what is it essential to retain under new conditions; (2) problems of acculturation, re-definition of old patterns. We might go further and study these problems of acculturation in the behavior of the individual. Probably the Indian is involved in a passionate attempt to reinterpret the old ways in terms of the new. Perhaps conflicts considered by psychiatrists can be more effectively understood when observed in this acute form as they occur in this cultural margin.

Mr. Sullivan suggested that if the Navajo still think of themselves as a people, while other Indians do not so think of themselves, it might be possible to get light on mental maladjustments, because of the likelihood that the incidence and character of such maladjustments [are] affected by the state of organization of the supporting group. ... Furthermore, we might here get some controls on our theories of personality growth. In the disintegrating Indian community at least, parental inculcation of the old folkways is no doubt often ineffective. ...

Mr. Sapir stated his impression that among contemporary Indians the individual problem is in a sense lost in the general problem, all members of the community being in the same situation; and further that conflict between individuals in the community appears to involve less emotional stress. Relations of affection between kin, for example, appear to be relatively unshaken by the culture conflict situation. Why is this?

Another fruitful aspect of the situation lies in the attitude of the Indians toward the whites. While respecting white instrumental values, Indians appear to judge more fundamental white values unfavorably.

... Mr. Anderson asked about the technique to be used.

Mr. Sapir mentioned careful case studies.

Mr. Anderson suggested that old difficulties of finding suitable technique would be repeated in this Indian situation. Would essentially new situations for study be encountered that are not already encountered in studying contemporary white society?

Mr. Sapir replied that he thought it likely that the culture conflicts were more acute.

... Mr. May asked if the study proposed was thought of as fundamentally different from the proposed Scandinavian study.

Mr. Sapir replied that while they were theoretically much alike, the actual situations were so different that it was probable that different problems would be encountered. The Indian situation introduces such a new factor as a great sense of corporate inferiority.

Mr. Sullivan felt that with the Thomas study the cultures involved were too much alike to make it probable much light would be thrown on personality problems; the Indian project was therefore welcome.

Mr. Allport asked to what extent the inferiority feeling was thought to be a vital part of the problem.

Mr. Sapir indicated special circumstances in the Indian situations, among them the preservation of old values in the old habitat under enormously changed conditions.

There ensued a lengthy discussion of Redfield's proposed exploratory study of "the frontiers of acculturation in four communities in Yucatan chosen to represent separated points on the scale from primitive Indian life to civilized city life." The transcript of the day's session concludes with a summary by Sapir:

Summing up these proposed studies of primitive-civilized culture contact, Mr. Sapir said he thought of these studies as in three stages: (a) a reconstruction of the old culture; (b) a study of acculturation; (c) a more precise personality study.

And in relating these proposed investigations to studies of child behavior, Mead, Sapir and Anderson stated the question: To what extent are the parents and near kin the effective representatives of the general culture? The presumption is that in the primitive community they *are* effective representatives; the transition to adult life is therefore easy.

August 31, 1930

Young presented a survey of work on the psychology of immigrants in the U. S. He included a discussion of work in intelligence testing, noting that "these studies have assumed differences resting in heredity, and tend to ignore early conditioning, especially by cultural patterns." The transcript continues:

... Mr. Sapir suggested a distinction between two sorts of cultural influences: (a) those bringing about technical difficulties of approach to the test, (b) those affecting "intelligence", e. g., alertness. Culture must be thought of as a general synthetic stimulus to effort, for example.

Mr. Anderson asked if this did not assume that the cultural factor was important, he would be willing to show that inherent differences are substantially identical. He could not conceive of a cultural factor universally affecting all negro groups unfavorably. Mr. Sapir suggested a well-patterned inferiority feeling.

...Mr. Redfield and Mr. Sapir referred to the difference between Pueblo and Plains patterning with respect to personal competitive distinction[s], and a probable explanation of Garth's results, wherein Plains Indians did better than Pueblo Indians on the test.

[The discussion turned to studies of parental attitudes that compared statements by parents with what parents actually did.]

Mr. Murphy mentioned similar studies of political attitudes, as verbalized and so actually made manifest, where high correspondence was found. Mr. Alpert pointed out that both response to stereotype and response to actual situation were involved in these tests. Mr. Sapir suggested that furthermore there were possibly important individual differences in verbalization.

[Finally, Young mentioned recent papers by Luria and Vygotsky attempting to measure cultural influence in performance tests.]

After the morning recess, Mr. Murphy reported on "Attitudes and Opinions in Relation to Personal Backgrounds". [Studies mentioned included an intensive study of a single individual's religious experience; European studies of children's changing attitudes toward the social order, especially in Russia, a study of differences in art appreciation between Japanese and Occidentals, and his own several studies of American political attitudes.]

... [Concerning the study of racial attitudes in the U. S.,] Mr. Sapir suggested the wisdom of confining the investigation to an inquiry as to what the subject would do in crucial instances.

September 1, 1930

Mr. Frank spoke on "the family as an agent for the socialization of the individual". We distinguish first, the imposition on the child of patterns (taboos) with regard to persons and with regard to things. ... The family is probably the initial and most pervasive agency that imposes these patterns. ... The child learns to get along with persons before he encounters the most important institutional patterns (money, marriage, etc.). All these imposed patterns check naive behavior. ... These institutional patterns are subject to a secular change. The breakdown of an individual may be attributed to the failure of the individual to satisfy his wants through the institutional patterns.

Mr. Allport asked if it might not be possible for breakdowns to come about by increased conformity to institutional patterns.

Mr. Sapir replied that the locus of the thwarting need not be in the totality of culture patterns.

Mr. Anderson remarked that in modern life the individual is presented with a complex and unintegrated cultural situation. There may be no real culture, as we have been using the term.

Mr. Frank resumed, pointing out that there is great uncertainty and inconsistency in the institutional patterns presented to the individual. This makes value-behavior difficult to pursue, and the individual tends to break down.

Mr. Sapir asked if it did not follow that religion was a favorable kind of value-behavior.

Mr. Frank replied it was conceivable that a religious renaissance might develop in the precarious and uncertain world.

Mr. Allport pointed out a distinction between family as the mere persons living together, and family as a body of values and patterns.

... Mr. Sapir suggested the importance of a comparative study of the actual functional significance of the family in various cultures.

... A general discussion emphasized the importance of intensive studies of the family as function; of the actual intimate interaction of individuals objectively reported and recorded, detail by detail.

...

After the morning recess Mr. Sullivan discussed "Personality Differentials as Antecedents and Consequents in Acculturation". [Sullivan termed the child's learning and adaptation to its environment "acculturation." Conflicts arise with advanced civilization, since cultural change outstrips cultural integration. Personality types differ in their ability to integrate situations.]

September 2, 1930

Mr. May presented his views on "Method in the Field of Personality and Culture." These remarks dealt with methods employed in the study of personality, and included suggestions for a plan of [research on] the impact of culture on personality.

... [Concerning May's discussion of questionnaires,] Mr. Sapir here pointed out the frequent difficulty of answering the questions presented by categorical answers.

[Further discussion of questionnaires ensued, May then turned to studies explaining personality differences in terms of inner mechanisms, as opposed to the situational approach.]

A discussion here intervened as to the logical validity of this distinction between approaches emphasizing exterior and interior factors, Dr. Sapir pointing out the danger of coming to regard concepts as entities. [The discussion digressed for a moment onto the meaning of the term "common-sense," then returned to the distinction between inner and outer factors.] Mr. Murphy pointed out that it was often merely a terminological distinction between "inner mechanism" and "situation". The previous situation becomes in effect an inner mechanism. Mr. Sapir replied that this view necessarily implied mechanisms for "building in" these previous situations.

... [The discussion emphasized] the importance of more careful analysis of situations. Mr. Sapir said the question really was practical, is it useful at this stage to formalize the available materials conceptually?

...

After the morning recess, Mr. Sullivan read the "Memorandum from the Conference on Research in Acculturation and Personality to the Social Science Research Council" (appended to these minutes). Mr. Young moved the adoption of this memorandum as the report and recommendation of the conference. In the resulting discussion, minor amendments to the report were proposed and carried. The report-memorandum was then unanimously adopted.

Mr. Sutherland presented his report on methods of study of crime and personality, and a discussion followed.

3. "The Cultural Approach to the Study of Personality" (lecture and discussion, evening of August 31, 1930)

The evening session of August 31 was chaired by Lawrence K. Frank, of the Louis Spelman Rockefeller Memorial (i. e., the Rockefeller Foundation). The audience consisted of all the regular conference participants and may have also included a few guests. No guest list for that evening is available, however, apart from the transcript of the session itself, which identifies (by surname only) persons who spoke in the discussion following the lecture.

From the stenographer's transcript, we reproduce Sapir's lecture in its entirety, as well as those portions of the subsequent discussion in which he responded to questions from the audience. Other portions of the discussion (in particular, lengthy statements by Harry Stack Sullivan and Adolf Meyer) are summarized.

This paper is of particular interest for its arguments which foreshadow Sapir's published essays from later in the 1930's, as well as his plan for *The Psychology of Culture*, but the Hanover lecture is not identical with any of these. At Hanover, Sapir alternated between approaching his topic from the cultural point of view and approaching it from

the perspective of the individual, without yet proposing any mediating level of analysis. In later works, however (such as Sapir 1937a, "The Contribution of Psychiatry to an Understanding of Behavior in Society," and chapter 10 of *The Psychology of Culture*, both in this volume), he argued that an analysis of specific situated conversations is the crucial mediating step. That argument seems to have been the product of Sapir's interaction with Harry Stack Sullivan. Although the two men had become acquainted before 1930, the Hanover meeting was probably an important moment in the crossfertilization of their ideas.

Although Sapir's lecture is not principally about language, he characteristically draws on language as the prime example of cultural patterning (here illustrated in relation to individual conduct). The linguistic material is presented in a non-technical way, and some of it derives from the everyday experience of American speakers of English. Some of it, however, derives from Sapir's then-current research, such as his discussion of a Liberian language (Gweabo; see Sapir 1931i, CWES II).

This lecture also includes a passage that is of interest with regard to Sapir's version of what has come to be known as the "Sapir-Whorf hypothesis" of linguistic relativity and determinism. Following a discussion of conversation at a hypothetical party, Sapir concludes with a statement that suggests a strong version of the hypothesis: "So far, then, from your manipulating the cultural machine called 'language', you were to a certain very significant extent being manipulated by it." But unlike Whorf's examples, which focus on individual perception and cognition about the physical world, Sapir's example focuses on social interaction. In this passage, it is not the speaker's thought so much as his conduct that is "forced in certain channels" because of the fact of speaking English. The speaker may be aware that he has "not been able to express quite what he wanted to express," but his interlocutors have no other means of interpreting what that was. The particular language has an effect on the social outcome because social communication must take place through a symbolic system. Related arguments may be found in the discussions of symbolism in *The Psychology of Culture* (this volume).

* * *

Chairman Frank introduced Sapir's lecture as follows:

FRANK: — The meeting will please come to order.

This term "personality" is being met with frequent continuity and outlets in a form in which it was seldom found formerly. You are mostly all familiar with the clinical approach, and it will be therefore exceedingly interesting to hear Dr. Sapir talk on, "The Cultural Approach to the Study of Personality." Dr. Sapir!

* * *

The Cultural Approach to the Study of Personality

Two of the outstanding tendencies in modern social scientific thought are of a somewhat contradictory nature. One of them is concerned with the concept "culture." The other is concerned with the concept "person-

ality." They are of a somewhat contradictory sort because the two terms are generally opposed to each other; whether rightly or wrongly, is another matter. If you emphasize the cultural aspect of behavior, if you say, for instance, "The reason John goes to church is because everybody else in the community goes to church," that he is merely following out a "cultural pattern," you feel that you are not saying very much about his personality. That is, whether consciously or unconsciously, you eliminate the act of his going to church as comparatively unimportant in an estimate of his personality.

If, on the other hand, you point to the fact that this same John is peculiar because he goes to church, you imply that you are saying something more or less significant about his personality. You make the correlative tacit assumption that the kind of people he associates with are not such as ordinarily go to church. That the culture of this particular group does not include church-going, in other words, is the tacit assumption. Therefore his going to church seems by contrast to take on the quality of an individual variation and seems to throw light on what is naively called "personality."

Another example of exactly the same kind of preliminary contrast is as follows: if a man associates with other men known as longshoremen, and it is a question of unloading a cargo, and somebody shouts to him with concomitant profanity, and he answers in kind, that is not ordinarily considered an evidence of his personality. He is merely being "regular." He is playing the game or acting out the culture pattern of his particular group. But if the same person, or an equivalent person, were to raise his voice to the same extent and to the accompaniment of the same expletives in a drawing-room, you would remark on the singularity of his conduct. You would be led to the inference that there is something peculiar about his character. In the latter case, you would imply that his group is not in the habit of acting as he then acted. You would be implying the theory or fact that the culture of [73] his group is such as to have that particular conduct seem aberrant, and therefore illustrative of a peculiar individual variation.

In these two very simple examples which I have given, examples which could obviously be multiplied by the thousand without special difficulty, you have, I think, an important entry into the whole tangled field of personality and culture. I am not meaning to imply, what perhaps some would wish that I might imply, that there is no such thing as personality, on the one hand, or that there is no such thing as culture on the other. Both theories are held. I am far from subscribing to either

of those negative theories. But the two illustrations which I have given and the thousands of others that might be supplied to supplement them certainly suggest some negative theory of that kind, because they suggest that it is a question of the relativity of judgment rather than of a difference of essence in the reactions themselves.

We are confronted by many contacts in ordinary life in which it becomes difficult to say whether to ascribe a particular element in human behavior to culture or to personality, because we have not the key, the contextual key, to the situation. It is a commonplace that people who come from a foreign country are to a certain extent difficult in the sense that it is not easy to calculate their motives — by which we do not necessarily mean that they are queer people. They may be quite normal people. But we do not know what kind of a line of normality to assume from which we may measure their distinctive variations, if they have any worth speaking about. What we can do in such cases, and what we do do consciously — or more often unconsciously — is to assume that the line of normality is the same as the one that we unconsciously adopt for our own civilization. We project the variations from that approximate line of normality into the foreign behavior and arrive at a personality judgment; for instance, we say, “The Italian is a queer person, because he is demonstrative as compared with the normal or average American, who does not carry his heart on his sleeve.” Of course, if we have any such premature notion in our minds, if we actually go to Italy and proceed on the assumption that the Italians are the kind of people that our preliminary analysis has made them out to be, we are doomed to disappointment. We find that they are quite hard-boiled and realistic in action, in spite of their seeming to be so demonstrative, so emotional, and so temperamental. We find, contrariwise, that a man who lives in a group that takes pride in hiding emotion and in being officially hard-boiled may actually have the tenderest sentiments, if only we catch him in those particular contexts in which it is possible for a member of his particular culture to exhibit an individual variation without being thought abnormal.

All this suggests that the field of personality versus culture is exceedingly tangled, exceedingly difficult. It suggests that perhaps it requires a certain courage to undertake the carrying on of the two concepts at the same time. And so we are not surprised to find that so many have tried to construct simplistic theories which minimize the reality of culture, of the social patterning of behavior, as much as possible, or theories [74] which minimize the reality of personality.

Before I go on with the analysis, I should like to point out that there has been a subtle shift of meaning in the term "personality" in the history of our modern languages. We still have a feeling for an antique meaning of the word "personality" when we say, "He is a great personality." He may actually, in the intimate psychological sense of the word, be a terrible nincompoop. He may be the kind of man whose actions or sentiments you can count on in advance with unfailing accuracy, if you have had any experience with people of his type. But you might refer to him as "a great personality," meaning that he occupies some kind of socially accredited throne, is a key figure perhaps in certain cases, or, at any rate, a symbol standing for a group to which value of some kind is attached — a superior class, for instance, or a nationality whose votes are important, or the whole set of labor unions, or any entity of that kind that you can think of.

Personality in that sense is really the old meaning of the word "personality." It is the most paradoxical meaning of the word for us of today, because the word "person" which lies back of "personality" is in turn nothing but the old Latin *persona*, itself taken over from the Greek, and originally meaning "mask". The word was originally used for the mask worn by actors in carrying out heroic parts in the Greek tragedies, and in the Roman plays modeled on the Greek. A man in those days, acting such a heroic part, artificially increased his height; he wore a helmet; he did all sorts of things to disguise his irrelevant human "personality," in our sense, which did not in the Greek sense exist at all, because it had no accredited social value as such.

Our modern contrast, then, is a new thing, and yet it is possible to hold on to the old notion of personality, if only we deepen it by deepening the cultural concept itself. In the old days, only certain kinds of activity were considered important, as vouched for by society. If you were a king, you reigned, and reigning consisted of certain symptomatic or symbolic acts, signing certain documents, making certain speeches, proceeding to battle, or what not. As time went on, however, the actual behavior of such marked individuals became more and more noteworthy, and there was a tendency to carry over the original meaning of "personality," which was that of "role," conduct following from status and assigned by convention, to actual conduct, which one tried to read in terms of that role.

So we get to the somewhat idealistic or sentimental phase in which one speaks of "the real mother," for instance, or of what "a true king" does, or of "the heart of a sister," it may be, or of "a wife," or of

whatever you like. This is a stage that we have not entirely emerged from yet. It is the stage in which the old *persona* idea, the collectivity of behavior patterns ascribed to a status, is identified without criticism with actual behavior.

Naturally, under such a regime as that, all kinds of problems arise which we should consider more or less bogus, many of us today — all sorts of problems as to the difference between the supposed and the real, [75] between the essential conduct and the actual conduct, which is always looked upon in such cases as a falling short, as it were, as an unwarrantable deviation.

We have learned that the actual conduct of human beings in every case is inordinately complex: that the kind of first-approach psychology that we use to explain overt behavior in well defined situations in which roles are played is very far from interpreting the sum of human behavior, except by certain logical fictions, as in the case of the economic man, for instance. These fictions work very well for conceptually defined discipline, and we cannot get along without them. But no one is so blind today as to assume that the kind of conduct that flows from these conceptual systems is actual conduct in the psychological sense.

The interest in psychology is really a new interest. The older writers, even as late, I should say, as the Elizabethan dramatists, were not so greatly interested in what we should call psychology. At any rate, their psychological outlines are of a very bold or “essential” type. They are not of an intimate type.

I suppose that Rousseau with his *Confessions* was a startling phenomenon when he appeared. People had not been in the habit of displaying their weaknesses. At the moment that Rousseau (this is merely a historical symbol; you need not take it as a historical fact) displayed his weaknesses and stood before man as still a man, at that moment our modern conception of personality was born. The older conception would have bid him refrain from the exhibition of any part of himself that did not correspond to the earlier *persona* or mask or status conception. So that he effected very much of a revolution in the history of the Western human mind. And we are only now beginning to reap the harvest, as it were, of this subtle movement in thought that was initiated in the latter part of the eighteenth century.

Much in Shakespeare, if one were entirely honest, which one is not in dealing with the literature of the past, is a little foreign to us — not because the situations are remote in a historical sense. That does not matter so much. One can always paint the local scene with historical

color. But it is foreign to us because a kind of standardized motivation is assumed that seems unreal to us. Why should a man who occupies the clown's position, for instance, be necessarily the kind of man he is? Why should a kingly man be just the kind of man he is — and he is generally either very much of a villain, or very much of a king. I think honesty would compel us to admit that the conception of the person as an actual carrier of behavior that we have in those plays is different from the conception we have today.

So this modern conception of personality, when all is said and done, is not very old. In fact, it may be said not to have been thoroughly born yet. It is possible even at this late date for a whole school of social scientists to maintain, and with some show of reason, that even the most subtle divergences of behavior, which we ascribe to an unanalyzed nuclear entity called "personality," are of a cultural type. And, as a matter of fact, I shall now, with your leave, try to show that there is much truth in that surmise. Later I shall return to the concept of personality, and it will be my total task, I hope, to have shown that [76] much of our trouble comes from not allowing a complex enough terrain of possibilities to tie the strictly and simply cultural point of view with the strictly and simply psychological or elemental point of view, that we allow these two points of view to meet too quickly, to fertilize each other too quickly, without patiently exploring into the vast realm of human behavior which lies between.

Let us start with culture. Let us take behavior which is seemed cultural in the strictly overt sense of the word, and point to preliminary indications of significant individual variation within it. For instance, in a drawing-room there are so-and-so many people sitting about, standing, chatting, eating, drinking, joking, doing various things. Our first impression would be that the only cultural element in the fact of these people gathering and behaving as they are behaving is that it is a party of some kind. There is not very much more to say than that.

Well, it is a particular kind of party. Perhaps it is a birthday party. Maybe it is a card party, maybe it is talk after a particularly important dinner to which an ambassador has been invited. You can define the thing culturally as much as you like, but we would certainly have the illusion — for I think it is something of an illusion — we would certainly have the impression that most of the individual facts of behavior within that party are facts that bear on individual personalities, once the party has been defined as a general background or setting.

It takes no very great powers of analysis for the sociologist or anthropologist to show us that this is very much of an illusion; that at every turn in the course of the events that mark the evening, cultural patterns manifest themselves. One of the most obvious of these is, for instance, the fact that English is being spoken. English cannot be spoken out of whole cloth. English has to be learned. Speaking English means that your conduct is forced in certain channels. For instance, you might have a certain kind of feeling, but if you have not quite the word to express it, you use an approximate expression for your feeling; and the person with whom you are communicating interprets you as having such-and-such a feeling, which he then imputes to a mysterious something in your personality. At that moment, you were at the mercy of the techniques of your language. You may not have been able to express quite what you wanted to express. So far, then, from your manipulating the cultural machine called "language," you were to a certain very significant extent being manipulated by it.

The stereotype comes to mind as an obvious example of this type of conduct. Even witty remarks obey the same laws of analogy. They have implied references to very complex cycles of experience held by sophisticated people in common, so that even the bright, the sparkling, the epigrammatic remark which seems to stamp one as an unusual person is nevertheless, so far as its actual texture is concerned, nothing but a highly complex blend of cultural patterns. That is true.

Furthermore, you will observe postures at this gathering. Some people have a somewhat stiff carriage. Others have a nonchalant, perhaps [77] too nonchalant, carriage. Here again, your first impression is that they are being themselves; they are not being merely participators in cultural patterns, they are manifesting their true nuclear selves. Yet how unreal is that simple picture, when you realize that these people come from different parts of the country; that they have participated in entirely different kinds of patterned or institutional experiences! These have necessarily left their mark upon them in the form of postural behavior, which is symbolic, to some extent, of their institutional experience. So while these slight variations in behavior are not in the most obvious sense of the word "cultural" in the given context, they are nevertheless cultural in the wide sense of the word.

If, for instance, you have been a polished diplomat and have been deferring to a sovereign a good part of the time, it is quite likely that you will have a certain manner of address, a certain method of inclining the head and the body, which is a symbol in the last analysis of your

role in society. It may be that the particular symbol does not quite apply at this party. Well, that simply complicates the problem. It may be that you unconsciously correct your general tendency to decorum by adopting a somewhat more frivolous or jovial tone and posture, in which case you have the interplay of two cultural patterns, blending into a more complicated one. Notice that the more complicated these patterns of an institutional or cultural sort become, the less easy does it become to ascribe them to any one given pattern.

We need simplicity of context in order to understand a cultural pattern as a cultural pattern. If you are marching in a regiment, that is simple. We know what this mode of behavior symbolizes. If you are answering a response in church, we know what that symbolizes. If we hear an educator talking to the children in a particular tone of voice, we reckon with that as part of the symbolism of the particular situation. But these are very simple situations. Most situations in human life are not so simple. As we extend our analysis of actual behavior, we get to reckon more and more with the concept of the blend of different cultural patterns in one behavior act.

That is a somewhat difficult concept for some to adopt, a very easy one for others — much depending, I suppose, on the nature of one's own experiences, for these give one the means wherewith to see still other experiences symbolically. There are people who find it very hard to understand how one person can be doing two things at the same time in the very same behavior act; that one can be saying "yes" and "no," with a wrinkle of the mouth, perhaps, or with the spoken word "yes." But the skillful actor makes situations of that kind clear enough to us, though it needs no skill in acting to illustrate facts of this sort. We all blend patterns thousands of times every day. For the most part, we are unconscious of the fact.

Now the net result of this type of thinking is to lead to a possible theory that there is no such thing as an elementary or nuclear personality, except as a secondary concept. We are then brought back to the old concept of the *persona*, the role, the difference between the old and the new viewpoints being simply this: that in the old days, when they talked of [78] the *persona*, they were interested only in certain bold, heroic contours, which were symbolic of a class of human beings, whereas now that we have deepened our conception of what is significant in human behavior, now that we care more about the unavowed types of human behavior and understand more clearly what symbolism is (or are beginning to do so), we can subsume under this concept of the *persona*, the

role, many more facets of activity than we could in the old days. Then, divergences of all kinds were unvalued and needed no special name; they were merely the accidents, the quips of fancy, of people, and had no special value attached to them, except in an unconscious or intuitive sense. This unconscious or intuitive sense, we maybe sure, has been characteristic of human perception and appreciation at all times, for we find it in primitive man as we find it among ourselves today.

While these remarks that I have been making are either unacceptable or else commonplaces, they are certainly deepened by the data of anthropology, because in the study of cultural anthropology we are confronted to a very much greater degree than in our daily experience by the concept of relativity of general cultural backgrounds. In modern life, the important outlines in the cultural background do not vary so greatly, when all is said and done; for, while we are always talking about A's background being very different from B's, we really assume that there is a substantial unity in the institutional background of both. Both A and B, for instance, thoroughly understand the use of money. Both A and B understand that depositing money at the bank has such-and-such implications. Both A and B understand that services are exchangeable for commodities through the medium of money. No matter how different they seem to be in their overt behavior, and however different are their cultural backgrounds in detail, both A and B understand that it is possible for the market to break and that their bank savings may not be as secure as they had hoped. Both A and B understand that going to the theatre is recreation rather than duty. Both A and B understand that going to church is supposed to be a duty, but both feel that it is not as stringent a duty as the word implies. A and B, in short, understand literally thousands of things which are not set down in any list of tacit understandings, for they are so clear that we never bother to mention them. This being true, the concept of significant variation in behavior is somewhat narrowed or channeled in advance; and therefore, the concept of the nature of the personality is not apt to take the same form as when we compare examples of behavior against entirely different backgrounds.

What happens when we compare entirely different backgrounds? Two things. First, the notion of relativity that is comparatively weakly developed if one's experience is taken from a society which is not too greatly varied in its understandings becomes infinitely deeper, more extended. It becomes more of a real thing. We see more of human life as possibly institutional in character than we might have seen before, when we

had not thoroughly analyzed all the unconscious, socially determined elements of the behavior situation.

On the other hand, another type of experience emerges which is very baffling. This is the intuitive conviction, which is shared, I believe, by all who have had much to do with primitive people or foreign people, that in spite of these very significant differences in cultural [79] background, there are always present variations in individual conduct that are roughly parallel to the kind of variations that we consider significant, in a nuclear sense, among ourselves. You will begin to see what I meant by the deepening of our sense of the complexity of the terrain lying between official or institutional life, the culturalized part of conduct, on the one hand, and the simpler somatic or psychological forms of behavior on the other, because this conviction both of the relativity of cultural background and of essential parallelism of human types in spite of these great differences of background squarely raises the question of where our intuitions as to personality begin and end, and up to what point our inferences as to culture have a right to extend themselves.

It is an unfortunate thing that in arguments about the relative place of cultural conditioning versus biological determinants and fundamental psychological conditioning, too little account is taken of the extremely complicated middle ground. It is as though one assumed that the sky met the trees of the landscape at a soon definable point, minimizing the reach of the atmosphere in between. An unfortunate parallel, I admit—because it dooms our analysis to a kind of futility. I had meant a final meeting of sky and trees. But certainly the finding of that meeting point is indefinitely delayed in our actual experience, and I imagine that the finality of our behavior-analyzing is similarly subject to indefinite delay in the field of personality and culture.

Let us take a particular cultural pattern and see at what point we run across the thing called "personality," if at all; and then, reversely, let us take the thing called "personality," and see at what point we meet culture, if at all. That will be an imaginative reconstructive method which would justify both concepts, at least in theory. Notice that the current of these investigations, the direction in which they proceed, as it were, is different. In one case, we are starting from an institutional pattern in behavior which all men of the group have in common. In the other case, we are assuming that there are certain elemental contours of personality which we are seeing maintained as this personality gets more

and more modified by contact with his fellow-men in society. Let us see if these two processes are real, or can be so considered.

We shall take language as our example. Language is a somewhat peculiar, even paradoxical, thing, because on the face of it, it is one of the most patterned, one of the most culturalized of habits — yet that one, above all others, which is supposed to be capable of articulating our inmost feelings. The very idea of going to the dictionary in order to find out what we ought to say is a paradox. What we “ought” to say is how we spontaneously react; and how can a dictionary — a store-house of prepared meanings — tell us how we are spontaneously reacting? Everyone senses the paradoxical about the situation, and of course the more of an individualist he is, the more he proclaims the fetish of “preservation of his personality,” the less patience he has with the dictionary. The more conformist he is, the more he thinks that people should, by whatever ethical warrant you like, be what society wishes them to be, the more apt he is to consult the dictionary. [80]

Language, then, suggests both individual reality and culture. To be sure, we shall not find individual reality in the word, not in the actual word. It is true that there are some bizarre writers who invent words. Suppose, however, you try to invent a word: what happens? Well, I imagine that in nine hundred and ninety-nine cases out of a thousand you would invent something that a careful analysis would show had dozens of cultural repercussions that you were entirely unaware of. Let me point out one very simple thing that is likely to happen. You would have a certain number of syllables in that word, and the number of syllables would be a function of the syllabic behavior of words in your language. If you had been brought up in China and tried the same experiment in your capacity of chairman, you would, no doubt, invent a monosyllabic word. It would never occur to you to have a word of two, three, or even four syllables. If you were talking certain American Indian languages, however, you might have a polysyllabic word of eight or nine syllables, and think nothing of it. Why is that? You are not making up an actual word, and yet you find yourself in the grip of culture. You are being manipulated by a machine that society has, in a sense, invented for you, and of which you have no explicit cognizance. If course, what you are doing there, as the psychologist would tell you, is following the force of habit. But the word “habit” does not sufficiently stress the part that culture plays in the process. You are accustomed to certain rhythms, to certain distributions of syllables, to certain

stresses, and even when you "invent," you relapse into one or more of society's cultural patterns.

That is very significant, because at your freest, at your most bizarre – when you are so free as to seem crazy – you are still the slave, as it were, of society. But it is not merely a matter of inventing the word as a word. Let us suppose that you know exactly what you are going to say, that you feel you can manifest your personality by choosing words in a novel way, that you can, by juxtaposing words in a peculiar manner, gain new meanings. You can take words, for instance, that do not ordinarily go together, and hit upon a new nuance of meaning. And, of course, many modernists do just that, hoping that in this way they may advertise to the world their "true" individuality. The very fact, however, that we have to resort to such extreme devices shows how difficult it is to be sure that we are naturalizing or symbolizing this feeling of the reality of our personalities with society's tools.

An analysis of the words used by particular writers leads to somewhat disappointing results. We find something like this, if we take a single writer who is removed from us in time and place; we are struck by all kinds of interesting peculiarities, and we say, "Aha! This man works with the same background that I possess, but he has so many divergences of expression that I must guess there is something peculiar about him." But if we proceed to read his contemporaries, we find that much that we considered interestingly peculiar is quite commonplace after all. And so those who are inclined to make much of the mere diction, say, of Shakespeare, should not read too much of the other Elizabethan writers. They will find that much that they attributed to Shakespeare is common Elizabethan stock; in fact, that some of the things that they thought most characteristic of Shakespeare are better illustrated, perhaps, in Marlowe. And so it goes. [81]

We may proceed from invented words and from actual words juxtaposed in new positions to still more subtle evidences of individuality in speech, such as intonations. What can be more individual than intonation? Here again we are confronted by very peculiar and tangled facts.

If you were to go to Liberia, where one of our research men at the University of Chicago is at the present moment investigating certain technical problems of music and language, drum signaling and horn signaling, you would discover some interesting facts. You would find that these people have a very lively way of expressing themselves, that they trip up and down the musical scale in a peculiar way. You would, if you were not a critical anthropologist or sociologist, develop the feel-

ing that these (aha!) are the real, temperamental Negroes from whom our American Negroes are descended, and whose volatility and tonal expressiveness they still have in modified form.

As a matter of fact, you would not know how much of this speech was expressive until you knew the rules of the game. That is fairly obvious. You would have to know what the mechanics of such a language were before you could even venture to guess. And, indeed, the mechanics of this particular language happen to be extraordinary. Imagine a language in which it makes a difference whether you pronounce the word "damn" on the note C, on the note A, on the note F, or on the note D; and that in the first case "damn" means, say, "beautiful," in the second "ugly," in the third "hallelujah," and in the fourth really "damn!"

That would be a bizarre situation, from our standpoint. It would simply mean that a technique that we had unconsciously appropriated for expressive purposes had invaded the realm of meaning symbolism. That is the sober fact in such a language. Moreover, you would find that, not content with these four distinct registers, the native can combine them into inflected patterns. Thus, you can say "Aha!" or anything of that kind, and expect to be understood in an intonational sense as we would be in English. But you have, first, to know the theory of possible combinations of the four registers in an upward and downward direction, all the mathematical possibilities of the case. If you will make a rapid calculation, you will find that with a four-register system, four notes taken as units, you can have six falling inflections and six rising inflections. Each one of those inflections is a distinct phonetic entity in the language. For instance, if in this language I want to say 'door', I use a certain syllable which starts on the highest register and ends on the lowest, a nasalized *moo*. You say, "Well, of course it might mean 'door'. It is just like our own word *door*." But when a native happens to say *moo* with an incomplete downward inflection, does he mean 'door'? Well, he does not mean that at all; he means 'I am closing something.'

You can see that with a whole terrain of intonational possibilities thus preempted, as it were, by tone patterns, the meaning in an expressive sense, of this chattering speech that you hear when you land on the coast of Liberia becomes a fairly inexplicable thing until you have worked out the rules of that particular game; and you feel that there are no significant inferences that you could make as to purely personal revelations [82] except on the basis of a complete understanding of that

framework. That is, the subtle variations that you could not hear at all at first, so drowned out were they in the general confused intonational picture, and which you now after many years' habit perhaps begin to disentangle from the mass, would be the only things that have expressive value.

Coming back to our own English-speaking terrain, we have to note two things. First, the field of intonation is not so thoroughly socialized in the simple linguistic sense as in the case of this Liberian language, so that intonational play seems to be of more value for inferences as to personality than in Liberia. The next point, however, is to see that even so, we are not done with our institutional problem. It is a commonplace that people have varying intonations according to the particular part of the country from which they come. We have the speech habits called "drawls." We have the lively, melodious, rippling speech of the English gentleman or lady. We have the peculiar type of speech of the Harvardian, let us say, or of the Oxfordian. These all involve intonational patterns.

Now, it is a crude analysis, is it not, to assume that every individual who follows these intonational patterns manifests a certain personality peculiarity in common with all others of the group? We do not really believe that. We tend to think so at first, before we have a sufficient social critique at our disposal to apply to the situation. But as our acquaintanceship with the group becomes extended, we tend, more and more, to discount these intonational peculiarities, until finally we have to say, "Here, too, speech is standardized."

It seems, then, that while the intonational limitations in English are of a very different nature technically from the intonational limitations in this Liberian language, in the deeper psychological sense they are not quite so different as seemed to be the case at first sight. It is merely that the cultural patterns to which these intonational habits are referred are of a greater or lesser order of complexity. We are having difficulty, then, as we pass through this much traveled domain of speech, in discovering indisputable indices of personality.

If, in spite of all these difficulties, you were to look back and describe your impressions of a particular individual whose speech you had thus analyzed and in which you had found so much disappointment in the way of definite personality indices that you could put your finger on, you would be quite sure (unless you were a certain kind of psychologist or sociologist, I might add) that there nevertheless was something rather distinctive about the individual. Moreover, if you had happened to

know him twenty years ago, you might, very likely, in spite of all the things that had happened to him, in spite of the fact that he had adopted an Oxford drawl, in spite of all kinds of other things of a similar sort, have the feeling that there was enough in speech alone, not to speak of other indices of behavior, that was in common between his actual performance today and his performance as you remembered it in the old days, to justify your considering him the same person, with the same personality peculiarities. [83]

And, quite frankly, we do not exactly know why we make these judgments. We are simply compelled to make them because we adjust to each other, not on laborious analytical grounds which have been rationalized for us, but intuitively, because of our quick perception of significant relations in the totality of behavior. What exactly that process is, how it can be analyzed in its precise detail, it is of course for the psychologist of the future to tell us, and the realistic psychologist is the first one to admit that he has everything to learn.

You will remember that I said that if we proceed to a primitive culture and work out all its different patterns of behavior, we are still left with a residuum of feeling that the purely individual variations are roughly parallel to those that we stubbornly feel exist in a society such as our own. At this point the psychiatrist, it seems to me, is of importance. His particular theories are often difficult to accredit, but his type of thought seems to me to be valuable, because he, of all individuals in the modern scientific world, tries to rationalize as best he can the stubborn intuition of normal human beings. He finds it difficult sometimes to quite convey his meaning to the sociologist, who can point out fallacies in his actual instances in many cases; but in spite of all that, he just knows, from dealing with human material, often over a long period of years, that his individual remains significantly the same in spite of all social modifications. And this belief of the psychiatrists comes to the aid of the simple, unanalyzed feeling of the persistence of personality that the culturist admits, though he says very little about it in the official literature of anthropology or sociology. This is the feeling that individual variations of a non-cultural character somehow obtain.

It may be that the contrast is illusory and is entirely due to the very perspective that I pictured at the beginning. It may be that these residual feelings are due to the last contrasts of contours that we only sense as individual variations in the total field of conformity which has been analyzed as culture, and that we have not wit enough to see these last stubborn outlines as themselves cultural in character. Much that is

called significant individual variation in personality is of cultural origin, no doubt, but I would not go so far as to believe that in these "last stubborn outlines" we are not somehow approaching certain differences in the human being that transcend the interplay of cultural patterns. For one thing, it is difficult to believe that where physical differences are as pronounced as they are, there should not be some correlative psychical differences. Certainly one expects differences of speed, for instance, in emotional reaction. It is hard to believe that there is not something in the popular concept of a naturally sluggish person contrasted with a naturally alert person. The fallacy comes in allowing the intuition of the distinction between the two to rest with too highly complex, socialized examples. To contrast the alert, intellectual behavior of a college graduate, for instance, with that of a sluggish, dull farmer means nothing. But when we find analogous differences, often quite as pronounced as this simple one, in exactly the same cultural environment, in persons who are earmarked by just such differences as this, we begin to suspect that something more is involved than the play of cultural forces. [84]

There are many psychiatrists who do not think that purely somatic determination is of the greatest consequence, it is true; but there are still other determinations, not cultural in character, which come upon the scene and which, for the psychiatrist, make the personality at an early period of life. Such are the attitudes of the infant toward its father, mother, brothers, sisters — attitudes which seem to give a set to his whole world, and while these are not innate in the sense in which somatic factors are innate, still one may believe that they proceed from somatic differentiations to a certain extent. It may be true that the modifying forces are very much more important than the prepared base, but the prepared base cannot be entirely eliminated. Otherwise, it would be very difficult to understand why negativism, for instance, is developed by one child, whereas the exact opposite is developed by another. It is very easy to say, as is always said in such cases, that the environments of the two children are not the same. Of course they are never quite the same. But there should be enough similarity in many cases to prevent the very considerable variation of personality features that we actually find.

I think any honest parent who examines his own children from this standpoint, whatever may be his official theory, is left almost inevitably with the feeling that there is something stubbornly nuclear which cannot be explained by any theories of conditioning with which we are familiar.

However that may be, the psychiatrist does develop the notion of a personality – partly innate, we will say, partly modified by very early conditionings – that tends to persist, in some sensible meaning of the word “persist,” throughout the rest of life.

Here we are traveling in the opposed direction, for we are going to meet culture now. The psychiatrist, as psychiatrist, does not care about culture. He sees culture merely as complicated kinds of behavior which are modifiable by the actual, persisting personality, and which are food for the private symbolisms of the personality. The psychiatrist is not interested, for example, in religion as an institution, except in so far as it is a background fact. He is interested in it in exactly the same way in which he is interested in the sunshine or the grass or anything else that is present in the environment. To him, its institutional definition does not constitute a human fact. To the anthropologist and sociologist, it does. The psychiatrist wants to see just what matters to the given individual with his “set,” however prepared in the earliest years of life, when he “meets” the institution, as it were. He may ask the question, “Going to church?” and receive the answer “Yes,” and feel that his knowledge is merely of culture, not of personality. “Well, what about it?” he ponders. Is church-going in this instance a casual habit, or is it a symbol of loyalty to the father? If it is a symbol of loyalty to the father, then the future conduct of the individual with regard to church-going will have a psychological characteristic peculiar to the father attitude. And if it is a problem of breaking away from the habit of going to church, mere scientific belief will not quite solve the personal problem, because he has to break away, at least to a meaningful extent, from the influence of the father. If he happens to develop an antagonism to the father, breaking away from church will be comparatively easy; in fact, too easy. It may even outrun his intellectual convictions. If he has intellectual convictions that indicate [85] the possibility of breaking away from church, but has a strong attachment to the father, then a conflict arises, in many cases involving much more important patterns than that of church-going itself, as, say, in the sex sphere. The psychiatrist tells us that such conflicts may in particular cases lead to neurosis, to psychosis, to all kinds of aberrant conduct, to all sorts of strange symbolism.

We see, then, that to the psychiatrist the whole field of culturalized behavior, which means all behavior as expressly labeled by language, is of no interest whatever until it has been seen from the point of view of how it hooks up with the very earliest attitudinal symbolism of the individual, however they in turn are determined. If you want to save

the cultural situation, you may say that these earliest determinations of personality are really elementary cultural determinations. They are not such as we would ordinarily think of as cultural, but perhaps we can express them in cultural terms. The peculiarity about them, however, is that they are infinitely variable as we go from person to person. There are certain types of personality determination which tend to remain constant, but the variations are so numerous that the purely cultural point of view leaves us rather in the lurch.

But, even so, let us assume that there is nothing to take account of but secondary, cultural determinations — that is, the imposition of cultural patterns of various degrees of complexity on the indefinitely plastic human organism. Then the whole problem which we have been laboring with takes on a new aspect, and we simply see one type of cultural conditioning as prior to another, and as symbolized by it, so that all human behavior takes on a highly relativist tinge; and it becomes possible to say, Yes, A goes to church and B goes to church, but is A's going to church a more archaic symbol, personally, than B's, or not? That is, in the chronological development of the personality, the cultural patterns come in at various points of the fundamental personality configurations and take on meanings assigned to them by these.

The process of such adjustment is of course exceedingly complex. There are all kinds of blends and conflicts which make it very difficult to give simple examples, but in order that you may more clearly perceive how complex I feel the field of personality development to be, let me for a minute discuss the term "ambivalence," which the psychoanalyst is fond of using. Ambivalence means that you feel in contrary ways about the given object. You hate your friend and you love your friend. Or you love your wife and, one fine day, you forget to kiss her. The psychoanalyst, that very gruesome individual, tells you that this really means that you hate your wife, and that this hatred "leaked out" at that particular moment. Never mind about the literal truth of such analysis as that. Let us assume for the sake of argument that such an analysis is possible. The psychoanalyst will go even further, if he is cranky and meticulous, and he will say, "Yes, you *did* kiss your wife, but first you started to go to the door and then you went back to kiss her. That shows that you corrected your essential conduct, you may have punished yourself, perhaps you managed to come late to your appointment. Perhaps you gloried in the coming late because that meant that you had only punished yourself for your disloyalty [86] to

your wife." These are examples of what some would call the vagaries of psychoanalytic explanation.

The really important thing to observe about situations of this kind is this: that while you have an ambivalent attitude, you are not really analyzing the situation until you begin to see that even an object, if one may use that word for something as close to you as your own wife, is not a simple, single, indivisible object. She belongs to different contexts of meaning. (This is in some cases only too deplorably the case.) We have the romantic ideal of oneness of meaning of the wife, and one hopes, romantically, that one can carry that single meaning through all of life. But that, of course, the gruesome psychoanalyst tells us, is merely one of the pleasant fictions of life. Actually, your wife is a symbol of a great many other things. For instance, she is the sister of your brother-in-law...and to that extent she is the symbol of brother-in-law, parents-in-law, alien family.

If you look at any "object" in that way, new problems arise of a very disturbing kind. You may, for instance, quite frankly detest your brother-in-law. At the particular moment when you forgot to kiss your wife, you may have been punishing her for being your brother-in-law's sister. You transfer your dislike for the nonce to her. She was at that moment a symbol of something other than the wife of yourself. This somewhat ludicrous example is not intended to be taken too seriously, although I think that for some cases it is serious enough; but it is merely an example of thousands of possible complications of meaning.

The term "ambivalence," in other words, is not, it seems to me, sufficiently analyzed by the psychoanalysts themselves, because they do not tell us, when they talk about ambivalence, exactly *who* the person that you are feeling ambivalent toward really is in his multiple symbolic significance; and until you find out exactly *whom* or *what* you love in the double or triple or quadruple entity the "object" may be, and whom or what you hate or are indifferent to, you do not understand the meaning of the term "ambivalence."

A simple and perhaps more serious example of the complexity of behavior is seen in the distinction between individual and class. A man, for instance, has a very good Chinese friend, but all of a sudden he finds himself acting toward this Chinese friend as though he were not his friend, but as though he were any Chinaman; that is, he discovers that he has some feelings about Chinamen. Of course, this is a very simple case of ambivalence. It means that the person in question is not

the same person, is not the same entity, the same object, in the two contexts.

It is the business of the psychoanalyst – of the realistic psychologist, I would rather say, for I think the term “psychoanalyst” is fated to disappear sooner or later – to be constantly worrying about what is the true, symbolic significance in fundamental personality patterns of anything that you choose to handle in your environment. The whole world of culture, therefore, is of interest to the psychologist only in so far as it can be disintegrated and discharged as irrelevant until reanalyzed in terms of [87] the more fundamental patterns of the very earliest years of conditioning.

How much of these more fundamental patterns are nativistic, and how much of them are secondary, I leave to future investigators. I am not so bold as to suggest anything at all. But as to the reality of the dual problem of seeing the “set” personality – and set alarmingly early, in my opinion – going out into culture and embracing it and making it always the same thing as itself in a constantly increasing complexity of blends of behavior in some sensible meaning of the word “same,” on the one hand, and seeing the historically determined stream of culture, which takes us right back to paleolithic man, actualizing itself in given human behavior on the other – this dual problem set by two opposed directions of interest, is the real problem, it seems to me, of the analyst of human behavior. The difficulty at present is not so much the understanding of the problem as a problem, but the convincing ourselves that it is a real one.

* * *

Following Sapir’s presentation, the meeting was opened for discussion. Chairman Frank asked first for specific questions of clarification that should be addressed before starting a general discussion of the paper’s thesis.

HART. – I should like to have explained a little more clearly the distinction that Dr. Sapir meant to make between personality and individuality, before he started taking up the psychoanalytic part of the talk.

SAPIR. – I purposely refrained from defining terms because the term “personality” is rather a hopeless one in the present tangle of usages. It can be defined in any one of several dozens of ways as Dr. Sullivan, who is present, can testify. There are almost as many definitions of personality as there are people who define the concept. I thought it was much more important to point out the possible reality of some kind of a concept of persistence of behavior pattern in the individual, on the one hand, and some kind of concept of institutional fixation or patterning, on the other, than it was to worry about whether we should call “personality” precisely this or that assemblage of behavior patterns.

Individuality, I think, is a little more easily defined because it does not commit itself to any particular theory. All we mean by the term is a difference which is significant enough to merit the name. Whether that modicum of difference is due to innate factors or to the very earliest kind of subcultural conditioning or to very complex cultural experiences of later life is a comparatively indifferent matter.

A man may, for instance, at the age of thirty learn to talk like Harry Lauder and, having done so, he will be credited with that particular trait of "individuality." Of course such individuality is of very little interest to the psychiatrist, say, except as a mere symbol of his wish to be different. That is all he will get out of it, and that much may of course be very important. But the actual behavior, the Harry Lauder-like behavior as such, is of no interest to him whatever. It would only interest him as a culturalist, if for instance, he wanted to know how a Scotchman is supposed to talk and this were the only example he had at his disposal to illustrate the Scotch dialect. In such a case he makes the most of the cultural experience. When we go out among Indians or other primitives to study their cultures, we use any evidence of a cultural sort that we have, not because we hope to find out much about the people as people but because we are interested in the official outlines of behavior.

From the ordinary human standpoint such an extreme variation in behavior as I have cited would be an example of individuality but it would not be significant for personality, as I use [the] term, because it does not connote that persistence of the fundamental individual or personal pattern which the term "personality" implies.

HART. — I thought in the first part of the talk you dealt simply with individuality in the sense of people being different, and I do not see the problem that was raised there. In the second part of the talk I see the difficulty raised, but I did not see why the fact that people are individually different from each other should be such a perplexing problems. Coats are different from each other and leaves are different from each other as we get to know them and feel about them as though they are different and to recognize the individual thing simply because it is a different combination of well-known —

SAPIR. — I did not assume that there was any special difficulty about the fact of difference. The point of interest in the earlier part of my remarks was the varying evaluation of such differences. The point that I was particularly interested in making at the beginning was that many of these differences do not necessarily involve the nuclear concept of personality which I was hoping to develop later on, although they may seem to — merely that. I was simply sounding a warning, as it were.

Chairman Frank then opened the meeting for general discussion.

WRIGHT. — I was not quite able to see why you needed to find anything out of culture to account for the personality. Why can you not simply say that you have a uniqueness in a particular combination of cultural elements; that that combination or pattern persists? You certainly have a sufficient number of cultural elements so that you can by putting them together get any number of unique combinations. Why is not that a sufficient explanation of the uniqueness of personality?

SAPIR. — That, of course, is a theory held by some sociologists, who believe that the essential personality is precisely what society makes of the person, but you are not referring to the sociological personality in the strictly technical sense of the word. You would grant indefinite variability of personality but you would think that the

chances of combination of various experiences given by culture are so great that there would be a unique development for each and every organism.

I think that is a perfectly possible theory, and you may remember that I tried to save the possibility of that theory as a theory of personality by pointing out that certain cultural determinations might be looked upon as so important, as contrasted with all others, because of a prior occurrence, perhaps, or because of their great emotional value, as to define a concept of personality for the psychiatrist that would be just as firm, just as persistent, as the concept of personality defined with the help of inborn traits and non-cultural forces.

I would not think it wise for anyone to commit himself to that at all at the present time. I hope that others who know more about psychology and about aberrant human behavior may throw light on these possibilities.

All I can say is that I personally prefer the other hypothesis, and the reason I prefer it is largely the very kind of experience that I referred to before, namely, that we get parallels in the general personality gamut, as we go from one culture to another, which seem to me to override all the determining forces of culture itself, even the most subtle ones.

WRIGHT. — Of course I can see that there are inherited elements which you speak of, that is, if you merely mean to distinguish between inherited elements and cultural elements.

SAPIR. — I do not know whether we understand the same thing by "inherited elements." Would you give an example of what you call an "inherited element" in this particular connection?

WRIGHT. — Apart from hereditary elements which do not enter into the problem of personality which I understand you are speaking of, it seems to me you have ample opportunities for uniqueness in merely the organization of culture elements. You spoke for instance of language and intonation. Doubtless if you find a New Englander who uses a word characteristic of New England coupled with an intonation which is characteristic of Virginia you have a combination which is a little unusual and you could readily say that that was a trait of personality. But each of the elements, both the intonation and word, are of course cultural elements.

SAPIR. — That was exactly the kind of example I quoted myself in support of that very point. But suppose we use another example.

Suppose you find that one individual has a rather strident type of voice that seems needlessly insistent, whereas another individual belonging to the same group and using exactly the same words, the same type of pronunciation, and everything else that is socially definable in speech has a voice that somehow impresses one as being apologetic. Would you consider that there was anything there that would justify the concept of a nuclear personality involving perhaps hereditary features, or would you think that there was nothing new in that particular feature of behavior? I confess that I am not very clear about that, but I should think there were certain elements there that would transcend the cultural sphere.

Chairman Frank called for contributions "from those who are particularly concerned with deviations in human behavior."

Harry Stack Sullivan expressed his strong sympathy for Sapir's analysis and suggested (without quite naming him) that Wright had challenged it out of prejudice and

"a cultural pattern which requires him to detract." Again emphasizing his agreement with Sapir, Sullivan then spoke to the overlap between psychiatry and the social sciences:

SULLIVAN. — ... If he [i. e., the psychiatrist] knew anything about the social sciences his problems as a psychiatrist would be much more capable of attack. Many of the problems of the psychiatrist actually are economic problems of his patients. Many more of them are of another variety. But there are economic problems and so on and he knows nothing about economics and therefore is inclined to omit from his data for classification and study all these aspects that do not have good medical background and so on, and as a result his subject matter, the disorders of personality, loses its resemblance to anything that any of you gentlemen study in the social behavior of people.

I wish to say, as my real contribution, that all psychiatry of that kind fails so far as its victims, the patients, are concerned; that the very process of converting them into objects of a purely medical specialty omits nearly all the difficulties that go to make up their illnesses ...

As soon as psychiatry begins to be concerned with the particular utilization of cultural patterns and so-called "social processes" by the individual who is its subject, then it begins to be useful to the individual, which is convenient for the doctor who lives by its success, but it also becomes a field for research in all the social sciences, since they are all supposed to apply to each member of society.

What I got from Dr. Sapir's address was that he was indicating how inseparable are the two aspects, how genuine is personality which concerns the psychiatrist, how general is an infinity of cultural patterns which go to make up each subject of the psychiatrist, because there are unusual utilizations of social patterns ... I should say that in psychiatric material, by cooperation between the culturalist and the psychiatrist, much light can be shed in both directions. In other words, one might start in the middle and walk both ways. (Laughter and applause)

Chairman Frank, noting that the members of the ongoing Conference on the Study of Personality (i. e., the meeting of the Committee on Personality and Culture) had expressed varying viewpoints during the daytime sessions, called on Adolf Meyer to contribute to the discussion. After some initial demur, Meyer asked:

MEYER. — I was inclined to ask the question of Dr. Sapir as to whether he would perhaps give us an idea of some specific anthropological problems in which the differentiation of personality and of culture would come out in a more distinctive way than in the relatively casual matters which he has used for exemplification. The activities of the human being are so multiple that one naturally likes to make contrasts only when they are of sufficient importance ...

Citing an early paper of his own on the problem of differentiating personalities, Meyer suggested that it was not true that physicians did not interest themselves in culture. He then rephrased his question:

MEYER. — My question would be: What are the things in anthropology that force us to try to make such an ultra-sharp division between what is individual and what is culture? As a physician I cannot separate the two things. It is a more organically determined or a more environmentally determined issue, but how I could make an absolute distinction I would be utterly unable to declare without doing harm to either the facts or the patient or the whole situation.

When we come finally to such a matter for instance as the Chinese with his particular lingo and our type, where shall we turn? We know that that type of individual has a different anatomy than we have. He has different facial muscles than we have. Where shall we draw the line? Are those determined by accident and the language perhaps somewhat related to it, or are they habits? What has determined the peculiar differences of the facial muscles in the Chinese and in other races?

There are evidently things there which may very easily be strongly cultural and it is only where the matter is conspicuous enough that we begin to ask the question: What is tribal just by cultural habit, and what is tribal more in the form of genetic or morphological development?

The feeling I have is that the study of personality is tremendously important because it leads us to focusing on certain types and those types are undoubtedly of more importance to us if they are morphologically determined as well as through habit formation.

At the beginning of the discussion this evening I could not help conjuring up some picture of contrasts and problems that I see. I thought of some of the Swiss funerals that I had an opportunity to attend, where families are much more likely to come together in large groups than would be possible in this country. There I might see the farmer, the lawyer, the doctor, the minister in one family, and apparently with totally different habits. It would be exceedingly difficult to think of turning the farmer into the minister, and vice versa, if they once have taken the toll.

Personality is not something that is acquired at birth and remains exactly the same. Personality to me is something plastic and it will refer to those things that are not likely to be changeable under the influences either of environment or of personal difference.

Applied to anthropology I would say of course it is difficult to know when we have just individual traits and when we have group traits, but that has not been decided by comparisons of large numbers, and I should like very much to have some forceful instance where making that sort of differentiation has cut a figure in anthropological discriminations. On the surface it is very easy but as to fundamental ones, I do not know. (Applause)

SAPIR. — I am not at all sure that I understand the question. It may be that to a certain extent we are thinking at cross-purposes, but in order that I may the better get the drift of Dr. Meyer's remarks I should like to ask one question. Do you think, Dr. Meyer, that there may be anatomical determinations in speech, for instance, which show in the thing that we call speech as a pattern, as an organizational system, as a cultural fact?

MEYER. — I would not be sure of that.

SAPIR. — I just wanted to get the general form of your thought.

MEYER. — I should not like to put excessive emphasis on it but I would leave it open to the historical inquiry which of course is not accessible because we have no history of those deep-laid things.

[To] what extent functional tendencies affected structural tendencies and to what extent structural tendencies affected functional ones — It certainly is an exceedingly interesting factor that we have such marked differences both in language and in the detail of muscle development.

As I said I do not want to stress that point excessively but it seems to me that when we go over to that funeral assemblage and the consequences that I drew from those observations, when we take up this question as to whether the personality that has developed as the farmer is going to be transformed into the ministerial personality, in the same family, or vice versa, then we have something that is opened within our generation.

SAPIR. — Well, I still do not exactly know where the point of attack that I should combat is meant to be, but perhaps I can start the ball rolling at least by taking up the question of language, because it is a peculiarly complex cultural pattern.

It seems to me that in that particular case we have some pretty good evidence, both direct, that is, in a historical sense, and inferential, in a reconstructive sense. I think it is the consensus of opinion of all students of comparative linguistics and of all anthropologists that there is not a single fact, not one single fact in the whole complex welter of details dealing with socialized linguistic expression, that can be explained by any kind of reference to anatomical facts. There is not a single sound, no matter how bizarre or strange it is — and many of them are strange from our standpoint when we are first confronted by them — which can be shown to be dependent on the peculiar formation of the larynx, for instance, or any peculiarities of the lips or palate or nose. You might, for instance, try to work out a correlation between the presence of nasalization in speech, say nasalization of vowels, as you get it in French, and the conformation of the nose, but the task is absolutely hopeless if only you look at it from the point of view of distribution, because, observe, you find that the distribution of this habit of nasalization, as a phonetic feature in language, has absolutely no relation to the facts of distribution of anatomical features. If you take the continent of Europe, you find that there are just a few languages that have these nasalized vowels. You have French, Portuguese, Polish, and a few German dialects, such as certain Swabian dialects, where these nasalized vowels are supposed to be due to the cultural influence, by diffusion, of French. If you go to the African continent, you find that a great many African languages have nasalization, and a great many others have not. Some Chinese dialects have it, and a great many have not. We even find distinct differences in language on this score on the American continent in cases where its dialects are very closely related to one another.

Of course you may say that this is too specific an instance, but if you generalize from such instances as these into the thousands and thousands of cases that you collect, you finally arrive at the conclusion that all the cultural or institutional facts, which I have called “cultural patterns,” insofar as they deposit themselves in the traditions known as language habits, are of that nature; that there is no possible correlation that we can point to, at any rate, between the patterns and the organismal facts of any sort whatever. We are, then, driven by our data to believe that there is a very large segment, and a very important segment, of total human behavior that can be explained without meticulous regard to organismal facts, which does not mean that the actualization of these patterns in the behavior of a particular individual at a given time and place does not need reference to the organism — certainly not. The anthropological answer to that would simply be that if I actually pronounce a French word I do more than simply actualize the pattern; I also express private, individual, symbolisms that have nothing to do with the language as an organization.

In fact, I personally believe that at the very moment that I am speaking, I am illustrating in speech not merely the various patterns which are conventionally deposited in speech according to the tradition which I happen to be heir to — but dozens of other personality revelations — or perhaps we should not say revelations, but symptoms — that do not belong to speech at all. Speech is merely, then, the carrier of these meanings.

Some of these indices of my total personality or individuality or *soma* or *body* — use whatever term you like — obviously belong to the anatomical sphere. There must be something about the conformation of my larynx, for instance, which forces me to speak as I do. If you changed my larynx, there is not the slightest doubt that the sounds I would make would be quite different from the sounds I am now making, and the acoustician could prove it by a study of the sound waves that I am producing.

But the anthropologist is not interested in total behavior any more than the sociologist is. He is interested in definable contours or patterns which have a history and a distribution and which exist in some real meaning of the word "exist," regardless of the actual physical variations of the body. He may be wrong in many of his interpretations, but so far as I know the data of anthropology, we can get along splendidly without the slightest recourse to any theory of the human body. In fact, we can assume in the conceptual world of the history of culture that these patterns unfold themselves owing to the coming together of ideas, of systems, of a conceptual nature without anybody as the carrier of them. We know of course that that is ridiculous, as a matter of fact, but so far as the understanding of culture is concerned we can get along remarkably well with that kind of hypothesis, and in fact the intrusion of the body at every turn in the explanation of cultural outlines is the greatest nuisance in the study of the social sciences.

From this point of view I am very much in sympathy with the economist when he talks of the fictitious entity known as "economic man," which does not mean that if he wishes to understand the total behavior of individuals in economic situations he can dispense with more realistic contours of the individual. But so far as economic functioning in the main is concerned, he does not need much more than the fiction that we call "economic man" and the kind of motives that are said to sway man's self-interest.

That particular example may or may not be sound but I want to point it out as a rough analogy of the kind of thinking that the anthropologist has to indulge in in constructing the hundreds and hundreds of pattern lines that make up the cultural history of mankind.

We also find more direct evidence, which is interesting. We find, for instance, that the phenomenon of diffusion, the spread of patterns, is such as to contradict most violently the presuppositions of a racial analysis. We find, for instance, that forms of behavior, forms of belief, forms of speech, ideals, anything you like, get to be entirely dissociated from the particular bodies that presumably were originally associated with them, and finally find an anchorage in bodies that are controlled by minds that believe themselves to be as the poles asunder from the said originators.

I do not know whether that particularly answers your question.

Meyer replied that he had not intended to raise any objection, "and it was probably unfortunate on my part that I gave the impression that I wished to place the emphasis on the soma." He continued:

MEYER. — The physician has to use all the social facts, all the religious, all the economic facts that are available, or he is not a good physician. And he will naturally also use all those things that are not social, that are more the problem, let us say, of structural dynamics or growth developments and individual changes, and finally racial changes, and things of that sort.

I am very anxious not to leave the impression that I wished to antagonize the exceedingly interesting and well-illustrated field from the ordinary point of view, but I feel that we must recognize that the differentiations of personality as the physician uses them have a somewhat different and more extended origin than was intimated; that he also has a forward-looking [i. e., prognostication] rather than a backward-looking interest and that that probably was very much more important in the development of the personality type as the physician looks at it.

The very discussion shows I think what a tremendously complex field we are entering upon and we therefore do well to have the relativity of the concepts before us. And when we deal with that sort of thing we should make sure that we know why we make the emphasis on a certain thing. And I should say that in the anthropological field very much the same things will have to be utilized that we used in that example that I mentioned, the funeral.

ALLPORT. — I merely wanted to ask Dr. Sapir whether it might not be possible that the ancestors of the present races that speak these different languages might have been of a physical type a little bit more pure, and a little bit less mixed by interbreeding, so that there might have been some anatomical characteristics at the time of the beginning of the differentiation of the language that might have been associated with the different sounds. It is queer that the human organism is so adaptable and can learn so readily that very slight differences of facial architecture would not play an important part, but when it comes to the beginning of those things, the initiation of those patterns of speech, it may be that small, very slight anatomical differences would give a cast to the inflection or the speech which might remain fixed by habit as a part of the culture pattern.

SAPIR. — I would not at all deny [it] as a possible theory, in answer to both Dr. Meyer's last remarks and Dr. Allport's, that slight physiological and anatomical variations might have been socialized and then have set certain historical processes going. I think, as a speculation, that is perfectly possible. All I claim is that so far as we have any direct or reconstructed evidence at our disposal, we never seem to be led to the use of purely biological differentiae in explaining our culture.

We actually have very definite evidence as to the development of those habits of nasalization that I spoke about. Every Portuguese nasalized vowel and every French nasalized vowel goes back to an actual consonant "N" or "M" in Latin. In other words, the nasalization as a physical habit disappears, in a sense. I mean it is shown to be the perfectly regular development of a certain anterior stage in which that particular habit of speaking does not exist. We not only have, then, the quite uncorrelated distribution of types of man and types of culturalized articulation on the one hand, but we actually have very definite historical evidence, directly in the form of Latin, inferential by comparison of languages, of changes of sound on non-anatomical grounds, so far as we can see.

I do not know whether that particularly answers the question, but one has, after all, to trust to the cumulative experience — and I believe it is vast — of the cultural

student in these matters and to attach some importance to the statement, which I think he must make quite flatly, whatever it may mean, that we are not, as a matter of sheer empirical fact, led to invoke somatic differences of any sort for significant cultural differences. That these are to be entirely eliminated from the speculative picture I do not claim at all. I think it is perfectly possible that fundamental inherited distinctions may become socialized and that in the process of diffusion, of transfer—there may be slight deflections from the original forms which register something of the racial distinctions themselves, but I would not be inclined to overweight that. I think it is a dangerous point to make at this stage of the game. I think that when the concept and the historicity of culture are more cheerfully accepted by all students than they are now, then will be the time, as a matter of tactics, to insist on the possibility of this other point.

Noting that the hour had already struck ten, Chairman Frank called the meeting adjourned.

4. Other Evening Sessions: Excerpts from Discussion

In addition to the discussion of his own lecture, Sapir participated in the discussion of other lecturers' presentations. We reproduce here those portions of the discussions in which he made some substantial comment.

Concerning the comments on Bowman's geography lecture, related arguments may be found in chapter 3 of *The Psychology of Culture* (this volume), see also the much earlier work, Sapir 1912b ("Language and Environment," CWES I). The methodological comments on Ruml's lecture on social science methods and training echo Sapir's comparisons of the social and natural sciences in chapter 2 of *The Psychology of Culture*. Discussions of etiquette may also be found in that work.

Sapir's comments on Hincks's lecture on "Mental hygiene and Social Science" are not reproduced here. They are brief and consist of questions about the demographic characteristics and qualifications of psychiatric social workers.

August 30

After the lecture by Isaiah Bowman on "Geography as a Social Science," session chairman Guy S. Ford opened the meeting for discussion. Various questions were asked about the charts and diagrams with which Bowman had illustrated his presentation. Sapir then broached some larger issues:

SAPIR. — In spite of all the detail which I followed with the very greatest interest, I could not make clear to myself exactly what Mr. Bowman would seek to show as the subject matter of geography.

I can illustrate my question by taking such a thing as meteorology, which I think we all understand fairly well, in relation to dress. Human beings wear different forms of dress according to the state of the weather. If you happen to be tremendously interested in human dress and think about the weather you may finally persuade yourself, it seems to me, that meteorology includes the study of the changes of dress, reasonable changes. If that happens to be the focus of interest, you can finally go as far as to talk of meteorology in the modification of social science.

The parallel is very simple. I do not think that anybody denies that any given interest which deals with objects localized on the earth has a geographical point of view, and I think that Mr. Bowman's particular point of view in regard to anthropology is very farsighted. I think it is much keener than the point of view of many anthropologists because so far from trying to explain culture in terms of geography, he almost explains geography in terms of culture which I think in a sense is an advance. He says practically that we see on the earth what we are made to see by our culture. If we are living in a culture where mining is not possible, mining can not exist.

I heartily agree in spirit with what he said in the earlier part of his lecture but what I do not clearly see yet — and here is where I seek enlightenment — is what is the conceptual justification of geography as a science if it takes in the human scene at all. And it is quite obvious that Mr. Bowman wishes geography to be considered as a human science.

I can easily see where one actuated by human interests may wish to read the human implications in geographic facts just as one may wish to read human implications in meteorological facts or physical facts. That is merely saying that you can have what I call intersecting types of interest, due to the meeting of two kinds of inquiry. That I do not deny at all. But have you the right, do you think conceptually, Mr. Bowman, to go so far as to actually define geography in terms of human interest instead of a purely objective humanly indifferent description of certain land masses?

What would be your point of view with regard to this fundamental matter of difference?

BOWMAN. — I am afraid I have spoken in vain if I have given you the impression that conceptually, to use your term, geography is primarily a human science. I do not have that impression.

Bowman then described several schools of geography in terms of how they relate geology and physiography to "the human aspects of the subject." He believed "the geographer has by far his greatest competence at the present time on the physical side of the subject. He continued:

What I have done in selecting this and other illustrations is to lead to a generalization which runs like this: that the geographer takes the characteristics of his regions and sets them up in an attempt to discover whether region by region in the same or different cultures there is any repetition of the characteristics, a pattern. That is to say, if you get the white man going into a pioneer land, for example, in some other place than Australia, have we a repetition of the conditions of culture and conditions of living that are found in Australia today?

...I would not approve, however, of your phrase "humanly indifferent." The emphasis in geography is not upon "land masses" as you term them, but upon the elements in the environment that have the most marked human associations or relations. After he has gained a degree of order and rationality in the treatment of his physical data, his next and most important step is to develop the human bearings of those data in their regional combinations. Geography can be defined in terms of "human interest," (again employing your term) as the relation of human activities and culture to the earth, region by region, in the present (primarily), in contrast to the primary interest of anthropology which may be defined as the study of cultural evolution in the larger past.

SAPIR. — Mr. Bowman, if I may risk the suggestion, would you change the title of your address to, "The Value of Geography for Social Sciences"?

BOWMAN. — That would be much better.

SAPIR. — I think there would be very little to quarrel with such a suggestion as that.

CHAIRMAN FORD. — The meeting stands adjourned.

September 2

The lecture by Beardsley Ruml, of the Rockefeller Foundation, took its title and inspiration from Sapir's presentation two nights earlier. Ruml summarized for use of Sapir's lecture as follows:

RUML. — After showing the effect of a cultural pattern on one aspect of personality in a simple and artificial case, Sapir referred to the complexity arising in real situations in the combination and fusion of the many patterns of a culture; and then Sapir said, paraphrasing somewhat, "The effect of the impact of this fusion of cultural patterns upon the so-called personality at any moment will be interpreted by each according to the nature of his own experience."

Although this statement of Sapir's is in anthropological terms, it has a definite application to the whole range of social science and to the individual and particular disciplines as well. Historian, economist, sociologist, political scientist, psychologist, the student of jurisprudence and of business, each is interested in the cultural environment, in its impact upon individuals and of individuals upon it. And since the interpretation of this impact is by each according to the nature of his own experience, the experiential background of the social scientist is a matter which may require more attention than it is probably receiving.

Ruml then discussed some examples of how different social sciences record — *i. e.*, transform into symbols — their experiential data, and the need for sensitivity to the symbols' inadequacy to represent all aspects of a problem. He then moved on to discuss the training of social science researchers, and the need to provide experiential opportunities. Following the lecture, Chairman Charles E. Merriam asked Sapir to comment.

SAPIR. — There are several thoughts that I should like to express, which have been raised by Mr. Ruml's very engaging presentation. I just want to echo some of his statements and enlarge on a few points that have been raised in my mind. I will begin with those eight peaches divided among four boys.

(Ruml had posed a problem — how to divide eight peaches equally among four boys — in which the arithmetical solution, two per boy, seems simple — but because it ignores qualitative differences among the peaches, such as the possibility that three of the peaches are not ripe, it will not actually result in an equal division. "The symbol represented only a partial aspect of the reality," Ruml had suggested.) Sapir continued:

The obvious critique that was made at that point, if I did not misunderstand the point which Mr. Ruml made, was that we must beware of conceptualization; we must beware of carrying over operations that are perfectly valid and associated in the conceptual sphere into the world of reality. I think that that more or less states the criticism.

I think that in this particular case and millions of others like it the same kind of apparently paradoxical statement might be made that is often made; measurements are criticized, not less measurements but more measurements. I should say the real cure for this particular fallacy Mr. Ruml spoke about would be not less conceptualization but more conceptualization.

The point is, so far as I see it, that there has been a fusion of two distinct conceptual analyses of that particular situation indicated by the problem of dividing eight peaches among four people. You might look upon that as a mathematical problem: eight entities of any type to be divided among four individuals of any type. So considered, "boys" is simply a content for a class, individuals who can receive something; and "peaches" is simply a content for a class which can be divided. That is of course a mathematical point of view and the solution is perfectly correct. But after all the problem was not meant that way. Eight peaches to be divided among four boys meant a certain mass conventionally represented as eight peaches, of enjoyable food, to be divided among four urchins who are so constituted as to enjoy such food. So put, the solution is indicated as fallacious not merely from the experiential viewpoint but from the strictly conceptual viewpoint. That is, the analysis of the situation required not less but more algebra and the whole trick of the problem is of course in reading one meaning into a verbal presentation which is possible on purely verbal grounds, but is not so intended. So that the whole thing is a kind of linguistic sleight-of-hand.

That is one fancy that occurred to me.

So that I do not think with examples of that kind we can be absolved² from the necessity of abstract thinking in our social problems, and we have to so mass our abstract thinking, so see particular situations as referable to intersecting contexts, as to make up the thing that we call concreteness of the situation.³ Excess then of abstraction or multiplication of abstraction leads to concreteness, if you want to look at it in that way. One may take that or leave it but at any rate I would not consider that that particular example and others like it mean the death of conceptual approaches.

There was another fancy that arose in my mind and that was this: if I understood Mr. Ruml correctly, he implied that the natural scientist has a certain peculiar advantage as compared with the social scientist. He experiences his materials. I think that was somewhat in your mind, was it not – the man who handles weights, masses, densities, deals with physical objects that he can stroke, fondle, toss, weigh, respond to in a sensory manner? But it seems to me that that participation in the objects that he studies is somewhat of an illusion.

After all, the ivory of the billiard ball as you experience it is not helping you very much with the final analysis of that sphere, or mechanics of a moving sphere on a certain kind of a surface. You can get a certain sort of enrichment of the two experiences, that is, the conceptual and the sensory, by associating them, enlarging the total field of experience, but actually the more the physical scientist concerns himself with the direct experience of the kind of objects that he deals with the less he is going to conceptualize and the less of the scientist he is going to be. So he has to effect some kind of association in his total experience if he is to be a real scientist. The real point it seems to me in his situation as compared with the situation of the social scientist is that that association is safe, because nothing matters much in that

process of abstraction which leads him to his laws. He goes on with his daily experiences with objects in quite an ineffectual manner, and the formulations that he makes of physical science do not have to be tested in the language of sensory experience, in the ordinary sense of the word. They do of course in the final process of verification but there only under very special controlled conditions which are not typical of experience in the proper sense of the word.

So that really the strength of this experiential philosophy of Mr. Ruml's of the physical scientist is that he does not need to enrich his conceptual experience in terms of the correlated sensory experience in the same sense in which Mr. Ruml feels — and I think rightly — that the social scientist needs to enrich his conceptions, and therein lies a very important distinction, it seems to me, which is constantly being overlooked, between social science and physical science, a distinction which was made best I think by Rickert, a German philosopher, in his critique of historical science versus natural science. And the essence of that distinction is simply this: that there are two ways of apprehending the world, one to destroy it by conceptualizing it, and that process of destruction means getting a hold of it, the other by valuing the actual as a historical entity. Social science is a sort of meeting-place of the two impulses. You want to conceptualize the social world in order to understand it in general terms. But at the same time you dare not conceptualize too much because if you do, you lose your sense of familiarity.

Why do we not want to lose that sense of familiarity? Why is it that the physicist can finally get down to perfectly unreal entities, in the psychological sense, such as atoms and electrons, and so on, without daring? It is because he hasn't valued his data in advance. It really makes no difference to him whether a given object he is experimenting with is destroyed or not. It always is destroyed. No particular event matters a hang to any physical scientist.

The social scientist is not in that position. Whether he acknowledges history as being particularly interesting to him or not he is actually swayed by the allure of history. He does value the particular event, the particular thing. And so there are always two impulses that cross in his mind and to get a healthy balance between those two impulses is the crucial difficulty of the social scientist. On the one hand he must conceptualize to get control at all. On the other hand he must hold on to experiential reality. I think if these conditionings are called sound it must seem fairly obvious that the problem of the social scientist is a very different problem from that of the physical scientist, and this feeling of safety and familiarity that the physical scientist has is simply due to the fact that an association is possible in his case which would be dangerous and misleading in the case of the social scientist. The double task of conceptualizing on the one hand, verifying in terms of colorful experience on the other, confronts the social scientist.

The third fancy which came to me on the basis of Mr. Ruml's words was in connection with the enrichment of experience itself. If I understood him rightly he pleaded⁴ for enrichment. Enrichment has two meanings to me. It means either doing more things or doing less things. Either is possible. You can enrich your conception of love by having more people to love, or you can enrich your conception of love by loving one person more. Take it either way.

I noticed that in illustrating his principle of enrichment or his idea of enrichment he spoke of doing A, doing B, doing C, doing D. In other words, he illustrated what

seems to me to be the chronic contemporary American incoherent mental philosophy: if only you can do enough things which are obviously different, some kind of a synthesis will be reached which you can call richness of experience.

So that finally in my own fantastic world Mr. Ruml's remarks lead to a critique of contemporary culture and it seems to me that in the last analysis the profoundest reason why the social scientist cannot make real his concept world in terms of experience hangs together with the fact that he has not a thickly massed, well-integrated, thoroughly consistent [amount] of experience under observation to draw from. He is full of contradictions. He is conceptually self-contradictory on a great many points and I will close by quoting as an example of what I mean a very humble experience at the luncheon table. Two of my friends here are already familiar with it because we discussed it at the time — something involving etiquette. I am not talking about my friends. I am very polite. (Laughter)

Etiquette is a crucial kind of experience because it is a crystallization of profound symbolisms which have become so habitual that one does not need to worry about the actual analysis.

At this particular luncheon there took place two streams of talk. One was between the three scientists assembled around the table, and that was very comforting and comfortable. The other stream of talk was that which was due to the waitress. Now, there are two theories about waitresses serving at a table at which scientists are gathered together. One theory is the democratic theory. The other theory is the more or less aristocratic theory or the strictly patterned theory, and of course there are blends or confusions possible between the two. According to the first theory all human beings are alike. If a number of human beings are gathered together at a certain point in space and happen to talk the same medium, which in this instance was English, they are entitled to talk to each other as a reciprocal, meaningful assemblage of human beings. There is no reason why therefore the waitress might not butt in and join in our psychological conversation.

On the other hand, one might — this did not really happen but it might have — adopt another point of view. Her function so far as we were concerned was simply to serve. Inasmuch as she was to be an administrant to our unexpressed wishes she might even be considered as deprived of the power of speech; all that she needed to do was to dispense service in the form of moving plates along as expeditiously and discreetly as possible in order that we might be accorded the privilege of carrying on our conversation.

What actually happened was a blend of those two possible conceptualizations or abstractions which I have presented to you. What actually happened was that she undoubtedly had the feeling inside of herself that she was very polite because she did not join with us in our talk on psychology. She kept discreetly aloof from her standpoint, and she felt that her business was to serve the dishes. In fact, she was so zealous about the serving of the dishes that she did it most effectively.

One of the most effective ways of doing a thing when we do not quite know how to do it is to ask what is wanted. So that we found practically in this condensation of experience which actually happened that at all sorts of crucial moments where we were following the trail of psychological thought she wanted to know whether it was pie that was wanted or something else that was wanted, or whether it was A that ordered a certain thing or B.

I claim that that is profoundly simple because it meant that two quite distinct patterns were hopelessly confused. It may be that she was very exceptional but I do not think you will recognize this as an exceptional case. I think you will have to admit it is a fairly typical case in the commerce of human activities.

You might say that it would be quite snobbish for her on her part to remain severely aloof and not to talk out loud, but here is the point: if we were to have clarity of experience in that particular situation, it should have been one or the other: either we should have a relentlessly democratic philosophy which permitted the waitress to join in our conversation, if we happened to have the phenomenon of a waitress who could join in a conversation on psychology, or she should be an administrant to our wishes and keep her mouth shut. In so far as she did neither one nor the other, the context was hopelessly confused and the experience was meaningless.

I give this as a kind of instance or model of what I think is the matter with contemporary American culture: that it is symbolically self-contradictory at so many points that it is very difficult even for the wise social scientist to know what it is all about. (Laughter)

Several other participants responded to Sapir's remarks. Ruml commented:

RUML. — ... It does seem to me that we have been depending too much on the transmission of experience purely by symbol. I do not want to be irreverent but I think it would be a good thing if these people could smell some of these social institutions (Laughter), if not literally at least in some form that would make it possible when the symbol comes again and again for them to be critical of it. And of course that is the real point of the peaches story which I was surprised that Dr. Sapir missed. (Laughter) Not, mind you, that an accurate analysis could not have been made by further conceptualization, but that without the check of experience, knowing that boys would want peaches and not entities, the conceptualization was not pursued to the point where it would yield a realistic answer, which is quite again, a different story. And it seems to me that is the type of experience, which will provide that check against your symbols, verbal or arithmetical or algebraic, that we lack so much.

September 3

On the final evening of the conference, in a session chaired by Arthur M. Schlesinger, Carlton J. H. Hayes spoke on "Research problems in the Field of International Relations." Much of the lecture actually concerned nationalism, and some of the kinds of research undertaken on nationalism in several disciplines. One of the approaches Hayes recommended was psychological, anthropological, and sociological: "studies of how and why men behave as nationalist individuals or groups." Sapir, late in the discussion period, raised further questions on this point:

SAPIR. — May I ask, Mr. Chairman, what function does Mr. Hayes believe nationalism to have? Is that function a necessary one? If not, how can we dispense nationalism?

... Let us assume that nationalism is dispensed with. I just want to get your point of view on this. I think the intellectual can very easily think of an internationalism that might take the place of nationalism but so far as the ordinary person is concerned, the man on the street, he needs some representation of himself as a large

scale. How would you expect him to work for anything like internationalism? Why would not nationalism be so necessary as to have to be accepted in some form or other?

What is your position in regard to that whole matter of a large structure that we call nationalism?

HAYES. — I do not know that I have any very decided position about that. What I should like would be to discover whether we can get a larger number of our fellow human beings to be a little more rational and a little less devotional about their various kinds of loyalties and to develop some sane loyalty that will transcend, rather than [be] subordinated to, this particular loyalty which we call nationalism...

Later, Sapir was asked to elaborate on his question:

SECRETARY LYND.⁵ — Mr. Chairman, I wonder if Mr. Sapir would care to comment on some of the varying forms and varying functions which this self-identification with a larger group appears to take in individuals in some groups with which he is familiar?

SAPIR. — I do not think I should like to go into any detail on that but I should like to relate an incident.

I knew a gentleman who was born in Yorkshire. He spoke with a great deal of feeling of his associations in Yorkshire and it was obvious from the way he spoke his sentiments were profound. He said every time he returned to Yorkshire something welled up in his heart and so forth, and yet owing to the fact that he had come to this country at a fairly early age and identified himself with a rural community here he had changed his allegiance. It was perfectly obvious from the way this gentleman spoke that he was not an intellectualist although he was connected with intellectual pursuits in the ordinary sense of the word, but he spoke pretty much as a man on the street might speak on these matters. I should say that his critical abilities were perhaps no more than mediocre.

Here is the thing that interested me and seemed a little paradoxical. He said that after the war he returned to England once and he got in with a bunch of English rural squires and others who discussed in some inn that he was staying at the question of America's participation in the war, and they produced the usual arguments that America came in too late and that Americans had the bad manners to proclaim that they or "we" won the war and that they were very tyrannical in the imposition of their financial terms. And he said he could not stand for that.

Mind you, he was a Yorkshire man revisiting his Yorkshire colleagues, and in defiance of prudence which would have dictated that he hold his peace, because he was in a rather peculiar position — he might have been considered a traitor — something or other in this simple soul demanded that he get up and protest, and while his arguments were not very refined or elaborate he produced the usual parlor arguments: that intelligent Americans did not say they won the war, but that there was a reasonable presumption that the war might not have been won by the Allies if the Americans had not stepped in when they did and that after all, the Americans were quite reasonable in their financial settlements.

I was very much impressed by the necessity that this newly termed American felt for espousing the cause of America.

I would put the problem in this way: Why was it so important for him to capitalize the abstract sentiment or espouse rather the abstract sentiment of nationality than specific allegiance? You might suppose the fact that he had certain feelings about Yorkshire on the one hand and certain secondary feelings about America on the other would produce a kind of psychological blend which would confuse his mind, but that is not the way he acted at all. Being a fairly average man he seemed to do something quite different, something that the intellectuals do not seem to do, at least those who write articles about internationalism. What he did was to quite calmly — he was a very peaceful man who hates war — surrender his soul as it were to the abstract ideal of nationalism, some kind of identification of himself with a great corporate body, and inasmuch as he was now identified and had been for many years in a most significant way with America that identification seemed the most natural to him.

I simply would like to ask Mr. Hayes and other internationalists why it is so easy for a notably peaceful man who has more than the usual home allegiance to sacrifice so much for what you might call the abstract idea of nationalism. It seems to me that there is a psychological reality.

HAYES. — I think that probably more light can be thrown on that question and a better answer given by the anthropologists than by any other group.

SAPIR. — I am simply stating the facts. I do not know any more about it than you do, Mr. Hayes.

ALLPORT. — It might be that that man's feeling was due to his own status or that particular group with which he came in contact in Yorkshire, in England.

Allport expounded at some length in response to Sapir's question, as did Adolf Meyer and Guy Ford. After a few briefer comments Chairman Schlesinger adjourned the meeting.

5. "Original Memorandum to the Social Science Research Council from the Conference on Acculturation and Personality,"
Hanover, September 2, 1930. By Professor Sapir,
Chairman of Conference.

Personality research cuts in many directions across the field of the social sciences. While the social sciences can exist without particular attention to the problems of personality, for useful results from research in most social science problems, due regard for such factors is necessary. The data of each social discipline find their origin and functional manifestations in personal acts. And the formulations of each of these sciences are distinguished from those of the natural sciences by the requirement for their factual demonstration and validation of inferences based on the actual performance of human personalities.

Regardless of individualities of definition that may be given to the term, personality, research useful alike to the social scientist and to those dealing with specific individual living, must concern itself with the description of specific behavior manifestations and with the discovery of the processes that enter as factors into the differentiated behavior manifested by the person. Such data are already available indicating that these latter processes may be studied as "inner" components — the specific functioning of organismic constitution, of neurological integrating apparatus, of will-power, drives, prejudices, desires, predispositions, sentiments, directing tendencies, tissue tensions, motives, complexes, repressed affects, and so on. Equally validly, they may be studied as the manifestations of cultural patterns — mores, customs, institutionalized patterns of behavior, fashions, etc., these incorporated in and functioning through the person. It is evident that neither of these approaches used independently will give us a complete understanding of the functional activity of personality as it is manifested in behavior. Personality research must study the interdependence of "inner" components and available cultural patterns.

There are available no adequate descriptions of behavior manifestations as they occur in daily life. There is, however, a body of data of this kind bearing on behavior manifested in more or less highly controlled situations. There are data bearing on gross observable behavior of some primitive individuals. The largest collection of data fairly approximating description of behavior is that accumulated by psychiatrists interested in seriously disordered personalities. The beginning of really adequate descriptions has been made in the study of infants and children; e. g., Gesell, D. S. Thomas, J. E. Anderson. The obvious difficulties of this phase of personality research lie in the ubiquity of the manifestations and our lack of techniques. The success of the psychiatrist comes from the extraordinary character of the behavior that he studies. The success of the infant and the child investigator, in turn, arises from the simplicity of the behavior. The ordinary behavior of everyday people, on the other hand, is often enormously more complex, and, curiously, more inaccessible even for the crudest recording.

The promising approaches to this phase of research are found in (1) the systematic observation and recording of particular types of behavior selected from the total complex, including laboratory techniques; (2) self-observations recorded in diaries, journals, letters, and other literary forms; (3) certain types of performance tests in which the behavior of the individual is more or less automatically recorded; (4) guided in-

interviews supplemented by free-fantasy, as used by the psychiatrist, and (5) investigation by study of recorded instances of past performances. The expanded utilization of these techniques, simply or, preferably, in combination, should be pushed in many directions.

On the side of the exploration of behavior by investigation of the interaction of "inner" and cultural factors, there is accumulated a great body of one-sided data. Some of this may be susceptible of successful *inter-correlation*, once techniques have been worked out by study of actual instances of interaction manifesting in adequately described behavior. Here and there such an effort has been made. In great measure, however, effort has been misdirected to the "explanation" of one of this body of factors by appeal to the other. Interpretations of anthropological data on behavior by an appeal to psychological, biological, or psychiatric formulations, for any purpose other than the drafting of hypotheses to be tested by subsequent investigation, are useless.

It is the sense of the Committee that the fruitful united attacks on this problem are to be made by the study of some relatively small groups possessed of well-developed cultural patterns conspicuously differentiated from those with which we are so identified as to make their functional activity obscure. Many such groups are easy of access in (a) the Indian reservations; e. g., the Navajo, the Plains Indians; and (b) various immigrant communities; e. g., the Scandinavian communities of the Northwest.

A rough suggestion of method for the investigation of such communities takes the form of (a) studies of the life of the group as a whole; (b) intensive personality studies of all or a selected number of the individuals actually engaged in the group life; and (c) studies of group and individual manifestations referable to environing cultural factors actually incorporated into some of the individuals. This sort of study will require the active team work of the cultural anthropologist, the sociologist, the psychologist, and the psychiatrist, each sensitive to the viewpoints of all the others.

From the findings of this study there will come formulations of personality in which the interacting factors of culture and "inner" components receive intelligible roles. The conclusions will be susceptible to meaningful reference to historic data on the evolution of the existing patterns of Indian and Scandinavian cultures. They will shed light on changes in culture actually underway in the selected groups, and on the processes and factors actually concerned. They will provide control material for such experimental variations in culture-environments as

those utilized of late in the treatment of crime and mental disorder. On the basis of these formulations, a technique can be evolved, for example, for effective utilization of representatives of other culture-groups, such as foreign-born and foreign-educated Fellows assembled in a seminar.

These investigations should provide means for analysis of our own cultural patterns, and of their interaction with "inner" components in the genesis of behavior.

It is the sense of this conference that the Social Science Research Council appoint a Committee on the Interrelationships of Personality and Culture.

6. "A Project for the Study of Acculturation among the American Indians, with Special Reference to the Investigation of Problems of Personality," ms. presented to the Social Science Research Council, September 2, 1930

Sapir's proposal for studying American Indian acculturation called for fieldwork by a research team to amass an empirical data base for the ethnographic study of personality. The proposal was effectively tabled, however, until resuscitated in 1936 by Robert Redfield, Ralph Linton, and Melville Herskovits ("Memorandum for the Study of Acculturation," *American Anthropologist* 38: 149-152). Emphasis on personality and the individual was much attenuated in the later version.

We reproduce here only the introduction to the proposed project. The original proposal continues with details concerning the project's supervisory committee, staff, duration of study, and budget.

* * *

The present brief memorandum of an anthropological project ... may be fairly looked upon as having back of it the consensus of opinion of the anthropologists of this country. Owing to the rapidly growing interest in problems of personality, in the relation between personality and cultural background, and in the large borderland of interests that link up cultural anthropology, sociology and social psychology with each other, it is believed that the present project, however specifically anthropological in subject matter, is by no means exclusively or even predominantly so in spirit.

In the main, anthropologists have concerned themselves with primitive cultures in their original form, and have shown comparatively little interest in the fate of these primitive cultures when they are brought in contact with our modern civilization. In this attempt to get at the out-

lines of the uncontaminated native culture the anthropologist has often had to eliminate secondary influences due to the white man. More and more, however, the anthropologist is becoming interested in precisely those aspects of native life which he was formerly at pains to ignore or weed out. All social phenomena are of interest to the social scientist, and anthropology stands ready to pool its resources with sociology and social psychology. It is suggested that it would be extremely valuable to study in some detail exactly what happened with a number of selected American Indian cultures under the stresses and strains of adaptation to modern life. Such studies would require a large amount of preliminary ethnological work, which, however, has fortunately been done for a considerable number of American tribes. A careful study of historical sources and other documentary material would also be necessary in order to enable one to gauge as accurately as possible the extent of the gradual change in culture that was being effected by contact with the whites.

The main part of the work which it is proposed to undertake is a fresh field study of some five or six Indian tribes, with a view not to reconstructing the aboriginal culture but to seeing exactly how these tribes maintain themselves under modern conditions, how much of the old life is relevant for modern conditions, how much has been sacrificed without regret, how much is being thought to continue in spite of modern conditions, what new interpretations of old material have been brought in by cultural blends, and, above all, what personality problems have been raised by the introduction of new ways of life and what effect these problems have on a selected number of individuals who may be taken as illustrative of various types of personality.

The particular tribes suggested for this study are: the Haida, of Queen Charlotte Islands; a selected tribe of California; the Dakota or other tribe of the Plains region; the Navaho; and the Hopi or other tribe of the Pueblo region. These tribes are so selected as to illustrate five rather distinctive American Indian cultures which have made a fairly good adjustment to modern life, though illustrating at the same time many problems of social and personal disintegration.

It should be pointed out that the project connects with work that has already been done by a number of anthropologists and with work in other cultural fields that it is proposed to undertake. Keesing's study of the Menomoni Indians of Wisconsin and Mekeel's study of the Dakota Indians have recently been undertaken under the auspices of Wiedler at Yale University and stress the historical factors in cultural adjustment

to modern conditions of life. The experiences gained in these researches would be invaluable in carrying out the present project, which is, however, to lay rather more emphasis on the psychological factors but somewhat less on the purely historical ones, though by no means ignoring the latter. Not unrelated also are the researches of Redfield, who has been studying the nature of the blend of aboriginal Mexican culture with the Old World culture brought in by the Spanish conquerors. The Personality Committee of the University of Chicago Social Science Research Council has been hoping for some time to raise funds for the study of personality problems in alien cultures and of the changes in personality which take place in individuals who are expected to adjust to entirely different cultural conditions than those in which they have been brought up or which constitute the social heritage of their people. The two recent Colloquia on Personality conducted by the American Psychiatric Association have drawn repeated attention to the importance of studying cultural backgrounds for the understanding of grave personal maladjustments, and it is the hope of a number of anthropologists, social psychologists and psychiatrists that it may be possible for the cultural anthropologist and the psychiatrist, apparently so far removed from each other, to study in the field problems that are of common interest. W. I. Thomas' Scandinavian project and the proposed seminar, presumably at Yale, of foreign students who are to take up problems of the impact of culture on personality, are also rather closely related to the present project.

Much of the value of the present proposal would seem to lie in the relative aloofness from practical problems. The state of the Indian is, after all, of minor concern to the administrator or the student of contemporary affairs. But the extreme psychological distance between the aboriginal American Indian cultures and the kind of life they are expected to lead today should prove an excellent gauge for estimating the possibilities of relatively quick adjustment. It is the essential viewpoint of the proposed study that the individual is seen as the meeting place of contrasting cultures. It is believed that cultural anthropology could hardly be of more direct service to sociology and psychology than in the manner indicated. The Indian and his cultures are rapidly passing. The present types of halfway adjustment are likely to pass in the not distant future. It will seem very important retrospectively to have analyzed in some detail the psychological nature of the adjustment process in the transitional period.

7. "The Proposed Work of the Committee on Personality and Culture"

a. Outline, September 2, 1930

A note attached to the following outline indicates that the proposed work of the committee was based on the attached memorandum (Original Memorandum to the Social Science Research Council), and that "the memorandum is designed to point out the approach and contribution by anthropology, recognizing that other factors require consideration in their proper place."

* * *

1. *Scope*: To study the relation between the development of the personality and the cultural and psychological characteristics of the community in which the personality develops.
2. *Objective of program*: Two related groups of studies concerning:
 - (a) General behavior patterns peculiar to given communities.
 - (b) A more sharply focussed objective, i. e. to explain the individual against culturally defined backgrounds.
 - While several factors may be responsible for individual differences in personality the one of considerable importance socially is to find what the general social patterns mean to individuals who participate in them. (The thesis is that the degree of agreement between the meaning which the individual comes to see in social patterns and the general meaning that is inherent [for others] in those patterns is significant for an understanding of the individual's process of adjustment, as revealing harmony or conflict.)
3. *Aim*:
 - The relationship of objectives (a) and (b), from the standpoint of anthropological investigation, is sequential rather than correlative. Therefore:
 - We should begin through close alliance with current work in cultural anthropology and sociology, e. g. community surveys, studies of acculturation.
 - These are necessary preliminaries to any type of personality studies that shall aim properly to stress the social environment as a factor that conditions the formation of the complete personality.
4. *Organization*: A Committee representing all approaches to the study of behavior.

5. *Contacts:*— With individual social scientists (sociological, anthropological, psychiatric, psychological, physiological etc.) who are already engaged on certain aspects of personality problems.
 - With institutions (Universities) that are developing a program.
 - With younger promising students in cultural anthropology and social psychology.
6. *Fields for research:*
 - (a) Surveys of local communities (preferably small and self-contained) with special reference to detailed study of individuals therein over a considerable period of their development. E.g. Connecticut community, Canadian Dukhobors.
 - (b) Studies of acculturation among primitive peoples. E.g. American Indians (Navajo), peoples of Polynesia (Samoa).
 - (c) Personality deviations (normal and abnormal) in groups that are racially and culturally distinct.

b. Revised version, February 18, 1932

It seems that the general objectives of the Committee are fairly clear. It is supposed to study the problem of the relation between the development of the personality and the general cultural and psychological characteristics of the community in which the personality develops. This would seem to indicate that the work of the Committee would fall into two groups of distinct, yet related, studies. One series of studies would take up the clarification of the general behavior patterns that are peculiar to given communities. This part of the work of the Committee would ally itself very closely with current work in cultural anthropology and sociology. Community surveys and studies of acculturation would be types of the kind of work envisioned in this part of the Committee's program. Such studies should be looked upon as necessary preliminaries to the more sharply focussed objective of the Committee, which is to explain the individual against culturally defined backgrounds. If these more detailed studies of personality differ at all from current studies in psychology, it would be in laying more continuous stress on the factors of the social environment which condition the formation of what we call the complete personality. It is not assumed that these factors are wholly, or perhaps even mainly, responsible for personality differentials, but if there is reason to think that they are so to at least a considerable extent, it becomes important not merely to study a community as such but to see exactly what the generalized social patterns mean for a large variety of individuals, to what degree they actually participate in them

and to what extent the general meanings which inhere in institutional and other social patterns affirm or contradict the meanings, conscious and unconscious, which the individual has developed in the course of his adjustment to society. Thus, both problems of harmonious adjustment and conflict are suggested.

These general objectives, while easy to state, are difficult to translate into specific projects which would be convincing to all students of behavior. Merely by way of submitting tentative proposals which are to be thoroughly discussed by the Committee as a whole, the writer would like to suggest that, among other studies, attention be directed to three distinct series of specific problems.

The first of these would be surveys of selected communities with particular reference to the detailed study of individuals over a considerable period of time with a view to watching the psychological development of these individuals, both personally and as statistical aggregates, in the communities which will first have been studied. Lynd's study of Middletown might serve as a model but it is hoped that the more strictly psychological aspects of such a survey would be emphasized to a greater extent. Owing to the enormous difficulty of understanding the larger and more complex urban communities of contemporary America it is proposed that these community surveys specialize on rather small, relatively homogeneous and self-contained communities that roughly approximate the conditions to be found among more primitive people. Specific examples might be a small Connecticut community of say 20,000 inhabitants or a religious community such as that of the Dukhobors of Canada. These communities should be selected in various parts of the United States and Canada with a view to having as many geographical environments represented as the limited funds will allow.

It is further proposed that we undertake selected studies of acculturation among primitive peoples. The attached memorandum on the study of acculturation among the American Indians, with special reference to the investigation of problems of personality, was originally prepared by E. Sapir for consideration by the Social Science Research Council and is given by way of initial suggestion to the present committee. It may be said that there is some reason to emphasize the study of the Navajo because of certain work in this direction already being undertaken by Yale. A further series of studies among primitive peoples is suggested by C. Wissler's memorandum on Polynesia. Naturally, the precise local field selected for study would have to be determined after due consideration by the committee as a whole. It may be pointed out that we

have promise of excellent personnel for this type of work because a considerable number of students of cultural anthropology are becoming more and more interested in psychological problems connected with their work.

As a third specifically delimited field of inquiry may be mentioned the more intensive study of personality deviations, both normal and abnormal, in racially and culturally distinct groups. Two specimen projects falling within this general field are herewith appended. One is a psychiatric project of Harry Stack Sullivan, the other a study of emotion among primitive peoples suggested by O. Klineberg, now in the department of psychology at Columbia University. In the first two sets of studies proposed, the emphasis is on the particular community and the emergence of personality in that community. In this third series of studies the emphasis is rather on the general psychological comparison of a given community with others. If this field seems too broad, as well it might, it is suggested that it be defined as the psychiatric study of selected groups by persons who qualify for this type of work because of their combined interest in cultural differentials and in personality problems as studied by the psychiatrist.

The question was raised of affiliation of the proposed work of the Committee with various institutions already interested in similar work. These affiliations are numerous and obvious. One has merely to mention Toronto, Chicago, Columbia, Yale and Harvard to realize how wide-spread is interest in the fields covered by the name of the Committee. It may be pointed out that the Institute of Human Relations at Yale is particularly interested in developing a program for the intensive study of a small urban community in Connecticut. Plans are now under way for the launching of this project and it is hoped that the work of the Institute of Human Relations in this regard can eventually be linked up with the similar work proposed for the present Committee.

A word should be said as to available personnel. There may be a little initial difficulty in finding quite the right person for the various types of work envisaged in this memorandum, but, on the whole, the writer has been impressed by the large number of promising students of culture and personality who are interested precisely in the fields that have just been mapped out. An excellent example of a very promising young man who is interested precisely in problems of acculturation is Dr. E. Beaglehole, who has recently published a general book on "Property" from the standpoint of cultural anthropology and who is eager to do intensive work in some Polynesian area, for instance Samoa. His proposed

project on acculturation in Samoa is herewith submitted as a kind of appendix to Wissler's general statement on Polynesian problems. A further source of strength for the prosecution of our work would be Dr. Harry Stack Sullivan, a far more mature person. While his experience has been chiefly with schizophrenic disorders, he should be helpful to the Committee because of his conviction that even profound behavior deviations, such as we observe in the insanities, are by no means without important relations to cultural differences of the environment. For participation in a psychologically weighted study of a selected urban community, S. Mekeel stands ready to serve at an early opportunity. He has had a great deal of experience in studying the acculturation of the Teton-Sioux to modern conditions. He is eager to enter the study of personality development in a community representative of our own civilization. Mention may also be made of Dr. W. Morgan of Cambridge, Massachusetts, who is a physiologist who is passing over into the field of personality development in various cultures with particular reference to primitive communities. He has started work of this kind among the Navajo at his own expense and prepared some valuable papers which indicate the fruitfulness of the proposed field of investigation. It is hoped that the Committee may be sufficiently interested in this type of work to warrant the submission of a more detailed memorandum on the study of personality development among the Navajo at a later time.

Copies appended of the following projects:

- (a) Study of acculturation among the American Indians, with special reference to the investigation of problems of personality - E. Sapir
- (b) Cultural factors in emotional expression - O. Klineberg
- (c) Polynesian projects - C. Wissler.
- (d) A study of the process of acculturation in Samoa - E. Beaglehole
- (e) Proposed investigation of schizophrenia - H. S. Sullivan

Editorial Note

These memoranda, discussion excerpts, and Sapir's address to the Social Science Research Council at the Hanover Conference of 1930 originally appeared in the conference transcripts. Not previously printed, they are published here with the permission of the Social Science Research Council. Minor changes in punctuation and corrections of typographical errors have been made for this publication.

Notes

1. For a summary of Sapir's brief remarks at the 1928 Hanover Conference, see Darnell 1990:301. Sapir did not attend the conferences of 1927 or 1929.
2. The transcript has "absorbed".
3. The transcript has "students".
4. The transcript has "pleased".
5. Robert Lynd, of the Commonwealth Fund, New York.

Custom (1931)

Editorial Introduction

Between 1931 and 1934, Sapir contributed eight entries to the *Encyclopedia of Social Sciences* edited by Columbia University political scientist R. A. Seligman and Alvin Johnson, Director of the New School for Social Research. Although the *Encyclopedia* editorial board included no anthropologists, representatives of the discipline did serve in various other advisory capacities. An advisory committee from constituent societies of the Social Science Research Council included Robert Lowie and Clark Wissler, acting on behalf of the American Anthropological Association. Alfred Kroeber served as an advisory editor for anthropology, and W. R. Ogburn and W. I. Thomas shared a similar position for sociology. Franz Boas served on the *Encyclopedia's* board of directors.

With so many other anthropologists involved, Sapir, whose ostensible specialty was in linguistics, was assigned important topics only in that field. In anthropology he was allotted only entries the editors apparently considered tangential. Undaunted, he focused these assigned topics so as to elaborate aspects of his increasingly integrated theory of culture. He took these essays sufficiently seriously that he included them as reading assignments for his Yale seminar on "The Impact of Culture on Personality" in 1932–33. Taken together, these brief articles present a succinct overview of Sapir's maturing theory of culture, society and the individual as presented for an interdisciplinary social science informed by, but not exclusive to, anthropology.

Five of Sapir's encyclopedia entries appear in the present volume: "Custom" (Sapir 1931d), "Fashion" (1931f), "Group" (1932b), "Personality" (1934c), and "Symbolism" (1934e). His more specifically linguistic entries – "Communication" (1931a), "Dialect" (1931e), and "Language" (1933b) – appear in *CWES* Volume 1.

Regarding "Custom" (1931), Sapir argued that the "formal cohesion" of isolated customs formed them into "larger configurations" which were understood as functional units despite disparate origins. This configurational perspective, which strongly connects "custom" with "culture," countered Lowie's 1920 dictum that culture was "a thing of

shreds and patches." Even while emphasizing configurations, however, Sapir did not abandon his interest in individuals, and the ways individuals attached feelings to these customary patterns. Culture, convention, and custom were all interpreted as individual habits, indirectly functional and inalienably symbolic and integrated.

Sapir's ethnographic examples of custom characteristically evaded exotica in favor of commentary on contemporary urban North America. Custom was not to be identified with so-called primitive society more than with the *Encyclopedia* readers' own society, which might have a more complex division of labor and an increasing emphasis on the individual (among other divergences) but depended on custom and convention nonetheless.

Custom

The word custom is used to apply to the totality of behavior patterns which are carried by tradition and lodged in the group, as contrasted with the more random personal activities of the individual. It is not properly applicable to those aspects of communal activity which are obviously determined by biological considerations. The habit of eating fried chicken is a custom, but the biologically determined habit of eating is not.

Custom is a variable common sense concept which has served as the matrix for the development of the more refined and technical anthropological concept of culture. It is not as purely denotative and objective a term as culture and has a slightly affective quality indicated by the fact that one uses it more easily to refer to geographically remote, to primitive or to bygone societies than to one's own. When applied to the behavior of one's own group the term is usually limited to relatively unimportant and unformalized behavior patterns which lie between individual habits and social institutions. Cigarette smoking is more readily called a custom than is the trial of criminals in court. However, in dealing with contemporary Chinese civilization, with early Babylonian culture or with the life of a primitive Australian tribe the functional equivalent of such a cultural pattern as our court trial is designated as custom. The hesitation to describe as custom any type of behavior in one's own group that is not at once collective and devoid of major importance is perhaps due to the fact that one involuntarily prefers to put the emphasis either on significant individualism, in which case the

word habit is used, or on a thoroughly rationalized and formalized collective intention, in which case the term institution seems in place.

Custom is often used interchangeably with convention, tradition and mores, but the connotations are not quite the same. Convention emphasizes the lack of inner necessity in the behavior pattern and often implies some measure of agreement, express or tacit, that a certain mode of behavior be accepted as proper. The more symbolic or indirect the function of a custom, the more readily is it referred to as a convention. It is a custom to write with pen and ink; it is a convention to use a certain kind of paper in formal correspondence. Tradition emphasizes the historic background of custom. No one accuses a community of being wanting in customs and conventions, but if these are not felt as possessed of considerable antiquity a community is said to have few if any traditions. The difference between custom and tradition is more subjective than objective, for there are few customs whose complete explanation in terms of history does not take one back to a remote antiquity. The term mores is best reserved for those customs which connote fairly strong feelings of the rightness or wrongness of modes of behavior. The mores of a people are its unformulated ethics as seen in action. Such terms as custom, institution, convention, tradition and mores are, however, hardly capable of a precise scientific definition. All of them are reducible to social habit or, if one prefers the anthropological to the psychological point of view, to cultural pattern. Habit and culture are terms which can be defined with some degree of precision and [659] should always be substituted for custom in strictly scientific discourse, habit or habit system being used when the locus of behavior is thought of as residing in the individual, cultural pattern or culture when its locus is thought of as residing in society.

From a biological standpoint all customs are in origin individual habits which have become diffused in society through the interaction of individual upon individual. These diffused or socialized habits, however, tend to maintain themselves because of the unbroken continuity of the diffusion process from generation to generation. One more often sees custom helping to form individual habit than individual habit being made over into custom. In the main, group psychology takes precedence over individual psychology. In no society, however primitive or remote in time, are the interactions of its members not controlled by a complex network of custom. Even at an early stage of the palaeolithic period human beings must have been ruled by custom to a very considerable extent, as is shown by the rather sharply delimited types of artifacts

that were made and the inferences that can be drawn from some of these as to beliefs and attitudes.

The crystallization of individual habit into custom is a process that can be followed out theoretically rather more easily than illustrated in practice. A distinction can be made between customs of long tenure and customs of short tenure generally known as fashions. Fashions are set by a specific individual or group of individuals. When they have had a long enough lease of life to make it seem unimportant to recall the source or original locality of the behavior pattern, they have become customs. The habit of wearing a hat is a custom, but the habit of wearing a particular style of hat is a fashion subject to fairly rapid change. In the sphere of language custom is generally referred to as usage. Uncrystallized usages of speech are linguistic fashions, of which slang forms a particular variety. Food habits too form a well recognized set of customs, within which arise human variations that may be called fashions of food and that tend to die out after a brief period. Fashions are not to be considered as additions to custom but rather as experimental variations of the fundamental themes of custom.

In course of time isolated behavior patterns of a customary nature tend to group themselves into larger configurations which have a formal cohesion and which tend to be rationalized as functional units whether they are such historically or not. The whole history of culture has been little more than a ceaseless effort to connect originally independent modes of behavior into larger systems and to justify the secondary culture complexes by an unconscious process of rationalization. An excellent example of such a culture complex, which derives its elements from thousands of disparate customs, is the modern musical system, which is undoubtedly felt by those who make use of it to be a well compacted functional whole with various elements that are functionally interdependent. Historically, however, it is very easy to prove that the system of musical notation, the rules of harmony, the instrumental techniques, the patterns of musical composition and the conventional uses of particular instruments for specific purposes are independently derivable from customs of very different provenience and of very different age, and that it is only by slow processes of transfer of use and progressive integration of all these socialized modes of behavior that they have come to help each other out in a complex system of unified meanings. Hundreds of parallel instances could be given from such diverse fields of social activity as language, architecture, political organization, industrial technique, religion, warfare and social etiquette.

The impermanence of custom is a truism. Belief in the rapidity of change of custom is exaggerated, however, because it is precisely the comparatively slight divergences from what is socially established that arouse attention. A comparison of American life today with the life of a mediaeval English town would in the larger perspective of cultural anthropology illustrate rather the relative permanence of culture than its tendency to change.

The disharmony which cumulatively results from the use of tools, insights or other manipulative types of behavior which had enriched the cultural stock in trade of society a little earlier results in change of custom. The introduction of the automobile, for instance, was not at first felt as necessarily disturbing custom, but in the long run all those customs appertaining to visiting and other modes of disposing of one's leisure time have come to be seriously modified by the automobile as a power contrivance. Amenities of social intercourse felt to be obstructive to the free utilization of this new source of power tend to be dismissed or abbreviated. Disharmony resulting from the rise of new values also makes [660] for change in custom. For example, the greater freedom of manner of the modern woman as contrasted with the far more conventionally circumscribed conduct of women of generations ago has come about because of the rise of a new attitude toward woman and her relation to man. The influences exerted by foreign peoples, e. g. the introduction of tea and coffee in occidental society and the spread of parliamentary government from country to country, are stressed by anthropologists more than by the majority of historians and sociologists as determinants of change. Most popular examples of the imposition of fashions which proceed from strategic personalities are probably fanciful and due to a desire to dramatize the operation of the more impersonal factors, which are much more important in the aggregate than the specific personal ones. With the gradual spread of a custom that is largely symbolic and characteristic of a selected portion of the population, the fundamental reason for its continuance weakens, so that it either dies out or takes on an entirely new function. This mechanism is particularly noteworthy in the life of language. Locutions which are considered smart or chic because they are the property of privileged circles are soon taken up by the masses and then die because of their banality. A much more powerful and exact knowledge of the nature of individual interaction, particularly as regards the unconscious transfer of feeling, is needed before a really satisfying theory of cultural change can be formulated.

Those customs survive the longest which either correspond to so basic a human need that they cannot well be seriously changed or else are of such a nature that they can easily be functionally reinterpreted. An example of the former type of persistence is the custom of having a mother suckle her child. There are numerous departures from this rule, yet both modern America and the more primitive tribes preserve as a custom a mode of behavior which obviously lies close to the life of man in nature. An example of the latter type of persistence, which may be called adaptive persistence, is language, which tends to remain fairly true to set form but which is constantly undergoing reinterpretation in accordance with the demands of the civilization which it serves. For example, the word robin refers in the United States to a very different bird from the English bird that was originally meant. The word could linger on with a modified meaning because it is a symbol and therefore capable of indefinite reinterpretation.

The word survival should not be used for a custom having a clearly defined function which can be shown to be different from its original place and significance in culture. When used in the latter, looser sense the word survival threatens to lose all useful meaning. There are few customs among us today which are not survivals in this sense. There are, however, certain customs which it is difficult to rationalize on any count and which may be looked upon as analogous to rudimentary organs in biology. The useless buttons in modern clothing are often cited as an example of such survivals. The use of Roman numerals alongside of Arabic numerals may also be considered a survival. On the whole, however, it seems safest not to use the word too freely, for it is difficult to prove that any custom, no matter how apparently lacking in utility or how far removed from its original application, is entirely devoid of at least symbolic meaning.

Custom is stronger and more persistent in primitive than in modern societies. The primitive group is smaller, so that a greater degree of conformity is psychologically necessary. In the more sophisticated community, which numbers a far larger total of individuals, departure from custom on the part of a few selected individuals, who may in turn prove instrumental for a change of culture in the community at large, does not matter so much for the solidarity of the group to begin with, because the chance individual of the group finds himself reinforced by the vast majority of his fellow men and can do without the further support of the deviants. The primitive community has also no written tradition to appeal to as an impersonal arbiter in matters of custom and therefore puts

more energy into the conservation of what is transmitted through activity and oral tradition. The presence of documents relieves the individual from the necessity of taking personal responsibility for the perpetuation of custom. Far too great stress is usually laid on the actually conserving, as contrasted with the symbolically conserving, power of the written word. Custom among primitive peoples is apt to derive some measure of sacredness from its association with magical and religious procedures. When a certain type of activity is linked with a ritual which is in turn apt to be associated with a legend that to the native mind explains the activity in question, a radical departure from the traditionally conserved pattern [661] of behavior is felt as blasphemous or perilous to the safety of the group. There is likewise a far lesser division of labor in primitive communities than in our own, which means that the forces making for experimentation in the solution of technical problems are proportionately diminished.

In the modern world custom tends to be much more conservative in the rural districts than in the city, and the reasons are similar to those given for the greater persistence of custom among primitive peoples. The greater scatter of the rural population does not generally mean the more intensive individual cultivation of the forms of custom but rather a compensatory effort to correct the threats of distance by conformity.

Within a complex community, such as is found in modern cities, custom tends to be more persistent on the whole in the less sophisticated groups. Much depends on the symbolism of a custom. There are certain types of custom, particularly such as are symbolic of status, which tend to be better conserved in the more sophisticated or wealthy groups than in the less sophisticated. The modern American custom, for instance, of having a married woman keep her maiden name is not likely soon to take root among the very wealthy, who here join hands with the unsophisticated majority, while the custom is being sparsely diffused among the intellectual middle class.

The varying degrees of conservatism in regard to custom can be illustrated in the behavior of a single individual because of the different types of social participation into which he enters. In England, for instance, the same individual may be in the vanguard of custom as a Londoner but insistent on the preservation of rural custom as a country squire. An American university man may be disdainful of customary opinion in his faculty club but be meekly observant of religious custom on Sunday at church. Loyalty or departure from custom is not a simple

function of temperament or personality but part and parcel of the symbolism of multiple participation in society.

Custom is generally referred to as a constraining force. The conflict of individual will and social compulsion is familiar, but even the most forceful and self-assertive individual needs to yield to custom at most points in order that he may gain leverage, as it were, for the imposition of his personal will on society, which cannot be conquered without the implicit capture of social consent. The freedom gained by the denial of custom is essentially a subjective freedom of escape rather than an effective freedom of conquest. Custom makes for a powerful economy in the learning of the individual; it is a symbolic affirmation of the solidarity of the group. A byproduct of these fundamental functions of custom is the more sentimental value which results from an ability to link the present and the past and thus to establish a larger ego in time, which supplements with its authority the larger ego represented by the community as it functions in the present.

The formulation of customs in the sphere of the rights and duties of individuals in their manifold relations leads to law. It is not useful to use the term law, as is often vaguely done in dealing with primitive societies, unless the enforcement of customary activity be made explicit, being vested in particular individuals or bodies of individuals. There are no societies that are wholly free from the binding force of implicit law, but as there are also many primitive societies which recognize some type of legal procedure it seems much better to speak of law only in the latter case. There are, for instance, few American Indian tribes in which customary obligations are recognized as a system of law that is capable of enforcement by the community. Psychologically law prevails, but not institutionally. This is in rather sharp contrast to the legal procedure which has been developed by the majority of African tribes. Here there is not merely the law of custom in an implicit sense but the perfectly explicit recognition of rules of conduct and of punishment for their infringement, with an elaborate method of discovering guilt and with the power of inflicting punishment vested in the king. The example of African law indicates that the essential difference between custom and law does not lie in the difference between oral tradition and the written formulation of custom. Law can emerge from custom long before the development of writing and has demonstrably done so in numerous cases. When custom has the psychological compulsion of law but is not controlled by society through the imposition of explicit penalties it may be called ethics or, more primitively, mores. It is difficult to distinguish

law and ethics in the more simple forms of society. Both emerge from custom but in a somewhat divergent manner. Mundane or human sovereignty becomes progressively distinguished from socially diffused or supernatural or impersonal sovereignty. [662] Custom controlled by the former is law; custom controlled by the latter is ethics.

The agencies instrumental in the formation of custom are for the most part quite impersonal in character and implicit in the mere fact of human interrelationships. There are also more self-conscious agencies for the perpetuation of custom. Among these the most important are law and religion, the latter particularly in the form of an organized church and priesthood. There are also organizations which are sentimentally interested in the conservation of customs which threaten to go out of use. In the modern world one often sees a rather weak nationalistic cause bolstered up by the somewhat artificial fostering of archaic custom. Much of the ritualism of the modern Scottish clans is secondarily rather than lineally conservative.

If complicated forms of conscious manipulation of ideas and techniques which rule the modern world are excluded from the range of the term custom, the force of custom may be said to be gradually lessening. The factors which favor this weakening of custom are: the growing division of labor with its tendency to make society less and less homogeneous; the growing spirit of rationalism, in the light of which much of the justification of custom fades away; the growing tendency to break away from local tradition; and, finally, the greater store set by individuality. The ideal which is latent in the modern mind would seem to be to break up custom into the two poles of individually determined habit on the one hand and of large scale institutional planning for the major enterprises of mankind on the other.

Consult: Tylor, E. B., *Primitive Culture*, 2 vols. (7th ed. New York 1924); Boas, Franz, *The Mind of Primitive Man* (New York 1911), and *Anthropology and Modern Life* (New York 1928); Lowie, R. H., *Primitive Society* (New York 1920) and *Are We Civilized?* (New York 1929); Wissler, Clark, *Man and Culture* (New York 1923); Kroeber, A. L., *Anthropology* (New York 1923); Sumner, W. G., *Folkways* (Boston 1907); Sumner, W. G., and Keller, A. G., *The Science of Society*, 4 vols. (New Haven 1927-28); Wallis, W. D., *Culture and Progress* (New York 1930); Malinowski, Bronislaw, *Crime and Custom in Savage Society* (London 1926); Hocart, A. M., "Are Savages Custom-bound?" in *Man*, vol. xxvii (1927) 220-21; Benedict, Ruth, "The Science of Custom" in *Century Magazine*, vol. cxvii (1929) 641-49.

Editorial Notes

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Fashion (1931)

Editorial Introduction

Another of Sapir's brief entries for the *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, "Fashion" was conceptually linked with the entry for "Custom" (this volume). Sapir identified fashion as custom in the disguise of departure from custom. It could be interpreted in terms of its conventionality as cultural pattern, yet at the same time it served individuals as a means of expression of personality. Though following the "powerful psychological drifts" that affect other cultural patterns (and language as well; cf. the discussion of language history in *Language*, 1921), fashion also provided avenues for individuals' behavioral differentiation.

Sapir's approach to this topic differed considerably from that of Alfred Kroeber, who had published a paper on it in 1919 ("On the Principle of Order in Civilization as Exemplified by Changes of Fashion," *American Anthropologist* 21: 235-63). In keeping with his own theoretical stance, Kroeber had emphasized the importance of cultural pattern as against individuals' actions and motives, which (he argued) large-scale trends in fashion revealed as illusory. Kroeber again pursued this theme in a quantitative study, published (with Jane Richardson) in 1940, just after Sapir's death: "Three Centuries of Women's Dress Fashions: A Quantitative Analysis," *Anthropological Records* 5(2) 1-6, 11-153. The contrasts between Sapir's and Kroeber's approaches to this topic recall the theoretical disagreement first articulated in their debate over the "Superorganic" in 1917.

Fashion

The meaning of the term fashion may be clarified by pointing out how it differs in connotation from a number of other terms whose meaning it approaches. A particular fashion differs from a given taste in suggesting some measure of compulsion on the part of the group as contrasted with individual choice from among a number of possibilities. A particular choice may of course be due to a blend of fashion and

taste. Thus, if bright and simple colors are in fashion, one may select red as more pleasing to one's taste than yellow, although one's free taste unhampered by fashion might have decided in favor of a more subtle tone. To the discriminating person the demand of fashion constitutes a challenge to taste and suggests problems of reconciliation. But fashion is accepted by average people with little demur and is not so much reconciled with taste as substituted for it. For many people taste hardly arises at all except on the basis of a clash of an accepted fashion with a fashion that is out of date or current in some other group than one's own.

The term fashion may carry with it a tone of approval or disapproval. It is a fairly objective term whose emotional qualities depend on a context. A moralist may decry a certain type of behavior as a mere fashion but the ordinary person will not be displeased if he is accused of being in the fashion. It is different with fads, which are objectively similar to fashions but differ from them in being more personal in their application and in connoting a more or less definite social disapproval. Particular people or coteries have their fads, while fashions are the property of larger or more representative groups. A taste which asserts itself in spite of fashion and which may therefore be suspected of having something obsessive about it may be referred to as an individual fad. On the other hand, while a fad may be of very short duration, it always differs from a true fashion in having something unexpected, irresponsible or bizarre about it. Any fashion which sins against one's sense of style and one's feeling for the historical continuity of style is likely to be dismissed as a fad. There are changing fashions in tennis rackets, while the game of mah jong, once rather fashionable, takes on in retrospect more and more the character of a fad.

Just as the weakness of fashion leads to fads, so its strength comes from custom. Customs differ from fashions in being relatively permanent types of social behavior. They change, but with a less active and conscious participation of the individual in the change. Custom is the element of permanence which makes changes in fashion possible. Custom marks the highroad of human interrelationships, while fashion may be looked upon as the endless departure from and return to the highroad. The vast majority of fashions are relieved by other fashions, but occasionally a fashion crystallizes into permanent habit, taking on the character of custom.

It is not correct to think of fashion as merely a short lived innovation in custom, because many innovations in human history arise with the

need for them and last as long as they are useful or convenient. If, for instance, there is a shortage of silk and it becomes customary to substitute cotton for silk in the manufacture of certain articles of dress in which silk has been [140] the usual material, such an enforced change of material, however important economically or aesthetically, does not in itself constitute a true change of fashion. On the other hand, if cotton is substituted for silk out of free choice as a symbol perhaps of the simple life or because of a desire to see what novel effect can be produced in accepted types of dress with simpler materials, the change may be called one of fashion. There is nothing to prevent an innovation from eventually taking on the character of a new fashion. If, for example, people persist in using the cotton material even after silk has once more become available, a new fashion has arisen.

Fashion is custom in the guise of departure from custom. Most normal individuals consciously or unconsciously have the itch to break away in some measure from a too literal loyalty to accepted custom. They are not fundamentally in revolt from custom but they wish somehow to legitimize their personal deviation without laying themselves open to the charge of insensitiveness to good taste or good manners. Fashion is the discreet solution of the subtle conflict. The slight changes from the established in dress or other forms of behavior seem for the moment to give the victory to the individual, while the fact that one's fellows revolt in the same direction gives one a feeling of adventurous safety. The personal note which is at the hidden core of fashion becomes superpersonalized.

Whether fashion is felt as a sort of socially legitimized caprice or is merely a new and unintelligible form of social tyranny depends on the individual or class. It is probable that those most concerned with the setting and testing of fashions are the individuals who realize most keenly the problem of reconciling individual freedom with social conformity which is implicit in the very fact of fashion. It is perhaps not too much to say that most people are at least partly sensitive to this aspect of fashion and are secretly grateful for it. A large minority of people, however, are insensitive to the psychological complexity of fashion and submit to it to the extent that they do merely because they realize that not to fall in with it would be to declare themselves members of a past generation or dull people who cannot keep up with their neighbors. These latter reasons for being fashionable are secondary; they are sullen surrenders to bastard custom.

The fundamental drives leading to the creation and acceptance of fashion can be isolated. In the more sophisticated societies boredom, created by leisure and too highly specialized forms of activity, leads to restlessness and curiosity. This general desire to escape from the trammels of a too regularized existence is poerfully reinforced by a ceaseless desire to add to the attractiveness of the self and all other objects of love and friendship. It is precisely in functionally powerful societies that the individual's ego is constantly being convicted of helplessness. The individual tends to be unconsciously thrown back on himself and demands more and more novel affirmations of his effective reality. The endless rediscovery of the self in a series of petty truancies from the official socialized self becomes a mild obsession of the normal individual in any society in which the individual has ceased to be a measure of the society itself. There is, however, always the danger of too great a departure from the recognized symbols of the individual, because his identity is likely to be destroyed. That is why insensitive people, anxious to be literally in the fashion, so often overreach themselves and nullify the very purpose of fashion. Good hearted women of middle age generally fail in the art of being ravishing nymphs.

Somewhat different from the affirmation of the libidinal self is the more vulgar desire for prestige or notoriety, satisfied by changes in fashion. In this category belongs fashion as an outward emblem of personal distinction or of membership in some group to which distinction is ascribed. The imitation of fashion by people who belong to circles removed from those which set the fashion has the function of bridging the gap between a social class and the class next above it. The logical result of the acceptance of a fashion by all members of society is the disappearance of the kinds of satisfaction responsible for the change of fashion in the first place. A new fashion becomes psychologically necessary, and thus the cycle of fashion is endlessly repeated.

Fashion is emphatically a historical concept. A specific fashion is utterly unintelligible if lifted out of its place in a sequence of forms. It is exceedingly dangerous to rationalize or in any other way psychologize a particular fashion on the basis of general principles which might be considered applicable to the class of forms of which it seems to be an example. It is utterly vain, for instance, to explain particular forms of dress or types of cosmetics or methods of wearing the hair without a preliminary historical critique. Bare legs among modern women in [141] summer do not psychologically or historically create at all the same fashion as bare legs and bare feet among primitives living in the tropics.

The importance of understanding fashion historically should be obvious enough when it is recognized that the very essence of fashion is that it be valued as a variation in an understood sequence, as a departure from the immediately preceding mode.

Changes in fashion depend on the prevailing culture and on the social ideals which inform it. Under the apparently placid surface of culture there are always powerful psychological drifts of which fashion is quick to catch the direction. In a democratic society, for instance, if there is an unacknowledged drift toward class distinctions fashion will discover endless ways of giving it visible form. Criticism can always be met by the insincere defense that fashion is merely fashion and need not be taken seriously. If in a puritanic society there is a growing impatience with the outward forms of modesty, fashion finds it easy to minister to the demands of sex curiosity, while the old mores can be trusted to defend fashion with an affectation of unawareness of what fashion is driving at. A complete study of the history of fashion would undoubtedly throw much light on the ups and downs of sentiment and attitude at various periods of civilization. However, fashion never permanently outruns discretion and only those who are taken in by the superficial rationalizations of fashion are surprised by the frequent changes of face in its history. That there was destined to be a lengthening of women's skirts after they had become short enough was obvious from the outset to all except those who do not believe that sex symbolism is a real factor in human behavior.

The chief difficulty of understanding fashion in its apparent vagaries is the lack of exact knowledge of the unconscious symbolisms attaching to forms, colors, textures, postures and other expressive elements in a given culture. The difficulty is appreciably increased by the fact that the same expressive elements tend to have quite different symbolic references in different areas. Gothic type, for instance, is a nationalistic token in Germany, while in Anglo-Saxon culture the practically identical type known as Old English has entirely different connotations. In other words, the same style of lettering may symbolize either an undying hatred of France or a wistful look backward at madrigals and pewter.

An important principle in the history of fashion is that those features of fashion which do not configure correctly with the unconscious system of meanings characteristic of the given culture are relatively insecure. Extremes of style, which too frankly symbolize the current of feeling of the moment, are likely to find themselves in exposed positions, as it were, where they can be outflanked by meanings which they do

not wish to recognize. Thus, it may be conjectured that lipstick is less secure in American culture as an element of fashion than rouge discreetly applied to the cheek. This is assuredly not due to a superior sinfulness of lipstick as such, but to the fact that rosy cheeks resulting from a healthy natural life in the country are one of the characteristic fetishisms of the traditional ideal of feminine beauty, while lipstick has rather the character of certain exotic ardors and goes with flaming oriental stuffs. Rouge is likely to last for many decades or centuries because there is, and is likely to be for a long time to come, a definite strain of nature worship in our culture. If lipstick is to remain it can only be because our culture will have taken on certain violently new meanings which are not at all obvious at the present time. As a symbol it is episodic rather than a part of the underlying rhythm of the history of our fashions.

In custom bound cultures, such as are characteristic of the primitive world, there are slow non-reversible changes of style rather than the often reversible forms of fashion found in modern cultures. The emphasis in such societies is on the group and the sanctity of tradition rather than on individual expression, which tends to be entirely unconscious. In the great cultures of the Orient and in ancient and mediaeval Europe changes in fashion can be noted radiating from certain definite centers of sophisticated culture, but it is not until modern Europe is reached that the familiar merry-go-round of fashion with its rapid alternations of season occurs.

The typically modern acceleration of changes in fashion may be ascribed to the influence of the Renaissance, which awakened a desire for innovation and which powerfully extended for European society the total world of possible choices. During this period Italian culture came to be the arbiter of taste, to be followed by French culture, which may still be looked upon as the most powerful influence in the creation and distribution of fashions. But more important than the Renaissance in the history of fashion is the effect of the industrial revolution and the rise of the common people. The former [142] increased the mechanical ease with which fashions could be diffused; the latter greatly increased the number of those willing and able to be fashionable.

Modern fashion tends to spread to all classes of society. As fashion has always tended to be a symbol of membership in a particular social class and as human beings have always felt the urge to edge a little closer to a class considered superior to their own, there must always have been the tendency for fashion to be adopted by circles which had

a lower status than the group setting the fashions. But on the whole such adoption of fashion from above tended to be discreet because of the great importance attached to the maintenance of social classes. What has happened in the modern world, regardless of the official forms of government which prevail in the different nations, is that the tone giving power which lies back of fashion has largely slipped away from the aristocracy of rank to the aristocracy of wealth. This means a psychological if not an economic leveling of classes because of the feeling that wealth is an accidental or accreted quality of an individual as contrasted with blood. In an aristocracy of wealth everyone, even the poorest, is potentially wealthy both in legal theory and in private fancy. In such a society, therefore, all individuals are equally entitled, it is felt, so far as their pockets permit, to the insignia of fashion. This universalizing of fashion necessarily cheapens its value in the specific case and forces an abnormally rapid change of fashion. The only effective protection possessed by the wealthy in the world of fashion is the insistence on expensive materials in which fashion is to express itself. Too great an insistence on this factor, however, is the hallmark of wealthy vulgarity, for fashion is essentially a thing of forms and symbols, not of material values.

Perhaps the most important of the special factors which encourage the spread of fashion today is the increased facility for the production and transportation of goods and for communication either personally or by correspondence from the centers of fashion to the outmost periphery of the civilized world. These increased facilities necessarily lead to huge capital investments in the manufacture and distribution of fashionable wear. The extraordinarily high initial profits to be derived from fashion and the relatively rapid tapering off of profits make it inevitable that the natural tendency to change in fashion is helped along by commercial suggestion. The increasingly varied activities of modern life also give greater opportunity for the growth and change of fashion. Today the cut of a dress or the shape of a hat stands ready to symbolize anything from mountain climbing or military efficiency through automobiling to interpretative dancing and veiled harlotry. No individual is merely what his social role indicates that he is to be or may vary only slightly from, but he may act as if he is anything else that individual fantasy may dictate. The greater leisure and spending power of the bourgeoisie, bringing them externally nearer the upper classes of former days, are other obvious stimuli to change in fashion, as are the gradual

psychological and economic liberation of women and the greater opportunity given them for experimentation in dress and adornment.

Fashions for women show greater variability than fashions for men in contemporary civilization. Not only do women's fashions change more rapidly and completely but the total gamut of allowed forms is greater for women than for men. In times past and in other cultures, however, men's fashions show a greater exuberance than women's. Much that used to be ascribed to woman as female is really due to woman as a sociologically and economically defined class. Woman as a distinctive theme for fashion may be explained in terms of the social psychology of the present civilization. She is the one who pleases by being what she is and looking as she does rather than by doing what she does. Whether biology or history is primarily responsible for this need not be decided. Woman has been the kept partner in marriage and has had to prove her desirability by ceaselessly reaffirming her attractiveness as symbolized by novelty of fashion. Among the wealthier classes and by imitation also among the less wealthy, woman has come to be looked upon as an expensive luxury on whom one spends extravagantly. She is thus a symbol of the social and economic status of her husband. Whether with the increasingly marked change of woman's place in society the factors which emphasize extravagance in women's fashions will entirely fall away it is impossible to say at the present time.

There are powerful vested interests involved in changes of fashions, as has already been mentioned. The effect on the producer of fashions of a variability which he both encourages and dreads is the introduction of an element of risk. It is a popular error to assume that professional designers arbitrarily dictate fashion. they do so [143] only in a very superficial sense. Actually they have to obey many masters. Their designs must above all things net the manufacturers a profit, so that behind the more strictly psychological determinants of fashion there lurks a very important element due to the sheer technology of the manufacturing process or the availability of a certain type of material. In addition to this the designer must have a sure feeling for the established in custom and the degree to which he can safely depart from it. He must intuitively divine what people want before they are quite aware of it themselves. His business is not so much to impose fashion as to coax people to accept what they have themselves unconsciously suggested. This causes the profits of fashion production to be out of all proportion to the actual cost of manufacturing fashionable goods. The producer and his designer assistant capitalize the curiosity and vanity of their

customers but they must also be protected against the losses of a risky business. Those who are familiar with the history of fashion are emphatic in speaking of the inability of business to combat the fashion trends which have been set going by various psychological factors. A fashion may be aesthetically pleasing in the abstract, but if it runs counter to the trend or does not help to usher in a new trend which is struggling for a hearing it may be a flat failure.

The distribution of fashions is a comparatively simple and automatic process. The vogue of fashion plates and fashion magazines, the many lines of communication which connect fashion producers and fashion dispensers, and modern methods of marketing make it almost inevitable that a successful Parisian fashion should find its way within an incredibly short period of time to Chicago and San Francisco. If it were not for the necessity of exploiting accumulated stocks of goods these fashions would penetrate into the remotest corners of rural America even more rapidly than is the case. The average consumer is chronically distressed to discover how rapidly his accumulated property in wear depreciates by becoming outmoded. He complains bitterly and ridicules the new fashions when they appear. In the end he succumbs, a victim to symbolisms of behavior which he does not fully comprehend. What he will never admit is that he is more the creator than the victim of his difficulties.

Fashion has always had vain critics. It has been arraigned by the clergy and by social satirists because each new style of wear, calling attention as it does to the form of the human body, seems to the critics to be an attack on modesty. Some fashions there are, to be sure, whose very purpose it is to attack modesty, but over and above specific attacks there is felt to be a generalized one. The charge is well founded but useless. Human beings do not wish to be modest; they want to be as expressive — that is, as immodest — as fear allows; fashion helps them solve their paradoxical problem. The charge of economic waste which is often leveled against fashion has had little or no effect on the public mind. Waste seems to be of no concern where values are to be considered, particularly when these values are both egoistic and unconscious. The criticism that fashion imposes an unwanted uniformity is not as sound as it appears to be in the first instance. The individual in society is only rarely significantly expressive in his own right. For the vast majority of human beings the voice lies between unchanging custom and the legitimate caprice of custom, which is fashion.

Fashion concerns itself closely and intimately with the ego. Hence its proper field is dress and adornment. There are other symbols of the ego, however, which are not as close to the body as these but which are almost equally subject to the psychological laws of fashion. Among them are objects of utility, amusements and furniture. People differ in their sensitiveness to changing fashions in these more remote forms of human expressiveness. It is therefore impossible to say categorically just what the possible range of fashion is. However, in regard to both amusements and furniture there may be observed the same tendency to change, periodicity and unquestioning acceptance as in dress and ornament.

Many speak of fashions in thought, art, habits of living and morals. It is superficial to dismiss such locutions as metaphorical and unimportant. The usage shows a true intuition of the meaning of fashion, which while it is primarily applied to dress and the exhibition of the human body is not essentially concerned with the fact of dress or ornament but with its symbolism. There is nothing to prevent a thought, a type of morality or an art form from becoming the psychological equivalent of a costuming of the ego. Certainly one may allow oneself to be converted to Catholicism or Christian Science in exactly the same spirit in which one invests in pewter or follows the latest Parisian models in dress. Beliefs and attitudes are not fashions in their character of mores but neither are dress and ornament. [144] In contemporary society it is not a fashion that men wear trousers: it is the custom. Fashion merely dictates such variations as whether trousers are to be so or so long, what colors they are to have and whether they are to have cuffs or not. In the same way, while adherence to a religious faith is not in itself a fashion, as soon as the individual feels that he can pass easily, out of personal choice, from one belief to another, not because he is led to his choice by necessity but because of a desire to accrete to himself symbols of status, it becomes legitimate to speak of his change of attitude as a change of fashion. Functional irrelevance as contrasted with symbolic significance for the expressiveness of the ego is implicit in all fashion.

Consult: Boehn, Max von. *Die Mode: Menschen und Moden im neunzehnten Jahrhundert*, vols. i-v, vii (Munich 1919-20), tr. by M. Edwards, 4 vols. (rev. ed. London 1927); Kroeber, A. L., "On the Principle of Order in Civilization as Exemplified by Changes of Fashion" in *American Anthropologist*, n.s., vol. xxi (1919) 235-63; Elster, Alexander. "Mode" in *Handwörterbuch der Staatswissenschaften*, vol. vi (4th ed. Jena 1925) p. 603-14; Lowie, R. H., *Are We Civilized?* (New York 1929)

ch. x; Stern, Norbert, *Mode und Kultur*, 2 vols. (Dresden 1915); Bradley, H. D., *The Eternal Masquerade* (London 1922); Veblen, Thorstein, *The Theory of the Leisure Class* (New York 1899), ch. vii; Troeltsch, Walter, *Volkswirtschaftliche Betrachtungen über die Mode* (Marburg 1912); Clerget, Pierre, "Le rôle économique et social de la mode" in *Revue économique internationale, Brussels*, vol. ii (1913) 126–42, tr. in Smithsonian Institution, *Annual Report* (1913) 755–65; Sombart, Werner, *Wirtschaft und Mode* (Wiesbaden 1902); Nystrom, Paul H., *The Economics of Fashion* (New York 1928); Raushenbush, Winifred, in *New Freeman*, vol. 1 (1930) 10–12, 323–25; Hurlock, E. B., *The Psychology of Dress* (New York 1929); Flügel, J. C., *The Psychology of Clothes* (London 1930).

Editorial Notes

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Cultural Anthropology and Psychiatry (1932)

Editorial Introduction

Sapir's most explicit formulation to date (1932) of the potential collaboration between his version of cultural anthropology and Harry Stack Sullivan's interactional psychology, this essay appeared in the *Journal of Abnormal and Social Psychology*. Sapir challenged the anthropological and sociological assumption that individuals could be seen merely as typical of their communities. Any fieldworker learns by experience, he pointed out, how necessary it is to cross-check statements by single individuals with other members of the same society. Nonetheless, the generic conventions of the ethnography of the day precluded acknowledgement of such variability (see also Sapir's discussion of this point in "Why Cultural Anthropology Needs the Psychiatrist," 1938, this volume). In most ethnographic accounts, patterns were stated in "relatively clear and impersonal terms" regardless of the degree of certainty with which they were ascertained.

Cultural phenomena could for some purposes legitimately be understood as impersonal, Sapir acknowledged; but they could not, on epistemological grounds, evade attention to the individual. Moreover, this approach to culture needed to be supplemented by study of the individual in order to arrive at some sense of process. That is, the dynamic element in Sapir's theory of culture lay neither in the individual nor in society per se, but in the interaction of the two.

Simply adding psychiatry to the social scientist's background would not answer, however. Psychiatry had its own problems, stemming from the ad hoc interpretation of clinical experience. Physiology and social psychology were as far as psychiatrists usually looked; culture and society entered into diagnosis and treatment unsystematically, and only in the absence of alternatives. Moreover, psychoanalysis disqualified itself from a major role in interdisciplinary synthesis by using anthropological data only to support racist or evolutionary positions. In contrast, Sapir's cultural anthropology asserted that the psychology of the "primitive" and the "modern" were not different in kind. All human beings were psychologically "primitive," and unconscious symbolism was char-

sen for socialization in a particular culture regardless of level of cultural development.¹

In this essay Sapir offered a definition of culture that was symbolic and focused on the individual, situated in terms of his/her social interaction (1932: 236). The argument about the "true locus of culture" in the actions and interactions of specific individuals was further elaborated in "The Contribution of Psychiatry to an Understanding of Behavior in Society" (1937) and in *The Psychology of Culture*, chapter 10 in particular (from lectures given in 1937). The "world of meanings" resulting from these interactions for the individual was unconscious and subjective; nonetheless it was real, and engaged in culture process. The epistemological danger for the anthropologist lay in elevating the useful statistical fiction of culture to a metaphysical state. In reality there were only individuals, having variable interpretations of symbolisms, in which personal and institutionalized meanings were intertwined.

Despite his longstanding critique of the "superorganic," a critique in which the present essay played a part, Sapir's discussions of culture in interdisciplinary contexts continued to refer to the cultural as a separate analytic level. What he sought was not to supplant cultural analysis; psychiatrists, in particular, needed to understand its relevance to them. Instead, he called on each of the major social science disciplines to reorient its conceptual apparatus to focus on the locus of patterning at the intersection of culture and the individual.

The original audience for this paper was primarily outside anthropology. Only later, and especially after its inclusion in Mandelbaum's *Selected Writings of Edward Sapir* (1949), did it gain much attention within the discipline. Although the scope of the argument escaped many of Sapir's colleagues at the time of writing and for some time afterward, its thrust has been taken up in the several disciplines in more recent decades.

Cultural Anthropology and Psychiatry

Before we try to establish a more intimate relation between the problems of cultural anthropology and those of psychiatry than is generally recognized, it will be well to emphasize the apparent differences of subject matter and purpose which seem to separate them as disciplines concerned with human behavior. In the main, cultural anthropology has emphasized the group and its traditions in contradistinction to indi-

vidual variations of behavior. It aims to discover the generalized forms of action, thought and feeling which, in their complex interrelatedness, constitute the culture of a community. Whether the ultimate aim of such a study is to establish a typical sequence of institutional forms in the history of man, or to work out a complete distributional survey of patterns and cultural types over the globe, or to make an exhaustive descriptive analysis of as many cultures as possible in order that fundamental sociological laws may be arrived at, is important, indeed, for the spirit and method of actual research in the field of human culture. But all these approaches agree in thinking of the individual as a more or less passive carrier of tradition or, to speak more dynamically, as the infinitely variable actualizer of ideas and of modes of behavior which are implicit in the structure and tradition of a given society. It is what all the individuals of a society have in common in their mutual relations which is supposed to constitute the true subject matter of cultural anthropology and sociology. If the testimony of an individual is set down as such, as often happens in our anthropological monographs, it is not because of an interest in the individual himself as a matured and single organism of ideas, but in his assumed typicality for the community as a whole.

It is true that there are many statements in our ethnological monographs which, for all that they are presented in general terms, really rest on the authority of a few individuals, or even of one individual, who have had to bear testimony for the group as a whole. Information on kinship systems or rituals or technological processes or details of social organization or linguistic forms is not ordinarily evaluated by the cultural anthropologist as a personal document. He always hopes that the individual informant is near enough to the understandings and intentions of his society to report them duly, thereby implicitly eliminating himself as a factor in the method of research. All realistic field workers in native custom and belief are more or less aware of the dangers of such an assumption and, naturally enough, efforts are generally made to "check up" statements received from single individuals. This is not always possible, however, and so our ethnological monographs present a kaleidoscopic picture of varying degrees of generality, often within the covers of a single volume. Thus, that the Haida Indians of Queen Charlotte Islands were divided into two exogamic phratries, the Eagles and the Ravens, is a statement which could, no doubt, be elicited from any normal Haida Indian. It has very nearly the same degree of impersonality about it that characterizes the statement that the United States

is a republic governed by a President. It is true that these data about social and political organization might mean rather different things in the systems of ideas and fantasies of different individuals or might, as master ideas, be construed to lead to typically different forms of action according to whether we studied the behavior of one individual or another. But that is another matter. The fundamental patterns are relatively clear and impersonal. Yet in many cases we are not so fortunate as in the case of fundamental outlines of political organization or of kinship terminology or of house structure. What shall we do, for instance, with the cosmogonic system of the Bella Coola Indians of British Columbia? The five superimposed worlds which we learn about in this system not only have no close parallels among the other tribes of the Northwest Coast area but have not been vouched for by any informant other than the one individual from whom Boas obtained his information. Is this cosmogonic system typical Bella Coola religious belief? Is it individual fantasy construction or is it a peculiar individual elaboration on the basis of a simpler cosmogonic system which belongs to the community as a whole? In this special instance, the individual note obtrudes itself somewhat embarrassingly. In the main, however, the cultural anthropologist believes or hopes that such disquieting interruptions to the impersonality of his thinking do not occur frequently enough to spoil his science.

Psychiatry is an offshoot of the medical tradition and aims to diagnose, analyze, and, if possible, cure those behavior disturbances of individuals which show to observation as serious deviations from the normal attitude of the individual toward his physical and social environment. The psychiatrist specializes in "mental" diseases as the dermatologist specializes in the diseases of the skin or the gynecologist concerns himself with diseases peculiar to women. The great difference between psychiatry and the other biologically defined medical disciplines is that while the latter have a definite bodily locus to work with and have been able to define and perfect their methods by diligent exploration of the limited and tangible area of observation assigned to them, psychiatry is apparently doomed to have no more definite locus than the total field of human behavior in its more remote or less immediately organic sense. The conventional companionship of psychiatry and neurology seems to be little more than a declaration of faith by the medical profession that all human ills are, at last analysis, of organic origin and that they are, or should be, localizable in some segment, however complexly defined, of the physiological machine. It is an open secret, however, that the

neurologist's science is one thing and the psychiatrist's practice another. Almost in spite of themselves psychiatrists have been forced to be content with an elaborate array of clinical pictures, with terminological problems of diagnosis, and with such thumb rules of clinical procedure as seem to offer some hope of success in the handling of actual cases. It is no wonder that psychiatry tends to be distrusted by its sister discipline within the field of medicine and that the psychiatrists themselves, worried by a largely useless medical training and secretly exasperated by their inability to apply the strictly biological part of their training to their peculiar problems, tend to magnify the importance of the biological approach in order that they may not feel that they have strayed away from the companionship of their more illustrious brethren. No wonder that the more honest and sensitive psychiatrists have come to feel that the trouble lies not so much in psychiatry itself as in the role which general medicine has wished psychiatry to play.

These insurgent psychiatrists, among whom Freud must be reckoned the most courageous and the most fertile in ideas, have come to feel that many of the so-called nervous and mental disorders can be looked upon as the logical development of systems of ideas and feelings which have grown up in the experience of the individual and which have an unconscious value for him as the symbolic solution of profound difficulties that arise in an effort to adjust to his human environment. The morbidity, in other words, that the psychiatrist has to deal with seems, for the most part, to be not a morbidity of organic segments or even of organic functions, but of experience itself. His attempts to explain a morbid suspiciousness of one's companions or delusion as to one's status in society by some organically definable weakness of the nervous system or of the functioning of the endocrine glands may be no more to the point than to explain the habit of swearing by the absence of a few teeth or by a poorly shaped mouth. This is not the place to go into an explanation, however brief, of the new points of view which are to be credited to Freud and his followers and which have invaded the thinking of even the most conservative of psychiatrists to no inconsiderable extent. All that interests us here is to note the fact that psychiatry is moving away from its historic position of a medical discipline that is chronically unable to make good to that of a discipline that is medical only by tradition and courtesy and is compelled, with or without permission, to attack fundamental problems of psychology and sociology so far as they affect the well-being of the individual. The locus, then, of psychiatry turns out not to be the human organism at all in any fruitful

sense of the word but the more intangible, and yet more intelligible, world of human relationships and ideas that such relationships bring forth. Those students of medicine who see in these trends little more than a return to the old mythology of the "soul" are utterly unrealistic, for they tacitly assume that all experience is but the mechanical sum of physiological processes lodged in isolated individuals. This is no more defensible a position than the naively metaphysical contention that a table or chair or hat or church can be intelligibly defined in terms of their molecular and atomic constitution. That A hates B or hopelessly loves B, or is jealous of B, or is mortally afraid of B, or hates him in one respect and loves him in another, can result only from the complications of experience. If we work out a gradually complicating structure of morbid relationships between A and B and, by successive transfers, between A or B and the rest of the human world, we discover behavior patterns that are none the less real and even tragic for not being fundamentally attributable to some weakness or malfunctioning of the nervous system or any other part of the organism. This does not mean that weakness or malfunctioning of a strictly organic character may not result from a morbidity of human relationships. Such an organic theory would be no more startling than to maintain that a chronic sneer may disfigure the shape of the mouth or that a secret fear may impair one's digestion. There are, indeed, signs that psychiatry, slowly and painfully delivering itself from the somatic superstitions of medicine, may take its revenge by attempts to "mentalize" large sections of medical theory and practice. The future alone can tell how much of these psychological interpretations of organic disease is sound doctrine or a new mythology.

There is reason, then, to think that while cultural anthropology and psychiatry have distinct problems to begin with, they must, at some point, join hands in a highly significant way. That culture is a superorganic, impersonal whole is a useful enough methodological principle to begin with but becomes a serious deterrent in the long run to the more dynamic study of the genesis and development of cultural patterns because these cannot be realistically disconnected from those organizations of ideas and feelings which constitute the individual. The ultimate methodological error of the student of personality is perhaps less obvious than the correlative error of the student of culture, but is all the more insidious and dangerous for that reason. Mechanisms which are unconsciously evolved by the neurotic or psychotic are by no means closed systems imprisoned within the biological walls of isolated individuals. They are tacit commentaries on the validity or invalidity of

some of the more intimate implications of culture for the adjustment processes of given individuals. We are not, therefore, to begin with a simple contrast between social patterns and individual behavior, whether normal or abnormal, but we are, rather, to ask what is the meaning of culture in terms of individual behavior and whether the individual can in a sense, be looked upon as the effective carrier of the culture of his group. As we follow tangible problems of behavior rather than the selected problems set by recognized disciplines, we discover the field of social psychology, which is not a whit more social than it is individual and which is, or should be, the mother science from which stem both the abstracted impersonal problems as phrased by the cultural anthropologist and the almost impertinently realistic explorations into behavior which are the province of the psychiatrist. Be it remarked in passing that what passes for individual psychology is little more than an ill-assorted melange of bits of physiology and of studies of highly fragmentary modes of behavior which have been artificially induced by the psychologist. This abortive discipline seems to be able to arrive at no integral conceptions of either individual or society and one can only hope that it will eventually surrender all its problems to physiology and social psychology.

Cultural anthropology has not been neglected by psychiatry. The psychoanalysts in particular have made very extensive use of the data of cultural anthropology in order to gather evidence in support of their theories of the supposed "racial inheritance of ideas" by the individual. Neurotic and psychotic, through the symbolic mechanisms which control their thinking, are believed to regress to a more primitive state of mental adjustment than is normal in modern society and which is supposed to be preserved for our observation in the institutions of primitive peoples. In some undefined way which it seems quite impossible to express in intelligible biological or psychological terms the cultural experiences which have been accumulated by primitive man are believed to be unconsciously handed on to his more civilized progeny. The resemblances between the content of primitive ritual — and symbolic behavior generally among primitive peoples — and the apparently private rituals and symbolisms developed by those who have greater than normal difficulty in adjusting to their social environment are said to be so numerous and far-reaching that the latter must be looked upon as an inherited survival of more archaic types of thought and feeling. Hence, we are told, it is very useful to study the culture of primitive man, for in this way an enormous amount of light is thrown upon the fundamental

significance of modes of behavior which are otherwise inexplicable. The searching clinical investigation into the symbolism of the neurotic recovers for us, on a modern and highly disguised level, what lies but a little beneath the surface among the primitives, who are still living under an archaic psychological regime.

Psychoanalysts welcome the contributions of cultural anthropology but it is exceedingly doubtful if many cultural anthropologists welcome the particular spirit in which the psychoanalysts appreciate their data. The cultural anthropologist can make nothing of the hypothesis of the racial unconscious, nor is he disposed to allow an immediate psychological analysis of the behavior of primitive people in any other sense than that in which such an analysis is allowable for our own culture. He believes that it is as illegitimate to analyze totemism or primitive laws of inheritance or set rituals in terms of the peculiar symbolisms discovered or invented by the psychoanalyst as it would be to analyze the most complex forms of modern social behavior in these terms. And he is disposed to think that if the resemblances between the neurotic and the primitive which have so often been pointed out are more than fortuitous, it is not because of a cultural atavism which the neurotic exemplifies but simply because all human beings, whether primitive or sophisticated in the cultural sense, are, at rock bottom, psychologically primitive, and there is no reason why a significant unconscious symbolism which gives substitutive satisfaction to the individual may not become socialized on any level of human activity.

The service of cultural anthropology to psychiatry is not as mysterious or remote or clandestine as psychoanalytic mysticism would have us believe. It is of a much simpler and healthier sort. It lies very much nearer the surface of things than is generally believed. Cultural anthropology, if properly understood, has the healthiest of all scepticisms about the validity of the concept "normal behavior." It cannot deny the useful tyranny of the normal in a given society but it believes the external form of normal adjustment to be an exceedingly elastic thing. It is very doubtful if the normalities of any primitive society that lies open to inspection are nearer the hypothetical responses of an archaic type of man, untroubled by a burdensome historical past, than the normalities of a modern Chinese or Scotchman. In specific instances one may even wonder whether they are not tangibly less so. It would be a rare joke to turn the tables and to suggest that the psychoanalysis of an over-ritualized Pueblo Indian or Toda might denude him sufficiently to set him "regressing" to the psychologically primitive status of an Ameri-

can professor's child or of a professor himself. The cultural anthropologist's quarrel with psychoanalysis can perhaps be put most significantly by pointing out that the psychoanalyst has confused the archaic in the conceptual or theoretical psychological sense with the archaic in the literal chronological sense. Cultural anthropology is not valuable because it uncovers the archaic in the psychological sense. It is valuable because it is constantly rediscovering the normal. For the psychiatrist and for the student of personality in general this is of the greatest importance, for personalities are not conditioned by a generalized process of adjustment to "the normal" but by the necessity of adjusting to the greatest possible variety of idea patterns and action patterns according to the accidents of birth and biography.

The so-called culture of a group of human beings, as it is ordinarily treated by the cultural anthropologist, is essentially a systematic list of all the socially inherited patterns of behavior which may be illustrated in the actual behavior of all or more of the individuals of the group. The true locus, however, of these processes which, when abstracted into a totality, constitute culture is not in a theoretical community of human beings known as society, for the term "society" is itself a cultural construct which is employed by individuals who stand in significant relations to each other in order to help them in the interpretation of certain aspects of their behavior. The true locus of culture is in the interactions of specific individuals and, on the subjective side, in the world of meanings which each one of these individuals may unconsciously abstract for himself from his participation in these interactions. Every individual is, then, in a very real sense, a representative of at least one sub-culture which may be abstracted from the generalized culture of the group of which he is a member. Frequently, if not typically, he is a representative of more than one sub-culture, and the degree to which the socialized behavior of any given individual can be identified with or abstracted from the typical or generalized culture of a single group varies enormously from person to person.

It is impossible to think of any cultural pattern or set of cultural patterns which can, in the literal sense of the word, be referred to society as such. There are no facts of political organization or family life or religious belief or magical procedure or technology or aesthetic endeavor which are coterminous with society or with any mechanically or sociologically defined segment of society. The fact that John Doe is registered in some municipal office as a member of such and such a ward only vaguely defines him with reference to those cultural patterns

which are conveniently assembled under some such term as "municipal administration." The psychological and, in the deepest sense of the word, the cultural realities of John Doe's registration may, and do, vary enormously. If John Doe is paying taxes on a house which is likely to keep him a resident of the ward for the rest of his life and if he also happens to be in personal contact with a number of municipal officers, ward classification may easily become a symbol of his orientation in his world of meanings which is comparable for clarity, if not for importance, to his definition as a father of a family or as a frequent participant in golf. Ward membership, for such an individual, may easily precipitate itself into many visible forms of behavior. The ward system and its functions, real or supposed, may for such a John Doe assume an impersonal and objective reality which is comparable to the objective reality of rain or sunshine.

But there is sure to be another John Doe, perhaps a neighbor of the first, who does not even know that the town is divided into wards and that he is, by definition, enrolled in one of them and that he has certain duties and privileges connected with such enrollment, whether he cares to exercise them or not. While the municipal office classifies these two John Does in exactly the same way and while there is a theory on foot that ward organization, with its associated functions, is an entirely impersonal matter to which all members of a given society must adjust, it is rather obvious that such a manner of speech is little more than a sociological metaphor. The cultures of these two individuals are, as a matter of fact, significantly different, as significantly different, on the given level and scale, as though one were a representative of Italian culture and the other of Turkish culture. Such differences of culture never seem as significant as they really are; partly because in the workaday world of experience they are not often given the opportunity to emerge into sharp consciousness, partly because the economy of interpersonal relations and the friendly ambiguities of language conspire to reinterpret for each individual all behavior which he has under observation in the terms of those meanings which are relevant to his own life. The concept of culture, as it is handled by the cultural anthropologist, is necessarily something of a statistical fiction and it is easy to see that the social psychologist and the psychiatrist must eventually induce him to carefully reconsider his terms. It is not the concept of culture which is subtly misleading but the metaphysical locus to which culture is generally assigned.

Clearly, not all cultural traits are of equal importance for the development of personality, for not all of them are equally diffused as integral elements in the idea-systems of different individuals. Some modes of behavior and attitude are pervasive and compelling beyond the power of even the most isolated individual to withstand or reject. Such patterns would be, for example, the symbolisms of affection or hostility; the overtones of emotionally significant words; certain fundamental implications and many details of the economic order; much, but by no means all, of those understandings and procedures which constitute the law of the land. Patterns of this kind are compulsive for the vast majority of human beings but the degree of compulsiveness is in no simple relation to the official, as contrasted with the inner or psychological, significance of these patterns. Thus, the use of an offensive word may be of negligible importance from a legal standpoint but may, psychologically considered, have an attracting or repelling potency that far transcends the significance of one's scientific thinking. A culture as a whole cannot be said to be adequately known for purposes of personality study until the varying degrees of compulsiveness which attach to its many aspects and implications are rather definitely understood. No doubt there are cultural patterns which tend to be universal, not only in form but in psychological significance, but it is very easy to be mistaken in these matters and to impute equivalences of meaning which do not truly exist.

There are still other cultural patterns which are real and compelling only for special individuals or groups of individuals and are as good as nonexistent for the rest of the group. Such, for instance, are the ideas, attitudes and modes of behavior which belong to specialized trades. We are all aware of the reality of such private or limited worlds of meaning. The dairyman, the movie actress, the laboratory physicist, the party whip, have obviously built up worlds which are anonymous or opaque to each other or, at best, stand to each other in a relation of blanket acceptance. There is much tacit mythology in such hugely complex societies as our own which makes it possible for the personal significance of sub-cultures to be overlooked. For each individual, the commonly accepted fund of meanings and values tends to be powerfully specialized or emphasized or contradicted by types of experience and modes of interpretation that are far from being the property of all men. If we consider that these specialized cultural participations are partly the result of contact with limited traditions and techniques, partly the result of identification with such biologically and socially imposed groups as

the family or the class in school or the club, we can begin to see how inevitable it is that the true psychological locus of a culture is *the individual* or a *specifically enumerate list of individuals*, not an economically or politically or socially defined group of individuals. "Individual," however, here means not simply a biologically defined organism maintaining itself through physical impacts and symbolic substitutes of such impacts, but that total world of form, meaning and implication of symbolic behavior which a given individual partly knows and directs, partly intuits and yields to, partly is ignorant of and is swayed by.

Still other cultural patterns have neither a generalized nor a specialized potency. They may be termed marginal or referential, and while they may figure as conceptually important in the scheme of a cultural theorist, they may actually have little or no psychological importance for the normal human being. Thus, the force of linguistic analogy which creates the plural "unicorns" is a most important force for the linguistic analyst to be clear about, but it is obvious that the psychological imminence of that force, while perfectly real, may be less than the avoidance, say, of certain obscene or impolite words, an avoidance which the linguist, in turn, may quite legitimately look upon as marginal to his sphere of interests. In the same way, while such municipal subdivisions as wards are, from the standpoint of political theory, of the same order as state lines and even national lines, they are not psychologically so. They are psychologically related to such saturated entities as New York or "the South" or Fifth Avenue or "the slums" as undeveloped property in the suburbs is economically related to real estate in the business heart of a great metropolis. Some of this marginal cultural property is held as marginal by the vast majority of participants in the total culture, if we may still speak in terms of a "total culture." Others of these marginal patterns are so only for certain individuals or groups of individuals. No doubt, to a movie actress the intense world of values which engages the participation of a physicist tends to be marginal in about the same sense as a legal fiction or unactualized linguistic possibility may be marginal cultural property. A "hard-headed business man" may consign the movie actress and the physicist to two adjoining sectors, "lively" and "sleepy" respectively, of a marginal tract of "triviality." Culture, then, varies infinitely, not only as to manifest content but as to the distribution of psychologic emphases on the elements and implications of this content. According to our scale of treatment, we have to deal with the cultures of groups and the cultures of individuals.

A personality is carved out by the subtle interaction of those systems of ideas which are characteristic of the culture as a whole, as well as those systems of ideas which get established for the individual through more special types of participation, with the physical and psychological needs of the individual organism, which cannot take over any of the cultural material that is offered in its original form but works it over more or less completely, so that it integrates with those needs. The more closely we study this interaction, the more difficult it becomes to distinguish society as a cultural and psychological unit from the individual who is thought of as a member of the society to whose culture he is required to adjust. No problem of social psychology that is at all realistic can be phrased by starting with the conventional contrast of the individual and his society. Nearly every problem of social psychology needs to consider the exact nature and implication of an idea complex, which we may look upon as the psychological correlate of the anthropologist's cultural pattern, to work out its relation to other idea complexes and what modifications it necessarily undergoes as it accommodates itself to these, and, above all, to ascertain the precise locus of such a complex. This locus is rarely identifiable with society as a whole, except in a purely philosophical or conceptual sense, nor is it often lodged in the psyche of a single individual. In extreme cases such an idea complex or cultural pattern may be the dissociated segment of a single individual's mind or it may amount to no more than a potential revivification of ideas in the mind of a single individual through the aid of some such symbolic depository as a book or museum. Ordinarily the locus will be a substantial portion of the members of a community, each of them feeling that he is touching common interests so far as this particular culture pattern is concerned. We have learned that the individual in isolation from society is a psychological fiction. We have not had the courage to face the fact that formally organized groups are equally fictitious in the psychological sense, for geographically contiguous groups are merely a first approximation to the infinitely variable groupings of human beings to whom culture in its various aspects is actually to be credited as a matter of realistic psychology.

"Adjustment," as the term is ordinarily understood, is a superficial concept because it regards only the end product of individual behavior as judged from the standpoint of the requirements, real or supposed, of a particular society. In reality, "adjustment" consists of two distinct and even conflicting types of process. It includes, obviously, those accommodations to the behavior requirements of the group without which

the individual would find himself isolated and ineffective, but it includes, just as significantly, the effort to retain and make felt in the opinions and attitudes of others that particular cosmos of ideas and values which has grown up more or less unconsciously in the experience of the individual. Ideally these two adjustment tendencies need to be compromised into behavior patterns which do justice to both requirements.

It is a dangerous thing for the individual to give up his identification with such cultural patterns as have come to symbolize for him his own personality integration. The task of external adjustment to social needs may require such abandonment on his part, and consciously he may crave nothing more passionately, but if he does not wish to invite disharmony and inner weakness in his personality, he must see to it, consciously and unconsciously, that every abandonment is made good by the acquisition of a psychologically equivalent symbolism. External observations on the adjustment processes of individuals are often highly misleading as to their psychological significance. The usual treatment, for instance, of behavior tendencies known as radical and conservative must leave the genuine psychiatrist cold, because he best realizes that the same types of behavior, judged externally, may have entirely distinct, even contradictory, meanings for different individuals. One may be a conservative out of fear or out of superb courage. A radical may be such because he is so secure in his fundamental psychic organization as to have no fear for the future, or, on the contrary, his courage may be merely the fantasied rebound from fear of the only too well known.

Strains which are due to this constant war of adjustment are by no means of equal intensity for all individuals. Systems of ideas grow up in endless ways, both within a so-called uniform culture and through the blending of various aspects of so-called distinct cultures, and very different symbolisms and value emphases necessarily arise in the endless sub-cultures or private symbol organizations of the different members of a group. This is tantamount to saying that certain systems of ideas are more perilously exposed to the danger of disintegration than others. Even if it be granted, as no one would seriously argue that it should not, that individual differences of an inherited sort are significantly responsible for mental breakdowns, it yet remains true that such a "failure" in the life of an individual cannot be completely understood by the study, however minute, of the individual's body and mind as such. Such a failure invites a study of his system of ideas as a more or less

distinct cultural entity which has been vainly striving to maintain itself in a discouraging environment.

We may go so far as to suggest quite frankly that a psychosis, for instance, may be an index at one and the same time of the too great resistance of the individual to the forces that play upon him and, so far as *his* world of values is concerned, of the cultural poverty of his psychological environment. The more obvious conflicts of cultures with which we are familiar in the modern world create an uneasiness which forms a fruitful soil for the eventual development, in particular cases, of neurotic symptoms and mental breakdowns, but they can hardly be considered sufficient to account for serious psychological derangements. These arise not on the basis of a generalized cultural conflict, but out of specific conflicts of a more intimate sort, in which systems of ideas get attached to particular persons, or images of such persons, who play a decisive role in the life of the individual as representative of cultural values.

The personal meaning of the symbolisms of an individual's sub-culture are constantly being reaffirmed by society or, at the least, he likes to think that they are. When they obviously cease to be, he loses his orientation and that strange instinct, or whatever we call it, which in the history of culture has always tended to preserve a system of ideas from destruction, causes his alienation from an impossible world. Both the psychosis and the development of an idea or institution through the centuries manifest the stubbornness of idea complexes and their implications in the face of a material environment which is less demanding psychologically than physically. The mere problem of biological adjustment, or even of ego adjustment as it is ordinarily handled by the sociologist, is comparatively simple. It is literally true that "man wants but little here below nor wants that little long." The trouble always is that he wants that little on his own terms. It is not enough to satisfy one's material wants, to have success in one's practical endeavors, to give and receive affection, or to accomplish any of the purposes laid down by psychologists and sociologists and moralists. Personality organizations, which at last analysis are psychologically comparable with the greatest cultures or idea systems, have as their first law of being their essential self-preservation, and all conscious attempts to define their functions or to manipulate their intention and direction are but the estimable rationalization of people who are wanting to "do things." Modern psychiatrists should be tolerant not only of varying personalities but of the different types of values which personality variations

imply. Psychiatrists who are tolerant only in the sense that they refrain from criticizing anybody who is subjected to their care and who do their best to guide him back to the renewed performance of society's rituals may be good practical surgeons of the psyche. They are not necessarily the profoundly sympathetic students of the mind who respect the fundamental intent and direction of every personality organization.

Perhaps it is not too much to expect that a number of gifted psychiatrists may take up the serious study of exotic and primitive cultures, not in the spirit of meretricious voyaging in behalf of Greenwich Village, nor to collect an anthology of psychoanalytic fairy tales, but in order to learn to understand, more fully than we can out of the resources of our own cultures, the development of ideas and symbols and their relevance for the problem of personality.

Editorial Notes

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Note

1. This was, in fact, the rationale on which Freud and many of his contemporaries approached the ethnographic evidence. Sapir argued to a different point, however — the comparability of the “primitive” and the “modern.”

Group (1932)

Editorial Introduction

In his entry on "Group" for the *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, Sapir addressed the perennial debate over the analytical primacy of the group or the individual. Although he elaborated on different kinds of group affiliation, and emphasized the symbolic importance of group identification for individuals, his own position was that the group had no independent existence apart from its meaning to its individual members.

Although the position was similar to the one he took in the "superorganic" debate in 1917, Sapir's intervening association with psychologists and psychiatrists was reflected in his insistence that individuals with different personalities enter into group identifications differently. Variability was inherent in culture and society because of this variation among personalities and their relationships to groups. Among psychiatric views that had influenced his thinking on the psychology of group identification Sapir explicitly cited Freud, but echoes of Harry Stack Sullivan can be heard also, especially in the statement that "the psychological basis of the group must rest on the psychology of specific personal relations" (1932: 182).

Group

There is a wide variety of meanings attached to the term group, different kinds of reality are imputed to the concept by psychologists and sociologists of different schools. To some the group is a primary concept in the study of human behavior; many sociologists say that the individual has no reality, aside from his biologically defined body, except as a carrier or crystallizer of meanings that are derivative of group action and interaction. To others, however, the individual remains as the sociologically primary entity and groups are the more or less artificial constructs which result when individuals, viewed as essentially complete physical and psychological entities, come into contact with each other.

For the former sociologists a child can hardly be said to have social reality except in so far as there is in prior existence a supporting family or social agency substituting for the family and a fairly well defined set of rules of behavior defining the relation between the child and such a family. In much the same sense there would be no such individual as a musician except in so far as there are such groups as conservatories, historically determined lines of musicians and musical critics, dancing, singing and playing associations of varying degrees of formal organization and many other types of groups whose prior definition is needed to make the term musician actual. For the latter sociologists the child and the musician exist as given types of individuals, whether they are so born or so conditioned; and the groups which the sociologist discovers as operative in the behavior which actualizes such individual terms as child or musician are merely ad hoc constructions due to the specific experiences of individuals either [179] within a given lifetime or over many generations. The difficulty of deciding whether the group or the individual is to be looked upon as the primary concept in a general theory of society is enhanced by fatal ambiguities in the meaning of the term group.

Any group is constituted by the fact that there is some interest which holds its members together. The community of interest may range from a passing event which assembles people into a momentary aggregate to a relatively permanent functional interest which creates and maintains a cohesive unit. The crowd which forms when there is an automobile accident, drawn together in the first place by a common curiosity, soon develops certain understandings. Its members may feel themselves to be informally delegated by society to observe and eventually report or to help with advice or action or, if there has been an infraction of the traffic rules, to constitute a silent or audible image of criticism. Such a group cannot be despised by the sociologist for all its casualness of form and function. At the other extreme is such a body as the United States Senate, which is fixed as to numbers, principle of selection, time of meeting, function and symbolic importance in a representative capacity. The former consists of individuals who do not feel that they are assuming a known or imputed role when they become members of the group; the latter is constituted by political and legal theory and exists in a sense in advance of the appearance of specific members, so that those who actually take part in deliberations of the Senate are something other than or beyond themselves as individuals. There is in reality no definite line of division anywhere along the gamut of group forms

which connect these extremes. If the automobile accident is serious and one of the members of the crowd is a doctor, the informal group may with comparatively little difficulty resolve itself into something like a medical squad with an implicitly elected leader. On the other hand, if the government is passing through a great political crisis, if there is little confidence in the representative character or honesty of the senators or if an enemy is besieging the capital and likely at any moment to substitute entirely new forms of corporate authority for those legally recognized by the citizens of the country, the Senate may easily become an unimportant aggregation of individuals who suddenly and with unexpected poignancy feel their helplessness as mere individuals.

Sociological theory can hardly analyze the group concept into its various forms unless it uses definable principles of classification. The primary principle of classification may rest on the distinction between physical proximity on the one hand and the adoption of a symbolic role on the other. Between the two extremes comes a large class of group forms in which the emphasis is on definite, realistic purpose rather than on symbolism. The three major classes of groups are therefore those physically defined, those defined by specific purposes and those symbolically defined. Examples of simply physical groups are a bread line, a little crowd milling in the lobby of a theater between the acts of a play, the totality of individuals who look on at a football game, a handful of people going up in an elevator and a Saturday afternoon crowd on Fifth Avenue. Groups possessed of a relatively firm organization and of a real or imputed specific purpose are, for example, the employees of a factory, the administrative personnel of a bank or stock company, a board of education, a society for the prevention of cruelty to animals, the taxpayers of a municipality, a trade union viewed as an agency for securing certain economic advantages to its members and a state legislature viewed simply as an agency of government. Groups of the third type differ from those of the second in that to external organization and one or more well defined functions there is added the general symbolic function of securing for the individual an integrated status in society. Examples of such symbolically defined groups are the family, the membership of a particular church or of a religious denomination, a political party in so far as it is not merely a mechanism for the election of political officers; a social club in so far as it means more than a convenience for luncheon or an occasional game of billiards, a university group looked at as something over and above an instrumentality for specific types of education; the United States Senate as a responsible

spokesman of the American government; a state as the legalized representative of the nation; a nation as a large aggregate of human beings who feel themselves to be held together by many ties of sentiment and which believes itself, rightly or wrongly, to be a self-sufficient social entity in the world of physical necessity and of human relationships.

The examples have been purposely chosen to suggest doubts and multiple interpretations. Some degree of physical proximity is either required or fancied in order to make for group cohesiveness; some degree of purpose or function [180] can be found in or rationalized for any conceivable group of human beings that has meaning at all; and there is no group which does not reach out symbolically beyond its actual composition and assigned function. Even so wide a group as a political party needs from time to time to give itself the face to face psychology of a mere physical gathering, lest the loyalty and enthusiasm which spring from handshakes, greetings, demonstrations, speeches and other tokens of immediate vitality seep away into a colorless feeling of merely belonging. The members of a church, standing obviously as a symbol of the relation between God and man, carry definite purposes of a practical sort, such as the securing of burial rights. Symbolisms of a potent sort may be illustrated in groups which are most readily classified under the first and second rubrics. Thus, a passer-by may be attracted to the casual crowd brought together by an automobile accident not because he thinks he can be of any particular assistance nor because he is devoured by curiosity but merely because he wishes half unconsciously to register his membership in the human universe of potential suffering and mutual good will. For such an individual the nondescript group in question becomes the mystic symbol of humanity itself. Thus defined it may be more potent in a symbolic sense than the nation itself. So clearly defined a functional group as a board of education has or may have a symbolic significance for its community that far transcends its avowed purposes. Nevertheless, there are few groups of human beings that cannot be readily classified as coming primarily under one or the other of the three indicated heads. This tripartite classification is easiest to apply in the modern civilized world. In less sophisticated folk cultures and to an even greater extent in primitive societies the possibility of allocating groups to one rather than another of the three types becomes difficult. Physical contact, a bundle of common purposes and heavy saturation with symbolism tend to be typical of all groups on these more primitive levels.

The suggested classification is based on an analysis of groups from an objective standpoint; that is, from the standpoint of an observing non-participant or the standpoint of humanity or the nation or any other large aggregate in which the significance of the individual as such tends to be lost. The interpretation of the various types of groups from the standpoint of individual participation offers new difficulties, and new principles of classification may be ventured. Individuals differ in the degree to which they can successfully identify themselves with the other members of the group in which they are included and in the nature of that identification. Such identification may be direct, selective or referential. Direct participation implies that the individual is or feels himself to be in a significant personal relation to all or most of the fellow members of the group with whom he comes in contact. For such an individual the reality of a committee, for instance, is not given by its external organization and assigned duties but rather by his ability to work with or fail to work with particular members of the committee and to get his own purposes accomplished with or in defiance of their help. A selective type of participation implies that the individual is able to identify himself with the group only in so far as he can identify himself with one or more selected members of the group who stand as its representatives and who tend to exhaust for the individual the psychological significance of the group itself. Or the selection may act negatively, so that the significance of the group is damaged for the individual because of feelings of hostility toward particular members of the group. This type of group identification is common in the workaday world. Referential participation implies that the individual makes no serious attempt to identify himself with some or all of the actual membership of a group but feels these fellow members to be the more or less impersonal carriers of an idea or purpose. This is essentially the legalistic type of approach.

The type of individual participation in the group and its purposes has something to do with its unconscious classification, so that the objective and subjective points of view are not in reality distinct. It is well to keep them apart, however, and to look upon them as intercrossing classifications. The least significant type of group psychologically would be the mere physical group with referential participation of the individual. The group so defined is little more than a statistical entity in the field of population. At the other extreme is the symbolically defined group with direct individual participation. Great art brings to the interpretation of symbolically defined groups, which tend to be somewhat colorless as

human entities because of their indefinite membership, the touchstone of direct participation. In Hauptmann's *Die Weber* (Berlin 1892; tr. by M. Morison as *The Weavers*, London 1899), for instance, German labor, a symbolically defined group as conceived by the [181] dramatist, is made doubly significant because of the illusion of direct participation in its membership.

The nature of the interest which lies at the basis of the formation of the group varies indefinitely. It may be economic, political, vocational, meliorative, propagandist, racial, territorial, religious or expressive of general attitudes or minor purposes, such as the use of leisure. To go into the details of the organization and purpose of such specifically defined groups would be tantamount to a description of the institutions of society. A popular classification of groups has been into primary or face to face groups and secondary groups. This is a convenient descriptive contrast but it does not take sufficient account of the nature of individual participation in the group. The distinction becomes of greater value if it is interpreted genetically as a contrast between those types of participation which are defined early in life and those which come later as symbolic amplifications or transfers of the earlier participations. From this point of view membership in a labor union with a dominant leader may have the value of an unconscious psychological recall of one's childhood participation in the family. Still another type of classification of groups which can readily be made is that based on the degree to which groups are self-consciously formed and group membership is voluntary. From this point of view the trade union or political party contrasts with the family or the state. The individual enters into the latter type of group through biological or social necessity, while he is believed to align himself with a trade union or political party without such necessity. This distinction is misleading, for the implicit social forces which lead to membership in a given political party, for instance, may for many individuals be quite as compulsive as those which identify him with the state or even the family. To make too much of the distinction is to confuse the psychological realities of various forms of participation with the roles which society imputes to the individual. The plurality of groupings for any one individual is a point that sociologists have emphasized. If one looks beyond the groups which are institutionally defined – in other words, beyond associations in the narrow sense of the word – any society, above all the complex society of modern times, has many more groups of more or less psychological significance than it possesses individuals who participate in these groups.

The changes in social groupings, studied partly through historical evidence, partly through the direct observation of contemporary trends, constitute a large part of the history of society. There are changes in the actual personnel of groups resulting from realignments brought about by such factors as economic change and changes in the means of communication, changes in the deepening or the impoverishment of the symbolic significance of the group and changes in the tendency to a more or to a less direct participation of the individual in his group. These types of change necessarily condition each other in a great variety of ways. An example of the first type is the gradual increase in the total potential membership of the political parties of England and the United States. The fact that individuals without property and women now share in the activities of the parties means that their present symbolic significance is different from what it originally was. Examples of the second type of change are provided by the universal tendency for groups which have a well defined function to lose their original function but to linger on as symbolically reinterpreted groups. Thus a political club may lose its significance in the realistic world of politics but may nevertheless survive significantly as a social club in which membership is eagerly sought by those who wish to acquire a valuable symbol of status. The third type of change is illustrated by the recent history of the American family, in which on account of many disintegrating influences direct and intense participation has become less pronounced. As far as the relation of brothers and sisters is concerned, for instance, the participation frequently amounts to hardly more than a colorless awareness of the fact of such kinship. Developments in the family illustrate the general tendency in modern life of secondary and voluntary groupings to assume the dominant role as against the primary and involuntary ones. Closely connected with this is the greater mobility of group membership due to a variety of factors, among which are increased facilities of transportation, the gradual breakdown of the earlier symbolic sanctions and an increasing tendency to conceive of a group as fundamentally defined by one or more specific purposes. Groups that are relatively permanent because they are needed to carry out important purposes tend to become more and more institutionalized. Hiking clubs, for instance, have replaced the more casual association of three or four men for the purpose of walking together in the country.

In the discussion of the fundamental psychology [182] of the group such terms as gregariousness, consciousness of kind and group mind do little more than give names to problems to which they are in no sense

a solution. The psychology of the group cannot be fruitfully discussed except on the basis of a profounder understanding of the way in which different sorts of personalities enter into significant relations with each other and on the basis of a more complete knowledge of the importance to be attached to directly purposive as contrasted with symbolic motives in human interaction. The psychological basis of the group must rest on the psychology of specific personal relations; no matter how impersonally one may conceive the behavior which is characteristic of a given group, it must either illustrate direct interaction or it must be a petrified "as if" of such interaction. The latter attribute is, however, not the peculiar property of group psychology but is also illustrated in the relations of single human beings toward one another. It is only an apparent contradiction of this point of view if the individual, as he so frequently does, allows himself to be controlled not by what this man or that man says or thinks, but by what he mystically imputes to the group as a whole. Group loyalty and group ethics do not mean that the direct relationship between individual and individual has been completely transcended. They mean only that what was in its origin a relation of individual dominance has been successively transferred until it is now attributed to the group as a whole.

The psychological realities of group participation will be understood only when theorizing about the general question of the relation of the individual to the group gives way to detailed studies of the actual kinds of understanding, explicit and implicit, that grow up between two or three or more human beings when they are brought into significant contact. It is important to know not only how one person feels with reference to another but how the former feels with reference to the latter when a third party is present. A latent hostility between two persons may be remedied by the presence of the third party, because for one reason or another he is an apt target for the conscious or unconscious hostility of both. His presence may serve to sharpen hostility between the persons because of his attractiveness for both and the consequent injection of a conscious or unconscious jealousy into the relations that obtain between them. Precise studies in the psychology of personal relations are by no means immaterial for the profounder psychological understanding of the group, for this psychology can hardly be other than the complex resultant of the pooling, heightening, cancelling, transfer and symbolic reinterpretation of just such specific processes. As psychology recognizes more and more clearly the futility of studying the individual as a self-contained entity, the sociologist will be set free

to study the rationale of group form, group function, group changes, and group interrelationships from a formal or cultural point of view.

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Editorial Notes

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The Emergence of the Concept of Personality in a Study of Cultures (1934)

Editorial Introduction

Originally prepared for a National Research Council conference on child development held in Chicago in 1933, this paper appeared in the interdisciplinary *Journal of Social Psychology* the following year. In keeping with the conference theme, the paper focused on socialization, linking it to cultural patterns and to the emergence of the individual personality in childhood.

Sapir's opening claim — that the same bit of a child's behavior could be interpreted both in cultural terms and in terms of individual psychodynamics — recalls methodological arguments he had been making since his critique of Kroeber's "superorganic" in 1917. Whether an analysis concerned personality or culture was a matter of the analyst's perspective on the same behavior, not a matter of different behaviors. In the present paper, however, he turned the emphasis to dynamics — that is, to the emergence of personality in the child's interaction with culturally-patterned experiences, and the emergence of culture in the child's developing integration of meanings. If personality began to show itself with the child's increasing independence from parental control and increasing awareness of his/her own potential for action, so were cultural patterns emerging in the child's creative understanding.

This process had a crucial relationship to cultural dynamics. Sapir argued. Overemphasis on cultural patterns, observed in the behavior of adults, had led most sociologists and anthropologists to a misleading notion of cultural conservatism and cultural determinism; but culture could not be fully understood solely in terms of adult integrations of meaning. Since that integration actually developed only *gradually*, through socialization, it was neither static nor completely determinative of individual action. *Dynamic* was the key word, widely used in the psychology and psychiatry of the day.

Personality, as a structure, had to be seen as having an internal organization; so too did culture. In this paper Sapir proposed that the same

kind of integration that might be seen in personality would be found in culture also. The analogy is abstract, however. It derives only from the fact that both are integrated organizations that develop in individuals' experience of a meaningful world. Sapir in 1934 had moved away from stereotyping whole cultures as personality types, a characterization he still appears to suggest in his 1926 Hanover presentation (this volume).

The Emergence of the Concept of Personality in a Study of Cultures

Our natural interest in human behavior seems always to vacillate between what is imputed to the culture of the group as a whole and what is imputed to the psychic organization of the individual himself. These two poles of our interest in behavior do not necessarily make use of different materials; it is merely that the locus of reference is different in the two cases. Under familiar circumstances and with familiar people, the locus of reference of our interest is likely to be the individual. In unfamiliar types of behavior, such as running a dynamo, or with individuals who do not readily fit into the normal contexts of social habit, say a visiting Chinese mandarin, the interest tends to discharge itself into formulations which are cultural rather than personal in character. If I see my little son playing marbles I do not, as a rule, wish to have light thrown on how the game is played. Nearly everything that I observe tends to be interpreted as a contribution to the understanding of the child's personality. He is bold or timid, alert or easily confused, a good sport or a bad sport when he loses, and so on. The game of marbles, in short, is merely an excuse, as it were, for the unfolding of various facts or theories about a particular individual's psychic constitution. But when I see a skilled laborer oiling a dynamo, or a polished mandarin seating himself at the dinner table in the capacity of academic guest, it is almost inevitable that my observations take the form of ethnographic field notes, the net result of which is likely to be facts or theories about such cultural patterns as the running of a dynamo, or Chinese manners.

Ordinarily one's interest is not so sharply defined. It tingles with both personal and cultural implications. There is no awareness of the constantly shifting direction of interest. Moreover, there is much of that confusion which attends all experience in its initial stages in childhood, when the significant personality is interpreted as an institution and ev-

ery cultural pattern is merely a memory of what this or that person has [409] actually done. Now and then, it is true, there arises in the flow of adult experience a certain intuition of what would be the significant eventual formulation, personal or cultural, of a given fragment of behavior. "Yes, that is just like John," or "But we mustn't make too much of this trifle. Presumably all Chinamen do the same thing under the circumstances," are illustrative symbols for contrasting interpretations. Naturally the confusion of interests is not merely one of the mingling of directions but also of an actual transposition or inversion. A stubbornly individual variation may be misinterpreted as a cultural datum. This sort of thing is likely to happen when we learn a foreign language from a single individual and are not in a position to distinguish between what is characteristic of the language and what is peculiar to the teacher's speech. More often, perhaps, the cultural pattern, when significantly presented in experience, tends to allocate to itself a far too intimate meaning. Qualities of charm or quaintness, for instance, are notoriously dangerous in this regard and tend to be not so much personal as cultural data, which receive their especial contextual value from the inability of the observer to withhold a strictly personal interpretation.

What is the genesis of our duality of interest in the facts of behavior? Why is it necessary to discover the contrast, real or fictitious, between culture and personality, or, to speak more accurately, between a segment of behavior seen as a cultural pattern and a segment of behavior interpreted as having a person-defining value? Why cannot our interest in behavior maintain the undifferentiated character which it possessed in early childhood? The answer, presumably, is that each type of interest is necessary for the psychic preservation of the individual in an environment which experience makes increasingly complex and unassimilable on its own simple terms. The interests connoted by the terms culture and personality are necessary for intelligent and helpful growth because each is based on a distinctive kind of imaginative participation by the observer in the life around him. The observer may dramatize such behavior as he takes note of in terms of a set of values, a conscience which is beyond self and to which he must conform, actually or imaginatively, if he is to preserve his place in the world of authority or impersonal social necessity. Or, on the other hand, he may feel the behavior as self-expressive, as defining the reality of individual consciousness against the mass of environing social determinants. Observations coming within the framework of the former of these two kinds of participation constitute our knowledge of culture. Those which come within the framework

of the latter constitute our knowledge of personality. One is as subjective or objective as the other, for both are essentially modes of projection of personal experience into the analysis of social phenomena. Culture may be psychoanalytically reinterpreted [410] as the supposedly impersonal aspect of those values and definitions which come to the child with the irresistible authority of the father, mother, or other individuals of their class. The child does not feel itself to be contributing to culture through his personal interaction but is the passive recipient of values which lie completely beyond his control and which have a necessity and excellence that he dare not question. We may therefore venture to surmise that one's earliest configurations of experience have more of the character of what is later to be rationalized as culture than of what the psychologist is likely to abstract as personality. We have all had the disillusioning experience of revising our father and mother images down from the institutional plane to the purely personal one. The discovery of the world of personality is apparently dependent upon the ability of the individual to become aware of and to attach value to his resistances to authority. It could probably be shown that naturally conservative people find it difficult to take personality valuations seriously, while temperamental radicals tend to be impatient with a purely cultural analysis of human behavior.

It may be questioned whether a dichotomy which seems to depend so largely on the direction of one's interest in observed behavior can be an altogether safe guide to the study of behavior in social situations. The motivations of these contrasting directions of interest are unconscious, to be sure, yet simple enough, as all profound motivations must be. The study of culture as such, which may be called sociology or anthropology, has a deep and unacknowledged root in the desire to lose oneself safely in the historically determined patterns of behavior. The motive for the study of personality, which we may term indifferently social psychology or psychiatry, proceeds from the necessity which the ego feels to assert itself significantly. Both the cultural disciplines and the psychological disciplines are careful to maintain objective ideals, but it should not be difficult to see that neither the cultural pattern as such nor the personality as such, abstracted as both of these are from the directly given facts of experience, can, in the long run, escape from the peculiarly subtle subjectivism which is implicit in the definitions of the disciplines themselves. As preliminary disciplines, whose main purpose is to amass and critically sift data and help us to phrase significant problems of human behavior, they are of course invaluable. But sooner

or later their obscure opposition of spirit must be transcended for an objectivity which is not merely formal and non-evaluative but which boldly essays to bring every cultural pattern back to the living context from which it has been abstracted in the first place and, in parallel fashion, to bring every fact of personality formation back to its social matrix. The problems herewith suggested are, of course, neither simple nor easy. The social psychology into which the conventional cultural [411] and psychological disciplines must eventually be resolved is related to these paradigmatic studies as an investigation into living speech as related to grammar. I think few cultural disciplines are as exact, as rigorously configured, as self-contained as grammar, but if it is desired to have grammar contribute a significant share to our understanding of human behavior, its definitions, meanings, and classifications must be capable of a significant restatement in terms of a social psychology which transcends the best that we have yet been able to offer in this perilous field of investigation. What applies to grammar applies no less significantly, of course, to the study of social organization, religion, art, mythology, technology, or any segment, large or small, or groups of segments which convenience or tradition leads us to carve out of the actual contexts of human behavior.

There is a very real hurt done our understanding of culture when we systematically ignore the individual and his types of interrelationship with other individuals. It is no exaggeration to say that cultural analysis as ordinarily made is not a study of behavior at all but is essentially the orderly description, without evaluation or, at best, with certain implicit evaluations, of a behavior to be hereinafter defined but which, in the normal case is not, perhaps cannot be, defined. Culture, as it is ordinarily constructed by the anthropologist, is a more or less mechanical sum of the more striking or picturesque generalized patterns of behavior which he has either abstracted for himself out of the sum total of his observations or has had abstracted for him by his informants in verbal communication. Such a "culture," because generally constructed of unfamiliar terms, has an almost unavoidable picturesqueness about it, which suggests a vitality which it does not, as a matter of scrupulous psychological fact, embody. The cultures so carefully described in our ethnological and sociological monographs are not, and cannot be, the truly objective entities they claim to be. No matter how accurate their individual itemization, their integrations into suggested structures are uniformly fallacious and unreal. This cannot be helped so long as we confine ourselves to the procedures recognized as sound by orthodox

ethnology. If we make the test of imputing the contents of an ethnological monograph to a known individual in the community which it describes, we would inevitably be led to discover that, while every single statement in it may, in the favorable case, be recognized as holding true in some sense, the complex of patterns as described cannot, without considerable absurdity, be interpreted as a significant configuration of experience, both actual and potential, in the life of the person appealed to. Cultures, as ordinarily dealt with, are merely abstracted configurations of idea and action patterns, which have endlessly different meanings for the various individuals in the group and which, if they are to build up into any kind of significant psychic structure, whether for the individual or the [412] small group or the larger group, must be set in relation to each other in a complex configuration of evaluations, inclusive and exclusive implications, priorities, and potentialities of realization which cannot be discovered from an inquiry into the described patterns.

The more fully one tries to understand a culture, the more it seems to take on the characteristics of a personality organization. Patterns first present themselves according to a purely formalized and logically developed scheme. More careful explorations invariably reveal the fact that numerous threads of symbolism or implication connect patterns or parts of patterns with others of an entirely different formal aspect. Behind the simple diagrammatic forms of culture is concealed a peculiar network of relationships, which, in their totality, carve out entirely new forms that stand in no simple relation to the obvious cultural table of contents. Thus, a word, a gesture, a genealogy, a type of religious belief may unexpectedly join hands in a common symbolism of status definition. If it were the aim of the study of culture merely to list and describe comprehensively the vast number of supposedly self-contained patterns of behavior which are handed on from generation to generation by social processes, such an inquiry as we have suggested into the more intimate structure of culture would hardly be necessary. Trouble arises only when the formulations of the culture student are requisitioned without revision or criticism for an understanding of the most significant aspects of human behavior. When this is done, insoluble difficulties necessarily appear, for behavior is not a recomposition of abstracted patterns, each of which can be more or less successfully studied as a historically continuous and geographically distributed entity in itself, but the very matrix out of which the abstractions have been made in the first place. All this means, of course, that if we are justified in speak-

ing of the growth of culture at all, it must be in the spirit, not of a composite history made up of the private histories of particular patterns, but in the spirit of the development of a personality. The complete, impersonalized "culture" of the anthropologist can really be little more than an assembly or mass of loosely overlapping idea and action systems which, through verbal habit, can be made to assume the appearance of a closed system of behavior. What tends to be forgotten is that the functioning of such a system, if it can be said to have any ascertainable function at all, is due to the specific functionings and interplays of the idea and action systems which have actually grown up in the minds of given individuals. In spite of the oft asserted impersonality of culture, the humble truth remains that vast reaches of culture, far from being in any real sense "carried" by a community or a group as such, are discoverable only as the peculiar property of certain individuals, who cannot but give these cultural goods the impress of their own personality. With the disappearance [413] of such key individuals, the tight, "objectified" culture loosens up at once and is eventually seen to be a convenient fiction of thought.

When the cultural anthropologist has finished his necessary preliminary researches into the overt forms of culture and has gained for them an objectivity of reference by working out their forms, time sequences and geographical distributions, there emerges for him the more difficult and significant task of interpreting the culture which he has isolated and defined in terms of its relevance for the understanding of the personalities of the very individuals from whom he has obtained his information. As he changes his informant, his culture necessarily changes. There is no reason why the culturalist should be afraid of the concept of personality, which must not, however, be thought of, as one inevitably does at the beginning of his thinking, as a mysterious entity *resorting* the historically given culture but rather as a distinctive configuration of experience which tends always to form a psychologically significant unit and which, as it accretes more and more symbols to itself, creates finally that cultural microcosm of which official "culture" is little more than a metaphorically and mechanically expanded copy. The application of the point of view which is natural in the study of the genesis of personality to the problem of culture cannot but force a reevaluation of the materials of culture itself. Many problems which are now in the forefront of investigation sink into a secondary position and patterns of behavior which seem so obvious or universal as not to be worthy of the distinctive attention of the ethnologist leap into a new and unexpected importance.

The ethnologist may some day have to face the uncomfortable predicament of inquiring into such humble facts as whether the father is in the habit of acting as indulgent guide or as disciplinarian to his son and of regarding the problem of the child's membership inside or outside of his father's clan as a relatively subsidiary question. In short, the application of the personality point of view tends to minimize the bizarre or exotic in alien cultures and to reveal to us more and more clearly the broad human base on which all culture has developed. The profound commonplace that all culture starts from the needs of a common humanity is believed in by all anthropologists, but it is not demonstrated by their writings.

An excellent test of the fruitfulness of the study of culture in close conjunction with a study of personality would be provided by studies in the field of child development. It is strange how little ethnology has concerned itself with the intimate genetic problem of the acquirement of culture by the child. In the current language of ethnology culture dynamics seems to be almost entirely a matter of adult definition and adult transmission from generation to generation and from group to group. The humble child, who is laboriously orienting himself in the world of his society, yet is not, in [414] the normal case, sacrificing his forthright psychological status as a significant ego, is somehow left out of the account. This strange omission is obviously due to the fact that anthropology has allowed itself to be victimized by a convenient but dangerous metaphor. This metaphor is always persuading us that culture is a neatly packed-up assemblage of forms of behavior handed over piece-meal, but without serious breakage, to the passively inquiring child. I have come to feel that it is precisely the supposed "givenness" of culture that is the most serious obstacle to our real understanding of the nature of culture and cultural change and of their relationship to individual personality. Culture is not, as a matter of sober fact, a "given" at all. It is so only by a polite convention of speech. As soon as we set ourselves at the vantage point of the culture-acquiring child, the personality definitions and potentials that must never for a moment be lost sight of, and which are destined from the very beginning to interpret, evaluate and modify every culture pattern, sub-pattern, or assemblage of patterns that it will ever be influenced by, everything changes. Culture is then not something given but something to be gradually and gropingly discovered. We then see at once that elements of culture that come well within the horizon of awareness of one individual are entirely absent in another individual's landscape. This is an impor-

tant fact, systematically ignored by the cultural anthropologist. It may be proper for the systematic ethnologist to ignore such pattern differences as these, but for the theoretical anthropologist, who wishes to place culture in a general view of human behavior, such an oversight is inexcusable. Furthermore, it is obvious that the child will unconsciously accept the various elements of culture with entirely different meanings, according to the biographical conditions that attend their introduction to him. It may, and undoubtedly does, make a profound difference whether a religious ritual comes with the sternness of the father's authority or with the somewhat playful indulgence of the mother's brother. We have not the privilege of assuming that it is an irrelevant matter how musical stimuli are introduced to the child. The fact that the older brother is already an admired pianist in the little household may act as an effective barrier to the development of interest in any form of musical expression. Such a child may grow up curiously obtuse to musical values and may be persuaded to think that he was born with a naturally poor ear and is therefore debarred from sharing in the blessings of one important aspect of the cultural life of the community.

If we take the purely genetic point of view, all the problems which appear in the study of culture reappear with a startling freshness which cannot but mean much for the rephrasing of these problems. Problems of symbolism, of superordination and subordination of patterns, of relative strength of emotional character, of transformability and transmissibility, of [415] the isolability of certain patterns into relatively closed systems, and numerous others of like dynamic nature, emerge at once. We cannot answer any of them in the abstract. All of them demand patient investigation and the answers are almost certain to be multiform. We may suggest as a difficult but crucial problem of investigation the following: Study the child minutely and carefully from birth until, say, the age of ten with a view to seeing the order in which cultural patterns and parts of patterns appear in his psychic world, study the relevance of these patterns for the development of his personality, and, at the end of the suggested period, see how much of the total official culture of the group can be said to have a significant existence for him. Moreover, what degree of systematization, conscious or unconscious, in the complicating patterns and symbolisms of culture will have been reached by this child? This is a difficult problem, to be sure, but it is not an impossible one. Sooner or later it will have to be attacked by the genetic psychologists. I venture to predict that the concept of culture which will then emerge, fragmentary and confused as it will undoubt-

edly be, will turn out to have a tougher, more vital, importance for social thinking than the tidy tables of contents attached to this or that group which we have been in the habit of calling "cultures."

Reference: Sapir, E. Cultural anthropology and psychiatry. *J. Abn. & Soc. Psychol.*, 1932, 27, 229–242.

Editorial Notes

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Personality (1934)

Editorial Introduction

The entry on "Personality" for the *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences* summarizes arguments Sapir had earlier made at the American Psychiatric Association colloquia, A. P. A. II in particular. The same arguments are further elaborated, too, in *The Psychology of Culture* (this volume), especially chapter 7. In all these presentations, Sapir compared concepts of personality in different disciplines to arrive at five definitions of the term. These different conceptions must not be confused with, or reduced to, one another: the sociologist's emphasis on social role, for example, was quite independent of the psychiatrist's emphasis on individual biography. Although Sapir evidently leaned toward a psychiatric conception, he rejected the particular systems of Freud and Jung, which did not adequately take account of cultural symbolisms and differences in social arrangements.

In accord with his long-standing interest in the quality of life which different societies presented to individuals, Sapir insisted that, although each culture had a psychological bias built into its socialization processes, different personality types responded differently. The fit between individual and culture could not be taken for granted. Crosscultural comparison along these lines was a responsibility of the social sciences, whether or not most practitioners of these disciplines acknowledged it.

In *The Psychology of Culture*, the chapter on "Personality" is followed by chapters discussing Jung's approach to personality, placing that approach in cultural context, and considering problems of individual adjustment in culture and society.

Personality

The term personality is too variable in usage to be serviceable in scientific discussion unless its meaning is very carefully defined for a given context. Among the various understandings which attach to the term there are five definitions which stand out as usefully distinct from

one another, corresponding to the philosophical, the physiological, the psychophysical, the sociological and the psychiatric approaches to personality. As a philosophical concept, personality may be defined as the subjective awareness of the self as distinct from other objects of observation. As a purely physiological concept, personality may be considered as the individual human organism with emphasis on those aspects of behavior which differentiate it from other human organisms. The term may be used in a descriptive psychophysical sense as referring to the human being conceived as a given totality, at any one time, of physiological and psychological reaction systems, no vain attempt being made to draw a line between the physiological and the psychological. The most useful sociological connotation which can be given to the term is an essentially symbolic one; namely, the totality of those aspects of behavior which give meaning to an individual in society and differentiate him from other members in the community, each of whom embodies countless cultural patterns in a unique configuration. The psychiatric definition of personality may be regarded as equivalent to the individual abstracted from the actual psychophysical whole and conceived as a comparatively stable system of reactivity. The philosophical concept treats personality as an invariant [86] point of experience; the physiological and psychophysical, as an indefinitely variable reactive system, the relation between the sequence of states being one of continuity, not identity; the sociological, as a gradually cumulative entity; and the psychiatric, as an essentially invariant reactive system.

The first four meanings add nothing new to such terms as self or ego, organism, individual and social role. It is the peculiarly psychiatric conception of personality as a reactive system which is in some sense stable or typologically defined for a long period of time, perhaps for life, which it is most difficult to assimilate but important to stress. The psychiatrist does not deny that the child who rebels against his father is in many significant ways different from the same individual as a middle-aged adult who has a penchant for subversive theories, but he is interested primarily in noting that the same reactive ground plan, physical and psychic, can be isolated from the behavior totalities of child and adult. He establishes his invariance of personality by a complex system of concepts of behavior equivalences, such as sublimation, affective transfer, rationalization, libido and ego relations. The stage in the history of the human organism at which it is most convenient to consider the personality as an achieved system, from which all subsequent cross sections of individual psychophysical history may be measured as

minor or even irrelevant variations, is still undetermined. There is no way of telling how far back in the life of the individual the concept of an essentially invariant reactive system may usefully be pushed without too disturbing a clash with the manifest and apparently unlimited variability of individual behavior. If this conception of personality is to hold its own, it must in some way contradict effectively the notion of that cumulative growth of personality to which our practical intelligence must chiefly be directed. The psychiatrist's concept of personality is to all intents and purposes the reactive system exhibited by the precultural child, a total configuration of reactive tendencies determined by heredity, and by prenatal and postnatal conditioning up to the point where cultural patterns are constantly modifying the child's behavior. The personality may be conceived of as a latent system of reaction patterns and tendencies to reaction patterns finished shortly after birth or well into the second or third year of the life of the individual. With all the uncertainty that now prevails with regard to the relative permanence or modifiability of life patterns in the individual and in the race it is unwise, however, to force the notion of the fixation of personality in time.

The genesis of personality is in all probability determined largely by the anatomical and physiological makeup of the individual but cannot be entirely so explained. Conditioning factors, which may roughly be lumped together as the social psychological determinants of childhood, must be considered as at least as important in the development of personality as innate biological factors. It is entirely vain in the present state of knowledge to argue as to the relative importance of these two sets of factors. No satisfactory technique has been developed for keeping them apart and it is perhaps safe to take for granted that there is no facet of personality, however minute, which is not from the genetic standpoint the result of the prolonged and subtle interplay of both.

It is unthinkable that the build and other physical characteristics of an individual should bear no relation to his personality. It is important to observe, however, that physical features may be of genetic significance in two distinct respects. They may be organically correlated with certain psychological features or tendencies or they may serve as consciously or unconsciously evaluated symbols of an individual's relation to others, belonging properly to the sphere of social determination. An example of the former class of physical determinants would be the association, according to Kretschmer, of the stocky, so-called *pyknic* build, with the cyclothymic type of personality, which in its psychotic form shows as manic depressive insanity, the so-called *asthenic and athletic*

builds being associated with the schizothymic type of personality, which, under the pressure of shock and conflict, may disintegrate into schizophrenia. An example of the latter type of determination, stressed by Alfred Adler and his school of individual psychology, would be the feeling of secret inferiority produced in a person who is of abnormally short stature, and the ceaseless effort to overcome this feeling of inferiority by developing such compensatory mechanisms as intelligent aggression or shrewdness, which would tend to give the individual a secondary ego satisfaction denied him by his sense of physical inferiority. It is highly probable that both of these genetic theories of personality have a substantial core of value although too much has doubtless been claimed for them. [87]

The most elaborate and far-reaching hypotheses on the development of personality which have yet been proposed are those of Freud and his school. The Freudian psychoanalysts analyze the personality topographically into a primary id, the sum of inherited impulses or cravings; the ego, which is thought of as being built upon the id through the progressive development of the sense of external reality; and the super-ego, the socially conditioned sum of forces which restrain the individual from the direct satisfaction of the id. The characteristic interplay of these personality zones, itself determined chiefly by the special pattern of family relationships into which the individual has had to fit himself in the earliest years of his life, is responsible for a variety of personality types. Freudians have not developed a systematic theory of personality types but have contented themselves with special hypotheses based on clinical evidence. There is no doubt that a large amount of valuable material and a number of powerfully suggestive mechanisms of personality formation have been advanced by the Freudian school. Even now it is abundantly clear that an unusual attachment to the mother or profound jealousy of the older or younger brother may give the personality a slant which remains relatively fixed throughout life.

Various classifications of personality types have been advanced, some of them based on innate factors, others on experiential ones. Among the typological pictures the one worthy of special note is perhaps that of Jung. To him may be attributed the popular contrast between introverts and extraverts, the former abstracting more readily from reality and finding their sense of values and personal identification within themselves, while the latter evaluate experience in terms of what is immediately given by the environment. This contrast, it is true, means something substantial, but it is unfortunate that a host of superficial

psychologists have attempted to fix Jung's meaning with the aid of shallow criteria of all sorts. Jung further divides personality into four main functional types — the two former being called rational, the two latter irrational. For these somewhat misleading terms, organized and unorganized may fitly be substituted. The classification according to functional types is believed by Jung to intercross with the introvert-extravert dichotomy. The validity and exact delimitation of these terms present many difficult problems of analysis. There is much that is suggestive in his classification of personality and it may be possible to integrate it with the dynamic theories of Freud and Adler. What is needed at the present time, however, is the ever more minute analysis and comparison of individual personality types.

There is an important relation between culture and personality. On the one hand, there can be little doubt that distinctive personality types may have a profound influence on the thought and action of the community as a whole. Furthermore, while cultural anthropologists and sociologists do not consider that the forms of social interaction are in themselves definitive of personality types, particular forms of behavior in society, however flexibly the individual may adapt himself to them, are preferentially adapted to specific personality types. Aggressive military patterns, for instance, cannot be equally congenial to all personalities; literary or scientific refinement can be developed only by individuals of highly differentiated personalities. The failure of social science as a whole to relate the patterns of culture to germinal personality patterns is intelligible in view of the complexity of social phenomena and the recency of serious speculation on the relation of the individual to society. But there is growing recognition of the fact that the intimate study of personality is of fundamental concern to the social scientist.

The socialization of personality traits may be expected to lead cumulatively to the development of specific psychological biases in the cultures of the world. Thus Eskimo culture, contrasted with most North American Indian cultures, is extraverted; Hindu culture on the whole corresponds to the world of the thinking introvert; the culture of the United States is definitely extraverted in character, with a greater emphasis on thinking and intuition than on feeling; and sensational evaluations are more clearly evident in the cultures of the Mediterranean area than in those of northern Europe. Social scientists have been hostile to such psychological characterizations of culture but in the long run they are inevitable and necessary.

Consult:

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Editorial Notes

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Symbolism (1934)

Editorial Introduction

In his entry on "Symbolism" for the *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences*, Sapir expanded the scope of his discussion well beyond his usual linguistic territory into a consideration of a wide range of symbolic modalities. Indeed, he insisted that all human behavior was inherently symbolic, although the balance between cultural and personal ingredients in an individual's symbolic constructs and interpretations might vary. Symbolic constructs were the medium of social interaction and hence formed the building-blocks of society itself. In that construction, which built symbol upon symbol, "very few bricks touch the ground." In *The Psychology of Culture* (chapter 9), Sapir took this metaphor further, even suggesting a model for conflict and social disorder—the bricks crash down if the functional interplay of individual and cultural symbolisms is distorted.

In 1933–34, the period in which Sapir wrote this essay, his lectures for *The Psychology of Culture* also included a presentation (see chapter 12) that evidently followed the text of his encyclopedia article almost word for word, even though, as far as we know, he did not normally rely on extensive written notes in his teaching. In the lecture this text on symbolism was followed by a discussion of etiquette, as an example of seemingly trivial behaviors that are actually suffused with rich symbolic content.

Sapir's ideas on types of symbolisms, especially his distinction between referential symbolism and "condensation symbolism," have proved especially stimulating to scholars of a later generation. Work in what became known as "symbolic anthropology" has been much influenced by this essay.

Symbolism

The term symbolism covers a great variety of apparently dissimilar modes of behavior. In its original sense it was restricted to objects or

marks intended to recall or to direct special attention to some person, object, idea, event or projected activity associated only vaguely or not at all with the symbol in any natural sense. By gradual extensions of meaning the terms symbol and symbolism have come to include not merely such trivial objects and marks as black balls, to indicate a negative attitude in voting, and stars and daggers, to remind the reader that supplementary information is to be found at the bottom of the page, but also more elaborate objects and devices, such as flags and signal lights, which are not ordinarily regarded as important in themselves but which point to ideas and actions of great consequence to society. Such complex systems of reference as speech, writing and mathematical notation should also be included under the term symbolism, for the sounds and marks used therein obviously have no meaning in themselves and can have significance only for those who know how to interpret them in terms of that to which they refer. A certain kind of poetry is called symbolic or symbolistic because its apparent content is only a suggestion for wider meanings. In personal relations too there is much behavior that may be called symbolic, as when a ceremonious bow is directed not so much to an actual person as to a status which that person happens to fill. The psychoanalysts have come to apply [493] the term symbolic to almost any emotionally charged pattern of behavior which has the function of unconscious fulfilment of a repressed tendency, as when a person assumes a raised voice of protest to a perfectly indifferent stranger who unconsciously recalls his father and awakens the repressed attitude of hostility toward the father.

Amid the wide variety of senses in which the word is used there seem to emerge two constant characteristics. One of these is that the symbol is always a substitute for some more closely intermediating type of behavior, whence it follows that all symbolism implies meanings which cannot be derived directly from the contexts of experience. The second characteristic of the symbol is that it expresses a condensation of energy, its actual significance being out of all proportion to the apparent triviality of meaning suggested by its mere form. This can be seen at once when the mildly decorative function of a few scratches on paper is compared with the alarming significance of apparently equally random scratches which are interpreted by a particular society as meaning "murder" or "God." This disconcerting transcendence of form comes out equally well in the contrast between the involuntary blink of the eye and the crudely similar wink which means "He does not know what an ass he is, but you and I do."

It seems useful to distinguish two main types of symbolism. The first of these, which may be called referential symbolism, embraces such forms as oral speech, writing, the telegraph code, national flags, flag signaling and other organizations of symbols which are agreed upon as economical devices for purposes of reference. The second type of symbolism is equally economical and may be termed condensation symbolism, for it is a highly condensed form of substitutive behavior for direct expression, allowing for the ready release of emotional tension in conscious or unconscious form. Telegraphic ticking is virtually a pure example of referential symbolism; the apparently meaningless washing ritual of an obsessive neurotic, as interpreted by the psychoanalysts, would be a pure example of condensation symbolism. In actual behavior both types are generally blended. Thus specific forms of writing, conventionalized spelling, peculiar pronunciations and verbal slogans, while ostensibly referential, easily take on the character of emotionalized rituals and become highly important to both individual and society as substitutive forms of emotional expression. Were writing merely referential symbolism, spelling reforms would not be so difficult to bring about.

Symbols of the referential type undoubtedly developed later as a class than condensation symbols. It is likely that most referential symbolisms go back to unconsciously evolved symbolisms saturated with emotional quality, which gradually took on a purely referential character as the linked emotion dropped out of the behavior in question. Thus shaking the fist at an imaginary enemy becomes a dissociated and finally a referential symbol for anger when no enemy, real or imaginary, is actually intended. When this emotional denudation takes place, the symbol becomes a comment, as it were, on anger itself and a preparation for something like language. What is ordinarily called language may have had its ultimate root in just such dissociated and emotionally denuded cries, which originally released emotional tension. Once referential symbolism had been established as a by-product of behavior, more conscious symbols of reference could be evolved by the copying in abbreviated or simplified form of the thing referred to, as in the case of pictographic writing. On still more sophisticated levels referential symbolism may be attained by mere social agreement, as when a numbered check is arbitrarily assigned to a man's hat. The less primary and associational the symbolism, the more dissociated from its original context, and the less emotionalized it becomes, the more it takes on the character of true reference. A further condition for the rich development of referential

symbolism must not be overlooked – the increased complexity and homogeneity of the symbolic material. This is strikingly the case in language, in which all meanings are consistently expressed by formal patterns arising out of the apparently arbitrary sequences of unitary sounds. When the material of a symbolic system becomes sufficiently varied and yet homogeneous in kind, the symbolism becomes more and more richly patterned, creative and meaningful in its own terms, and referents tend to be supplied by a retrospective act of rationalization. Hence it results that such complex systems of meaning as a sentence form or a musical form mean so much more than they can ever be said to refer to. In highly evolved systems of reference the relation between symbol and referent becomes increasingly variable or inclusive.

In condensation symbolism also richness of meaning grows with increased dissociation. The chief developmental difference, however, between [494] this type of symbolism and referential symbolism is that while the latter grows with formal elaboration in the conscious, the former strikes deeper and deeper roots in the unconscious and diffuses its emotional quality to types of behavior or situations apparently far removed from the original meaning of the symbol. Both types of symbols therefore begin with situations in which a sign is dissociated from its context. The conscious elaboration of form makes of such dissociation a system of reference, while the unconscious spread of emotional quality makes of it a condensation symbol. Where, as in the case of a national flag or a beautiful poem, a symbolic expression which is apparently one of mere reference is associated with repressed emotional material of great importance to the ego, the two theoretically distinct types of symbolic behavior merge into one. One then deals with symbols of peculiar potency and even danger, for unconscious meanings, full of emotional power, become rationalized as mere references.

It is customary to say that society is peculiarly subject to the influence of symbols in such emotionally charged fields as religion and politics. Flags and slogans are the type examples in the field of politics, crosses and ceremonial regalia in the field of religion. But all culture is in fact heavily charged with symbolism, as is all personal behavior. Even comparatively simple forms of behavior are far less directly functional than they seem to be, but include in their motivation unconscious and even unacknowledged impulses, for which the behavior must be looked upon as a symbol. Many, perhaps most reasons are little more than *ex post facto* rationalizations of behavior controlled by unconscious necessity. Even an elaborate, well documented scientific theory may from this

standpoint be little more than a symbol of the unknown necessities of the ego. Scientists fight for their theories not because they believe them to be true but because they wish them to be so.

It will be useful to give examples of some of the less obvious symbolisms in socialized behavior. Etiquette has at least two layers of symbolism. On a relatively obvious plane of symbolism etiquette provides the members of society with a set of rules which, in condensed and thoroughly conventionalized form, express society's concern for its members and their relation to one another. There is another level of etiquette symbolism, however, which takes little or no account of such specific meanings but interprets etiquette as a whole as a powerful symbolism of status. From this standpoint to know the rules of etiquette is important, not because the feelings of friends and strangers are becomingly observed but because the manipulator of the rule proves that he is a member of an exclusive group. By reason of the richly developed meanings which inhere in etiquette, both positive and negative, a sensitive person can actually express a more bitter hostility through the frigid observance of etiquette than by flouting it on an obvious wave of hostility. Etiquette, then, is an unusually elaborate symbolic play in which individuals in their actual relationships are the players and society is the bogus referee.

Education is also a thoroughly symbolic field of behavior. Much of its rationale cannot be tested as to direction or value. No one knows or can discover just how much Latin, French, mathematics or history is good for any particular person to acquire. The tests of the attainment of such knowledge are themselves little more than symbolic gestures. For the social psychologist education, whatever else it may be or do, stands out as a peculiarly massive and well articulated set of symbols which express the needs of the individual in society and which help him to orient himself in his relations with his fellow men. That an individual possesses the bachelor's degree may or may not prove that he knows, or once knew, something about Roman history and trigonometry. The important thing about his degree is that it helps him to secure a position which is socially or economically more desirable than some other position which can be obtained without the aid of this degree. Society has misgivings about the function of specific items in the educational process and has to make symbolic atonement by inventing such notions as the cultivation of the mind.

It is important to observe that symbolic meanings can often be recognized clearly for the first time when the symbolic value, generally un-

conscious or conscious only in a marginal sense, drops out of a socialized pattern of behavior and the supposed function, which up to that time had been believed to be more than enough to explain it and keep it going, loses its significance and is seen to be little more than a paltry rationalization. Chairmanship of a committee, for instance, has symbolic value only in a society in which two things are believed: that administrative functions somehow stamp a person as superior to those who are being directed; and that the ideal society is a democratic one and that [495] those who are naturally more able than others somehow automatically get into positions of administrative advantage. Should people come to feel that administrative functions are little more than symbolic automatisms, the chairmanship of a committee would be recognized as little more than a petrified symbol and the particular value that is now felt to inhere in it would tend to disappear.

An important field for investigation is that of personal symbolisms in the use of cultural patterns. Personal symbolisms are often the more valuable as they are hidden from consciousness and serve as the springs of effective behavior. Interest in a particular science may be an elaborately sublimated symbol of an unconscious emotional attachment to what a man who is significant in one's personal development is believed to be linked up with, such as the destruction of religion or the discovery of God, these grandiose preferences in turn serving as symbols of repressed hate or love. Much charitable endeavor is animated by an unconscious desire to peer into lives that one is glad to be unable to share. Society itself, perfecting its rigid mechanisms of charitable activity, cannot in every case or even in the vast majority of cases subject the charitable act to a pragmatic critique but must rest content for the most part with charity organization as its symbolic gesture toward alleviating suffering. Thus individual and society, in a never-ending interplay of symbolic gestures, build up the pyramided structure called civilization. In this structure very few bricks touch the ground.

Consult: Bally, Charles, *Le langage et la vie* (Paris 1926); Markey, John F., *The Symbolic process and Its Integration in Children* (London 1928); Ogden, C. K., and Richards, I. A., *The Meaning of Meaning* (3rd ed. London 1930); Sapir, Edward, "Language as a Form of Human Behavior" in *English Journal*, vol. xvi (1927) 421-33, and "A Study in Phonetic Symbolism" in *Journal of Experimental Psychology*, vol. xii (1929) 225-39; Bühler, Karl, *Die geistige Entwicklung des Kindes* (6th ed. Jena 1930); Dewey, John, *Human Nature and Conduct* (New York 1922); Hollingworth, H. L., *The Psychology of Thought* (New York

1926) ch. xi; Kantor, J. R., "An Analysis of Psychological Language Data" in *Psychological Review*, vol. xxix (1922) 267–309; Mead, George Herbert, "A Behavioristic Account of the Significant Symbol" in *Journal of Philosophy*, vol. xix (1922) 157–63; Semon, R. W., *Die Mneme als erhaltendes Prinzip im Wechsel des organischen Geschehens* (3rd ed. Leipsic 1911), tr. by Louis Simon as *The Mneme* (London 1921); Steen, Clark J. and William, *Die Kindersprache*, Monographien über die seelische Entwicklung des Kindes, vol. i (4th ed. Leipsic 1928); Newman, Stanley S., "Further Experiments in Phonetic Symbolism" in *American Journal of Psychology*, vol. xlv (1933) 53–75.

Editorial Notes

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Proceedings of the Conference on Personality and Culture, convened by the National Research Council, March 1935, together with extracts from the minutes of the 1936 and 1938 meetings of the N. R. C. Committee on Personality in Relation to Culture

Early in 1935 Sapir, who was then Chairman of the Division of Anthropology and Psychology of the National Research Council, proposed that the N. R. C. sponsor a conference on personality and culture. "The conference," Sapir wrote to Marion Hale Britten, secretary of the Division, "would interest itself in varying human behavior against different cultural backgrounds," and formulate a research program (Sapir to Britten, 8 Feb. 1935). The conference was duly held on March 6, 1935, at the American Museum of Natural History in New York.

Those present were: Edward Sapir, Chairman; Madison Bentley, Professor of Psychology, Cornell University; Francis G. Blake, Chairman, Division of Medicine, N. R. C., and Sterling Professor of Medicine, Yale University; A. Irving Hallowell, Department of Anthropology, University of Pennsylvania; Mark A. May, Professor of Psychology and Director of the Institute of Human Relations, Yale University; Adolf Meyer, Johns Hopkins Hospital; W. Lloyd Warner, Professor of Anthropology and Sociology, University of Chicago; Clark Wissler, Curator of Anthropology, American Museum of Natural History, and Professor of Anthropology, Yale University; Harry Stack Sullivan, practicing psychiatrist; R. W. Woodworth, Professor of Psychology, Columbia University; and W. V. Bingham. Others invited, but unable to attend, were E. L. Thorndike, J. McKean Cattell, H. A. Murray, and Stanley Cobb.

Much of the discussion focused on defining key terms — culture, society, and personality — and how specific projects bore upon the relations among them. Attention was also given to the problem of units and levels of analysis. Sapir found "society" too unwieldy a unit for studies concerned with personality. His allusion to Kroeber's paper on the "superorganic," and (implicitly) to his own critique, shows the continuity in his thinking on these issues since 1917.

From the unpublished transcript of the conference, we reproduce Sapir's substantive remarks and summarize the rest of the discussion. We have appended extracts from minutes of the 1936 and 1938 meetings of the Committee on Personality in Relation to Culture, established by the 1935 conference.

A Subcommittee on Training Fellowships, of which Sapir was also a member, met in December 1935 and produced a proposal (apparently authored by Sullivan) for training selected cultural anthropology students in psychiatric methods. For more information on that meeting and its proposal, which was not funded, see Darnell (1980: 322–26).

1935 meeting

Sapir, as Chair, opened the meeting, stating that there would be no set agenda, but he hoped that the discussion would be quite free; and that the purpose of the meeting was to discuss and possibly outline a program for research in the subjects included. He gave as his reasons for calling the group together his own interest in a project of growing importance to students of culture, and the interest of Dr. Bowman, then Chairman of the Council, in "borderland fields."

SAPIR. — This field seemed particularly well suited for discussion by bordering sciences, since it involves the cooperation of psychology, psychiatry and medicine. It seemed to me that anthropology and medicine had not engaged in any large researches joining their interests, and that this is an obvious one for such cooperation. Of course it is a wide field, and we will want to define it a little more closely. In view of Dr. Bowman's interest, it would seem to be up to us to discuss the feasibility of a distinctive program which we might present to the foundations with some hope of being given a hearing. The objectives that I would like to suggest in a tentative way are two: (1) From the anthropological standpoint, there is a great deal of material that goes to waste in the ethnological field. The ethnologist is trained to select those types of behavior that throw light on his totality of pattern of behavior in a group. Individual variations seem more like interferences with his discipline. Only a small minority of anthropologists in this country or any other are tangibly interested in the facts of individual behavior that are included in patterns of culture. A book like *Crime and Custom in Savage Society*, by Malinowski, has been remarkably successful, and this seems to indicate a real interest in such individual variations. For instance, in the primitive society of the Plains Indians, all males were ready for warfare; but what effect would this have on individuals, particularly, sensitive individuals? We can see variations of individual behavior in primitive society better than we can in our own, perhaps, because these patterns are woven into our own lives. This seems of the greatest interest to anthropology and to psychology, giving them a common ground.

[2] From the psychological standpoint it seems to me we suffer from the projection of our own habits into the wide open field of humanity. For instance, ambition is often spoken of as universal, but this is part of the actual program or ideal of the group. Individuals may overcompensate to the extent of being more ambitious than the group standard. This seems to me of the greatest interest to psychologists — the problems coming up from the tendencies of the individual and the intention of mature demands of the culture upon him.

We have now to present some sort of more definite scheme. This is a preliminary group of people interested in the field, and the theme is open to you for discussion. Perhaps Dr. May will begin by giving us a statement as to the history of this project in the S. S. R. C. [Social Science Research Council].

May reported that the S. S. R. C. had formed three working subcommittees: a group of psychologists, working on "cooperative and competitive habits;" a group working on acculturation; and a group of sociologists whose agenda he did not know. The "habits" group had sponsored research assistants' work on various research projects, approaching its topic among children and adults, locally and cross-culturally, and from the perspectives of psychology, anthropology, and sociology.

Meyer noted the importance of cultural differences in regard to such problems as alcoholism. Sullivan commented on cultural factors in socialization, and the importance of socialization in personality development. Bentley suggested that the study of individual psychology and of cultural differences was not quite enough.

BENTLEY. — ... Not very much has been done to relate behavior to what we may call culture, but the social psychologists will discover that they won't get very far in the realm of impersonal behavior. By that I mean he must consider the sub-groups of culture: consider the individual not as of a given culture but as occupying a certain specific, highly specified place in that culture. Here there may be work that he can do, but that is as far as I have gone at the moment.

SAPIR. — I am struck with your statement that the terms "personal" and "cultural" are a useful first approximation of something that is not yet very clear. That makes me think of the meaning of "culture." It is clear that we use such terms usefully only when we actually go on with a subject to a definite concept. But that is not saying that our concept is one that the psychologist or psychiatrist must accept. The general body of knowledge goes on, but the concepts are being constantly redefined. Perhaps we as a group might penetrate into that field where the term culture is a little

There are three of these concepts: (1) society, (2) culture and (3) behavior. If culture is something that society has actually, to which the individual must adapt himself, — but this is probably only a metaphor, and useful as a metaphor. Another example of this is Dr. Kroeber's concept of the superorganic. Anthropologists' data, while alluring, is perhaps not very useful to psychologists, because it is a little too vague for someone who is dealing with an individual as an individual.

BENTLEY. — I am not sure that the anthropologist should attempt to revise his cultural terms, but keep his own point of view, and then try to bring the two together.

WARNER. — I am interested in what Dr. Sapir has said about the terms "behavior," "society" and "culture," and his reference to Kroeber's article. I believe Kroeber did not use culture at all, but used the word social entirely. Also he used the social as a lead to another plane. This seems a paradox, because man is *not* the only social creature...

There continued a discussion of terminology and of units of analysis, such as nation, race, family, individual, or some unit within the individual.

SAPIR. — It seems to me this insistence on a definition of unit or social, and it makes me feel doubtful of studying a single characteristic, because the characteristics as defined would be so much saturated with cultural influences that there would be difficulty in picking it out. Also, I think we should have a smaller unit than "society." It seems to me a study of an individual or a very small group of individuals, say a particular family, would be more hopeful. This kind of limitation will have to be set up.

WARNER. — ... It is quite necessary that we put a greater emphasis on the variations within the culture or the society.

SAPIR. — Do you mean deviation from a given norm, or a certain definite *group*? Take a certain activity: sexual relations between men and women. There may be a type of relation, but among the individuals you may have 95% behaving within the norm and the others varying from it. Is there a *norm*?

SULLIVAN. — Sexual intercourse in marriage might approach the irrelevant, but in the individual it would be of great importance, particularly to the psychiatrist. We do find people who are entirely incapable to adapt to the circumstances, but most of the individuals do get along...

WARNER. — You still have two groups segregated out.

SULLIVAN. — It seems to me rather a vast individual variation. You discover people who are startled by the unusual in sexual relations, but in that group you have a slowly mounting change from the other group.

MAY. — In regard to the size of the unit, we must have a manageable unit, small enough for that, but still large enough to be scientifically useful. Here we may ask for a unit that is most relevant to what we are trying to find. We may have to go beyond what is involved actually physically, but instead to comprehend all that is relevant we choose a distinct unit for the purpose.

SAPIR. — There is a certain danger in being sure that verbally comparable terms are actually comparable. In the matter of marriage, if you start from the large scale of marriage, you are going to have an entirely different concept from that of psychology. Still we can classify them as examples of the same kind of a process. But whether they really are at all the same? In one it may be an adjustment to society, and in another an utterly individual type from the standpoint of the other pair. If you are to talk about the kind of marriage as being a certain type of event, there is not a single type of culture that can be taken for granted. All culture is due for a grilling review from this point of view.

MAY. — Is there any hope that we can arrive at an agreement upon terms; for instance, as marriage may be only the number of documents signed, or you can discuss it as a psychological relationship. Is there any hope of agreeing on a set of categories with which we can work?

SAPIR. — It seems to me the categories are of small importance except as we agree to use them by a consensus. The variability of meanings and therefore of cultures in the long run is due to break down. I hope some investigations can be made of the ideal world that will lend color to this development of culture. You can take nothing for granted, once you ask questions about the meanings of terms in culture, the operations of speaking are exact, but what objective validity this has cannot be answered. I don't see why culture should escape this kind of analysis. Therefore we must address ourselves to the very definite task of descriptive consideration of ideas and cultures in definite individuals. We will eventually arrive at culture as a tendency toward a larger grouping of ideas. We have said nothing so far about the types of personality, and the relevance of that concept for a study of culture.

BENTLEY. — Is there some group of problems that grows out of these two terms as grouped? Why were the terms put together? Do you mean nothing more than culture and the individuals concerned in it?

SAPIR. — More than that, I should think — the tidying up of genesis of this sort of problem. If the term "the individual" has the same connotations for you as for me, nothing is gained. But I find there is a great deal of variation in the use of the terms. They both have all sorts of overtones.

The discussion turned to the term "personality." Sullivan proposed that this term involves "biology plus meaning" — the meaning being dependent on, and manifest in, the individual's social environment. Not everyone found this definition comparable. Bingham suggested thinking about these terms in relation to particular research problems, such as the study of workers moving into the Tennessee Valley.

SAPIR. — In other words you would want these definitions proved by their usefulness in a certain project. What we call culture may be the diffusion of personality. Or you would ask what are the effects of personality of individuals on the culture in the Tennessee Valley. I think, though, that the skeptical remarks are very useful in bringing forward the need of concentration on some one form of departure. I suggest that we test the value of the terms in terms of their usefulness to the individual worker. May I also suggest that we set up sets of problems? (1) We may take frankly an individual in his placement, but not study the cultures from a psychologist's point of view all over again, but study the group as to the genesis of his characteristics, going out into his group if necessary. Then take together interrelationships of these individuals with others. ...

SULLIVAN. — In your remarks is inherent the fact that we are not so much interested in extreme differences but the smaller differences that we might be able to actually do something with.

SAPIR. — Yes. My guess is that it would not be very fruitful to contrast violently different societies as such. As an example: the West Coast Indians are spoken of as the businessmen of the primitive Americans. But when we study this we find that he does entirely different things than we do with the gold or money that he may collect. The "status" that he reaches is quite different from ours. Thus, there is no direct comparison.

The afternoon session of the conference focused on administrative matters. Bingham noted that the Division had always preferred very specific research problems. Sapir maintained that the conferees were not yet in a position to undertake a specific project, but were now "discussing the possibility of framing and continuing a project in general." It was proposed that the conference carry on as a permanent committee which might later propose specific projects or subcommittees for support from the Council. The size and name of a permanent committee was discussed. Proposals for comparative study of personality among American Indians, in China, Harlem, and Brazil were briefly mentioned. After calling for any further proposals, Sapir asked:

SAPIR. — Is it the consensus of the group that we should undertake the study with the individual as the unit, not to dodge the institution as such, but approach from the point of view of the individual?

WARNER. — I agree, though my own interests have been quite opposite. This seems to me very important, particularly at the present moment. I do think that there will come a time when we shall have to consider the problem of relating the thinking that has been done in the other field to what we shall be attempting. I think at first we should emphasize rather concrete projects.

SAPIR. — This sounds very encouraging to me, because I am rather sensitive to the general opinion of social anthropologists who are hard upon this sort of approach.

WOODWORTH – It seems to me that where the anthropologists are studying would be a very good place to come in – places that are already pretty well known from the institutional side – and undertake there the individual side.

With this general agreement on the basic approach, the conference participants formally voted to recommend the establishment of a permanent Committee on Personality in Relation to Culture, with a subcommittee to canvass projects already underway in the field and prepare an agenda for the first meeting of the full committee.

1936 meeting

A Committee on Personality in Relation to Culture, chaired by Sapir, was duly formed, as was a Subcommittee on Fellowships, chaired by Harry Stack Sullivan. In February 1936 the Subcommittee, in which Sapir participated *ex officio*, presented to the Division a "Proposal for Training of Four Cultural Anthropologists and Others in the Methods of Personality Study." The proposal was not approved by the Division's Executive Committee, partly because it had been submitted by the Subcommittee without ratification by the full Committee, and partly because of its strong emphasis on psychoanalysis.

At a meeting of the Committee on October 25, 1936, Dr. W. S. Hunter, Chairman of the Division, explained why the proposal had been rejected. Sapir commented that "the Subcommittee had intended this psychoanalytical training of anthropologists as merely a beginning." The group agreed that the topic was of sufficient interest to warrant a modified project, with a less specialized beginning. After a discussion of financial issues, the committee voted to try to form interdisciplinary seminars in their own institutions. Post-doctoral students would be nominated by committee members as deserving of special training, and the committee would try to help them obtain funding.

1938 meeting

The Committee on Personality in Relation to Culture had also set up a Subcommittee whose task was to develop a "Handbook of Psychological Leads for Ethnological Field Workers." This subcommittee was chaired by A. Irving Hallowell. At the full committee's meeting on January 29, 1938, Hallowell reported on the progress of his project and raised once again the matter of the training program which had been disapproved by the Division. The Committee members commended Hallowell's efforts. They agreed that the idea of a training program should not be abandoned, but postponed any definite plans until after a survey of existing institutional programs, especially interdisciplinary efforts, should have been made.

Sapir's health did not permit him to attend the 1938 meeting of the committee. Before the meeting, however, the committee's Chair (now Lloyd Warner) had called on all members to submit written statements on what general policies and specific actions the Committee should adopt for the future. Sapir's response is recorded in the minutes of the meeting as follows:

Mr. Sapir believed that in all stages of the work the emphasis of our Committee "should be on the individual, not on culture or society as such."

That "we should encourage an exhaustive study of individual cases that have a bearing on cultural or social problems, but would manifest little interest in wholesale statistical studies of behavior patterns in selected societies."

That it was advisable to keep "in close touch with psychiatric circles in order to encourage community of interest between social science and psychiatry."

That this might mean practically encouraging "adequate psychiatric training of sociological and anthropological students."

He believes that the original training program, perhaps in a modified form, should be continued by the larger committee and that the Chairman of the larger committee should continue to be in touch with such agencies as may help to realize at least part of that program.

He felt it important that Hallowell go on with his book on "Psychological Leads for Ethnological Field Workers."

The Application of Anthropology to Human Relations (1936)

Editorial Introduction

This essay was written for *The American Way*, a volume edited by N. D. Baker, C. J. H. Hayes and R. W. Strauss, concerning relations among Catholics, Protestants and Jews in the United States. In the 1930's, public discussion of those relations often invoked a concept of race — inappropriately, in Sapir's view. In this paper he defended the Boasian position that race is a biological category which cannot analyze social relations; he flatly denied that there was any evidence for the existence of an Aryan race, a pseudo-category that had become increasingly important with the rise of the Nazi government in Germany. Sapir proposed a more scientific as well as a more humane notion of causality in human history, focusing on culture rather than race. He challenged social scientists to influence public opinion, revising group stereotypes and acknowledging the power of cultural tradition.

Sapir's historical dynamic relied on the different "slant" of various cultures in history. Projection of cultural values from one system of meaning to another was meaningless. Appreciation of other cultures was possible only in their own terms. In the course of making this argument, Sapir offered a definition of culture that crystallized some of the ideas he had been working with in presentations for more professional audiences. His statements in this essay can be compared with his discussions in other papers on culture theory, as well as Part I of *The Psychology of Culture*.

The Application of Anthropology to Human Relations

In a concept of race the view of the anthropologist will be seen to differ from the view of the man on the street.

To the scientist, grouping of human beings according to race may be contrasted with nonracial types of grouping. For example, cultural

groups (composed of individuals having common interests), national groups, political groups, religious groups, and linguistic groups, are not *racial* divisions. These groups have social existence. Race is not a social concept but a biological concept. Race is a biological fact which gives the mind of man or spirit of man a chance to operate.

All the tangible groups with which we have to deal are social groups. There is no such thing as a French, German, Russian, Anglo-Saxon or Jewish race. The so-called Anglo-Saxon race, for example, is a mixture of Celts, Angles, Saxons, Jutes, Vikings, Normans and pre-Nordic stocks. Therefore, to talk of the Anglo-Saxon race is sheer nonsense. All that one can say is that here is a group of people of diverse biological inheritance tied together by cultural bonds and rationalizing their cultural commonality by the [122] inventing of a physical basis for it. It is like giving a genealogy to the physical basis of an idea.

Nevertheless, the anthropologist by observation and measurement is able roughly to divide the people of Europe into three more or less typical biological types: (1) the Nordic, which predominates in the north; (2) the Alpine, which predominates in the central part of Europe, and (3) the Mediterranean, which inhabits the southern part. But even here the anthropologist can make only a rough classification because of the effect of climate, food and other prevailing forces in the environment. The Nordic stock, for instance, predominates in Scandinavia, Scotland and north Germany. But a majority of Germans, particularly in the south, belong to the Alpine stock, to which group the French people also largely belong.

So far as the so-called Aryan race, of which we hear much today, is concerned, it was not talked of until 100 or 150 years ago. Sanskrit was discovered and studied by western scholars who were impressed by its close kinship with the Armenian, Greek, Latin, Slavic, Baltic, Germanic and Celtic languages. From the Sanskrit word meaning "one of noble birth" the adjective Aryan was derived and applied to these languages. Then it was conjectured that a race once existed which spoke the primitive Aryan language and to this imagined race was given the name Aryan. There followed, of course, much vain speculation regarding the place where such a race originally lived. There is no more evidence that such a race lived in central Europe than there is that it lived in Armenia, or in other places.

Thus it is seen that the anthropologist, who works with objective data, is forced to class together peoples of radically different cultural ideals and even those who regard each other with intense hatred. [123]

Contrariwise, there exists a popular notion of race. In the family relationship we learn to think of those who are nearest us and most like us as being related to us by ties of blood. The popular notion of race is an extension of this feeling to those with whom we share a common culture, so that we come to feel that we are bound together by elemental biological ties. This is the notion of race which is in vogue among the masses today.

Many people believe that they can tell what race a person belongs to by looking at him. But this may be easily refuted by the reflection that a good actor may cleverly imitate members of other groups in a convincing manner without lengthening the head or changing the color of the eye. The truth is that what are popularly taken as racial characteristics are really cultural. They are social, not biological at all. No racial group has functional unity. Social groupings furnish the basis for functional unity. Race is a biological concept and cuts across all types of social groupings. As a matter of fact, it is not race that draws people together but a common culture.

The term culture is ambiguous. It has one meaning in good English usage but quite a different meaning when used as a technical term by the anthropologist. In ordinary speech it refers to the higher things of life such as education, music and good manners: in short, to things upon which we put value. The anthropologist, however, uses the term to refer to the results of human history without implying value as a distinguishing characteristic. Cultural activity, scientifically speaking, is (1) any type of behavior historically transmitted by the action of mind on mind, or (2) any activity which is the property of the group rather than of the individual.

An example of the first meaning of cultural activity may [124] be found in the way in which a person gives expression to his emotions. What would be a very extreme expression of emotion for a cultivated Japanese gentleman would be only a mild expression for most Americans. Therefore, before estimating the meaning of behavior one must know something about the cultural background of the individual whose behavior is being interpreted.

The second meaning of cultural activity may be illustrated by language. Take the word "table." An individual cannot own the word "table" as he can own *a table*. The word is the property of society. The activities of an individual may help to change, but can never entirely determine the fate of things which belong to society as a whole. Only

social activity can do this and more often than not the unconscious influences are more powerful than the conscious.

The conclusions from these observations are:

- 1. An event or element of culture can be understood and rightly interpreted only in the light of its historical and cultural context;
- 2. The meaning of an individual's behavior can be correctly estimated only by reference to the ways of expression which are characteristic of the group of which he is a part;
- 3. There is a tendency to overestimate what can be done to accomplish cultural changes by conscious educational processes;
- 4. It is impossible to judge one culture by values which are imported from another.

Early anthropology was not interested in individuals. Spencer, and those who followed him, spoke of cultural or social evolution and regarded the development of culture as passing naturally through certain inevitable stages. The [125] fact that in North America the aborigines developed agriculture without passing through the pastoral stage is only one example of many facts which discredit such a theory. The emphasis on the social determination of cultural development was important as a corrective of an older point of view which regarded culture as fashioned by great individuals, but needs now to be again corrected by recognizing the importance of the contributions of individuals.

In a well-integrated form or part of culture the individual is to a large extent subordinated to influences from without but all institutions inevitably change because no individual will or can reproduce a cultural pattern exactly as he learned it.

Changes in the cultural pattern, therefore, inevitably appear and are communicated through the influence of social suggestion. Psychology is therefore tremendously important in the study of culture. And due to this influence of the individual in cultural development the impersonality of culture must be tempered by the recognition and harmony both of individual influence and the influence of fortuitous events.

Cultures do not refer to actual groups of human beings but to imaginary groups. For example, there is no culture of the United States of America as a whole. Of course, for some purposes there are cultural facts which can be referred to such a geographical entity – such as the use of the post office. But there are always groupings within any larger group which are not entirely at home in the life of the whole and are at least in some if not in many respects at odds with other groups.

The analysis of the simplest kind of human behavior would lead to the farthest part of the globe and to the most [126] ancient human practices. Cultures are not developed in packets but are now understood to be more universal. Springing from a few centers cultures become specialized and through cross-fertilization are again transformed.

The arts of chipping stone, of melting metals, of molding pottery, of domesticating animals, of growing grains, were never the exclusive property of any race or group but were borrowed and used by all or nearly all primitive peoples. Even folk tales, which are among the most stubborn cultural traits, show the influence of people on people. An example of this is the fairy tale of the magic flight episode which is to be found among the folk tales of primitive peoples from Japan across the Bering Straits to the Amazon River.

Therefore, to ask *who* created *what*, is relatively unimportant. To push a button and turn on an electric light requires no more intelligence than to give a war whoop and not so much as to make a fire with flint and stone. But he who pushes the button — the electrician, the engineer and the physicist, all alike — use only the tools and the accumulated wisdom of the group.

In summary, then: (1) The kind of physical or intellectual tools which a group uses at a given time is no indication of racial intelligence. The technology which is the proud boast of many modern western nations is the product, not of nations, but of history — of the whole of humanity. Nations of the West are the temporary custodians of tools which may pass into the keeping of what are now regarded as very backward peoples. And it is conceivable that they may not do so badly with them as we. It is an outright impertinence to ascribe the cumulative culture of the whole race to the genius of one culture. [127]

(2) The planning of a culture is not so easy as the planning of bridges. This is because our emotions are involved. The intelligence in planning is only a small fraction of the determining factors. The unconscious influences in cultural change are more powerful than the conscious. We need more knowledge and some day we may have it. Meantime we must seek it.

(3) A new kind of history teaching is needed. To tell children of the little battles of the American Revolution is so much less important than to teach them the origin of pottery and the relation of their games to the life of primitive man. The function of education is not to make this or that kind of ideal citizen but to deliver men from provincialism, to trace the history of human culture from its beginnings to the present.

to show that no idea and no technique exists that does not involve the whole history of the race.

Cultures differ not only in details but in general slant, or meaning in the psychological sense. Therefore they may be classified not only on the basis of detailed characteristics, but on the basis of controlling ideas.

Examples of controlling ideas in cultures are as follows:

(1) *Time-Sense*, according to Spengler, is one of the master ideas of western culture. We have an amazing sense of time. It is a pattern of living. It is illustrated by an Institute of Human Relations which, while it is primarily intended to promote understanding and good will among those who are gathered together, nevertheless is organized according to the strictest time schedule. And, of course, this interferes with the freedom and spontaneity of the life of the spirit in making its discovery of others.

Moreover, this involves a philosophy of society. We say that the North American Indian wastes time. He knows [128] the value of time because he can hurry if he needs to. But according to our standards he wastes time. His culture does not include in the same way as ours what for us is the controlling idea of time. Hence we have a clash of fundamental feelings as we pass from our culture to another. The guests, and particularly the hostess, do not look at their watches at tea. The good administrator sometimes breaks the rules of the time game — he wastes a lot of time. The prince and the peasant meet in their defiance of the master idea of bourgeois society.

(2) *The idea of measure*, so fundamental in the life of the ancient Greeks, so important in the culture of modern France, so characteristic of the life of the Far East, is not honored in our Anglo-Saxon culture. It is not possible for an American business man to understand the Frenchman who retires from business even while he is a young man and has every chance to “make a killing.” It conflicts with the urge of duty — the desire to go on, to work, to use his powers in his chosen field of labor. But the American cannot communicate his sense of the value of work to one who does not understand the American culture with this master idea.

(3) *The Idea of Holiness* is a third example of a controlling idea. The Jewish culture is saturated with the idea of holiness. It is like a collective phobia that if you do not behave yourself every minute of the day you cannot come into the presence of the Almighty. This idea can be conveyed to the more strict Christian but it is mere madness to the Chinese,

just as two minutes more or two minutes less is madness to the North American Indian.

(4) *The Jazz Motif*. "pepping it up," the sense of exciting, tingling pleasure is another master idea of American [129] culture. Some people cannot enjoy music without "jazzing" it. This tendency is seen in the sensationalism of all the arts and of literature.

(5) *The Idea of Democracy* is necessarily a controlling idea in a culture where democracy is also a master idea. Because of this idea quality has to be sacrificed to increase quantitative participation.

In sum, then, cultures will be vastly different according to the kind of values which are served by their master ideas. A rule of intergroup conduct might be stated this way: If you do not understand another do not project your own values and judge him by them at once, but seek to understand his behavior in the light of his culture, its history and its master ideas. This is a bit chilly. It may postpone activity. It gives patience to understand. It means appreciation.

Editorial Notes

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The Contribution of Psychiatry to an Understanding of Behavior in Society (1937)

Editorial Introduction

This paper appeared in a special issue of the *American Journal of Sociology* (based in the University of Chicago sociology department) addressing the relationship between sociology and psychiatry. Most of the contributors were psychiatrists; Sapir, along with Chicago social psychologist Herbert Blumer, represented the social sciences. From their papers both Sapir and Blumer may be seen as symbolic interactionists, showing clear conceptual links to other scholars of that school such as George Herbert Mead, as well as continuities to a later symbolic and interpretive anthropology.

This paper's connection with symbolic interactionists is perhaps most clearly evidenced in the concluding passage, with its suggestion that culture and society emerge from – or at least are affected by – the use of symbols in social interaction. Sapir developed this argument somewhat further in his 1937 lectures for *The Psychology of Culture* (chapter 10; this volume), where he linked it with Harry Stack Sullivan's "interpersonal relations," as the middle ground between cultural anthropology and psychiatry.

Much of the present paper, however, was devoted to cautioning social scientists against hasty applications of psychiatric concepts to whole societies and cultures. Sapir lauded some of the steps psychiatry and social science had taken in the direction of mutual intelligibility: psychiatry had liberated itself from a rigidly biological to an "interpretive" point of view, while ethnographers, for their part, had learned to describe other cultural worlds in ways that would permit psychiatrists to appreciate the relativity of customs and meanings. Yet, both psychiatrists and social scientists were inclined to characterize whole cultures in the same terms as the psychology of particular individuals. Such short-cuts credulously confused levels of analysis and failed to recognize that society consisted of the actual relationships of many individuals.

Implicitly, Sapir was attacking the work of Ruth Benedict and Margaret Mead, in a critique he made explicit in his lectures on *The Psychology*

ogy of Culture, as well as in correspondence (see his letter to Philip Selznick, this volume). Despite the "literary suggestiveness" of their mode of equating individual and group psychology, individual and society were not reconcilable by such superficial metaphors and inapplicable psychological generalizations.

The omission of this paper from the 1949 collection of Sapir's works, *Selected Writings of Edward Sapir*, has perhaps obscured the difference between Sapir's approach and that of Benedict, Mead, and their successors in the "culture and personality" school.

The Contribution of Psychiatry to an Understanding of Behavior in Society

Abstract

Psychiatrists are becoming more aware of the social component in conduct while social scientists are becoming more aware of the concerns of psychiatry. The concept of "interpersonal relations" constitutes a good meeting-ground. Psychiatrists, largely due to the problems with which their science began, have been excessively individualistic and have tended to regard as universal and invariant, modes of conduct found only in certain cultures. In the rebound from this view it is necessary to avoid the dangers of "sociologism" which would disregard the true task of psychiatry which is the understanding of the fundamental and relatively invariable structure of the personality. Psychiatry will be of assistance to social analysis to the extent that it aids in revealing the intricate symbolic network which binds individuals together into collectivities.

It is with great pleasure that I accede to the request to comment in a general way on the present symposium on psychiatry and the social sciences. The relation between the two suggests many interesting and complicated problems, both of definition and interpretation. It is a bold man who would venture to speak with assurance about such abstruse entities as "individual" and "society," but where it is difficult for any intelligent person to withhold a theory or an opinion, I may be pardoned for not doing so either. I have read the seven psychiatric papers with great interest. Unless I am greatly mistaken, the language used in these contributions as a whole is measurably nearer the terminology used by social scientists than was formerly the case in psychiatric literature. I doubt if this is entirely due to the fact that the psychiatrists have felt under a compulsion to be courteous to the sociologists responsible for the journal to which they now find themselves a collective contrib-

utor. I find no "pussyfooting" here; rather a sincere recognition of the importance, perhaps even the reality, of the things connoted by the words "society" and "culture." Even if these words still remain largely unanalyzed in terms that ought to be completely satisfying to a psychiatrist, it is a great gain to have them given a hearing. The extreme individualism of earlier psychiatry is evidently passing. Even the pages of Freud, with their haunting imagery of society as [863] censor and of culture as a beautiful extortion from the sinister depths of desire are beginning to take on a certain character of quaintness; in other words, it looks as though psychiatry and the sciences devoted to man as constitutive of society were actually beginning to talk about the same events — to wit, the facts of human experience.

In the social sciences, too, there has been a complementary movement toward the concerns of the psychiatrist. At long last the actual human being, always set in a significant situation, never a mere biological illustration or a long-suffering carrier of cultural items, has been caught prowling about the premises of society, of culture, of history. It is true that long and anonymous confinements within the narrow columns of statistics has made him a timid subject for inquiry. He seems always to be slinking off into anxiety-driven flesh and bone or else, at the oddest moments, unexpectedly swelling himself up into an institution. But it is easy to see that the firm hand of the psychiatric sociologist will some day nab him in one of his less rapid moments of transition.

Of these seven papers, it is chiefly Dr. Sullivan's and Dr. Alexander's that give me the most comfortable housing. They seem to be camped somewhere about the crossroads leading to pure psychiatry and pure sociology and I confess that I find the uncertainty of their location very agreeable indeed. In an atmosphere of mollified contrasts one may hope to escape the policemen of rival conceptual headquarters. Not being bothered by too strict a loyalty to aristocratic conventions, one may hope to learn something new. I am particularly fond of Dr. Sullivan's pet phrase of "interpersonal relations." The phrase is not as innocent as it seems, for, while such entities as societies, individuals, cultural patterns, and institutions logically imply interpersonal relations, they do little to isolate and define them. Too great agility has been gained over the years in jumping from the individual to the collectivity and from the collectivity via romantic anthropological paths back again to the culture-saturated individual. Reflection suggests that the lone individual was never alone, that he never marched in line with a collectivity, except on literal state occasions, and that he never signed up for a

culture. There was always someone around to bother [864] him; there were always a great many people whom his friends talked about and whom he never met; and there was always much that some people did that he never heard about. He was never formed out of the interaction of individual and society but started out being as comfortable as he could in a world in which other people existed, and continued this way as long as physical conditions allowed. It is out of his manifold experiences that different kinds of scientists derived their tips for the invention of two or three realms of being.

For a long time psychiatry operated with a conception of the individual that was merely biological in nature. This is easy to understand if we remember that psychiatry was not, to begin with, a study of human nature in actual situations, nor even a theoretical exploration into the structure of personality, but simply and solely an attempt to interpret "diseased" modes of behavior in terms familiar to a tradition that was operating with the concepts of normal and abnormal physiological functioning. It is the great and lasting merit of Freud that he freed psychiatry from its too strictly medical presuppositions and introduced an interpretative psychology which, in spite of all its conceptual weaknesses, its disturbingly figurative modes of expression, and its blindness to numerous and important aspects of the field of behavior as a whole, remains a substantial contribution to psychology in general and, by implication, to social psychology in particular. His use of social data was neither more nor less inadequate than the use made of them by psychology as a whole. It is hardly fair to accuse Freud of a naïveté which is still the rule among the vast majority of professional psychologists. It is not surprising that his view of social phenomena betrays at many points a readiness to confuse various specific patterns of behavior, which the culturalists can show to be derivative of specific historical backgrounds, with those more fundamental and necessary patterns of behavior which proceed from the nature of man and of his slowly maturing organism. Nor is it surprising that he shared, not only with the majority of psychologists but even with the very founders of anthropological science, an interest in primitive man that did not address itself to a realistic understanding of human relations in the less sophisticated societies but rather to the schematic task of finding in the patterns of behavior reported by the [865] anthropologist such confirmation as he could of his theories of individually "archaic" attitudes and mechanisms. If the contemporary anthropologist is scandalized by the violence with which Freud and his followers have torn many of the facts of

primitive behavior out of their natural cultural setting, he should recall that just such violence was the hallmark of the most approved kind of thinking about ethnological data not so long ago. When all is said and done, and in spite of the enormous documentation of the cultures of primitive groups, how easy is it to get even an inkling, in strictly psychological terms, of the tempo, the relative flexibility, the individual variability, the relative openness or hiddenness of individual expression, the characteristic emotional qualities, which are implied or "carried" by even the most penetrating cultural analyses that we possess of primitive communities? It seems unexpectedly difficult to conjure up the image of live people in intelligibly live relationships located within areas defined as primitive. The personalities that inhabit our ethnological monographs seem almost schizoid in their unemotional acceptance of the heavy colors, tapestries, and furniture of their ethnological stage. Is it any wonder that actors so vaguely conceived, so absent-mindedly typical of something or other, can be bludgeoned by a more persistent intelligence than theirs into sawing wood for still remoter stages, say that dread drama of the slain father and the birth of totemism?

At the present time the advance guard of psychiatric thinking is rapidly discovering the fruitfulness of the concepts of society and culture for a richer and a more realistic analysis of personality. The close relation of personal habit systems to the general patterning of culture — that very insight which has for so long been the special pride of anthropology — comes to psychiatry as something essentially new. Supposedly universal feelings and attitudes, sentiments about parents and children and sex mates, are found to be almost as relative to a culture's set patterns of behavior as fashions in clothes or types of artifacts. At any rate, this formula of the relativity of custom has long been a commonplace in anthropology on purely descriptive grounds and is invading psychiatry as a new basis for the philosophy of behavior.

An age-old blindness tends to be corrected by opened eyes that are [866] too confident and undiscriminating, and one wonders whether the special viewpoint of psychiatry is not tending to yield too readily to the enlightened prejudices of anthropology and sociology. The presumptive or "as if" psychological character of a culture is highly determinative, no doubt, of much in the externalized system of attitudes and habits which forms the visible "personality" of a given individual, and, until his special social frame of reference is clearly established, analyzed, and applied to his behavior, we are necessarily at a loss to assign him a place in a more general scheme of human behavior. It does not follow,

however, that strictly social determinants, tending, as they do, to give visible form and meaning, in a cultural sense, to each of the thousands of modalities of experience which sum up the personality, can define the fundamental structure of such a personality. If culture and its presumptive psychology were all that is needed to explain what we dimly reach out for and call "individual personality," we should be put in the position of a man who claimed, for instance, that the feeling called love could not have started its history until the vocabulary of a specific language suggested realities, values, and problems hitherto unknown. All of which would be true in a sense which matters more to the culturalist than to the closer student of behavior. A culture which is constantly being invoked to explain the necessities and the intimacies of individual relations is like an *ex post facto* legalization of damage done. The biological and implied psychological needs of individuals are continuous and primary. If we think, not of culture in the abstract nor of society as a hypothetically integrating concept in human relations, but rather of the actual day-to-day relations of specific individuals in a network of highly personalized needs, we must see that culture is the inevitable coin of the realm of behavior but that it is far from synonymous with those actual systems of meaning, conscious and unconscious, which we call personalities, and that the presumptive psychology of a culture as a whole is not equatable with any actual personalized psychology. Cultural analysis is hardly more than a preliminary bow to the human scene, giving us to know that here are people, presumably real, and that it is here rather than there that we must observe them.

It is the privilege of psychiatry to be always looking at individuals [867] and to think of society as merely a convenient term to cover the manifold possibilities of actual human relationships. It is these actual relationships that matter, not society. This simple and intuitively necessary viewpoint of the psychiatrist is shared, of course, by the man in the street. He cannot be dislodged from it by any amount of social scientific sophistication. It is to be hoped that no psychiatrist will ever surrender this naïve and powerful view of the reality of personality to a system of secondary concepts about people and their relations to each other which flow from an analysis of social forms. The danger of a too ready acquiescence in the social formulations of the anthropologist and the sociologist is by no means an imaginary one. Certain recent attempts, in part brilliant and stimulating, to impose upon the actual psychologies of actual people, in continuous and tangible relations to each other, a generalized psychology based on the real or supposed

psychological implications of cultural forms, show clearly what confusions in our thinking are likely to result when social science turns psychiatric without, in the process, allowing its own historically determined concepts to dissolve into those larger ones which have meaning for psychology and psychiatry. We then discover that whole cultures or societies are paranoid or hysterical or obsessive! Such characterizations, however brilliantly presented, have the value of literary suggestiveness, not of close personality analysis. At best they help us to see a new facet of the problem of personality. If they do not help us to see the individual, in however exotic a society, with that quiet sharpness of gaze which makes the true student of personality something other than a discourser on "interesting" facts about people, the psychiatrist will have essentially little to learn from them beyond the fact, which he might, of course, have suspected all along, that human motivation has expressed itself in far more varied forms and through far more complex channels of transformation than he had believed possible on the basis of his limited ethnic experiences. This in itself is a far from unimportant insight, but it does not constitute the true basis of a science of psychology, or of a science of psychiatry, which may be defined as that science of man which undertakes to grasp the [868] fundamental, and relatively invariable, structure of the individual personality with as great a conceptual economy as our still inadequate psychologies allow.

It is the obvious duty of psychiatry, once it has enriched its interpretative techniques with the help of the social sciences, to be always returning to its original task of the close scrutiny of the individual personality. Not what the culture consists of or what are the values it seems to point to will be the psychiatrist's concern, but rather how this culture lends itself to the ceaseless need of the individual personality for symbols of expression and communication which can be intelligently read by one's fellow-men on the social plane, but whose relative depth or shallowness of meaning in the individual's total economy of symbols need never be adequately divined either by himself or by his neighbor. It should be the aim of the psychiatrist to uncover just such meanings as these. He must be too little satisfied with a purely social view of behavior to accept such statements as that A's reason for joining the orchestra is the same as B's, or that the motive of either can ever be strictly defined in terms of a generalized pleasure which socialized human beings derive from listening to music or participating in the production of it. Such blanket explanations as these are useful in that they enable people to join hands and give each other an effective hearing. To the culturalist

joining an orchestra is a valuable illustration of an important social pattern. To the psychiatrist it is as irrelevant as the interesting biographical fact that this "lover of music" first met his future wife at the corner of Fifth Avenue and Forty-second Street. What the psychiatrist can get out of the orchestra-joining pattern depends altogether on what symbolic work he can discover this behavior to accomplish in the integrated personality systems of A and B. To the culturist A's joining the orchestra is "like" B's joining the orchestra. To the psychiatrist the chances of these two events being in the least similar are quite small. He will rather find that A's joining the orchestra is "like" his earlier tendency to waste an enormous amount of time on trashy novels, while B's apparently similar behavior is more nearly "like" his slavish adherence to needlessly exacting table manners. The psychiatrist cares little about descriptive similarities and differences, for, in his view of [869] things, all manner of flotsam and jetsam of behavior rush into an individual vortex of few and necessary meanings. He does well to leave the study of the scheme of society to those who care for unallocated blueprints of behavior.

I have, perhaps, overstressed the fundamental divergence of spirit between the psychiatric and the strictly cultural modes of observation. I have done so because it is highly important that we do not delude ourselves into believing that a lovingly complete analysis of a given culture is *ipso facto* a contribution to the science of human behavior. It is, of course, an invaluable guide to the potentialities of choice and rejection in the lives of individuals, and such knowledge should arm one against foolish expectancies. No psychiatrist can afford to think that love is made in exactly the same way in all the corners of the globe, yet he would be too docile a convert to anthropology if he allowed himself to be persuaded that that fact made any special difference for the primary differentiation of personality. With every individual of whom the psychiatrist essays an understanding he must of necessity reanalyze the supposedly objective culture in which this individual is said to play his part. When he does this he invariably finds that cultural agreement is hardly more than terminological, and that, if culture is to be saddled with psychological meanings that are more than superficial, we shall have to recognize as many effective cultures as there are individuals to be "adjusted" to the one culture which is said to exist "out there" and to which we are supposed to be able to direct the telescope of our intelligent observation.

It would appear from all this that the psychiatrist who has become sufficiently aware of social patterning to be granted a hearing by the

social scientist has at least as much to give as to receive. It is true that he cannot be given the privilege of making a psychological analysis of society and culture as such. He cannot tell us what any cultural pattern is "all about" in psychological terms, for we cannot allow him to indulge in the time-honored pursuit of identifying society with a personality, or culture with actual behavior. He can, of course, make these identifications in a metaphorical sense, and it would be harmful to his freedom of expression if he were denied the use of metaphor. In his particular case, however, metaphor is more [870] than normally dangerous. An economist or historian can talk of the soul of a people or the structure of society with very little danger of turning anybody's head. It is generally understood that such phraseology means something but that the speed of verbal communication is generally too great to make it seem worthwhile to try to convert the convenient metaphor into its realistically relevant terms. But the psychiatrist deals with actual people, not with illustrations of culture or with the functioning of society. It is our duty, therefore, to hold him to the very strictest account in his use of social terms. If he, too, is the victim of slipshod metaphor, we have no protection against our own credulity. We cannot be blamed if we tend to read out of the society and culture which the necessities of verbal communication have conjured into a ghostly reality of their own an impersonal mandate to behavior and its interpretation.

So far the psychiatrist has had too many superstitions of his own to help us materially with the task of translating social and cultural terms into that intricate network of personalistic meanings which is the only conceivable stuff of human experience. In the future, however, we must be constantly turning to him for reminders of what is the true nature of the social process. The conceptual reconciliation of the life of society with the life of the individual can never come from an indulgence in metaphor. It will come from the ultimate implications of Dr. Sullivan's "interpersonal relations." Interpersonal relations are not finger exercises in the art of society. They are real things, deserving of the most careful and anxious study. We know very little about them as yet. If we could only get a reasonably clear conception of how the lives of A and B intertwine into a mutually interpretable complex of experiences, we should see far more clearly than is at present the case the extreme importance and the irrevocable necessity of the concept of personality. We should also be moving forward to a realistic instead of a metaphorical definition of what is meant by culture and society. One suspects that the symbolic role of words has an importance for the solution of our

problems that is far greater than we might be willing to admit. After all, if A calls B a "liar," he creates a reverberating cosmos of potential action and judgment. And if the fatal word can be passed on to C, the triangulation of society and culture is complete.

Editorial Notes

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Note

- 1 The necessity of disentangling it from problems of personality value in a given society.

Why Cultural Anthropology Needs the Psychiatrist (1938)

Editorial Introduction

The initial issue of Harry Stack Sullivan's journal *Psychiatry* in 1938 was perhaps the ideal sympathetic environment for the views Sapir had developed in his conversations with Sullivan and political scientist Harold Lasswell. In his paper for that issue, Sapir chose to focus not on psychiatry but on modifying the impersonal character of traditional ethnology by introducing personal (and interpersonal) considerations. The argument opens anecdotally, citing J. Owen Dorsey's quotation of Omaha elder Two Crows denying a statement made by another Omaha. Such statements, too often ignored by ethnologists intent on leaping to some level of communal cultural patterning, were actually incontrovertible evidence of intracultural variability. Insofar as every individual's version of his/her culture was legitimately unique, no individual's statement of culture could possibly be wrong. The methodological consequence of Two Crows' denial, however, was that the ethnologist must test all apparent cultural patterns against the statements and behaviors of various individuals. The longstanding assumption that any normal individual might equally well represent a homogeneous culture was untenable. Instead, culture could be approached only through its documented variations.

Although Sapir had no plans to test his model in the field, his theoretical position was clear and grounded in cultural anthropology. The theory of personality had not yet developed to the point where it could explain the variability of human behavior. Sapir wanted to persuade an audience of psychiatrists of the promise to be found in the social sciences, particularly anthropology. Implicitly, however, his paper addresses anthropologists above all. Of Sapir's anthropological writings, this essay has been one of the most widely cited within the discipline.

Why Cultural Anthropology Needs the Psychiatrist

Until not so many years ago cultural anthropology and psychiatry seemed miles apart. Cultural anthropology was conceived of as a social

science which concerned itself little, if at all, with the individual. Its province was rather to emphasize those aspects of behavior which belonged to society as such, more particularly societies of the dim past or exotic societies whose way of life seemed so different from that of our own people that one could hope to construct a generalized picture of the life of society at large, particularly in its more archaic stages of development. There was little need in the anthropology of a Tylor or Frazer to ask questions which demanded a more intimate knowledge of the individual than could be assumed on the basis of common experience. The important distinctions were felt to be distinctions of race, of geographical setting, of chronology, of cultural province. The whole temper of cultural anthropology was impersonal to a degree. In this earlier period of the development of the science it seemed almost indelicate, not to say indecent, to obtrude observations that smacked of the personal or anecdotal. The assumption was that in some way not in the least clearly defined as to observational method it was possible for the anthropologist to arrive at conclusive statements which would hold for a given society as such. One was rarely in a position to say whether such an inclusive statement was a tacit quotation from a primitive "John Doe" or a carefully tested generalization abstracted from hundreds of personal observations or hundreds of statements excerpted from conversations with many John Does.

Perhaps it is just as well that no strict methodology of field inquiry was perfected and that embarrassing questions as to the factual nature of the evidence which led to anthropological generalizations were courteously withheld by a sort of gentleman's agreement. I remember being rather shocked than pleased when in my student days I came across such statements in J. O. Dorsey's "Omaha Sociology" as "Two Crows denies this." This looked a little as though the writer had not squarely met the challenge of assaying his source material and giving us the kind of data that we, as respectable anthropologists, could live on. It was as though he "passed the buck" to the reader, expecting him by some miracle of cultural insight to segregate truth from error. We see now that Dorsey was ahead of his age. Living as he did in close touch with the Omaha Indians, he knew that he was dealing, not with a society nor with a specimen of primitive man nor with a cross-section of the history of primitive culture, but with a finite, though indefinite, number of human beings, who gave themselves the privilege of differing from each other not only in matters generally considered "one's own business" but even on questions which clearly transcended the private in-

dividual's concern and were, by the anthropologist's definition, implied in the conception of a definitely delimited society with a definitely discoverable culture. Apparently Two [8] Crows, a perfectly good and authoritative Indian, could presume to rule out of court the very existence of a custom or attitude or belief vouched for by some other Indian, equally good and authoritative. Unless one wishes to dismiss the implicit problem raised by contradictory statements by assuming that Dorsey, the anthropologist, misunderstood one, or both, of his informants, one would have to pause for a while and ponder the meaning of the statement that "Two Crows denies this."

This is not the place to introduce anything like a complete analysis of the meaning of such contradictory statements, real or supposed. The only thing that we need to be clear about is whether a completely impersonal anthropological description and analysis of custom in terms which tacitly assume the unimportance of individual needs and preferences is, in the long run, truly possible for a social discipline. There has been so much talk of ideal objectivity in social science and such eager willingness to take the ideals of physical and chemical workmanship as translatable into the procedures of social research that we really ought not to blink this problem. Suppose we take a test case. John Doe and an Indian named Two Feathers agree that two and two make four. Someone reports that "Two Crows denies this." Inasmuch as we know that the testimony of the first two informants is the testimony of all human beings who are normally considered as entitled to a hearing, we do not attach much importance to Two Crows' denial. We do not even say that he is mistaken. We suspect that he is crazy. In the case of more abstruse problems in the world of natural science, we narrow the field of authority to those individuals who are known, or believed, to be in full command of techniques that enable them to interpret the impersonal testimony of the physical universe. Everyone knows that the history of science is full of corrective statements on errors of judgment but no value is attached to such errors beyond the necessity of ruling them out of the record. Though the mistaken scientist's hurt feelings may be of great interest to a psychologist or psychiatrist, they are nothing for the votaries of pure science to worry about.

Are correspondingly ruthless judgments possible in the field of social science? Hardly. Let us take a desperately extreme case. All the members of a given community agree in arranging the letters of the alphabet in a certain historically determined order, an order so fixed and so thoroughly ingrained in the minds of all normal children who go to school

that the attempt to tamper with this order has, to the man in the street, the same ridiculous, one might almost say unholy, impossibility as an attempt to have the sun rise half an hour earlier or later than celestial mechanics decree to be proper. There is one member of this hypothetical society who takes the liberty of interchanging A and Z. If he keeps his strange departure from custom to himself, no one need ever know how queer he really is. If he contradicts his children's teacher and tries to tell them that they should put Z first and A last, he is almost certain to run foul of his fellow beings. His own children may desert him in spite of their natural tendency to recognize parental authority. Certainly we should agree that this very peculiar kind of a Two Crows is crazy, and we may even agree as psychiatrists that so far as an understanding of his aberrant fantasies and behavior is concerned, it really makes little difference whether what he is impelled to deny is that two and two are four or the order of the letters of the alphabet as a conventionally, or naturally, fixed order.

At this point we have misgivings. Is the parallel as accurate as it seems to be? There is an important difference, which we have perhaps overlooked in our joint condemnation. This difference may be expressed in terms of possibility. No matter how many Two Crows deny that two and two make four, the actual history of mathematics, however retarded by such perversity, cannot be seriously modified by it. But if we get enough Two Crows to agree on the interchange of A and Z, [9] we have what we call a new tradition, or a new dogma, or a new theory, or a new procedure, in the handling of that particular pattern of culture which is known as the alphabet. What starts as a thoroughly irresponsible and perhaps psychotic aberration seems to have the power, by some kind of "social infection," to lose its purely personal quality and to take on something of the very impersonality of custom which, in the first instance, it seemed to contradict so flatly. The reason for this is very simple. Whatever the majority of the members of a given society may say, there is no inherent human impossibility in an alphabet which starts with a symbol for the sound or sounds represented by the letter Z and ends up with a symbol for the vocalic sound or sounds represented by the letter A. The consensus of history, anthropology, and common sense leads us to maintain that the actually accepted order of letters is "necessary" only in a very conditional sense and that this necessity can, under appropriate conditions of human interrelationship, yield to a conflict of possibilities, which may ultimately iron out into an entirely different "necessity."

The truth of the matter is that if we think long enough about Two Crows and his persistent denials, we shall have to admit that in some sense Two Crows is never wrong. It may not be a very useful sense for social science but in a strict methodology of science in general it dare not be completely ignored. The fact that this rebel, Two Crows, can in turn bend others to his own view of fact or theory or to his own preference in action shows that his divergence from custom had, from the very beginning, the essential possibility of culturalized behavior. It seems, therefore, that we must regretfully admit that the rebel who tampers with the truths of mathematics or physics or chemistry is not really the same kind of rebel as the one who plays nine-pins with custom, whether in theory or practice. The latter is likely to make more of a nuisance of himself than the former. No doubt he runs the risk of being condemned with far greater heat by his fellow men but he just cannot be proved to contradict some mysterious essence of things. He can only be said, at best, to disagree completely with everybody else in a matter in which opinion or preference, in however humble and useless a degree, is after all possible.

We have said nothing so far that is not utterly commonplace. What is strange is that the ultimate importance of these commonplaces seems not to be thoroughly grasped by social scientists at the present time. If the ultimate criterion of value interpretation, and even "existence," in the world of socialized behavior is nothing more than consensus of opinion, it is difficult to see how cultural anthropology can escape the ultimate necessity of testing out its analysis of patterns called "social" or "cultural" in terms of individual realities. If people tend to become illiterate, owing to a troubled political atmosphere, the "reality" of the alphabet weakens. It may still be true that the order of the letters is, in the minds of those relatively few people who know anything about the alphabet, precisely what it always was, but in a cultural atmosphere of unrest and growing illiteracy a Two Crows who interchanges A and Z is certainly not as crazy as he would have been at a more fortunate time in the past. We are quick to see the importance of the individual in those more flexible fields of cultural patterning that are referred to as ideals or tastes or personal preferences. A truly rigorous analysis of any arbitrarily selected phase of individualized "social behavior" or "culture" would show two things: First, that no matter how flexible, how individually variable, it may in the first instance be thought to be, it is as a matter of fact the complex resultant of an incredibly elaborate cultural history, in which many diverse strands intercross at that point

in place and time at which the individual judgment or preference is expressed (this terminology is *cultural*); second, that, conversely, no matter how rigorously necessary in practice the analyzed pattern may seem to be, it is always possible in principle, if not in experiential fact, for the lone individual to effect a [10] transformation of form or meaning which is capable of communication to other individuals (this terminology is *psychiatric* or *personalistic*). What this means is that problems of social science differ from problems of individual behavior in degree of specificity, not in kind. Every statement about behavior which throws the emphasis, explicitly or implicitly, on the actual, integral, experiences of defined personalities or types of personalities is a datum of psychology or psychiatry rather than of social science. Every statement about behavior which aims, not to be accurate about the behavior of an actual individual or individuals or about the expected behavior of a physically and psychologically defined type of individuals, but which abstracts from such behavior in order to bring out in clear relief certain expectancies with regard to those aspects of individual behavior which various people share, as an interpersonal or "social" pattern, is a datum, however crudely expressed, of social science.

If Dorsey tells us that "Two Crows denies this," surely there is a reason for his statement. We need not say that Two Crows is badly informed or that he is fooling the anthropologist. Is it not more reasonable to say that the totality of socialized habits, in short the "culture," that he was familiar with was not in all respects the same entity as the corresponding totality presented to the observation or introspection of some other Indian, or perhaps of all other Indians? If the question asked by the anthropologist involved a mere question of personal affirmation, we need have no difficulty in understanding his denial. But even if it involved the question of "objective fact," we need not be too greatly shocked by the denial. Let us suppose that the anthropologist asked the simple question, "Are there seven clans or eight clans in moiety A of your tribe?", or words to that effect. All other Indians that he has asked about this sheer question of "fact" have said eight, we will assume. Two Crows claims that there are only seven. How can this be? If we look more closely to the facts, we should undoubtedly find that the contradiction is not as puzzling as it seems. It may turn out that one of the clans had been extinct for a long time, most of the informants, however, remembering some old man, now deceased, who had been said to be the last survivor of it. They might feel that while the clan no longer exists in a practical sense, it has a theoretical place in

the ordered description of the tribe's social organization. Perhaps there is some ceremonial function or placement, properly belonging to the extinct clan, which is remembered as such and which makes it a little difficult to completely overlook its claims to "existence." Various things, on the other hand, may be true of Two Crows. He may have belonged to a clan which had good reason to detest the extinct clan, perhaps because it had humiliated a relative of his in the dim past. It is certainly conceivable that the factual non-existence of the clan coupled with his personal reason for thinking as little about it as possible might give him the perfectly honest conviction that one need speak of only seven clans in the tribe. There is no reason why the normal anthropological investigator should, in an inquiry of this kind, look much beneath the surface of a simple answer to a simple question. It almost looks as though either seven clans or eight clans might be the "correct" answer to an apparently unambiguous question. The problem is very simple here. By thinking a little about Two Crows himself, we are enabled to show that he was not wrong, though he seemed to disagree with all his fellow Indians. He had a special kind of rightness, which was partly factual, partly personal.

Have we not the right to go on from simple instances of this sort and advance to the position that any statement, no matter how general, which can be made about culture needs the supporting testimony of a tangible person or persons, to whom such a statement is of real value in his system of interrelationships with other human beings? If this is so, we shall, at last analysis, have to admit that any individual of a group has cultural definitions which do not apply to all the [11] members of his group, which even, in specific instance, apply to him alone. Instead, therefore, of arguing from a supposed objectivity of culture to the problem of individual variation, we shall, for certain kinds of analysis, have to proceed in the opposite direction. We shall have to operate as though we knew nothing about culture but were interested in analyzing as well as we could what a given number of human beings accustomed to live with each other actually think and do in their day to day relationships. We shall then find that we are driven, willy-nilly, to the recognition of certain permanencies, in a relative sense, in these interrelationships, permanencies which can reasonably be counted on to endure but which must also be recognized to be eternally subject to serious modification of form and meaning with the lapse of time and with those changes of personnel which are unavoidable in the history of any group of human beings.

This mode of thinking is, of course, essentially psychiatric. Psychiatrists may, or may not, believe in cultural patterns, in group minds, in historic tendencies, or even missions; they cannot avoid believing in particular people. Personalities may be dubbed fictions by sociologists, anthropologists, and even by certain psychologists, but they must be accepted as bread and butter realities by the psychiatrist. Nothing, in short, can be more real to a psychiatrist than a personality organization, its modification from infancy to death, its essential persistence in terms of consciousness and ego reference. From this point of view culture cannot be accepted as anything more than a convenient assemblage, or at best total theory, of real or possible modes of behavior abstracted from the experienced realities of communication, whether in the form of overt behavior or in the form of fantasy. Even the alphabet from this standpoint becomes a datum of personality research! As a matter of fact, the alphabet does mean different things to different people. It is loved by some, hated by others, an object of indifference to most. It is a purely instrumental thing to a few; it has varying kinds of overtones of meaning for most, ranging all the way from the weakly sentimental to the passionately poetic. No one in his senses would wish the alphabet to be studied from this highly personalistic point of view. In plain English, it would not be worth the trouble. The total meaning of the alphabet for X is so very nearly the same as that for any other individual, Y, that one does much better to analyze it and explain its relation to other cultural patterns in terms of an impersonal, or cultural, or anthropological, mode of description. The fact, however, that X has had more difficulty in learning the alphabet than Y, or that in old age X may forget the alphabet or some part of it more readily than Y, shows clearly enough that there is a psychiatric side to even the coldest and most indifferent of cultural patterns. Even such cold and indifferent cultural patterns have locked in them psychiatric meanings which are ordinarily of no moment to the student of society but which may under peculiar circumstances come to the foreground of attention. When this happens, anthropological data need to be translated into psychiatric terms.

What we have tried to advance is little more than a plea for the assistance of the psychiatrist in the study of certain problems which come up in an analysis of socialized behavior. In spite of all that has been claimed to the contrary, we cannot thoroughly understand the dynamics of culture, of society, of history, without sooner or later taking account of the actual interrelationships of human beings. We can postpone this psychiatric analysis indefinitely but we cannot theoretic-

ally eliminate it. With the modern growth of interest in the study of personality and with the growing conviction of the enormous flexibility of personality adjustment to one's fellow men, it is difficult to see how one's intellectual curiosity about the problems of human intercourse can be forever satisfied by schematic statements about society and its stock of cultural patterns. The very variations and uncertainties which the earlier anthropologists ignored seem to be the very aspects of human behavior that future students of [12] society will have to look to with a special concern, for it is only through an analysis of variation that the reality and meaning of a norm can be established at all, and it is only through a minute and sympathetic study of individual behavior in the state in which normal human beings find themselves, namely in a state of society, that it will ultimately be possible to say things about society itself and culture that are more than fairly convenient abstractions. Surely, if the social scientist is interested in effective consistencies, in tendencies, and in values, he must not dodge the task of studying the effects produced by individuals of varying temperaments and backgrounds on each other. Anthropology, sociology, indeed social science in general, is notoriously weak in the discovery of effective consistencies. This weakness, it seems, is not unrelated to a fatal fallacy with regard to the objective reality of social and cultural patterns defined impersonally.

Causation implies continuity, as does personality itself. The social scientist's world of reality is generally expressed in discontinuous terms. An effective philosophy of causation in the realm of social phenomena seems impossible so long as these phenomena are judged to have a valid existence and sequence in their own right. It is only when they are translated into the underlying facts of behavior from which they have never been divorced in reality that one can hope to advance to an understanding of causes. The test can be made easily enough. We have no difficulty in understanding how a given human being's experiences tend to produce certain results in the further conduct of his life. Our knowledge is far too fragmentary to allow us to understand fully, but there is never a serious difficulty in principle in imputing to the stream of his experiences that causative quality which we take for granted in the physical universe. To the extent that we can similarly speak of causative sequences in social phenomena, what we are really doing is to pyramid, as skilfully and as rapidly as possible, the sorts of cause and effect relations that we are familiar with in individual experience, imputing these to a social reality which has been constructed out of our need for a maximally economical expression of typically human events. It will

be the future task of the psychiatrist to read cause and effect in human history. He cannot do it now because his theory of personality is too weak and because he tends to accept with too little criticism the impersonal mode of social and cultural analysis which anthropology has made fashionable. If, therefore, we answer our initial question, "Why cultural anthropology needs the psychiatrist," in a sense entirely favorable to the psychiatrist, that is, to the systematic student of human personality, we do not for a moment mean to assert that any psychiatry that has as yet been evolved is in a position to do much more than to ask intelligent questions.

Editorial Notes

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Letter to Philip S. Selznick, 25 October 1938

Editorial Introduction

Philip Selznick, on his own initiative, sent his honors essay from City College of New York to Sapir for comments. Sapir's reply, written only a few months before his death, offered an informal view of the emerging field of "culture and personality," and summarized some aspects of his own approach. Sapir was impressed by the young man's understanding of the conceptual basis of the distinction between culture and individual, but he cautioned him against some potential pitfalls – excessive cultural relativism, and false analogies between individual personality and culture – into which, Sapir suggested, Ruth Benedict and Margaret Mead had fallen. He referred to his own planned book, *The Psychology of Culture*, as the work that would properly explicate his point of view, although he must have realized that he would not live to complete it.

This letter, with commentary by George W. Stocking, Jr., was published in 1980 in the *History of Anthropology Newsletter*, under the title, "Sapir's last testament on culture and personality."

Letter to Philip Selznick (1980)

October 25, 1938

Mr. Philip S. Selznick,
3099 Brighton 6th Street
Brooklyn, N. Y.

Dear Mr. Selznick,

I have read your essay with very great interest and am returning it to you under another cover. I believe that you have assimilated the culture and personality point of view very successfully. I find myself in substantial agreement with you at practically every point and I sincerely hope that you are planning to deepen your acquaintance with the problems suggested.

While the point of view which you discuss has largely been advanced by what might be described as the radical wing of anthropology, I believe that further work in this field, if it is to be truly significant and

not merely philosophical in tone, is destined to come largely from those that are immediately concerned with psychiatric reality, that is from people who take seriously problems of personality organization and development. Practically, this means that the younger people like yourself who aim to contribute significantly to a clarification of problems of personality and culture should plunge boldly into personality problems. Specific cultural problems are of course of the greatest value, but I have come to feel that the law of diminishing returns operates rather quickly in anthropology. I mean to say that such ideas as cultural relativity and psychological reinterpretation of cultural forms are assimilated readily enough by an intelligent person on the basis of a comparatively slight knowledge of the ethnographic field. An extended knowledge of exotic cultures deepens of course our sense of cultural history, but it does not, after a certain point of sophistication has been reached, help very much with the clarification of the more fundamental question of the meaning of personality organization in cultural terms. Psychiatric insight can, I feel, not be obtained by the mere reading of a great deal of literature. Clinical experience and a patient analysis of actual case material are indispensable.

I judge from a number of passages in your essay that you share my feeling that there is danger of the growth of a certain scientific mythology in anthropological circles with regard to the psychological interpretation of culture. I believe this comes out most clearly in Ruth Benedict's book, "Patterns of Culture." Unless I misunderstand the direction of her thinking and of the thinking of others who are under her influence, there is altogether too great readiness to translate psychological analogies into psychological realities. I do not like the glib way in which many talk of such and such a culture as "paranoid" or what you will. It would be my intention to bring out clearly, in a book that I have still to write, the extreme methodological importance of distinguishing between actual psychological processes which are of individual location and presumptive or "as if" psychological pictures which may be abstracted from cultural phenomena and which may give significant direction to individual development. To speak of a whole culture as having a personality configuration is, of course, a pleasing image, but I am afraid that it belongs more to the order of aesthetic or poetic constructs than of scientific ones.

The only critical reaction that I have had in reading your pages is a certain misgiving as to whether you were not stretching the idea of cultural relativity too much. Like many young people who are obvi-

ously exhilarated by symbols of revolt and seem to tend to fear the establishment of universals in behavior, you tend to hold off the establishment of the "normal" as much as possible. I am sure that this is a healthy tendency at the beginning of one's scientific career, but I think you will find that it may lead in the long run to superficiality. In this very sphere patient psychiatric work is destined to give us a more and more profound respect for the recognition of certain fundamental normalities regardless of cultural differences. meanwhile it is perfectly true that anthropology has had a healthy effect in forcing the psychiatrist not to identify his ill-defined conception of normality with specific cultural forms. It will be our not too easy task to redefine normality on a broader cultural and psychiatric basis. There is one point that may possibly not have escaped your observation, and that is that there is often an unconscious or at least an unacknowledged motive for the denial of normalities which transcend the compulsions of culture. ... One could write a very interesting paper on the usefulness of the concept of cultural relativity as a sophisticated form of what the psychiatrist somewhat brutally refers to as a flight from reality. Certainly this is not the whole story, but I have come to feel that there is far more in it than a liberal intelligence might wish to grant in the first place.

Anyway, I want to congratulate you on your intelligent grasp of the problems that you discuss and to thank you for giving me the opportunity of reading your interesting essay. Under another cover I am sending you a few reprints that you may be interested in.

Yours sincerely,
Edward Sapir

Editorial notes:

This letter was published in 1980 in *A History of Anthropology Newsletter* 7(2):8–10 under the heading, "Sapir's Last Testament on Culture and Personality." George Stocking, editor of the Newsletter, noted that the letter was reproduced (with the elision of one personal passage) "by the kind permission of Professor Selznick and Professor J. David Sapir.

Psychiatric and Cultural Pitfalls in the Business of Getting a Living (1939)

Editorial Introduction

This paper appeared as the lead article in *Mental Health*, a publication of the American Association for the Advancement of Science, discussing what physical and cultural environment might be most conducive to mental well-being. Ruth Benedict contributed a paper on cross-cultural studies of personality; Harold Lasswell wrote about politics and psychiatry; and Harry Stack Sullivan served as discussant. This was Sapir's final entry in the interdisciplinary arena that consumed much of his energy during the 1930's.

Assigned the topic of mental health's relation to the economic structure of American society, Sapir enlarged his focus to include biological and psychological determinants of behavior. He then turned to a favorite topic, the methodology of the social sciences. While economics relied on a conception of an idealized individual, "economic man," whose behaviors in aggregate were supposed to result in economic trends, psychiatry offered case histories of actual individuals, and anthropology offered a view of the cultural conditions and symbolisms in which individuals' behavior was framed. What was needed, however, was to put these insights together. Psychiatry, for example, had ignored the social and economic forces that placed some individuals in difficulty regardless of personality.

This paper turned the tables on Sapir's usual emphasis on individual cognition and creativity. The argument that individuals' emotional reactions must be understood in relation to an exterior economic context and structure shows, perhaps more conspicuously than in any other paper, that Sapir was not the methodological individualist some have thought him.

One of the paper's examples — that of the psychological effect of economic insecurity on the college professor — bore an evident relation to Sapir's personal circumstances. During the last year of his life he had to return to teaching at Yale in spite of a serious heart condition. But

although this last essay reflects his depression and precarious health, in theoretical terms it marks a further development in the innovative perspective on culture, society, and the individual which began with his critique of the "superorganic" in 1917.

Psychiatric and Cultural Pitfalls in the Business of Getting a Living

All special sciences of man's physical and cultural nature tend to create a framework of tacit assumptions which enable their practitioners to work with maximum economy and generality. The classical example of this unavoidable tendency is the science of economics, which is too intent on working out a general theory of value, production, flow of commodities, demand, price, to take time to inquire seriously into the nature and variability of those fundamental biological and psychological determinants of behavior which make these economic terms meaningful in the first place. The sum total of the tacit assumptions of a biological and psychological nature which economics makes gets petrified into a standardized conception of "economic man," who is endowed with just those motivations which make the known facts of economic behavior in our society seem natural and inevitable. In this way the economist gradually develops a peculiarly powerful insensitiveness to actual motivations, substituting life-like fictions for the troublesome contours of life itself.

The economist is not in the least exceptional in his unconscious procedure. Any one who deals habitually with what man makes and thinks, not because he is interested in man directly but because he wishes to find law and order in what man makes and thinks, slips, by insensible degrees, into the assumption that such regularities of form and process as he finds in selected categories of man's behavior are fundamentally due to a peculiar quality of self-determination in those categories rather than to the ceaseless, eternally shifting, balancing of concretely definable motivations of particular people at particular times and in particular places. The very terminology which is used by the many kinds of segmental scientists of man indicates how remote man himself has become as a necessary concept in the methodology of the respective sciences. Thus, in economics, one speaks of "the flow of commodities," without special concern for a close factual analysis of modifications of demand which, if studied in their full realism, might be shown to be

due to such factors as hatred of an alien group, growth of superstition, increased interest in bawdy shows, or decline of prestige of hotel life, each of these motivational categories, in turn, opening up a series of inquiries into intricate problems of interpersonal relations, direct and symbolic. In aesthetics, one can speak of "necessary balances of lines of tone masses" almost as though one were the Demiurge of the universe in whispered conversation with the law of gravitation, apparently without a suspicion that defects of eye and ear structure or highly indirect imputations of "meaning" due to the vacillations of fashion have anything to do with the "aesthetic" problem of how to create "satisfactory balances" of an "aesthetic order." In linguistics, abstracted speech sounds, words and the arrangement of words have come to have so authentic a vitality that one can speak of "regular sound changes" and "loss of genders" without knowing or caring who opened their mouths, at what time, to communicate what to whom.

Science vs. Man. — The purpose of these remarks is simply to indicate that science itself, when applied to the field of normal human interest, namely man and his daily concerns, creates a serious difficulty for those of us who find it profitable to envisage a true "psychiatric science" or "science of interpersonal relations."¹ The nature of this difficulty may be defined as follows. Inasmuch as science has greater prestige in our serious thinking than daily observation, however shrewd or accurate, or than those obscure convictions about human beings which result from a ceaseless experiencing of them, there tends to grow up in the minds of the vast majority of us a split between two kinds of "knowledge" about man. Every fragmentary science of man, such as economics or political science or aesthetics or linguistics, needs at least a minimum set of assumptions about the nature of man in order to house the particular propositions and records of events which belong to its selected domain. These fragmentary pictures of man are not in intelligible or relevant accord with each other nor do they, when wilfully integrated by a sort of philosophic fiat, give us anything remotely resembling the tightly organized and fatefully moving individuals that we cannot but know and understand up to a certain point, however much it may be to our advantage not to know and understand them at all. A student of aesthetics finds it very much to his advantage to make certain sweeping assumptions about the "aesthetic nature" of man in order to give himself maximum clearance for the development of those propositions and for the record and explanation of those events which professionally interest him, those that work with him and those that have preceded

him in a prestige-laden tradition. Random observations about "beautiful" things or structures, such as arrangements of ideas, such observations as might be made by a child or by any naive person who cannot define aesthetic terms and who has no conscious place for them in that personally useful vocabulary which defines his universe, tend to be dismissed as marginal to the proper concern of aesthetics, as untutored, as of impure conceptual manufacture. The aesthetician is amused or annoyed, as the case may be. He has to be almost a genius to be instructed. The less fateful is the split between his professional conception of man as a beauty-discerning and beauty-creating organism and his humble perceptions of man as a psychobiological organism, the less difficulty will he have to surrender the rigid outlines of his science to the fate of all historical constructs. Such a synthetist is secretly grateful for anything that jars him out of the certainties and necessities of his ghost-inhabited science and brings him back to the conditionalities of an experience that was too hastily and magnificently integrated ("cured," the psychiatrist might say) by his science in the first place.

It is not really difficult, then, to see why anyone brought up on the austerities of a well-defined science of man, must, if he is to maintain his symbolic self-respect, become more and more estranged from man himself. Economic laws become more "real" than certain people who try to make a living; the necessities of the "State" get to outweigh in conceptual urgency the desire of the vast majority of human beings to be bothered as little as possible; the laws of syntax acquire a higher reality than the immediate reality of the stammerer who is trying to "get himself across"; the absolute beauty, or lack of it, of an isolated picture or isolated poem becomes a more insistent item in the diary of the cosmos than the mere fact of whether there is anybody around who is moved by it or not.

Now fantasied universes of self-contained meaning are the very finest and noblest substitutes we can ever devise for that precise and living insight into the nooks and crannies of the real that must be forever denied us. But we must not reverse the arrow of experience and claim for experience's imaginative condensations the primacy in an appeal to our loyalty, which properly belongs to our perceptions of men and women as the ultimate units of value in our day-to-day view of the world. If we do not thus value the nuclei of consciousness from which all science, all art, all history, all culture, have flowed as symbolic by-products in the humble but intensely urgent business of establishing meaningful relationships between actual human beings, we commit per-

sonal suicide. The theology of economics or aesthetics or of any other ordered science of man weighs just as heavily on us, whether we know it or not, as the outmoded theologies of gods and their worshippers. Not for one single moment can we allow ourselves to forget the experienced unity of the individual. No formulations about man and his place in society which do not prove strictly and literally accurate when tested by the experience of the individual can have more than a transitory or technical authority. Hence we need never fear to modify, prune, extend, redefine, rearrange, and reorient our sciences of man as social being, for these sciences cannot point to an order of nature that has meaning apart from the directly experienced perceptions and values of the individual.

"Economic Man." — Let us consider the meaning of the problem of "earning a living." It is not a simple problem, though it is relatively so for the economist. If the economist hears that A gets a salary of \$1500.00 a year, his scientific curiosity does not go much beyond trying to ascertain if this income is a normal one for the services that A is said to be rendering. Should he discover that A is a "full professor" at a "university," he will note the fact that the salary is well below the average fee paid in America for the kind of work that "full professors" do. Beyond such observation he will have nothing to offer, though, if he is himself a professor or the son of a professor, he may allow himself a twinge of concern at the imperilment of the economic status of a peculiarly valuable class of person in the cultural scene of contemporary America. But, strictly speaking, A's salary of \$1500.00 a year must be interpreted as an item in the strictly economic process of balancing the demand for such services as A is rendering, or is supposed to be rendering, with the supply of individuals capable of rendering them at as low a figure as A is willing to accept. It will not be important for the economist to try to find out if A's salary is as low as it is because he is a member of a poor religious sect which is not in a position to pay more for the full professors of its sectarian university or universities (such curiosity is as unseemly for an economist as would be the desire of a physicist to know whether his falling body was blue or bright red, though the economist might allow his less austere colleague, the sociologist, to indulge in a few musings on the subject) or because A is, as a matter of fact, a millionaire with an educational hobby which he feels he ought to give his fellow citizens the benefit of at small cost to "society." You can't get any more of a personality sketch of A out of the

economist than that A just does happen to illustrate a somewhat unusual equilibration of the law of supply and demand.

In fairness to the economist it must be stated that just as he fails to be seriously perturbed over the singularly low economic standard of A, *qua* full professor, so he fails to be greatly saddened by the spectacle of B's efforts to get along on \$500.00 a year, even if it can be proved that B is married, has three or four children, and is not a millionaire in disguise. Should B also prove to be a full professor, the economist might be pardoned if there grows up in him a more serious uneasiness as to the imperilment of the economic status of a class in which, being a member of it, he has after all a little more than a merely mathematical interest. But no, B is not a full professor, he is merely a farmer and the economist is quickly reassured that all's well with B, or, if B really is having a desperately hard time of it, at least all's well with B *qua* farmer, for he finds that B's income is snugly within the normal limits of income earned by American agriculturists — among the most useful of our various classes of citizens, he is quite willing to add. Here too the economist is very skillful in placing B at any one of those strategic corners of space and time in which certain factors of supply and demand get properly equilibrated. Anyway, if his irrelevant "personalistic," not to say humanitarian, interests are too greatly aroused, he can take quick comfort in the fact that the average income of the American farmer is well above \$500.00 a year, so that B, a member of the farmer class, ought not to be too greatly discouraged. Or, if B is not easily reassured, at least those who tend to be worried about B should cease to be so. Of course B may be a peculiarly shiftless person, but the economist will not press that point. It is better to be statistically magnanimous and to content oneself with reflecting that B just does happen to stand at one of the less rewarding corners of space and time. There is no need to develop an essentially "unscientific" interest in B's personality, in his "cultural" background, and in the nature of the value judgments and "symbolisms" of society re B that add up to so trifling an emolument for this particular farmer.

In still further fairness to the economist it should be said that not only is he prepared to accept as "normal" or "natural" incomes that an ordinary person or even a sociologist might describe as "subnormal" or "unnatural," from an angle of observation that subtends much more than the field of operation of "economic laws," but he is also prepared to accept as entirely "normal" or "natural" incomes that are fantastically beyond the ability of anyone to "handle" except by way of the

most peculiar, remote, picturesque, symbolic, in short, dream-like or make-believe, extensions of the personalities of the recipients of such incomes. Should any impertinent, thoroughly unscientific, snooper whisper to the economist that, so far as he can see, C's \$500,000.00 income (in virtue of his vice-presidency of the X bank plus shareholding in the Y company plus investment in the Z oil-fields of Mexico plus a long list of other services rendered his fellowmen) seems to be strangely unaffected by the tissue of physical and psychological performances of the psychophysical entity or organism called C, it making apparently little difference whether C is on hand to instruct one of his secretaries to cut his coupons or is resting up in the Riviera, the economist loses patience. If he then speaks at all, it is to point out that, regardless of C's to him unknown and forever unknowable personality, C does, as a matter of fact, render just such services as society is "agreed" naturally flow from the rendering of these services and that the supposed "facts" about C are of no more interest to him than are, to a professor of alphabetology, certain reports about bad boys scrawling obscene words on a brick wall instead of turning out Shakespearian plays.

In desperation, then, let us admit that the economist is right and reflect, once and for all, that the economist is no more interested in human beings than the alphabetologist is interested in literature, the numismatist in the morality of the kings of Bactria, or the theologian in the chemical rationalization of miracles; that is to say, respectively *qua* economist, *qua* alphabetologist, *qua* numismatist, *qua* theologian. These various scientists have their "universes of discourse" that they are extremely proud of, through the instrumentality of which they secure valuable definitions of their egos and at least partially earn their living, and there's an end of it. The necessarily fragmentary, philosophically arbitrary "universe of discourse" gets provided with an excellent terminology, more or less self-contained and self-consistent principles, and some insight, however tangential, into a highly selective phase of human behavior (including human opinion about divine behavior).

There is no mischief in all this, once it is clearly understood that the scientist of man has chief concern for science, not for man, and that all science, partly for better and partly for worse, has the self-feeding voracity of an obsessive ritual. We must give up our naive faith in the ability of the scientist to tell us anything about man that is not expressible in terms of the verbal definitions and operations that prevail in his "universe of discourse" — a beautiful, dream-like domain that has fitful

reminiscences of man as an experiencing organism but is not, and cannot be, immersed in the wholeness of that experience. Hence, while economics can tell us much about the technical operations that prevail in the conceptually well-defined "economic field," a specific type of "universe of discourse" which has only fragmentary and, at many points, even a fictional relation to the universe of experienced behavior, it cannot give us a working conception of *man* even in his abstracted role of earning a living, for the experiential implications of earning a living are not seen by the economist as part of his scientific concern.

Man as Man. — But it is precisely these experiential implications that we non-economists are interested in. We want to know what making a living (just about making it or failing to make it or making it a hundred times over) does to A and B and C. To what extent is the specific economic functioning of A and B and C of importance, not only to themselves and those immediately dependent on them, but to all human beings who come in contact with them and, beyond these empirical kinds of importance, to the eye of science? Not, to be sure, to the eye of any safely ticketed science that has its conceptual vested interests to conserve but to an inclusive science of man, one that does the best it can to harbor the value judgments of experiencing human beings within its own catholic "universe of discourse." Such a science will perhaps be called a dangerous or treacherous congeries of opinions, ranging all the way from the feeble aspirations of theologically or classically tinted humanism to the sentimental, direct-action interferences of mental hygiene. But we need not be so pessimistic. For centuries the only escape from fragmentarism was into the too ambitious dream-worlds of philosophy, worlds defined by the assumption that the human intelligence could behold the universe instead of twinkling within. Now that philosophy is being progressively redefined as a highly technical critique of the validity or conditionality of judgments, it is interesting to see two disciplines — each of them highly apologetic about its scientific credentials — which are taking on the character of inclusive perception of human events and personal relations in as powerfully conceptualized form as possible. These condensations of human experience are cultural anthropology and psychiatry — both of them poorly chosen terms, but we can do no better for the moment.

Cultural Anthropology and Psychiatry. — Each of these disciplines has its special "universe of discourse" but at least this universe is so broadly conceived that, under favorable circumstances, either of them can take on the character of a true science of man. Through the sheer weight of

cultural detail and, more than that, through the far-reaching personality-conditioning implications of variations in the forms of socialized behavior, the cultural anthropologist may, if he chooses, advance from his relatively technical problems of cultural definition, distribution, organization, and history to more intimate problems of cultural meaning, both for individuals and for significantly definable groups of individuals. And the psychiatrist may, if he chooses, advance from theories of personality disorganization to theories of personality organization, which, in the long run, have little meaning unless they are buttressed by a comprehension of the cultural setting in which the individual ceaselessly struggles to express himself. The Anthropologist, in other words, needs only to trespass a little on the untilled acres of psychology, the psychiatrist to poach a few of the uneaten apples of anthropology's Golden Bough.

So far the great majority of both kinds of scientists – if that proud classification be granted them – have feared to advance very far into the larger fields that lie open before them, and for a good reason. The fear of losing the insignia of standing in their respective disciplines, still dangerously insecure in the hierarchy of science, leads to an anxious snobbery which is easily misunderstood as modesty or self-restraint. But at least they have this great advantage, so far as the study of man is concerned: neither, in his heart of hearts, believes that the economist or the political scientist or the aesthete or any other sort of technical expert in conceptually isolated realms or aspects of man's behavior is in a position to talk real sense about that behavior. An anthropologist knows that you can't talk economics without talking about religion or superstition at the same time; the psychiatrist knows that you can't talk economics without dropping some rather important hints about mental health and disease. On the whole, it seems safest to keep such knowledge in one's heart of hearts and to act as though one were content to carry on from where the economist left off. Therefore, as culturalists, let us not be too much concerned with what sorts of cultural universes A and B and C are living in; as psychiatrists, let us not be too much concerned with what the play of "economic forces" is doing to A and B and C and be satisfied to mumble, as occasion arises, something quite discreet about how an income of \$500.00 a year would not seem to discourage B's paranoid trends or about how poor C's Don Juanism, with its secret unhappiness, might possibly have been mitigated if he had only had an income of \$5000.00 a year to play with. It is so easy

to be paranoid on \$500.00 a year and it is so difficult to be a Don Juan — and C, by the way, is not an Apollo — on \$500.00 a year.

Economic Factors in Personal Adjustment. — Everybody really knows a good deal about what economics has to do with the personal distribution of "cultural patterns" and with mental health. The facts are pitifully obvious. Professors who earn only \$1500.00 a year cannot go to the opera very often and must therefore go in for plain living and high thinking. If they have good health, are happily married, and have more than average intelligence, they and their wives can manage to stave off envy of the banker and real-estate agent and their respective wives, mingle sturdy Puritanism with a subscription to "The Nation," and construct a pretty good cultural world for themselves. After all \$1500.00 is three times as much as \$500.00. But if their health is not too good, if they are not too happily married, and if their intelligence, as generally proves to be the case, is about average, then it is to be feared that \$1500.00 is not quite sufficient to buy themselves enough of cultural participation to stave off that corroding envy of the banker and real-estate agent and their respective wives which, psychiatrists tell us, is not very good for either the digestive tract or the personality organization. So, one surmises, a salary of \$1500.00 a year for a full professor may have a good deal to do with the gradual cultural impoverishment of A's universe. A normal vitality will mask the degenerative cultural and psychiatric process from himself, his neighbors, the trustees of the university and, above all, the economist, who, having been unpleasantly jarred for a moment by his threat to the salary curve of full professors, need never think of him again.

At first A's difficulties find their solution in a slightly apologetic vein of irony, which cultivated visitors find rather charming. A certain school of social psychologists might at this point even prove that A was quite appreciably enriching culture both for himself and society. (Few would have the hardihood to suggest that he was enriching the cultural world of his wife, though his children might be robust enough to pick up a few crumbs of value or, perhaps, more accurately, a few ambivalently colored experiences which the softening retrospect of later years will transmute into crumbs of value — if not indeed into a philosophy, so strong is the magic of Illusion.) But A's charm does not wear well, no better than the loveliness, once so fashionable, of the incipiently tubercular flush. Any competent novelist may step in at this point and tell us about the fascinating story of his growing sense of isolation, his

growing morbidity, the growing concern of the trustees of the university for the mental health of his students, his inevitable, though regrettable, dismissal, and of how, in sheer desperation, he founded a new religion (it was a sectarian university after all), gave Robinson Jeffers a chance to write a masterpiece (which the economist's wife, if not the economist, can read with comfortable gusto), thereby again adding materially, though in a more passive sense, to America's store of cultural values, when, apparently out of blue sky, his wife, unable to determine whether she loved him or hated him, committed suicide. Apparently the equilibrating power of \$1500.00 a year was not enough to avert the tragedy. Dare either the culturalist or the psychiatrist say that a salary raise of \$500.00 would have had no cultural or psychiatric importance? The feeble vein of irony might have grown into a sturdy fortress, for with an extra \$500.00 he could have just managed to buy his wife a dress barely good enough to have them go to the annual tea given by the banker (we forgot to say that he was one of the trustees of the university) for the express purpose of having faculty and trustees get to know each other. As it is, he was morbidly isolated, she no less. And, if the truth were known, Robinson Jeffers had a lot of other things to write about.

All of this, the economist insists — and quite rightly — is neither here nor there. If sociologists want to worry about such things, let them. They don't have to be so scientific. But most sociologists dearly wish to be scientific. They collect case histories, to be sure, but it is generally seen to that they contain just enough data to make it possible to discover general truths (such as that full professors in southern universities are less amply rewarded for their services than in northern universities) but not enough data to make A intelligible. That would be invading the field of the novelist and no scientist, *qua* scientist, can afford to do that. So we must turn to the psychiatrist, it seems, and ask him to be so kind as to add the following law or observation or principle (the exact terminological placement of this truth to be decided on later): "Whoever is sophisticated enough, sensitive enough and representative enough of our country's higher culture to get himself appointed a full professor in one of the universities of said country, cannot, if he is married, be expected, in view of the known cost of many requisite symbols of status, to be either happy or comfortable at a salary which is less than a quarter (the figure is merely a random suggestion) of the income of the averagely prosperous banker or real-estate agent of the community in

which he lives, it being presumed that the remaining three-quarters (or other suitable figure) be more or less adequately compensated for by such substitutive values as membership in scientific societies and the habit of reading difficult but not too expensive literature. It is suggested that \$1500.00 a year is well below the safe minimum for such a person. In the absence of powerful personality-preserving factors, such as unusually robust health or a far more than averagely happy marriage, so low a salary must be considered a definite factor in the possible deterioration of the professor's personality."

If the psychiatrist exclaims that this is mixing psychiatry and economics with a vengeance, we must gently remind him that personalities live in tangible environments and that the business of making a living is one of the bed-rock factors in their environmental adjustment. We are not in a position to distinguish sharply between innate or organismal strains, physical and psychological, and so-called external strains. They come to us fatally blended in practice and it is a wise man who can presume to say which is of more decisive importance. For all practical purposes a too low income is at least as significant a datum in the causation of mental ill-health as a buried Oedipus complex or sex trauma. Why should not the psychiatrist be frank enough to call attention to the great evils of unemployment or of lack of economic security? His recognized concern for the well-being of the individual gives him every right to be heard, where ordinary opinion or common sense is often dismissed as governed by sentimental prejudices.

Now as to the starveling farmer and his \$500.00 income, he is too busy, from dawn to bed-time, to know whether his health is good or bad and he hasn't the faintest notion whether he is happily married or not. Imperious task follows task in an all-day grind, he barely manages, he cannot pay off his mortgage, he is thankful for reprieves. The notion of mental ill-health is a luxury to him, he'd rather suspect himself of laziness — there's so much to be done — just as he'd rather suspect the other fellow of being a little weak in the head than waste breath on the ill-effects of extreme poverty. His class comes in relatively little contact with the psychiatrist and the mental hygienist. You either somehow manage or you "bust." If you manage, there's little need to graduate the psychological quality of the performance. Happiness, soul-weariness, apathy, envy, petty greed, are just so many novelistic fancies, utterly dwarfed by the solid facts that the potatoes didn't do so well this year, that the cows must be milked as usual, that the market for hay is unex-

pectedly poor. It is only when the sober, inevitable, corroding impoverishment of the farmer's personality is lit up by some spectacular morbidity of sex or religion that the psychiatrist or novelist or poet is attracted to him. The far more important dullness of daily routine, of futile striving, of ceaseless mental thwarting, does not seem to clamor for the psychiatrist's analysis.

All this is known to be "uninteresting," hence we prettify the facts as best we can with shreds of folk-lore, survivals of a pioneering culture that had a self-containedness and satisfyingness of its own. That culture has rotted away and our farmer is little more than a disgruntled economic drudge and a cultural parasite. It is not only worth the psychiatrist's while to inquire into these conditions and report on them, it is his duty to do so. Perhaps we could better understand morbid religious frenzies, lynch law, and other devastating phenomena of contemporary American life if we looked more closely into the psychological tissue of our rural life. "North of Boston" and Faulkner's exhibits need to be supplemented by the sober case history and by the economic-psychiatric appraisal of the conditions of life in our rural sections.

As to C, the interest of the psychiatrist in his moods, conflicts, and aspirations is perennial. He has his troubles, it seems, his surfeits and futilities, and we are all glad to know that the psychiatrist is eager to put his technical skill at his disposal. All human life is sacred — to hark back to a nineteenth century prejudice — and C should, most certainly, be made a happier man, if C will only let the psychiatrist define happiness, which I take to be a synonym of mental health, for him. But is it wrong to remark that for every suffering C there are many thousands of suffering A's and many thousands of suffering B's? We shall not try to fantasy what ails C, there are many admirable textbooks of psychiatry which give us a fair notion of how to be miserable though wealthy. Perhaps C too inclines to suffer from an economic ill — that obscure, perverse, built feeling which, the psychiatrist tells us, so often festers in one's heart of hearts when one tries to balance one's usefulness to society with the size of one's income. Here too is a chance for psychiatrists to be reasonably vocal. Is it conceivable that good mental hygiene, even expert psychiatry, may find it proper to recommend some share of income reduction for the sake of the mental health of those who are too heavily burdened by a material prosperity that far outruns their needs or, if the truth were known, their secret desires? In this mysterious realm we need further light.

Editorial Notes

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1. As some of my readers have from time to time expressed their difficulty with my non-medical use of the terms "psychiatry" and "psychiatric," I must explain that I use these terms in lieu of a possible use of "psychology" and "psychological" with explicit stress on the total personality as the central point of reference in all problems of behavior and in all problems of "culture" (analysis of socialized patterns). Thus, a segmental behavior study, such as a statistical inquiry into the ability of children of the age group 7-11 to learn to read, is not in my sense a properly "psychiatric" study because the attention is focused on a fundamentally arbitrary objective, however important or interesting, one not directly suggested by the study of personality structure and the relations of defined personalities to each other. Such a study may be referred to "psychology" or "applied psychology" or "education" or "educational psychology." Equally marginal to "psychiatry" in my sense is such a study in the externalized patterning of "collective behavior" as the analysis of a ritual or handicraft, whether descriptively or historically. Studies of this type may be referred to "ethnology" or "culture history" or "sociology."

On the other hand, a systematic study of the acquirement of reading habits with reference to whether they help or hinder the development of fantasy in children of defined personality type is a properly "psychiatric" study because the concept of the total personality is necessarily utilized in it. A close study of the symbolisms of ritual or handicraft, provided these symbolisms are discussed as having immediate relevance for our understanding of personality types, is also a truly "psychiatric" study. "Personality" and "personalistic" would be adequate terms but are too uncouth for practical use. My excuse for extending the purely "medical" connotation of the terms "psychiatry" and "psychiatric" is that psychiatrists themselves, in trying to understand the wherefore of aberrant behavior, have had to look far more closely into basic problems of personality structure, of symbolism, and of fundamental human interrelationships than have either the "psychologists" or the various types of "social scientists."

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Section Two
The Psychology of Culture

Judith T. Irvine, editor

Acknowledgements

The work that follows is a reconstruction of a course of lectures Edward Sapir gave at Yale University, lectures that were to have been the basis of a book he had contracted to publish with Harcourt, Brace. Most of the material used for the reconstruction comes from student notes, collected and microfilmed shortly after Sapir's death with a view toward eventual publication.

In embarking on this task I was initially somewhat daunted by the prospect of constructing a text in which, inevitably, I must put words in Sapir's mouth. I am much indebted, therefore, to the late Fred Eggan, the principal custodian of this material over the decades, who encouraged me to interweave the notes, put them in narrative form, and treat the whole as a Sapir "manuscript". I was also encouraged by the example of Charles Bally and Albert Sechehaye, without whose efforts we would never have seen Ferdinand de Saussure's *Course in General Linguistics*. Nevertheless, I have marked my own insertions so that readers will have some basis for judging for themselves degrees of certainty in the reconstruction.

There are many people who have contributed materials, encouragement, or assistance to this project. J. David Sapir first drew me in to the plans for publishing a new edition of Edward Sapir's work; he has remained a source of encouragement, as has Dell Hymes, himself a historian (as well as eminent practitioner) of linguistic anthropology and, like David Sapir, my former teacher. Both were members of the Sapir Centenary joint committee of the Linguistic Society of America and the American Anthropological Association, which selected the editorial board for *The Collected Works of Edward Sapir* (CWES).

For source materials I am indebted, first of all, to David Mandelbaum and Fred Eggan, who initially collected and preserved eleven sets of student notes from Sapir's course at Yale. Fred Eggan gave me a copy – perhaps the only one extant – of the microfilm on which the notes were recorded. Both he and David Mandelbaum also provided me with access to their own notes on all courses they took with Sapir, as well as relevant correspondence. Just before his death, Mandelbaum very kindly answered my questions about Sapir and invited me to look at his files in his office at Berkeley. I am grateful to Ruth Mandelbaum for her help in following through on that invitation and for sharing her own recollections of the Yale student cohort. The Anthropology Department of the University of California at Berkeley hospitably assisted my work in their offices.

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Judith T. Irvine

The Psychology of Culture: Editor's Introduction

Judith T. Irvine

In 1928, after a conversation with Alfred Harcourt on the Twentieth-Century Limited out of Chicago, Edward Sapir wrote to Harcourt, Brace proposing to publish a book on "The Psychology of Culture". Estimated at about 100,000 words in length, the book was to be based upon a graduate course Sapir had been giving at the University of Chicago. The course had attracted a considerable audience, drawing in psychologists as well as anthropologists and sociologists. Sapir hoped that the book, too, might appeal to a wide circle of non-professional readers.¹ The book proposal and the chapter outline accompanying it were well received, and Harcourt contracted to publish the work.

Despite Harcourt's enthusiasm for the project and Sapir's sense of its potential importance, the book was not to be. Other projects intervened, including duties which Sapir undertook for financial or administrative reasons. But the idea for the book was not merely a momentary flash of enthusiasm conceived in a heady train conversation and forgotten as soon as the train pulled into the station. Although Sapir's interest in the project appears to have fluctuated, he continued to teach and to rework the course on which it was to be based, and to refer to his intention to complete the book, until almost the end of his life. He gave the course several times after his move to Yale in 1931, and materials from the last version of the course (1936–37) suggest new ideas and a renewed excitement about the project, especially toward the end of the academic year.

The following summer (1937), after a strenuous eight weeks' teaching at the Linguistic Institute in Ann Arbor, Sapir suffered a serious heart attack and had to curtail his work effort and travel plans for his sabbatical year (1937–38). Still, in a hopeful mood in October 1937 he wrote that "it is my plan to work at 'The Psychology of Culture' during this sabbatical."² As it turned out, recurrent illness made it impossible to carry out this plan. Though he again mentioned the work in a letter of October 1938 as "a book that I have still to write",³ by that time it was

all too clear that his physical strength was waning. Sapir died in February 1939, this project and many others remaining unfinished.

Many of Sapir's unfinished works were edited and completed by his students and colleagues after his death. As early as May 1939 Sapir's widow, Jean McClenaghan Sapir, and Leslie Spier initiated plans to fulfill the Harcourt contract, so that "The Psychology of Culture" could be published posthumously.⁴ The enterprise differed from other efforts to edit Sapir's work, because no actual manuscript in Sapir's hand had been found, other than the chapter outline and correspondence he had sent to the publisher.⁵ What was proposed, therefore, was to collect sets of notes from the students who had attended the course of lectures on which the book was to have been based, and from these to "present the gist of it" as an essay.⁶

Sapir's students responded with alacrity. Under the leadership of David Mandelbaum, who had emerged as organizer of the *festschrift* eventually published as a memorial volume,⁷ eleven sets of notes were assembled and microfilmed.⁸ Elizabeth Herzog, then the wife of the ethnomusicologist George Herzog, was to have attempted the reconstruction. Although the notion of fulfilling the Harcourt contract was soon abandoned, there was considerable enthusiasm for including some version of this material in a collection of Sapir's writings (the collection published in 1949 as *Selected Writings of Edward Sapir*, edited by Mandelbaum). Commenting, for example, on a proposed table of contents for that volume, the linguist Zellig Harris assigned the highest priority on the list of Sapir's works to "The Psychology of Culture; The Outline of Sapir's course, supplemented by an integrated transcript of students' notes". "Please, as full as possible," Harris wrote.⁹

By 1946, however, it had become evident that the class notes material could not be included in *Selected Writings* after all. The task of reconstructing a text from the notes was much larger than it had seemed at first, and the resulting text would have been too long to be added to an already sizeable volume. During the next few decades, although many people expressed interest in the notes and in any synthesis that might be made of them, nothing came of the idea until the Sapir Centenary in 1984.¹⁰ With renewed interest in Sapir and the initiation of a new publication project, *The Collected Works of Edward Sapir*, which was to include as much of Sapir's academic work — published or unpublished — as possible, an attempt to integrate the student notes looked worth undertaking.

The present work is the result. It is an attempt to fulfill the hope Sapir's students, colleagues, and family have expressed over the years: that a set of lectures making a major contribution to anthropology and psychology should be made public. Though Sapir is justly renowned for the importance of his work in linguistics – and his interest in the details of linguistic analysis was almost always greater than his interest in the details of ethnological work – the extent of his commitment to rethinking theory and method in anthropology and psychology has tended to be underestimated. It is not to be measured by the number of his actual publications.¹¹ Sapir saw himself as a central contributor to the social sciences, and many of his contemporaries would have agreed. *The Psychology of Culture* was to have been an important work.

A synthesis of classroom presentations is not, of course, the same thing as the polished, carefully thought-through manuscript Sapir would himself have produced had he lived to complete this book. His class lectures must often have included spontaneous flashes of insight, tentative explorations of ideas, and off-the-cuff examples, all of which he would have meticulously checked, developed, and evaluated before presenting them in print as final intellectual judgements.¹² When these lectures were given, Sapir's ideas were still evolving, and a classroom presentation to students differs from a formal presentation to colleagues. For instance, these lectures include a few comments on Sapir's anthropological contemporaries that are sharper in tone than any he ever allowed to appear in print. Moreover, student lecture notes – which make up the vast preponderance of the source materials for the reconstruction – must surely differ from what was actually said, both in inclusiveness and in subtlety.

Nevertheless, the notes include so many passages in which one seems to hear the echo of Sapir's voice, and so many topics unrepresented or only hinted at in his published writings, that Sapir's students and others from 1939 on have seen this material as a significant part of his intellectual legacy. Most important, perhaps, is the broad scope of the lecture course and book, as compared with the essay format of his actual publications in cultural anthropology and psychology. *The Psychology of Culture* affords us a glimpse of how Sapir would have sketched a broad vista of anthropological and psychological issues. Although some of those issues are perhaps of less interest today than they were in the 1930's, on the whole Sapir's conception of culture, of anthropological method and theory, and of individuals and their relationships remains

fresh and relevant. The work is not only a document of historical interest, but a contribution to contemporary culture theory and psychological anthropology.

The Evolution of Sapir's Course

Since the material drawn upon for reconstruction comes from several different versions of Sapir's course, the resulting text necessarily masks what those differences are and in what ways the course shifted over time. It may be useful, therefore, to summarize the kinds of changes that appear in the source materials as the course evolved.¹³ The most interesting changes are those that suggest new directions in Sapir's thinking. Not all the differences among versions of the course are likely to be due to changed ideas, however. Some are more likely related to practical and pedagogical concerns.

I shall pay most attention to the Yale period, since it provides most of the material I have used in reconstructing the text. But by the time Sapir presented the course at Yale he had already given several versions of it elsewhere. The earliest was a summer course at Columbia in 1925; no detailed records of this remain, as far as I know. At the end of that summer Sapir moved to Chicago, where (in the fall of 1925) he offered a set of ten lectures derived from the Columbia course to a popular audience, a group headed by the Chicago lawyer Clarence Darrow. Following that condensed version came the regular University course on "The Psychology of Culture", first given in the winter term of 1926 and repeated several times. Since Chicago was on a quarter system, the course there occupied only 30 one-hour class meetings over ten weeks, a much shorter format than at Yale, where it was spread over a full academic year.

Arriving at Yale in 1931, Sapir did not offer the "Psychology of Culture" course immediately. Instead, he first presented portions of this material during the international seminar on "The Impact of Culture on Personality" sponsored by the Rockefeller Institute and held at Yale in 1932-33.¹⁴ The students in the seminar were young scholars in the social sciences from a variety of different countries. The idea was that these scholars, representing different cultural traditions, would combine the roles of informant and analyst, and the result would be a social science transcending the limitations of any one set of cultural assump-

tions. In leading the seminar Sapir was assisted by John Dollard, as well as a long list of visiting speakers.

Although the Rockefeller Seminar had the same title as Sapir gave to his lecture course in the following year, its format and emphasis were different. In the seminar Sapir did not attempt to lecture on the full range of topics he had discussed at Chicago and planned for the book. Participants' activities included a "nuclear course" of two lectures per week, but apparently Sapir did not give many of these lectures himself until the second semester. Concerned more with psychology than with culture per se, most of his presentations that spring relate only to portions of the second half of his book outline and the Chicago course.

It was not until 1933–34, then, that Sapir first offered a two-semester regular graduate course on the material for his book. Retaining for the time being the Rockefeller Seminar title, "The Impact of Culture on Personality", Sapir expanded his Chicago course but devoted a considerable amount of course time to student reports and discussion. Several class meetings in the fall were given over to exercises in the description and analysis of two common American cultural patterns: smoking and piano-playing (see Appendix 1). There were also assignments on definitions of "culture" and the concept of "the social", on devising cultural inventories,¹⁵ and (in the spring term) on the investigation of etiquette. Later versions of the course apparently abandoned these pedagogical exercises, or at least did not discuss them during classroom hours. The lecture component of the course was expanded instead. In 1935–36 and 1936–37 Sapir also changed the course title back to "The Psychology of Culture".

These pedagogical changes affect several portions of the reconstructed manuscript. Because the 1933 exercises on smoking and piano-playing were self-contained, easily isolated from the rest of the course, and never repeated, I have removed them from the main body of the text and placed them in an Appendix. The other assignments were not so easily isolated, and since Sapir seems to have integrated their discussion into his 1933 lecture material, I have included them likewise. Chapter 2 in particular, with its leisurely exploration of the term "social", reflects the dynamics of classroom give-and-take, as (to a lesser extent) does Chapter 12's treatment of etiquette. Although a shift from class discussion to lecture presents some difficulties for the editorial process, differences between versions of the course on these topics cannot be attributed solely or even largely to changes in Sapir's thinking.

Another difference between the 1933 and later versions of the material in Chapter 2, "The Concept of Culture in the Social Sciences", involves disciplinary issues. Perhaps because of his involvement in the interdisciplinary Rockefeller Seminar the previous year, as well as his recent experiences with the interdisciplinary activities of the Social Science Research Council, Sapir's discussion of Chapter 2's topic in 1933 has relatively little to say about the special disciplinary concerns of anthropology, preferring a more diffuse orientation to the social sciences in general. In 1935 and 1936 Sapir seems, instead, to speak to an audience of anthropologists about their own field and its problems, such as methodological difficulties in cross-cultural ethnography. The sense of anthropological audience is again apparent in Chapter 5, where the later versions of the course include a lengthy excursion into Sapir's own Nootka ethnography to illustrate cultural configurations and methods of investigating them.

Given the vagaries of student attendance and note-taking, it is probably unwise to draw many inferences from omissions in topical coverage. Still, one might notice that in Chapter 3, "'Causes' of Culture", a section on economic causes discussed in 1933 does not occur in the records for later years. The putative "causes" of cultural form discussed in this chapter – the others are race, geography, and an aprioristic psychology – are raised here only to be thoroughly and finally dismissed; conceivably, Sapir may have decided that the role of economics in culture was a different, more complicated kind of problem. Did he also change his mind as to whether economic determinants were to be entirely dismissed? The answer remains unclear. What he did say on economic "causes" in 1933 does not appear to be out of line with his published statements of later years, and he certainly never changed his mind so radically as to become an economic determinist. Yet, the 1936–37 notes show a discussion later on in the course (see Chapter 10, "The Adjustment of the Individual in Society") that closely follows a portion of his argument in the 1939 paper, "Psychiatric and Cultural Pitfalls in the Business of Getting a Living", in which large-scale economic organization appears as an independent social force impinging on the individual.¹⁶

With the exception of the matters mentioned so far, and some expansion of lectures in later years to fill class time no longer taken up by discussion of student assignments, the contents and organization of the first two thirds of the course – the material represented in Chapters 1 through 8 – remained quite stable during the Yale years. Evidently

Sapir had settled on the view of culture he wanted to present (Part I, chapters 1–6), and on what he wanted to say about the concept of personality (chapters 7 and 8 in Part II). Up to this point in the book, culture and the individual are discussed rather separately. It is the remaining chapters that explore their nexus and clinch the argument; and the three Yale versions of this discussion differ considerably. Sapir's ideas in this culminating portion of the course seem still to have been evolving. In the later versions of the course he revised the organization of the last two months' lectures and added new material.

These changes had major implications for the thrust of Sapir's book. They also created editorial problems. Because the student notes from different years are not compatibly organized, and because Sapir's new ideas are represented only in the 1936–37 notes, the final chapters of the book proved difficult to reconstruct. I have had to rely more heavily than elsewhere on Sapir's published writings and letters of the same period (1937–39) – and on my own interpretation – to fill in the gaps. Material with which Sapir had concluded the course in earlier years, including much of his discussion of symbolism, could not be smoothly integrated into the 1937 discussion.

My solution was to move the earlier material out into separate chapters (12 and 13). Thus the final (1937) version of the course ends with Chapter 11. Part III is an addendum, representing earlier conclusions. It is not that Sapir had come to disagree with the details of what he had then said, but that he did not use them to conclude the course. Unfortunately, the evidence as to how he actually did conclude it in the final lecture of 1937 is relatively scanty. Only a few sketchy notes on that lecture survive.

The Plan and Purpose of the Book

Because of the lack of a strong concluding statement in the reconstructed text, it may be worthwhile to summarize the book's argument here.

There can be little doubt that Sapir envisioned his proposed book as a major theoretical statement of cultural anthropology, as that field had been defined by Franz Boas and his students. Many of the book's concerns were shared by fellow members of the Boas school, and some of the material in chapters 3 and 4 (the discussion of culture, race, and geography, and the critique of culture-trait inventories) overlaps sub-

stantially with statements by others. But although not all the ideas in the book are unique to Sapir, it is perhaps insufficiently recognized today how much he contributed to their discussion. For example, his conception of cultural patterning and configuration, and their relation to function, were developed prior to the appearance of Benedict's *Patterns of Culture*, but not published in detail until now (see Chapter 5), although he had presented them in letters, lectures, and colloquia. And as Benedict's book did in 1933, Sapir's 1928 plan for *The Psychology of Culture* was to explore the relationship between the patterns of culture and the psychology of individuals — though with a different conception of what the relationship was, as his critique of Benedict's work reveals (see Chapter 9). Thus the fact that Sapir's sense of cultural anthropology's agenda was shared with some of his fellow Boasians does not diminish the originality of his contribution.

As his contemporaries often recognized, Sapir's expertise in linguistics gave him a special perspective that extended into the rest of his anthropological work. One way in which language occupies an important place in his cultural anthropology is that he so frequently cites it as a prime example of a cultural phenomenon. Indeed, in the present book discussions of language appear again and again, for that reason. These discussions of language structure and use serve Sapir's arguments about culture in several ways: linguistic examples are drawn upon to illustrate arguments about culture; the organization of cultural patterns is deemed analogous to the organization of grammatical forms, with lexicon providing a key to the patterns' psychological reality (see, especially, Chapter 5); and conversational interaction emerges as the locus of cultural dynamics (Chapter 10). One might also suspect that Sapir's understanding of language's systematicity, and the relation between form and meaning in language, contribute at a more subtle level to his ideas about cultural configurations and function — even to his ideas about the processes of cultural change (Chapter 6).

Yet, the originality of the book does not stem only from the influence of linguistics in it, but also from Sapir's conceptions of "culture" and "psychology" themselves and the epistemological issues relating to them.

To explore "the psychology of culture", the Yale course material divides into two roughly equal parts: a discussion of the concept of culture and a discussion of psychology. The rationale for this organization may perhaps be best understood by a glance at Sapir's 1930 Hanover Conference paper, which seesaws between culture and personality in

order to show that an exploration of the one necessarily leads to a consideration of the other. They are two poles of analytical interest — two approaches to the same observational subject matter, namely human behavior. Like the conference paper, the book points to the theoretical and methodological problems that arise if “culture” and “individual psychology” are contrastively understood. Instead, each is to be understood in ways that lead toward the other.

In the first half of the book Sapir defines “culture” in terms of ideas and values, organized in conceptual systems. From the beginning he bases this view of culture on an argument that — in any society — individuals will represent society’s values differently. Culture rests, therefore, on selective valuation, and on an imaginative projection of ideals and wishes which some social subgroups will appear to fulfill more than others do (Chapter 1). While a psychological approach to culture is of course a hallmark of Boasian anthropology, Sapir’s presumption of intra-societal variation as basic to the very concept of culture is clearly his own, as is his emphasis on imagination.

The methodological and theoretical importance of individual variation is a subject Sapir had been exploring at least since 1917 (in “Do We Need the ‘Superorganic?’”, his reply to Kroeber [1917]), and it occupies much of the present work as well, especially Chapter 2. There, in an argument clearly continuous with his 1917 paper, Sapir points out the problematic methodological abstractions involved in moving from the observation of individuals’ behavior to a statement of cultural pattern pertaining to society. It is a fallacy, he contends, to identify culture with physical phenomena, such as material objects or outward behavior. Instead, culture resides in the *significance* of these, and in the conceptual pattern underlying them. It is also a fallacy to identify culture with society, in the sense of some aggregate of people. Despite the fact that anthropologists must consider cultural meanings to have a social (as opposed to a private) frame of reference, Sapir warns that “society” is not a physical or observational given, but a conceptual construct. As such it influences the behavior of even the most isolated individual.

Despite its social frame of reference, then, culture must not be assumed to be uniformly shared among some aggregate of people. Everyone does not know the same things, and the significance they attribute to those things will not be identical, since it must always depend in part on individual experience. Yet, the systems of symbols through which people interact operate with reference to a community and its sanctions.

These symbols enable people with quite different personal experiences to participate in the life of the larger group. Through symbols an individual can come to benefit from other participants' special knowledge, and even, sometimes, to believe that everyone shares understandings of the meanings of symbols when they actually share only the forms (see Chapter 9).

If Sapir's conception of culture points inward, toward the psychology of the socialized individual interacting with others, his conception of individual psychology points outward, toward socialization and interaction. It is as much a fallacy, to him, to study psychology as if the individual existed in isolation, as it is to study culture as if individuals had no relevance. Sapir concedes that an individual's temperament may be influenced by factors of biology or prenatal experience, in ways not yet well understood. From the beginning, however, the child interacts with and adapts to a social world, and his or her psychology cannot be understood without reference to its cultural patterns and symbolism.

Much of Chapter 7's discussion of "personality" clearly parallels the 1934 encyclopedia article of the same title (Sapir 1934a). Chapter 8's discussion of Jung, however, is not represented in any of Sapir's work published elsewhere, apart from a brief book review (Sapir 1923i) written much earlier. Like many other intellectuals of the 1920's and 1930's Sapir had become interested in psychology and psychiatry, and this interest has been well known; but the depth of his intellectual appreciation of Jung has not been obvious heretofore. Jung describes personality as a system, a psychological organization interacting with and adapting to an external world. This view of psychology must have appealed to Sapir as he searched for a conception of culture that would be realistic in terms of the individual. Despite the close attention Sapir gives to Jung's work in Chapter 8, however, he does not in the end rest content with Jung's analysis, or even with his own revised version of it. The psychology Sapir arrives at in *The Psychology of Culture* is a synthesis that derives not only from Jung, but also from Koffka's Gestalt psychology, from Sullivan's interpersonal psychiatry, and from his own studies of linguistic symbolism.

"Personality", in Sapir's usage, is as much a cognitive organization as an emotional one. Chapters 9 and 10 explore the relationships this organization has with culture. There are three:

(1) **Personality as model, or metaphor, for culture.** As he wrote in 1934 ("The Emergence of the Concept of Personality in a Study of Cultures"), "the more fully one tries to understand a culture, the more it

seems to take on the characteristics of a personality organization." If personality is understood as a systematic psychological organization depending on constellations of symbols – an organization in which each part is interconnected with other parts, and which interacts with an external world – then, in these respects, it is analogous to the concept of culture Sapir had presented in earlier chapters. At a time when some anthropologists still thought of culture as an assemblage of traits, a psychiatry that emphasized the systematicity of personality must have seemed a useful model.

More specifically, Jung's typology of personalities, classified according to the nature of their organization and their interaction with their environment, provides Sapir with an analogy for a typology of cultures. The two levels are not to be confused, however. In a society having an "introverted" culture there is no special reason to suppose individuals have introverted personalities (see Chapter 9).

(2) "As-if" Personalities: Cultural systems provide normative standards for behavior. The patterns of culture conventionalize the forms of behavior deemed acceptable, within a community, for its particular range of social occasions. In so doing, Sapir argues, the cultural patterns suggest a normative personality (or personalities) – the kind of person who would behave in that way even if not required to by convention. The individual who conforms to these behavioral conventions thus behaves *as if* he or she had that personality, or those motives, regardless of what the actual motives or opinions might be (see Chapter 9 and Sapir's 1926 conference presentation, "Notes on Psychological Orientation in a Given Society"). Just as cultures differ in their behavioral conventions, so they differ in "as-if" personalities. These "as-if" personalities must not be confused with an individual's actual personality, Sapir insists (attributing that error to Benedict and Mead). The "as-if" personality is merely an external standard, a frame of reference that is part of the environment to which an individual must adapt.

(3) Personalities' actions and interactions give rise to cultural meanings. Without subscribing to a "great man" theory of history, ever since the 1917 debate with Kroeber Sapir had emphasized the role of the creative individual in culture. A personality is both an organized system and an integrative mechanism, he argues. Shaped in terms provided by the specific patterns of culture to which an individual is exposed, a personality contributes, in turn, to the re-shaping of the patterns themselves. From his or her experience each individual extracts significant uniformities, systematizes them, and bases actions on them. In the process, personal

significances may influence cultural ones, depending on an individual's circumstances and opportunities to affect the experiences of others.

Though I have summarized it only roughly, this argument appears many times in Sapir's work, from 1917 to the several versions of the "Psychology of Culture" course. In 1933–34, the emphasis is on symbols as mediators between individual and society (Chapter 12). The constellations of a symbol's meanings shift, he suggests, between different individuals as well as between different cultural systems. Yet, private symbolisms may come to take on a wider, hence social, significance. In 1933 Sapir says little about how this influence can come about; in 1937, he situates it in the specific social interactions of individuals — thus inserting a situational, interactional level of analysis between the psychology of individuals and the abstracted patterns of societies (Chapter 10). Influenced by Harry Stack Sullivan's interpersonal psychiatry, Sapir now argued that what we can consider "culture" to be emerges from the interactions of specific individuals, and the symbols involved in those interactions. In a discussion partly replicated in his 1937 publication, "The Contribution of Psychiatry to an Understanding of Behavior in Society" (a paper given in a symposium of psychiatrists, including Sullivan), Sapir seems to have told his 1937 class:

Cultural considerations alone can never explain what happens from day to day — they are inadequate for predicting or interpreting any particular act of an individual. The reason for this, in a nutshell, is that in those particular acts the individual is not adjusting to "society", but to interpersonal relationships. Faced, therefore, with the difficulty of segregating the psychological and the social systems, and convinced that the gap between the sociological approach and the psychological approach must be filled and both systems must be used, I find that I am particularly fond of Dr. Harry Stack Sullivan's pet phrase of "interpersonal relations"...

The study of "interpersonal relations" is the problem of the future. It demands that we study seriously and carefully just what happens when A meets B — given that each is not only physiologically defined, but each also has memories, feelings, understandings, and so on about the symbols they can and must use in their interaction... In any [specific] situation when two people are talking, they create a cultural structure. Our task, as anthropologists, will be to determine what are the potential contents of the culture that results from these interpersonal relations in these situations.¹⁷

Sapir did not end the 1937 course with that statement. Instead, as in earlier years and in his 1928 chapter outline (the prospectus for Harcourt), he took up a subject then prominent in some schools of psychiatry and anthropology: the concept of "primitive mentality" (Chapter 11). A work on the "psychology of culture" in the 1930's could scarcely omit discussing the influential notions of Freud, Lévy-Bruhl, and Mali-

nowski, authors whose work must have dominated many readers' conceptions of what culture and psychology might have to do with one another. Although he had discussed Freudian psychiatry elsewhere (see, for instance, his 1917 reviews of Freud and Pfister), Sapir's published writings heretofore had said little about the work of Lévy-Bruhl or Malinowski. In the book and in the course, he evidently intended to present a comprehensive critique of these three authors' ideas. The point was that there could be no such thing as a primitive mentality at all.

As the end of Chapter 11 shows, Sapir shifted away from the concept of "primitive mentality" to make a concluding statement for the 1937 course as a whole. He seems to have alluded to the individual's creative integration of cultural forms — "the springs for art in every human being", as the class notes put it — and returned to the argument that the individual's tendency to expression may, under certain conditions, give rise to or influence cultural patterns. Regrettably, very few notes on this concluding passage survive.

In sum, although some of the ideas in this book can also be found in Sapir's published essays, these lectures provided him with an opportunity to explore some of them more fully and to place them in a broadly comprehensive argument. Other ideas, and the breadth of the terrain he covers here, are not to be found in his previously available work, and so must add to our sense of his contribution. Examining the evolution of the course sheds light on the development of his ideas in the last decade of his life, for he was still actively engaged in thinking about the "psychology of culture" right up to the end. Whether he had finally arrived at a formulation that really satisfied him, however, we shall never know.

Sources and Editorial Procedures

The principal source materials for this project were fifteen sets of student notes taken in Sapir's course on "The Psychology of Culture". Eleven sets were available on the Yale microfilm, a copy of which was given me by Fred Eggan. Eggan had been given the microfilm by Louis Wirth, who had received it (or copies of the actual notes) from Elizabeth Herzog sometime before June 1942.¹⁸ Apparently, there was some possibility at that time or in the next few years that Wirth might have the notes mimeographed, or that Eggan might look them over and do the synthesis himself.

Sapir gave the course at Yale three times: in 1933–34 (when it was titled “The Impact of Culture on Personality”), in 1935–36, and in 1936–37. Students from all three years contributed notes to the microfilm. Of the eleven students, nine can be firmly identified:

Ernest Beaglehole (PhD 1931 from the London School of Economics; a postdoctoral visitor at Yale before completing his major fieldwork on Pukapuka later in the 1930’s; a native of New Zealand, he returned there in 1937 to hold the first chair in Psychology; died in 1965): notes 1933–34.

Willard W. Hill (PhD Yale 1934; for many years chair of Anthropology at the University of New Mexico; known for his studies of peoples of the southwestern U. S., especially the Navajo; died in 1974): notes 1933–34.

Weston LaBarre (PhD Yale 1937; Professor of cultural anthropology, biological anthropology, and anatomy at Duke University until his retirement in 1977; noted for studies of psychology and religion, particularly the Peyote cult; died in 1996): notes 1933–34.

David Mandelbaum (PhD Yale 1936; taught briefly at the University of Minnesota and then for many years at the University of California at Berkeley; fieldwork among the Cree and in India; editor of *Selected Writings of Edward Sapir*, 1949; died in 1987): notes 1933–34.

Walter W. Taylor (transferred to Harvard for his PhD, which he received in 1943; primarily an archaeologist, often cited for his interest in the sociocultural implications of archaeological data; Professor emeritus at the University of Southern Illinois, Carbondale; died in 1996): notes 1935–36.

Lyda Averill Taylor (wife of Walter Taylor; died in 1960): notes 1935–36.

Anne M. Cooke, later Smith (PhD Yale 1940; she and Erminie Voegelin were the first women to receive anthropology PhD’s from Yale; conducted ethnographic research on the Ute; taught at Franklin and Marshall College; deceased): notes 1936–37.

Irving Rouse (PhD Yale 1938; a specialist in New World culture history, especially in the Caribbean and surrounding areas; Professor emeritus at Yale): notes 1936–37.

Mary Mikami Rouse (PhD from Yale in Sinology; wife of Irving Rouse): notes 1936–37.

Two other notetakers from the microfilm cannot be identified. One, who took notes in 1936–37 (the final year of the course), may be Erminie Voegelin; the other, who took notes in 1933–34, may be Willard

Park.¹⁹ Among other possibilities for the '33-'34 note-taker are Verne Ray, Walter Dyk, Pearl Beaglehole, or Dorothy Hill (wife of Willard). This set of notes is almost in complementary distribution with Willard Hill's.

In addition to the notes on microfilm, two other students in Sapir's course at Yale were kind enough to give me their notes:

Edgar Siskin (PhD Yale 1941; a rabbi, after early fieldwork in North America he moved to what was then Palestine; now head of the Jerusalem Center for Anthropological Studies); notes 1933–34; and

Beatrice Blyth Whiting (PhD Yale 1942; noted for her work in the cross-cultural study of socialization and education; Professor emerita of Educational Anthropology, School of Education, Harvard University); notes 1935–36.

Notes from earlier versions of the course, given in 1927 and 1928 at the University of Chicago, were obtained from Richard Preston via Regna Darnell. The Chicago notetakers were:

Stanley Newman (PhD Yale 1932; a graduate student who accompanied Sapir on the move to Yale, Newman's first major research was a grammar of Yokuts; though best known for his studies of North American linguistics, he also worked in educational psychology; taught for many years at the University of New Mexico; died in 1984); notes 1927; and

Frank M. Setzler (after graduate work at Chicago, he held a position as archaeologist and museum curator at the U. S. National Museum in Washington; author of many works in North American archaeology; died in 1975); notes 1928.

Another source of material derives from the Rockefeller Seminar (1932–33). The student participants wrote up summaries of each session. I have drawn upon the summaries for the sessions led by Sapir during the second semester, sessions that evidently included lectures as well as discussions. The participants' summaries are on file in the Margaret Mead papers in the Library of Congress. Those whose notes concerned Sapir's sessions were: Theodore P. Chitambar (India); Walter Beck (Germany); Bingham Dai (China); Leo Ferrero (Italy/Geneva); Ali Kemal (Turkey); Henry Halvorsen (Norway); and Robert Marjolin (France).²⁰

I have also drawn upon Sapir's own outline prospectus for *The Psychology of Culture*, sent to Harcourt in 1928.²¹ Additional sources, used only where appropriate and necessary to flesh out an argument, are Sapir's correspondence, his published writings, the transcripts of his

presentations at the Hanover conferences of the Social Science Research Council (1926 and 1930), and student notes from other courses and lectures given by Sapir. Besides the notes on Sapir's lectures to the Friday Night Club (1933; notes taken by David Mandelbaum) and the Medical Society (1935–36; notes taken by Weston LaBarre), which are included in the Yale microfilm, notes on several other courses Sapir gave at Chicago and Yale were generously lent to me by their notetakers: David Mandelbaum, Fred Eggan, and Edgar Siskin.

As a lecturer, Sapir had an inspiring, even electrifying effect on his audience. Describing what it was like to be a student in Sapir's class, David Mandelbaum wrote (1941: 132–34), "he was more than an inspired scholar, he was an inspiring person. Listening to him was a lucid adventure in the field of ideas; one came forth exhilarated, more than oneself... He could explain his explorations so clearly, in such resplendent phrases, that we felt ourselves, with him, heroes in the world of ideas. An eminent psychiatrist recently remarked that Sapir was an intoxicating man. That he was."²² Ironically, however, the awe and excitement Sapir aroused in his students seems sometimes to have interfered with note-taking. As Walter Taylor remarked, "Sapir's command of English was itself quite hypnotic and ... resulted in my listening to him talk and not to what he was saying! And note-taking merely interfered with the flow of language and the intricacies of Sapir's thinking. In fact, if I remember correctly, I stopped taking notes altogether toward the end of the course — but I did not stop being fascinated and excited about the ideas he was presenting."²³ In a similar vein — and out of modesty — several notetakers I spoke or corresponded with expressed doubts about the usefulness of their own notes as compared with others'.

That Sapir's lecture style was complex, polished, and compelling is amply evident not only from students' recollections but also from the existing transcripts of his conference presentations to the Social Science Research Council (now published in *CWES*, this volume). It is easy to see how a notetaker might feel that his or her notes could not adequately represent the actual performance, and that essential ideas or statements had been left out. But with regard to the notes' value for reconstructing the gist of Sapir's arguments, the note-takers' doubts were quite unfounded. While any one set of notes is necessarily only a partial record, when several sets are compared the record becomes that much more complete. Each note-taker omits different things. Although the brilliance of Sapir's performance cannot be fully recaptured, the

essentials of his argument usually can be. In fact, many interesting points emerged only as a result of the detective work of comparing and integrating the various sets of notes.

For these reasons the option of simply reproducing the notes themselves for publication, without synthesis, has never been seriously entertained. It is only through careful comparison that one can get a sense of an individual note-taker's omissions (of passages, wording, or whole lectures), of note-cards out of order (mistakes probably introduced in the microfilming process), of repetitions resulting from a note-taker's having copied another student's notes to supplement his or her own, and so on.

The editorial procedure, therefore, has been to compare, select among, and interweave the various sets of notes in order to reconstruct Sapir's text as closely as possible. Obviously, the result will differ from Sapir's written style, and it cannot display the vividness and wit for which his spoken style was so often lauded. But the contents of the notes overlap sufficiently with each other, while remaining sufficiently different from Sapir's published writings, to make it worthwhile to attempt some approximation of these lectures that influenced so many eminent anthropologists and linguists, and which Sapir himself envisioned as a book.

The task of reconstruction was complicated by the fact that the notes come from several versions of the course. There is no single Sapir oral "text" to be reconstructed — no single course of lectures; instead, there are several overlapping courses. Had there been more material from the final (1936–37) version, I might simply have reconstructed a text for that presumably most mature stage of his thinking. Indeed, I began this project with that intention. But the 1936–37 material was not adequate for reconstruction by itself, and it omitted or only hinted at many interesting topics for which notes existed from the earlier years.

The solution was to incorporate all the notes from the Yale period, while giving greater weight to those representing the latest version of the course. That is, where the versions differ, either in the order in which topics are introduced or (which is less often) in the content or implications of a discussion, the 1936–37 version takes priority. These Yale materials, both from the "Psychology of Culture" course and from the Rockefeller Seminar, are represented in their entirety, interwoven for narrative presentation. Sapir's own 1928 outline is also incorporated almost entirely, because it comes to us as his own typescript, unmedi-

ated by notetakers; but because of its earlier date it bears less organizational weight in the reconstruction than do the later materials.

Other sources, including the notes from the Chicago versions of the same course, are drawn upon only when necessary to flesh out or clarify a passage. Although the Chicago notes — especially Newman's — are very interesting, they differ more substantially from the Yale versions than the latter differ among themselves. The course was much shorter at Chicago, and Sapir seems to have reworked it considerably when he moved to Yale. Only a few excerpts from the Newman and Setzler notes are included in the reconstructed text, therefore.

Once the content and organizational decisions were made, putting the material into narrative form required further editorial decisions. The notes vary in format: some are largely narrative (Cooke, Mandelbaum, Beaglehole, Irving Rouse, the unidentified notetaker of 1936–37); some are largely in outline form (Hill, Mary Mikami Rouse, Whiting, Siskin, the unidentified notetaker of 1933–34); others are in paragraphs of telegram-like prose (the Taylors, LaBarre). In reconstructing a text, where I had only to supply connectives, articles, auxiliary verbs, and the like in order to turn “telegram style” and outlines into narrative, I have done so without so indicating in the draft. Similarly, for smoothness of flow I have sometimes altered the syntactic structure of a sentence in the notes. But wherever I have had to supply a content word or a content-filled connecting passage, I have marked my own additions in brackets.

Since some of these bracketed additions are lengthy, I have supplied a number of footnotes that try to explain my rationale for inserting what I did. It is not always possible, however, to identify a single source or articulate a specific reason for these insertions. Some of them derive from the implications of a notetaker's spatial organization of notes — such as placing one point below another, or placing a notation in the margin, or drawing connecting arrows. Other insertions I can only attribute to my own interpretation, after immersion in the material, of what Sapir meant.

In addition to the brackets representing textual insertions, other notations on the text show, in a coded form, which notetaker(s) or other sources were drawn upon for a particular passage. For example, a sentence early in Chapter 1 reads as follows: “^{r2}There seem to be three reasonably distinct ways of defining ‘culture’.” This passage comes from the notes of Irving Rouse (r2; see explanation of codes, below). Where two or more notetakers have the same or very similar passages, all are

identified; if one of them was accorded greater weight in reconstructing the passage, that notetaker is listed first. Significant differences between notetakers' versions are explained in editorial footnotes.

Where notetakers' wording of a passage differs in ways that are not easily reconciled, an option I have often taken is to include both versions. Lecturers often repeat a statement in slightly different wording to emphasize a point; there is no reason to suppose Sapir did not do so. Still, the reconstructed text may sometimes be rather more repetitive than Sapir's actual lecture would have been. In this as in other respects the reconstruction differs from what Sapir might have wished to see in print. His written style was carefully polished, closely argued, and seldom redundant.

In sum, the editorial procedures and mode of presentation of the reconstructed "text" have had the aim of staying as accountable to the sources as possible while offering a synthesis that would be accessible to the reader. Although I cannot hope to have represented exactly the book Sapir would have published himself, I hope I have come somewhere close to his intentions, as those were represented in his course of lectures.

Explanation of codes and notations in the text

All sources are identified in the text by means of a superscript code placed before the relevant portion of text. For notetaker sources, I have used letter codes derived from the name of the notetaker. For Sapir's own publications, the superscript code identifies the work by publication date, as listed in the CWES cumulative bibliography. An unpublished piece of correspondence is identified by a letter code. Editorial supplements (insertions added for narrative flow and ease of interpretation) are identified by being placed in brackets.

The superscript codes are as follows:

(1) Class notes, *The Psychology of Culture*:

University of Chicago, 1927–28:

ne Stanley Newman

se Frank Setzler

Yale, 1933–34 (*The Impact of Culture on Personality*):

h1 Willard W. Hill

dm David Mandelbaum

- lb Weston LaBarre (LaBarre actually took the course twice, but the notes are apparently all from '33-'34)
- bg Ernest Beaglehole
- si Edgar Siskin
- h2 Unidentified note-taker

Yale, 1935-36 (*The Psychology of Culture*):

- t1 Walter Taylor
- t2 Lyda Averill Taylor
- bw Beatrice Blyth Whiting

Yale, 1936-37 (*The Psychology of Culture*):

- r1 Mary Mikami Rouse
- r2 Irving Rouse
- ck Anne Cooke Smith
- qq Unidentified note-taker (possibly Erminie Voegelin)

mo, all Passage found in **most**, or **all**, of the notes on the particular topic, in more than one year of the course

(2) Rockefeller Seminar, Yale 1932-33 (*The Impact of Culture on Personality*):

- ch Theodore P. Chitambar (India)
- wb Walter Beck (Germany)
- da Bingham Dai (China)
- lf Leo Ferrero (Italy/Geneva)
- ak Ali Kemal (Turkey)
- ha Henry Halvorsen (Norway)
- rm Robert Marjolin (France)

(3) Sapir's own outline for *The Psychology of Culture* (1928):

- ol Outline

(4) Student notes on other courses or lectures given by Sapir:

Weston LaBarre, Yale:

- 2ms "Sapir's Two Lectures to the Medical Society"²⁴

David Mandelbaum, Yale:

- fnc "Lecture to the Friday Night Club" (1933; see Appendix 3)

Fred Eggan, University of Chicago:

- e20 "Linguistics" (course notes)
- e65 "Psychological Survey of Primitive Religion" (course notes)
- e85 "Psychology of Language" (course notes)
- e92 "Northwest Coast Tribes" (course notes)

Edgar Siskin, Yale:

- **smp** "Methods and Problems of Anthropology" (course notes, 1935; co-taught with Leslie Spier)
- (5) Sapir's publications and manuscripts:
 - 1915a "Abnormal Types of Speech in Nootka"
 - 1915h "The Social Organization of the West Coast Tribes"
 - 1917a "Do We Need a 'Superorganic'?"
 - 1917i "Psychoanalysis as Pathfinder," review of Oskar Pfister, *The Psychoanalytic Method*
 - 1921d "Language, Race, and Culture" (Chapter 10 of *Language*)
 - 1923j "Two Kinds of Human Beings," review of C. Jung, *Psychological Types*
 - 1923l "An Approach to Symbolism," review of C. K. Ogden and I. A. Richards, *The Meaning of Meaning*
 - 1924b "Culture, Genuine and Spurious"
 - 1924c "The Grammarian and His Language"
 - 1927a "Anthropology and Sociology"
 - 1927h "Speech as a Personality Trait"
 - 1928e "Psychoanalysis as Prophet," review of Sigmund Freud, *The Future of an Illusion*
 - 1928j "The Unconscious Patterning of Behavior in Society"
 - 1929m "A Study in Phonetic Symbolism"
 - 1932a "Cultural Anthropology and Psychiatry"
 - 1932b "Group"
 - 1934a "The Emergence of the Concept of Personality in a Study of Cultures"
 - 1934c "Personality"
 - 1934e "Symbolism"
 - 1937a "The Contribution of Psychiatry to an Understanding of Behavior in Society"
 - 1938e "Why Cultural Anthropology Needs the Psychiatrist"
 - 1939c "Psychiatric and Cultural Pitfalls in the Business of Getting a Living"
 - 1946 (with Morris Swadesh) "American Indian Grammatical Categories"
 - 1980 Letter to Philip Selznick (Oct. 25, 1938)
 - 1997a "Notes on Psychological Orientation in a Given Society," Social Science Research Council, Hanover Conference, paper delivered 1926.

1997b "The Cultural Approach to the Study of Personality," Social Science Research Council, Hanover Conference, paper delivered 1930.

kro Letter to A. L. Kroeber (Aug. 25, 1938)

All quotes from Sapir's own writings are exact, unless noted otherwise.

Notes

- 1 Edward Sapir to Alfred Harcourt, 27 June 1928.
- 2 Edward Sapir to David Mandelbaum, 15 October 1937.
- 3 Edward Sapir to Philip Selznick, 25 October 1938.
- 4 Jean Sapir to David Mandelbaum, 19 May 1939.
- 5 It is not clear whether any manuscript materials, such as lecture notes, ever existed. Sapir's students differ in their recollections of whether he brought papers with him to class. Judging from students' documentation, some of the lectures remained very similar from one year to the next – perhaps suggesting the use of notes – but other lectures did not.
- 6 Jean Sapir to David Mandelbaum, 19 May 1939.
- 7 Leshe Spier, Alfred I. Hallowell and Stanley S. Newman, eds. (1941) *Language, Culture and Personality: Essays in Memory of Edward Sapir*.
- 8 According to Irving Rouse (pers. comm.), Willard Park may also have played a central role in assembling notes from students still at Yale.
- 9 Zellig Harris to Philip Sapir, 20 July 1942.
- 10 At the Centenary Conference in Ottawa, Sapir's prospectus and the corpus of class notes were discussed in print for the first time (Preston 1986).
- 11 Thus Jean Sapir wrote to David Mandelbaum (30 January 1950) thanking him for giving a major place in *Selected Writings* to Sapir's contributions "in the culture and personality field, about which Edward thought so much but wrote so little. The very dates of what he did get into print tell the whole story."
- 12 I owe this comment to Allan H. Smith, a student in the 1935–36 Yale course.
13. See also Preston (1986).
- 14 For further information on the Impact seminar see Darnell (1990), chapter 17.
- 15 The idea seems to have been for the students to discover that it was impossible to devise any cultural inventory in advance of ethnographic investigation.
- 16 In his 1939 paper, Sapir's criticisms of the discipline of economics tend to concern the methodological individualism according to which some economists posit a typical individual, an "economic man" and his behavior, in order to explain the workings of an economic system. The criticisms do not concern the study of economic systems as such.
- 17 I quote from my reconstructed text; see Chapter 10. The reconstruction here is on pretty firm ground.
- 18 Elizabeth Herzog to Louis Wirth, 19 July 1942.
19. I owe these suggestions to Irving Rouse.
20. Other participants in the Seminar included: Andras Angyal (Hungary), Wilhelm Gierlichs (Germany), Michiji Ishikawa (Japan), Jan Krzyzanowski (Poland), Niilo Maki (Finland), and Max Weinreich (Poland). For further information on the Seminar Participants see Darnell (1990).

21. Sapir's 1928 outline is published here as a companion piece to the reconstructed text – a companion of special importance, since it is from Sapir's own hand.
22. David Mandelbaum (1941), "Edward Sapir" (an obituary appearing in *Jewish Social Studies* 3: 131–40). See also the recollections of other former students of Sapir at the Ottawa centenary conference (Cowan, Foster, and Koerner, 1986).
23. W. W. Taylor to J. T. Irvine, 18 February 1987.
24. The two lectures are dated 18 February 1935 and 29 February 1936 in LaBarre's notes. But because the first lecture refers to a topic as forthcoming in the second lecture, it seems likely that the two were given in the same year, rather than a year apart.

Outline for *The Psychology of Culture* (1928)

In June 1928, Sapir sent Alfred Harcourt (of Harcourt, Brace & Co.) a proposal for a book to be based on a graduate lecture course he had been offering at the University of Chicago. About the proposal, which consisted of a chapter outline, Sapir wrote:

I have thought over your kind offer to consider arrangements with me for a book on "The Psychology of Culture" a number of times since our conversation ... but I have not had the opportunity to revise my original plan until last night. The enclosed outline is analysed only for the first two chapters, the rest of the outline giving merely the chapter headings and a few sentences or phrases to indicate the nature of the contents of each. You will understand, of course, that much is tentative in this outline, even the title, and that I may have to change a good deal of the layout as I get down to the actual writing of the book. This book would represent a good deal of experience in presenting my ideas to graduate classes, yet it is not intended to be an academic text-book. It will be rather a free discussion, though I should hope to avoid a breezy, merely literary air... (ES to Harcourt, 18 June 1928)

Student lecture notes from Sapir's courses indicate that he continued to work out his ideas for the book during the following decade, and made various revisions in the format and substance initially proposed in this 1928 outline. The outline remains, however, the only formal presentation of the book that survives in Sapir's own typescript.

Outline for *The Psychology of Culture* (1928)

Part I.

Introductory: The Varying Connotations of the Word "Culture"

- a. Traditional English use of the term "culture". Culture so defined implies standard pertaining to individual or group; selection of traits implying "culture", emphasis on grace; "spiritual" or "mental" qualities as contrasted with "material" values. Critical remarks on absoluteness of concept. The "cultured man" or "ideal man" in various societies: English, Chinese, Hindu, orthodox Jewish, American Indian.
- b. Wider, but still selective or evaluating, use of terms as applied to larger groups. Their "culture" is identical with their distinguishing "spirit". Examples: French and Russian cultures in a nutshell.

- c. Strictly ethnological use of term "culture" as embracing all reactions which are socially inherited as contrasted with individual reactions which have no historical continuity and with biologically inherited types of behavior.

Part II. What Culture is and What it is Not

Chapter I. *The Necessity of the Concept of Culture in Social Science.*

- a. An attempt at a closer definition of the term "culture" in its exact sense (*C* of preceding chapter) leads to unexpected difficulties because no human behavior can be discovered which is intrinsically or purely "cultural." This leads to:
 - b. The difficulty of being clear as to the subject matter of social science.
 - (a) The objective delimitation of the natural sciences.
 - (b) The objective delimitation of psychology or of a science of behavior.
 - (c) The essentially arbitrary differentia of "social" in the realm of behavior.
 - c. Pitfalls in the use of the term "social."
 - (a) The fallacy of ascribing "social behavior" to a collectivity as such. The reality and irrelevance of group behavior in its literal sense.
 - (b) "Social behavior," so called, is both individual and collective. Why the term "cultural behavior" is more exact.
 - (c) How "culture" is *abstracted* from the totality of human behavior.
 - d. The notional conflict between "culture" and behavior deemed "social." The uncertainty that generally prevails as to whether a given study in "social science" belongs to the field of "culture" or to the field of actual behavior. The justifiability of either point of view. Much "social science" is a half-hearted study of certain modes of behavior that have been tacitly (and often unavowedly) selected on cultural, not behavioristic, lines.
 - e. Social science from the cultural angle.
 - (a) The relativity of all cultural concepts. Their dependence on the historical background and peculiar ideology of particular cultures.
 - (b) The difficulty of constructing a convincing "science" of cultural patterns. The study of culture, no matter how generalized, is essentially a historical discipline.
 - (c) The importance, nevertheless, of the concept of cultural relativity for the science of behavior.
 - f. Social science from the behavioristic standpoint.
 - (a) This "science" must take the cultural facts for granted as a body of environmental determinants.
 - (b) The laws of behavior in "society" or in the carrying out of cultural patterns are no other than the laws of behavior generally.
 - (c) Nevertheless, the fundamental laws of behavior may help us, however inexactly, to understand the historical working out of cultural patterns. The *real* and the *putative* psychology of such patterns of behavior.

- g. General difficulties of social science.
 - (a) The extreme complexity and the multiple determination of all, even the simplest, types of social = i. e. cultural = behavior.
 - (b) The essential uniqueness of all cultural phenomena. The hurt done our understanding of these phenomena in abstracting from their particularities is not, it seems, altogether analogous to the necessary simplification of experience in the natural sciences. The concept of "value."
 - (c) The consequent inexactness of all classes in the cultural domain.
- h. Certain extrinsic difficulties of social science.
 - (a) Difficulties of observation due to the "projection" of unconscious cultural patterns by the investigator.
 - (b) Difficulties of historical interpretation and reconstruction.
 - (c) Chronic paucity of material.
 - (d) Uncertainty of interpretation of objective data. "Spurious accuracy" in much statistical work in the social sciences.
 - (e) The extreme uncertainty prevailing in the field of psychology, the chief explanatory tool of social "science."
- i. The essential fallacy of all strictly conceptual definitions of culture. Culture as history. Cultural "levels of discourse" are not strictly congruous with biological or psychological ones. Culture as selection, not as objective fact.

Chapter 2. *Race as a Supposed Determinant of Culture.*

The vanity of the usual attempts to understand culture as a strictly racial expression or as a biological concept.

Chapter 3. *The Supposed Psychological Causation of Culture.*

The strictly limited sense in which psychology can be said to give us the causative factors of culture. Culture is not a mere province for either biological or psychological theories.

Chapter 4. *Culture and Environment.*

The usefulness of environmental considerations in the study of culture. Their insufficiency. The supposed economic determination of all cultural phenomena.

Part III. The Externalities of Culture: its Elements and its Geography.

Chapter 1. *The Content of Culture.*

What it embraces, or may be supposed to embrace, objectively. The impossibility of drawing up in advance an intelligible table of contents or inventory of culture.

Chapter 2. *The Apparent Purpose of Culture.*

The functional point of view. Its limitations. The pitfalls of rationalization.

Chapter 3. *The Individual Elements and Complexes of Culture.*

The analysis of culture into "elements" and "complexes." How they reassert themselves into shifting units. "Secondary associations." Survivals.

Chapter 4 *The Geography of Culture.*

Diffusion of culture traits. Their assimilation to the receiving culture. The concepts of "culture area" and "culture stratum."

Part IV. The Patterning of Culture.

Chapter 1 *The Configurative Point of View.*

The more intimate understanding of culture as form. The meaning of a "cultural pattern". A glance at configurative ("Gestalt") psychology. Examples of general patterns in behavior that are definable aside from content.

Chapter 2. *Fallacies in the Observation of Cultural Phenomena.*

The fallacy of judging the essential nature of a given culture from external appearances. The inevitability of placing objective phenomena according to one's own patterns. The shock which one experiences on discovering the existence of entirely different patterns in a given culture from those that had obviously seemed to be present.

Chapter 3. *The Patterning of Culture Exemplified: Speech.*

Language as an example of an elaborate pattern that keeps itself going as a self-contained "organism" or system of behavior.

Chapter 4. *The Multiple Interpretation of Cultural Data.*

Examples of completely distinct patterns and orientations in dealing with objectively similar phenomena. E.g., the "Privilege" concept of the Nootka Indians does not easily emerge from mere observation. The importance of native terminology as a key to the understanding of cultural patterning.

Chapter 5. *The Dynamics of Culture Patterns.*

The fundamental dynamic concepts involved in the notion of "cultural patterns." Nothing in behavior, cultural or otherwise, can be understood except as seen in reference to configurations. The idea of relativity in culture. "Absolute" values not valid.

Chapter 6. *The Development of Culture.*

The concept of development in culture. Growing complications in the various levels of a whole cultural complex. The idea of compensatory simplifications. The notion of "progress"; limitations of the idea. The cyclical or periodic point of view.

Part V. The Individual's Place in Culture.

Chapter 1. *Culture and the Individual.*

The artificiality of the usual contrast. Culture as something transcending the individual spirit or as embodied in it. Two points of view: extravert, introvert.

Chapter 2. *The Problem of Personality Types.*

Attempts to define types of personality. Jung's classification.

Chapter 3. *Cultural Types.*

The possibility of constructing a typology of culture on the basis of a psychology of individual types. The social psychology of such cultural types are not to be interpreted literally but as "as if" psychologies. We arrive at a new and fruitful point of view as regards the relation of the individual to society.

Chapter 4. *The Problem of Individual Adjustment in Society.*

Methods of adjustment, successful and unsuccessful. The concept of pluralism of culture in a given society. Endless revaluation as we pass from individual to individual and from one period to another. Individual and cultural configurations: how they correspond, reinforce each other, overlap, intercross, conflict. Compromise formations ("pseudo-extraversion" and "pseudo-introversion"). Heightenings of "personality" when configurations correspond.

Chapter 5. *Primitive Mentality.*

Primitive and sophisticated mentality. The theories of the psychoanalysts, of Lévy-Bruhl, and of others. Critique of theories that presuppose a special primitive mentality. The apparent differences of behavior are due to differences in the content of the respective cultural patterns, not to differences in the method of mental functioning in the two supposedly distinct levels. Our scientific thinking does not explain our own culture.

Part VI. Society as Unconscious Artist.

Chapter 1. *Culture as Purpose and as Art.*

Culture as purpose and art or imagination. The necessity and the limitations of the idea of purpose in culture. Conscious purpose as a controlling or moderating influence. Imagination as the unconscious form-giver of culture.

Chapter 2. *The Meaning of Culture.*

The concept of significant form in culture. How the struggle for significant form in culture unconsciously animates all normal individuals and gives meaning to their lives. The problem of happiness. The limitations of a merely humanitarian ideal. It is ameliorative and question-begging at best.

Chapter 3. *The Decay and the Renaissance of Culture.*

The necessity of "decay" when cultural patterns are no longer vitalized by the unconscious of the individual. Decay necessarily leads to renaissance. The powerlessness of the conscious individual will to prevent decay or to dictate the terms of a renaissance.

The Psychology of Culture:
A Course of Lectures by Edward Sapir,
1927–1937

Reconstructed and Edited by Judith T. Irvine

Contents

PART I: THE CONCEPT OF CULTURE

1. Introductory: The Term "Culture"
Three uses of the term; culture as selection and value 421
2. The Concept of Culture in the Social Sciences
"Cultural" vs "social"; methodological and epistemological
problems in the social sciences in general, and anthropology
in particular 441
3. "Causes" of Culture
To what extent do factors such as race, geography, psychology,
and economy influence cultural form? 467
4. The Elements of Culture
The contents of culture: trait inventory vs. functional pattern 489
5. The Patterning of Culture
The configurative point of view; language as an example of
patterning; ethnographic example: the Nootka *topati*, a con-
cept of "privilege" 509
6. The Development of Culture
Concepts of progress and change; technological, moral, and
aesthetic processes; developmental cycles 531

PART II: THE INDIVIDUAL'S PLACE IN CULTURE

7. Personality
The individual as bearer of culture; definitions of personality;
the psychiatric approach 545

8. Psychological Types
A review and critique of Jung 559
9. Psychological Aspects of Culture
The difficulty of delimiting a boundary between personality and culture; attitudes, values, and symbolic structures as cultural patterns; culture as "as-if" psychology; critique of Benedict and Mead 585
10. The Adjustment of the Individual in Society
Individual adjustment and neurosis; adjustment to changing social conditions; socialization: can there be a "true science of man"? the emergence of culture in interpersonal relations . . . 603
11. The Concept of "Primitive Mentality"
Critiques of Freud, Lévy-Bruhl, and Malinowski; the importance of aesthetic imagination as the form-giver of culture . . 621

PART III: SYMBOLIC STRUCTURES AND EXPERIENCE (1933-34)

12. Symbolism
Types of symbols; symbols and signs; speech as a symbolic system; symbolism and social psychology; etiquette 631
13. The Impact of Culture on Personality
The field of "Culture and Personality;" concluding remarks . . 655

APPENDICES

1. Classroom exercises on the study of American culture: smoking and piano-playing as cultural patterns (1933) 663
2. Notes on a Lecture to the Friday Night Club, October 13, 1933 (notes taken by David Mandelbaum) 673
3. Sapir's lists of suggested readings for "The Impact of Culture on Personality" (1933-34) and "The Psychology of Culture" (1935-36) 677

BIBLIOGRAPHY

Part I: The Concept of Culture

Chapter 1. Introductory: The Term "Culture"

^{1924b} There are certain terms that have a peculiar property. Ostensibly they mark off specific concepts, concepts that lay claim to a rigorous objective validity. In practice, they label vague terrains of thought that shift or narrow or widen with the point of view of whoso[ever] makes use of them, embracing within their gamut of significance conceptions that not only do not harmonize but are in part contradictory. An analysis of such terms soon discloses the fact that underneath the clash of varying contents there is unifying feeling-tone. What makes it possible for so discordant an array of conceptions to answer to the same call is, indeed, precisely this relatively constant halo that surrounds them.

^{bg} [Suppose we ask ourselves, then,] what is "culture"? [I propose to show you that here is a term of the very type just mentioned: a label that seems to mean something particularly important, and yet.] ^{1924b} when the question arises of just where to put the label, trouble begins. [for] ^{bw, r1, ol} the uses of the term "culture" have varying connotations.¹ ^{dm} We cannot take culture for a rigidly defined thing. [But perhaps there are nevertheless some common themes we might identify and thence arrive at our own idea of] ^{r1} the meaning of the concept of culture.

1. The traditional English use

^{r2} There seem to be three reasonably distinct ways of defining "culture." First of all, ^{bg, bw, t1} consider its meaning in the phrase, "a man of culture." ^{ol} This is the traditional English use, ^{r1} a conventional idea of culture [referring to an] ^{1924b} ideal of individual refinement [and implying] ^{bw, r1} a normative ascription of value — a preconception that one type of behavior is superior to another, ^{r2} and that certain customs are best. [When we speak of "a man of culture," we mean a man whose conduct and qualities are those considered better and more valuable than those of other men.] ^{bw, t1, h2} There is a highly evaluative [connota-

tion to the term, and an] emphasis on selectivity [among the various forms of] behavior [practiced] in a civilization.² [such that the selected behaviors seem to endow their practitioners with an aura of] unanalyzed excellence and nobility. [There is nothing specially English about the evaluative process, however.]^{ck} The ascription of value to every type of behavior is a natural [impulse, so fundamental an expression of human psychology that we may reasonably expect to find some idea resembling this sense of the term "culture" among peoples otherwise widely different.]³

^{cl} Culture, so defined, implies a standard pertaining to an individual or group. ^{4a} ⁴¹ To be "a man of culture" involves participation in special social values clustering around tradition. ⁴¹ [It is not the particular content of those traditions that is vital in distinguishing the "cultured person" from others – for all too] often the "culture" of an advanced civilization is a [mere] rehash of traditional, staid subjects – [but the fact that they are traditional and valued.] Everyone who is "cultured" lives in a certain realm of specific feeling, [deriving not only from those attitudes and typical reactions traditionally prescribed for him, but also from] a feeling of security that comes to the person within the "cultured" circle. Because of [this] personal and group security, [one's] relation with the out-group becomes easy or supercilious. ^{1924b} Aloofness of some kind, [in fact,] is generally a *sine qua non* of [this] type of culture. ⁴¹ It is an idea of culture that depends largely on class, more often hereditary class [than class of any other kind], and it centers upon a literary tradition and a practical tradition, be it church, military, or business.

^{dm} What is it that validates class stratification in any society? [Although this question is a difficult one, let us approach it by comparing a few examples.] ^{bg}, ^{bw}, ^{r1}, ^{r2} [We might start by] examining the culture of the English country gentleman of the eighteenth century. [What characterizes] this cultured class? ^{dm} In 1750 it was necessary for the "cultured" gentleman to quote Horace. [It was quite unnecessary for him to engage in activities of an immediately practical kind;] ^{h2} the tendency, [instead,] was to deny that the exigencies of nature [had any bearing on one's behavior.] ^{dm}, ^{h2} The elite of 1750 had freed themselves of the natural urgencies and hence could be casual and free from care. ^{dm} Thus sport developed in England as one of the earmarks of the gentleman, as was hunting. There were few occupations for him to [take up, but it was quite] definite [which ones would be suitable: they were limited to political and military activities, such as being a member of] Parliament

or [an officer in the] navy, or [being a member of] the clergy — and it is rather peculiar [to England, perhaps,] that the gentry and clergy were so [closely] associated.⁴ ^{bg, r1} [In sum,] this cultured class [is distinguished by] its economic security, wealth, and leisure, its education in the classics, its engagement in hunting and sport, and [its involvement] in public activities such as politics and the established church.

^{99, r2, ck, r1} So, enjoying freedom from care (in a collective sense), living a gracious life, and preoccupied with conventional literary values, these English gentlemen held a common stock of cultural goods from whose extreme conventionality [they gained] a feeling of essential security. ^{r1, ck} [That form of] collective anxiety that arises from a lack of participation in known cultural goods was relatively absent; instead, the common fund of cultural symbols enabled [this class to enjoy] a margin of dissent and a certain emotional freedom. (^{ck} [In contrast,] there is so much collective anxiety in cultural groups in America that adventurousness is not permitted except in the form of humor. ^{r1, r2, ck} American society is anxiety-ridden because we have not defined a cultural group which has meanings in common, nor have we universally accepted [a set of] customs as a stereotyped ideal.)

^{r1} One sense of “culture,” then, is “cultivation.” [The idea that some members of society are more “cultivated” than others,] ^{r2} and the ideal that certain customs are best, [can be found in civilizations exhibiting the widest differences in other respects.] ^{r1} Yet, the method of arriving at the “cultured” state is different, in different civilizations. ^{bg, ck, dm} [Consider, for instance,] the old Chinese gentleman of the mandarin class, who need not be wealthy but who had to pass stiff examinations on the philosophy of the Chinese poets, and who must himself be able to write poetry and paint exquisite characters. ^{dm} Literary ability was the great thing; ^{ck} passing examinations on the Chinese classics gave him a right to receive a good government post, and joined him with others who had done the same thing. A developed aesthetic attitude, and the gracious side of life, were emphasized. ^{dm} Thus the Chinese elite was different [from the English] in particular, but remarkably similar in kind, ^{ck, 99} for although the principle of selection of this cultured group differed from that of the 18th century English group in that the mandarin class was more democratically chosen, it was a selection nevertheless; and several [other] features were rather similar. Again graciousness characterized the class, and membership was dependent upon familiarity with the literary tradition. [Within the privileged circle] one was very secure in the symbolic system of knowledge and in the special cultural

tradition, and the cultural ideal was calmly accepted by elite and folk alike. ^{ck. r2} There was very little strain between the cultural tradition and the folk mind.

^{dm. b7} The Athenian gentleman of scholarly tendency, with his interest in government, is another case in point. ^{dm} Here too is an economically secure class: [and in addition to] economic freedom, the criteria [for membership] again [emphasize acquaintance with] an enshrined literature. [This is part of the gentleman's] preoccupation with [materially] useless things – [the other side of the coin being] freedom of thought and [the opportunity for] bold speculations. ^{bg} [So if you start with the English gentleman.] compare the Chinese gentleman, next the Athenian gentleman, and go on to examine your gentlemen of all cultures, primitive or civilized. [you will find that] there will be something of a parallelism in their respective “cultures.”

[At this point you may wish to object that it seems somewhat odd to speak of “gentlemen” in any but the higher civilizations. Let me remind you, however, that] ^{dm. ol} we have no rigid definition of culture nor an absolute concept [according to which] we could say who is more or less cultured among a people. ^{bg} [And for the same reasons it is] difficult to determine which cultures are “higher” or “lower.” ^{bg. dm} A primitive people may have a much more complex and more highly developed system of kinship terminology, [for example,] than have we, or of seating prerogatives [at a feast]. [Nor could we depend on our own sense of what constitutes fine manners, for] the system of etiquette [also] differs among different peoples. [Even though some form of etiquette convention may characterize the elite in many different societies, we cannot say much in advance about its content: even] belching, sneezing, and so on [may have quite different evaluations. So let us not hesitate to examine the characteristics of elites even in cultural groups where application of the label “gentlemen” might seem, to some, quite surprising.]

^{ck. qq. r1} In Orthodox Jewish society, culture [(in this first sense)] [pertains to] a traditional rabbinical group. Their special culture, [as in the Chinese and English cases, also involves a] literary tradition, consisting of the Old Testament scriptures, which are accepted literally as an inspired document, plus the body of oral tradition codified in about 200 A. D. ^{ck. r1} Erudition in these texts and the scholastic tradition [is valued because of the] belief that everything important is contained therein, although there is some freedom of interpretation. ^{dm} This is a theocratic society, [then, although we might also consider it] democratic [in the sense that membership in the rabbinical class] has little to do with birth

or economic or military status – it depends only on learning. ^{ck, r1} Manipulation of this vast mass of tradition, and application of it to practical [concerns] in everyday life, are the marks of membership in the cultured group. One becomes a member of this class not through family or economic status, but by acquiring [the appropriate] erudition. Although great social prestige attaches to the [rabbinical] group, membership in it is informal. ^{ck, r1} It is a republic of religious letters, [based upon a] “lineage of spirit” [rather than a lineage of birth; and] a humble snobbery, with a feeling of personal responsibility to God’s word, [characterizes the scholarly elite].

^{ck, r1, qq} There are several similarities [between the rabbinical group and] other groups of cultured persons. First, [the elite] is a comparatively small group, looked up to without strain by the people at large; second, “culture” is built around a literary tradition – ^{dm} the rabbinical group takes as their class symbol a literary document; ^{ck, r1, qq, dm} third, the cultured group has freedom, in at least a psychological sense, from mundane economic care. ^{qq} The scholars’ world was perhaps a substitute for the drab everyday struggle. They were excused from common [duties] when they wished, and could contribute their studies or meditation instead.⁵

^{r1, ck, qq} In primitive society, too, there are “cultured” groups accepted as such by the folk. ^{qq, h2, ck} In Northwest Coast society, [for example] (that is, among the Indians on the west coast of British Columbia), there are definite classes: chiefs, commoners, and slaves. ^{6 bg, h2, dm, r1, ck} The elite are the nobles,⁷ who marry [only] among themselves, and are the repository of the tribal lore, an oral tradition [comprised of] ancestral legends, impersonal myths, folklore, and songs. ^{dm, h2} [So strong is these nobles’] connection with the glorious past that they speak of an ancestor [in the first person – as] “I” – ^{sc} as if they feel they are the dramatic impersonators of tradition. ^{bg} [Like our other examples, these nobles] too are removed from the necessity of earning a living and are highly respected by the people as a whole. ^{h2, ck, qq} [So although the Northwest Coast Indians are] a non-agricultural people, [subsisting by] hunting, fishing, and gathering, [even] here the cultured class has a special economic and social position, determined at least in part by family lineage. ^{qq, ck, r1} [The special valuation of literature as representing the stock of cultural goods has its parallel here as well, even though] there is no writing; for the noble has a special [crest symbolically] bearing [a load of] oral tradition – the ancestral legends connected with the nobles’ names. ^{r1} The name is the emblem of a glorious past. ^{qq} Again

there is a certain mobility [between classes], and no fast line between the noble class and the rest.⁸ ^{r1} [Thus in several respects the nobles of the Northwest Coast] show similarities with [the other examples we have considered. Like those others.] they are a selected group, whose members are conscious of belonging, and [who are expected to display a certain] graciousness. ^{r1, ck} A gracious attitude is shown in a tradition of liberality, about which there is much ado, [despite the fact that on the whole] this is a cruel and relentlessly snobbish society.

^{11, dm, h2} [Another example from primitive society is] the Navajo, although the elite [category] among the Navajo is less formally [defined] and less sharply segregated [from the rest of society than is the elite among] the Northwest Coast Indians, with their hierarchy and strong class distinction which depend on the doings of ancestors.⁹ ¹¹ In Navajo [society] class distinction [based on birth] is not strong, so practicality [of achievement] is at a premium. ^{ck, qq, dm, h2, bg} The Navajo elite are the "chanters" (as the native term [describes them]) or medicine men, highly versed experts in ritual and the accompanying lore, songs, and so on. ^{h2} It is a greater honor [to be a chanter] than to be a chief, ¹¹ and once an individual is a chanter he is in the "in-group."

^{qq, ck, dm} [The chanters' performances.] elaborate ritual chants accompanied by dramatic representations of origin legends, are used in curing disease by way of pleasing angry gods. The chanter must learn the legends. [along with all] details of the ceremony and prayers. The set of rituals involves a large number of sand paintings, which he manufactures, and an even larger number of different songs, which must be done absolutely without mistake. ^{qq, ck} Yet, the chanters are sometimes employed for a deliberately faked illness: ¹¹ if a long time has passed with no one sick, someone makes believe he is sick so that the ceremony may be performed. ^{qq, r1, ck} Apparently, the rituals have a transcendental value [causing them to be performed if only] in an effort to keep the knowledge of them alive. ^{qq, 11} The rituals are not entirely for practical use, then; they are appreciated for their beauty, just as in the other cultures mentioned.

^{ck, r1} Because the Navajo rituals [require] exact knowledge on the part of the chanters, they involve a great deal of memory, [both verbal and] visual. It may take ten years to learn one chant.¹⁰ [But the chanter's cumulative store of traditions transforms him into something much more than a mere repeater of memorized material, for] the knowledge of chants, legends, and rituals builds up into a theological and esthetic doctrine. Thus the chanters are a group of professors of theology, the

aristocrats of the Navajo, prestigious persons for whom the average Navajo has great respect. They are the repositories of the load of theological tradition; ^{ck} and this world of holiness is a closed world, as it is for the Orthodox Jews. For the Navajo, there are no more miracles, no more communications with the gods.

^{bg} [In sum,] the elite of all cultures are somehow alike in that they are all the keepers of the traditional lore, be it classics, folklore, or songs. ^{qq, r1, h2} All [six] of these groups cluster their values around tradition, as laid down in literature, documents, or oral legend. ^{ck, r1} All six, too, show a real desire for a transcendent ideal of life — a mystic insight, a feeling for something beyond the necessities of the day. ^{ck, qq} The “cultured man” is one who participates in this ideal world of traditional values. ^{qq} This one notion of culture is not rare or accidental, then; it is something more profound and universal than restricted to certain classes of Western society. ^{r2} Probably every society possesses some sort of ideal tradition around which people’s emotions cluster, ^{ck} and where people select, out of the possible behavior patterns of their group, certain ones that bring [prestige.]¹¹

^{bg} The elite [in all these cases are also alike in that] they are all more or less economically free and consequently leisured. They [have both the time and the freedom to] preserve and dramatize the glorious past, whence [comes] their esteem by the masses. ^{qq} But what is the universality of this phenomenon due to? ^{bg} What is it that universally causes peoples to support such a leisured class and respect it? ^{h2, bg, qq, r2, ck, dm} [About this interesting problem I can only offer speculation; but perhaps]¹² the explanation of [the support of] elites [lies in some form of] wish-fulfilment on the part of the masses. ^{dm, bg, h2, qq} In a [process of] transference similar to the transfer of ambition from father to son, the [common people] transfer [their wishes onto] the elite; and it is because of [this] unconscious identification that the elite are so easily accepted. The dream life [of the masses] is embodied in the elite, to which they consequently pay homage. [We should not simply dismiss this psychological process as delusionary and self-defeating, for it surely represents] a desire to transcend our own stubborn humanity, that is present in all normal individuals.

^{h2} This orthodox [concept of] “culture” is highly evaluative, [then, and it is even plausible to think of] ¹¹ “culture” [in this sense] as an evaluative attempt to shirk the problem of life, through an artificial security and feeling of well-[being]. The manifestation of “culture” is [supposed to be] the arrival at human excellence, [yet in each case it

turns out that human excellence] is to be arrived at through the culture of that particular group. [and we should look in vain for any logical reason to choose between the excellence of reciting the Navajo chant and the excellence of quoting Horace.]^{bg} There is really no difference, [in this moral realm.] between the value of a written and an unwritten literature.

[In light of the claim to universal superiority through the preservation of indispensable spiritual heirlooms,]^{13 1924b} perhaps the most extraordinary thing about the cultured ideal is its selection of the particular treasures of the past which it deems worthiest of worship. This selection, which might seem bizarre to a mere outsider, is generally justified by a number of reasons, sometimes endowed with a philosophic cast, but unsympathetic persons seem to incline to the view that these reasons are only rationalizations *ad hoc*, that the selection of treasures has proceeded chiefly according to the accidents of history.^{dm} [Were rationality the only guide] a case could be made for teaching Eskimo in the public schools instead of Greek or Latin; [but the languages of the classical world are not, for us, merely grammatical schemes for our intellectual exercise. Their importance rests primarily on their value as symbols of our tradition.] In the acceptance of social symbols one must not be too logical.

2. The German Kultur

^{ck} The foregoing has defined one conception of culture — the contrast between the cultured group and the folk.^{dm} This idea of culture is the evaluational term referring to the activities of the elite. A second definition of culture is the German *kultur*,^{bg, h2} which even when used by German anthropologists seems always to have something mystical in its meaning. It somehow embraces the idea of the *geist* of a people, the underlying soul or spirit.^{dm} The German philosophers' idea was that there were general and absolute values which transcended trivialities and could be said to be characteristic of a group. [If we wish to try to put this less mystically we might say that]^{r2, r1, h2} *kultur* is a unified or integrated conception of culture, [emphasizing] its complex of ideas, its sense of the larger values of life, and its definition of the ideal (for example, the Greek ideal of calmness and the perfect, static image).^{ol} Though wider [than the first conception of culture it is] still a selective or evaluating use of the term, as applied to larger groups.^{tl, bw} Thus

kultur belongs to a whole people and includes [their notion of] those things that are fine and that differentiate the human race from the animal world – and, often, from humans [considered] more primitive. ^{ck} Certain societies have definite ideals; and anything contrary to the ideal is not cultured, it is barbaric.

^{bg} Distinguishing *kultur* from *natur*, ^{qq, ck} Rickert¹⁴ makes the statement that primitive peoples have no culture. The distinction seems to be based on the supposed self-consciousness of the spirit [among “civilized” peoples as opposed to the primitives.] ^{bw} such as Hottentots, who do not have it. ^{qq, r1} A good conception of this meaning can be obtained from Spengler’s *Untergang des Abendlandes* (*Decline of the West*). [Rickert’s statement about primitive peoples must be rejected, however, for] ^{bg} there is no such thing as a state of nature, or a man without cultural conditioning. [If this conception of “culture” has any usefulness it will be found to be as suitably applied to the Hottentots as to ourselves.]¹⁵

^{bg} It is not easy to define the *geist* of a culture (or people, rather) – ^{dm} to estimate a whole civilization in terms of these archetype values. ^{ck} [Still, let us try some examples and, for each, consider its] “culture” from the standpoint of basic ideas. For instance, ^{qq, ck} French culture might be characterized by the ideal of the golden mean: ^{r1} nothing in excess. ^{bg} There seems to be a pervading formality, [an emphasis on] clarity and closure in configurations and patterns ^{t1} that results in a standardization of spiritual values as well as of many other values. ^{dm} The French take forms very seriously; although they emphasize grace and ease they don’t want things to go casually or informally, [and they have little interest in] spic-and-span American efficiency. ^{bw, t2, t1} The philosophy of standardization to an ideal [is a pervading theme in many areas of life, such as] the regularization of language [decreed by] the French Academy, ^{dm, bg} the devotion to clear and lucid expression, *le mot juste*, and [the operation of] the French bureaucracy.¹⁶ ^{bw} [Notice, however, that this is not at all the same thing as] industrial standardization, [which is resisted in France,] especially if it comes into conflict with family traditions [of business management, as occurred] for instance in the linen trade and in bookbinding.

^{r1, r2, ck, qq} In French culture self-expression, [too, should display] taste, restraint, and discretion. ^{r2, ck} There is a distrust of fundamental drives unless they are checked by discretion and convention: for [the French] beauty lies in reason, not in some Faustian spirit of exhilaration in self-expression. ^{ck} So cooking and eating are arts, a sublimation of bodily needs – and the French think it is barbaric not to sublimate

thus. ^{ck} The real French artist would never be lacking in good taste. ^{bg} There is no abundance of emotion and nothing which is not precise, clear, and measured, be it music or literature. ^{t2} Voltaire and Debussy caught the French spirit, where there can be profound thought but it is covered with a certain airiness. ^{t1} an exact casualness. ^{t7} ^{t2}. ^{bg}. ^{bw} Wagner, [on the other hand,] was not accepted in France — he is too stirring, [too expressive of] revolt; and the French dislike Shakespeare because of the lack of emotional measure and [classical] form. ^{ck} Robinson Jeffers would be impossible in French literature. ^{bw} [Of course, not every French author perfectly represents the ideal.] Victor Hugo cannot be classic and chaste although he is impressionistic in technique.

[Another aspect of the French "spirit"] ^{bg}. ^{md} is their supreme indifference to other cultures or to what others think of them. But perhaps what this satisfaction with one's own culture [most represents is not something peculiar to the French but] what I would consider a criterion of the "perfect development" of a culture: ^{t8} ^{dm} it is because they are so secure in their own values that [people] are uninterested in foreign influences. They live so well in their own culture that they are indifferent to [others.] ^{t9}

^{bg} This analysis of a people's *geist* could be done for other cultures too. ^{bg}. ^{t2}. ^{t1} In the culture (in the sense of *kultur*) of pre-war Russia, in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries that is, [we see a spirit] very different [from the French.] ^{bg} Music and literature (for example Tchaikovsky, Dostoevsky, and so on) were characterized by an overflowing of emotions, an openness, outspokenness, even a brutal emotional completeness. ^{t924b} In a spiritual sense, it was easy for the Russian to overthrow any embodiment of the spirit of institutionalism; his real loyalties lay elsewhere. ^{bw}. ^{t1} preoccupied with [an elemental humanity and an intense] spirituality. [It is a spirituality] with a double face — as close to Satan as to God. ^{bw} [Perhaps the] quintessential [work of this [culture's] literature is the] play *The Lower Depths*, with its faith in human nature at its worst. ^{t924b} In the pages of Tolstoi, Dostoyevski, Turgenev, Gorki, and Chekhov personality runs riot in its morbid moments of play with crime, in its depressions and apathies, in its generous enthusiasms and idealisms. ^{t2} Russian writers seem to be [immersed] in raw human experience: [despite a certain French influence] they never surrendered to that [French] artificiality. ^{bw}. ^{t2} Their music, too, has a quality of starkness — a more elemental, simpler emotional character. ^{bg} [All this is before the War and the Revolution of 1917, however.] It would be inter-

esting to know if Russia has really changed emotionally, or whether this [cultural "spirit" we have just described] is not still the case.

^{t2, t1, bw} What about the *kultur* of Germans themselves? This presents a curious paradox. On the one hand there is a remarkable exactness and thoroughness, an extraordinary care and skill [with detail]; and with it, on the other hand, is a rather wishy-washy romanticism [exalting] the shadowy and the mystical. ^{t2} Really, [the Germans are] a very romantic people. ^{t1} Goethe [is a supreme example of] mystic romanticism with an occasional return to supreme brusqueness.²⁰

^{r2, r1, ck, q9} The contemporary American, however, feels the overpowering necessity to utilize all possibilities or capabilities. ^{ck} If having a fortune is important to the French, making one is important to Americans; it is imperative to make as much money as possible. ^{ck, q9} American culture is autobiographical in character, and its ideal is adventurous, with a certain tumultuousness of spirit always present that does not regard tradition too highly. ^{ck, r2, r1} There is something of the mystic in the typical American, with his belief in answers, [especially as deriving from] education. [It is for this reason that he insists on] exactness, on making evaluations in finite terms, with definite figures. ^{ck} Only in American culture could the phrase "fifty-fifty" have evolved, [for only here do we find such] willingness to measure intangibles; expression must be quantitative. ^{ck, r2, r3} There is a pretense of extreme objectivity, of objective control of situations which cannot be [tangibly measured]. ^{ck} To make of society a machine, understand it, and then control it — this is the American idea. ^{q9} Yet, the individual's life reveals a relative fragmentariness and contradiction.

^{r1} [For our final examples, let us compare] the classical Hindu culture of India [with the culture of Americans and of the Chinese]. ^{ck, r1} The Hindu ideal is curiously individualized, [but in a manner very different from the American or Chinese.] The sense of time differs greatly. ^{r2} [amounting to a virtual] disregard of time, [from an American point of view, and this disregard contrasts strikingly with the] ^{r2, r1, ck} obsessive time-consciousness of all Western cultures, where time is [constantly being] measured and there is a keen awareness of its passing, along with a strong interest in history. ^{ck} The Chinese, too, have a vivid time sense and interest in past history, ^{ck, r1} with a keen understanding of the value of dating cultural events, ^{r1} theirs is not the instrumental sense of time that ours is. ^{ck, r1} Hindu culture, however, does not care for dates. There is little emphasis on time location in Indian history or literature, for the Indians do not assign value to [such specifics] but feel that fundamental,

perduring values are timeless and placeless. ^{ck, r2, r1} Unconcerned with an immediate world of cause and effect, [they attend instead to] a precise modality of principle: the world is made up of eternal principles which are found [only] through suffering — suffering that is sometimes mistaken for pleasure. ^{ck, r1} [Hindu culture is] a strange mixture of immersion in the immediate world of sense and at the same time a complete withdrawal from it. Since the sensory life [entails] suffering, thoughts of future happiness [concern not this life but] new reincarnations, [leading, ultimately, to] absorption in God. ^{r2, r1, ck} This sort of life is a paradise of the introvert. While the Chinese cultural ideal [devotes more attention to] the commonplace, and to awareness of the present moment, the Indian seems apathetic and unaware. To him the present, and the world of sense, are a vain illusion.²¹

^{bw} [Our second conception of culture,] *kultur*, [thus defines culture in terms of a particular people's] preferred qualities and evaluations, and their loyalty to [certain central themes and] master ideas. ^{r1} [With our first conception it shares a stressing of] a group's unconscious selection of values ^{1924b} as intrinsically more [important,] more characteristic, more significant in a spiritual sense than the rest. ^{bw} But just how valuable is this definition?²² The whole terrain through which we [have just been] struggling is a hotbed of subjectivism, a splendid field for the airing of national conceits... ^{1924b} [Yet] there need be no special quarrel with this conception of a national genius so long as it is not worshiped as an irreducible psychological fetic. ^{ck} The anthropologist does not like this generalized view of culture, however. ^{1924b} Ethnologists fight shy of broad generalizations and hastily defined concepts. They are therefore rather timid about operating with national spirits and geniuses. The chauvinism of national apologists, which sees in the spirits of their own peoples peculiar excellences utterly denied to less blessed denizens of the globe, largely justifies this timidity of the scientific students of civilization. Yet here, as so often, the precise knowledge of the scientist lags somewhat behind the more naive but more powerful insights of nonprofessional experience and impression. To deny to the genius of a people an ultimate psychological significance and to refer it to the specific historical development of that people is not, after all is said and done, to analyze it out of existence. ^{ck} [It must, instead, even help to illuminate such ethnological problems of historical development as the selective "borrowing" of cultural traits, because it calls attention to the fact that] while elements are borrowed, they are being snugly fitted into a definite framework of values. (^{r1} [Actually, there is some]

danger in using the term "borrowing" for [this process, since the] traits are fitted into a pattern of values quite other [than that in which they originated].)

^{r1} [In short,] the above two ideas of culture share an emphasis on [selectivity and] a sense of value. [Shorn of their more mystical and chauvinistic elements they are not unworthy of the anthropologist's attention.] ^{1924b} [From the idea of *kultur*] we may accept culture as signifying the characteristic mold of a civilization, while from the [first] conception of culture, that of a traditional type of individual refinement, we will borrow the notion of ideal form. [From both we may adopt the emphasis on value.]

3. *The anthropological idea of culture*

[While the first two definitions of "culture" are based, in their different ways, on concepts of selection and value, the anthropological idea of culture – supposedly, at least – is not. It concerns, instead,] ^{ol} ^{tl, bw} all those aspects of human life that are socially inherited, as contrasted with those types of behavior that are biologically inherited and with those that [represent] ^{ol} individual reactions lacking historical continuity. [Perhaps the best-known anthropological definition is the one proposed by Tylor in 1871: "Culture or civilization, taken in its wide ethnographic sense, is that complex whole which includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society."]²³

[But although Tylor's definition is often cited,] ^{r1} it is illusory to think culture is clearly defined. [Only a slight alteration of Tylor's statement yields the following:] ^{h1} The evaluation or reaction of an individual to (1) patterns of behavior, (2) habits of mind, (3) traditions, (4) customs – which he learns as a member of society – is his culture. [But is it not the case that as soon as we have emphasized the individual's evaluations or reactions, our definition] equals personality [as much as, or rather than,] culture? [Yet, we shall need to make a distinction between the two since] this [individual] reaction may, in certain cases, influence the content of the culture. Even Rémy de Gourmont,²⁴ who spent most of his time in an attic, [had his effect on the culture of his time.]

[Suppose, then, that we try to evade this difficulty by emphasizing the social and excluding that which is individual.] ^{dm} But were we to confuse the "social" with the "cultural"²⁵ [we would only be exchanging

one problem for another, for] ^{h1} "society" and "social" are ill-defined (and much fine literature [in the social sciences] is vitiated by this). ^{dm} ^{b*} "Social" as a term points in two directions: there is "social" in the sense of "acting in concert," or gregariousness; and there is "social" in the sense of falling back on the sanctions of the group — on the understanding of the group. ^{dm} [The first sense is not particularly helpful for an understanding of culture, since] the interactions of individuals as such may extend to enormous numbers of people and yet not be cultural. [It is true that] in normal situations culture is carried by collectivities — hence the ready confusion. ^{h1} But collective yawning, for example, may not be cultural. [In the company of others] an individual may react as an individual, or he may duplicate reflexes, [and neither of these, presumably, is quite what we thought we meant by "culture."]

^{h1} [Indeed,] not enough attention has been paid to individual activity which is collective [but not cultural, perhaps because of the aforementioned confusion about the term "social." And perhaps we have also failed to recognize the extent to which an individual's behavior is culturally formed even when he lives alone. Even] ^{dm} the anchorite must rationalize [his actions] or connect himself in some way to a body of culture.

^{h1, s1} [The second meaning of "social," that is as involving] consensus and, [especially,] sanction, is better [suited to our purpose, since it draws our attention beyond behavioral acts.] ^{bg} For behavior, [no matter how collective,] illustrates culture but is not culture. It must always have meaning in terms of the opinion of a collectivity, ideal or actual,²⁶ before it is culture. There is something of social evaluation in anything that is cultural; [certainly] ^{h1} it enters into every definition of culture I have made. Culture is not mere behavior, but *significant* behavior. A particular word in a given language [is a good example: ^{dm} thus [the expression] "damn you," uttered ([let us suppose]) as a release of tension, is just as much at the mercy of society as any cultural trait [ordinarily found on an ethnologist's list]. Being the "data" of culture it cannot be merely haphazard syllables, for the choice of sounds is fixed by an unconscious trend of opinion. [No matter that our example is humble. Even if a conversation is utterly banal,] just to talk is of the highest cultural relevance, while running out of a theater in a fire scare may not be cultural at all. [It may be more important, certainly, but] ^{dm, h1} importance has really nothing to do with a concept of culture. Sanction, [instead,] is significant, for the meanings of behavior rest on historical sanction and selection.

^{dm} [We might even say that] the test of [whether a type of behavior is part of] culture is the ability to historicize it. Some types of behavior [are historically sanctioned in that they] have been selected as meaningful. ^{dm, bg, h1} As an illustration, we need not hesitate to call *gesture* a culturalized field, because it is subject to history and change. ^{h1} Neapolitan gestures, for example, are culturally determined [and locally specific; they are] not Latin or Mediterranean or racial. ^{dm, h1, bg} To be sure, behavior looked at as a purely physiological function — and all behavior is physiological [at some level, where it might be analyzed as involving] reflexes, relief activities, [and the like] — looked at *as such* it is not culture.²⁷ [But to look at gesture only as physiology would be an error. As with so many other behaviors, in gesture] there are two fields of activity, the physiological and the psychological.²⁸ ^{dm} [Developmentally]²⁹ speaking, I think that culture is [indeed] built on individual impulse, but we know very little about how individual behavior is actually [given psychological significance in the child's experience:] nor do we know very much about how social transmission [actually works.] In the world of significant activity — “culture” — we are never in the position to spot the psycho-biological genesis of any one trait.

^{h1, bg} [Nevertheless, it is still perfectly possible to say that] gesture is cultural in that it is historically determined, changing from time to time. It is full of meaning, not on the level of the individual's reflex, but within a framework of conventions in a particular society. [Doubtless, the very fact of its conventionality contributes to gesture's social function, for a distinctive system of gestures helps to establish what we might call a] “community of motion.” [The gestures] have a significance for society in that they give it a comfortable feeling of social relationship. ^{bg, dm, h1} We must not try to be too functional in our explanation [of such behaviors, however, for their] functionality is not all-important. ^{bg} Gestures cannot and should not always be interpreted from the original significance of a particular action. [It is more fruitful to consider their role as social symbols. But] even where there is no specific symbolism to apply to a particular [form of behavior or] social phenomenon, we should not press functionalism too far. ^{h1, dm} or try to be too logical about the meanings of culture. ^{bg, dm, h1} The habit of being too functional is a paranoid mechanism, basically! ^{h1} The paranoid type of personality is logical to the nth degree, always looking for ad hoc explanations of everything, [and overestimating] the value of self-reference.³⁰ ^{dm} We cannot inquire too closely into the real relevance of cultural traits.

[Now, where might gesture fit into Tylor's definition of culture? Should it be listed as another item in the contents of culture, in addition to] ^{bg} knowledge, beliefs and morals, law and custom, and habits? [But does it not partake of all of these in some way?] ^{dm, h1, bg, si} The actual content of culture is enormous, [and we shall not capture its essence by itemizing. It seems to me, therefore, that] ^{r1, ck} Tylor's definition of culture has outlived its usefulness. It merely helps to orient you, and does not go very deep. ^{dm, bg, h1, si} Tylor's definition is inadequate because it makes too much of those particular types of behavior that seem most important in a political sense, and of highly evaluative cultural elements such as religion. He is not wrong, but he prevents us from thinking clearly through to such cultural facts as gesture, whistling, speech, attitudes, or other elements which are unnoticed yet definitely cultural.

[Let me suggest a somewhat different definition, therefore.]³¹ ^{bg, h1, dm, h2, si} Any form of behavior, either explicit or implicit, overt or covert, which cannot be directly explained as physiologically necessary but can be interpreted in terms of the totality of meanings of a specific group, and which can be shown to be the result of a strictly historical process, is likely to be cultural in nature.³² ^{bg} "Historical process" means the conveyance of forms of behavior through social processes, either by suggestion or by direct instruction to the young. ^{dm} This last [part of the definition] is needed because of the possibility that innate biological motor patterns [contribute or point] toward the symbolism [maintained by a group without actually being part of that symbolism.] ^{si} *History* and *consensus* are the important [things, therefore]; even habit may be [cultural] if it is historically determined. ^{dm, si, h2, bg, h1} Culture demands a historical continuum, implicitly or explicitly conveyed to the young by their elders, ^{bg, dm, h1, si} [though in general] unconscious assimilation plays a greater part than conscious learning, and implicit forms are more significant than explicit ones.

^{1924b} "Culture" in this third sense shares with our [second, Germanic] conception an emphasis on the spiritual possessions of the group rather than of the individual. With our [first] conception it shares a stressing [of historical tradition. And as modified, our definition shares with other conceptions a notion of form and selective valuation: there is a selection of behavioral forms that are meaningful to a group, that it recognizes as belonging to its world of significant acts. So perhaps there is more that is useful in these two first conceptions of "culture," and

more that they have in common with our technical definition, than anthropologists are used to admitting. We shall have to look at our "true" definition of culture more closely.]³³

Editorial Note

This chapter coincides with Part I of Sapir's 1928 Outline and the opening lectures of his course each year he gave it, both at Chicago and at Yale. The notes for all three Yale years are quite similar. In 1936–37, the material in this chapter was discussed in the lectures of Oct. 12 and 19 (notes by R1, R2, CK, QQ). For 1935–36 no dates are given, but all sets of notes (T1, T2, BW) cover some of the same material. In 1933–34, the lectures of Oct. 3, Oct. 10, and a portion of Oct. 17 deal with this topic; among the note-takers for that year BG, H2, and MD have notes for Oct. 3 and 10, while H1 and SI join in as of Oct. 17.

Sapir's discussion of the term "culture" here clearly resembles a portion of his argument in "Culture, Genuine and Spurious" (1924b). I have drawn on a few passages from that text in reconstructing the first two sections of the chapter. The third section, on a definition of the anthropological use of the term "culture," relies mainly on notes from 1933. In the 1936 notes there is evidently a gap: from concluding passages it is clear that some anthropological definitions of culture, including Tylor's, had already been presented, but the portions of Sapir's lecture that did so are not recorded. Instead, the notes from 1935 and 1936 focus on methodological problems that seemed to me more conveniently placed in the next chapter.

Notes

1. In 1933 and perhaps in 1935, Sapir seems to have made a quick summary of the three uses of the term "culture" before delving more deeply into each of them. He apparently did not start with such a summary in 1936.
2. Here Sapir uses "civilization" rather than "culture" in the anthropological sense; see 1924b: "To avoid confusion with other uses of the word 'culture,' uses which emphatically involve the application of a scale of values, I shall, where necessary, use 'civilization' in lieu of the ethnologist's 'culture.'" In the present passage there is little conflict between this use of "civilization" and common uses of that term.
3. CK actually has "a natural thing," and then adds: "Language not definable in its own terms — words, for children, have definite value, emotional color. We acquire a rubber stamp attitude toward a word by gradually unloading emotional values from a word."

This passage about language is apparently out of order, however. I have placed it in ch. 2, where R1 has a similar text. See also a similar passage in ch. 10's discussion of socialization

- 4 DM adds "Mr. Garff (Taylor) was an example of the system of gentry that is so secure that it has a hypnotic effect (?)".
- 5 DM adds "No criticism made of their being serious. Jokes are only release mechanism."
- 6 In 1933 Sapir seems to have called this a "caste system."
- 7 BG has "priests", all others have "nobles."
- 8 This statement seems somewhat to contradict other note-takers' reference to a "caste system" (DM, H2) and H2's note about noble endogamy (although what H2 actually has is "Caste system; nobles / marriage among them"). Sapir's 1915 paper, "The Social Organization of the West Coast Tribes," indicates that intermarriage between nobles and other ranks was impossible in theory and rare in practice. If QQ's note is accurate, perhaps in this passage Sapir was alluding to those "cases in which men of lower rank have by dint of reckless potlatching gained the ascendancy over their betters, gradually displacing them in one or more of the privileges belonging to their rank." (Sapir 1915; SWES p. 472)
- 9 T1 has "But Northwest Coast Indians have a hierarchy and strong class distinction which depends on the doings of ancestors who established the family, the value lies in the right to sing, play, lay claim to ancestors and legends which is real and authoritative."
- 10 CK adds: "(Visual memory keen as it is not obscured by substitutive symbol, memory, reading)."
- 11 CK actually has "kudos."
- 12 Since BG prefaces the explanatory passage by "Sapir:" and H2 has "Sapir's explanation of elites:", I infer that Sapir prefaced this passage with some hedging or suggestion that he was offering only a personal opinion.
- 13 Wording of the bracketed passage derives in part from Sapir 1924b.
- 14 See H. Rickert, *Kulturwissenschaft und Naturwissenschaft: ein Vortrag*. Freiburg i.B., 1899. This work was published in several editions. Publication dates suggest that the edition Sapir used may well have been the 5th (1925).
- 15 See Sapir 1924b: "A genuine culture is perfectly conceivable in any type or stage of civilization, in the mold of any national genius..."
- 16 BW has: "fr ex. language, regularization – allow no Carlyleness – better have norm for measure in language, definitions accepted make easier to know you are understood."
- 17 T1 also has: "'French measure' in music is not really emotional but rather a limited, classical ecstasy (ballets). Exponents are Voltaire and Debussy."
- 18 For a similar argument see "Culture, Genuine and Spurious" for a notion of cultural "genuineness."
- 19 DM has "outside influences."
- 20 In 1933 Sapir did not discuss German culture but instead mentioned the Pueblo Indians. BG has: "The geist of a pueblo people is quite another pattern – subdued sobriety, introversion, restraint, being the characteristics."
- 21 CK adds: "Indian culture is collectivized introversion."
- 22 BW actually has: "(not valuable def)". It is not clear whether Sapir himself decreed it not valuable – a statement that would be consistent with the note in BG that "It is not easy to define the geist of a culture or people." but inconsistent with the foregoing excursions into the spirit of French culture, Russian culture, etc. – or whether he said (as in CK and 1924b) that anthropologists tend not to like this definition.
- 23 Although none of the note-takers quote Tylor's definition exactly, it is evident that Sapir called it to their attention. DM gives a close paraphrase. I cite the original (Tylor 1871:1).
- 24 Remy de Gourmont (1858–1915), French writer.
- 25 DM actually has: "'Social' and 'cultural' must not be confused."

26. It is not clear whether "ideal or actual" refers to the collectivity, the behavior, or the evaluation of the behavior. In the margin of this passage BG has "samt / sinner / everyman".
27. H1 has: "To be sure, all behavior is physiological and as such is not culture." DM has: "Behavior looked at as a physiological function is never cultural." BG has: "Behavior that is purely physiological = reflexes, relief activities = is not cultural."
28. H1 actually has: "There are two fields of activity: / psych = physiol) psycho-biol." The arrangement of these notes on the page makes it unclear whether the two fields are the psychological and the physiological, with "psychobiology" as a hybrid that may tend to confuse them, or whether Sapir was making some distinction between "psychobiology" and "psychophysiology." I have chosen the first alternative.
29. DM actually has "Genetically," a word Sapir almost always uses in the developmental sense rather than in the biological sense. To avoid confusion for the modern reader I substitute "developmental" for "genetic" here and in many other passages.
30. H1 adds: "Being too functional is a paranoid mechanism: to wit, Brown, & Mead, and Malinowski."
31. BG has "Sapir's definition." Notice that the definition shifts away from "culture" to what is "cultural" – from whole to attribute.
32. The note-takers have slightly different versions of the definitions. BG has: "Any form of behavior, either explicit or implicit, overt or covert, which can not be directly interpreted physiologically, and which has meaning in terms of the totality of meanings of a specific group and which can be shown to be the result of a strictly historical process, is cultural." H1 has: "Any form of behavior, either implicit or explicit, that is not explainable in a physiological sense, and which has meaning in the totality of the group and which can be shown to be the result of historical process, is culture." H2 has: "Any form of behavior, explicit or implicit, overt or not, which is not directly physically and biologically necessary and individual but can be interpreted in terms of the group and can be shown to be historically determined is likely to be cultural in nature." DM has: "Any behavior which has meaning for the totality of a group and which can be shown to be the result of an historical process are culture." SI has: "Any form of behavior which has meaning in terms of totality meaning in group and which can be shown in historic trend."
33. Wording of the bracketed passage comes partly from Sapir 1924b, partly from note-taker passages already drawn upon, in order to bring the chapter to a conclusion.

Chapter 2. The Concept of Culture in the Social Sciences

[Methodological problems in anthropology]

^{bw, 11} [In the preceding lecture we began to consider] the anthropological sense of the term "culture" as embracing all those human reactions which are socially inherited, as contrasted with those lacking historical continuity or those based on biological heredity. ⁰¹ [You will recall, however, that our] attempt at a closer definition [than Tylor's] led to [a glimpse of some] unexpected difficulties. [Let us examine some of these more carefully now.]

^{bw} [Whatever else culture may be, the anthropologist insists that it is] a continued thing, [transcending the vagaries of] individual experience. ¹¹ For example, although the Minnesota accent [of a Mid-Western schoolboy from a rural background may] change naturally to an Oxford accent [if he should happen to cross the ocean for his university education, this change is merely a personal matter that has little to do with the gradual shifts of pronunciation that take place over the years in the language as a whole.]¹ The English language goes on, with a continuity [of its own that does not depend on the particular events of an individual's personal history. Nor is] the biological sequence [by which our schoolboy passes from] birth to adulthood and [eventual] death [a cultural matter, even though cultural transmission involves the sequence of generations.] ^{bw, 11, 12} [We must therefore distinguish among at least] three fields of behavior or kinds of continuities: those continuities that are biologically necessary; those that are accidental or contingent;² and those that are socialized. [It is the last that represents the] cultural continuities, for ^{bw, 12} culture is in no regard accidental, [insofar as this characterizes that which is] individual and personal, nor does culture concern itself with that which is biologically necessary.

^{11, 12} [What are the phenomena] belonging to culture, [then? Perhaps it seems obvious enough that] language, religion, monetary systems, political [patterns such as] methods of voting, social organization, and literature all are in the continuity of culture. [But what do these grand

rubrics represent, in terms of behaviors the anthropologist might observe?]^{bw} Is culture an objectively [observable phenomenon] after all? It really is extremely difficult and perhaps impossible to [identify what is cultural with complete] objectivity. There seem to be certain things we [as individuals] cannot change, [and we call these] culture. [But, as I suggested in last week's lecture, some activities] may [appear to partake of that grand cultural] pageant just because they exercise many adherents.³ So although my definition has emphasized the historical and social as apart from the individual, it may be [that this distinction is largely] metaphorical and that [the "social" in the sense we intend it here] cannot be isolated.⁴

[We shall return to the problems inherent in the term "social" at some length later on. For the moment, let us try another approach to the problem of identifying what is "cultural." We agree that we have excluded the accidental from the realm of the cultural, as well as physiological necessities as such. Yet, all behavior has a physiological dimension; so how are we to isolate that which is cultural in it?]^{t1} [Though we referred to biological "necessity" earlier on, it is doubtful that we can solve our dilemma by supposing that all necessity is biological. Even physiological] necessity [is subject to cultural evaluation, entering the cultural dimension as it] takes on a psychological character. The *locus* of this necessity is important then; yet it can be [physiological or psychological.] individual or general.

[Thus we have run into two kinds of difficulties.]^{o1} [First,] no human behavior can be discovered which is intrinsically or purely "cultural."^{bw} [Second,] we have not been patient [in our thinking about] the actual locus of culture, [for as soon as we] knew it was not in the individual [as such we] jumped to the "social" uncritically. [And as if two difficulties were not enough, there is yet a third, for]^{bw} [we anthropologists have somehow to infer the] continuity [between behavioral events, the continuity we are going to attribute to socialization], if we are then to say we have culture. [That is, we claim that] wherever this *pattern* [of behavior occurs we have identified something cultural, since we know that the pattern's actual manifestations may differ in irrelevant ways. But how do we get from the behavior to the pattern?]^{t1} It is illusory to think culture is clearly defined.^{bw} Its content is shaky, not fixed; the confines of the realm are not given but have to be created.

^{bw, t1} [In practice,] "culture" is an ad hoc term for [those aspects of] experience that do in a sense transcend the individual and [to which we can attribute]⁵ an historical and geographical continuity.^{lb} The anthro-

pologist slices culture out of behavior, [as it were =] ¹¹ ^{bw} that is, we abstract culture from behavior and label it with symbols — [not] objectively, [for objectivity in this realm] is not possible, but rather ad hoc, based on our experience of elements [of behavior] which are referred to by certain terms [in our language. We] discover a thing because, in a sense, we already know it. [Our “slicing” is done] through words, [and because we did not personally invent these terms we suppose that they] carve with “objectivity.”

¹ Just as it is illusory to think culture is clearly defined, then, so it may be an illusion [to assume that the anthropologist can objectively describe and study] the “totality of culture.” [I suspect that what I am saying here will not please those anthropologists who like to think of themselves as properly] ^{1939c} brought up in the austerities of a well-defined science of man. ^{ck} The ideal of most anthropologists is [to proceed] like the chemist — to describe and classify objectively, not to value; ¹² personal factors should be absent. [Difficulties in realizing this ideal arise immediately in ethnographic work, however.] ^{ck} You start out describing socialized patterns, and end up by being biographical. You don't know whether you are interested in what you are going to abstract from observation or in behavior patterns.⁶ [And so on. If we are honest with ourselves we must recognize that no matter how careful and scientific one tries to be, the student of culture faces some serious methodological dilemmas.]

¹ The difficulty [lies in the process] of abstraction [necessary to anthropological analysis, and to the fact that] the behavioral data [you can observe] are connected with less easily observed material, [without which they cannot be understood]. [It is usually supposed that], ideally, [the less directly observed material, and its connection with behavior, are to be discovered through immersion in the culture]; but the idea of immersion in a culture seems contradictory to that certain aloofness necessary to analyze the patterns of behavior. ¹² The more you immerse yourself in a culture, the less ability you have to analyze the culture according to the anthropological ideal, for [just as] the Indian is not aware of the patterns of his culture, [so will you be unaware of them the more you become like him]. ^{ck} The more you identify yourself with the people, the less you are being an anthropologist, [in that sense].

¹². ¹ There is a conflict of interest, therefore, between the anthropologist's ideal of participating in the culture, and his technique of analyzing the culture. To participate would be to psychologize; and in participating, things become too vital for analysis. ^{ck} As an anthropologist you

want to tear every fact of the culture out of its individualized context. It is more important for the anthropologist to abstract patterns than to give a wealth of biographical detail, [and yet in so abstracting you must inevitably tend to lose sight of the actual experience of living individuals, to whom such patterns have real value in their interrelationships with other human beings.]⁷ ^{r2} In a way, the psychologist is much closer to the Indian than is the anthropologist, because he does not tear the [personal] context up.

^{r2, r1} The task of the anthropologist, then, cannot be [simply] to gather all observations available. The ideal of describing what one sees and hears is not enough. ^{r1} [If the purpose of anthropological work] is the analysis of how culture is made up of a system of patterns,⁸ and to understand the relationship of these, ^{ck, r2, r1} then what the anthropologist studies is not behavior at all, in the ordinary sense. His interest is not in the facts of behavior but in its typical patterns — not in the individual's experience, but in the patterns of culture. ^{r2, r1, ck} The anthropologist is not interested in behavior, but in the field of behavioral forms.⁹ ^{r1} From the study of [behavioral] forms, anthropologists build up the patterns which [(they believe)] are transferred, socialized, and carried by the individual. ^{ck} But not everything we observe has anything to do with pattern.

^{ck} For example, could we base the study of religion on watching people in church? [Not everything we could observe in their behavior concerns religion, and not everything concerning their religion would be directly observable in their behavior.] Dorsey's study of the Arapaho Sun Dance¹⁰ is a *mélange* of all kinds of observations some of which have nothing to do with the Sun Dance. [If you propose instead to study the Sun Dance as a form of religious expression,] you must reassert your data in the terms of the pattern you have analyzed out. [The usual] advice is to note everything, but you don't — you note those things that have to do with the pattern you are observing. ^{r2} Actually, if we made a complete encyclopedic survey of all the facts connected with religion, we would find that very few of them are directly related to the anthropologist's pattern of religion. The anthropologist's pattern is based on words — "religion," "God," etc. — and on the assumption that certain details can be omitted because they are like our own culture.¹¹

^{ck, r2} You need to understand the general behavior of the Indian, then, in order to make your abstractions [from observation, and even to select which observations you will take note of]. ^{ck} There is no such thing as "religious behavior" — there is [only] *behavior*. [When you propose to

study religious behavior,] you dissociate this segment from the whole of which it is part. ^{r2} Hence, although a study of cultural behavior is worthwhile, it is not a true study of culture patterns. ^{r2 ck r1} Indeed, the concept of "cultural behavior" is a hybrid, even contradictory concept — a conflict in terms. There can be no such thing, for behavior cannot be equated with patterns. ^{ck} [Behavior is a property of the individual, and while] we need more study of the individual in primitive society, it is not in itself the equivalent of a purely cultural survey. ^{r1 ck r2} [Moreover, behavior is physiological and for this reason too its observation is not the same thing as a study of culture, for] culture is not concerned with the physiological necessities as such. ^{r1} Culture deals with them, but it is not *concerned* with them. ^{ck} They are implied, even taken for granted, but they are not relevant for cultural analysis. You *observe* behavior, from which you *abstract* culture.

^{ck r1} [In proposing] criteria for a concept of culture, [then, we shall clearly have to leave] Tylor's definition [rather far behind. And we shall not have resolved all problems as to the locus of culture, or its relationship to individual psychology. Anthropology's frequent assumption]¹² ^{1932a} that culture is a superorganic, impersonal whole is a useful enough methodological principle to begin with but becomes a serious deterrent in the long run to the more dynamic study of the genesis and development of cultural patterns because these cannot be realistically disconnected from those organizations of ideas and feelings which constitute the individual. ^{ck} Where do socialized patterns leave off and the primordial human being begin? We do not know yet where culture ends, [or how it affects and alters the persons who live with its help and in its influence.] ^{ck r1} The rate of modifiability of human beings in regard to [cultural] patterns is an interesting question. ^{r1} But it is useless to the versatility of the culture which is carried by them.¹³

[*Distinguishing between the "cultural" and the "social"*]

^{ck} In contrast to psychology, which has no difficulty in discovering its subject matter — for its interest is in the [individual] human being, his behavior and reactions — anthropology has difficulty on the theoretical side in defining its subject matter. ^{ck r1} [First of all] it does not know whether to ascribe certain aspects of behavior to culture or to biology. Gesture, for example, [has seemed ambiguous in this way, as we saw in the preceding lecture. Moreover, anthropology has] difficulty

distinguishing between social phenomena and individual phenomena.^{r1} These difficulties [are inherent in] the anthropological sense of “culture.” [The contrast with psychology does not arise because anthropology concentrates on the totality of behavior or on some portion thereof that] ^{ol, ck} is deemed “social,” but because “culture” is *abstracted* from the totality of human behavior.

^{bw, ck, ol} Although we [often] mix the term “cultural” with the term “social,” they are really quite distinct, [even in a way] antithetical. [Actually, there are some dangerous] ^{ol} pitfalls in the use of the term “social.” ^{bg, dm, st, h1, h2} [for if we inquire as to] its meaning we must realize that there are various concepts or implications of the word, and we must decide which is [to be invoked. To start with, there is the basic distinction between] ^{ck, r1, r2} “social” as arising from the [sheer] coming together of people – physical togetherness – and social togetherness. The biologist [might be concerned with] the physical togetherness of people, and the psychologist [might be interested in] the reinforcing of individual actions [that such propinquity facilitates;] but the sociologist [emphasizes] the organized behavior and ordered life of a group, [whose members need not always be physically in the same place, their] togetherness being of a different kind.¹⁴

[Not only are these two senses of the term “social” different, but they may even come into conflict with one another. The first definition,] ^{bw, t1} “social” in the sense of gregariousness, or of human beings herded together in a band, [might, for example, be used to describe] a gang in the city, or ^{h1} a crowd at the theater. ^{bw, t1} “Social” in the second [sense would describe] a social dictum, for instance that you should not say the word “Swell!” because it is [supposed to be] bad [grammar]; yet, on the other hand, [in a way the dictum itself is] antisocial because it is referred to [a disapproved] group [among whom] “Swell!” is the [normal] usage. [What is “social” here – the actual] use [by a group, or the] idea[^{tional}] construct ([condemning that use?])¹⁵

^{bw, t1} [For an example of a similar] difficulty, [suppose we return to our theater crowd; and suppose someone in the crowd yells,] “Fire!” [From one standpoint this act is] social behavior, because “fire” is a socially understood word; yet [its utterance] lets loose antisocial behavior (in our first sense of the term) [when the theater crowd panics.] The socially understood word [(socially in the second sense)] dissolves the group of the other “social” type. ^{bw} So the first sense of the term is not enough [for the social scientist’s needs, while the second sense] is essentially [a matter of] ideas.

^{ol} Thus there is a fallacy in ascribing the term "social behavior" to a collectivity as such. Group behavior in this literal sense [may be comfortably observable and] real, but it is irrelevant [to our purpose.] "Social behavior," so called, is both individual and collective; [it is anchored in the realm of ideas and understandings. Now, where does "culture" enter in? It has more to do with the second sense of "social" than the first. But if we really want to answer this question we shall have to make even finer distinctions among the meanings of the term "social."¹⁶ There seem to be five possibilities:]

(1) ^{bg, h1, dm, h2, la} Social in the sense of "gregarious," [or the simple assemblage of people in an aggregate. It is difficult to find examples of this simple situation — a group gathered together at one place, say our theater crowd waiting for the curtain [to rise, considered] from a purely biological [viewpoint] as an ecological group, apart from the reasons for being there. ^{h1, lb} [The example cited earlier.] of this theater crowd in a panic when someone yells, "Fire!"; [might better illustrate the point.]¹⁷

(2) ^{bg, dm, h1, h2, lb} Social in the "gregarious" sense plus cultural connotation. Our theater [aggregate] is now an opera crowd, expecting [a performance and to some degree knowledgeable about] the history of music. ^{bg} That is, we have people plus motives plus patterns, and so on.

(3) ^{bg, dm, lb, h1, h2} Social in the sense of an individual [whose thoughts or actions have a] group implication: for example the actions of a small child whose play activities [are oriented so as to] avoid parental taboos.

(4) Social in the sense of an individual [whose activities have] cultural connotations, including ethical evaluations. President Roosevelt is alone in his study but he is writing a speech, or preparing a bill, with reforms of cultural import. ^{h1} Or, as another example, Chauncey Johnny John thinking what he will say at the Green Corn Festival the night before the third day.¹⁸

(5) Social with reference only to *organization*,¹⁹ for example political or geographical organization. We need an adjective other than "social" for this last type; perhaps it should properly be called *societal*. ^{h1} If we say *societal* with reference to organization, and mean *societal* organization, it is a good term [for what is studied in a] Science of Society.²⁰

[In these examples we have distinguished individual activities from collective activities, and we have seen that cultural connotations can attach to either kind, although they need not.] ^{lb} Another way to distinguish among the many uses of the term "social" is to compare the various disciplines [that employ it, but with different connotations. Thus we might consider:]²¹

(1) the ethical usage ([as in the expressions] “social sympathy,” “social integration,” “unselfish social work”).^{h2} Ethical considerations may come under any of several [of the senses of “social” mentioned above,] since ethics involves the content [of one’s actions] as opposed to [merely] considering the pattern:

(2) the biological usage (i. e. gregarious, like ants and bees;

(3) the sociological usage (concerning structure and organization);

(4) the anthropological usage (concerning the peculiar nexus of a culture, which is historically conditioned – speech, tabus, beliefs, arts, and so on);²²

(5) the psychological usage (concerning individual evaluation and criticism).

[In short, it is highly misleading simply to equate the terms “cultural” and “social,” or to assume that one has accounted for what culture is by referring to “social behavior” without further qualification.]^{ck} “Cultural” and “social” tend to be associated together, but they are really distinct.

[Distinguishing between culture and behavioral phenomena]

[One of the greatest pitfalls in the term “social” is that its ambiguities may allow social scientists to persuade themselves that they are objectively observing physical behavior, when in fact they are not.]¹¹ The social scientist is perpetually talking of ideas, and is bound by ideas, although [he often believes] that physical phenomena are what he means.^{ol} There is a notional conflict between “culture” and behavior deemed “social”: it is the¹¹ conflict between cultural phenomena and natural or physical phenomena, [and it is masked by the ambiguities in the term “social.”]

Let us consider another example of these ambiguities, this time drawn from]¹¹ religion.^{bw} Going to church is social in the [collective sense, because there are a] lot of people there. [It is also social] in the [consensual sense, because the people] participate in communal ideas, “sin” for example. Yet most people do not pay [a great deal of] attention to the ceremony. [Suppose, for instance,] a girl [in the assembly is present but] does not pay attention; yet she is part of the “social” [occasion. She is] classified as participating from the mere fact that she goes with her father and does not voice her thoughts,^{nc} which may differ greatly from the attitudes of the various [other] individuals who are there. If we

call this *mélange* of ideas "religious," [or so identify her participation,]¹¹ we make her a victim of [our own] idea [of what religion is.] We are not [taking an objective,] behavioristic [approach — nor could we, in the study of religion, for] "religion" is not actually a naturally visible or a physical entity. It is, rather, a collectivity of thought. Mere numbers are not necessary [for "religious" behavior,] so that the concept of "social" in sense 1 is invalidated; yet we are again wrong [if we go too far in the opposite direction and] think that the collectivity was not the necessity at all but that the idea was the thing.

^{dm, bg, h2, t1} In the social sciences we are always torn between two poles: the interest in individual behavior, and [the interest in] cultural patterning and social understanding.^{h2} [The realm of social science is] therefore hard to define — its object of study is confusing.^{bw} [In much the same way] the delimitation of culture [itself] is difficult — ^{ol, bw} unlike the objective delimitation of [subject matter in] the natural sciences.^{ol} [In the social sciences] uncertainty generally prevails as to whether a given study belongs to the field of "culture" or to the field of actual behavior,^{dm} whereas in the natural sciences everybody knows exactly what is being referred to [(what the object of study is)].^{dm, bw}
^{ol} The psychologists concerned only with behavior are pretty near [that certainty] too, [although their object of study] always relapses into [merely] a more complex physiology.^{23 dm} But in the social sciences we are always talking about two things: what people are actually doing in reference to social situations and, on the other hand, [our concern] with the social pattern, at the ethnological [level].^{24 ol} Either point of view would be justifiable, [but not their confusion.] Much "social science" is a half-hearted study of certain modes of behavior that have been tacitly (and often unavowedly) selected on cultural, not behavioristic, lines.

^{dm} If you were a strictly [objective] social scientist you would never use the word *religion*, for that presupposes certain categories [into which your observations are to fall. But it is not possible to avoid making use of any categories in observing social situations and activities.]²⁵ Any set of activities is pre-judged in advance by the culture of the observer [As a social scientist you may wish to use the term "religion" because you are trying to get at some sort of] universal meanings — [whatever it is that is responsible for] the diffusion of Christianity,²⁶ [for instance. But you should not confuse this with a behaviorist psychology.] Religion from the point of view of psychology is quite a useless concept, [since] the psychologist is told in advance what religion is and that bothers [any true behaviorist.] Religion is not a thing that is [physiologically

or] emotionally there, but a historically determined series of patterns interacting in a certain situation and [in a certain] series. [It is a cultural concept, and] a simple application of cultural concepts in a psychological investigation is naive.

^{dm, bg} The only way out is to say that the patterns are never [directly present] in action. Religion never “occurs” — it is never performed. All you can study is the behavior of certain individuals in particular situations that already have a cultural label. ^{bg, dm} The [observer]²⁷ should never start with patterns but with the individual, [from whose perspective] in any case the actualization of a pattern is never more than marginal.²⁸ ^{bg} No two people participating in a service have the same motives, the same feelings, or the same reasons [for being there.] Each individual is differently “religious,” and you cannot accurately talk about a generalized “religious [person].” ^{dm} In the actual religious situation, moreover, [as we said before, not all the behavior that occurs is relevant to religion; some of it is merely head-scratching. In fact] you have the whole of human conduct flowing in, [and what you select to observe] depends on what you want to look at. ^{dm} Thus this situation that we called religious is more of a fiction than we thought it was. It’s all in the terminology — ^{bg} it is merely the use of terminology that makes patterns. [This is as true for the native as for the ethnologist, incidentally, so as a social scientist you can also turn it to your advantage.]²⁹ ^{dm} There is nothing that helps us find out so much about behavior as terms and language.

¹¹ The conflict of cultural phenomena with natural or physical phenomena [also arises with regard to so-called “religious objects,” or “fetishes.”] ^{bw} Objects are not religion; ¹¹ fetishism has no place in the idea of culture, for it is [merely] the misplacement of memory by outworn tokens. ^{bw, 11} For example, a ceremonial dancing shirt belongs to [the realms of] religion, decorative arts, technology (the history of clothing) — and to none of the three. [If] it is culture, it does not completely belong to any one [classification; for] ^{11, 12} culture is an idea, but a shirt is a piece of material. [If you want to call it] a piece of “material culture” [you must bear in mind that] ^{12, bw} although the material articles give us the means of [deducing some aspects of]³⁰ the culture, one cannot hang on to them alone, [and treat] the shirt as [a sort of] deposit of behavior. [If you wanted to understand its connection with religion you need not necessarily have collected the shirt itself at all — instead,] ^{bw} you should have found out the relevance of the shirt, [the meaning for its users and

the psychological background that caused people to make it in this way.]³¹ To get its import one must analyze it out of existence.

[The tendency on the part of some anthropologists to fetishize the fetish, as it were, that is to overemphasize the importance of objects just as a neurotic might overvalue the hair of the beloved, is only the most extreme example of the misplaced identification of the cultural with the physical which we have also discussed with respect to the "objective" study of behavior.³² The point I want to make here is that] ^{bg} ^{h2, dm} the patterns [of culture] as given by ethnologists [in their analyses] are not real things — they are merely the normal methods of interpreting behavior.³³ The cultural mode of studying behavior is a highly abstractionist view that is not really interested in behavior at all. ^{dm, h2, kb} You can't ever see culture; you see people behaving, ^{h2, bg, lb} and you interpret [their behavior] in abstracted terms, by gathering data on [what you consider to be] typical forms of behavior, [as if the behavior were] a pattern exemplified. ^{dm} Then you form theories as to how the patterns operate. ^{lb} The ethnologist is never a "simon pure" [behavioral observer, since] anthropology's interest is in the pattern, *par excellence*.

^{9q} The distinction between the study of culture patterns and the study of actual detailed behavior is absolutely fundamental to the point of view presented here. ^{r1, ck} The first represents a configurative viewpoint and [consists in] the study of a series of abstracted forms or patterns, while the second [concerns] behavior — "social" behavior [in some sense, perhaps, but] actual behavior [nonetheless, and as distinguishable from the abstracted forms as is the province of] the behaviorist from that of the historian.

ck, r2 Criteria for Culture

[Our discussion has focused on a number of methodological and conceptual difficulties relating to the anthropological notion of culture and having considerable importance for the position of anthropology in the social sciences. But so far we have perhaps said less about] ^{9l} what culture is [than about] what it is not. [If we are to be able to consider] social science from the cultural angle, [how shall we recognize cultural phenomena? The preceding discussion has suggested various criteria, which may now be examined more closely.]

1. [*Culture depends upon criteria of value.*] ^{9q} The cultural, in behavior, is the valued rather than the nonvalued. [Value criteria apply both to

the people whose culture we study and to our own methods of analysis.]^{ck, r1} No matter how objective we try to be, we unconsciously apply criteria of value to our data, and make certain value judgements in the selection of the behavior patterns to be studied. [And so do the people we study. For this reason]^{ol} all cultural concepts are relative, depending on the peculiar ideology and historical background of particular cultures.³⁴

2. [*Culture is nonbiological.*]^{qq, ck} The cultural is also non-biological — [not only in the sense that] it is not hereditary, but also^{qq} in the sense that it is dependent upon equivalences of phenomena which can be biologically or physically described but whose locus of equivalence is not to be found in biological explanation so far as that can at present go.^{r1} [That is, although behavior has a physical dimension, cultural patterns] are not physically definable; they are only definable through [a principle of] substitutions.^{ck, r1} Culture [represents] an arbitrary theory of equivalences, where one set of physical facts can be translated into another (its symbolic equivalent), as spoken words can be translated into written ones. There is no limit to this fictitious world of symbolic equivalences, but rather, [ever] new combinations [matching] the infinite variety of experience.^{ck} The *locus* of the pattern is not in biology or physics, so the culturalist is never interested in the biological or physical world [as such].^{r1, ck} Even [our patterns of] adjustment to primary biological needs are plastered over with secondary cultural meanings.^{ck} And we have learned to get away from those partly biological experiences which were responsible for our knowledge in the first place. [Arithmetic,] for example, [may have arisen from] counting the fingers on the hand, yet the concept of “ten” can be projected even though [a particular] individual has only seven fingers.

^{ck} [Despite an anthropological consensus that culture depends upon social tradition rather than biological inheritance, the difficulty of distinguishing the pattern from the expression of the pattern means that] the anthropologist does not always know whether to ascribe certain aspects of behavior to culture or biology.^{r2, r1} Because culture is not concerned with physiological necessity as such, the total pattern called culture must not be implicit in the fact that the object of study is an organism.^{nc} Falling down the stairs is not cultural ([even if the stairs themselves are a product of cultural activity]).^{r2, se, h1} Walking, eating, and mating are not culture, as regards their physiological functionality, although these biological factors are governed by culture in that the *methods* of preparing food, of taking [a mate, and so on] are governed

by habits [and customs that are] socially [acquired and sanctioned] ^{ck} Another good example of this [problem] is gesture; as we saw earlier, ^{md} we need not hesitate to call "gesture" a culturalized field, ^{b1} because, [among other things,] it is subject to history and change. ^{r1} However, [we must be cautious about inferring that something is cultural rather than biological just because it has changed.] The rate of modifiability [of a pattern is not in itself a simple matter or a clearcut way to distinguish the biological, the individual, and the cultural, for] the rate of modifiability varies from pattern to pattern, from society to society, and from individual to individual.

3. [*Culture has a social reference.*] ^{q9} The cultural is also often distinguished as being societal, ³⁵ i. e. going on in relation to other members of the group; ^{ck, r1} it involves the recognition of other people more clearly than we ordinarily do. ^{q9} But it would be difficult to find any biological fact of human behavior that does not involve interorganic connectedness – ^{ck} that is, there is no biological experience which is not ultimately societal – ^{q9} so this is not a [sufficient] defining characteristic. [We have to exclude the biological first.]

^{ck} [We have already discussed] the difficulty of distinguishing between social phenomena and individual phenomena, and [the difference] between the "social" and the "cultural" – [but it is probably useful to emphasize once again that the activities which are culturally patterned, or have cultural relevance, need not be collective.] ^{r1} Anti-social or un-social persons may produce cultural [forms] or social assets, ^{bw} [as for instance when an artist's work, produced in isolation,] ³⁶ integrates social ideas that have been lying around. ^{bw, r1} From the [observational] ³⁷ point of view [this activity] is not "social," but in a cultural sense it is "social" and may be the best type of object of study for the social scientist. ^{r1} [Similarly,] a hermit is anti-social in one way, yet through census-[taking], [use of] money, taxes, and so on, [even in his rationalization of self-isolation,] he is a part [of a larger community.] He may be an unwilling or unwitting [part, but he is in a sense] a member of society and [a participant in] culture. ^{bw} You can escape the "social" [in the sense of social gatherings,] but you cannot escape culture.

^{r1, r2, ck} For the anthropologist, [therefore, what is important in behavior is not whether people perform it in a group situation but] the pattern of their behavior, those phenomena for which a social tradition is responsible. ^{r1} A pattern is an assemblage of significant things, with a terminological key.

[Presumably, then,]^{ck} when you limit yourself to pattern awareness, this is anthropology.^{r1, r2} But an individual's awareness of the patterns of experience is conditioned by his individual history and experience, [and this is as true of ourselves as it is of anyone else we study.]^{r1, lb, bw} Is [it not conceivable, therefore, that] our conception of "society" [itself is] a cultural construct?^{r2} As a matter of fact, all our concepts are mere patterns of our culture, and^{1932a} the term "society" [is no exception. It] is a cultural construct which is employed by individuals who stand in significant relations to each other in order to help them in the interpretation of certain aspects of their behavior.

4. [*Culture is made up of patterns.*]^{ck, r1} Strictly [speaking, then,] the anthropologist is concerned with the location of patterns in the cultural order, [including] their origins, history, diffusability, etc.^{qq, ck} When the cultural is distinguished as not hereditary, this anthropological dictum is of course with reference to the patterns of culture as such, though they all have hereditary determinants^{r1} in the organs and predispositions [through which they are manifested].^{qq, ck} Any patterns of behavior that are conceived of as having perduring reference to a group and are not carried by the biological mechanism of heredity give us the matrix out of which we can abstract the things called "cultural patterns."^{ck, r1, r2} The anthropologist is trained to follow the patterns rather than the social entities that carry the patterns,^{r1} although the historical [transmission]³⁸ of patterning means that perfected patterns of behavior are conveniently located in social groups.

[The process of discovering a pattern is not the same as its historical genesis or its ontogeny, however.]^{r1, ck} A good example of cultural pattern [illustrating this difference] is the English language, [although any language might serve just as well, since]^{smp} language is the most massively unconscious pattern in all cultures.³⁹^{r1, ck} For the child, words are fraught with emotion, backed by expression; they have a definite value, [in the sense of an] emotional color. [For children] language is not definable in its own terms, without emotion. For the adult, words are symbols. By gradually unloading emotional values from a word we acquire a rubber-stamp attitude toward it.^{ck, r1} [From this standpoint the strong emotional attachment to one's language which can characterize] ethnocentrism, in the adult, is a kind of childhood nostalgia, a longing for a [remembered] feeling of security within the close little group.

^{r1, ck} For the linguist, [interested in] the form of the language, the process of discovering linguistic patterns and the location of patterns

of speech differs from the psychological discovery of speech [— the discovery of the psychological significance of a particular utterance in a particular situation]. In language, [there is actually an inverse relationship between complexity of form and complexity of contextual implication, for it is the] limitation of form to a minimum that [allows it to bear] a maximum of implication.^{40 r1} [The linguist derives] an analysis of complex patterns [only by abstracting away] from the concrete actions [of speech].^{ck} Thus English is a hierarchy of simple patterns abstracted from concrete situations which grow in complexity. Patterns are abstracted from an event; they are not a record of an event.^{r1} The event [itself, the actual] situation, is the meeting of many patterns, [not only the one you select for attention in your process of analysis.]^{ck} To understand an actual situation you are building pattern on pattern and the further down you dig, the more useless your patterns are in understanding the real situation, [the “meaning” of the event to the people actually involved in it.]^{dm} When one says a word, one is angry, tired, and so on as well as manifesting a [linguistic] pattern. [So although one could] describe the behavior in cultural terms, the linguistic psychologist [must also realize that] the actual fact of behavior [is not governed only by them.] Only the psychiatrist can tell you [about the rest of] what is actually there.

^{ck, r1} The anthropologist’s “culture”, then, is the hierarchy of abstracted patterns and their complex interrelationships.^{h1} We draw these abstractions from the behavior of individuals in social settings, by agreeing on certain fictions such as social organization, religion, and so on, which we employ as hitching posts for certain behavior patterns.⁴¹
^{tl, bw} The cultural [aspect]⁴² is the core of a behavior pattern when all the individual factors and differences have been taken away. A single occurrence or phenomenon may be the result of an unlimited number of culture patterns — ^{bw} [that is, it may] split up into complicated participations having no [obvious] link — ^{tl, bw} and in taking true stock of this occurrence, to place [an action such as a glancing] look in the totality of the [individual’s] behavior and his relation with others, all these [patterns] should be considered; but generally in ethnology this cannot be done and should not be [undertaken.]

^{tl} [Now, if] culture cannot be seen in the abstract, but is given in the forms of behavior, the sum of which make culture, then ^{tl, ck} the locus of these [cultural] patterns — where they reside — [is problematic:] you cannot actually locate a pattern in time or space.^{1998b} We shall take language as our example. Language is a very peculiar,⁴³ even paradoxical

cal. thing because, on the face of it, it is one of the most patterned, one of the most culturalized, of habits, yet that one, above all others, which is supposed capable of articulating our inmost feelings. The very idea of going to the dictionary in order to find out what we ought to say is a paradox. What we "ought" to say is how we spontaneously react, and how can a dictionary — a storehouse of prepared meanings — tell us how we are spontaneously reacting? Everyone senses the paradoxical about the situation, and of course the more of an individualist he is, the more he proclaims the fetish of "preservation of his personality," the less patience he has with the dictionary. The more conformist he is, the more he thinks that people should, by whatever ethical warrant you like, be what society wishes them to be, the more apt he is to consult the dictionary. Language, then, suggests both individual reality and culture; [so it would be absurd to say that language is *located* in the dictionary. The dictionary is merely an object, a thing that symbolizes language with respect to a certain value situation — in which the patterns of language intersect with the patterning of authority.]⁴⁴ ^{r1} The dictionary is an example of the cultifying of a certain type of [linguistic] behavior: it takes a normative point of view, ascribing value [to certain linguistic acts]. [That is, the dictionary, as a concrete object, is not language, but merely an expression of the patterning of authority with respect to linguistic behavior.]

^{ck, r1} For the anthropologist, culture is a conception, not a reality. And it is not a closed field; there are always new patterns [intersecting whichever one we happen to have focused attention upon]. ^{r1} [Consider, for instance, the expression,] "thank you," [spoken at the end of a] dinner [party. Analysis of the patterns in which this expression takes part would not be limited to those represented in a dictionary of English, but would include the system of] sounds, the characteristic order of sounds, and the grammar; [the relation of "thank you" to other] symbols of politeness, [at dinners or elsewhere]; the [placement of these symbols in relation to] the dinner's symbolism of courses, [their] preparation, [and their sequence;] the type of meeting [the dinner party represents, as compared with other types of social gathering; and so forth].^{ck} Thus the realm of culture is always widening.

^{r1} [In sum,] culture is *not* behavior; it cannot be seen. [It is, rather, an] abstraction of concepts gained from experience. ⁹⁹ Since the realm of "culture" so set forth is no naturally established division of [the phenomena occurring in the] world, it is useless to look for thoroughly efficient causes within this cultural universe. The causal point of view

is helpful, of course, in finding fairly uniform [historical] sequences [in different civilizations],⁴⁵ but ^{r1} it is impossible to speak of cosmic causes in the study of culture. ^{t1} Nothing in nature except culture itself is able to facilitate the definition of culture.

Difficulties of the Social Sciences

[The anthropologist's difficulties in defining the concept of culture, and in distinguishing the cultural from the social and biological, are representative of] ^{ol, h1, qq, t1, dm, h2, lb, bw, r2, t2, bg} the difficulties of the social sciences in general — difficulties they encounter] because the concept of culture is necessary to them — as compared with psychology and the natural sciences.⁴⁶ ^{ck, r1} Why is social science such a difficult thing? ^{ol, h2} The difficulties [inhere in the] attempt to understand behavior from the standpoint of social patterning. [They arise, as we have already begun to see, in part from problems of abstraction, and in part from] the essentially arbitrary differentia of the "social" in the realm of behavior. ^{r1} Attempts to fit a science of culture, concerning relations of human beings, into a tight scheme as in the biological and other sciences [run into trouble because] ^{ck, r1} we do not have the neat, tight universe with certain basic postulations and clearly definable problems as they have in, say, physics. ^{ck} [Physicists] know what particular corner of the universe they are dealing with; [the culturalist does not. Instead.] ^{r1} the culturalist, trying to abstract those qualities of total human behavior which are perduring, cannot be absolutely sure of the limits or bounds of what he is dealing with. ^{ck, r1} Because culture is a self-enlarging field, the culturalist is dealing with an expanding and contracting world.

^{qq, lb, h2, dm, h1, bg, bww} [Some of the] difficulties of the social sciences, then, as compared with the physical, are intrinsic [to their subject matter. These include:]

1. ^{ck, qq, r1, t2, bw, t1, h2, h1, lb} *The extreme complexity and multiplicity of all behavioral phenomena*, whether viewed from the social or the cultural [standpoint].⁴⁷ ^{dm} There are no single motivations; [instead.] ^{r1, dm} we have to deal with multiple determinations of our phenomena. ^{ck} This is not true of the physical world, [and it is therefore not unreasonable] for physicists to be so interested in defining [an all-encompassing] pattern.

2. ^{ck, qq, r1, h2, h1} *The essential uniqueness of all cultural phenomena*.⁴⁸ ([For a relevant comparison,] see Rickert's [discussion] on the limits of natural science.)⁴⁹ The physicist deals with a conceptual universe, not

with the real world of experience. He has little interest in the particular events, while the social scientist does deal with specific occurrences in the real world — with facts that are unique.^{ol} The hurt done to our understanding of these phenomena in abstracting from their particularities is not, it seems, altogether analogous to the necessary simplification of experience in the natural sciences.^{r1} We cannot have the 100% exactness of the physical sciences,^{lb, dm} [for we are] never far removed from the accidents of history.^{r1} [Instead of a conceptual universe,] we try to deal with the specific, viewed through a conceptual [lens.]^{50 t1, ck} The difference between the [subject matters of the] physicist and the historian or social scientist is the difference between all *possible* [phenomena] and all *actual* phenomena.⁵¹

3. ^{ol} [*The facts that we deal with in the social sciences are also facts that require, for their interpretation,] the concept of "value."*^{t1} Social science has trouble because it has to attempt to make abstractions from unique phenomena, [selected for the purpose because they] are personally meaningful to the scientist and to science.^{bw} [For example,] technology has great prestige now, [so it stands out to the social scientist as an important dimension of cultural achievement; yet it may not be the most important achievement of some other society, whose accomplishments may therefore be overlooked.] Every time you abstract from the cultural [setting toward a] general [statement] you sacrifice something.

[Our difficulty arises, however, not only when we try to make generalizations, but at that earlier point — the construction of comparisons — upon which the generalizations are based.]^{h1} Owing to our interest in patterning, as well as [to our] study of particular cultures, a comparison can never be made except in an abstractionist sense.^{r1, ol, bw, h2, lb, h1, t1, t2, md, bg} In consequence, all classifications in the cultural domain are inexact.^{h1} [they are necessarily relative.] Classifications such as religion, social organization, and so on [do not have precise counterparts] in the primitive mind. Informants do not see the validity of our convenient conventions for classifying their culture.

^{ck, r1, lb, h2, h1, dm, bg, bw, t2} [Other] difficulties of the social sciences are extrinsic, [deriving from qualities of the observer and from the present inadequacies of pertinent data and explanatory tools]:

1. ^{r1, ck, qq, r2, ol} *Difficulties of observation.*^{t1} [Just] what behavior is to be observed, so that the cultural [pattern] can be abstracted from it? [For instance, one may observe someone making] involuntary sounds; these are behavior, but they are not [relevant to] cultural patterns. [Now, since it is] physically impossible to see everything, [we have to make

our] ^{h1} observations with reference to [some] criteria, ^{h2} and the investigator [can rarely escape] the preconceptions that are due to one's original conditioning and cultural bias. ^{bg, dm, bw, lb, h2} [Thus some] difficulties of observation are due to the investigator's unconscious projection of his own cultural patterns, with all attendant meanings. ^{r1} This is a psychiatric tendency, rooted in egocentrism and the tendency to read oneself into one's environment, ^{t1, bw} for one [naturally takes] more interest in what pertains to oneself; so observations are distorted, tending to be colored by the observer's own ego and by what is to his own interest or advantage. ^{ck} [When,] for example, Mr Smith overhears "Mr Seers is a damn fool" as "Mr Smith is a damn fool," [he illustrates] the difficulties of observation that are due to the fact that we have an interest in seeing things differently.

^{r1} [Projection comes from the simultaneous existence of] two tendencies in oneself: insecurity and doubt about one's own ability, yet [at the same time] a mad hope that one is able [after all. The result is] a tendency to read another society from one's own experience, in the light of its projection of one's favorite meanings into society. ^{t1} Knowledge and reasoning [are simply] more readily applied to things with which the observer's culture makes him more or less familiar. ^{qq, t1} The sheer difficulty of making observations [by any more objective procedure makes this process of projection all the more likely to occur].⁵²

2. ^{qq, r1, ck, ol, t1, t2, bw} *The difficulties of historical reconstruction and interpretation.* ^{dm, lb, h1, h2, bg} [Our information concerning] social phenomena comes to us not all at one time but at different historical levels, as memories, documents, opinions, [and so on,] evidence that has to be sifted, ^{dm} for it is notoriously fallacious. ^{qq, r1, ck} [Besides the possibility that some of this "evidence" may have to be discarded altogether,] the historical reconstruction of cultural data involves a process of interpolation, of drawing connections; ^{ck} in historical reconstruction you are imagining nexuses and connecting them. [In this process] we are always dealing with interpretations, because it is hard to know what to do with our materials [otherwise]. ^{r1} Interpretation is difficult, however, because its criteria are unevaluated. Interpolation makes for a risky reconstruction, ^{qq} because of the subjectivity of the interpretations [necessary for it].⁵³

3. ^{r1, qq, ck, r2, ol, h1, lb, h2, dm, bg, t1, t2, bw} *The chronic paucity of data at one's disposal*, and those data not all of equal value. [One reason interpolation becomes necessary is the scarcity] of materials in both ethnology and history. ^{qq} Here anthropology has a special difficulty, [as

compared with the other social sciences.]^{r1} Our data are unequivocal; the materials are in fragmentary condition, and in unequal assemblages, ^{ck} [so that what material we have] is not all equally [useful or important].^{t2} [To try to infer pattern from a] paucity of facts [is obviously risky, since] one [new] fact may overthrow the whole pattern.^{h2} Many important generalizations [that have been made have been] based on very little material,^{t1} by a [sort of] pyramiding of implications; but although far-reaching conclusions can be made [in this way,] they are not entirely satisfactory.⁵⁴

4. r1, ck, r2, ol, h2, bg, h1, dm, lb, t1, t2, bw *Uncertainty with regard to the interpretation of objective social data.* qq, r1 Inadequacies in the data and in [our] objective judgement of them can be partly corrected by statistical methods, ^{ck, r1, qq} but these sometimes lead to a spurious accuracy. ^{t1, t2, bw} Because [we feel] we must be accurate, we limit ourselves to [considering] those phenomena which are capable of finite formulation and accuracy; and so the whole is colored by over-accuracy and thus over-emphasis on certain phenomena, others being relegated to the background.^{t1} Exact statistics on inexact subjects are misleading. ^{ck} If you do not have a correct pattern in mind, the results are of no use. Statistics are a way of manipulating figures; they are not a methodology, for you only get out of statistics what you put in. ^{bg} They can tell you a lot about the occurrences of a pattern without telling [you anything about] the meaning of the pattern. ^{ck} [Just as] a hammer is not architecture – it is a tool – [so statistics must not be expected to construct meanings on their own accord].

5. ck, r1, qq, r2, lb, bg, t1, t2, bw, h1, dm, h2 *The extreme uncertainty pervading the field of psychology,* which would be such a great explanatory tool for social science. ^{ck} If we had a firm psychology which gave us some sort of views of general personality, we should [see a] much clearer [path] in the social sciences.^{t1} At present psychology is only theory, ^{h1, t1} and in its extreme uncertainty and insufficiency it fails us. ^{ck} It is difficult for psychology to treat the individual as a member of society, so it tries to handle problems [pertaining to] the isolated individual. [But between the individual and society] there is no such chasm.

[Lacking a sufficient contribution from the field of psychology itself, the various social sciences have resorted to psychological pictures of their own, since]^{1939c} every fragmentary science of man, such as economics or political science or aesthetics or linguistics, needs at least a minimum set of assumptions about the nature of man in order to house the particular propositions and records of events which belong to its

selected domain. ^{h1} [Without a solid set of generalizations about actual human beings, we describe their] equivalents, seeking to explain [human] behavior [in terms of the supposed psychological characteristics of] the "economic man," "the religious man," or "the golf-playing man." These are convenient fictions, [but they are only fictions and ought to be recognized as such. There is no "economic man";] there are, rather, certain individuals performing these roles.

[In the construction of such fictional psychologies] ^{1939c} the theology of economics or aesthetics or of any other ordered science of man weighs just as heavily on us, whether we know it or not, as the outmoded theologies of gods and their worshippers. Not for one single moment can we allow ourselves to forget the experienced unity of the individual. ^{dm} The "common man" is a fiction, [and so is his relevance to cultural patterns; actually,] the more you try to understand individuals the more what you ruled out as irrelevant to the pattern becomes important. ^{h1} The work of the pure ethnologist is the study of patterns; [in our attempt to explain them,] the great danger is that we become quasi-psychologists.

^{ol} [Now in lamenting the lack of a psychology truly worthy of the name, I do not wish to suggest that the study of culture can be reduced to individual psychology.] Cultural "levels of discourse" are not strictly congruous with psychological ones, [any more than with the biological.] ^{bw} The psychological problem [of the locus of culture] is still there, but it is a fallacy to localize it in the individual mind. ^{tl} Indeed, it is a psychological fallacy to localize [all] behavior in the individual alone, [for] behavior patterns always involve more than one [person.] ^{tl} ^{bw} [If we want to understand individual] psychology [from the pattern point of view we have to] enlarge the individual, [so to speak,] to meet the [others with whom he is in] contact. [Similarly, to understand the psychological dimension of culture patterns one must] prune the social toward the coalescence [of interacting] individuals [for whom behavior has meaning.] ⁵⁵ ^{tl} The actual locus of culture is to be found not in the whole nor in the individual.

[Incidentally, the problem of the locus of culture does not trouble an anthropologist like Radcliffe-Brown who takes a] ^{h1}. ^{dm} functionalist approach, for the functionalist believes that the key to the understanding of behavior lies only in the study of the relations of patterns. But the patterns which the functionalist deals with are in themselves abstractions; [it is an error to confuse them with] the behavior of individuals. ⁵⁶ There is no philosophical justification for a study of behavior in refer-

ence to abstractions [which must depend on aprioristic conceptions. From this standpoint] ^{lb} Radcliffe-Brown is a conceptualist; and ^{ol} all strictly conceptual, [or aprioristic,] definitions of culture are fallacious.⁵⁷

[I do not think we can do without psychology in the study of culture, but it needs to be a social psychology, and of a special kind.] ^{1932b} The psychology of the group cannot be fruitfully discussed except on the basis of a profounder understanding of the way in which different sorts of personalities enter into significant relations with each other and on the basis of a more complete knowledge of the importance to be attached to directly purposive⁵⁸ as contrasted with symbolic motives in human interaction. ^{dm} A really fruitful social psychology [does not select patterns beforehand, on the basis of some preconception or conscious articulation of their purpose. Instead, it] throws all patterns into a common pool and discusses meaning — [their symbolism, and their significance for the individuals interacting by means of them] — and picks illustrations from the pool. In that sense the study of culture is more ramified and diverse [than the functionalist envisions.]

^{dm} Now, the more you study meanings, the more you come back to individual meanings. [Ideally, the psychoanalyst should be able to help us understand what these might be about. But meanings are attached to behavioral forms, and] ^{hl} the psychoanalyst is in no position to tell us what is behind the *forms* of behavior. In reference to individual meanings, then, we are driven to study culture.⁵⁹

[In short, being a social scientist is not an easy task.] ^{h2} Those who study socialized behavior [face some] obvious and unanswerable criticism which they must be hard-boiled enough to resist. [Rather than giving in to quasi-psychologizing or to misleading statistical exercises, they must keep their sights firmly focused on the need to] study the essential nature of human interrelations in evaluated situations, and the meanings — for the individual of course — of the patterns which culture recognizes.⁶⁰ ^{md} [That is to say,] the field of understanding of sociological human behavior is difficult, and we must resist the objective of refinement of technique. We cannot use the refined methods of statistics because we don't know what to do with them. But we cannot wait until our data are so carefully sifted as to be all [entirely suitable⁶¹ for statistical applications. Perfect objectivity would doubtless be a good thing, but we can't have it; and] if we can't have a good thing we'll have [to make do with] a bad one.

^{dm} Since even natural science is only *ad hoc* and subject to change, ^{bn} anthropology should not be worried about whether it is an "exact" science; it is a discipline *sui generis*. ^{md} We are interested in the meanings for the individual of the patterns which culture recognizes. And this is a bastard field.

Editorial Note

This chapter is drawn from notes of Oct. 19 (second half of the lecture), Oct. 26, and Nov. 2, 1936; Oct. 17 (second half) and Oct. 24, 1935; and Oct. 24, 1933. It corresponds to Chapter 1 of Sapir's own Outline. Although there is considerable overlap in content among the three years' lectures, Sapir seems to have followed his Outline less closely in 1936. The epistemological problems discussed in this chapter were approached from somewhat different angles in the three different versions of the course, and these shifts create some difficulties for the reconstruction.

In 1935 and, especially, in 1936, Sapir seems to have focused his argument much more closely on the concerns of anthropology as a discipline than he had done in 1933, when the discussion was somewhat more diffusely oriented to the social sciences in general. It was in 1933 that Sapir went into most detail about the ambiguities in the concept of the "social," while in 1935–6 he focused on methodological difficulties in ethnography; and in 1936 he added a section on "criteria for culture" that provides a more constructive anthropological anchor for his epistemological critique than he had previously given. Joining these discussions together in the reconstructed text, however, creates an appearance of repetitiveness in the reconstruction that is not actually true of any one version of the course.

Notes

1. See the discussion of "drift" in Sapir's *Language* (1921)
2. TI has "accidental or conditioned continuities."
3. BW actually has: "Maybe pagent just because exerce many adherents ="
4. BW actually has: "(historical & social as apart indiv = his definition = but may be = metaphorical note. cannot be isolated)"
5. BW has "have."
6. It is unclear why the CK notes contrast "what you are going to abstract from observation" with "behavior patterns." Perhaps the contrast here should really be between *observation* and *pattern*, to be more consistent with the rest of the argument.

7. The wording of the bracketed passage is based on similar statements in Sapir 1934a, 1938c, and 1939c.
8. The passage in R1, in stenographer's shorthand, is difficult to decipher. It seems to say, "analysis of what [?] culture made [?] system of patterns".
9. CK has "Anth not interested in behavior, but in the forms of behavior." R2 has: "He is interested in the field of behavior, not in behavior." R1 has: "No interest in behavior – interest in the field of behavior / From the study of forms..."
10. Dorsey 1903.
11. The text here is almost illegible. It could equally well read, "because they aren't like our own culture," but I think that reading less likely.
12. CK has a passage here which I have drawn upon earlier: "Criteria. Tylor's definition of culture has outlived its usefulness, merely helps to orient you, it doesn't go very deep." R1 has: "Criteria of culture. Tylor [?]" (this last is in shorthand).
13. This last passage is in shorthand. Decipherment of the word "versatility" is questionable.
14. For a somewhat similar discussion see Sapir's 1932 encyclopedia article on "Group," with its argument that "the difficulty of deciding whether the group or the individual is to be looked upon as the primary concept in a general theory of society is enhanced by fatal ambiguities in the meaning of the term group." The article goes on to make a "distinction between physical proximity on the one hand and the adoption of a symbolic role on the other. Between the two extremes comes a large class of group forms in which the emphasis is on definite, realistic purpose rather than on symbolism. The three major classes of groups are therefore those physically defined, those defined by specific purposes and those symbolically defined."
15. T1 has: "'Social' the word SWELL is bad because referred to group." BW has: "social dictum. should not say swell – antisocial on other hand if it is the usage & use – idea constructs".
16. The five-fold distinction made here occurs only in the 1933 notes. I find it to be not fully consistent with the 1935 and 1936 discussions, where Sapir seems to identify "culture" more clearly with his second sense of "social" (as involving social sanction and a social frame of reference; see the "criteria for culture" section in later pages).
17. LB places this example under (2).
18. The reference may be to a ceremony among certain Iroquoian peoples.
19. i. e., without implying awareness of that organization or ideas about it, on the part of the people so organized.
20. i. e., sociology.
21. The explanation of these rubrics is somewhat obscure. It is unlikely that Sapir meant to exclude the ethical, the sociological, and the psychological from his concept of culture or from the discipline of anthropology. What is more likely is the suggestion that each discipline has used the term "social" with a special emphasis.
22. LB adds "the 'humane'."
23. BW adds: "introspection. psych. not evaluate as concerns indiv, not concerned by hist". Sapir was referring to behaviorist psychology before; perhaps he now added something to the effect that introspectionist psychology also does not share the special difficulties the social sciences have.
24. DM has: "with social pattern of the ethnological."
25. The point made in the bracketed passage is supported not only by the logic of the argument but by SE: "We often know culture before we attempt to find out about it. A clean unpresupposing attitude may not be able to succeed. Always a conduct [concept?] is presupposed."
26. DM actually has: "However there are universal meanings – as *diffusion* of Christianity."
27. Bg actually has "behaviorist." I have altered the text because Sapir's usage of "behavior" and "behaviorist" seems to conform only in part to the usage a modern reader would

- identify with the behaviorist psychology of Watson and Skinner. Sapir's "behaviorist" shares with them an emphasis on what is empirically observable, but does not necessarily share their physiological explanation for it.
28. i. e., the individual acts from personal motives, not in order to actualize a pattern.
 29. Although the note-takers do not actually include the statement made in the bracketed passage, it seems the only way to make sense of the juxtaposition of comments about the cultural role of terminology, first concerning the observer's own terminology and then concerning terms and language in the systems one studies.
 30. T2 actually has "determining."
 31. The bracketed material comes from an analogous example in SE: "Distinction between culture and actual behavior. A set of pueblo pots studied, if [one wants to] understand historical significance of these pots one must study similar wares from [the surrounding neighborhood and thereby arrive at a sequence of culture. This method [of study] explains method used by Zuni to make these pots [i. e., it distinguishes their method from that of other pueblo peoples]. On the other [hand] one might study the psychological behavior of maker, and understand the background which caused the man to work in this way."
 32. This passage is based on a concluding note in BW: "Fetishism = hair of beloved Anthrop. emphasis. mistake."
 33. DM adds: "The psychologists may have to blow up these patterns because of symbolism."
 34. It may be questionable to connect the Outline's point about cultural relativity with the 1936 lecture's point about criteria of value. I have done so on the basis of Sapir's emphasis elsewhere on value in the sense of a culture's particular ideology.
 35. It is not clear whether the word "societal" in QQ's 1936 notes reflects the precise definition Sapir had given this term in 1933.
 36. BW has "Debussy?"
 37. The text actually has "behavioristic." See note 27, this chapter, on this term.
 38. R1 actually has "historical procedure of patterning."
 39. This statement comes from Siskin's notes on Sapir's 1935 course, "Methods and Problems of Anthropology." The notes continue: "Unconsciousness in native of systems and facts of own culture, that we know systematically: kinship system."
 40. CK actually has: "Minimum of form in language implies a maximum of implication." R1 has: "Speech = limitation of form = maximum of implication" ("meaning" is crossed out). It is not clear just what Sapir meant here. I have interpreted the passage as having something to do with pragmatic implication, and whether a speaker relies on contextual cues as opposed to supplying verbal specifics and elaborations; but this interpretation is somewhat dubious.
 41. BW adds here: "objectivism at mercy of words. Must abstract core."
 42. T1 actually has "the cultural whole," but this does not seem to make sense. Perhaps what Sapir said was the "cultural hole" that is left after all the individual factors are removed.
 43. The text – a transcript from an oral presentation – has "Language is a very somewhat peculiar, even paradoxical, thing..."
 44. The bracketed passage, as well as the subsequent two sentences, come from R1 and SI. R1 has: "Locus of patterns = where do they reside / authority = a pattern / dictionary = example of cultifying [?] of a certain type of behavior / normative point of view / ascription of value." SI, in a different lecture (Jan. 23, 1934), has "Culture cannot be defined in terms of things ("lists") or overt patterns – Culture defined as *valued kinds of activities*. Value situations *symbolized* by objects, things. (You do not define culture by naming objects.)"

- 45 It is not entirely obvious what Sapir was getting at here. Perhaps no comparison of different civilizations was intended.
- 46 Only the Outline, card 2, explicitly distinguishes psychology from the social sciences in this way.
- 47 Bg has, instead "We are trying to understand behavior from culture patterns, which is nigh impossible." H1 has: "Behavior – the complexity and multiple determination of behavior *abstracted* from cultural settings./ b. point of attack. (Linguistics) Multiple determination / (Religion) – various interpretations."
- 48 H2 adds, "This doesn't bother a functionalist."
- 49 H. Rickert, *Die Grenzen der Naturwissenschaftlichen Begriffsbildung*, Tübingen, 1902 (*The Limitations of Forming Scientific Concepts*. Published in several editions; 5th ed. 1929.)
- 50 The text reads, "viewed through a conceptual viewpoint."
- 51 T1 adds, "i. e. limitations of time and space." CK has: "Scientist interested in conceptualizing the universe and he has to let time come in."
- 52 Sapir apparently gave examples of observational problems, or observer bias, in ethnography LB mentions "potlach," while H1 adds "as in our evaluation of games." It is not clear what Sapir actually said in these regards.
- 53 T1 has: "relative stratigraphy is hard to obtain due to personal factor of examinee and his reinterpretation due to geographical distribution."
- 54 In 1935 Sapir apparently gave an illustration from the ethnography of North America, and its reliance on the culture of memory. BW has: "Paucity of material – do they live up to culture? Did whites upset? Is it ideal?"
- 55 See Sapir 1998b, and "Group" (1932b).
- 56 H1 has: "The functionalist deals with patterns which in themselves are abstractions (A R Brown). It is the study of behavior of individuals (Sapir) vs. the study of patterns (functionalism)."
- 57 H1 refers again to the contradictory notion of the "religious psychologist".
- 58 Note that elsewhere in the volume Sapir connects "functionalism" with a too heavy explanatory reliance on conscious purposivity. See ch. 4.
- 59 See Sapir 1998b for a similar argument.
- 60 H2 adds: "If a certain pattern is the solution of a conflict, then it will embody forever the terms of that conflict; that conflict will be inherent in it. Relatively few patterns do not embody a conflict." It is not clear whether this passage is an elaboration of "the meanings for the individual of the patterns which culture recognizes," or whether it belongs with the next class session. The "conflict" is presumably a conflict within the personality, as discussed in the chapter on individual adjustment.
61. MD actually has "100% OK."

Chapter 3. Causes of Culture

r2, r1, qq, ck What causes culture? ck The question cannot be answered unless you accept Kroeber's concept of the Superorganic: [it does not make sense, at least as thus phrased, in the light of the view of culture presented here — that] r1 culture is something we abstract from behavioral phenomena. [Moreover, to phrase the question in terms of multiple] dm, si determinants of culture, or bg criteria for the determination of culture, [will not solve our problem.] bg, si On examination, we shall find that what we consider to be criteria for the determination of culture are in themselves selectively cultural.

bg This [problem of criteria selection]1 at once arises when it is a question of comparing cultural elements of two different cultures. dm The very thing that you are comparing people for will not stay put — even your table of contents shifts and varies and metamorphoses with different cultures. The task seems easier than it is, because we have preferred values and project the importance of [those aspects of culture that are significant] for us, such as music, onto the Hottentot. bg For example, a high development of music in one culture may not be strictly comparable to music in another culture: a logical comparison should be with, say, a high development of etiquette in the second culture. dm Thus it might be possible in some cultures to be as etiquette-alive as we are music-alive, and a man might well be an artist in manners who might stress and nuance the factors of etiquette as nicely and as delicately as Kreisler manipulates the violin. si Artistic accomplishments are possible in etiquette as in music, but we are not attuned to them.

The important thing is to beware of projecting personal evaluations based on one's own culture into the task of evaluating justly another culture. si [We are too easily misled by] the fallacy of [taking as] absolute values our own preferred values, such as the preference of music over etiquette. Why [do we have this preference, anyway]? si bg In our own culture music is highly valued because it is so very individualistic, [according] prestige to the individual performer, and our culture stresses individual differences. bg Yet, in another culture where music is a group possession and the locus of musical appreciation coincides with the total

membership of the group, musical evaluation will inevitably be on a different plane of appreciation.²

[Criteria for culture are sometimes supposed to be justified on the basis of a notion of cultural progress, with our own culture representing a stage of advancement.] But ^{dm, si} there cannot be any absolute criteria of progress; to [compare cultures on such a scale] would be to assert that we have such objective, concrete criteria. ^{dm} Many questions we ask about culture thus are naive and blind in that we think we are connected to a definitely advancing pulse of onward change.

^{dm, si} Nevertheless, what are the supposed determinants of culture, as they have been [proposed]?³ [Various factors external to culture have been proposed as possible determinants of its form, and it is worthwhile to examine the extent to which they do or do not have such influence.]

1. *ol, bw* Race as a supposed determinant of culture

[In previous lectures I have already commented on] ^{ol} the vanity of the usual attempts to understand culture as a biological concept. [To understand it] as a strictly racial expression [is therefore utterly fallacious. Still,] ^{si} race is much heard of as a determinant of culture. [It is popularly presumed that]⁴ ^{bg} cultural achievement can be correlated with a specific racial stock because ^{r1} the relative ability of races determines the forms of culture possible for them. ^{si, bg} [It is said, for example,] that the negro [has a special racial ability in] music. [But such statements ignore] factors of culture and “setting,” [though they] are the most important. ^{bg} Linguistic materials, too, cannot be correlated with a specific racial stock, for ^{1921d} language does not exist apart from culture, that is, from the socially inherited assemblage of practices and beliefs that determines the texture of our lives.

[Let us try to be clear, if brief, about why] ^{r2} race has no influence on culture. [starting with the assertion that a “superior race” will produce a higher record of cultural achievement.] ^{ri, ck} So far as experience goes we have no knowledge of any race without culture, in the anthropological sense. ^{ck, r2} [Even] the metaphor of the accumulation of culture patterns. [i. e. the notion that we have accumulated “more” culture than the primitives,] is not really true. ^{r1, ck} The culture patterns of primitive groups are complex, and their behavior is just as conventional as ours. [Indeed, with regard to the force of convention one could even say that] primitive groups are much more bound by culture, and there is probably

more fixity to that culture than in the culture of the "civilized." ^{ck} Much of the history of the world is a process of loosening up the feeling of cultural necessity. Eskimo grammar is much more complicated than ours, and Navajo religion is much more complicated than ours. ^{r1} But the difference in cultures is one of degree rather than kind.

^{r1} As regards technology, we evidently have a greater fund of knowledge, but ^{r1, ck} the average person in a primitive group is more in touch with the totality of technological knowledge of the group than we are. ^{ck, r1} We share in many parts of culture [only] by having them available in the specialized technological knowledge of our various [sub]groups, ^{r1} in which we participate [not directly but] through symbols. ^{ck, r1, r2} So while our total accumulation of cultural goods may be greater than that of a primitive group, we as individuals are not in touch with a great portion of it. ^{r2} The actual cultural associations of an individual in our own culture are no more than those in a primitive culture. ^{r1} In the psychological sense all races of men are on the same cultural plane, and the primitive is no closer to nature than we are. ^{ck} [The reverse is nearer to the truth: although] the primitive doesn't *have* more culture, he *is* more cultured in the anthropological sense.

[The question of accumulation, therefore, is easily confused with a question of population size.] ^{t1, bw} The [population] size of the race is determinant of many criteria [of its cultural achievement]: for example, if the United States had only half of its present population they could not carry on the present culture. ^{t2} We couldn't carry on our civilization without great numbers [of people]. [But those who assert that] ^{bg} cultural achievement can be correlated with a specific racial stock ^{t2} leave out numbers and then compare a small group with a very large group.

^{t1} [If you are looking for] possible determinants of culture, ^{t2} the smaller group is the best field for study. ^{t2} [I say "group" here because we] should look to the community which carries the culture, not to the race at large. ^{bw, t2} The community — the group which [we have identified as belonging to] a race — is responsible for culture, not race [itself;] and in measuring achievement one must always take into consideration the effective number [of people needed to bring about a particular result.] and what percentage [of the community's population is effectively [available for a particular project]. ^{bw} Building a house with five people, and building it with five thousand people, are not the same engineering project. You cannot jump from race to community and from community to culture. ⁷

^{bw} Let us assume we have comparable units, however. ^{bw, t2} Then the next difficulty is, what is the constitution — the makeup — of a race? [The concept of race is based on] a theory of racial homogeneity which is, [actually], just a theory. ^{t1} No race can be called “pure”; therefore race is not definite enough to warrant study. ^{bw} [Actually, though it is supposed to be biologically based, in practice the concept of] race is a blend of culture, nationality, and so on with the physical. Seizing on certain symbols to explain the differences between peoples, it [(the concept of race)] is biology-conscious,⁸ although there is nothing to substantiate [the predominance of the physical over other factors. Indeed, other, non-material factors once held more appeal as predominant symbols of differences between peoples. Today] the eugenicists’ idealist biology and germ plasma have become what religion and soul were [to an earlier age. But] because of evolutionary theories [the religious explanations will not do for the eugenicists, who] feel nature is now going back on us and we must help nature [do its job].

[If the concept of race is so vague, why then the plethora of writings on the subject?] ^{t1, t2, bw} Our real interest in race, we must see, is not biological but emotional: it is emotional feeling that determines [what group is considered a] race, not biological homogeneity.⁹ ^{bw} [This group, the “race,”] is [actually] a culture unit, [to which feeling is attached.] [Now, “racial] homogeneity” is more determined by environment than biology [anyway, because a] change in environment [eventually leads to a] change in race, and [because the “race” may] develop homogeneity by [the very thoroughness of its] mixing.¹⁰ ^{t2} That is to say, when an intermixed group lives under certain conditions for a time, they will gain a certain degree of homogeneity; ^{t1} thus from the intermixing of two or more “races” will evolve another “race” — so where are you? [Another difficulty with the theory of racial homogeneity is the arbitrariness of the characteristics selected as racial markers and their non-congruence with other characteristics, for] ^{bw} groups which seem alike [in one respect] often have grave dissimilarities [in another. You] have to know what makes for homogeneity — [in what respect people are being judged as alike — before you can look for its consequences. Today] race is a symbol for homogeneity; [emotionally it seems to reflect] the extension of ego to your particular group. [The size and supposed homogeneity of this group thus depend on your point of view. Take,] for example the history of the English [“race” from] prehistoric to modern [times: it is a gradually wider extension, incorporating and mixing

different groups —] Saxons, Jutes, Celtic [groups], and Normans (themselves mixed).

[But supposing that distinct "races" could be definitely identified,]^{h1} could culture elements be explainable in terms of racially determined psychological determinants [such as intelligence]? And as a corollary: were this true, would it matter? If, for example, [you could demonstrate] the fact that a Zuñi were more intelligent than a Navajo, would you have the right to explain the greater sophistication of Zuñi clan and ceremonialism, [and other aspects of Zuñi] culture, on this basis?

^{r1, r2, ck} [The first problem is how we are to assess and compare] the intelligence of races, [to see how it might influence the level of their culture].^{h1} [Here we must not confuse the intelligence of persons with the characteristics of groups, for] ^{r1} there is no relation between personal intelligence and the status of culture. [Moreover, we shall have to beware of a serious methodological difficulty, for] ^{bw} you cannot test intelligence by [means of] tests which involve superiority for a person whose cultural experience makes him familiar with the subjects under consideration [in the test. His performance will] depend on his experience, [not only on his native intelligence.]

^{bw} [We shall also have to distinguish] lack of intelligence from lack of emotional participation, [as for example if the test] stimulus is not relative to [a person's] experience, or if he has some negativism [about the test. Besides its connection with cultural experience, therefore.] the stimulus connects with a whole [emotional] field beyond [the realm of strictly] cultural values, and you have to get [some sense of] the symbols of participation for this person, to back up your understanding [of his behavior in the test. Actually, this problem points to the fact that our notion of "intelligence" is ill-defined and fails to recognize that] ^{r2, r1, ck} there are two types of intelligence, and they are [quite] different: the intelligence which insists on thinking things through for oneself, [which we may call] native intelligence; and social intelligence, which consists in adjusting to social and cultural patterns. [The difference is well illustrated by] ^{ck} the psychotic, who is often alarmingly intelligent but who applies his intelligence to problems that are not valid, usually those that have already been better solved. ^{ck, r1} There is intelligence involved in using cultural forms, but [native] intelligence is not [what is necessarily] required.

^{t2} Actually, to carry on a culture, both intelligence and stupidity are needed. ^{t1, t2} Too much intelligence and initiative in a population would make the culture advance too fast, and go beyond the grasp of the

majority or the median [individual] (in the normal curve of frequency).¹² Look around you and see how little true thinking goes on — for example, when a person presses a button and watches a light go on.^{r1} More intelligence is required in using a [“primitive”] fire drill than in pressing a button to turn on the lights.^{h1} Turning on an electric light by means of pressing a button is in our culture an act of faith. It does not require the intellect or comprehension of forces involved that making fire by friction demands of an individual living in an exotic culture. The so-called primitive will have a great knowledge of the properties and qualities of woods and techniques of manipulating them. We, [on the other hand,] may understand none of the complexities of electrical circuits, the property of a sub-culture within our own — the electricians, analogous to the country yokels and their knowledge of a [rural] environment unknown to us — and in turn the electrician may not be able to explain electrical phenomena to the satisfaction of the physicist.^{bg-}¹¹ We as individuals are not more intelligent than primitives because we make light by turning a switch instead of by the use of a fire drill. That is group intelligence, based on historical factors.^{t1, t2} It is not race that is evolving, but culture. The culture shows “intelligence,” not the individual.

^{bg} [As the example of the light switch shows, it is important to] distinguish between the [mental] life of a culture and its [technological] power.¹² Psychology [as such] doesn’t help you to understand its life: here you must get at historical factors. The intelligence of the people of a group does not determine whether it has a high or a low culture; this is historically determined. An individual Oklahoma Indian of low culture may of course be much more intelligent than an Indian of a high culture such as the Pueblo.^{ck} Thus the business of trying to estimate the intelligence of a group on the basis of its cultural artifacts is on a very shaky basis. [And in any case,] the anthropologist thinks of the world of culture as not racially defined.

^{s1} [The notion of] “racial memory” [is another example of the confusion of individual psychology with group affiliation, and of history with biology.] “Racial memory” is not [racial at all; what is so labeled is, in] reality, the memory of cultural forms in early childhood which are dear to one. The fundamental truth [of the matter] is that it is not a matter of the nervous system, but a matter of emotional significance.

[An attempt to argue that race influences culture through the operation of differences in intelligence would run into several obstacles:]^{ck} (1) [when considering race, we must start by asking] what biological

differences are significant when it comes to the question of ability to adapt; (2) we know very little as to what mental traits are associated with physical traits,^{bw} or about the [psychic] potentialities and abilities of a group [(as opposed to an individual)];^{ck} and (3) the relation of intelligence to culture is by no means close — it is a fast and loose relationship.

^{r1} [Yet, someone might contend,] the white race [has been responsible for] an accumulation of social goods of a high order. [If this is not due to] superior intelligence, then why is it so? Because there is no stable relationship between physical nature, [including membership in the white] race as such, and the development of culture.^{s1} There is tremendous cultural variation in the same race.^{ck} You will find individuals in our midst who don't participate in "white" culture; you will find segments of the population (such as peasant farmers) who don't participate in "white" culture; and you will find whole groups — white communities in the Caucasus — who don't participate in the traits ascribed to "white" culture.^{r1} A degree of parallelism between the cultural and the racial [does exist, but it is] due [only] to geographical affinity. [Geographical connections are also important in understanding how it came about that the high development of western civilization was produced by members of the white race] — ^{r1} the strategic locality of the Mediterranean in relation to ancient culture centers, for example.^{ck} Enough time has not elapsed for us to rule out the influence of the purely geographical factor in the accumulation of culture. We must not confuse history with appraisal.

There is no correlation, therefore, between race as such and the degree of development of culture — ^{r2} only a historically-determined association.^{r2, r1} Between race and culture there is really a psychological or emotional plane, and [it is here that] the [only] effect of race in culture [might lie].¹³

[Now, I have already suggested that the group which is identified as a "race" is really a cultural unit, identified on the basis of its emotional significance. But is there, on the other hand, some racial determination of emotional tendencies?]^{bw} If we assume that psychic qualities follow in the wake of physical qualities,^{ck, s1} [we should find] an association between race and mental characteristics [(as opposed to culture itself) — characteristics such as] ¹² temperamental differences. Are there certain expectations of temperament to be looked for in different races?

^{ck} It is probable that certain physical characteristics *imply* certain mental characteristics.^{14 ck, r1, s1, dm, h1} Kretschmer's [studies of] physical

types, [for example, try to give substance to] the intuitive feeling that there is a relation between physical constitution and mental set.¹⁵ ["Mental sets" refer primarily to] ^{r1} divisions of an emotional order, made by psychiatrists, such as schizoid and manic-depressive — ^{h1} types of psychotic behavior. [The validity of the correlations] is as yet to be determined, ^{dm} but we must leave the door open for some theory of association or physical type and psychological difference.¹⁶

^{r1, r2} [Can such correlations be linked with race?] Are there, then, racial differences in emotional characteristics, or psychic-emotional natures? [Kretschmer's subjects all came from the same local population;] ^{ck} we don't know whether the gross physical differences between races are of the same order as differences within a group. [Mental] tests in regard to differences between races have been of an intellectual, not an emotional, order. [Moreover,] ^{t1} temperamental phenomena and their various aspects are capable of only meager definition, [especially as applied to races]. That is, the Negro and American Indian are at the poles while the White race shows no uniform temperamental face but is individually heterogeneous. ^{t1, t2} And as soon as a temperamental facet becomes an overt behavior trait, such as using the hand, then it becomes culture.

^{t2} Thus temperament is highly culturalized; but it may also be racial. Personally, I believe¹⁷ ^{t2} there is something to the "stolidity" of the American Indian — ^{ck} that the Indian has a basically different emotional makeup than the white man. (You must [at least] keep your mind open to possibilities. Liberalism with a closed mind is as bad as obscurantism.) ^{ck, r2} Indians have more of a diffused than a concentrated emotionality, ^{ck} and they are less able to dissociate emotionality [from its object]. A purely rational appeal doesn't work [with them]; feelings must be involved. ^{ck, r2} [Perhaps]¹⁸ they have the seeds of sentiment more than we have, ^{h1} and perhaps on this basis a more solid family life. But as to whether there is a physical basis for [these aspects of] emotional life [we cannot as yet say —] we can only make plausible guesses.

[Whatever their source,] ^{h1} emotional ties and personality differences are difficult to isolate within¹⁹ the cultural pattern. We must deny the power of ^{h1, t1} intelligence and temperament ^{h1} in shaping culture as a negative which we cannot explain, but admit the possibility of its existence to a degree. [That is, we must not discuss these factors] on a completely negative basis.²⁰ ^{h1} [But as regards] cultural *complexity*, it would seem that historical antecedents are determinant. Culture is not the immediate expression of intelligence, race, or emotion, although

these factors may enter into its growth. If there is a fundamental causality [in culture], it is history. [Any other] determinants of culture [can be only] secondary. All the cultures we have studied come to us with a rich environmental and cultural – in short, historical – background.

2. ^{ol} *The supposed psychological causation of culture*

[The question of racial causation of cultural form has led us to psychological causation, through consideration of intelligence and temperament. But] the sense in which psychology can be said to give us the causative factors of culture is strictly limited. ^{r1} The difficulty of applying psychological criteria to culture [is a topic to which we shall return at length, in later chapters.]

^{r1} Anthropologists have [pointed out that] ^{r2} the trouble with the purely psychological interpretation of culture is that it ignores time and space. ^{ck} If psychologists have one factor in common, [it is that they] ignore history or have a sort of history ad hoc. ^{qq} [Thus even such radically different psychologists as] Watson and Freud often tend to disregard the time dimension and talk as if the individual were just about to create some cultural phenomenon *de novo*. ^{r1} [But any such individual has] a cultural heritage; and culture, [in turn], has absorbed the [creations of the] individual. ^{qq} The history of the culture is of great importance in interpreting cultural causation, although it can hardly be precisely placed in historical terms.

^{ck} To understand [the individual's] relation to [his or her] environment you must study the whole mental background, and the potential energy of the psyche, not [just the] dynamic flow. ^{r1} The subject must be culturally defined to be psychologically treated – ^{r2} personality must be defined culturally before you talk about psychological causation.

^{dm} [It is true that] in one sense all culture causality is psychological – [in that the individual is the effective carrier of tradition]^{r1} – ^{dm, lb} but because the culturalist abstracts his materials, he loses touch with the reality of basic psychological functioning. Then, these abstractions have sometimes been personalized as a psychologically-apposite “datum”: the group mind, or the group belief. ^{lb} When a pattern is abstracted and becomes [recast as] a [psychological] “problem,” it is a bogus problem; for there is a tendency to treat abstract patterns as if they functioned as such, [i. e., psychologically]. For example, [in speaking of] the function of religion, abstract patterns are shuffled and one

seeks to translate [these] patterns into a psychological situation – [supposedly the “cause” of religion, but really only] the social psychologists’ after-the-event rationalization. There is always an enormous mass of purely historical material involved, [which they ignore].

^{dm}, ^{lb} In language, too, this has taken place. ¹¹ For example, the loss of English [inflectional] forms, etc., is blamed on Anglo-Saxon culture ^{lb} by psychologists of language [who speak of] the “English mind” and the “English language”; ¹¹ but it is to be truly blamed [only] on the usual [process of] simplification in language. ^{1b} [These processes] have no validity when applied specifically to persons. ([Consider] the verb system, with its [inflections expressing] time-sense and [the actions or states of] individuals, [such as the *s*-ending on 3rd person singular present tense]. [That our verbal inflections have simplified in these directions is not due to the “English mind,”] but to historical growth. [The process is a formal one rather than a social-psychological one, as we can see when we observe the existence of forms violating the supposed psychology of time-sense and individualism:] $2 + 2$ is 4, she *comes* tomorrow.) The child seizes upon suggestions in language as absolutes; he has no alternative of his own. So we can’t say that the individual necessarily participates psychologically in the extracted “psyche” of the language.²²

¹¹ Thus a psychological attack on the causative processes of culture is not in all cases justified. ¹² Every set of cultural patterns has its own psychological goal; and ¹¹ there are different levels and different denominators of the psychological aspect of culture. That is, [the psychological relevances of such different patterns as] the language, the parliament, and so on [cannot be the same]. The psychological disturbances [of patterning – individual variations and innovations –]²³ do not define and cannot dictate absolutely the forms of culture, but rather are a conditioning factor or jumping-off place for the understandable and typical forms within a particular culture. The varying aspects of culture are subject to the impact of individual psychology in varying degree. There is a general similarity of the psychology of the individuals [in a particular community], and what we must notice²⁴ are these psychologic peculiarities which would not be allowed to affect the traits of a whole culture. [However, at the same time] there are probably forms of personality which do make for segregation of culture patterns. The problem to be solved is “how much” and “how.”

^{1b} [On the one hand,] there is a colossal resistance of the inherited [forms] to the psychological nuance of the moment. ^{dm} Cultural forms

are rarely disturbed by psychological needs if they can be stretched or retained in any way — witness clumsy [systems of] orthography [retained from the past]. Institutions have a way of staying put out of all proportion to their real or supposed usefulness.¹¹ [On the other hand,] culture is possessed of a great many disassociative forces, such as cultural specialization, which seems to be opposed to the integration of individuals or culture. Rectifying this disassociation is cultural inertia, a great factor in nullifying the impact of individual psychology.²⁵ ^{1b} This is culture conservatism, [in which we see that culture] is not totally and completely responsive to the psychological needs.

[We must therefore distinguish clearly between cultural form and psychological function.] ^{1b} [To see] form as function, as in Wundt's psychology, is naive. We can detect [large-scale] direction in language, but we can't correlate it with any large-scale psychological facts.¹² Culture forms themselves are not directly explicable by psychological terms.

^{r1} 3. *The [supposed] environmental causation of culture*

^{bw} Are environmental [factors] determinants [of cultural form?]^{o1} Environmental considerations have [some] usefulness in the study of culture, but [as culture determinants] they are insufficient. ^{1b, dm} The argument of environmental [determin]ists, like the cultural geographer Huntington,²⁶ is one huge fallacy. ^{1b} Though it is a culture on which [environmental] influences impinge, they forget this, [declaring instead that] "America [was] destined to be agricultural —" [because of its] alluvial plains. But [what about] the Amerindians, [who occupied this continent for millennia without farming those selfsame plains, even after agriculture was known to them? This interpretation of] history as [environmental destiny] is naive, [as is the view that] Canadian Indians must have less intelligence because they did not exploit the Saskatchewan plains [agriculturally], as opposed to the Anglo-Saxon [settlers] who almost immediately used them as wheatfields. [The reason this argument is naive is that] the mere presence of an economic stock-in-trade, [such as alluvial plains suitable for growing wheat], is not enough: you must have [the appropriate cultural] patterns.

^{1b} We ourselves don't know the full possibilities of our environment, [nor can we see these independently of our culture.] Culture *changes* the environment; we have habits, not an inventoried knowledge of the cosmic possibilities. [And our habits may depend more on our history of

contacts with other parts of the world than on the initial state of our own geographical setting. Our] use of coffee and tobacco, [for instance, is due to historical] accidents. We might have many [other] plants [in our environment that are] usable as stimulants and narcotics, [but we ignore them.]²⁷ ^{bw} It is hard to see the environment except in terms of what you want.

^{dm} [Moreover,] the environment always has what you need if you are in a position to get what you need; unhappily, you are not always in a position to get it. ^{lb} We'd be sunk in the Eskimo's environment despite our fine technology, because the environment lacks the raw materials usable by our system; but an Eskimo would be equally helpless in our more "benevolent" environment, unequipped with our culture.

¹ Thus there is more to the problem of environmental influence on culture than the simple example of the absence of snow houses in the Congo. [As with the psychological interpretation of culture, a strictly] ^{r2} environmental interpretation of culture ignores the interrelationships between cultural traits, and the history of the trait patterns. ^{9q} [Most of all, the] great difficulty [with the notion of environmental causation] is that the cultural pattern determines the functional nature of the environment. ^{r1} The environment plus a datum of culture is a different thing from the environment alone. ^{ck, bw} [In any case,] "environment" must include the cultural as well as the physical environment, ^{r2} for beyond the purely physical environment is an environment composed of the ideas of the people who live there. ^{r1} The real environment [includes] the cultural potentialities of these ideas, plus the basic [physical] environment.

^{r2} Facts of environment are only important, then, if the natives think they are important. ^{ck, r1} The cultural stock in trade means that you can redefine the environment in those terms. Culture insists on seeing things in its own terms; it defines what is beautiful and what is not. Environment as such is of no value to the culturalist; what is important is environment *as defined by culture* — what the natives have unconsciously culturally selected from the environment, and [their] cultural evaluation of it. ^{r1} [A people's] response to their environment is conditioned by their cultural heritage; it is not an immediate response. ^{ck} We see nothing beyond what we are trained to see.

^{r2} The culturally-interpreted environment, therefore, is just as important to a study of culture as a culturally-interpreted psychology. ^{9q} Both the psychology and the environment have to be well activated in cultural understanding before being of much use [to the ethnologist]. [Be-

fore assuming any sort of) ^{r1} geographical determinism, one must consider the cultural urge. [Thus environment does indeed have an effect, but it is as] a culturally-defined environment. Environment as defined by those participating in the culture is important [only] as a background factor in defining the direction of culture, [not as a significant cause]. [Indeed,] primitives often flout [their] environment because they are not culturally ready to take advantage of [the full potential of its] geography. They will go out of their way to secure things not in the immediate environment. ^{r1, ck} [What is important are] the forms and attitudes already developed by culture; on these patterns environment has a facilitating effect.

[In other words, the main direction of "influence" is just the opposite of what the environmentalists would have it.] ¹¹ environment is fitted to certain forms of culture patterns – or rather, environment is utilized and made relevant to a culture pattern (such as rice or wheat agriculture, etc.). Psychological demands ask for a cultural response, and cultural patterns, [in turn], demand solving; whereupon environment is required to fulfill these demands. Whether it does fulfill them is an environmental or geological or ecological problem. But environment does not dictate – culture pattern dictates. Environment is [only relevant in its] culturally weighted aspect, and one environment may be favorable or unfavorable according to the prevalent culture.

[An environment that does fulfill culturally-dictated demands will not cause its inhabitants to look beyond their own cultural pattern, no matter how "rich" it may be from the point of view of an alien tradition.] ^{1b} So long as nature gives us *some* food we don't go any further. [It does not seem as if human beings are impelled, because of some inherent drive toward the nutritionally perfect diet, to investigate and invent novel ways to exploit their particular locality.] Some bogus dieticians say we need such and such a diet; but isn't [the diet they recommend] a mere recording of the norms of [cultural] habit? [While dieticians claim we need a certain balance of meat and vegetables,] the Eskimo [get by] with all meat, and [large populations in] the Orient [survive on] all vegetables. Personally, I have faith²⁸ that any people can work out its diet; we get too excited about it. [And we fail to notice that many of our dietary recommendations, and notions about the effects of food substances on our well-being, depend more upon food symbolism than on dietetic necessity. For the cultural aspect of diet also includes] food symbolism, as well as linguistic symbolism. [It is a system of rationalizations governing dietary habits.] You can rationalize the asparagus-

eating habit once you have it, [while the effects of] coffee may be a collective illusion; and the dietetically perfect may lack a good symbolism [and therefore fail, as the malnourished do for physiological reasons, to enjoy a sense of well-being.]

[If the local geography should prove inadequate to a people's culturally-defined needs (nutritional and otherwise), it is at least as likely, if not more likely, that people will try to secure those goods from elsewhere, than that they will reconsider their own locality and their accustomed ways of exploiting it. Indeed, in our own culture, however vaunted for its technological proficiency,]^{1b} there is [a good deal of] ecologic ignorance. We import [certain materials], and wars are fought [to insure our ability to import them]; but why not turn back again to recheck the environment? In a siege we might be pressed to [make an] inventory of our environment, [and we might find many possibilities not as yet tapped.]

[But it is not only in diet that environment supposedly influences cultural destiny.]^{1b} It has been said that Greece was "predestined to a high culture" because of the "happy blend" in which it combined hilly with maritime country – the hilly [country fostering] individualism, and the [maritime providing] harbors for communication. [The futility of such statements should by now begin to be clear. We have only to remind ourselves that] Mesopotamia, [where a high culture emerged earlier than in Greece,] was a plain, [to begin to realize that] nothing in the environment as such forces [particular cultural developments]. Environment is only favorable by and large. From Neanderthal man to today, not all [of cultural history] is to be credited to the specifically Greek environment. Our [present cultural] pattern, [deriving from] our Renaissance tradition, [places] perhaps relatively too much emphasis [on Greece as the source of all we see as lofty in our civilization, anyway.] We might just as well indict the Greek culture and environment for war and paranoia.²⁹ To pick on the Nile valley, as does Elliot-Smith,³⁰ is just as bad.

[What can finally be said, then, about]¹² environmental influence and its relation to culture?^{1b} The environment is important as a detail, and¹¹ as a negative factor^{dm} by setting limits – it cannot give you what it does not possess, [regardless of your cultural pattern].¹² The relevance of the environment does have to be considered: we live in it, and we are subject to its limitations. But our culture manages to transcend certain environmental limitations, as in the case of tea, which we [drink but] do not raise, and rice, which we [eat but] have not cultivated. Even among the most primitive people there is trade. No environment is self-

declaratory. ^{lb} Thus environment can never be invoked as the primary cause [of a cultural pattern]. That it both positively and negatively sets limits, is the best we can say — and it is doubtful that we can approach both these limits at the same time or even, ordinarily, either. Environment is a modifier and refiner of culture, [not more.]

^{qa} Where the ethnologist finds a relation between the environment and a culture trait, therefore, it is not a simple response-relation but a rather complex relation, the behavior showing relations to patterns arising in other areas. ^{ck} The tipi, for example, is not [best understood as] a response to the environment [in which it is found]. [In that environment,] timber is scarce; so that the [tipi] poles are cherished, [and have to be] carried around with you. ^{ck, qa, lb} [The tipi] is largely an adaptation of a previous type of house, the semi-permanent bark house of the Eastern Woodlands, a conical type of bark lodge. The lodge was modified when people moved into an area where bark was not available. ^{lb} Carrying the poles of the tipi from time to time, the Plains Indians fight with the environment as much as working with it. ^{ck} Out of sheer conservatism you stick to the old pattern and apply it to an unfavorable environment.

^{lb} The student of culture may tend to underestimate the environment's importance, but it is even more overwhelmingly true that anthropogeographers underestimate the culture-impetus. They might say, [for example, given the combination of] rainfall, softwood cedars, and heraldry-carving on the Northwest Coast, that this kind of country was predestined for heraldry — it "could not but develop." [But we know, of course, that parts of the Northwest Coast are now shared by settler populations whose culture scarcely includes heraldry at all.] ^{ck} Every time you point to environmental determination you can point to similar people in a similar environment with different responses. ^{lb} [What is more "determinative", therefore, is the specific cultural history, in which] — as with the Plains Indians — once a pattern is developed, people worry themselves into keeping it, [even if the environment changes, and trees are more, or less, abundant than before.] The eye that sees the occasional grove is the eye of culture, not of immediate perception.

4. ^{lb, bg, dm} *Economic Determination of Culture*

^{dm, lb} [The question of whether] economic factors determine or cause the form of culture is a difficult problem. [The greatest difficulty facing

the economic determinist is to distinguish those economic "causes" from their cultural setting.] Any economic scheme of life is itself a highly cultural phenomenon; we cannot talk of a pattern of abstract economic needs apart from cultural needs. ^{lb} The stock elementals [of the economist] don't carry you very far [toward understanding human society and culture]; the economist constructs "economic man," with needs, and this man doesn't act as real men do psychologically and culturally. ^{lb, dm} There is no universal pattern because the economic needs are always [conceived] in terms of the culture itself, and so they are always highly symbolic. For instance, we have needs such as an Easter bonnet that are hard to justify [in other than symbolic terms]. For the economist [this need] is as important as such as a morsel of bread (though not biologically). He never attempts to explain why Easter bonnets are valuable; he just accepts their value after the event, and studies their prices, etc., not the rich psychological problem [their value poses]. ^{lb} We can't say, then, that a scale of needs is primarily causal when the "needs" themselves are at least partially conditioned culturally.

^{lb, dm} The culturalist cannot place faith in any one aspect of culture as the sole influence [on the rest]. ^{bg} [How are we to be certain that] basic material, biological needs are more important than immaterial symbolic needs, or aesthetic needs? ^{lb} The concrete phenomenon involves any, some, or all of these [aspects of culture] in particular cases. Or [all these "causes"] may be always there. [For example, once] the church is established, [there emerge] vested interests [in the maintenance of its institutional structure and its officials, such as] the bishopric. Economic determinants may not be the root causes [of this phenomenon] — the tradition of Christianity as a cultural phenomenon may be much more important [in determining] the cultural or spiritual "need" for bishops (or, on the other hand, the "tolerance" of these economic parasites).

^{dm} If you want to say that the final challenge and test of any social order is the economy, [in the sense of the biological maintenance of its members], you are right. But to what extent does this final test operate in the [daily] round of life? ^{lb} [It is true that] sooner or later [a social analysis must] get into the biological world's tyranny, and this gives economics some truth. But what of the symbolic, nonbiological tyrannies? Do religious needs take precedence over the material? Although, in our civilization, they don't now, they *did* — and so [the question of precedence of needs is itself] a cultural matter. That is, we cannot say absolutely or a priori [that one or the other of these "needs" is more

highly valued]; such theorists [as do say so] are [themselves] immersed in culture. (We are victims of history too.) One can point to all sorts of evaluations in primitive societies, such as class-distinction, ghost-fear, taboos, etc., [which may seem absolutely fundamental to their members]. Some societies have aesthetic motivations and determinants – for example the Japanese, as opposed to [American] pioneer society.^{10c} The emphasis of value shifts indefinitely from society to society, and from time to time. There is a danger, therefore, in stressing the insistent values of one culture [as if they applied for all places and for] all time.

^{dm} The question of economic value and needs thus goes far beyond the confines of economics, for the world of value of the economist is not the stark and real utilitarian world he wants but a conventionalized, symbolic world. Despite our pragmatism, our [economic] criteria are a *post hoc* interpretation.^{1b} Before we can say what the causes [of cultural form] are we need to know some of the [cultural] picture itself, and the evaluations in it. Too many determinants are involved historically [for us to] pick out any grandiose one.

^{1b} Significantly [for the question of economic determinism], material causes are not necessarily always present. For example, [the form of] Jewish late culture [cannot be explained] merely by the loss of the material elements of culture. [In this case as in any.] the history behind [the form] is always involved; plenty of other peoples have lost political prestige, and so on. Human beings may be power driven, but it is culture that determines the patterns [of their behavior], and the environment [its] limits. You can't explain capitalism because of a supposed "human nature" or basic necessity – it may be due negatively to the loss of other values, [whose loss] may change the terrain entirely, so that the dominant individual may be forced into other patterns [if he is] to tower up [over others]. [Consider] the scientist, who today grubs unknown in a laboratory; or the banker, who, with the loss of prestige of bankers since the Crash, is not the patternable figure now, but a shabby one. Perhaps [there is now occurring] a shift to political leaders, [where towering individuals can now be found, such as] Roosevelt, Hitler, Mussolini, and Stalin.

^{1b} [Indeed.] there may even be conflicts between cultural needs and material needs. For example, our cultural need for competition, individually and collectively, may be harmful – it may dwarf the human personality, driving to suicide and insanity, [by the way it both] encourages *and* discourages the individual. The symbolism of capitalism [would declare that it] is an ego-satisfying [form of] society; but statistically not

even in that can it be universal for all individuals [(that is to say, not all individuals' egos would be satisfied in this manner)]. There is a cultural symbolism, a mythology – not a biological [necessity] – rationalizing [the supposed appropriateness of capitalism] for all societies. [Where] the Middle Ages [saw] a theocratic-Stoic “structure of the Universe,” Capitalism [sees] biological “human nature.”

^{lb} [So all-encompassing is the evaluation of] economics [today] that modern literature is at its mercy. Whether it bolsters up these preferred ideas or attacks them, literature is a mirror of our ideas of economic dominance. Yet, it should be a function of literature and art, because they are wishful thinking (and should be so), to [offer] phantasy and suggest desires, [including] desirable alternatives [to our present society]. [Art should be] *more* than the servant of economic forces. [If it is only this, perhaps] artists may be too well regarded by the system, and cease to be artists. Or [else the artist] may be (and traditionally is) a perpetual revolutionist.

[The cultural theorist, too, must recognize that the emergence of economic questions to the foreground of cultural inquiry, as if they took precedence in determining other aspects of cultural form, is but a part of our present system of cultural conventions, with its insistence on a biologically-rooted, materialistic “human nature.” If it is the task of theory to rise above mythology – to be more than] ^{bg} a legitimised collective lunacy³¹ – ^{dm} [then,] to find out what are the relative precedences of cultural values is one of the cultural theorist's grand problems.

[Summary]

^{tl, r1, r2} Like racial and psychological “determinants,” therefore, environment [and its exploitation in a material economy are]³² not fundamental as a defining cause of culture. The causes of culture cannot be determined. ^{r2} Culture is only a philosophically determined abstraction and cannot have a physical-like cause.

^{dm} [There is something fundamentally misleading about the search for] causative factors in general, [in the study of the social world]. ^{h1} Cause [itself] is a relative concept; it is not compelling, but in variable sequence. ^{dm, h1} The causative relation expressed as A causes B is never experimentally borne out,³³ ^{dm} for there are always extraneous effects and elements that make a pure cause and effect relation only the convenient fiction of mathematics and metaphysics. ^{dm, h1} We never deal with

real "entities" as such, [even] in the physical sciences - ^{h1} for science, [removed as it is from the particulars of real-world events,]³⁴ is a pyramidal fiction, of which physics is the ultimate zenith. The [supposed] "rigors" of the social sciences, such as the clan, etc., are fictional constructs [too]. ^{dm} In human affairs it is just social convention that enables men to talk of equivalents at all.

^{h1} We might better leave the pyramidal fictions to the philosophers. For our worlds of fictions are not congruent: ^{dm} ^{h1} to the social scientist, as to the artist, the world is defined by things which are *ad hoc*, as they seem on the surface, while [the world of] science is not. [I.e., the world of science is defined by what supposedly lies under, or is abstracted from, superficial appearances.] ^{dm} The world of the plastic artist is one where there are no accidents. For him things are what they seem to be.

^{h1} Is [the scientist's world] our concern in ethnography? ^{dm} The persistence of entities in the [physical] world is a very different thing from the persistence of entities in the social world.³⁵ There, it is the condition of the thing being received by the human intelligence, not what the thing really is, that is important. ^{h1} Social science operates in the world of *relative*³⁶ fictions: the "world of meanings," as J. M. Mecklin [has put it].³⁷ ^{ms} ^{h1} It is a world of "as they say," dealing with "what a thing is said to be worth," not what it really is in the physical sense. ^{h1} [Our] causal relations, therefore, are of a derivative nature. Speech meanings are fictions, [though speech is] located in the physical world, as things of the artist are. But the facts of the physical world are of minor importance in the realm of social phenomena. ^{dm} In social phenomena, no matter how carefully you define your terms and set up your formulation there always must be a large amount of leakage [between definition and instances]. Thus in the social world the physicist's causal sequence is debarred because the social world is an artificially [constructed] world. We must [abandon the search for those causal sequences,] and restrict ourselves to typical sequences.

Editorial Note

This chapter is reconstructed from notes on the lectures of Nov. 9 and 16 (first half), 1936, from undated notes on the same topic in fall 1935, and from notes on several lectures in 1933-34 (Nov. 7, Dec. 12, Dec. 19, and part of the lecture of Jan. 16). There is relatively little

difference in content among the three versions of the course, except that the 1936 notes omit the section on “economic causes” (placed under “environment” in Sapir’s 1928 Outline). I have used the 1936 notes as the organizational framework for the chapter, but I have retained the economics section as a fourth “cause.” Although the 1933 notes do treat the economics section in that way (as a fourth “cause”), they do not otherwise provide the best organizational framework for the chapter as a whole, because in that year Sapir evidently interrupted the discussion of “causes” with several sessions devoted to classroom discussions of American cultural patterns (smoking and piano-playing; see Appendices). Moreover, the 1933 notes also contain some recapitulations and possible reworkings of the material by the student note-takers themselves.

Among Sapir’s published works those most relevant to the material in this chapter are: “Language, Race, and Culture” (ch. 10 of *Language*, 1921d); “Racial Superiority” (1924e); “Are the Nordics a Superior Race?” (1925a); “Language and Environment” (1912b); and “Psychiatric and Cultural Pitfalls in the Business of Getting a Living” (1939c).

Notes

1. BG has “This question at once arises...”
2. This discussion of music in the 1933 notes is juxtaposed with classroom exercises and discussions on the history and distribution of piano-playing. See Appendix.
3. DM has “as they have been set up.”
4. For wording here and many of the same arguments as are included in the lecture notes, see Sapir’s papers, “Are the Nordics a Superior Race?” (1925a) and “Racial Superiority” (1924e).
5. BG phrases this as a question.
6. T1 has “In determining culture...”
7. T2 has: “Cannot enfold ([unfold?]) a culture from a race, but unfold it in the group which is defined as a member of a race.”
8. i. e., focused on the biological as symbolic of difference.
9. See Sapir (1924e), “Racial Superiority,” which argues that claims about racial superiority rest on an emotional basis – the feeling of loyalty to one’s ethnic group – rather than on any biological sense of the term “race.”
10. BW has: “Reason believe change envir change Race & similarly develop homog by mix = Groups which seem alike often grave dissimilarities”.
11. R2 has: “Race has no influence on culture. Culture has no connection with the intelligence of the race.”
12. BG has: “Distinction between the psychological life of a culture...” with “psychological” crossed out... That *technology* is meant here is suggested by the discussion of cultural progress in ch. 6.

13. See R1: "Race has its effect on culture on a psychological or emotional plane." R2: "There is really a psychological plane between race and culture, i. e., the effect of race in culture is really in psychological or emotional plane."
14. Emphasis original. In 1935–36, however, Sapir seems to have expressed more skepticism about any racial connection with psychology, including Kretschmer's types. BW has "Assume are psychic types (this probably not true) / still not race / psychic as in race cult [?] all [?] physical types. Is a trait physical, psychic, or what. Cultural probably"
15. See Ernest Kretschmer, *Physique and Character* (1925).
16. H1 has: "(Sapir rings a note here that Boas does in *The Mind of Primitive Man* – prove that there is a possible connection between physical type and native psychic constitution (Boas cited small Esk. community as theoretical possibility))"
17. CK has: "Sapir has a prejudice that it may be said that the Indian has a basically different emotional make up...". T2 has: "Sapir believes there is something to the stolidity of the American Indian." Throughout this section Sapir seems to have emphasized that his statements suggesting racial differences in temperament represent only personal opinions and guesses, not well-founded claims.
18. CK has: "[Sapir] thinks Indians have seeds of sentiment..."
19. i. e., distinguish from.
20. H1 has: "not on a positively negative basis."
21. See "Cultural Anthropology and Psychiatry" (Sapir 1932a): "We are not, therefore, to begin with a simple contrast between social patterns and individual behavior, whether normal or abnormal, but we are, rather, to ask what is the meaning of culture in terms of individual behavior and whether the individual can, in a sense, be looked upon as the effective carrier of the culture of his group." See also "The Emergence of the Concept of Personality in a Study of Cultures" (1934a): "In spite of the often asserted impersonality of culture, the humble truth remains that vast reaches of culture, far from being in any real sense 'carried' by a community or a group as such, are discoverable only as the peculiar property of certain individuals, who cannot but give these cultural goods the impress of their own personality." (Note: this passage seems to have a typographical error as printed in SWES p. 594.)
22. LB adds: "Language the official symbol of time sequence but not pragmatically (e. g., gesture, etc eke out); and many fossils, psychologically (gender in European languages)"
23. On psychological "disturbances," see *Language* (1921d) p. 182–3, where "disturbance" refers to idiolectal variation: "The desire to hold on to a pattern, the tendency to 'correct' a disturbance by an elaborate chain of supplementary changes, often spread over centuries or even millennia – these psychic undercurrents of language are exceedingly difficult to understand in terms of individual psychology, though there can be no denial of their historical reality. What is the primary cause of the unsettling of a phonetic pattern and what is the cumulative force that selects these or those particular variations of the individual on which to float the pattern readjustments we hardly know?" See also the discussion in "Why Cultural Anthropology Needs the Psychiatrist" (1938e) on whether Two Crows could change the order of the letters of the alphabet, or the history of mathematics, by denying, respectively, that A is first and Z last, or that $2 \cdot 2 = 4$.
24. i. e., what comes to our notice because it stands out as different from the community norm?
25. In 1935–36, Sapir apparently discussed integration and disassociation in individual psychology as well. BW has: "Integration and disassociation. Integration – thing w/ things which apply to you personally. Association – technician. Suicide in disassociation. Have to integrate in long run. Thing wh. not linked too formal, lose force"
26. See Ellsworth Huntington, *Civilization and Climate*, Yale University Press, 1918 (2nd ed. rev., 1924); see also Huntington, Charles Clifford and Fred A. Carlson, *The Geographic*

Basis of Society, New York: Prentice-Hall, 1933, published 1929 under the title, *The Environmental Basis of Social Geography*.

27. Sapir evidently gave more examples of cultural patterns in the use of plants and animals. LB has: "(California acorn; Plateau food – use and disuse of fish, fowls Polynesia, cows India, milk Orient)".
28. LB has: "Sapir: faith that any people..."
29. Sapir apparently referred here to an article entitled "War and Paranoia." I have not been able to identify the reference.
30. See Grafton Elliot Smith (1915) and (1930). Elliot Smith's Egyptocentric view of human cultural history was much debated in anthropology in the 1920s, along with W. J. Perry's *Children of the Sun* (1923).
31. In the context of his notes on shifting emphases of value and needs, and in questioning the thesis that materialistic factors are paramount, BG has: "Culture is a legitimised collective lunacy. The hereafter is the locus of unfulfilled obligations, hence its excuse for being."
32. Note that Sapir's 1928 Outline places economic determinism under "environment".
33. HI has: "A / B – C is a fiction in the physical sciences..."
34. See discussion in ch. 2.
35. DM has: "The persistence of entities in the social is a very different thing from the persistence of entities in the social world."
36. Emphasis added.
37. John Moffatt Mecklin, American historian. See Mecklin 1924, 1934.

Chapter 4. The Elements of Culture

The Content of Culture

^{dm} [To ask what are] the determinants of culture, [as we have done in the preceding lecture, is also to ask,] what is culture made up of? ^{o1} What does culture embrace? ^{dm} To ascertain this is by no means simple, because we have no *a priori* structure, or skeleton, of culture. Culture feeds upon itself, and the criteria of culture "stations" or focal points are in turn culturally determined. ^{o1} It is impossible to draw up in advance an intelligible table of contents or inventory of culture.

[As a starting point, however, we may say that] ^{bg} culture is defined in terms of forms of behavior, and the content of culture is made up of these forms, of which there are countless numbers. ^{lb} [The most diverse aspects of social life must be included:] putting salt on meat is as much a cultural [form] as is worshiping God.

^{bg, lb} [Some writers, such as] Graebner, Foy, and Schmidt, [attempt to] inventory the contents of culture ^{r2} by making lists of culture traits [which prominently feature material objects –] food, clothing, etc.; [but their approach has major] ^{bg} deficiencies, for the listing of objects does not constitute culture. ^{h2} [Indeed,] the classification of material objects as such is not particularly useful. ^{bg} Objects are only the instrumentalities which are sign posts to culture. The most important thing about them is their utilization in patterns having meaning. ^{h2} Even a cathedral is not really a cultural object *as such*, while even a cliff may be made a "cultural object" used to cite boundaries of territory. ^{bg} To the archaeologist, [though he depends so largely on material objects as a source of evidence,] objects are of value only as inferential signposts to vanished cultural meanings. ^{h2, bg} They only become objects of *culture* with reference to their use, when they are placed in a context of meaning. An object – whether it be cathedral, headland, paddle, arrow-point, or pot – is in fact only a cultural potential. ^{h2} Our cultural subject matter, therefore, is not objects at all, but patterns of behavior. ^{1 lb} [And these in turn must not be treated as if they were objects.] Modes of behavior are not objects, but culture.

^{b2} The type of analysis [presented here, then, focuses upon] valued types of behavior patterns, of which material objects are [merely] signs and symbols. The object as such is nil – it only becomes a *thing* (*versus* a nothing) as and if it is employed or interpreted. The “Thing Approach” is a fetishistic point of view that doesn’t lead to the heart of culture. ^{s1} [For] culture cannot be defined in terms of things, or lists,² or [even] *overt* patterns. [Instead,] culture [must be] defined as *valued kinds of activities*. You do not define culture by naming objects; [rather,] objects and things *symbolize* value situations.

^{b1} How do the items of culture arrange themselves? — ^{r1, ck} In a *cultural pattern*, [which we may define, for the moment, as] any clear, specific formal outline abstracted from the totality of behavior, ^{s1} [and involving] the [evaluative] judgements of a culture. ^{r1, ck} As an example of a culture pattern, [consider] education.³ [In a sense the] ideal [of education] is the projection of the ego into the future by impressing our ideas on the young; ^{r1} it is the self-preservation technique of culture. The pattern of education [thus incorporates] all kinds of values. [It also includes] the set-up of institutions, administration, etc., with [official] degrees serving as symbols of advancement to a higher status. [A cultural pattern reaches into many realms of social life.]

[The view of cultural pattern and cultural contents that we will elaborate here is somewhat different from certain other uses of the term in anthropology today.] ^{r1} There seem to be two points of view as to culture patterns. ^{r1, r2, bg} One is a functional point of view: [assuming] a well thought-out⁴ scheme of fundamental [human] needs, ^{r1} the inclination of a type of behavior would depend on relativities of [its connection to] the basic needs. ([But, as we have pointed out in the preceding chapter,] ^{bg} when we try to classify patterns from the viewpoint of need, [we run into difficulty: how and] by whom are needs to be judged?)⁵ ^{r1, t1, r2} The second [approach to] culture patterns is an index, a series of headings ordering what are merely assemblages of cultural patterns. ^{r1, r2} This is not a functional pattern, but a language list, ^{r2} merely language categories by means of which we artificially organize culture. ^{t1} In any index of a culture pattern, definitions of headings must be given to decide the presence or absence of a head, such as “war”; and so the question evolves into a more verbal argument. Moreover, various degrees of intensity within the heads [(i. e., relations among the headings)] call for thought and allow an additional margin of error. For example, [how would one index the headings involved in] education, [the culture pattern alluded to above?] ^{lb} [And if we use a heading such as “Reli-

gion," [claiming, "there] are no peoples without religion," what do we mean?⁶

^{bg, r1} [Here we must] emphasize the necessity for the anthropologist to study a culture in its own terms — to assemble cultural patterns through the terminology of the natives themselves. [Otherwise] ^{lb} we use only ad hoc schemes. ^{lb, r1, r2} Thus the point of view in Wissler's *Man and Culture*, which constructs such a scheme, cannot be utterly accepted. ^{bg} [Nor can the work] of Roheim, whose attempt to interpret Australian society in terms of his own symbolism [must be considered a] failure.⁸

^{r1, r2} Such [a scheme as Wissler's, an ad hoc type of indexing] classification, is good only for ordering assemblages of cultural patterns — an index for convenience in comparing different [cultures]. ^{bg} But the levels of comparability of cultures vary greatly in different aspects, from language at the one end to religion at the other. Thus although language consists of articulate noises having symbolic value for some society, [and for it alone,] languages are convertible from one culture to another. Is this possible for other configurations of culture, when we compare dissociated elements in one society with those of another? ^{bg} [All too often,] in comparisons of cultures, use is made of patterns of fictionalized concepts and these concepts are compared. (^{lb} Radcliffe-Brown, for example, is a conceptualist.)⁹ ^{bg} This involves difficulties because (1) it is almost impossible to compare forms of behavior from patterns; (2) forms of behavior are unique to each culture and patterns are highly inexact classifications;¹⁰ (3) since cultural forms are historically determined, this increases the difficulty; and (4) there is uncertainty as to the interpretation of similar forms in different cultures. ^{h2} Who is to judge the use or value of a pattern — the native or the observer? The conformist or the rebel?

^{si, bg, h2, dm} [Nevertheless, it is not impossible to classify culture patterns, as long as we focus on] *form*, rather than function. ^{dm} For despite our [supposed] pragmatism, our functional criteria are [only a] *post hoc* interpretation. This is why we can classify form so readily and [yet] baffle at classifying these experiences functionally. ^{si, bg} [Now,] what enables us to see culture objectively? There are three reasons — [or, in other words,] three criteria for discovering and classifying culture patterns:

(1) ^{si, h2} Human beings have the ability to [differentiate and] define some experiences as against others through the senses, and classify activities in physiological terms. That is, ^{h2, dm, bg} in a classification through the sheer testimony of the senses, the culture patterns have

a very fundamental relation to physiological activities; ^{h2} they have a physiological validation. ^{bg} Paddling, for example, impinges on the senses differently from making a word. ^{si} [The two activities involve] variant physiological movements.

(2) ^{si, h2, bg, dm} [There is already a] rough and ready theory of the classification of function, and the functioning of society, [constructed] by a society itself and later by the observer.¹¹ ^{h2} The observer's theory may revise or even reverse [that which the society itself has]; ^{si} [but for both, the presumption is that] everything is explainable.

(3) ^{h2, bg, dm, si} The third reason lies in the technique of reference which all societies develop through words. Words are very important instrumentalities in defining form and even function, of and by themselves. ^{bg, si} The ability to classify in advance comes from the use of words: e. g., having two words, religion and superstition, indicates two classifications. A society's classifications depend on the type of language used. ^{dm} You will see culture differently according to the symbolic implementation, the terminology, you work with.

^{h2, si} These three items give a pretty firm feeling for form in culture – ^{bg} that is, they give cultural classifications in a strictly formal sense. ^{h2} Therefore it is easy to discover forms of culture, despite our relentless pragmatism. And ^{bg} form criteria are the most important in classifications. ^{bg, h2} Functional definitions and criteria come later; ^{bg} they are of value only after the event. ^{h2, si} They are more difficult and more subtle; we don't know enough about society to get [to functional criteria] yet. The contents of culture [must take into account both] form and function, [but as yet we are on a firmer footing with the first of these than with the second, although] we may know more about functions in the future. ^{h2, bg, si} Are the needs of man definitive and circumscribed, and thus easily satisfied, or are they an illusion? ^{si} [If you simply assume they are definitive you will fail to recognize] the limitations and creative possibilities of culture.

^{ol} Thus the functional point of view has its limitations. [In emphasizing form rather than function, at least for the time being, my approach differs from that (for example) of] ^{lb} Malinowski, who is an anti-formalist.

[But before leaving the question of classification behind, we may propose our] ^{bg} own classification of culture,¹² in terms of the classification of behavior patterns. Behavior patterns may be classified pragmatically or empirically, according to the way they are related to the following broad classes of activities:

1. Patterns relating to economic life – the food quest, and the quest for shelter.
2. Patterns relating to the production of material goods, of value per se or of instrumental value: manufactures, clothing, ornament.
3. Patterns relating to individual development and mutual social interrelations as in kinship, marriage, war, etiquette, language.
4. Patterns formulating the relations of man to supernatural or other-worldly powers: religious activities, sorcery, shamanism, death.
5. Patterns formalizing the desire for aesthetic experience per se, or instrumental [in realizing it]: dance, graphic art, music.
6. Patterns relating to the attitude of man to sustaining ideals: the vision quest, hunger strike, etc.

^{bg} [It is important to emphasize that] this is not a hard and fast classification. ^{ol} It is impossible to draw up an intelligible table of contents or inventory of culture in advance. [The classification given here is only a convenience which must necessarily fail to capture the way in which] ^{bg} cultural elements [and patterns, in a given society.] aggregate themselves together, for this varies in different societies. You must try to visualize a kaleidoscopic variety of patterns caught up, in this way or that, by pattern configurations or ideas and taking color, habitation and name in terms of this ideal specific to a local time and space.

^{bg, dm} In a descriptive study, then, the author's task boils down to: ^{dm}

1. Working out carefully the landscape of cultural forms as they naturally fall together.
2. Starting out all over again as a psychological work on individuals as individuals in their own framework, and see how they work out their own needs.¹³

[A descriptive study should attempt, ultimately, to concern itself thus with both cultural form and function. For comparative purposes, however, a concern with function is problematic.] ^{bg} Again, it is important to realize the difficulties of comparing the contents of culture: [consider] the difference between education in our culture and in, say, Eskimo culture. A prayer in Western society may equate with a primitive dance. Form is itself more important than function; in language the form remains the same but the function differs. E.g., the word "hussy" derives from "huswif" but with an entirely different meaning, while a new word, "madam," takes the formal place of "huswif." [And the concept of "function" is itself unclear.] ^{dm} If we take cultures as a whole it turns out to mean simply the cohesiveness of a group and the belonging of individuals to that group. But when we get down to specific things we've got to watch our step.¹⁴

The Purpose of Culture ^{ol, r1, r2, t1, t2}

[Let us continue our discussion of form and function in culture with a broader consideration of cultural "purpose."] ¹⁵ ^{t2} [Surely a great many of] the [supposedly] fundamental purposes of culture are really individual necessities and the rationalizations of those needs. "Preserving the heritage," "controlling aggression," and [accounts of] "learning to smoke" [are examples of such rationalizations in our own society]. ¹⁶ [It would be a serious error to mistake our own society's rationalizations and conceptions of need for universal purposes.] Some purposes we want to hold on to – those which [really do represent] our biological needs we should keep because they are fundamental. But we can always reaffirm our biological purpose in such a way that [our other purposes will] seem right. [In other words, in keeping with the] ^{dm} pragmatism [of American society.] ^{t2} we will always try to find tangible purposes to any phase of our culture.

[Yet, from a cultural standpoint, even our most obviously biological purposes, such as eating, are expressed only indirectly.] ^{t2} Why was it necessary to culturize our needs such as food? Why this food and not that? Why prepare it this way and not that? In short, why did man have to evolve a more indirect method of satisfying his food needs instead of just going and getting it? [The challenge to the economic or biological determinist] is to try to prove the need for all this indirectness in regard to our purposes. ^{t1} For culture is not exactly squared to needs. Culture traits may at some point change their meaning; for example, [an income is necessary in our society for an individual to acquire food and other biological necessities; but, let the income grow large enough – say, to] an income of 75 million – and, [as so] often, [the "purpose" of the trait] changes into an expression of "ego," or the assertion of it to gain [status]. ¹⁷ Biological and psychological needs are satisfied by culture, but in addition, culture adds, through its own momentum, much more than these needs. ^{1927a} [Indeed,] a potent social pattern may fly in the face of reason, of mutual advantage, and even of economic necessity.

[What, then, is the relationship between cultural pattern and fundamental biological and psychological drives? Is it a mistake to suppose that such drives are related to culture at all?] ^{r1} [Here let us consider] art, [for the aesthetic is often said to lie at the opposite pole from biological necessity. It is sometimes even defined in this way. But this view is itself culturally determined, and should not prevent us from] assuming a psychological base for aesthetic expression. American culture is not

[particularly] conducive to the development of aesthetic expression. [A strong] convention inhibiting [the exploration of visual] form [is part of the American] religious [tradition, deriving from] the Puritans and from evangelical [movements in] England.¹⁸ Moreover, for great cultural development [in aesthetic forms] there is a need for a rich cultural background. From a cultural standpoint, it is possible to find [a society with] no artistic expression, due to lack of cultural background. [There may also be some] repressive mechanism of a cultural sort, such as militarism, and so on. From the viewpoint of instinct and innateness, therefore, I do not deny a physiological base or genetic relation with cultural patterns, [even in the case of] art. It is fundamental. [But culture may inhibit drives as well as develop their expression.]¹⁹

^{r1} Indeed, any fundamental drive may be used by all manner of [cultural] purposes – [although the fact that cultural purposes cannot be specified in advance] does not mean there are not some typical purposes. ^{r2}, ^{r1} Among the different purposes that may be given, some are functional: music, for example, may be [thought of] as a recreation. This “function” is only a secondary rationalization, however, [as we can see when] the form of aesthetic expression survives although its momentary purpose disappears. [So, for instance, musical works may be performed today for purposes entirely different from those which prevailed at their creation, as when sacred works are performed at concerts.] ^{r2} A second type of purpose concerns the association [of a cultural pattern] with other parts of culture. Really, music is simply a part of a total pattern which includes the kind of clothes worn [at musical occasions], the social status [of musicians and audiences], and so on. The purpose of music is so vast that it interpenetrates all of culture. ^{r1} ^{r2} Music has every possible type of purpose.

^{r1} [Similar considerations pertain to] religion. [What is its “purpose”]? From one point of view,] religion is the ally of a symbolism of status. Although this may be a secondary factor, secondary factors are often very strong. From another, psychoanalytic point of view, [it may represent] wishful thinking, [such as] the desire for immortality; while the divine father idea [represents] the transfer of an attitudinal set from childhood: [the image of] childhood blessedness – of the child in a happy state – [is linked with] the father image and thus begins with heaven. [To choose among these viewpoints, or to infer some fundamental drive explaining religion, is impossible.] ^{1b} We can't say *what* drives are fundamental in religion. [Nor can we say that drives have altered, where the forms of religious activity have altered.] We can't say, for

instance, that sadism [was responsible for] burning [people] at the stake and made it cruel, but that such sadism is lacking now. Psychological sadism is the same then and now; the important matter is [not a change in the nature of such motives, but in] how culture allows one's indulgence of sadism — [whether in realms] economic, religious, or intellectual). These causes may shift in importance in time and space, and in conceptual and actual [arenas]. Maybe religion feeds on basic ego and libidinal urges which may be redistributed.

^{r1} The attempt to explain the "purpose" of any cultural manifestation [is vulnerable, therefore,] to a frontal attack, [which can show that there could] result any number of explanations for the actual content of the patterns. You cannot find a simple reason [for the form of a pattern] in the function of patterns — this is secondary. ^{1927a} Any student who has worked through a considerable body of material [in comparative ethnology] is left with a very lively sense of the reality of types of organization to which no absolutely constant functions can be assigned. Moreover, the suspicion arises that many social units that now seem to be very clearly defined by their function may have had their origin in patterns which the lapse of time has reinterpreted beyond recognition. A very interesting problem arises — that of the possible transfer of a psychological attitude or mode of procedure which is proper to one type of social unit to another type of unit in which the attitude or procedure is not so clearly relevant. Undoubtedly such transfers have often taken place both on primitive and on sophisticated levels.²⁰

^{o1} [Still, even if] functional explanations [of particular cultural forms are] of limited usefulness because of the pitfalls they present,²¹ [one may nevertheless speak of cultural purpose in a more general sense.] ^{r2} [In this sense] there are two main purposes for culture. The first is a specific purpose: [to constrain the individual] to act in the same way as [is prescribed in] behavior patterns. The second is a general purpose: to actualize basic impulses in a harmonic fashion. ^{r1} Culture has the same purpose as [other forms of] adaptation to an environment — to actualize [(i. e., satisfy)] primary needs — [but it does so through a system of] mental substitutes. ^{r2, r1} Culture may be a symbolic field, a fundamental system of indirections which ^{r1} [present] the possibility for a multiformity of expressions and ^{r1, r2} allow the fundamental psychological drives of each individual to harmonize with each other, through secondary symbols of reference. The cultural pattern is a powerful system of channeled behavior²² which actualizes certain basic impulses and ^{r1} gives the possibility for personal realization.²³

[From the point of view of individual psychology, you could say that] ^{bg, dm} the purpose of culture is to serve as the total stock in trade for the realization and expression of the ego. ^{r1, r2} But there is no genetic relation between certain impulses and certain [cultural] patterns.

Culture Traits and Complexes

^{h2} Orthodox ethnology sees culture as the historical accumulation of culture traits. ^{r2} [The concept of] *culture trait* (^{r1} or *cultural element*) ^{r2} [is a means by which] anthropologists study the movements of patterns without trying to evaluate them, or to determine their interrelationships with other parts of the culture. ^{r2, r1} [One attends to] individual elements in the complexes of culture.

^{r2} What are these elements of culture which the ethnologist talks about? [They include such phenomena as, e. g.,] 1. cross-cousin marriage; 2. dowry; 3. buying ties for Christmas; 4. chewing gum; 5. writing on a blackboard with chalk; 6. artificial heating; 7. Saturday night baths; 8. playing the piano. ^{r1} Culture is analyzed into thousands of elements, ^{r1, r2} without limitation. ^{r1} The cultural universe is an element; a type of behavior and [the culture's] philosophic explanation of it may be two traits, ^{r1} brought together.

^{bg} What is a unitary cultural trait? Is it a unity depending on description or upon historical factors? ^{r2} Cultural traits can be of any size. ^{r2} However, when you make them universal you get into the psychological rather than the cultural world. ^{r1} Disintegrating a given element [into traits drawn from a universal set] leads to an implication of [common] humanity and [common] psychology. (Anthropologists [of this bent] find nothing unique in the cultural world.) ^{r2} You then explain things ([i. e., the occurrence of particular elements in particular places]) in terms of diffusion rather than in terms of parallelisms. [Deciding on what is to be considered a unitary element is a loaded question, therefore.] ^{r1} Parallelism [as an explanation can be a useful] corrective note to the idea of universal traits [whose occurrence is always due to] cultural contact. ^{lb} Yet, these sorts of explanations after the fact must always be, in the absence of exact knowledge, a kind of "Just So" story. ²⁴

^{r1, r2} Can traits be gathered together into complexes? There are two uses of the word *complex*: (1) Traits which are functionally interrelated, e. g. the "horse complex." ^{r1} This is a "natural complex," [since it reflects the] integration of traits naturally, [and the fact that an individual]

trait [among them] never occurs alone. (2) ^{r1, r2} Traits which are merely historically linked — e. g., Graebner's complexes,²⁵ ^{r1} arbitrary associations of unrelated traits. This conception of culture [imagines] an atomistic universe in which elements are grouped and regrouped according to fortuitous winds of history. ^{r1} [The focus is on] isolated histories of elements, ^{r2} fortuitous in their associations.

^{r2} [This approach] will never lead to a true philosophy of culture because it neglects psychology. It does have its value in preventing thoughts of automatic associations, e. g. that cannibals have no music. ⁹⁹ ^{r1} Thus the term "complex" is useful when it is confined to meaning the togetherness of certain traits at a particular time and place, without any universal or necessary connection being assumed. ⁹⁹ But American anthropologists have tended to emphasize the fortuitousness of the coming together of the traits in a complex, [to the neglect of those intrinsic connections that might genuinely be sought.] ¹¹ [For example,] Christianity and its component parts, however small and seemingly insignificant, are a complex [in the "functional" sense] and divisible into traits which may lead far outside Christianity into irrelevant and contrasting fields. There is great resistance of [some] elements to analysis and separation, resistance offered by the emotional make-up of people. Some other associations are not resistant to separation, however they may seem to one outside the culture.

¹¹ In history, trait analysis is very important because it shows the flexibility of culture (language, [for instance,] being forced to express what people desire to express and not remain so rigid as to prohibit communication of thought).²⁶ ⁹⁹ The emphasis on diffusion as of really great importance was very surprising when first introduced; it had been supposed that each intelligent people would invent the things they needed. ^{1b} [But some ethnologists came to see trait diffusion as a kind of Darwinian] battle for the success or failure of ideas and culture-elements, [whose] survival value was intrinsic. [The atomistic nature of the approach is what creates the problem: the trait does not have an inherent value regardless of all other aspects of the culture.] ^{dm} One must have social sanctions before value may be attached to any individual creation. ^{dm, bg, 1b, h1} [That is to say,] the prestige-giving background of culture is imperative to the diffusion of culture and complicates a simple [picture of trait] diffusion. New ideas don't count — ^{h1} they don't "bite" — and traits do not diffuse, unless they are buttressed by symbols of prestige. ^{1b} The buttressed ideas and elements succeed; the others, [mere] phantasies, die.²⁷ ^{h1} The personality of the carrier is always a

factor in diffusion, too, as with Chauncey Johnny John and his seed corn, or Alice Two Guns and the jumping style of women's dancing.²⁸ So is diffusion via [social principles such as] family removal or marriage, for people tend to keep up the old culture in their new surroundings.²⁹ Thus the survival value of an element is both intrinsic and extrinsic.

[Having mapped the distribution of traits, the anthropologist is faced with the problem of discovering the point from which they diffused.]³⁰ Wissler's *centered* system of diffusion [(which places the point of origin of a trait at the geographical center of its distribution)] may be criticized as simplistic, [as may any of those systems which insist on but a single point of origin.]³¹ There have probably been many tentative beginnings. The problem presented here by the cultural anthropologist is largely artificial; Old World and New World agriculture, for instance, are not really the same "trait." This tendency to deal with atomic culture-elements, in terms of isolable traits — as if there were no Lippertian *Lebensfürsorge* involved²⁹ — is antipsychological. Our terminology is our enemy too, for the mere use of the same term [(such as "agriculture")] prevents our seeing differences. ([This is a good reason to] use native names!)

^{dm} The interest of anthropologists is fortunately gradually shifting from the trait analysis and description which was [once] the [be-all] and end-all of the discipline.^{bg} For the trait point of view does not tell us much about culture.^{bg, lb} [Consider,] for example, the Plains [Indians'] arrangement of their camp in a circle,^{lb} as compared with the smoothness of our table. Are these both traits of equal [significance]? The purposes for which we use tables might equally allow the use of a rough table. What about the bull-roarer of Australia, and the Nootka bull-roarer? (Bull-roarers have more prestige in anthropological circles than the polishedness of tables.) Are they the same trait?

^{lb} We may well be made unhappy, when we deal with atomic elements, at the diffusion vs. independent-development dilemma. [For the equation of the Australian and Nootka bull-roarers is] unfortunate. What work does the bull-roarer *do*, culturally? The Nootka bull-roarer is a game, owned by a certain lineage. It is only one game among many, played for prizes — prizes being the important part, a segment of the potlach "trait." [Similarly,] it doesn't tell you anything about Plains Indians [just] to know that they have their camp in a circle.^{h2} To enumerate traits is of little [help],^{h2, lb} although our catalogue of traits gives us the illusion that something has been said.

bg, lb, h2 [In sum,] it is useful to follow up the distribution of a trait but only as a preliminary study or point of departure, for a trait list provides only the signs of the presence of cultural dissimilarities (differences from our own [culture]).^{bg} The isolation of these traits and the reconstruction of their history is important for the way it emphasizes the vagaries of historical accident in the processes of development.^{lb} To give an example: historically our English language is a stranger to us. [By tracing the history of forms] the linguist can blow up our sentimental psychological configuration. [Thus the expression] “damn bitch” [unites forms derived from] Church Christianity and Norman hunting — strange bedfellows. Complexes don’t necessarily belong together [just] because they do historically occur together. There are indeed some *accidental* complexes and configurations, [and trait histories can help reveal them.]^{bg, h1} But they can never take the place of the dynamic study of patterns.^{bg} No culture consists of traits save in the atomistic sense.

dm, lb, h1, h2. ^{bg} The trait is really the enemy of the pattern — it is of no importance isolated from its configuration and too often has been elevated, as by Graebner, to fetishistic significance (fetishistic because attaching too much importance to the materiality of the thing pointed to). No trait belongs to any one culture.^{lb} We can’t claim any [particular] trait as “ours” — ^{bg} there is diffusion everywhere. To realize this breaks down some parochialisms of thought (consider the connection of the Dakota corn farmer with Mesopotamia, or the history of the alphabet); but ^{h1} traits have no *meaning*.³⁰ ^{dm, lb} Some old-[fashioned] historians and anthropologists are still very much concerned as to who first cultivated wheat, who discovered barley, who invented the alphabet, etc. — ^{lb} but it doesn’t matter. What matters is the meaning pattern [in which these elements occur]. It is after the event to say that the alphabet was an important invention; in the beginning it wasn’t important at all. Shall we sing a hymn of praise to Irish monks, missionaries, Latins, Etruscans, West Greeks, Cadmus, or [to alphabet creators of] the “East” — Phoenicians? [The alphabet existed] before them, though. (Columbus effectively “discovered” America to the European consciousness, though others preceded him. [Who is the great “discoverer,” then?])

^{lb} We don’t know today what are the really great ideas. Nor did they in the past. We can’t know what a culture-element can *do* cumulatively — hence many “great” men in history are so [only] retrospectively, merely in terms of their specific ancestry to modern man psychologically; and such evaluative history must be rewritten each generation. [In its

early days the alphabet was] just a pattern, [deriving] from Egypt and with prestige-value to the Semitic peoples, but not completely understood. [Only by the] accidents of history [have we acquired alphabetic writing rather than some other form, for it is] not the alphabet [as such] that does the work but the cumulative history. These few scratchings meant little to the Sinaitic people (like runes, [in a later age]). Ogham³¹ likewise died, although as [a system] it was quite as spectacular or as dull as the Sinaitic alphabet — and yet few have ever heard of Ogham writing. Much of history, then, is invidious intellectual ancestor-hunting, reevaluative [according to the values of] the present time-level, not in terms of actual beginnings and contemporary importance. (Our elementary education [is full of such] systematized pabulum — “Eskimos live in snow-houses,” “The Phoenicians invented the alphabet,” “It gets colder as you go north.”)

^{1b} The order of the alphabet is traditional; like a spell, [or the rhyme] “eeny meeny miney mo,” [it has no intrinsic significance.] From the trait viewpoint it is right to connect [alphabetic order] with all these peoples, for it is a singularity, [a product of] historical continuity only. But from the cultural-complex viewpoint [the connection would] not [be right.] Although you can’t build a complete picture of culture without [any elements, or] traits, the alternative — to attach a once-for-all, [supposedly inherent] significance [to a trait] — is just as wrong. ^{1b, h2} Traits are nothing in themselves, only fossils and habits full of irrationality and [laden with] prestige. ^{1b, bg, dm} The study of “traits” is valuable for distributive historical studies, but not for psychological synchronic³² explanations of *culture*. [Notice, for example,] the different horizons of u, v, w, x, q, and j historically; [they entered our alphabet at quite different times.] [But as regards our culture today,] we don’t care about any of these things; we don’t live under the dispensation of “culture traits” — nor do primitive people, probably. (Even Thor, [a trait now usually connected with “Nordic” peoples,] may be Ugro-Finnic [in origin]; and the pre-Indoeuropean people in England were “Nordic” [in many ways, though Nordic traits are often supposed to “belong” to the Indoeuropeans.]

^{dm, h2, bg} While traits may be isolated from a purely descriptive or an historical standpoint, the latter is the real criterion for the culture trait. [In other words,] there is no real criterion for a culture trait save historical continuity. Description is suitable for large-scale, complicated traits [(showing the component parts),] but not for simple traits. ^{h2} For the trait *an sich* is nil; its functions change from age to age, from people to

people, and even, perhaps, from individual to individual. ^{bg} Contrast, for example, the historical study of the alphabet with its value as a symbol of education for the child of tender age: here the alphabet has dynamic value. Traits take on new significations from time to time, and hence it is impossible to construct history from them. [Trait analysis suggests] descriptive unity, as between Old and New World agricultural traits; historical unity, as in the relation between Christianity in New Haven and in Abyssinia; but *cultural* traits don't really exist. They are remade in each culture, according to its mythology and its rationalizations.

^{lb} [As our discussion of culture elements illustrates, we] serve two masters, psychology and history — the meaning and the “how come” sides of anthropology. ^{dm} [From a cultural point of view,] the [only] main purpose of studying traits is to give the necessary preliminary stock-taking of the culture; ^{lb} but the historical background [of culture] is not necessarily congruent with the situation today. Things mean what we think they mean, [not where they have come from.] ^{lb, h2} Trait “ethnology” is really archaeology, [just] not of things dug from the ground. It is not cultural anthropology.

^{lb} *The Geography of Culture*

^{ol, h2} The study of the diffusion of culture traits [has made much of] the logic of [their] spatial distribution. ^{r1} From the [geographical] extent of a trait, [one speculates as to whether the trait's occurrence is due to] old heritage or to secondary factors of distribution, [with most occurrences] probably due to distribution, in the last analysis. ([For a discussion of] diffusion, see Wissler's *Man and Culture*.)

[There has been much success in tracing the paths of diffusion by this means; yet the procedure has its limitations, especially for the more complex societies.] ^{lb} As civilized man transcends space as well as time, the [diffusional] picture is even less clear than in primitive societies. [Consider, for example, the spread of ideas through] university contacts: it is not topography, but the carriers [of the ideas] that are important [in determining their spread.] ^{h2} [Actually, this is true of any process of diffusion:] the distance as evaluated by the carriers is different from the actual location. ^{lb} We must *weight* geography, [measuring] not mileage but cultural-mileage. ³³

[This includes the fact that some ideas spread more easily than others.]^{1b} There is little resistance to the spread of a myth — e. g., [we find] Grimm fairy stories in oriental settings — but not so with a kinship system. [But although a myth, or elements of a myth, may spread relatively easily.]^{1b} the *significance* of the tale varies — not as part of the tale-trait, but subjective to the particular culture [in which the tale is found.] The Nootka suitor-myths [can serve as an example. Among the Nootka,]^{nm} the legend of the suitor winning a supernatural bride is embodied in the marriage ceremonial which symbolizes status. The legend [occurring] in the ceremonial is the same thing as a story in another locality, but the ceremonial one is a *topati* (privilege), while the other tale is recreation. [So profoundly Nootka is the significance of the tale in its Nootka context, that it is]^{1b} a disappointment to an informant with knowledge of its wider distribution as a literary product. [to learn that the tale does not belong to the Nootka alone.]

[Likewise,] the Star-husband myths of the Plains may be found among the Klamath;³⁴ and ^{1b, r1} tales of magic flight occur in ancient Japan, in South America (Upper Amazon), and all over North America, as the same story but with different motives for the flight.^{1b} This is no mere parallelism, ^{r1} [but a tale] adopted by different peoples and re-interpreted into local terms. ^{nm} The elements of these myth tales that are added or subtracted are as important as the common elements that are preserved throughout the myth as distributed. ^{r1, 99} [A more complex,] large-scale example is the diffusion of Christianity. Documentary and terminological evidence are important in identifying the complex, ^{r1} with whose spread there are changes — [here and] there a different emphasis, and a modification.³⁵

^{99, r1, r2} The interchange of traits does not require friendly relations between groups; even with a hostile relation there may be much borrowing. ^{r1} Diffusion is [perfectly] possible under conditions of war. ¹² But traits are never taken over exactly as they are received. ^{99, r1, r2} Instead, borrowed elements must be assimilated to the already given background; and this assimilation is selective. ¹¹ Often, the subject culture picks up what may be considered very insignificant or trifling within the complex of the parent culture; this trifle or aspect may, however, be just what the subject culture is then in need of (or what it is entirely unconscious of). ¹² [The assimilation into our own culture] of jazz music from Africa, or of [elements of] southern speech from the Negro, are examples where it is just some aspect of a larger thing that is taken in. ^{99, r1} Probably any element might be assimilated, provided it may be re-

interpreted. ^{r1} A culture may [even] adopt a trait the essence of which is antithetical to it, and refit [this element] to its general pattern.

^{r2} The anthropologist has not done much work on the process of re-interpretation of traits by the receiving culture, [so we can make only a few general remarks about it]. Culture never somersaults: the process of reinterpretation is gradual. The technique of assimilation [must require a certain] preparedness, [on the part of] the receiving culture, to accept new things; selection [of the elements to be absorbed]; and integration [of the new traits] with something old and already ingrained. (^{ck} [Here] the terminology is tremendously important. If you can call new customs by old names, they seem more acceptable.) ^{r1} In other words, there is not only a cosmos of re-interpretable traits; there are also communities of receptive peoples.

[Are nearby peoples most likely to be the receptive ones? Such receptivity is one way to think about] ^{t1, t2, ck} the concept of *culture area*, although the concept [first] arose from the need to arrange and systematically classify museum specimens for exhibition. ^{lb, h2} [It represents a regional] "clustering" of characteristic culture traits and complexes. ^{lb} If traits were distributed only on the basis of chance, the distribution of any trait would be incongruent with that of other traits; ^{r1} [where, however, we find an] amassing of traits by areas, [we speak of] "culture areas."

^{qq} The English ethnologists have tended to neglect the [geographical] spread of culture traits. ^{ck} The idea of [cultural] evolution is more popular there. Frazer, for instance, was more interested in pointing out the typicality of the primitive reaction [than its regional differences].^{36 qq} The Americans, on the other hand, have sometimes attempted to mark off culture areas all over the map. Yet the reality of culture areas as clear-cut entities seems to vary greatly. ^{lb, h2} Though it has a didactic value, this type of classification can be — and too often is — overdone, for not all people can be fitted into such a scheme. ^{lb} Too much of a fetish has been made of the culture-area concept. [It works] best for the Plains and the Northwest Coast; but elsewhere a passion for classification has run away with us, and one thinks other areas are of equal weight and cogency. ^{lb, h2} As Boas [points out in] "American Myths" (*Scientific Monthly*), the classificatory habits [deriving from] biological and zoological taxonomy have done anthropology a great deal of harm.

^{t2, t1, ck} With regard to the mechanics of culture action, European [ethnologists have a somewhat similar] concept: the culture stratum. They are not so interested in area. ^{t1} But the "culture area" is a relatively

simple concept in America as compared with the great complexity of [cultural] stratification in the Old World. ^{r2} [The European ethnologists] tried to work out the stratification of primitive cultures by ^{r1} describing distinct, disconnected cultural traits, naming the resulting pot-pourri of individual traits a "culture," and searching for other places with similar combinations. [A given locality may have many such "cultures," in stratified combination.] ^{r1} This is the Graebnerian point of view. ^{r1} As before, here we can talk of [both] historical and psychological culture strata: [both points of view would apply.]

^{r1} Is the culture area ([or stratum]) a mere description of culture flow, or is it, aside from that, a psychological unit? The latter! ^{r2} Although the culture area concept can be criticized [on the grounds] that there isn't the same degree of relation between [any] two traits [constituting it], there are, however, assemblages of people who understand each other's culture and feel themselves as a unity. [Our conception here represents] a sort of cross between political science and anthropology. ^{r2} ^{r2} This is the true psychological meaning of culture area: ^{lb}, ^{r2}, ^{ck} a nascent nationality. ^{ck}, ^{r1} Under the dominating idea in an area there is a nascent feeling of unity; it is a potential "nationality," in the sense that a "nation" represents a communality of understanding. For example, ^{lb} [consider] the Siouan and Cheyenne parfleche: what you say of the Sioux attitude you can say of a dozen other [peoples], and this is the psychological value of the culture-area. ^{ck} A Sioux captured by a Blackfoot would feel at home in the culture even though [in the hands of] deadly enemies, whereas (say) a Pueblo [Indian] captured by a Plains tribe would not feel at home — he would not know what [his situation] is all about.

^{ck} Some of our culture areas are very real things in the psychological sense; others are pretty weak in the knees. How many culture areas are psychological realities? ^{r2} On this basis, Plains culture, Southwest culture, and Northwest Coast culture are valid areas, but the others ([in North America]) do not have a sufficient psychological basis of unity. ^{ck}, ^{r2} [As we have said,] the culture area really is a nascent nation, and many nations probably arose in just this way — [thus we may wish to] compare the different tribes in the Plains area with the different city states in Italy. But this notion of the culture area should never be confused with the notion of the state. ^{lb} The state is a method for compromising or solving antagonistic points of view; ^{ck}, ^{r1} the Plains tribes, with their uniformity of [cultural] patterns, are a cultural unity, the

psychological ground [for a state, if you will, but as yet lacking this method.]³⁷

^{ck, r2, r1} What vital culture areas, [in this sense of the term,] could we recognize a hundred years ago in the civilized world, before modern industrialism set in? [A list might look as follows:]

1. Occidental (Western European) culture, with its American derivatives.
2. Saracenic (Islamic) culture in the Near East.
3. The culture of India.
4. East Asiatic culture – Chinese, with Japan as a derivative of that (also Korea).
5. Possibly a Turkish-Altaiic culture area (^{r2} though probably not).

[At least the first] four of these are ^{ck} vital culture areas, cosmoses that in spite of tremendous diversities within them are psychological unities. ^{r2} In the course of time the cross-fertilization of traits has developed a common pattern of culture with ^{r2, ck, r1} a kind of commonality of feeling which transcends local and political differences. ^{ck} This is what anthropology should have meant by culture area.

Editorial Note

This chapter covers the lectures of Nov. 16, 23, and 30, 1936 (R1, R2, QQ, CK: of the three lectures, QQ and CK have little material on the first two). Also included are two lectures from 1935–36, one undated (Jan. 3?) and the other dated Jan. 10, 1936 (BW, T1, T2), as well as lectures from 1934 (Jan. 23, 30, and Feb. 6; DM, H2, LB, BG, SI). The organizational framework for the discussion is provided by the 1936 notes and by Sapir's 1928 Outline.

The 1936 notes are sparse for the introductory sections, when Sapir apparently discussed the relationship of form and function. Most of the chapter's material on this topic comes, therefore, from the earlier versions of the course. The 1934 notes, though rich, present some organizational problems. Some of the notes are probably out of order.

Notes

1. BG also has: "The contents of culture 'ought' to be reduced to modes of behavior. There are no objects of culture; there are only modes of behavior."

2. SI has: "*Culture* cannot be defined in terms of things (lists) of *overt* patterns (Marcellebaum's classific. useless.)"
3. R1 has "Education – two phase." It is not clear what phases Sapir had in mind, or whether they applied only to our own culture.
4. R2 actually has "thought of." R1 and BG do not have this word
5. Included under the "functional point of view." R1 also has "Important psychological patterns – philosophic point of view – (Difficult to carry out)"
6. LB adds, "Language ditto."
7. R2 has: "points out that this [Wissler's culture pattern] is not a functioning pattern as his is."
8. See Roheim 1932 and 1934, presumably the works Sapir might have had in mind
9. See Benedict's comments, in a letter to Margaret Mead, on a paper Sapir gave at the 1932 meetings of the American Ethnological Society: "The speech was on function and Pattern in modern anthropology, and it was aimed at Radcliffe-Brown..." (in *An Anthropologist at Work*, M. Mead, ed. [1959], p. 325). Benedict's opinion of Sapir's paper was largely negative. The paper itself, if it ever existed in written form, is now lost, and Sapir did not comment on Radcliffe-Brown in his published writings.
10. T1 also has: "Conflict between systems and styles of culture and the actual, prevalent forms themselves." It is not clear, however, just where in the overall discussion this point belongs.
11. DM has: "The rough and ready theory of function that the society or that the individual has." BG and H2 have *observer*, not *individual*.
12. It is not clear whether this classificatory scheme is Sapir's or Beaglehole's; I suspect the latter. Sapir may well have proposed that the students try to come up with a satisfactory classification so that, in comparing the proposals in class discussion, it could be shown that no one a priori scheme was preferable to another.
13. BG has, in an apparently parallel passage, "Analyze the fundamental functions of society."
14. This passage in DM comes right after the passage about (descriptively) seeing how individuals work out their own needs – a discussion of "function," that is. But it is not certain that the "it" in "...it turns out to mean..." actually refers to "function."
15. R1 links the heading, "Purpose of Culture," with "functions." See also the section entitled "Function and Form in Sociology," in Sapir 1927a, "Anthropology and Sociology"
16. T2 has: "Brill's explanation of smoking and his mental method of reaching that point, the shrinkage of space."
17. T1 has "kudos."
18. This line in R1 actually reads: "Convention – form – inhibition – religion – evang. – England – puritans –". Note that R1 does not specify *visual* form, but I infer that this may be meant, because the "art" section seems to be set apart from the "music" section which follows it.
19. R1 has, in the margin next to this paragraph on art, "Ramifications of a word"
20. I insert this passage from "Anthropology and Sociology" because R1 has, at this point, "Psychological – attitudinal sets".
21. What the Outline actually has here is: "The functional point of view. Its limitations. The pitfalls of rationalization."
22. R1 has "possible behavior".
23. R1 has more here, on "Secondary symbols of congruence" (?) but the passage is illegible.
24. LB adds parenthetically here: "(educationally inhibiting element in our culture: the 'mucker pose'; when one dares to be as linguistically clever as he can, he studies not only others but himself too."
25. See, for example, Graebner 1911 and 1924

26. T1 adds "Discussion on canonistic writings – Bible (Old and New T), Koran, Vedic poems, Confucian classics, etc., as a trait."
27. DM adds. "Here is the nuclear element, the spring board for your thesis on the economic determination of social status and prestige."
28. H1 has "(Did Alice Two Guns live at Cattaraugus? Did the jumping style of dancing in Women's dance originate here at Coldspring or over there at Cattaraugus?)" The reference is again to an Iroquoian group.
29. See Lippert 1886–87.
30. H1 cites Sapir's (1916h) paper on *Time Perspective* [see *Ethnology* volume: CWES IV] "for the principle of [trait] distribution and antiquity, and the principle of broken distribution and antiquity and time...the logical method." H1 comments, "Sapir seems to have altered his position since 1916; he no longer insists on the logical explanation culture, trait, and culture complex in terms of distribution, seriation, etc. For in 1933 he says, "No trait belongs to any culture; Trait is the enemy of pattern; traits have no meaning."
31. An early Irish system of writing using notches for vowels and lines for consonants to form an alphabet of 20 letters.
32. LB has "psychological at-one-time explanations".
33. Similar wording, and many of the same ideas and examples, can be found in Sapir's 1916 *Time Perspective in Aboriginal American Culture: A Study in Method*. The view of culture is somewhat different, however.
34. See F. Boas (1891), "The Dissemination of Tales among the Natives of North America," *J. Amer. Folklore* 4: 13–20.
35. At this point LB gives a long list of what are apparently further examples of ideas some of which have diffused and others have not; those that diffuse become rationalized according to the local cultural setting. Thus "the plank house [occurs] from the panhandle of Alaska to the Klamath River of northern California, [where the local culture] rationalizes [its construction from] redwood: you can make this selfevident (a soft wood, etc.) – but the Algonquians use birch bark [for a similar type of house]." Another example is "the medicine-bundle: the psychology of the present functioning element has nothing to do with its history." Other examples include the division of the Bible into sections, the history of Jewish law, the four (or sometimes six) cardinal points, the Navaho "unique origin-myth of the horse," short-story "plots" (Cinderella, Ulysses), and our "master formulae...putting a value on services, attaching figures to intangibles (unintelligible in other societies)." The examples are not cited in enough detail to reveal what specific use Sapir made of them.
36. See Frazer 1917–20, *The Golden Bough*.
37. The definition of the state given in LB occurs next to the section on "Culture Areas" but is actually included under another heading: "Sapir on Culture and Neurosis."

Chapter 5. The Patterning of Culture

of The Configurative Point of View

[In the previous lecture, I mentioned the concept of] ^{ck, r1, t1} "culture stratum": the description of a pot-pourri of individual, distinct, disconnected cultural traits [that happen to occur at a particular historical period in a particular region]. ^{r1} This is the Graebnerian point of view, [among whose defects one might mention methodological problems; for although the stratum is supposedly defined in terms of historical combination,] ^{ck} without documentary evidence it is difficult to tell the age of traits.

^{ck, r1, t1} [In contrast,] the point of view [put forward in this lecture] is *configurational*: ^{ck} the emphasis is not on the factuality of every bit of behavior, trait, or element, but on its position in relation to other elements. ^{r1} [That is to say, this point of view] emphasizes the placement of a cultural element rather than its content. ^{ck} [Consider,] for example, [the difference between] handing someone a nickel and handing him an unshaped bit of metal. [Though the substance of the two may be the same, the latter is not part of our system of coinage and has not the same meaning –] ^{dm} [a meaning in terms of which] a dime [(say) may be exchanged for] a bar of chocolate, or a doll. The dime, the chocolate bar, and the doll are [culturally] equated, [even though they are physically very different objects.] ^{ck, r1} Such examples have a methodological significance: the principle of setting significant acts in a tight-fitting configurational scheme. ^{r1} The meaning of the act is not to be judged by its abstract content, but by its placement in the life of a people.

^{t1} [With respect to trait analysis,] this symbolic or actual placement [of a cultural element] in a pattern of culture [– that is, the element's psychological value – places a configuration upon a trait or complex. The logical analysis [of traits] can [otherwise] go too far and can [end up] being reckoned without cultural context. But [to remove a trait from its context is to strip] the trait of that latent or total cultural content that acts upon its meaning, response, and position.

[When viewed out of context, a trait's historical import may become severely distorted; for, over time,] ^{t1} the values and configuration [in

which the trait occurs] may be completely transformed or reversed, due to changes in customs which may or may not be directly associated with the transformed trait or complex. When a pattern or complex begins or ends is uncertain; all that can be ascertained are the relationships among several of them. [The once] intrinsic value of coinage, for example, is a question of faith having arisen in deferred credit and thus has become another pattern. [More important than questions about the historical origins of patterns is] the question: what is the range of a pattern? What does it embrace in the psychological context of a culture?

¹¹ [The importance of pattern, as compared with the overt content of an act of behavior, is illustrated by the possibility of] conflicts of classification ([i. e., behaviors that can be classified in terms of two conflicting patterns of meaning]). Biological and physical factors, [no matter how "overt," are always susceptible to multiple interpretation as to how they are] classified and defined by cultural pattern, as when it is uncertain whether a man walking [in a particular way] is happy, drunk, physically disabled, on a slippery floor, etc. ^{ol} [Hence] the fallacy of judging the essential nature of a given culture [element] from external appearances.

[As compared with the culture stratum view] ^{r1} of Graebner, ^{nc} Father Schmidt, and others, ¹ therefore, ^{ol, nc} [we gain] a more intimate understanding of culture [when we turn our attention away from the spurious concreteness of individual elements ("traits") and begin to view it in terms of] *form*. ^{nc} For behavior follows forms, [like a gesture following] a curve pattern that begins and comes definitely to a closure. The closure comes when all the elements contributing to the behavior are present and aid in the end of a set of responses. A behavior response gets its meaning in a setting of a behavior pattern. [For this reason there is a] feeling of uneasiness, incompleteness, and dissatisfaction when one or more of the elements in the behavior pattern is missing or replaced by an unexpected element. The lack of salt in a meal, a dignified friend calling you by your first name after [only] a short acquaintance, a man leaving the room during a lecture – [in such cases] we would feel uneasy until we could *place* the action. (The walking out of the room is not [in itself] the significant part of the act. The important part of the act is the meaning – [why he walked out.]) Until we can interpret the act, we are in a non-closure state.

^{ol, nc} A glance at configurative ("Gestalt") psychology [would confirm the importance of pattern in perception; one sees this in action also, as with the] ^{nc} lapse and closure of an action pattern.² People act with a

feeling of closure in the future. Certain elements have great importance in the pattern. We reconstruct a plan of our action; each element has its relation to the pattern. The significance of each act depends upon its place in the pattern, and if we feel strongly the pattern in which the act belongs, our reaction to the act is "right." But patterns overlap. [suppose we are] discussing politics with a friend, when his child comes in[to the room]. How should we react to the child? [What pattern of conduct should now apply?] Intuition means the ability to see the map, the pattern of conduct, imaginatively. It is not the overt conduct that matters, but the arrangement.

^{ne} Words tick off these configurations of conduct. Consider, for example, the words "tradesman" and "bandit" in relation to configurations of experience. "Tradesmen" refers to such people as Chicago business tradesmen, a [realm of] experience one is used to. [Suppose, however, that we encounter] businessmen [in a less familiar locale, as, perhaps.] in the bazaar trade in Asia, a trade based on bargaining; and [(the bargaining ending to our disadvantage) we call the bazaarmen] "bandits." But they are not "bandits" — they are "tradesmen"; we call them bandits because we see their activity against the background of our configuration of behavior — [our expectations about how trade is carried out.] Thus words do not describe objective things as much as place objects in the behavior configuration.

^{ne} [The point is that] we do not see things, we see significances. For instance, we may "pretend" these are all t's: t, T, +, [etc.],³ yet they are all different.

^{o1} [Let us consider a few more] examples of general patterns in behavior that are definable aside from content. ^{ne} To a painter, the whole world can be expressed in paints. Painting a rural barn, the artist does not paste pieces of wood on his canvas to get the texture more exact. [He relies, instead, on a pattern of visual relations that is definable quite apart from the actual substances of which the barn, on the one hand, and the medium of paint, on the other, are composed.] Or, [when I greet a child somewhat abruptly,] the child's mother "pretends" my brusque greeting [can be taken] as a nice one, and that that is the one I really meant. Interpretation [— placing a behavioral act in a pattern of significance — is what matters, not its physical content.] Conduct is seen not as what it is overtly, but in relation to a pattern, to a geometric plane [if you will, or a particular] context: ^{ne},^{o1} [and contexts may overlap] or be switched, as in humor, [which we might think of as] an unconscious mathematics of changed contexts.

^{ol} [The problem of locating the pattern in terms of which an element should be viewed is all the greater when we] observe cultural phenomena [deriving from a culture other than our own.] Inevitably, one places these “objective” phenomena according to one’s own patterns — and [inevitably, too, one] experiences a shock on discovering the existence of entirely different patterns in a given culture from those that had obviously seemed to be present. ¹¹ Cultural phenomena are [always subject to] a double response, therefore.⁴ An ethnological specimen is viewed [quite differently] by an anthropologist [who sees it] in terms of a native culture, and a miner who, respectively, [sees it in terms of] his own. Cologne Cathedral, viewed as from the local or Catholic culture [of Cologne itself, will have a different significance] from the view of an anti-German Iowa farmer. When anything is viewed, one’s own culture-confiners are always present in varying degrees and aspects. ([This propensity to embrace new experiences or cultural elements within its framework is] what we might define as the “carrying-power” of a pattern.)

^{bg} [In short,] a pattern is a theory of activity having meaning in terms of the typical event of a given society. (We may distinguish a pattern from the total configuration.) ^{bg, h1, dm, si, h2} *A pattern is form, seen functionally.* ^{h1} Things which seem the same are not, unless they function similarly. ¹¹ [Indeed, in reviewing the problem of culture “traits”] my purpose is to show differences in seemingly similar objects — [functional differences that arise because the objects participate in different cultural configurations.]

^{ol} *The Patterning of Culture Exemplified: Speech*

^{h1} [Although we may define] cultural patterning [in terms of the relation between] form and function, [our cultural] analysis [is not thereby made simple.] ^{dm} The problem of form and the problem of function are very much more subtle than is generally envisaged. ^{h1, ol} [To illustrate these problems, let us consider] speech; ^{ol} for language is a [particularly convenient] example of an elaborate [cultural] pattern that keeps itself going as a self-contained “organism” or system of behavior. ^{h2} [It is also a good illustration of the complexity of functions and of the inappropriateness of viewing pattern through an alien lens. For] linguistic analysis does not rest content with “overhead functions”; and pattern

must be understood in terms of the ultimate analysis intuitively felt by any normal member of a given community.

^{bg} Language is the supreme example of the fact that the total functioning of patterns is different from the functioning of a specific pattern. In two languages one may find the form (sound) and the function (meaning) of elements to be the same but the patterns totally different.⁵ ^{si} It is the internal economy — the configurational analysis — that is completely different in all languages. ^{r1, dm} [Suppose.] for example, that in language A, [the form] *wala* means 'house', and in language B there is also a form *wala* meaning 'house'. Yet although [the two forms] are linguistically and culturally the same they can still be [significantly] different. Why? ^{r1} Because there may still be a difference in the morphology or configuration of the languages. In language A, [*wala* consists of] *wa* + *la*. *wa* means 'to dwell', and *la* means 'that which is used'. In language B, however, *wala* [is composed from] *w-* + *-ala* (where *ala* = 'house', and *w-* is a prefix marking neuter [gender]).⁶ [Thus the two forms are] functionally different in the two languages. ^{h1} [To put this point another way,] in language the same formal elements plus a different configurational union may equal two patterns, resulting in two separate languages.

[What, then, is the role of meaning, in language?⁷ Does function, in this sense, determine form? Do meanings, as located in the world and its physical characteristics, explain the linguistic configurations in which people talk about them?]⁸ ¹² Although the exigencies of adjustment to the world are fairly uniform — hunger and [the search for] food, etc. — the languages about these ["necessities"] are very different. ^{e20} Meaning or reference are articulated by speech — we don't *know* the world before we have speech. If we don't have symbols, we don't have meanings.

¹¹ By "speech" I mean the way in which groups symbolize thoughts and ideas, [in their totality, not just the individual word]. ¹² [Consider some expressions using the English word *drop*:] you throw matches in the air, and they *drop*; but also one *drops* in attendance; and one *drops* out of sight. Now, there is a certain behavior to the word *drop*, in that there is a uniformity to our conception of the word even if we use it in violent ways. Yet, you may also be able to express the same thing without using that word. In agreement, for instance, you can say "uh-huh" instead of "I agree." Thus the [wider] concept [you want to express] may be analysed in another way. There are languages — Navajo, [again, for example] — that have no word [specifically] meaning *drop*. ¹¹ Instead, in Navajo, analysis shows that [the expression we translate as] 'drop'

means the passing through space of stone, or mush, etc., showing that object as the main subject of thought. ^{11, 12} [The Navajo is] interested in the type of object which travels through space. This object is the nuclear idea, while the "dropping" idea comes in only as a prefixed element, adding an indication of a downward direction.⁹ ¹¹ Thus [the Navajo] does not express 'drop' in our sense.

¹¹ 'Give' is the same way. ^{dm} It is an illusion that languages express necessary fact instead of convenient expression for necessary fact — [an illusion] that makes us fallaciously believe that [the English sentence] "I will give it to you" is exactly equivalent to the Latin *Id tibi dabo*, for example. Not only are the words not equivalent [in the English and the Latin,] but in the Navajo *nà-dè-c'at'* the idea of *giving* is not even [explicitly] expressed. ^{bg} [That is,] all languages do express the concept of giving but Navajo has no word for *give* though it expresses this through a specific arrangement of patterns. ^{si} [Indeed,] there is an amazing variety of configurations [invoked] in expressing the sentence "I will give it to you" in different languages.¹⁰

[Thus there is no necessity that the meaning expressed by a particular word in English should be expressed in the form of a word in some other language.] ^{h2} A word is anything the language *says* is a word; and ¹¹ the overtones in words are irreplaceable, being incapable of synonyms. ^{ck, r1} Actually, in language words as such do not have meaning without context. ^{r2} Even though a form may have a typical meaning usually associated with it, context can change this meaning entirely. ^{r1, r2} Thus the form itself is not important — meaning is given by the context in which or to which it fits. ^{h1} Implication bears 90% of the work of language.¹¹

[The same flexibility in the relation between form and meaning holds true for grammatical categories, as a means of expressing] ¹¹ a group of concepts, or one whole concept. ^{11, 12} [For example, consider] the use of the plural in English. [expressed with a grammatical tag.] ¹² Should we also have a tag denoting "brightness" versus "dullness"? [Perhaps it seems more appropriate to have a grammatical expression for plurality because] plurality is more fundamental. ¹¹ Surely we know the difference between one and more than one, so we use plurals, while we don't use differences in color all the time. ^{11, 12} But it is a difference of degree, not of kind. Some languages do not allocate to plurality the same importance that we do [in English]. [Even in English,] we sometimes make a plural reference in the singular; ¹¹ plurals in English are used only spasmodically according to idiom. ¹² And some languages have no plu-

rals = they only seem to.¹² (¹⁹⁴⁶ In many American languages what seems at first sight to be a true plural of the noun turns out on closer analysis to be a distributive.)¹² We look for such things [as plurality] because they are a necessary concept to us; nouns must have number, [we assume].

¹² [Similarly, we suppose,] number is akin to gender; and we think of tense as being very important.¹¹ But even tense forms are interchangeable under common usage;¹² and there are languages, such as Yana, without tense tags.^{12, 11} In Nootka, the first sentence of the story locates the time by denoting the tense. [After that, tense] is not referred to again. [The story] goes on in a general or present tense, and people [just] know what's what.¹² But they are very dogmatic on the *aspect* [of the verb].^{12, 11} Aspect is the geometric form of time:¹³ all events [can be conceived of as either] a point or a line, and this [distinction] is formalized by certain languages.¹² "She burst into tears" is a point, while "she lived happily ever after" is a line; and this in Nootka is more important than tense.¹¹ [Event shapes such as] (1) Momentary, (2) Durative, (3) Graduative, (4) Inceptive, (5) Pre-graduative, and (6) Iterative (based on 1, 2, and 4) are aspects found in Nootka and in some other languages, in varying combinations. Formally they are very clearly defined principles, whether [they are represented by] individually integrated symbols or not; that is, there is some flexibility in the content of the form.¹¹ So the difference between what is formally necessary and what is logically necessary must be considered.¹² Language is concerned with meaning, but it is also [— and more fundamentally —] concerned with form. [One might even say that]¹¹ language is *mainly* concerned with form, with meanings a concern of psychology.¹⁴

^{10c} [There are many instances when the behavioral form provided by a pattern does not follow, or no longer follows, in any straightforward "logical" way from its content.] Consider, for example, verbs that are not entirely active [in their meaning but are treated as active in the linguistic structure:] in English the subject "I" is logically implied to be the active will in "I sleep" as well as "I run." [A sentence like] "I am hungry" might, [in terms of its content, be logically] better expressed with "hunger" as the active doer, as in [the German] *nich hungert* [or even the French] *j'ai faim*. In some languages, however, such as Sioux, a rigid distinction is made between truly active and static verbs. [In that case, pattern and content coincide more "logically" than in English.]

[It seems, then, that] when we get a pattern of behavior, we follow that [pattern] in spite of [being led, sometimes, into] illogical ideas or a

feeling of inadequacy. We become used to it. We are comfortable in a groove of behavior. ^{1998a} [Indeed,] it seems that no matter what [the] psychological origin may be, or complex of psychological origins, or a particular type of patterned conduct, the pattern itself will linger on by sheer inertia, which is a rather poor term for the accumulated force of social tradition, and entirely different principles of psychology come into play which may even cancel those which originally motivated the nucleus of the pattern of activity. Patterns of activity are continually getting away from their original psychological incitation.

^{9c} Thus a culture pattern does not present itself in a definite time frame — only as a relative point of completion. [To understand the operation of a pattern] needs a long view, both backward and forward. ^{9c} In English, we have lost the feeling for gender in the noun; but, illogically, we [still] have genders in the pronoun — [reflecting] an archaic classification of the universe into masculine, feminine and neuter. ([Note that other classifications are perfectly possible, as for instance a classification into] big and little, as in some African languages, or animate and inanimate, as in Algonquin [languages].) Once a pattern of expression becomes solidified, we unconsciously run our behavior pattern into that mold.

[Many examples of the psychological force of pattern in behavior could be drawn, too, from the sound systems of languages.]¹⁵ [Consider the sounds] *ng* and *l* in Nootka: [if a speech sound were only a set of muscular movements of the vocal apparatus, then once you know how to make the sound you should be able to make it anywhere; but this is not so.] These sounds are used by the Nootka only in sacred chants and songs (where *l* is the ceremonial variant of *n*). ^{1915a} Such special song-sounds are, at least so it would seem, pronounced with difficulty by Indians under ordinary circumstances, as in the handling of English words that contain them. The obvious inference is that one may react quite differently to the same speech-sound entering into dissimilar associations. This fact has, of course, a much wider psychological significance.

^{9c} [Similarly,] for English-speakers [attempting to speak German,] the sound *tz* [sic], occurring as German *z* at the beginning of a word, is more difficult [to pronounce] than *zh* (French *j*), but not because we have never pronounced it. [In fact we have pronounced both of them. But only the French sound is provided for in the] configuration [of sound relations we already have in English; see Table 1]:

Between vowels:		At beginning of word:	
-zh-	-sh-	sh-	X
-z-	-s-	s-	z-
-v-	-f-	f-	v-

We have the feeling relations of X – [the configuration in which a sound of a particular sort, namely *zh*, could occur at the beginning of a word – while] *ts*, though expressed as German *z*, is thought of as two sounds, *t* + *s*, [a kind of combination forbidden, in our English sound pattern, from occurring at the beginning of a word.] [Or, consider the English speech-sound] *w/h* and [the sound one makes when] blowing out a candle. Behavioristically they are the same, but their contexts are different.¹⁶

[To understand the significance of an act of behavior, or even to be able to produce it at all, depends, therefore, on a pattern or context of its occurrence, which gives it meaning and possibility. And a given act (like the candle-blowing sound) may have more than one context, more than one pattern according to which it might be interpreted.] These choices of configuration are *evaluations* rather than *measurements*. [Measurements have to do with objective characteristics of an act or a thing; evaluations have to do with choosing the configuration within which it has meaning.]

^{ck} Indeed, a configuration once understood can give meaning even if you don't know [exactly] what to do with [the details of] your structure.^{e85} In language, the elements are discovered after the pattern is known, not vice versa. ^{ck} Once the form is satisfactory, configurational [relations] give the ability to make meanings ad hoc. [Consider the following] illustration, [concerning the parts of speech in] Yana.^{17 e20} [The parts of speech are not somehow naturally given – as we can see by considering problems in their definition, history, and comparison. In the Indo-European languages, for example, the relations between nouns and adjectives have changed over time. In many languages, too, there may be so close a formal relationship between adjectives and verbs that it is not clear that they are really distinct categories. Indeed,]¹⁸ if in a language, verbs and adjectives have the same phrasing they must be

the same. For Yana, compare [the following “Verbal”] and “Adjectival” constructions [(see Table 2)]:

“Verbal”	ni-sa- si ndja	present definite	‘I walk away’, etc.
	ni-sa- si numa	present definite	‘you walk away’
	ni-sa- ha ndja	past definite	[‘I walked away’]
	ni-sa- ha numa	past definite	[‘you walked away’]
	ni-sa- ti ndja	indefinite	[‘I ...’]
	ni-sa- ti numa	indefinite	[‘you ...’]
“Adjectival”	dyul- si ndja, etc.		‘I am long’, etc.

[The glosses of morphemes are:]

ni – a single male being walks

sa – off, away

si – present tense

ndja – 1st person singular

numa – 2nd person singular

ha – past tense

ti – indefinite [or quotative?]

ku-sindja – do not

[These examples show that] the paradigm for the adjective [in Yana] is the same as for the verb; all adjectival forms are classified as verbs. Nootka has the same, as do many other languages. Forms get established and become comfortable; they are then imposed on further experience. [We can see this in the] reduction and interchangeability of parts of speech.

^{ck} [Whether in language or in other cultural domains, therefore, it is the configuration, not the content, that determines an element’s meaning.] Just as you claim that giving a person a piece of paper is equivalent to giving him a fatted calf (and can prove this by the structure of the culture, [with its use of paper money or notes of credit]), so you can prove that every adjective is a verb by the structure of the language. [I.e., in a particular language, with its particular configuration.]

^{dm} Thus we are very naive to look for exact equivalences in the patternings of language, or for that matter in all of culture. ^{bf} The complete meaning does not lie in the specific function of segmented bits of behavior but in functions of wider import. (To cite a [cultural] example: paying a visit may be due to [requirements of] reciprocity, not to immediate pleasure.) ^{dm, bg} Simple necessary functions which can easily be linked with overt behavior are not the point of analysis — they do not necessarily constitute a pattern. ^{h1, h2, si} [Only] a complete formal analysis — plus a complete understanding of the forms' functioning — will give us pattern. ¹⁹

^{ne} Language, in its very nature, is symbolic; and symbolic behavior lies more in the unconscious realm than does functional behavior, which is more in the conscious realm. [The stability of cultural pattern, and]²⁰ society's unwillingness to change, are largely due to the symbolic texture of behavior, and [our] unconscious attachment to these modes of behavior that stand for larger contexts.

^{si} *The "Topati" (Privilege) Pattern among the Nootka*²¹

^{dm} The handy sociological terms we possess imply that the functional residues of behavior define logical and equivalent categories. This is obviously not so. All culture resolves itself into patterns but not in a departmental sense — rather in a terminological sense, [with its own terminology (i. e., the *native* term)]²² bearing a unifying concept. ^{dm, si, bg} And the culture thus constituted²³ is not an incremental, segregatable collection of patterns, but rather a manifold continuity of functions.

^{mo} [To illustrate this point with another] example of cultural pattern, let us consider the concept of *topati*, 'privilege', among the Nootka Indians ¹¹ as a psychological aspect of culture, ¹² and the behavior in regard to this concept. This is not totemism, but an idea of privilege, ^{ck, r1, q1} status, or ^{r2} class, ^{r2, 12} under which are grouped such diverse things as the right to use certain names, songs, fishing and hunting rites and ceremonies, etc. ^{ck} Among the Nootka there were nobles (chiefs), commoners who (like medieval villeins) were attached to noble households, and slaves. How are you going to symbolize status in the society?⁹ *Topati*, literally "black token"²⁴ (probably originally a crest), ¹² is the name for certain privileges, ^{r1, ck} ranging from the symbolic (such as names and songs) to the practical (rights to hunt and fish), ¹² that pass in the lineage and are the exclusive rights of that line.

^{cl} The Nootka concept of privilege does not easily emerge from mere observation. Cultural data [are subject to] multiple interpretation, and objectively similar phenomena [may participate in] completely distinct patterns and orientations. ^{nc} Each *topati* activity has its counterpart in a [similar] activity that is not *topati*: there are *topati* songs, [but also] other songs; *topati* names, and other names; etc. [How, then, are we to locate the cultural pattern?] ^{hl, rl, ol, ck} Vocabulary may be the key — a native term [such as *topati*] points to the reality of a culture pattern. ^{r2} The way to define the *topati* is to determine similar concepts which do not have the same value as *topati* concepts, e. g. nicknames, and songs of certain types. [By contrasting (say) songs that have a *topati* value with songs that do not, we can arrive at a pattern definition for *topati*. This coincides with the native's own interests, since] ^{nc} the native is interested in the *topati* aspect of a *topati* song, rather than in that song.

[We must consider, therefore, the realms of activity in which phenomena labeled as *topati* are found, in order to distinguish the *topati* aspects of the activity from other aspects. For, to define this cultural pattern, it would not suffice merely to describe our observations of events and add them up. As we have said,] ^{dm, si, bg} the content of culture is not incremental. ^{bg, si} The meaning of an event in a society must be manifold, because the event is the crossroads of many cultural patterns. ^{nc} One behavior pattern is constellated in a group of patterns; thus behavior can be understood only in relation to these other patterns...Context is always needed to give the culture pattern.

^{ck} [A kind of context especially] important in this area is the potlatch: every feast ceremony or public event is a potlatch — that is, at some point property is given away in a certain form. If you wish to affirm your status, you must give a ceremonial feast at which you distribute property. You don't merely give wealth; you are entitled to give a ceremony which is yours, and you must validate it by distribution [of gifts]. Giving a name to a daughter, for example, is an occasion for a feast, for the name belongs to the lineage — it has been owned by particular people in the past, and it is [therefore] valuable. The potlatch is the validation, or reaffirmation, of the privilege. ^{c92} [To put it another way,] the philosophy of the potlatch is the "holding up" of a privilege. It is not a simple economic system, but the affirmation of privilege and honoring people.

^{1915h} The subject of privileges is a vast one, and a complete enumeration of all the economic, ceremonial, and other privileges of one high in rank would take a long time. [A few may be listed here to give an

indication of the diversity of activities and realms of cultural life into which topati values enter.]²⁵

1. *Legends.* ^{qq} Legends act as the warrant for status. Mere precedent is not sufficient to establish status; the legend is also necessary. ^{ck} Thus a man's status is defined by the fact that he enters into the activities described in the legend. There is a feeling of participation in the deeds of ancient ancestors of the mythological past. Although many of the privileges [warranted] in legend are referred to only by implication, the legend is important both as a document [of privileged activities, names, and objects] and as a privilege [in itself], for ^{ck, qq} the right to tell a certain topati legend with ceremonial properties, ^{qq} and to tell one for gain, is also a privilege. ^{r1} The legends belong to [particular] lineages, in which ^{r2} they are said to have been handed down from generation to generation. ¹² But there are also legends which are not topati.

2. *Names.* ^{ck, qq, r2, r1} Hooked up with the topati legends are personal names, both of individuals and of objects. ¹² A child at five is given a name that doesn't have much connotation; later, [he or she] is given another name which has certain rights [attached to] it. ^{r2} Some names belong to first sons or daughters, some are for males [only] or females only, and some are for older people or for younger people. ^{ck} There are names for the sons of an older daughter and for sons of a younger daughter. (Everything that relates to war is associated with younger sons.) ¹² There are legends in the line of descent which use these names. There is a gradation of names, and the giving of names must be validated by the giving of property at a naming [ceremony]. ^{r2, ck} Names are therefore changed from time to time, adding increased status. For example, a man can give certain names to his daughter as dowry on her marriage, ^{ck} and she can use these for her children. ^{ck, r2} Names refer not only to persons, but also to things, e. g. canoes, houses, house posts etc., harpoons, caves [?], and rituals[?].²⁶ ^{ck} However, there are also names which have no topati value, [such as] nicknames.

3. *Ceremonial games.* ^{qq, r1, r2, ck, 12} Ceremonial games for prizes are also recognized privileges, often dramatizing some incident in a legend. Given at potlatches, they also validate privilege and are often accompanied by a distribution of gifts. ^{r2, ck} Songs introducing the games are part of the privilege.

4. *Songs.* ^{ck, qq} [In addition to] the introductory song for a ceremonial game, there is a great variety of songs, [some of which are topati and some not]. Gambling songs, for example, are not topati — anyone is free to sing them. Club songs, love songs, etc. were also not privileged.

The topati songs, however, were also many, and were named: for example, "Communicating with the spirit" songs, ^{ck} originally associated with whaling, are now used on many occasions. ^{qq} Originally they were intended to persuade the spirit in a whale to come toward the land rather than away. [Other examples of topati songs include]:

— ^{ck} Songs to announce important events, and secret announcement songs. ²¹

— ^{ck, qq} Songs to demonstrate the possession of wealth, often in the context of a legend.

— Lullabies, which also connect with legends. ^{ck} You often put up a pole in the potlatch house, put the baby by it and sing a lullaby; then the host has to give away money.

— ^{ck, qq} Woman-purchasing songs (^{ck} beginning with the engagement, possibly a year before the marriage).

— ^{ck, qq} Songs in connection with winter feasts, [especially] the wolf-ritual. ^{ck} Only certain people can sing them, for acting as Wolf is topati. Many other varieties of songs are topati, ¹² as are dances of all sorts which go with the songs.

5. *Ceremonial activities.* ^{ck, qq, r2, r1} Many particular ceremonial activities are topati: the lassoing of novices; ^{ck, r2} the privilege of blackening the faces of those present at an exorcism; ^{ck} acting as Wolf; etc. Very often the privilege is owned by a woman, the oldest in the lineage. She can transfer the activity to a substitute and pay him for it — and this payment also enhances the topati.

6. *Heraldry.* ^{12, qq} The right to paint houseboards with certain paintings, and [indeed] all ceremonial features of the house, houseposts, and beams, are topati. ^{e92} For the [Nootka] house is a symbol as much as it is an instrument — it is something that symbolizes lineage and the status of the owner. The paintings on the outside of the house are likewise part of the house, as is the totem pole, which can only be understood in connection with the house structure. It is carved with symbolic animals and personages in myth. The carvings may represent several crests of different families — [the representation constituting] more a social system, a crest armorial, than a totem proper. Originally [the totem pole was built] right up against the house; the door went through the pole, and the poles were merely a variation of the house posts. In order for the chiefs to exhibit all their crests they put them outside. Later variations put the posts away from the house (and [also gave rise to the] development of grave posts, which are probably similar symbolically to the house posts.

Behind the concept of crests is, [again,] the concept of privilege, *topati*. The crest [is itself] a privilege, as is the naming of houseposts, and the legends [represented on them]. [Illustrating these legends,] the totem pole figures are the pictures of an unwritten book.

7. ^{ck, r1, qq} *Special ways of performing ceremonies* are also *topati*, and are often validated by family legends.

8. *Chief's privileges.* ^{qq, ck, r2} Certain symbols of status for the chief himself are considered to be *topati* — ^{ck} symbols of his office which are attached to it and ^{qq} inalienable. That is, they are not transferable from one situation to another as are these other privileges [we have mentioned]. ^{ck} For example, the way in which a whale is divided up among households is according to privilege, and ^{ck, qq} the dorsal fin goes to the chief. ^{ck} So does the flotsam and jetsam, [for the chief has] ^{qq} the right to property that drifts up on the group's territory. ^{r2} [Similarly,] the privilege of taking the natural resources of a given type of land is such a *topati*. ^{ck, qq} The boundaries of the tribe's territory, carefully guarded, may also be regarded as the *topati* of the chief.

^{qq} It is also someone's special privilege to harpoon whales at the beaches where they burrow into the sand occasionally, though he may not otherwise own the land. ^{qq, ck} This is illustrative of the [Nootka] conception of property, referring not to land as such (for land as such is not owned), but to the privilege of performing a certain activity there. ^{ck} The same [is true of] fishing places. [These privileges are] *topati*.

[Now, how shall we define the *topati* pattern underlying all these diverse activities?] ^{ck} One must not confuse the *topati* with the idea of value, for ^{ck, qq} not all valuable things and activities are *topati*. One example is the secret way of preparing whale harpoons: these [preparations] are valuable, but they could not be *topati* since they are not made into public exhibitions. ^{t2, t1} You cannot have a *topati* unless you are willing to show it in public; ^{t1} secret practices are not *topati*, because they do nothing to enhance your prestige or that of your ancestors. ^{ck} The *topati* is always public. It is a token, a crest of privilege — ^{r2} a matter of prestige. Therefore magic is not *topati*, although it is just as valuable. ^{t2} Rites and ceremonies to get power, which are secret and private, are not *topati*. ^{ck} *Topati* and [non-*topati* forms of] valuable knowledge are inherited differently. Moreover, power as such is not *topati*.

[We can now begin to identify the] ^{t2} things characteristic of *topati* — the pattern definition:²⁸

1. ^{r2, ck, qq, r1} To be topati a thing must be *public*; ^{r2, ck} it must be openly presented to people, known and talked about.

2. ^{r1, r2, ck, qq, t2} It *cannot be exhibited without an expenditure of wealth*, ^{t2} and having a feast.

3. ^{r2, r1, ck} It is the *corporate right of a lineage*, ^{r2} not of an individual; ^{qq} [it derives from one's] identification with a glorious ancestor.

4. ^{r2, r1, ck, qq, t2, t1} There must be a *tie-up with a legend* ^{t2} backing [the topati].

5. ^{r1, ck, r2, qq, t1, t2} It must be *localized*. ^{ck} Every topati belongs to a place. ^{r2} and the legend refers to some place. ^{ck} (Localization is important [in general] on the North West Coast, and in California too, among the Hupa and Yurok.)

6. ^{qq, r1, r2, ck} The individual's *right to participate must be clear* — ^{r1, ck} you must have clear title to the privilege ^{t1, t2} and be able to state your relationship to it. ^{ck, t2, r2, r1, qq} The normal way of gaining this right is by direct descent. ^{ck} in which both a rule of primogeniture and of male descent holds. ^{al} Other ways to obtain a topati are by dowry, or by a ceremonial gift, in which you just hand over a right to someone; ^{ck} for example, a chief may give a topati to another chief, and this is expected to be returned later on. ^{al} A topati can also be obtained by "hitting" — by force, [in other words, such as by] warfare or assassination. ^{t2, t1} By this "might of right," you just kill someone calmly and take his topati. ^{r2} [Or, you might] steal a box and mask from neighboring tribes, or conquer one of their fishing territories.

^{qq} These samples [of Nootka life involving the topati system] suggest that [we should see] cultural pattern always as a configuration or aesthetic form rather than merely [as a set of] specific events. ^{ck} There is an analogy, therefore, between working out the grammar of a language and working out the pattern of the topati. ^{r1, r2} The system of the topati, as a [cultural] pattern, is equivalent to a grammatical form, such as the system of the passive, ^{r1} [in the sense that] the form gives the background, pattern, or configuration to enable the hooking in of a type of behavior into a pattern or form of implications. ^{r2} [Thus, for instance,] all verbs have passives, although some, such as "to go," are not logical;²⁹ in the same way, many elements of culture are fitted into configurations merely by analogy, rather than by psychology.

[To reiterate:]³⁰ ^{r1} this grammatical interpretation of a cultural pattern [is appropriate because] ^{r1, ck} a cultural pattern is always a configuration — an aesthetic form into which a particular behavior, or event, may be fitted. ^{ck} To understand an event, you have to give it a

locus; ^{r1} [and it is the configuration which] gives a locus for behavior-^{bg} [However — as we have already pointed out —] the meaning of the event is manifold, because the event must be the crossroad of many patterns. ^{r2} Each culture “trait” fits into a number of different configurations. ^{r1} Perhaps even the simplest behavior pattern is complex because it fits in and intertwines with all kinds of others — [according to the] implications of the total cultural pattern. For example, the lullaby sung in a potlatch ties in with the whole pattern of topati. ^{bg} And it is [this] overhead meaning, rather than the simple function of a pattern, that helps explain the stability of the pattern in the face of culture contact. Because the event is the crossroad of many meanings, the immediate and simple function does not go very deep. What is needed [for our analysis, therefore,] is the meaning of the overhead valuation plus knowledge of the streams of meaning behind the configuration. We must know this before we have a functional analysis of any power.

^{r1, r2} We must therefore discover the leading motivations for these configurations — the master ideas of cultures. ^{r2} These leading motivations constitute the culture in an anthropological sense. ^{ol} They are the fundamental dynamic concepts involved in the notion of “cultural patterns.” Nothing in behavior, cultural or otherwise, can be understood except as seen in reference to configurations.

^{ck} There has not been much analysis of culture from a configurational point of view so far. We see much more clearly individual psychology and [social] institutions; [yet a configurational analysis would be much more profound.]³¹ But culture is just as dynamic a thing as human behavior. Culture should be defined as a series of human activities in a configuration.

[*Conclusion: Culture as Possible Events*]

^{h1} Culture, then, resolves itself into patterns, or configurations, not departments: the content of culture is not an incremental concept of the Wisslerian type. The [configurational] point of view³² stands over against an “objective” dichotomy of data into cultural entities which are [merely] the result of *a priori* prejudices. For instance, we have good descriptive accounts of the Plains Indian cultures, but we lack a good picture of *our brackets* — [our own cultural framework, from whose vantage-point those descriptions were made.] ^{ol} An idea of relativity in culture [is essential, therefore. What the Wisslerian type of analysis

takes as] "absolute" values are not valid; [their supposed objectivity represents, instead, a projection of our own cultural system's emphasis on sensory facts and things.]³³

^{r1} [In our discussion of language, earlier in this lecture, we saw that for] symbols such as words, [while there may be a] primary meaning implicit in the form, there is also a derived meaning — which makes for glibness of interpretation, on a personal scale.³⁴ ^{lb} There is never a one-to-one relation of symbol and referent, and this is because of the configurative richness [of the system]. In the symbolic pyramid of a culture, very few bricks touch the ground — there is a consecutive and endless passing of the [referential] buck. ^{e85} Indeed, symbols become more meaningful as they become dissociated from the actual experience. ^{r1} [Yet, the supposedly "objective" types of analysis make] constant appeal to the senses. ^{ck} A sensory fact has enormous potency for us — [even though] ^{ck, r1} an object in itself has no meaning, until it is related to something [else] in our experience. ^{r1} For example, [even something so sensory as] odors are judged by their configurational setting. ^{ck, r1} But because of this [potency] something like a sensation fetishism builds up [in our culture], where values are built up in terms of the *thingness* of things. ^{r1} (The above blocked Thurstone's response to the *wala* experiment.)³⁵

^{r1} [This kind of] projection [represents one of the] difficulties of social science;³⁶ thing fetishes are a danger. [We need to] get the definition [of our observations not in terms of things, but] in terms of meaning. And, in thinking configuratively, [culture] must not be [seen as] static — as a structure — but as *possible events*. Cultural understandings are to be seen in terms of possible behavior.

^{ck, r1} Thus it is absurd to enumerate a list of things as defining a culture. ^{r1} Their participation in the culture, not the fetishistic thingness, is what counts. ^{ck} You must put yourself in a behavioristic relation to a thing before it becomes an element of culture. ^{ck, r1} What gives a thing its presentational value — makes it recognizable — is the multiplicity of behavioral situations of which it is a part. ^{r1} This is what defines a thing. ^{r1, ck} If we are to understand it, we need to construct a typical picture of a series of behavioristic patterns, situations into which it (an object) may be placed. For things have no intrinsic values.³⁷

^{r2} Any [putative] culture pattern must, [then,] be tested out as a behavior sequence. No pattern can be considered as peculiar, since each has its own behavior-value. ^{ck} Yet, we can never know *all* the behavioristic implications; and, ^{r1} to apply the behavioristic test requires a vast

knowledge of the cultural background, which we don't have. ^{r1} ^{ck} [The point is that] the structure we call culture, or social understanding, is implicit in behavior itself. ^{ck} [So, in a way] it is not relevant to say we must test out culture in behavior. ^{r1} Instead, we must see culture as a behavior sequence. ^{ck} The test of a real grasp of understanding of culture is ^{ck} ^{r1} its interesting commonplaceness. ^{r1} That is what attests the reality of culture.

Editorial Note

This material was apparently covered in only one lecture in 1934 (Feb. 27), but in three in 1936–7 (Dec. 7, 14, Jan. 4). The 1935–6 notes are undated.

In 1934, linguistic examples are discussed first (as in the Outline), and the Nootka *topati* is only briefly summarized. This order was also followed in 1935–36, but the *topati* example is further developed. (It is not clear how many lectures were spent on this material in that year.) In 1936–7 the Nootka ethnological example is much expanded, while the linguistic discussion is brief and divided (some before, some after the *topati*); and there is a conclusion that must have taken up most of the Jan. 4 lecture, although the note-takers' record of that lecture is thin.

Because most of the linguistic discussion comes from the 1934 notes and is linked, in them, to the preceding introductory section, I have placed this material before the *topati*, as in 1934 and in the Outline.

In this chapter I have also included material from the 1927–28 period (notes by Newman and Setzler), to clarify Sapir's concept of "form" in culture. Also from Chicago, Eggan's notes from other courses Sapir gave clarify some linguistic examples and some details of the Nootka *topati*.

For Sapir's other works on Nootka see volumes IV, XI, and XII of the *Collected Works*.

Notes

1. See Graebner 1911, 1924; Schmidt 1924, 1926–35; and other representatives of the *Kulturkreis* school of ethnology.
2. On Gestalt psychology, Sapir wrote to Benedict in 1925: "I've been reading Koffka's 'Growth of the Mind' (Margaret's copy) and it's like some echo telling me what my

intuition never quite had the courage to say out loud. It's the real book for background for a philosophy of culture, at least your/my philosophy, and I see the most fascinating and alarming possibilities of application of its principles, express and implied, mostly implied, to all behavior, art, music, culture, personality, and everything else. If somebody with an icy grin doesn't come around to temper my low fever, I'll soon be studying geometry over again in order to discover what really happens when a poem takes your breath away or you're at loggerheads with somebody. Nay more, unless a humanist like yourself stops me, I'll be drawing up plans for a generalized Geometry of Experience, in which each theorem will be casually illustrated from ordinary behavior, music, culture, and language. The idea, you perceive, is that all you really need to do to understand — anything, is to draw a figure in space (or time) and its relevance for any kind of interest can be discovered by just noting how it is cut by the plane (= context) of that interest..." (Mead 1959:177).

3. The notes show several different designs at this point, all interpretable as cursive shapes for the letter "t".
4. T1 has: "Responses to cultural phenomena are two — ethnological specimen is viewed by anthropologist and miner in terms of native and own culture respectively..."
5. BG actually has these two sentences in the reverse order. See footnote 6 below.
6. DM has: *wa* plus *la* in one [language], *wal* plus *a* in another.
7. The discussion of words and grammatical categories embarked upon here seems to be meant to illustrate the following point: the relationship between form and function in language is complex because both form and function have several levels of organization. BG gives a good summary: "Language is the supreme example of the fact that in two languages one may find the form (sound) and the function (Meaning) of elements to be the same but the patterns totally different. The total functioning of patterns is different from the functioning of a specific pattern. E.g., all languages express the concept of *giving* but Navajo has no word for *give* although it expresses this through a specific arrangement of patterns. The complete meaning does not lie in the specific function of segmented bits of behavior but in functions of wider import, e. g., paying a visit due to reciprocity and not to immediate pleasure. Simple functions linked with overt behavior are not the point of analysis."
- At the same time, Sapir also emphasizes the primacy, or analytic centrality, of form as compared with meaning or function. See, especially, excerpts from T1 and T2 in the discussion below.
8. T2 begins this section with "Concept of the world by languages — exigencies of adjustment..."
9. At this point Sapir explained what he meant by "nuclear" concepts. T2 has: "Some word concepts are nuclear, such as *plow*; some are derivative, such as *plowman*."
10. See Sapir and Swadesh (1946), "American Indian Grammatical Categories," on the expression of the English sentence "He will give it to you" in six American Indian languages.
11. Here Sapir refers the audience to a work by Zona Gale, "Portage, Wisconsin and Other Essays," 1930.
12. T1 has: "Some people have no plural concept. Plurals in English are used only spasmodically..."
13. T2 has: "Aspect is the geometric form of the event."
14. T2 has: "Language is concerned with meanings, but is concerned with form."
15. Here Sapir referred the students to his 1925 paper, "Sound Patterns in Language."
16. See Sapir 1925p, "Sound Patterns in Language," for an extended development of this example.
17. There is no indication in the CK notes as to what Yana example was given here. However, in an introductory linguistics course at Chicago (E-20), Sapir drew on a Yana

example, among others, to make a similar argument. Another clue suggesting this might be the appropriate Yana example comes from CK's mention, shortly after the "illustration from Yana," that "so you can prove that every adjective is a verb by the structure of the language."

18. The bracketed text represents a summary of the material in E-20 introducing the Yana example.
19. By "complete" here Sapir seems to mean "multi-leveled."
20. See BG (below): "The overhead meaning rather than the simple function of a pattern helps explain the stability of pattern in the face of culture contact."
21. Sapir's major published works on privilege, rank, and the potlatch in Northwest Coast societies are: "A Girls' Puberty Ceremony among the Nootka Indians" (1913b), "The Social Organization of the West Coast Tribes" (1915h); "A Sketch of the Social Organization of the Nass River Indians" (1915g); and "Sayaeh'apis, a Nootka Trader" (1922y). Although these works all date from the first half of his career, the topic continued to interest him in later years. In 1924 he gave a paper on "The Privilege Concept among the Nootka Indians" at the Toronto meeting of the British Association for the Advancement of Science (unfortunately, no manuscript or abstract of this paper has been found). In the late 1920's he gave a course at the University of Chicago on "The North West Coast Tribes" (E92), in which much of the material was organized around the concept of privilege; in 1927 he drew on the same subject matter as an example of cultural pattern, in "The Unconscious Patterning of Behavior in Society"; and the present chapter shows his reworking of the subject in the 1930's. See also "Songs for a Comox Dancing Mask" (1939e) and the Nootka texts (Sapir and Swadesh 1939, 1955).
22. In DM, the sentence "All culture resolves itself..." is in a separate paragraph from the preceding discussion of sociological terms, and seems to be placed in contrast with it. For this reason, and because of Sapir's emphasis on native vocabulary in the *topati* discussion (as elsewhere), I infer that he means native terminology here, as opposed to sociological terminology.
23. DM has: "The content of culture is not an incremental, segregatable collection of patterns..."
24. R1 has "black totem".
25. Sapir's published discussions of privilege and the potlatch, and the discussion in his course on "The North West Coast Tribes" (University of Chicago, E92) are differently organized. The miscellaneous character of this list in the class notes, with the more organized analysis afterwards, seem to be related to the methodological points Sapir is making: that a culture pattern does not easily emerge from mere observation, that a pattern is embedded in a context of other patterns; and that the concept of privilege is a "leading motivation" or "master idea" of Nootka culture, pervading many realms of social life.
A numbered list of *topati* activities is given in QQ and R1. R2 and CK present the same activities in the same order, but discursively. T2 and T1 have much of the same material.
26. "Caves, rituals" comes from R2, but the handwriting is not clear. "Caves" may be just "canoes".
27. It is not clear from the context in CK whether "secret announcement songs," whatever they are, are meant to be examples of *topati* songs or non-*topati* songs.
28. R2 and QQ both present these characteristics as a numbered list. R1 has a list, without numbers. CK presents the same characteristics discursively, as do T1 and T2.
29. This passage is only partly legible in the original.
30. The repetition here is not just an artifact of the editorial process. R1 and, in part, CK indicate that Sapir himself reiterated the point.

- 31 and more "real"? T2 has: "Configurations: – Child's conception of Santa Claus is as real as the British Constitution." This point, in T2, comes after the topati material.
- 32 H1 has "This point of view (Sapir's) stands over against..."
- 33 The bracketed text is based on the subsequent discussion of "projection" and "sensation fetishism"
- 34 R1 describes the *wala* example at this point.
- 35 Louis L. Thurstone (1887–1955), a psychologist at the University of Chicago.
- 36 See chapter 2.
- 37 CK has: "Necessity of constructing a sequence of behavioristic situations into which an object can fit, if we are to understand it. There are no intrinsic values."
R1 has "Construct a typical picture of a series of behavioristic patterns into which things may be placed. Things are not intrinsically valuable."

Chapter 6. The Development of Culture

ol. r1. 99 The Concept of Development in Culture

[Our concepts of cultural dynamics, change, development, and progress are intimately related; but they have not always been distinguished from one another.¹ In order to consider the concept of development in culture, we shall focus on the idea of] ¹¹progress – a perilous subject, to be sure.

¹⁰The idea of cultural progress is a relatively modern point of view. ¹¹Indeed, it is [so much] a characteristic of modern man that even in our time, in spite of all, we must believe in progress. Even the most cynical person has a childlike faith in it. [Earlier ages, such as] classical [antiquity], did not share this faith. On the contrary: for them the perfect time was in the past; ¹⁰and they were more likely [to emphasize] stories of deterioration, as with the [story of the] Garden of Eden, and the like. ¹¹For the [early] Christians it was the same; [later,] in the Middle Ages, there was a very equilibrated world, neither improving nor decaying. All values were fixed; [they were expressed in] an international language [(Latin)]; etc. [In this respect] the world of today is a world of anxiety compared to the medieval world.

¹¹Meanwhile, however, in the seventeenth century, science developed and colonization took place. That means a complete breaking up of the old world. The notion of progress depends on this; it could no more be shaken off. It was founded on that [change]: that on a basis of some new scientific discovery it was possible to measure progress, to prove that a generation was “superior” to the preceding generation, to the “immediate past.” ¹¹, ¹²[Today] the idea of progress is a very strong element in culture – in our culture and, more and more, in other cultures. ¹¹, ¹²The notion of indefinite perfectability is taken for granted, [both] in [its] psychological aspect [(the perfectability of the individual)] and in [our] outlook on culture [itself (cultural evolution)].

¹²But what is the nature of progress? ¹¹It was never proved that this progress, [the “superiority” of the modern scientific world,] was more than mechanical. Men were naturally tempted to think that this power could be applied to anything else. But there is something more.

^{h2, h1}[First of all, we should distinguish] *progress* from [mere] *development*, ^{h2}[even from] *development with a tendency*; [for the concept of progress implies some evaluation of the tendency, i. e. that it represents an improvement. For example, a tendency to reduce the elaboration of some cultural form may be considered a] simplification, or a deterioration; it *may* be progress, [but whether it is or not depends on one's point of view.] [Most importantly, we must recognize that] ^{h1, o1}the various levels of a whole cultural complex [may differ as to how a concept of] progress [applies to them.] For example, the individual's [cultural] stock-in-trade [may develop differently from that of the] culture [complex taken as a whole]. Paradoxically, then, as against growing complications [at one level we may need] the idea of compensatory simplifications [at another.]² ^{sc}And where culture change [is seen as increased cultural] complexity, [we must make a distinction between] analyzing detail and finding a much more rich culture; for this we must know the meanings of objects in culture. The total complexity of the culture of a small hamlet may be higher than the splendid Greek cities.

[It now seems clear that] ^{qq}the earlier anthropologists oversimplified in emphasizing the progressive piling-up of power in the development of culture. But contemporary [anthropologists] go too far in the other direction by denying progress [altogether]. ^{h2I} [(Sapir)] am not wholly with those who would discard the concept. You have to be unreasonably broadminded to feel we are no further along than Neanderthal Man. ^{h1}However, "progress" (at [whatever] level) [is so far only] an intuitive concept. Is there any one idea, or formula, [for what constitutes "progress"]?

^{qq, r2, ck, h2, n}The general concept of progress may be usefully split up into three conceptual strands: ^{qq, r2, r1, ck}(1) technological progress or advance — the material, industrial, or power point of view; (2) "spiritual" progress — the moralistic point of view; and (3) the cyclical development of patterns — the aesthetic point of view.

(1) *Technological progress*.^{t2, t1} Since the dawn of civilization there has been a progressive improvement in the amount of knowledge of the physical environment and an application of that knowledge to our use, ^{t1}the better to use and combat the physical elements. ^{t2}It is a long step from making a big fire with no matches or a fire board to central heating. ^{lf}[Similarly,] the fact that I can take a railway and travel quickly is progress, because I do that with a minimum of effort. (Let us take as given the reality of that kind of value.) ^{ck, qq, r1, r2}In the field of power, then — ^{r1}that is to say, the ability to utilize the environment — ^{ck, qq, r1,}

r2. ^{lf}human beings have lost essentially nothing since early times, ^{ck}but have, instead, conserved and added to [the technological repertoire]. ^{ck}This means progress implicitly. ^{lf}At least, it means mechanical progress. ^{qq}. ^{ck}Although specific techniques have been lost, we have equivalents for every process ever developed, apparently; and we have greater technological power than ever before.

^{r1}A good example of a great [technological] contribution is the tin can — a high point because it involves many technological processes and is of use to a great number [of people]. ^{ck}. ^{h1}. ^{lf}In terms of power, the tin can is more important than Etruscan vases. ^{ck}. ^{r1}For the fact that objects are used in cultural sequences — their place in culture — is what makes them important, not the objects themselves. ^{ck}To set going a [cultural] current which means maximum utilization of the means at our disposal with a minimum of effort — this is progress.

^{ck}This [definition of progress] is objective, not subjective. [Thus technological advances are easily recognized as such, despite other differences in cultural background.] Technological superiority is always copied by peoples with less superior knowledge who come in contact with superior technical knowledge. Either they learn how to handle advanced power devices or they are killed off; ^{h1}[and, besides,] people continually hunt for ideas which give much with little effort. For example, the Eskimo woman readily takes over the sewing machine. [Moreover, on the level of] the individual there is a rapid self-orientation to a new cultural element (such as the tin can). ^{r1}As the knowledge of the use of power becomes common property, ^{r1}. ^{ck}. ^{lf}the accumulation of power cannot be stopped. (^{h1}[Note] Thurnwald's³ idea of the cumulative nature of material culture.)

^{qq}This concept of progress, of course, includes the development of ideas, since the ideas have at least the opportunity or potentiality of giving power. ^{lf}Increase of knowledge, then, is also an instrumental progress. ^{ck}Power and ideas are inextricably associated: ^{qq}[the ideas] enable us to anticipate the solution of possible future problems; ^{r2} ^{r1}they give us the ability to predict; and they pave the way for the ideas of the future. ^{ck}. ^{r1}. ^{r2}Mathematics, for example, [enables us to make] scientific projections [which, in turn, further our technological] power. ^{ck}[Even] pure mathematics [can be seen] as power — as an economical way of thinking — which may be applied to other problems. Mathematics enables one to go through the imaginary to the real; this is power. ^{r1}[The example of mathematics also illustrates how] the accumulated power of

the past is used to build power for the future, ^{ck, r1}because a certain system of mathematics was essential for Einstein's theory of relativity.

⁹⁹It is interesting that non-European groups very readily take up ideas that have technological power even if they are unfavorable about other ideas. ^{ck}Primitive man does not resist technological power [in the least; rather, he] ^{r1}is hospitable to it. ^{ck}[Yet, this ready acceptance suggests a] fatality about the use of power [that is perhaps the] most essential fact in culture.

¹¹[In sum,] the increase of power in certain lines shows progress, [although there remains the question of] whether fast progress is at the expense of certain elements such as esthetics, beauty, or peace. ^{t1, t2}Actually, the occasional retrogression and loss of power only heightens the stature of the actual accumulation of progress in the long run. ^{r2}Despite occasional setbacks, the conservation of man's energy has constantly increased through technological inventions which increase our powers. ^{h1}There has been no loss of vital mechanical processes, but, instead, an adaptation of new methods, as in the sciences. ^{h2}Technological progress [involves a] growth in point of view as well as in technique; and [it results in] an ability to orient oneself in the world with increased efficiency (and success).

(2) *Spiritual progress.* ^{ck, t2, 99}Now, about spiritual progress it is more difficult to be certain, ^{ck, r1}for we are dealing with intangible values. ^{t1, t2}Largely a question of opinions and ideas, this factor is under the influence of subjective impulses more [than technology is].⁴ ^{t1}Culture is ghostly and full of fantasies — but nonetheless forcefully demanding and exacting. Moreover, spiritual progress is also conditioned by the culture itself. ^{ck, r1}Each group has certain preferred modes of behavior, [and considers certain moral] traits desirable; but these [preferences] contradict each other in different cultures. [They change according to] time and place.

^{r1, ck, 99}Do there seem to be certain kinds of behavior, certain desirable traits or values, which people in general do tend to grope towards? ^{r1}Is there, for example, a general feeling of value in the immaterial world? ^{99, ck}It is certainly true that every people persists in thinking that some sorts of actions are better than others, ⁹⁹and they place some special value on "high ideals." ^{r2}[Note, too, that] the "spiritual" (or moral) includes the behavior traits by which people get into contact with other people. These are the behaviors which get a man called a "good fellow." [These generalities are rather vague, but we can still use them as a basis for asking whether] ^{r1, r2}there is any development of consciousness —

^{r2}any means developed for the individual consciousness to survive. Has there been any progress in imagination?

⁹⁴What may be taken as the essential is the process of identification, and this means the question of [society]⁵ itself. ^{ck}[Thus we might rephrase our question about consciousness as:] Is there any tendency in the history of culture for a growth of imagination [in the sense of] substitution of other egos for one's own consciousness? ⁹⁴And has there been any widening of this tendency? ^{r2}. ^{r1}I think we conserve our consciousness by identifying ourselves with the [social] group; ^{r2}for our consciousness survives with the group. ^{ck}Knowing you can't conserve your own consciousness [beyond] death you depute it to others, to the group as a whole. The wish to conserve the reality and permanence of your own consciousness is served by identifying it with a group.

^{ck}Now, the idea of identifying oneself with members of one's own family is easy — ^{r1}[seeing] one's continuation in an identity with one's children. ^{ck}The idea of identifying oneself with people of another country is difficult. [In fact, the psychological processes involved in identifying with one's own group may be what makes it difficult.] ⁹⁴The hostility toward other groups may be interpreted as due to the adjusting of control of impulses to one's [own] group. ^{r1}Thus the consciousness of different groups [entangles them in] the paradox of self-defense. ⁹⁴Wanting to aggrandize one's own group, one belittles others.

[How far does the control of impulses go?] ¹¹If I am a member of an Indian tribe I kill [other Indians, though] only for good reasons. If I am a citizen of the United States I don't kill [other citizens at all]. I have extended the range of my inhibitions. I cannot [even] kill a member of another nation if I am not protected by the ideology of war. Let us call this spiritual progress. It is not disconnected from the first kind of progress, however, because a society is more efficient, if people do not kill one another.

⁹⁴In war, too, even if we do remain for the present as ruthless as ever, there seems to be progress in our attitude toward killing individuals not of our own group. ^{h2}[Unlike our ancestors of a few generations back,] we apologize for war, ¹²[and emphasize] the sanctity of human life, [preferring to] save a life rather than save Rheims Cathedral. ^{ck}[Compared with our forebears] we [have to] try harder to rationalize and justify war, because our feeling of responsibility for the lives of those not identified with us is greater. There were no pacifists in Greek times. [Today,] ⁹⁴not only is there a pacifist movement but there is more real general conflict [(i. e., ambivalence)] in human beings than ever before, for there

is more genuine awareness of others' [self-consciousness] and of the possibility of identification with those remote from us. ^{r1}The idealists who identify consciousness with humanity [as a whole, rather than with a particular individual or group, may be seen, therefore,] as a step in the growth of imagination with reference to consciousness. ^{ck}Our realization of [the existence of] consciousness other than our own is here to stay.

^{h1}, ^{h2}Thus certain values have tended to take on increments from [one historical] period to another. ^{h2}The world of reference is larger than ever before; ^{h1}the growth of imagination [means] including more people in the group [with which one identifies.] (Christianity is the arch example.) The idea of cleanliness, [too, is an example of a] larger individual integration of the progressive tendency to include more people ^{h2}and to have more respect for the rights of others. ⁶ ^{qq}In race prejudice, there seems to be real progress visible in the last generation, ^{ck}with a growth [in awareness] of consciousness of races other than our own. ^{lf}Education can be another example: the range of education is growing. It is [now] taken for granted that the crowd must be educated, because inasmuch as a man is respectable, we must develop his mind. This feeling is of the same nature as the feeling of the sanctity of human life.

^{r2}So spiritual progress, in the sense of a willingness to give up a part of our own consciousness to help somebody else's consciousness, does occur, I think. Our feeling of responsibility for the life of those not identified with our group has increased greatly.

[There is an analogy between this process and the development of the individual, for] ^{r2}the growth of an individual's consciousness from childhood requires giving up a part of our own consciousness in order to give happiness to somebody else's consciousness. ^{ck}The perfect world of a small child is bought at a price of limitation of [its awareness of the] consciousness of the adults making its world. But as you grow up you resign part of your own consciousness so that others may have equal rights. We grow up in society and learn to resign or defer many of our satisfactions. [Similarly,] in the history of culture we seem to catch the growth of an ability to identify our consciousness with others. There is a growth of consciousness in people at large, as there is in the development of a child.

[Our assertion of spiritual progress in culture, and in the growth of imagination, is on a different footing from our discussion of technological progress, however. For, as we have said before,] ^{bg}there is danger in stressing the insistent values of one culture all the time: the emphasis of

value shifts indefinitely from society to society, and from time to time. [In a way,] culture is a legitimised collective lunacy.⁷ ¹¹Spiritual progress is also conditioned by the culture itself. This progress is asserted and felt but it cannot be proved in the sense in which technological progress can.

Moreover, ¹¹, ¹²what our time views as progress⁸ may, viewed in perspective at a later date, appear to be a retrogression: for some things appear as great during their time, but not so later. ¹²This gives rise to the concept of "cycle" in cultural development. [We shall discuss this concept mainly with respect to aesthetic forms. But in spiritual] ⁹⁹respects, too, there seems to be a cycle. ^{h2}, ⁹⁹[As regards] the growth of imaginative awareness, and greater concern for the value of human life and individual expression, for example, we seem closer to the Greeks than to medieval people like the enthusiastic ecclesiastic in the heyday of the power of the Church.

(3) *Cyclical development of patterns.* ^{h1}, ^{h2}The aesthetic view of progress⁹ is not endlessly linear, but cyclical, [incorporating both] progress and decline. ^{1f}Perhaps this [cyclical development] is not progress; but it is often confused with it. If you study anything that has a form you see that in the beginning it is confused and imperfect; then gradually it develops and it arrives at a certain peak; but in complicating the form you become expressive by and by, [and this is not always an aesthetic advantage]. For instance, the Cathedral of Cologne is perhaps more magnificent but less beautiful than others that are more simple. The cycle of polyphonic music is the same: the peak has been reached by Palestrina; Bach is already a decay from the pure polyphonic point of view, [because the polyphony] is complicated with harmony. Haydn, [later,] abandoned the polyphonic patterns [in favor of the harmonic ones].

⁹⁹Thus we find certain periods in music, for example, when the fundamental ideas are questioned, considered, and revised. ¹¹Within those developments we are tempted to say that there is progress. ¹²But there is a confusion here between the aesthetic and the technological. [Cycles of change in the arts involve both.] For example, in a symphony, ¹², ¹¹the elemental musical idea – the aesthetic [element] – is the simple tune, while the harmonization of the tune is technological. ¹¹[a harnessing of] power. ¹², ¹¹In jazz, the achievement is entirely technological, since the melodies and themes are threadbare; ¹²only their working has been emphasized. ^{ck}The technology [of jazz] is exciting but not creative – a mere bag of tricks. Wagner is the great accelerator of technological

advance in modern music: he set instrument makers specific problems, ^{r1}[and added] more horns, for more power. But the excitement of technical advance [in the arts] does not endure. Honesty of impulse will outlast technical advance: aesthetics is more important than technique.

^{r2} ^{ck}In modern instrumental music, [therefore, we have an illustration of how] things go through a cycle. ^{ck}[This form of] music developed out of polyphonic singing – ^{qq}a hint [?] in vocal music suggested a new type of music, the instrumental forms, ^{ck}with instruments being used instead of the human voice. ^{r2}[Once] a pattern of instrumental music is established, this is developed, ^{ck}and so there comes later a preoccupation with technique – more and more comes in the playing with technique. ^{ck} ^{r2}The cyclical climax of modern music is reached with Beethoven. ^{ck}This plateau is maintained for a time, ^{qq} ^{ck}but then people come in who [merely] carry out stunts. ^{ck}([The case of] Wagner, [we might say.] is stunts plus genius.) ^{ck} ^{r2}Then things degenerate and drag on until, out of the confusion, a new idea comes in and a new cycle arises. ^{h2}We have passed the heyday of [the classical cycle in] music; now we are feeling for a new start.

^{qq}[To recapitulate: when] form and technique are well fitted, the peak of development is soon reached. Then the epigones, trying to give a more personal meaning [to the forms], introduce tricks – modifications of technology rather than [changes of] idea – and somewhere along the way the cycle may begin again.

^{ck} ^{qq}Within a given movement, or cycle, various samples of behavior may reasonably be compared; [and comparison is necessary, of course, for any assessment of progress. Across cycles this cannot be done.] ^{ck} ^{r1}It is impossible to compare a Chinese musical composition with our Beethoven symphonies because they come from different cultural patterns, and we don't know [the Chinese music's] cycle, its cultural pattern.¹⁰ ^{r1}A particular pattern, such as the classic musical tradition, [represents] the actualization¹¹ of an idea in a [particular] group. ^{ck}Technological progress may be hitched to a cycle, [but across cultures we cannot reasonably assess how this has been done.]

^{qq}The development of the English sonnet may also be used as an example [of cyclical development]. ^{ck}The first sonnets were crude copies of an Italian form; then came Shakespeare's sonnets. ^{qq} ^{ck}By now the sonnet has actualized itself, and it might be felt today that it has said all it has to say. ^{ck}Now it is more or less of a form, a stunt – it is difficult to find an authentic poet today who is doing his best work in the sonnet. [So] this is no longer the day of the authentic sonnet, though

we have great technological expertness in the sonnet [form]. Although there is always a thrill in technical achievement, this is sometimes confused with aesthetic judgement.

^{h2}Practically all aesthetic patterns run through such a gamut: a rise from humble beginnings, an authoritative pinnacle, a prestige hangover – then down! ^{ck}[The progress of an aesthetic cycle, then, means that] there is aesthetic development within an aesthetic idea. The work of art is an answer to a problem, and at certain stages that problem can be better solved.

^{ck}. ^{ll}Take, for example, the cyclical development of English drama: ⁹⁹there are spurts of creativity, sometimes without any obvious continuity between them, in the Elizabethan, Restoration, late eighteenth century, and contemporary realistic [periods]. ⁹⁹At the beginning, there were two relatively feeble strands: the miracle plays and the [classic]¹² tradition. In a very short time the two strands are fused, quite unpretentiously. ^{r1}From this simple beginning, Elizabethan drama develops complexity. ⁹⁹But after the rich productions of Marlowe, Shakespeare, etc., the development seems to wear itself out. ^{ck}The later dramatists after Shakespeare had a rich heritage, but they became preoccupied with technique, and we have a good deal of artificiality. Posterity is never much interested in purely technical problems. ¹²[In our eyes] the Elizabethan drama is still great; the writers after that were probably considered still greater during their own time, but they seem tawdry to us.

^{ck}Thus the set of problems posed in a particular artform starts with fumbling, then moves forward to its peak with a few great exponents [of the form]. ⁹⁹May this be because the set of problems arising out of a new form get an answer and reach a climax? ⁹⁹. ^{ck}Then technical problems begin to complicate [the idea], a slow decline sets in, and the movement [falls] down. [But despite the cyclical nature of the development.] ⁹⁹there is a real progress in this sort of cycle, ⁹⁹ ¹²and of a sort which is to be found in many cultural phenomena – perhaps in the development of most cultural patterns. ^{ck}We can talk of [all sorts of] problems in a cyclical sense. Ethnologists do concern themselves [with these matters] when they talk of pottery styles, types of house decoration, etc. (If we had sufficient evidence we could trace cycles in primitive art – Northwest Coast art, for example: Haida and Tsimshian [art forms] are “classic,” while Bella Coola [forms] are too baroque, fussy, and [formally] degenerate.) [Our examples need not be drawn only from the arts.] ^{ll}The history of any religious movement, for example, represents a cycle.

^{qq} ^{ck} ^{r2}Even language forms have something like a cyclical development. ^{ck} ^{qq}Although the language's development is continuous, it is possible to ^{ck}define a certain set of linguistic forms — ^{qq}or point to a certain stage of development of a form — ^{ck} ^{qq}as classical. ^{qq}The classical stage would have a perfectly consistent and tight-wrought use of forms. ^{ck}Now, people participating in an aesthetic cycle are not conscious of it; [so it may come as a bit of a surprise when I say that we are not in that kind of stage in modern English.] English today is in a kind of trough. It has not perfected its own possibilities, nor does it still do excellently what it did in the period of Gothic. Even Anglo-Saxon was a bit "weaker" than Gothic. For example, the weakness of gender in English today is not classical. If you call a ship "she" and the sun "he," then there should [(in a classical stage)] be a feeling of she-ness or he-ness about any noun; [but, as we know, in modern English there is not]. As another example, the suffix *-s* is used for three categories: [it marks] the possessive, the plural, and the third person singular in verbs; but in no case is it completely and consistently carried out. All are [only] weakly expressed. ^{ck} ^{qq}For the verb endings, ^{qq}the classical stage would have either "I go, you go, he go," or [else something like] "I gon, you gom, he goes," etc. There is some feeling in the verb [?] as [the forms] merge toward obliterating the distinction between singular and plural altogether. But ^{qq} ^{ck}[English's] inconsistency with respect to case endings is also non-classical, and again there seems to be a tendency to cut these out altogether.¹³ ^{ck}[A "classical" stage would] either carry these distinctions out consistently or do away with them.

^{qq}[To the extent that English seems to show a tendency toward obliterating these kinds of affixes,] a movement toward a thoroughly analytic language may be in progress. ^{ck}Chinese has [already] gone through this cycle. ^{qq}A Scandinavian scholar found in the Confucian writings a case distinction in pronouns which was rather weak, a sort of an echo of a formerly more synthetic language; but the Chinese has long ago become entirely analytic, depending entirely upon [separate words and word] order [to express grammatical relations,] instead of [word-]internal changes. ^{ck}Thus Chinese has anticipated us by discarding case and using a rule of order. ^{qq}The Chinese, [on the one hand, as an analytic language,] and the Sanskrit (or Greek and Latin), [on the other, as a synthetic language,] are both, then, classical even though of quite different form; ^{qq} ^{ck}whereas the English is not a classic kind of language, because it is not thoroughly integrated.

^{ck}[Incidentally,] there is no relation between [this concept of "classical" form in a] language and the literature which is expressed in it.

Tibetan, for example, is a fine language from a linguistic point of view, but its literature is drivel.¹⁴ ^{qq}[To say that the English language is not thoroughly integrated is to speak about something] quite different from the value of what is written with English.

^{ck}This idea of cyclical [development] also applies in everyday life. ¹¹[Not only can we trace] the rise and fall of [patterns in] drama, Gothic architecture, language forms, or Mohammedanism, but ^{qq. ck. 12}in the history of the railroad train or the automobile one may be able to trace a similar cycle of development. ^{h1. h2}[Perhaps even in] democratic government [we can see] a drifting away [from an original idea]; or in science, ^{nc}where there has been a scrapping of traditional bundles [of knowledge, as with the decline of] alchemy and astrology. Certain questions have died out. ([But in science, perhaps] ^{h1}this is only *change*, [not decline; for] ^{nc}progress is not possible without destruction.)

¹¹The cycle is hard to define starkly, or to isolate. ^{12. 11}During its height, in the classic period, the cycle is so vital to the culture that it is unquestioned and taken for granted. ^{ck}There is a relation between form and need, such that at some point there is a complete equilibrium between them. But this balance does not remain. ¹¹The questioning occurs and then comes a long period of weakening. ¹²As the cycle becomes less and less pure, it may be caught up with another meaning – but then it is really a new pattern.

^{ck}There has been no evaluation of primitive culture on the basis of the cyclical idea. There are many dangers in this point of view, but [such evaluation] should be done if we are to understand primitive cultures. ^{nc}[For without some notion that] primitive culture [undergoes] climax and decay in its own terms, [we cannot usefully incorporate it in any conception of progress.] The primitive is not [just] a barbarian and a preliminary to “civilization.” It is impossible to compare cultural details of one group with those of another unless there is a definite historical continuity. (In America, Walt Whitman [strikes a] primitive note; taken up by sophisticates in Europe and re-phrased in French, he becomes a decadent.)

[In sum:] ¹¹[we have distinguished] three kinds of progress, which get mixed up one with the other. [People of different times and places have not always accepted all three kinds.] but [(one might suspect)] each type of man shall more or less believe in one of the three kinds of progress. As for mechanical progress, man has never lost anything in this realm. ¹¹there has been an increase of power. ^{ck}Although the flow of consciousness has not [grown] in a steady line like power – there is an ebb and flow – on the whole there has been progress there too, ¹¹in the gradual

development of a consciousness transcending the self, or the ego. [As for the third kind:]^{ck} ^{r1}for any complex pattern of expression you seem to have cycles of development.

^{l2}[Perhaps the growth of cycles, with the possibility of a new pattern emerging out of an earlier one.] is the one vital idea worth saving out of the idea of progress. ^{h1}[It might be called an] “epigonal” view of progress. ^{l2}[As the pattern moves from a] primitive [stage] to a classical and then an epigonal one, there may be a rejuvenation so that the pattern doesn’t die out. ^{h1}The “epigonal period” [involves] a realization of the potency of expressive forms – [a certain] progress in knowledge of psychic process, [and a] ^{h2}greater concern for the value of human life and individual expression.

[Coda: Symbols of Progress]

^{ck}[Just as any idea has its symbolic expression, so it is with the idea of progress in our culture:] we have [our] preferred symbols of progress. [One of the most important realms for the expression of those symbols is education. But there can be a lag between what the culture has come to value most – what it sees as its signs of “improvement” over an earlier age – and what is enshrined in education, as the sign of an improved person.] For example, the prestige of knowing many languages has been carried over from the old Renaissance tradition. But, particularly in America, we no longer really believe in this. You cannot plan [school] curricula unless you know what symbols are authoritative, and have the greatest value. The symbols [of progress] are changing today: if the change isn’t too fast, education may catch up.

^{ck}[The relation of educational symbols to cultural ideas of progress can itself be seen as a cyclical pattern.] The English education of *Tom Brown’s Schooldays* [illustrates] the classical part of a cycle, because those symbols were more authoritative in those days. Today no one is in a position to say what is a rational curriculum. We don’t know what we have transcended, and what values are going to emerge as significant.

Editorial Note

This material was covered in two lectures in 1937 (Jan. 11 and Jan. 18), but apparently in only one in 1934 (March 6). It is not clear how much time was devoted to it in 1936. The principal change in 1937

seems to have been an expansion of the discussion of cyclical development and aesthetic patterns.

I have also drawn upon Sapir's lecture on "Progress" to the Rockefeller Seminar, March 1933, notes taken by L. Ferrero. These notes show a lecture closely parallel to the 1934 version, which seems also to have been entitled "Progress" rather than "The Concept of Development in Culture."

For other discussions of the dynamics of cultural and linguistic change see Sapir 1916 ("Time Perspective") and 1921 (*Language*). The present discussion is somewhat different from these earlier works, however.

Notes

1. The bracketed text derives in part from the fact that Sapir seems to have shifted among several titles for this section. In the OUTLINE he has "The Concept of Development in Culture," while Newman (1927) has "Progress," and Setzler (1928) has "Culture Change" and then "Progress in Culture." Ferrero and H2 (1933) have "Progress," while H1 has "Development vs. Progress;" T1 (1936) has "Development of Culture", R1 and QQ (1937) return to the OUTLINE's title, but R2 (1937) has "Progress." The relevant sections in T2 and CK are untitled. I add "dynamics" to link the material with the preceding chapter.
2. H1 has: "Development vs. Progress./ The individual stock in trade – cultural (HRE) as an example) progress at various levels. An intuitive concept (is there any one idea, formula?) Paradox."
H2 has: "development with tendency"/; development vs. progress/ simplification vs. deterioration; may be progress"
See also OL, SE (below), and discussion of cultural accumulation in ch. 3
3. Richard Thurnwald (1869–1954), German ethnologist/functionalist.
4. T1 has: "As with technological progress, spiritual progress is a factor, which, however, is under the influence of subjective impulses even more." T2 has: "Now about spiritual progress – so what! There is no telling about this, it is a question of values. It is largely a question of opinions and ideas."
5. QQ has only an S-shaped squiggle here. The context concerns the individual's identification with a social group.
6. H1 adds: "Luxury of thought."
7. BG adds: "The hereafter is the locus of unfulfilled obligations, hence its excuse for being." It is not clear where this whole passage belongs, however.
8. T1 has "technological progress" here, while T2 apparently refers the same statement to spiritual progress.
9. H1 has "the surer, aesthetic view of progress."
10. See LB notes on "First of Sapir's two lectures to the Medical Society," Feb. 18, 1935: "'Great' music implied absolute standards, illusion Chinese faces with Beethoven's Ninth; No necessity of nature here; 'cosmos of unreal things'"
11. R1 has "actuality".
12. There is an illegible word here.
13. See the chapter on "Drift" in Sapir's (1921) *Language*.
14. Editorial apologies are hereby conveyed to Tibetans. Whether Sapir would have published a statement like this I do not know.

Part II: The Individual's Place in Culture

Chapter 7. Personality

^{h2} The Relation of the Individual to Culture¹

¹¹ [Although anthropologists sometimes entertain notions] to the contrary,² anthropology is very much dependent on the individual, even necessitating rapport or good psychological relationships between two individuals. [This applies, in the first instance, to the anthropologist's relationships with individual informants, from whom so much of his information derives.] However important it may be, the fallacy [in anthropological method] is that the results [of those relationships with individuals] are considered — and definitely stated to be — “culture” as a whole. ¹² [That is,] a person in the field presents the culture as a whole without realizing that the information depends upon the informant. [What is true for the anthropologist, moreover, is all the more compelling for the individual participating in society:] the individual has to conform and fit together the conflicting [versions] of culture [he encounters. Perhaps we see such a process most clearly when it concerns] a foreigner in this country [learning to conform,] or a southerner moving north. In the psychological sense, culture is not the thing that is given us. ¹¹ The “culture” of a group as a whole is not a true reality. What is given — ¹² what we do start with — ^{11, 12} is the individual and his behavior.

^{bg} Analytically, the individual is the bearer of culture. Therefore, an anthropologist's generalizations about the culture of a group are extremely theoretical. They depend upon his [sense of] sureness and [his] ability to extract significant uniformities from individuals' (separate) cultures³ and to generalize these into a pattern. Yet, it may turn out that his “culture,” so extracted, is so formalized that it exists only as [his own] mental construct and has no objective reality at all. [In that case,] for example, no individual [from the group whose culture it purported to be] would recognize it as his own culture — in many respects

it would seem foreign to him. [But, if that were so, would there not be something questionable about the anthropologist's report? As we said before, pattern must be understood in terms of the ultimate analysis intuitively felt by any normal member of a given community.]⁴ ^{bg} Remember, then, that the sole significance of a cultural pattern depends upon [its meaningfulness to the bearer:] the emotional reaction to it. This gives a test of the reality of cultural elements to individuals in the group.

[These considerations, however, while deriving from our concern with the supposedly impersonal forms of culture, also come within the framework of the individual's psychic constitution, or personality.]⁵ ^{t2} [As members of society,] we accept the forms of our culture; it is [imposed] upon us, and then we consider it right. ^{t1} Even such a thing as the English plural, [a cultural form] thought to be individually passive, is — [by virtue of being a cultural form —] what the individual wants, what makes him feel easy, what has relevance for his specific personality. ^{t2, t1} We identify ourselves with our cultural background, ^{t1} and this identification is quite as easy, and quite as possessed of relevance for the individual, as an association with any natural phenomena (associations which are often, along with other things, thought to hold validity for [the individual's] personality). ^{t2} There is really no part of culture which does not have some bearing on our personality. [That bearing need not be anything we are consciously aware of, for] we are often most biased when we are consciously most honest.⁶

[Does this mean that the anthropologist's task simply resolves into that of the psychologist?] ^{bg} If the culture of a group is thus in a way impossible to formulate, what becomes of the anthropologist's calling, and how realistic can his approach be? [In falling back upon the individual, as the "objective" given, we need not reject the concept of culture. On the contrary: we provide our formulations with better evidence.] ^{1938e} Any statement, no matter how general, which can be made about culture needs the supporting testimony of a tangible person or persons, to whom such a statement is of real value in his system of interrelationships with other human beings. [But] if this is so, we shall, at last analysis, have to admit that any individual of a group has cultural definitions which do not apply to all the members of his group, which even, in specific instances, apply to him alone. Instead, therefore, of arguing from a supposed objectivity of culture to the problem of individual variation, we shall, for certain kinds of analysis, have to proceed in the opposite direction. We shall have to operate as though we knew nothing

about culture but were interested in analyzing as well as we could what a given number of human beings accustomed to live with each other actually think and do in their day to day relationships. We shall then find that we are driven, willy-nilly, to the recognition of certain permanencies, in a relative sense, in these interrelationships, permanencies which can reasonably be counted on to perdure but which must also be recognized to be eternally subject to serious modification of form and meaning with the lapse of time and with those changes of personnel which are unavoidable in the history of any group of human beings.

^{1932a} [Thus] it is not the concept of culture which is subtly misleading but the metaphysical locus to which culture is generally assigned. ^{1932a} The true psychological locus of a culture is *the individual or a specifically enumerated list of individuals*. [Notice, however, that we do not define] ^{ck} the individual [in the same way as would] the biologist. The biologist has no trouble in defining an individual, [but his definition is not ours.] ^{1932a} "Individual," here, means not simply a biologically defined organism maintaining itself through physical impacts and symbolic substitutes of such impacts, but that total world of form, meaning, and implication of symbolic behavior which a given individual partly knows and directs, partly intuits and yields to, partly is ignorant of and is swayed by.

^{ck} [As anthropologists, then, we may – without too great a sense of contradictoriness –] believe in a world of discrete individuals but also in a oneness and continuity of culture. [The soundness of this belief rests on] our having a different view [of the individual] from [that of] the biologist. ^{1932a} We have learned that the individual in isolation from society is a psychological fiction. [For the same reasons, culture does not result from the juxtaposition of organisms.] ^{ck} We have discrete individuals, but – in the world of thought – could your individual plus another individual enable you to create American culture? [The answer must be an emphatic] *no*. You cannot dispense with any one individual, it is the total sum of individuals that makes up American culture. The culture historian must realize that every individual [who participates] in a culture⁷ is necessary to its history.

[In relation to this totality we call culture,] ^{12. 11} individuality consists [not in the biological definition of organism but] in the recognition of the *differences in the consciousnesses* of the individuals [concerned] – ¹¹ [the recognition of] discrete personalities. [To the extent that we conceive of culture as a world of thought, we may believe in its oneness while also recognizing this differentiation.] ¹¹ [In fact,] we cannot get

away from the individuality [inherent in] the concept of consciousness, or personality, ^{ck, r1} since consciousness is the only approach we have to reality. ^{ck} Only by an act of faith can we transcend our own consciousness. ^{ck, r2, r1} The continuity of the individual stream of consciousness, which memory links together, causes the recognition of personality. ^{ck} [That is to say,] this connective memory [— rather than the boundary of the organism —] is our proof of individuality, ^{r1} our indication of the reality of the individual personality. ^{ck} [Memory is what gives it continuity, for] the biological organism is [always] changing.

[The Concept of Personality]

[Now, if our anthropological method obliges us to consider the individual and his personality, just what should we mean by “personality”?] ^{r1} Personality is a certain nuclear entity which is concerned [in all our activities] and is objective in itself; [this is our starting point]. The exact definition is difficult, but it is significant that there is a problem posed. ^{r2} Although personality is hard to define, we act upon the concept just as a child works upon its concept of chairs and tables being a set as opposed to falling snow. He may not know the words for these things, [but he acts upon them as a set just the same]. [Let us attempt to be more articulate than this child, however, and consider how the term has been used in the past.]

^{bg, lb, h2} [The term] “personality”⁸ derives from the Greek *persona*, a mask: ^{lb} a dramatic figure, transcending the petty, and given prestige — a person significant insofar as he is not himself. ^{bg, lb} [In the ancient world] personality was artifice, the mask that society used to judge [a person by,] and so it was equivalent to status. ^{md} [This definition,] equating a person’s personality to his status, has a great tradition in literary [works, even if it has become uncongenial to us today]. ^{lb, md} [Thus we may feel] chilled by Homer’s lack of interest in Ulysses’s personality [in the psychological sense,] and by Shakespeare’s Toryism; ^{bg} for even in Shakespeare personality is equivalent to status. ^{lb} Shakespeare’s clowns, being lowly, are not psychologized. [Psychological depth is reserved for the higher statuses, as we see,] ^{md} for example, in *Macbeth*.

^{h2} It was Rousseau who started the vogue of the individual, with his *Confessions*, ^{bg} [a work] startlingly new in that he threw aside the mask and showed the personality beneath the status or role. ^{lb} [With a sort of] “boasting about weaknesses,” Rousseau took the back-stairs interest

in gossip into the arena of literature, [where it was subsequently taken up by other writers –] Jane Austen, [for instance]. [Still more recent is the view of] personality as physiology, [a quite] modern [notion, as is the idea that] ^{h1} personality may be equivalent regardless of status. This is the coming view, [and it is virtually the opposite of what personality was to the Greeks].

^{h1} [As this brief excursion into the history of the term indicates,] “personality” is an artificial concept having reality [only as we may choose to use it. Thus] ^{1934c} the term personality is too variable in usage to be serviceable in scientific discussion unless its meaning is very carefully defined for a given context. ^{md} There are several different ways of defining personality:

(1) ^{r2, ck, r1} The first definition of personality is a psychological one: the reification of the feeling of personal identity through continuous consciousness. ^{ck} [This definition takes an] introspective [approach, for] ^{r1} introspection presupposes the world of the individual consciousness. ^{t2} [It is a world where] there is a continuity of personality, it stays put – [and this is what gives it reality:] ^{t1} [its] reality is in fact the mere phenomenon of continuity [of moments of consciousness which, if they have] no persistence, have little or no reality. ⁹ ^{lb} The continuity of consciousness is, in an important [sense], all that I [really] *know*. That there is a buzzing external world is [a recognition] forced on me by society, [but it is not part of myself in the same way.] ^{t10} ^{t2} The personality is made up of the experiences it has had, and those things which it has not experienced cannot be said to exist in the personality. ^{bg} Personality defined in this way [is seen] in terms of the events that impinge upon the individual.

(2) ^{md, 1934c} As a purely physiological concept, ^{md} the individual [may be considered] as a mechanism, ^{1934c} and personality may be considered as the individual human organism with emphasis on those aspects of behavior which differentiate it from other organisms. ^{t2, t1, ck} The biological definition of personality is a conception of organism; ^{ck} and the biologist is comfortable with this. He doesn't need [a notion of] consciousness – [or so he supposes.] But if it weren't for our consciousness, how could we recognize the identity of organisms? You get at the concept of organism through consciousness; ^{t1, t2} could the concept of organism, [then, be merely] a projection of our own feeling of identity which surrounds our consciousness? ^{t2} This biological definition is not very helpful, therefore. We don't really know ourselves as individuals in the biological sense, but only as symbols of what we see around us.

[(However, we may wish to inquire whether there are physiological or genetic influences on personality as defined in other ways.)]

(3) ^{bg} The sociological viewpoint today judges personality by the [social] role an individual plays. [In other words,] personality is defined in terms of a sociological abstraction and emphasis upon formal roles.¹¹
^{lb} ^{bg} [Other aspects of] personality, [such as the more psychological notion of] nuclear personality, are [treated as] an illusion which disappears when you abstract one's income, status, etc., [and examine the general characteristics of people filling these categories. By this means, for example, you can trace] the professional character of a businessman, and that of a bishop. ^{bg} Napoleon in the role of Emperor is his personality; individual X in the role of archbishop is his personality. But Napoleon as a reader of *The Sorrows of Werther*, weeping over what he read, was a personality in the psychiatric sense.

^{r2, r1, ck} The sociological viewpoint defines personality as a series of roles, or [modes of] participation in society, which a person¹² carves out for himself, or takes part in. A personality [in this sense], therefore, is the sum total of the individual's social participations; ^{md} the individual [is seen] as the collectivity of behavior patterns. That is, all things called individuals are merely collocations of certain habits — a series of roles in a complex arrangement. ^{md} [As I have already indicated,] personality was first judged from the sociological point of view. Every man functioned in the part laid out for him by society. ^{md, lb} Thus Achilles and Ulysses were always heroes, and a slave was always a slave. ^{lb} Even if their acts were objectively similar they were treated differently — as arrogance or as impudence, as [an act of war] or of private murder ^{md} (note that this is true of the Bible and so through *Tom Jones* and the novel up to James Joyce). ^{md, lb} The Greeks were then primarily sociologists, [in their definition of personality.]

[But this definition is] ^{ck} fallacious, [or at least] ^{r1} not completely true, because it ^{ck, r2, r1} neglects the feeling of consciousness — the original intuitive sense of identity — which is implied in the psychological definition. It neglects our fantasies, for instance, ^{r2} and instead considers only our train of thoughts about the symbolization of the individual to the community. ^{r2, ck, r1} It is very easy to distinguish between the individual and his sociological role. ^{lb} [It is also necessary to do so. Otherwise you] confound the status of a person with himself.

^{lb} [Moreover, these sociological abstractions] are not too valuable in tracing the genesis of personality. ^{bg, lb} [For that we will need] a psychiatric viewpoint, where the basic principle is the priority of nuclear con-

stellations in an infantile configuration. ^{bg} It is impossible to avoid the sociological viewpoint altogether, since it is economical at times to make status judgements and it is the very purpose of society to keep the basis of personality hidden. No one can afford to be too honest with himself. ^{bg, lb} But the sociological viewpoint is incremental: personality is made up of [roles] $a + b + c + d$, where d is added last and is unaffected by what went before. The psychiatric viewpoint, [on the other hand,] is configurative, since the basic pattern (a) affects the total resulting set-up.

(4) ^{r2, r1, ck} Finally, there is the psychiatric definition of personality. This is the conception of nuclear personality, based on the sense of ourselves that we acquire in childhood. ^{r2} It has no connection with [the preceding definition] of personality. ^{l3 ck} [Indeed, to distinguish these two definitions allows us to see the] independence of the individual in society from society's judgement of the individual. ^{bg} Consider aggression, for example, in [terms of this] contrast between the sociological and psychiatric viewpoints. Sociologically, aggression is defined in terms of behavior. Psychiatrically, however, aggression must be defined in personal symbolisms, hidden meanings, compensations, projections, and the like — so that one's actual behavior may show no signs at all of sociological aggression.

^{md, h1} [The psychiatric] point of view [treats] personality as equivalent regardless of status. ^{l4 md} It levels down all personality — ^{h1} that is, it makes the data comparable — at ^{md, h1} the same general level of childhood, ^{h1} the infantile stage, ^{md, h1} when the patterns are just beginning to be fixed. Any particular set[-up] of personality at the starting point has a relative priority and will persist through the other [(later)] configurations. ^{l5 md} Thus the final actualization may be very different from the first innate bias but the original ground plan may yet always be discerned. This is the kind of personality judgement that the psychiatrist uses. It [conceives of] personality as an integrative mechanism. ^{l6} Overtly similar acts may be entirely different [in significance, therefore,] when fitted into the ground plan of personality. That is, [an act of] theft, for example, may be heroism or criminality. ^{l7}

^{md, bg} To know personality in this wise, a theory of personality today must really take into consideration two kinds of attitudes toward the individual: ^{bg} that which sees him as a mere culture carrier, or as ^{md h1} the sociologically defined "man brought to trial" ^{l8} or "citizen of the state"; ^{bg} and that which sees him as an integrated entity in himself. ^{h1} a real persona. ^{md} [starting from] the genetically defined personality

plus the accretions and changes wrought by the experience of years. ^{lb} [The first attitude sees] personality acts as the acts of a man of such and such a social status, while the second – the psychiatric approach – is rather a filling in of a personality on the basis of discovered nuclear characteristics. ^{md} This is a Gestalt attack, a mode of observation that is aesthetic rather than teleological. [To put it another way, it is] an aesthetic interpretation of personality. ^{h1} My point of view, [then, is intended to combine] an aesthetic [mode of observation] with a Gestalt psychology of configuration and with the dynamism of the psychoanalyst.

^{ck} The psychiatric point of view flows from within the intuitive consciousness – ^{r2, r1} from the fact that we have a continuous consciousness which has not been disassociated since our childhood, [but instead] has been building up [from that nucleus]. ^{r2, r1, ck} I believe, therefore, in a concept of *invariance* of personality. ^{r2} Thus, it is possible for us to translate ourselves to our earlier personality without changing ourselves. ^{r1} [Our present experiences can be seen as the] equivalents of experiences [of the past, for we are continually] reliving old experiences [and feeling the] same feelings. ^{ck} It is the task of psychoanalysis to interlace present experiences with past ones. ^{ck, r1} [The idea of] invariance, [therefore, means that] one is never other than oneself.

^{r2} Of course, the ability [for and propensity] towards introspection is different in different individuals, [and this affects what the psychiatrist actually does. In general, however, what the psychiatrist attempts to reveal is the process of] ^{r1} emotional transfer – [the process by which] ^{r1, r2} our [present] experiences and contacts with people around us are to a large extent rephrasings or recallings of old attitudes, [deriving from] our infantile experience. [If some of these rephrasings seem to hinge on quite trivial aspects of an experience, it must be remembered that] ^{r1} the trivial may be just as [telling] a part of one's personality as the [obviously] important.¹⁹

^{md, r2, r1, h1} What then are the determinants of personality – the things which fix this [sense of] primordial self? ^{h1} This is the weakest part of our approach, [because the determinants commonly suggested lie in realms poorly understood.] ^{r1, r2, bg, lb} First are implications of biological structure – genetically-determined heredity – of nervous characteristics, for example. ^{md} Our ignorance of physiology, etc. [is such that] we don't know [much about this possibility.] ^{r2, r1, bg, lb} Second are prenatal conditionings, experiences, experiences in the womb [that might also serve as personality] determinations. ^{lb} We don't know enough about

[these conditionings] either. ^{r2, r1, bg} Third are early childhood experiences (up to the age of two or three), post-natal modifications [of the prenatally-established self] – experiences of profound anxieties, for example – ^{bg, lb} [to the extent that these represent] pre-cultural conditionings and determinations. ^{bg} These three factors, [it is generally assumed,] influence the basic personality [which, once] set-up, ^{lb} [establishes a] permanent psychiatric ground plan for the individual at an early age.

^{bg, lb} The importance of the infantile configuration is shown in phenomena of “regression” to an earlier, easier plateau. ^{bg, lb} As an analogy with a personality in the time-dimension, consider a musical theme with variations where the theme is the basic configuration and the variations are more and more complex constructs using the fundamental pattern. ^{bg} This is an aesthetically constructive concept, whereas the personality building up is continuously adjustive. ^{lb} Yet, the form persists through all variations; ^{bg} regression [just] means withdrawal to an earlier theme, to an earlier or simpler level of adjustment. In the persistence of childhood memories and infantile emotional tensions, discovered in regression, we see the persistence of the fundamental personality patterns throughout life. ^{ck} If you wish your adjustments to people to be real, you must get back to your primordial self.

[In later life there will always be] ^{ck, r2} a tendency to lapse into the nuclear personality unless we can hitch on to a symbol [provided by] society. ^{r2} For example, acting as a student is a symbolization by which we come out of our nuclear personality. We keep on with certain studies, etc., because of our symbolic feeling of oneness with society and gratitude to it, even though we have lost interest in their [subject matter]. ^{ck} The social process keeps us going – you need a social tradition to make you go on. ^{l2} Thus personalities are fitted into places [in society] in which they have no [intrinsic] interest. Their culture, and the people around them, throw them into a concept which they did not entertain about themselves. [The social process counters regression, then, for the very reason that social roles and their associated behavior are not based directly on the individual’s “personality” in the psychiatric sense.]²⁰

[How might this disjunction come about? Why is it that, in our social encounters, we do not simply pursue an undifferentiated impulse to know one another’s personalities as fully as possible? The answer, presumably, is that]^{21 2ms} A is not really interested in what B is, but what he can bear as *symbol*. We know each other only as roles. ^{l2} We take parts of personality from other people, but we can never entirely know

another's personality. ^{bg} It is the very purpose of society to keep the basis of personality hidden, and no one can afford [to uncover everything.] ¹² There is something vague which cannot be delved into. ^{2ms} Indeed, we don't need each other a hundred percent; what we need is an effective [but] partial participation. Many intelligent and worthy persons are uncomfortable in being admired, because people need to find in you those qualities they admire, [and you know that] sooner or later you are going to ruin their picture. Every human relationship is a temporary implicit contract, [not a total immersion].

¹² To completely know another would mean sacrifice [of oneself; and] ^{2ms} we don't want to be swallowed by another's personality. Even a child wants to feel a stranger to its mother — complete identification is resisted. Therefore we can never know or afford to know the whole truth about personality. [Instead, the] key persons [in our lives, much of the time, are] doing duty for what almost anyone else could give. [And just as we cannot afford to concern ourselves too deeply with another's personality, the same is true for our own.] Being concerned with oneself is a sign of insecurity and defiance. [Although we may often phrase that concern in terms of claims to our own uniqueness — for it is more acceptable to maintain that] “I am one of a million in this matter” [than that “I am interested in my own personality” — most of] us get sick and tired of the impulse to know ourselves. (But Proust did not.)

[There is a certain tension, then, in our feelings about personality, a] ^{1934a} duality of interest in the facts of behavior [as to whether we see them in terms of personality or not.] ^{2ms} In anthropology, [similarly,] there are two viewpoints: the psychological — “I wish to hold on to my personality;” and the sociological — “I do not wish to hold onto my personality.”

[The Uses of Psychiatric Theories in Anthropology]

[The approach to personality we will need in anthropology must resemble the psychiatrist's in its emphasis on configuration and genesis (i. e., personality development), but its need to incorporate the personality's social setting will distinguish it from any psychiatric theory presently established.] ²² ^{bg} Psychoanalysis is valuable for its way of thinking, not for its present formulas. ^{md} Let us understand first of all, [therefore,]

that we take [the ideas of] Freud, Jung, etc. [only] as working principles subject to modification by further knowledge.

^{1934c, r1} The most elaborate and far reaching hypotheses on the development of personality which have yet been proposed are those of Freud and his school. The Freudian psychoanalysts analyze the personality topographically into a primary id, the sum of inherited impulses or cravings – ^{r1} the libidinal drive; ^{1934c} the ego, which is thought of as being built upon the id through the progressive development of the sense of external reality; and the superego, the socially conditioned sum of forces which restrain the individual from the direct satisfaction of the id. The characteristic interplay of these personality zones, itself determined chiefly by the special pattern of family relationships into which the individual has had to fit himself in the earliest years of his life, is responsible for a variety of personality types.²³ [However,] ^{ck} ^{1934c, md, h1} although Freud is interested in typical dynamisms and mechanisms of personality formation, he does not construct a theory of personality types.²⁴ [On this point and others the Freudian school of psychoanalysts are divided.] ^{md} Jung, [for example,] is interested in types, [based on the idea that] not all people will develop in the same way under the same conditions. [We shall pursue this matter in a later lecture. But in many respects] ^{ck} Jung, Adler, and Ranke, in revolt against Freud, overemphasized their points of difference [with him].

^{h1} [For the anthropologist,] Freud's [work] is [useful as] a way of thinking, not as a body of doctrine. ^{bg, md, h1, lb} [Consider, for example, the famous] Oedipus Complex, in our culture and others. ^{bg} The important thing is that certain nuclear situations inevitably affect the emotional and personality development of the child, whatever the type of society [he is born into.] Some type of family situation – ^{h1} some kind of human relationship – ^{bg, h1} holds everywhere, whether [specifically] on the model of Oedipus or not. ^{lb} The child is not born in a cultural or social vacuum; [his personal] symbology is subjective to a [particular] culture, and it is a mistake to make a fetish of doctrines [of symbological development based only on European clinical material.] ^{md, h1} Thus the Oedipus Complex is simply a common sense human situation which may be found in the Trobriand Islands or anywhere – under differing conditions, true, but with the same simple human situation pattern. ^{h1, lb} When Malinowski, in "Sex and Repression in Savage Society," [presented certain] strictures on Freud by showing a new modification [of the Oedipus Complex] due to a different social context – [so that the Trobriand child's] transference of early bends or sets [tended] toward

the maternal uncle instead of the mother – ^{h1} Freud's disciples reviled him. [To them, the essential thing about] Oedipus was the correlation²⁵ of transference along sex lines.²⁶ ^{bg} Yet the Freudians should welcome Malinowski's [work,] since although he shows that with a different familial set-up in the Trobriands the Oedipus complex [per se] does not hold, nevertheless he shows that even here there is an important conditioning of the child at an early age by family relationships. Thus he extends the basic Freudian concept, rather than upsetting it.

^{bg} [For the uses of the anthropologist, therefore,] psychiatric analysis must be schematic, save in the actual case study. For example, there are many types and actual varieties of jealousy, though possibly the basis of all [of them] may be a negative reaction to interference by others with the libidinal fixation upon a certain individual. [Whether it is about jealousy or some other aspect of personality formation,] what the schematic view would show is the importance of nuclear home attitudes and situations for the child – the influence of the parents and their relations one to another; the effect upon the unclouded intuitive understanding of the child; the function of emotional attitudes, and the effect on [a person's] later life (at mating, [especially]) of prior nuclear symbolisms even though these are projected or transformed²⁷ later into new situations.

[In summary, the anthropologist can find much of value in the psychiatric approach to personality, but in its outlines rather than its specific formulations. In favoring a psychiatric view I] ^{1938e} do not for a moment mean to assert that any psychiatry that has as yet been evolved is in a position to do much more than to ask intelligent questions. [The insights we seek are only beginning to emerge.] ^{bg, md, h1} A vital understanding of personality depends upon the development of a powerful dynamic psychology – which will be a *genetic*²⁸ psychology in a social setting. ^{bg} Using Freudian concepts cast in a configurative Gestalt pattern, it will be interested solely in actual social settings and not in stimulus, response, and the rest [of the behaviorist's representation of them] – the whole view being influenced by aesthetic considerations, which will look for the fundamental theme and then for the recurring variations.

Editorial Note

Although the Outline begins its section on "The Individual's Place in Culture" with a chapter on "Culture and the Individual," the class notes

give relatively little space to the material that was to have gone there, moving instead almost immediately into the concept of personality. Apparently the student note-takers did not record much of Sapir's introductory discussion. But it is also clear that Sapir himself covered this material quickly, without much elaboration, even though so many of his publications in the 1930's were concerned with it. My guess is that this section was condensed partly because it would have been repetitive. Its subject matter – the theoretical and methodological problems that arise if "culture" and "the individual" are contrastively defined – is, after all, the concern of the whole book.

For Sapir's treatment of this subject in article form, the reader is referred particularly to "Cultural Anthropology and Psychiatry" (1932a), "The Emergence of the Concept of Personality in a Study of Cultures" (1934a), and "Why Cultural Anthropology Needs the Psychiatrist" (1938e). I have drawn on these papers to fill in the sketchy class notes. Most of the present chapter, however, is devoted to the concept of personality. Here Sapir's classroom discussion closely parallels his encyclopedia article on "Personality" (1934c).

The material incorporated in this chapter apparently took up a lecture and a half in 1937 (the second half of Sapir's lecture of January 18²⁹ and the lecture of January 25). In 1933 it was allotted at least two lectures, on March 13 and 20. The Taylor notes (1936) are undated, so it is not clear how much lecture time was involved.

Notes

1. T2 has "to society."
2. T1 has: "Despite thoughts to the contrary, ..."
3. BG has "individuals' cultures (separate)". It is not clear how Sapir actually worded the important point.
4. The second sentence in the bracketed text comes from H2, in the discussion of culture pattern in ch. 5. See also "The Unconscious Patterning of Behavior in Society"
5. Much of the wording of this passage is derived from Sapir (1934a), "The Emergence of the Concept of Personality in a Study of Cultures," SWES pp. 590–91.
6. T2 adds: "Maximum security is desired by all." Perhaps Sapir's point is that cultural forms can have relevance for the individual if only by providing the security of identification with a group.
7. I insert "who participates" by analogy with the statement in Sapir 1932a: "the vast majority of participants in the total culture, if we may still speak in terms of a total culture." Sapir's published writings of this period do not use the expression "individual in a culture," an expression that treats "culture" as a synonym for "group" or "society."
8. H2 has: "person comes from *persona*, Latin = person, also dramatic mask"

- 9 H1 has: "Reality is in fact the mere phenomena of continuity of no persistence, they have little or no reality."
- 10 LaB adds "Split personalities greatest tragedies therefore."
- 11 BG has "in terms of a sociological abstraction from nuclear person. and emphasis upon formal roles."
- 12 CK has "a given biological organism".
13. What R2 actually has is: "Has no connection with other personalities." I believe, however, that the point is that this definition is unconnected with the sociological one.
- 14 i. e., independent of status.
- 15 Here H1 has a drawing of three triangles; the center one has a mangled top half.
- 16 Actually, it is unclear whether Sapir claimed that only the psychiatric view of personality sees it as an integrative mechanism, or whether the sociological view (personality as deriving from status) was also an integrative mechanism of a sort (presumably less coherently configured). MD and H1 have "Personality as an integrative mechanism" as the title of the March 20 lecture comparing the sociological and psychiatric points of view, while BG emphasizes the differences between them as incremental vs. integrative.
- 17 MD adds, "(Stalin)".
- 18 MD has "man in the courtroom".
- 19 R1 has, after "emotional transfer": "The trivial is just important a part of one's personality as the important."
20. I insert the bracketed passage as a summary of the preceding paragraph, where Sapir argues again that personality (psychologically or psychiatrically defined) and social status are distinct. This does not mean, however, that the two have no influence on one another. For an argument that personality, or at least one's emotional state, is affected by an individual's social position, see Sapir's "Psychiatric and Cultural Pitfalls in the Business of Getting a Living" (1939c).
21. Some of the wording of this bracketed passage is drawn from "The Emergence of the Concept of Personality in a Study of Cultures" (1934a): "Why is it necessary to discover the contrast, real or fictitious, between culture and personality, or, to speak more accurately, between a segment of behavior seen as cultural pattern and a segment of behavior interpreted as having a person-defining value? Why cannot our interest in behavior maintain the undifferentiated character which it possessed in early childhood? The answer, presumably, is that each type of interest is necessary for the psychic preservation of the individual in an environment which experience makes increasingly complex and unassimilable on its own simple terms." Although Sapir's focus in that paper is on the outside observer, he seems to suggest that the participant has the same duality of interest.
22. Much of the content of this bracketed passage comes from the material in MD, BGL, and H1 cited at the close of the chapter.
23. MD, H1, T1, and LB all allude to "personality types" at this juncture (as heading or in the text).
24. CK has: "does not construct a theory of personality." All others have "personality types."
25. The handwriting of this word is unclear.
26. H1 adds: "mother → to son rather than the daughter – groundplan: – *Sapir*. – homosexuality: –". LB adds: "Nostalgia for father in Oedipus complex; hate-love mother."
27. The handwriting is unclear. This word may be "transferred".
28. i. e., developmental.
29. Only in CK, who sometimes puts dates in the wrong place. It is possible that all this material comes from January 25.

Chapter 8. The Problem of Personality Types: A Review and Critique of Jung

md, h1 The Type Point of View: Introvert and Extravert

[In the previous chapter we mentioned that there is a matter of some disagreement within the Freudian school of psychoanalysis as to whether personalities can be classified into different types. This is not merely some trivial instance of internecine warfare. It concerns the very nature of personality integration, and it has many implications for a theory of personality formation, even if some of the most basic aspects of the problem have scarcely been addressed as yet by either side. As we said,] ^{md, h1} Freud [himself] is more interested in typical mechanisms [of personality formation] than in types. ^{md} He is not clear as to what the basic material of personality is; ^{lb} [instead, he seems to take the] attitude that the individual is indefinitely malleable, although the question of whether there are physiological types [remains open]. ^{h1, md} Jung, however, [proposes that there are] fundamental types over and above the mechanisms — that not all people will develop in the same way under the same environmental conditions. ^{h1} While Freud is [primarily] interested in individual cases, Jung goes in for the “racial mind” and believes in types given at birth (preformation, as opposed to epigenesis).

^{lb, h1} I believe Jung is fundamentally right [in proposing] a basic typology — ^{r1} various *kinds* of adjustment — ^{h1} in children, over and above the dynamic relations [with which Freud is concerned]. ^{bg} The importance of Jung’s viewpoint [lies not in the specific causes¹ he assumes, but in the idea that] childhood conditioning isn’t everything: for example, one can’t make a hysteric out of every child. With each child, [his] study shows, there is a varied type of adjustment depending upon the basic personality set-up. These varied differences of adjustment are something over and above the emotional conditioning that is due to specific familial [situations.]²

^{bg, h1} Genetically determined predispositions³ may be shown, [for example,] in [children’s] varying sensitivity to loud noises, and [their] varying apperception — sensitivity to objects in the environment.⁴ ^{bg} In re-

gard to this, [Jung's?] study shows that one child goes out readily to meet such objects. He identifies himself with them, explores them, handles and enjoys them. The other child hesitates, classifies them, and always seems to refer them to some evaluated past experience. ^{bg, h1} Perhaps he values them in terms of some nostalgic feeling associated with the pleasure of suckling at the mother's breast. ^{h1} To [link]⁵ objects around one with that feeling is the genesis of "introverted" behavior. ^{bg, h1, md} The identifying type [of child] is the *extravert*, who participates fully in the world of sense, while the classifying type is the *introvert*, who holds back from the world of sense. ^{lb} ([These] types also [correspond] to Holt's *adience* and *abience*.)

^{h1} [But while one may describe these types as already existing among children.] Jung nowhere [really] discusses their genesis. ^{bg} Indeed, the genesis of [personality] types is a difficult [problem.] ^{bg, lb} Are they to be explained in terms of hereditary dispositions given once and for all at conception, or is there some genetic explanation, such as that given above, [involving] empirical conditioning? ^{bg} [If the latter, should we seek its explanation, in turn,] in terms of Freudian mechanisms — or does the cultural configuration itself influence basic personality types? Jung gives no answer to these questions.

^{r1} Is Jung's classification of personality types, then, genetic, post-genetic, or descriptive? ^{r1, r2, ck} I believe his classification to be mainly descriptive, not genetic or dynamic. ^{ck} [Presumably,] personality is [influenced by all these] factors — genetic,⁶ prenatal, and early conditioning — ^{ch} but Jung's study, [even though it purports] to be a causal one [and not only] a personal one, is not strictly scientific. ^{1923j} ([Indeed, although his *Psychological Types*] is a fascinating and extraordinary book, it is never very closely reasoned.)⁷ [About his notions of "racial mind" and preformation we should be particularly cautious.] ^{t1} It is not that the physical has nothing to do with psychology (and hence culture), but only that the definitions of physical phenomena are too naive and fallacious.

^{r1} [Obviously, even a purely descriptive] classification of personality types has implications as to the formation of personality. [But personality is not simply a direct reflection of Jung's types.] ^{r1, qq} A process of compensation [intervenes]. ^{r1} Society is not tolerant of extreme variations of personality, ^{r2} and because a person is always concerned with other people's opinion of him, ^{r1} with social pressure and potential praise or blame — ^{ck} [we might even say that] the potential judgement of society is the individual's main problem — ^{qq, r2, r1} he tries to compen-

sate for those variations regarded as social defects, towards some [more approved] general type or behavior pattern. ^{r2, ck, r1} Hence, basic personality differences, if they exist, must be masked beneath the typical behavior. [Perhaps it is from one's own eyes that one's basic personality is most effectively hidden.] ^{ck} In our efforts to conform to a common ideal, we lose touch with our earlier selves. ^{qq} [The attempt to reach back to that nuclear constellation is the reason for] the psychiatric emphasis on the importance of the early years in the formation of personality, ^{h1} and for the attempt, in psychoanalysis, to determine personality types.

[Thus the relation between our basic orientation and our compensations does not easily rise into conscious awareness.] ^{qq, ck} We have a persistent illusion of changing a great deal, but it seems likely that there really are perduring patterns in the individual's personality from early life. ^{r1} The basic pattern of the individual's behavior does not change – [even though] we like to feel we can change, probably for the better. ^{qq} [Now, when it concerns someone other than ourselves.] we are very quick to see incidents about a single individual as consistent and integrated, though this is of course inconsistent with the just-mentioned illusion. ^{qq, r1} Various personal motives influence our belief about this question: ^{qq, r1, ck} we do not like to believe that we are ourselves not capable of great change in personality if we wish to change in any respect; ^{qq, r1, ck, r2} and we also like to feel that we are influential in effecting changes in other people, by giving advice to those who look to us for guidance. [In a sense we are right in both our beliefs – that people are consistent and that people can change – insofar as the psychiatrist's concepts of basic adjustment and compensation correspond to them. And we are also not without support in our feeling that the influence people have on one another, in their advice and in their judgement, is important.] ^{h1} A sociological outlook and balancing are factors in personality, [because the identification with] sociological reality versus any other reality is essentially what extraversion and introversion are. The extravert [is the person] whose libido flows into those concerns which are connected with other people and the outside. The introvert, on the other hand, abstracts, consciously or unconsciously, his meanings from the outside world.

^{qq, r1} Jung claims that the difference between the extravert and the introvert is not merely a matter of interests. ^{qq} Compensation, for example, may make one's interests quite deceptive with respect to fundamental tendencies. ^{r1} [Moreover, interests could easily be confused with] the

degree to which a personality is willing to unmask himself ([or is masked in the first place; consider the kind of person described by] the French word "simple" – an unrevised personality). [Instead, the difference between] ^{r2, h1} extravert and introvert [concerns how one resolves the fundamental] conflict, [faced by] the child, between infantile fantasies and the external world. ^{r1} [It is the problem of helplessness] – your own weakness in attaining your infantile desires, [as compared with] the power about you, the institutions and traditions [you encounter]. ^{h1, md,}
^{lb} Man always knows he is a helpless being [in the face of his] environment and fellow beings, but he can't afford to admit it. ^{lb} You can't be healthy and [still] realize this. ^{md} Ways of adjusting, then, are ways of overcoming helplessness.

^{r2, ck} There are two ways of solving this problem of the conflict between the self and a powerful environment: ^{r1, ck} you can blot out the one or the other – the external or the internal world. ^{qq} Realizing one's weakness in the midst of strong forces, one can either negate those forces, recognizing only those that one wishes to admit, or else deny the reality of one's weakness (in the extreme by denying the reality of oneself and identifying oneself with the environment, and other people, at every point). ^{r2, r1, h1, lb} To blot out and deny all the external environment over which one has control⁸ [is the solution of] the introvert, ^{h1, lb} the idealist who reinterprets the world in terms of something he has mentalized or verbalized.⁹ ^{qq, ck, r1} In its morbid extreme, this tendency becomes schizophrenia, dementia praecox; ^{qq, r2, r1} less extremely, it is seen in such organized movements as Christian Science and in the medieval mystic, ^{r1} who simplified the world around him through wishful thinking. ^{r2, r1, ck} This method is similar to the general problem of abstraction, which is the ability to ignore facts. ^{r1, ck} Only certain things have value for the introvert; [beyond them, he has the] ability to deny the reality value of the external world. ^{r2} ([This propensity] is well exemplified by classical Hindu culture.)

^{ck} The other method is to deny yourself, to deny the reality of your own weakness. ^{r1, lb} The extravert identifies with the environment, the world of activity; ^{lb} [in effect,] he denies that there is anything to adjust. ^{r1} The world is what has value, in the face of this denudation of the personality. ^{bg} Words don't interest him save as symbols of adjustment to the world. He consciously denies the self as an entity. Instead, anything that happens in the world *is* the self. ^{ck, r1, r2} When this becomes morbid you have hysteria. ^{r2} In this case there is no introspection at all, and if the environment were taken away such a person would be lost.

^{lb} The extravert is a mechanist: [the introvert, an] idealist. While the introvert [sees] — as in Descartes' thesis — an antagonism between the self and the world, the extravert identifies with the world and participates in it sympathetically and sensationistically. ^{bg} He finds the environment friendly and swallows it in in huge gob fulls. ^{r2, r1, q1, ck} The introvert finds an unanalyzed value in intensity of experience, the extravert in extensity or numbers of experiences. ^{r2} ([By analogy with this pattern, then.] Christian theology is introverted, while the Mediterranean world is extraverted.) ^{lb, h1} The extravert is an empiricist: ^{lb} [says he.] "A fact [is a fact], what more do you want?" The introvert, lacking the ability to value a thing as such, [instead] evaluates it subjectively: "A fact — what about it? So what? A fact *of what order and meaning?*"

^{r1} The extravert is not necessarily [more] objective, [just] because [his] values lie in the immediate environment. ^{q1, r1} Indeed, it may be questioned whether one is not here projecting oneself in order to identify [with the externalized projection,] and whether there is [actually] any more objectivity in extraversion than in introversion. ^{ck} Thoroughly extraverted people are unobjective, because they are the most bound up in the environment. ^{bg} The introvert, [on the other hand,] is a verbal realist, or objective subjectivist: the word is substituted for the world of internal reality. His sense of power comes from handling words and concepts in lieu of actual facts. ^{bg, lb} Facts are not valued as such, but only in terms of personal evaluations.¹⁰

^{bg} These characterizations are polar extremes. [Actual analyses of real individuals would not usually show such stark contrasts. In fact,] actual analysis is difficult since ^{r2, r1} there is a tendency for one type to compensate with the thinking of the opposite type. ^{ck, r2, r1} For example, Nietzsche was an introvert and a masochistic [personality,] but he hated this in himself and so invented the superman. [The inventor of the superman, then, was] not [exactly] a superman himself. Dewey was [personally] an introvert, but as a philosopher he writes with an extraverted ring,¹¹ ^{ck} expressing the philosophy of the extravert in education by reason of an elaborate compensation mechanism. ^{bg} Thus introversion may be disguised by a pseudo-extraversion for reasons of personality adjustment. [We might also mention] Whitman in this respect, and note the paucity of hard images in his poetry. [Conversely,] a man may also be introverted in his intellectual life but extraverted in [his] personal relations. As an example, [one might compare] Coleridge's poetry with his relations with Wordsworth and his circle.

[Just as the personality types are not merely a matter of interests, so they do not directly link up with an individual's position in life. We can find examples of both types in all realms of activity.] ^{r1} It is an illusion [to think] that businessmen, for instance, are necessarily extraverted, for external activity may belie [the nature of] the ego. A mere description of behavior does not indicate the nature of the personality. [Instead, we] must interpret the flow of activity in terms of the mechanics of activities and thinking. ^{qq, r1} In business, perhaps Carnegie is an example of the extravert, Ford of the introvert — the former enjoying the activity for its own sake, while Ford was somewhat discontented [with it and placed more importance on] idealistic principles ([as when sponsoring his] peace ship).

^{qq, r1} In religion, the early Christian movement seems to be an introverted one: beginning at a time of great differences in wealth, its [introversion] was perhaps a social characteristic growing out of the extreme poverty of the people, as a denial of their external circumstances. [Later on] Luther seems to be a sample extravert, interested in his immediate environment and identifying himself with the masses (^{qq} as, for example, in his colloquial translation of the Bible, and his realistic table talk). ^{qq, r1} Calvin, with his interest in the "noble Bible" and so on as an ideal, seems rather more introverted: ^{r1} [concerned with] rational respectability, he turned within himself, to emerge with a formula [for attaining it]. [Presumably] he would not have been sympathetic with evangelism.

^{r1} [In politics,] Robespierre seems to have been an introvert, who swayed the masses by [the power of an] idea rather than for himself. President Wilson, too, was an introvert: [at the close of the war, when the new boundaries of nations were to be decided,] an ethnological staff ([including] Dixon of Harvard)¹² was taken to Europe but not consulted; [Wilson's] interest was in ideological principles. The actual, picaresque details of the distribution of peoples were of little interest to him.

^{qq, r1} In literature, [while we may tend to think of literary activity as typically introverted,] Dickens and Kipling come to mind as ready examples of extraversion. ^{qq} The essential thing, for example with the businessman, is not how busy a man keeps with external affairs but where he finds his maximum enjoyment.

^{r2, r1, qq, ck} In summary: the extravert identifies himself in his orientation with his environment, ^{ck} and feels no difference between himself and the thing out there. ^{r1, ck, r2} [To him] the principle must always be sacrificed for the facts. ^{r2, r1, ck} The introvert identifies himself with his own self-consciousness and abstracts from the environment that which

he needs for the principles. ^{99, r1} Thus the introvert overlooks the specific facts for the sake of selected general principles and control; the extravert attends to the specific events in their sequence simply as events. ^{99, r1, r2} Among scholarly pursuits, history tends toward the extremely extravert side; mathematics and conceptual science, toward the introvert. ⁹⁹ Thurstone's work in psychology seems extremely introverted, with its complete emphasis on method, precise definition, and complete lack of interest in practical problems or everyday values.

^{r2} [As we pointed out earlier, however,] Jung's classification is descriptive, [not explanatory.] It cannot be used to explain behavior, as too many other factors, for example the symbolism of the situation, are also concerned. [The process of compensation, too, complicates any attempt to explain behavior as the direct result of personality type.] ^{h1} ^{bg} [For these reasons a strong note of] caution [must be sounded against overenthusiastic applications of Jung's classification.] ^{h1, lb} Introversion and extraversion are to be evaluated not in terms of overt behavior, but in terms of subjective orientation — ^{bg} the personal subjective evaluations of meaning peculiar to the individual in question.¹³ Failure to realize this leads to half-baked¹⁴ attempts to measure introversion and extraversion by means of psychological tests which are far too naive to be of value.

^{bg} Actually, the whole concept of adjustment, as used by modern psychologists, is usually badly misunderstood, through a failure to realize the importance of subjective evaluations. ^{tl, h1} [Moreover, adjustment is not just a matter of one's nature; one's] sociological outlook and balancing are [just as important] factors in the personality. ^{h1} [Thus we encounter the] pseudo-extravert: one who by circumstance is driven to extraverted behavior, though he should by nature be a well-adjusted introvert. [Similarly,] asocial behavior is need by some who strive for external adjustment. [In short,] either "extravert" or "introvert" [as a personality classification] is devoid of value, except in terms of what culture demands. Jung makes the mistake of identifying [his types]¹⁵ with thought tendencies [alone, without reference to cultural form].

Jung's "Functional Types"

⁹⁹ Jung also classifies [personality] according to "functional types," a term that is not actually very suitable for them. ^{lb, r1} [He proposes four

of these types:] the thinking, feeling, intuiting, and sensational, [grouped into] rational vs. irrational, thus [(see Figure 1)]:

Thinking	}	Rational
Feeling		
Intuiting	}	Irrational ⁴⁶
Sensational		

[FIG. 1]

^{ck} [Like introversion and extraversion,] this personality classification is applicable at an early age.

^{r1, lb} These classifications are based not on the realm [of one's interests or activities,] but in the authoritative [psychological] function [governing their value]. ^{lb} Thought, feeling, sense, and intuition are concepts to indicate the type of [psychological] control, authority, or underpinning advanced for holding one's professed interests. ^{bg, h1} For example, [one might compare] these four "authorities" as four different [reasons, or] desires, for learning a new language. ^{h1} One [person has a] love for play with words [(this is the sensational type)]; ^{bg} another desires to know about the life, material culture, and so on of the people [who speak the language]; ^{h1} one [person] learns languages which are symbols of authority for belonging to certain groups; ^{h1} [and another has] an intuitive sense of form as such, ^{bg} or an intuition that the language may later become important [to him]. [Each person engages in the same activity, but under the sway of a different "authority."] ^{bg} Each "authority" derives its strength from compensated or sublimated libido impulses — [presumably] in a genetic fashion, [although we do not know exactly how this works.]¹⁶

^{md} Jung's classification into functional types has been criticized, and justly so. ^{r1, h1, ck} [Taken] at face value the classification [is absurd, because its criteria are not comparable. ^{ck} (It is like [comparing] a red house and a gabled barn.) ^{h1, md} But we should be charitable of the types nevertheless, for they are very valuable in that they emphasize the authoritative stamp in one's wish for the reality of an experience. ^{md} Thus they stamp the kind of thing that gives things reality to people. ^{r1} In which kind of experience does value predominantly reside? This is what Jung really asks. Where Freud, moralistically, explains a maladjusted person by what has happened to him, Jung wishes to know how a person works.

^{r1} [It should be noted from the start, however, that the classification] must be redefined and reinterpreted. ⁴⁹ ^{r2}, ^{r1} Jung's distinction between rational and irrational certainly has to be redefined, [and we shall come to this shortly]. ⁴⁹ Putting the feeling and the thinking types together seems to be his most important contribution; ^{ck} the contrast between the sensational and the rational is also important, [with its corollary that] ^{r2}, ^{r1} the rational (intellectual) and feeling concepts must be contrasted with the sensational concept. ^{r2}, ^{ck}, ⁴⁹, ^{r1} The intuitive concept, however, I believe is on a different plane from the other three, ⁴⁹ and needs to be seen as cross-cutting the other three classes. ^{r1} ^{r2} It applies to the rate of activity or adjustment rather than the kind of values.

^{md} [Even more than the introvert/extravert types,] these types are rarely found in their pristine purity. [Still, let us examine them more closely.]

(1) ^{r2}, ^{r1}, ^{ck} The *sensory type* is the person who places a great deal of emphasis on sensory experiences, and whose preferred values spring from experiences of a sensual order, ^{t2} such as eating and the palatal tastes, or the use of colors. ^{ch} The significances of sensation are very real, especially to children. Later in life, of course, sensation becomes symbolized; but when sensation [itself] becomes significant you have a peculiar type of person. ^{r2}, ^{r1}, ^{ck} From the Freudian standpoint the sensory type seems to be somewhat of an arrested type – i. e., they do not show the normal sentiments. Freud would say that the sexual interests of these people are prematurely sublimated in sensory impressions, or on a sensory basis. ^{t2} [Thus the type is not based on learning:] a person from a very dull background might grow into a very sensation-[oriented] person, when the libido [is sublimated in this way] – when emotion enters into the sensational value, and it grows (as is possible) into a fetish. Jung believes that the sensational value might take the place of thought, if the person is given to sensing,¹⁷ not thinking.

^{r2} When Jung says this type is irrational, he probably refers to disequibrated action. ^{r1}, ^{ck} I would say, rather, that it is disoriented – too greatly isolated from the totality of the problems of life. ^{r1} One cannot adjust well to life on the basis of these [sensory] values only. ^{ck} If you establish your values on a sensory basis you are dealing with a limited world. ^{ch} The organization of pure sensation is irrational because it does not connect you with the world – an emotional world disintegrates into the sensational. ^{r1}, ^{ck} The reason why such a person can adjust and survive at all is that society has placed value on his values. It values [the sensory] to such an extent that, if he is good in his limited field,

society will pay him for his product. ^{ck} If not he has a serious personal problem ([as we often see with the] artist or musician, for example).

^{ck} Culture is selective as to [its emphasis on] sensory values. At some periods in some cultures, no value is given to them. ^{bg} [Usually, however,] some sensations have a social validation of [their] meaning, in terms of convention, tradition, or literature (e. g., the scent of the rose, ^{lb} which [combines] sensation plus a culturally left-over "aura" in Persian poetry and in the Romantic period).¹⁸ ^{bg} Other sensations, however, have only a private meaning, and the individual swayed by their authority is the [real exemplar of] the [sensory] type. The artist is typical.¹⁹ ^{h1} Thus there is a social side to sensations, ^{lb} a "social history" to them, while the callous person who yields to the authority of a collection of private sensations is self-indulgent, lacking social integration or social sympathy. ^{bg} Insofar as sensations are [only] privately validated, and because of the inherent disjunction of the various sense qualities, the sensational world is inherently an irrational or unordered one.

^{r1, r2} As Jung says, this type can be intelligent. Its irrationality — ^{ck} and the sensory type always has some quality of fragmentariness and irrationality — ^{r1} [lies only in its preference for] sensory values instead of sentiments. ^{r2} These people follow their sensory values, which are not the same as the sentimental values. ^{ck, r1} (Most human sentiments are really cultural artifacts, compulsions of a secondary nature.) [Yet, it might be worth remembering that what we often call] ^{r1, r2, ck} intelligence is really an after-the-event concept, a descriptive term applied after an individual has achieved a certain success.

(2) ^{ck, r2, r1, t1} [In contrast to the sensory type, we have the] *feeling type*, which I believe to be the normal ^{t1} and most common ^{ck, r2, r1} type of adjustment. Jung calls this type "rational;" ^{r2, r1} however, [these people] are actually in the grip of sentiment and feeling. ^{r2, ck} They are "rational" only in that their thinking is tightly organized in the system of sentiments they have built up. ^{r1} [Their] whole world of experience is organized according to feeling, ^{bg, r1, h1} derived ultimately from love and hate, husbanded and organized. ^{r1} Everything is fitted into [this system of] evaluation — ^{ch} the person's feeling is completely implicative. ^{ck} Those who feel their way through experience, attaching a segment of love or hate to everything, cover the universe. There is nothing fragmentary about their attack. ^{bg, h1} Where there is a high degree of organization, as for example in [the case of] Bismarck, this is probably traceable to a stable and satisfying emotional adjustment worked out in infancy.

r2, ck, r1 The normal child lives in very much this kind of world, where everything has an aura of emotional value. [But most people do not retain this system in its entirety in adulthood.]²⁰ r1 In language, for example, every word has emotional values according to its associations, r1, ck but children must divest themselves of emotion towards words as they grow up. r1 Indeed, the whole of culture is pervaded by feeling [associations in this way.]^{ch} Not all individuals are able to break up this organization — this “highly organized feeling” that grows up in the mind of the individual. Thus, for example, if a person is brought up and is living in a certain cultural environment, his attitude toward other cultures and environments must necessarily be prejudiced and moulded by the general ideas prevailing in his own culture. Hence the origin and use of such terms as “tricky Oriental,” “heathen Chinese.”²¹ He thinks he could not have got this without direct, sober experience, but as a matter of fact it is quite illogical.

bg [Actually, one’s attitude toward other cultures might even make a suitable] test [distinguishing the feeling type of personality from the thinking type.] In response to a [request]²² to grade a list of nationalities in terms of likes, the feeling type usually does this easily, probably in terms of the emotional experiences of infancy and childhood. For example, the Hindu is disliked because of an association with unpleasant infantile experiences, and so on. The thinking type, however, seeing no reason for one preference rather than another, finds this [task] difficult.)²³

r2, r1, ck Jung’s term “rational” [for this type], therefore, means scaled according to emotions. r2 These people have a complete attitude towards the world, but little to say about it, as they feel. [In fact, what they say may derive only from a superficial rationalization and not represent their fundamental attitude at all.]²⁴ ch The declared opinions of intellectual people are not [to be] taken too seriously, except in a few rare cases. Sometimes such people are apparently quite radical, whereas in fact, they are conservative. ch The reality of the rational “feeling” life (as Jung expresses it) may be exemplified by [the case of] a friend of mine — a man who, for example, talks loud and long against private schools, yet he sends his son to one. [The other day] he spoke very vehemently against the proposal of dropping Latin as a graduation requirement, but when asked for the reason for his stand, said he did not know why he felt so. bg Dr. Samuel Johnson is [another] good example. Though his philosophy was [actually nonsense,]²⁵ nevertheless by his dynamic personality he managed to magnetize his circle of admirers.

[In its purer forms this kind of adjustment is not untroubled.] ^{r1} [A complete] loyalty to feeling judgements [can be a] strain. ^{r2, r1} The desire for travel and other escape mechanisms, for example, is due to the fatigue that comes with too great a load of feeling.

(3) ^{r2, ck, r1} The third type is the *intellectual type*, whose genesis is in the desire to solve problems. ^{bg, h1} He finds unity and interest in verbalization — in conquering the world and winning admiration through the display of verbal facility, rationalizations, and command of the thought processes. ^{h1} [He tries to] understand the world in [purely] rational terms, ^{26 bg} thinking the whole world will be righted if [its] illogical errors are only pointed out. ^{h1} He is the man who is calm in the face of disaster, [for the situation's] emotional charge is defused: he takes his father's funeral, for instance, as an opportunity to do scientific work. ^{27 r2, r1} In his contacts with people, he divests the situation of its emotion, and thinks only of the actual situation. ^{r2, r1} For example, he treats a shopkeeper only as a machine for solving a certain [problem, or carrying out a certain] function. ^{ck} If you go through life thinking of people only in this instrumental sense, you have no free flow of feeling — ^{r2, r1} only intellectual attitudes toward functions. ^{ck} The de-emotionalization of the objects in our environment is an intellectual act. You build up a rich world of observation and fact, with little investiture of feeling. But you cannot go about your daily business as though you were handling engineering problems.

^{r2, r1} In fact, a good deal of feeling is probably attached to these intellectual attitudes by a secondary process of rationalization. ^{r1} Perhaps [the whole intellectualizing process, and hence the personality type,] is secondary. Yet, many [people,] and not [only] intellectual giants, are of this type, divesting situations of [their] emotional [associations] and thinking of people in an instrumental [way]. ²⁸ Often what passes as feeling, [for them,] is only an intellectual attachment to known symbols of feeling. They have only an intellectual attitude toward functions, never [actual] feelings.

^{r1} Rigorously thinking out [a problem,] and systematizing according to feeling, have the same organizing quality. ^{ck} [Perhaps we should say that] Jung's contribution [is to describe personality as] *organization*, ^{r1, r2} [for the discussion of] these three types has stressed the organizational aspect. Each of them builds up a tight, complete attitude toward behavior and the universe. [In a sense] they try to be consistently reasonable. Actually, of course, type 2 and type 3 are interrelated. ^{r2} A child starts out with a feeling attitude toward life, and gradually takes over much

of the intellectual attitude. ^{r1} From a dynamic standpoint, these two types stand together.

^{hl, lb, bg, md} [In a sense, too.] the intelligence of the thinking type is derivative of fear. In essence, this intelligence is nothing more than the alert response to a danger stimulus — or, better put, it is a highly elaborated, exaggerated, sublimated response to anxiety situations, such as the anxiety to control the environment. ^{bg} Consider, for example, the person who sleeps little and wakes early, so as not to be “caught napping”: fear is the basis [of his behavioral pattern]. Consider also the fact that among the members of a secure social class like the English gentry, where there is no anxiety about position or future, there is to be found great stupidity. Intelligence, therefore, is a method of controlling one’s environment, due to fear or anxiety motivations.

^{ck} [It is not just that there is a “thinking type,” then, but that] effective adjustment takes the form of thought. ^{ck, r1} There are two approaches to the intellectual type: its rational adjustment, on the one hand (the well-adjusted aspect of this type), and the denudation of emotional content, on the other. ^{ck} Really they are both the same things, [but looking at the type in terms of emotional denudation shows us that you cannot be well adjusted if you carry this attitude to an extreme]. Feeling and thinking go together; [for the best adjustment, you] must get an equilibrium between them. ^{r1} Thus the feeling and thinking types are normally conjoined. Criminals, who are often found not to possess much feeling, are emotionally underdeveloped.

^{ck} Generally one thinks and feels at the same time. ^{r1} You are unconscious of when you are doing the one and when the other, and you often do both together. ^{ck, r1} But as thought has more prestige value than feeling, we call a lot of things thought that are really feeling. ^{r2} Thinking is often used to rationalize emotions, also. It is therefore the feeling type that tries to be most reasonable. ^{r1} That is, those who [most strongly] insist they are reasonable are often most bound by feeling. On the other hand, intellectuals often act casual because they are afraid of being *too* reasonable.

[Actually, our conception of *feeling* is perhaps itself ambiguous.] ^{ck} ^{r1, r2, qq} It isn’t feeling that people differ in, but emotion, ^{r1, r2} which is merely the use and expression of feeling in behavior. ^{29 r1} Our capacity for emotion is physiologically the same, just as a man sitting on a chair all day has muscles though he does not use them. However, what a person does with emotion is a different thing. An emotional state is the mental correlate of [physical] activity; [thus he may make use of his

capacity for emotion or not). ^{r1, r2} Many people tend to stifle emotion although they have a great amount of feeling. ^{r1} Yet, there are also those who may seem insincere because their [expression of] emotion seems excessive. [Paradoxically,] the point [at which we interpret an emotional state as] indifference is not far from [the point of greatest] expressiveness.

⁹⁹ Actually there may be more emotion stored up in the unresponsive individual, because the expression of feeling probably releases emotion. ^{r1} Those who are wont to show feeling in the ordinary [course of their daily life] do not store up emotional energy. An ordinarily stolid person may suddenly "blow up," ⁹⁹ while those who express feeling a great deal may actually often be quite callous. ^{r1} We should not confuse emotion and feeling, therefore. ⁹⁹ Jung seems to make this distinction, but perhaps it is not very clear.

[Before continuing with Jung's fourth type, which I believe in any case is not on the same plane as the other three, let us reconsider his division of types into "Rational" and "Irrational." As I have suggested,] ^{ch, r1, h1, bg, lb} what he calls "rational" and "irrational" personalities could better be explained as "organized" and "unorganized," ^{h1} a more useful terminology which avoids the paradox detracting from Jung's. [Jung's terms are too easily confused with rationalization and reasoning, labels that apply primarily to his third type, yet] ^{ch} his "feeling type" being classified as "rational" is an important contribution that he has to make.

¹² [Jung's] rational vs. irrational, [then, is not a question of intellectualism but] a question of organization and implications. ^{bg} Organization means harmony, the integration of a well-systematized universe, where taste and experience are blended through the intricacy and closeness of association. ^{h1} We [all] read order into experience, [and select certain events as our] points of reference [for that order, but the points of reference differ, as does the ultimate coherence and accessibility of the system built upon them.] For the mystic who craves a divine order, the buzzing of a bee mirrors the rhythm³⁰ of the Universe; [but other people will not evaluate the bee sound in the same way.] ¹² People, things, and events have implications, but not for everyone. ^{h1} If the sequences of events by which you establish order have only private meanings, ¹² and if you work on these implications instead of realities, you will be boring and you will hurt everyone's feelings. This is the "irrational" person, to Jung's way of thinking. He is often led by motives unknown to [the rest of] us, having a kind of necessity that leads him to do it. It has nothing

to do with being right or wrong, it is [just] his preferred method of proceeding.

^{r2} The thinking that insists on organization is rational, [whether or not it has anything to do with intellectual matters. Indeed, the success of our adaptation to society itself requires some measure of this kind of thinking.] The demands that society makes are highly organized, and it is hard for some people to keep track of this organization, although it is easy for others. Take the example of giving parties and inviting people: [knowing just what sort of party to give, and whom to invite, has actually quite a complicated social basis, and some people are much more attuned to these social intricacies than others are.]

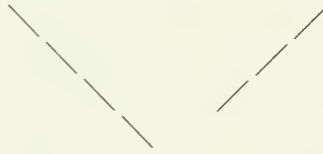
^{ch} What Jung calls the "irrational" type, [then, as we have seen.] is not irrational [in the sense of] emotional [(as contrasted with reasoning)]. What Jung means is a kind of irrationality that comes in the life of sensation and intuition. [It has to do with the completeness and coherence of the world one builds up.] One cannot build up an [unfragmented] world out of sensation, and hence [the sensational] type is irrational. [But Jung's assumption that he is dealing with basic types of thought tendencies presents some difficulties —] ^{h1} perhaps he has made too much of this thought business.³¹ ^{ch} [First of all,] it should be remembered that Jung's primary classification is on the conscious level. [Yet, much of our discussion of feeling, rationalizing, and so forth has concerned an unconscious level as well — and the possibility of a difference in the "authorities" governing the two. Moreover, Jung does not attend to the influence of the cultural configuration, and the sociological reality, to which the individual adapts.]³² ^{lb} In spite of his terminology and the great number of his categories, [this question of] social and cultural [adjustment] gives us some left-over unclassifiabes. [To cite examples we gave earlier, there is a great difference between] the Persian poet, or poet of the [European] Romantic period, [whose valuing of sensations] is socially integrated [and has a] social history, and the callous, self-indulgent, [or more truly rebellious] person who yields to the authority [only of his] collection of private sensations. ^{h1} If the individual rests upon [private] sensational points of reference, he is a law unto himself, escaping socializing forces.³³ ^{ch} Such people are irrational because they are injecting fresh valuations that are not accepted by the majority. [But Jung's classification does not leave room for considering social acceptability, or the ways] sensation becomes symbolized.³⁴

[Similar questions of acceptability arise elsewhere in the classification.] ^{h1} Reasoning is not far from — and might [even] be the same as

— rationalization, the difference [lying only] in [our] acceptance of [their product: that is,] the acceptance of “reasoning” and non-acceptance of “rationalization.”¹² Reasoning people rationalize everything.³⁵ We rationalize about the superiority of man over animals; a premise such as this is so universal that it is accepted by all, and as soon as someone questions it we rationalize it. [The contrast between the feeling type and the thinking type is therefore much less obvious, in practical terms, than Jung supposes.]

(4) ^{r2, ck, r1} [Jung’s] fourth type is the *intuitive type*,^{1b} not quite “irrational” and unordered as Jung would have it, but a new dimension — ^{b*} a difference of mode and rate of apprehension, as compared with ordinary comprehension; ^{1b} or, alert thinking, as opposed to laborious thinking.^{h1, md} When we say a person is a “good thinker,” we [may] mean two contradictory things: one is alertness and rapid apprehension; the other is the rational configuration, the slow, plodding [process] of integrative thought. The fast [kind] is what Jung [calls] intuiting.^{bg} According to Jung, it means a direct apprehension — without thought — of total relations, due to the operation within the individual of a primordial sense of integration. Animals are good examples: they often act intelligently without being intelligent.

^{r2, r1} The intuitive person is imaginative: he has a chronic inability to see things as they really are — ^{9q} [that is,] to see something and see nothing more; he sees ahead to potentialities.^{36 ck, r2, r1, h1} As an illustration, [suppose you] see two lines, [as in Figure 2:]



[FIG. 2]

If you imagine the point at which the two lines meet, you are using intuition.^{r1} The mathematician [is an extreme of this type: when he suggests that] parallel lines meet in infinity, he sees the point rather than the lines — by mathematical intuition.^{h1, 1b} [Or we might say that] the intuitive mind is an historical mind, aware of all the relations that are locked up in the given configuration.^{37 r1, r2} Intuitive people look ahead, and foresee their actions, while non-intuitive people are afraid of implications, and stay with their sensations. Intuitives are symbolic,^{r1} for

they cannot see only the facts presented as such. ^{t1} For the intuitive type the awareness is of relations and not of entities so much.

^{qq, ck, r1} The United States may be considered as having an intuitive culture, ^{r1} [at least] in the technical sense³⁸ — ^{qq} always projecting a little more than can really be managed, taking a chance, risking a lot in an attempt to realize some ideal. ^{r1} You take chances in order to “get in on the ground floor.” ^{qq, r1} A good politician must be intuitive: he is not interested in the status quo [for its own sake, but only in] using it as a starting point for changes hereafter. ^{qq, r1, ck} The successful businessman and the successful playwright must both be intuitive, seeing and displaying the implications [of a situation]. ^{ck, qq} A great playwright has to be intuitive because he has such a short time to put over his ideas. A good actor, too, must be aware of the implications or he can spoil the playwright’s play. ^{qq} Hence some great poets write poor plays, because they are too much intoxicated by the sensory elements [of the situation]. ^{ck, r1, qq} Some poets are intuitive, like Shelley and Blake — an intuitive person would like Shelley as a poet — while others are not, like the unintuitive Keats, who takes a sensory delight in words and confines himself to their sensory richness.

^{ck, qq, r1, t2} The intuitive person therefore must be defined not by the nature of his values, but by his degree of awareness of a situation’s implications, and his rate of response [to them]. ^{r1, r2, ck} There is no content to intuition — it is, rather, a way of responding to a situation. ^{bg} Whatever its genesis, intuition is the direct awareness of relations.

^{bg} Here, however, [we must propose] a modification of Jung’s view. ^{bg, md} While Jung believes the intuitive type must be defined as a [separate] intellectual faculty, ^{lb} a more primordial kind of apperception, to me it is a phenomenon of *rate* of apprehension — “shorthand thinking,” in which minor elements merely don’t appear explicitly in the consciousness. ^{lb} The intuitive mechanism [is rather like the intellectual equivalent of] getting on the night train at Washington and awaking to find yourself in New Haven, [without being conscious of the points in between.] ^{bg, md} I believe that intuition is better to be conceived as a matter of general awareness of implications and relations, which extends into all spheres of mental activity. ^{bg} It is a third dimension in individuals’ cognitive-feeling life, [or perhaps] more a quantitative concept than a term to be applied to a special sphere of experience. ^{ck} You can have intuitives of all sorts, so this is [really] a criterion of a different kind.

^{t2, t1} Because intuition is [in large measure] merely a matter of rate, and the degree to which implications of form are made, I would not

[consider] it as a special [personality] type. I would prefer Thinking Intuitive, Feeling Intuitive, Sensational Intuitive, etc.,^{bg} for one can well speak of intuition in sensation, in thought, or in feeling.^{qq, r2, r1, ck} Even within sensory experience there may be intuitive acts:^{bg} an example of an intuitive sensationist would be an expert cook who can project the result of combining [taste ingredients to create a new dish,]^{qq, r1, ck, bg} or a musical composer imaginatively reconstructing or planning ideal sensory experiences,^{r1} like Beethoven's almost obsessive search for the perfect theme. (Much of life, however, is spent in inhibiting [this kind of] intuition.)

^{qq, r1, lb} In just the same way there is emotional intuition, and intellectual intuition, [the latter sometimes in conflict with non-intuitive thinking.]^{ck, r1} The history of science is a [continual] battle between these two points of view, [which we may call] the observationist and the Einsteinian type (^{h1} for Einstein is collossally intuitive, intellectually):^{r1, r2} [the type that] is interested in the unimaginative observation of facts, and [the type that] is interested in generalizations. The generalizations are derived from facts, but once a generalization is reached, the facts are disregarded and dismissed.^{qq, r2, r1, ck} The most obvious instance of intuitive study is in mathematics, which gives one structures in which to fit facts until finally one can practically neglect the facts altogether.^{lb} Like great physicists who know the "critical" tests [to make before making them,] great mathematicians know the answers before they are proven, [by a process of] projection.^{h1} The geologist in the field [is another example of someone with an] awareness of total relations without all the data at his disposal.

^{r2, r1, ck, lb} Intuition, therefore, means an ability to respond to implications rather than to experiences,^{lb} without [even] attending to all elements of the situation.³⁹ [But its results are not always pleasant or apt.]^{ck, r1} [The extreme intuitive,] Ibsen's Brand for example, has the cruelty and ruthlessness of the idealist, [always] substituting total implications for immediate experience. And because intuition is an inexplicit, un verbalized, immediate sense of relations, [it may also give rise to] idiotisms. [The intuitive's thought may show] a sort of dissociation, a schizoid quality.

[The question of social acceptability, too, is no less relevant to the intuitive than to other types in the classification.]^{h1} [To people whose primary] loyalty is to experience, [intuitives] are disloyal Lloyd Geogers. [On the other hand, since society requires assumptions that are often counter to particular realities,]^{lb} loyalty to reality can be anti-

social, as opposed to a loyalty to the "rational" social [principles].^{h1} ^{h1} Samuel Butler's *The Way of All Flesh* [is an example of anti-social disloyalty, in its] protest against the bromide that parents are kind to children.

99 Applications of the Types

⁹⁹. ^{r1} [Let us consider (as Jung does)] some applications of the types in [philosophy and in] literary work. ^{ch} According to Jung, all philosophers try to interpret God and the universe according to the thoughts and ideals of their early training and view of life. Thus Bergsonism is the philosophy of the sensational, while Dewey and James are very "thin" philosophers who try to be "hard-boiled." [The same process of personal interpretation applies in literature as well.] ⁹⁹ In [the work of] Anatole France, for example, the intellectual quality appears most conspicuously at the outset; the contemporary relevance of his emotional adjustment, his revolt, makes it more and more difficult to enjoy his works. ^{r1} There is too much emphasis on the intellectual machinery. ⁹⁹. ^{ck}. ^{r2} The same is true of Shaw, who is primarily an intellectual artist, expressing no feeling; ⁹⁹. ^{ck}. ^{r1} only Shaw is still more private, and one cannot identify with his characters except as ideas, because Shaw himself does not identify with them — he simply invents them as ideas. ^{r1} His plays are a little hollow, ^{ck} for there is no emotional investment,⁴⁰ no participation in universal feelings. ([A work that does so participate can therefore transcend its time and place:] Oedipus is still of great interest, because he deals with human feeling.)

⁹⁹. ^{ck}. ^{r2} Conrad, on the other hand, shows the opposite extreme of emphasis on the immediate reality of emotional experience. ^{r2} He is all feeling — he exhibits no intellect. ^{ck}. ^{r1} He doesn't understand his own characters [in an intellectual sense.] but rather he is [just] actualizing himself, for he has not transcended his own personal problems. He over-feels his characters: he is obsessed with Lord Jim, because he can never get away from his own anxiety. [Perhaps] Conrad is nuncing, for he triturates your feelings too much. Henry James, on the other hand, would like to feel a little more authentically than he really does.

⁹⁹. ^{ck}. ^{r2}. ^{r1} In Keats we see a sensory poet, but one whose world of sensory experience is heavily laden with feeling. Coleridge, in contrast, ^{ch} though his "Rime of the Ancient Mariner" is classical for its evocative value, ⁹⁹. ^{ck}. ^{r2}. ^{r1} has less feeling attached to his sensory emphasis. ⁹⁹

And here is indicated the independence of this valuational classification from the extravert-introvert classification. ^{qq. r2. ck. ch} For Kipling has perhaps equally a sensory emphasis, but it is quite extravert and objective, whereas Coleridge is an introvert, his images singularly devoid of realistic content or context, even though they are quite clear. ^{ch} Herein, perhaps, lies the difference between Coleridge and Kipling, or between Coleridge and Defoe, Stevenson, etc. as sensationalists. Let us take D'Annunzio and Coleridge: they are the arch-examples of extravert and introvert sensationalists respectively. In Coleridge's "Ancient Mariner" there is not an image that is not entirely vivid, and yet it is [somehow not quite real.]⁴¹ His sensations did not have to be real to be valid for him, but only the image of his sensations. D'Annunzio, on the other hand (or all extravert sensationalists), takes sensation as it is and identifies himself with it. Kipling would come under this class too.⁴²

So it is possible to be maximally sensationalistic and yet introverted — in contradiction of Jung's early contention. As Lowes showed, Coleridge's images came almost entirely from his reading, not from his own imagination or his own sensory experiences. From the reading which satisfied his desire for exotic experience, he subjectively reassembled the imagery; but it remains literary, not re-evoking one's own sensations. Unlike Keats, Coleridge did not have a great wealth in his own experience of sensations that were interesting to him.

[Now, if we can apply Jung's classification to philosophers and literary figures, might we not also apply it to other writers, including Jung himself? Perhaps a] ^{ch} comparison of Jung and Freud, [on the basis of Jung's typology, might shed light on some of the comments that have been made about their work. Thus] ^{ch} Jung, being of an intuitive and not of the intellectual type, and also having difficulty in finding words, has a rather poor machinery [for presenting his ideas]. (Language, [we might say, supplies the] "engines" in the theory of human intercourse.) But he has at his back a large mass of rich clinical material and experience. The types are, [for him, a kind of] preservation of the ego; he places the personality in a world of values, each type being valuable in its own world.

Freud, [in comparison,] has a clearer idea of mechanisms. More schematic in feeling, he disregards the self-preservative organism in an individual personality — and so he kills the personality in dealing with it. Freud is a better theorist and scientist, Jung a better clinician. A criticism of Freud may be that he thinks of adjustment as a simple unilinear process, when in reality it is not so.⁴³

^{bg} [As regards the] opposition to Jung [within psychology, then — whether it comes from the Freudian school or elsewhere —] there is much to be said for some of his opponents' conclusions, such as Jung's inability to link up his theories with modern psychological terminologies. But he is, after all, a clinical physician untrained in the subtleties of academic psychology. ^{bg} In any case, the present task is to build up a powerful dynamic psychology that will function as an instrument of analysis. That will come from a blending of psychoanalysis with more formal psychological concepts.

[Summary]

^{1923j} Those who have read Dr. Jung's "Collected Papers on Analytical Psychology" may remember that in an earlier tentative classification of types he was disposed to identify the introverted with the thinking, the extraverted with the feeling type. These very dubious identifications have now been abandoned [in his more recent work, *Psychological Types*]. Dr. Jung is perfectly clear, and the reader will be with him, about the independence of a classification based on general attitude (extravert and introvert types) and one based on the specific functioning of the psyche. Whether Dr. Jung's theory of the existence of four distinct functional types of personality is correct it would be difficult to say. It may be that a given personality tends to find its way in the world chiefly by aid of the intellect, of emotion, of intuitive processes, or of sensation; [I would prefer to revise this scheme somewhat. But even if you accept it] ^{1923j, t2, r1} it would be dangerous to erect the eight neatly sundered types that result from a crossing of the two points of view into a psychological dogma. ^{1923j} We may be quite certain that such a classification is too scholastic to prove entirely sound and workable.

^{h1} [In their general outline, and without assuming they are exhaustive, Jung's distinctions among personality types organized on the basis of] sensation, thought, or feeling — [cross-cut by the dimension of] intuition — are all probable, it seems to me. ^{ck} [Just as with the introvert-extravert classification, however,] most of this [typology] is descriptive, not dynamic. [Were we to try to explore the genesis of the types, we would have some difficult questions to answer, including the relation between the two classifications.] ^{ck, r1} Since there is no causal relation between Jung's functional types and the introvert-extravert types (value [types]), [do they have an entirely different genesis?]

^{r2} Probably there is some biological, inherited basis for [at least some] of these types. They are not entirely caused by environment. The problem is what values are to be attached to different kinds of phenomena, [and how does that association arise]? These values may be experiential, or they may be a product of one's nervous set-up. ^{ck} The introvert-extravert [distinction] answers the question as to what sort of world you live in, based on [your] unconscious selection from the world of experience. ^{r1} [Perhaps this is] due to environmental determination, while the other types (feeling, thinking, etc.) compare more with the old idea of innate ability. These functional types [concern] preferred regions of experience, [based on] unconscious selections, [as opposed to the] value types.⁴⁴

^{r1} As an example of [differences in] value types, [consider two possible approaches to the study of language. The first is interested in] language as an abstract [system of] meaning; [the second goes] beyond language [to what we experience directly, namely] speech. The emphasis on one or the other [is a difference] in content, not orientation as in the functional types. The field of speech [includes such matters as] speech melody ([i. e., is the melody someone uses] in a sentence when talking to you characteristic, [and if so, of what?]), and style ([i. e.,] to what [characteristics] are your [choices of] sentences or words attributed? to facility, immaturity, to what [you have] studied, or imitated? [what about your] separation of words?) [What is of interest here is the totality of] the implications and significance of speech and gestures, and the enormous implicative power of individual experience.

[Although the two analyses seem to be distinct, the study of language cannot ultimately rely on just one of them.] ^{1927h} [If] personality is largely reflected in the choice of words [(for example),] here too we must distinguish carefully the social vocabulary norm from the more significantly personal choice of words. Individual variation exists, but it can be properly appraised only with reference to the social norm. ^{1927h} We human beings do not exist out of society; on the other hand, we can never have experience of social patterns as such, however greatly we may be interested in them. ^{1927h} Society speaks through the individual. [One or another approach may appeal to us depending on our own personality type, but neither has an absolute claim to the truth.]

[Insofar as we look for cultural patterns and attend to individual experience only to abstract from it,] ^{ck} we [anthropologists] are obtuse about the implications of personality data. ^{r2, r1} [But are the psychologists really any better off? For all their attention to it,] the psychologists

miss the vital problem of personality – the total value set-up of the individual – since they persist in studying fragmentary psychological processes [and ignore the cultural forms in terms of which the personality meets the environment.]⁴⁵ 1998a Perhaps we social scientists who are always asking psychologists to aid us can be of assistance to them in suggesting reformations of psychological problems. I don't think it is too supercilious to suggest that the borrowing need not be all on one side.

Editorial Note

Sapir devoted a considerable amount of lecture time to the material in this chapter, most of which consists of a review and critique of Jung's classification of personality types. In 1937 he spent at least three lectures on this subject: February 1, March 1, and March 8. It looks likely that there was another lecture, sometime later in March, in which he concluded the discussion of Jung and moved on to culture and personality, although indications in the student notes are somewhat confusing (at this point some of the notes appear to be out of order and they lack dates). In 1934 the relevant lectures are those of March 20 (second half), April 10, and April 17. The Taylor notes from 1936 are undated. I have also drawn upon the Rockefeller Seminar lecture of February 16, 1933, on the "Theory of Personality Variations (Jung and Freud)," notes taken by T. P. Chitambar (CH).

The reader is also referred to Sapir's review of Jung's *Psychological Types* (1923j), and to the 1926 Hanover Conference paper, "Notes on Psychological Orientation in a Given Society" (1998a).

Notes

1. Note that CH has: "Jung's study is a personal and causal one but not a strictly scientific one."
2. BG has "set ups."
3. Note that Sapir does not necessarily mean "hereditary" when he speaks of the "genetically determined."
4. H1 has: "apperception – varies in learning –", BG has "Varying sensitivity to objects in environment."
5. H1 has "identify" (the object, not the self).
6. Here meaning "hereditary"?
7. The review of Jung actually reads: "Not until the last page is turned back does one fully realize how extraordinary a work one has been reading. It is often dry – it is sometimes

impossible to follow, and it is never very closely reasoned, for Dr. Jung accepts intuitively as given, as elementary, concepts and psychological functions which others can get at only by the most painful of syntheses, if indeed they can find a way to some of them at all. But it is a fascinating book."

8. R1 has: "The introvert blots out the environment except for what he chooses and turns on himself."
9. R1 adds: "Feeling of growth with denudation." This note about the introvert is juxtaposed with: "extravert; identification with the world of activity (Value in face of denudation of personality)". I surmise that Sapir meant that the introvert experiences a feeling of growth of the personality with denudation of the environment; the extravert, the reverse.
10. LB adds: "Formulae: extravert capitalist, laissez-faire: introvert socialist, small sacrifice to release mean of expression and personality freedom."
11. R1 adds: "Ibsen's "Brand" – introvert"
12. Roland B. Dixon (1875–1934).
13. In his 1926 presentation to the SSRC Hanover Conference, "Notes on Psychological Orientation in a Given Society" (1998a), Sapir made a similar point: "It [(compensation)] means, then, you can't tell whether a person is extraverted or introverted by a simple study of overt behavior. That is where many make drastic mistakes. If your whole culture is extraverted, it has a bias. Any individual has to be very extraverted in order to count as extraverted. Kinds of compensations that are habitual will need to be of different types in different individuals. I have sometimes arrived at conclusions that are different than those overtly suggested. I am thinking of a certain individual who would generally be considered introvert. I am convinced he is an extravert. He is playing up to an introverted society, to an introverted orientation familiar to him in childhood. His compensations are of a kind that need a certain kind of cultural knowledge to understand. If you carry these ideas to a logical conclusion, you will see, alarmingly enough, that psychology, psychiatry, all practical things we are interested in as to personality, are very much more involved with the problems of social science than we had thought."
14. This word actually looks like "half-pie."
15. H1 has "int." (introvert, etc.?)
16. BG has: " – in genetic fashion?" Again, Sapir probably means "developmental."
17. T2 has "feeling."
18. LB has: "Irrational (unordered) in spite of terminology and great number of categories give us socially culturally left-over unclassifiables for some: odor of rose – sensation, plus 'aura' (Persian poetry, Romantic Period)."
19. LB has "nativists."
20. The bracketed material is derived from a later statement in R2: "A child starts out with a feeling attitude towards life, and gradually takes over much of the intellectual attitude." See below.
21. Here Sapir referred his audience to the writings of Bret Harte.
22. BG has "plea."
23. BG adds: "Type typography. Perhaps possible to diagram this by getting responses in terms of definite individuals on gamut (1) bowing situations – friendly thru' to formal; on gamut (2) luncheon situations, inviting individuals to lunch, formal or informal – and linking up points on gamut scale."
24. The bracketed insertion is based on the following material from CH and a later statement in R2: "Thinking is often used to rationalize emotions...It is therefore the feeling type that tries to be most reasonable." BG, too, has: "Feeling type: feelings primary, reasoning used to rationalize feelings."
25. BG has "his philosophy punk," i. e. bunk?
26. H1 adds: "(A R Brown)."

27. It is not actually clear which type — if only one — this passage in H1 refers to. It reads as follows: “3 ‘Warm personality — man who is calm in face of disaster — take f’s funeral as opp. to do scientific work instead (emotionality in control) of escape from work — emotional chge defused — all thought animated — continually emotionally charged — feeling type vs. — *emotional type*: [feeling type] not nec. emotional —”
28. R1 has: “Divestment of situations of emotional equipment. Thinking of people in instrumental strain.”
29. It is clear that at this point Sapir distinguished between internal emotion and its expression, but the notes contradict each other as to which of these he called “emotion” and which “feeling.” Thus R2 has: “People differ in emotion rather than in feeling. Emotion is merely the expression of feeling...”, while CK has: “It isn’t emotion that people differ in but feeling, the use and expression of emotion in behavior.” QQ has: “If feeling is the free use of emotion, then it is in feeling that people differ significantly.” R1 has both R2’s “People differ in emotions rather than in feeling. Emotion is merely the expression of feeling,” and, later, after the discussion of indifference and expressiveness, “Difference not in emotion but in feeling.” I believe the first (R2’s) is the general point and the second applies only to the indifference vs. expressiveness point.
- The 1933 notes emphasize control rather than expression. BG has: “Feeling should not be confused with emotion, rather it is controlled emotionality, (anecdote of man who called to bedside of dying father, put in time working at an article) emotion doing the work of thought.” LB has: “feeling is emotion in control, no reservoir of undiffused inoperative emotion”. See also H1 notes quoted in a preceding footnote.
30. H1 actually has “rhyme”.
31. H1 (who has the expression “thought tendencies” in an earlier passage) adds: “are there spoofs?”
32. The second bracketed sentence comes from BG’s discussion (drawn upon earlier in the chapter) of the genesis of personality types: “...does the cultural configuration itself influence basic personality types? Jung gives no answer to these questions.” T1’s discussion of “sociological reality” (“Sociological outlook and balancing are factors in personality. Sociological reality versus any other reality is essentially what introversion and extraversion are”; and T2’s discussion (just above) of the individual’s ability to keep track of the organization of society’s demands.
33. H1 adds: “ attitude to smiles — ‘cheeses’.”
34. The full passage in CH reads: “... One cannot build up a world out of sensation and hence it is irrational. (It should be remembered that Jung’s primary classification is on the conscious level.) The significances of sensation are very real, especially to children, later in life, of course, sensation becomes symbolized — and when sensation becomes significant you have a peculiar type of person. These sensations may be either of the feeling, sound, or visual type — such people are irrational because they are mixing fresh valuations that are not accepted by the majority. Bergsonism is the philosophy of the sensational.”
35. T2 actually has: “Rational people are reasoning people, they rationalize everything.”
36. R1 adds: “Intuition — to Sapir a definite concept”
37. LB adds: “(Spengler’s dionysian? Lewis’ ‘time’ man?)”
38. R1 has: “(in tech. sense)”.
39. At this point Sapir referred the 1933 class to his work on phonetic symbolism (“A Study in Phonetic Symbolism,” 1929m). H1 has: “Sapir on phonetic symbolisms — also Newman!” LB has: “mi.la = stream, symbolism bogus thinking with inner consistency”
40. CK has “feeling investment”.
41. CH actually has “sensational” here, but the passage does not make sense with that word.
42. CH adds: “(See Machen, A.: *The Hill of Dreams*)”

43. CH continues: "According to Jung, feeling is not emotion, but it is an effective manifestation of experience of the individual. For Jung, there is not much significant difference between the total emotional experience of different people." It is not clear whether this passage still represents a comparison with Freud.
44. At this point, Sapir evidently gave an illustration from the study of language. What follows is an attempt to reconstruct this, but the result is quite doubtful, since the passage is represented only by a few sketchy notes in R1. After "Value types," R1 has:
- Language - abstract - meaning
 Speech - beyond language
 emphasis on one or other - in content (not
 orientation as in functional types)
 Field of speech
 Speech melody (charact...? is it) in a sentence
 when talking to.
 Style
 [two lines of illegible shorthand, perhaps reading:]
 To what ___ are your sentences or words ___
 [attributed??] ___ facility immaturity
 ___ ___ studied ___ imitated - separation of
 words
 Implications & significance of speech
 " " " gestures
 Enormous implicative power of individual experience
45. The bracketed material comes from the immediately following material in R2 and CK, which continues on the anthropological side of the contrast between psychologists and anthropologists, and between the study of personality and the study of culture. (See the beginning of the next chapter.) I have decided to divide the chapters at this point, but it does not coincide with the end of a lecture. Some lecture, probably an undated one from late March 1937, begins with this last section ("Summary...") and continues into the relation of personality and culture.
46. Next to the terms Rational and Irrational, LB actually has "(organized)" and "(unorganized)", respectively. Since those parenthetical labels are Sapir's rather than Jung's, I omit them from this initial passage where Sapir is presenting Jung's own terms.

Chapter 9. Psychological Aspects of Culture

*[The Difficulty of Delimiting a Boundary Between Personality and Culture]*¹

^{r2, r1} [If the psychologists' study of personality is deficient because] they persist in studying only fragmentary psychological processes. [omitting the cultural dimension,] the same is true in culture: [there too] we study fragmentary data. ^{ck} [As I have said,] we [anthropologists] are obtuse about the implications of data [that pertain to] personality. [The trouble is that both psychologists and anthropologists generally draw a sharp line between their disciplines and fail to recognize the overlap, even identity, of the problems they study.]

^{1934c} The failure of social science as a whole to relate the patterns of culture to germinal personality patterns is intelligible in view of the complexity of social phenomena and the recency of serious speculation on the relation of the individual to society. But there is growing recognition of the fact that the intimate study of personality is of fundamental concern to the social scientist. ^{1934a} [Indeed,] there is no reason why the culturalist should be afraid of the concept of personality, which must not, however, be thought of, as one inevitably does at the beginning of his thinking, as a mysterious entity resisting the historically given culture but rather as a distinctive configuration of experience which tends always to form a psychologically significant unit.²

[Thus the psychiatric view of personality as a configuration in which experience is organized in a system of psychological significance might also be applied to the problem of culture. So, for example, when we propose that] ^{r1} distinctions in nuclear attitudes are due to a difference in [one's] concept of a thing, [we might be speaking about personality or we might be speaking about culture.] ^{ck} [The attitude comprised in the individual's nuclear personality has an analogue in a cultural attitude, or what we might call] cultural loyalties – loyalties imbibed from your own culture which make you a little insensitive to the meanings in different cultures. You are obtuse to meanings that are not welcome, that do not fit into the old scheme of things.³

^{ck, r2, r1} From the personalistic point of view, the whole field of culture can be regarded⁴ as a complex series of tests for personality — ^{r2, r1} tests of ways in which the personality meets the environment. ^{ck, r2} All cultures have the potentiality of psychological significance in personal terms.⁵ That is, ^{r1, ck} the totality of culture offers endless opportunities for the construction and development of personality through the selection and reinterpretation of experience. ^{r2, r1} [Conversely, too,] the totality of culture therefore is interpreted differently according to the kind of personality that the individual has. ^{r1, ck} [Consider what happens to a person upon] entering a new cultural environment: the essential invariance of personality makes one alive and sensitive to some things and obtuse to others — [depending upon how the] new environment [matches up with] pivotal points from the old. ^{r1} [Your] awareness of certain things in a new cultural [setting] is a test of the old one, [a test of what the old one's pivotal points in fact were.]

^{ck, r2, r1} The study of etiquette is [another] good way to [approach the relationship] between personality and culture, for it is a field that unites the field of culture and the field of personality. ^{r1} Its conventional forms [are clearly] goods of a highly cultural kind, [yet these forms are manipulated by individuals for the most personal purposes.] ^{r2} How should we delimit the boundary between personality and culture [here] — between the cultural form and the individual attitude? ^{r1} [When the same forms evince both] the permanence of cultural dogma, on the one hand, and the expressiveness of the individual, on the other, ^{ck} it is difficult to know just what you are dealing with. ^{r1} [The study of] family relations, or of clothing, [would be other good examples of fields with similar problems.] ^{ck} There is nothing vainer than to classify [such cultural] organizations unless you know their psychological correlates. Some organizations may divide up into quite different segments.

^{r2, r1} The relation between personality and culture — [that is, on the level of observable behavior, between] behavior [expressing the personal concerns of the] individual and behavior [expressing] cultural [forms — has become] my obsession.⁶

*[Attitudes, Values, and Symbolic Structures as Cultural Patterns]*⁷

^{r1, ck} [In order to approach the problem of culture and personality, then, let us begin with a] characterization of culture in psychological terms — ^{r1} [or, to put it another way, with an exploration of the] psycho-

logical aspects of culture. [Even the anthropologist who thinks of culture as an assemblage of traits might find something of the sort on his list, for] ^{lf} certain attitudes are definite traits of a culture. ¹² ^{ck} ^{rl} A distinguishing characteristic of American culture is our businesslike attitude: an insistence on clear business objectives and an efficient economic organization, ^{ck} and our consciousness of the blueprint and of the organization of time. ^{lf} [The concept of] "self-help," and [the associated] tendency to action, [are similarly part of the] American [attitude.]

^{lf} Can one go a little further in defining a culture from a quasi-psychological point of view? [Perhaps] a culture can be looked at as having a psychological imprint. [Just as] we can say that the member of a society belongs to a certain race, and the biological elements tend to express themselves in that way, we can also say that certain cultures have an ideal program that the participants tend to realize. They have a role, culturally imposed. [When I mention the expression of racial elements, however, I do not mean to suggest that a culture's "psychological imprint" has a biological basis, only a certain analogy between the two processes of program and expression. Whether] there can also be interaction between the two [kinds of] elements [is a problem to be investigated with careful study, not assumed from the start.] [For instance,] is the [relative] humorlessness of the Indian [- at least from our point of view -] a racial characteristic or is it a cultural fact? [At this stage] I do not [think we can] know.]⁸

^{lf} [Many aspects of individual experience that we are accustomed to thinking of as entirely personal must turn out, if this point of view is consistently adopted, to have a cultural basis. Even] dream formations are a cultural fact. We are ashamed to admit the obsessive value of a dream; primitive peoples are not. [For them] dreams are prognostic. [We need not take that evaluation of dreams literally in order to recognize that the content of dreams and the evaluation of their significance are culturally shaped. Similarly,] the motive of revenge is a cultural fact: in certain cultures you are expected to [take] revenge, more than in others. [We might even ask,] to what extent, [in a given culture,] is inhibition or sublimation possible? [This extent] will be different in different cultures. [For example, characteristics evaluated as] "feminine" are so resented in the male, in America, that the artist, who is [in terms of such characteristics]] hermaphrodite, is blocked and has difficulty in developing himself.

^{lb} [We must acknowledge, therefore, that many of the] "motives" and dynamic unconscious "wishes"⁹ of the individual [derive from] cultural

patterns [and reactions to them. How this works may be quite complex. Consider, for example.] the reactionary "Humanists'" hatred for Rousseau — an opposition between pattern and protest. Thus we have the traditional man who is aesthetically comfortable in his vested psychological and cultural interests versus the trauma-driven innovator who meets life immediately, extra-culturally, and afresh. [But innovation is not always extra-cultural, however much the traditional man may see it that way.] Romantic [revolt becomes a pattern in its own right,] in opposition to the classical [scheme.]¹⁰

^{ck} This characterization of a culture [— in terms of patterned attitudes, motives, and values —] helps you to understand the lives of individuals and their relation to each other. ^{ck, r2, r1} For example, take a personal situation like two people [entering] a subway: each wants to pay his own way, his own carfare. ^{ck} Culture manifests itself in this situation, ^{r1} for there is a principle of economic independence and [of what constitutes a] debt relation [that is demonstrable] ^{r2} in the balance of how individuals spend money.¹¹ ^{r1} In the countries of continental [Europe there would be] a different attitude.¹² ^{r2} This is a system of value; and there are peculiar systems in each culture. ^{lf} In Italy, [for instance, we find a systematic value in] expressiveness; in Japan, in the evaluation of sensation; in China, in [the relatively] little solicitude toward salvation.

^{r2} These are the patterns of culture, and they are at a different level than ordinary psychological behavior. [It is not that personality has no bearing upon them:] ^{ck} the solution of conflict, for example, is also affected by personality, [not only by cultural form. But it would be impossible in any case to assess personality utterly independently of culture.] Knowledge of the culture gives you a point of reference. You know what is the expected behavior; [only in relation to this can you interpret what the individual actually does.] ^{lb} [Consider, for example, a clinical case of "neurosis": a girl patient engages in a ritual in which she throws shoes at a door.¹³ Now, if you are going to say that] the girl who threw shoes at the door [was "neurotic," you] have to know that throwing shoes wasn't the culturally-patterned reaction to the situation — [that it involved, instead,] a refusal to accept culture, [and a creation of a] personal [system of] tabu and rituals. Neurosis is definable only in terms of a culture, which is implicitly present and acknowledged by the clinician. It is not explicit, [but it is crucial nonetheless.]

^{ck} Anthropology has a great deal to teach psychiatry, therefore. ^{ck, r1} The psychiatrists make the mistake of ignoring social factors, [espe-

cially] the different balances of values in different cultures. ^{ck} In fact, they are usually unaware of what the cultural values are. ^{r1} ^{ck} It is a fallacy [to conduct] a personality analysis without a sociological and cultural analysis first, for only after the cultural analysis can you really understand the personality. ^{r1} But psychiatrists set up a universal norm [of behavior] without considering this point.

[Of course, we can turn this argument around as well, for] ^{r2} there is never a simple dichotomy between individual personality and culture. [From the individual point of view,] actually, culture elements are merely symbols which enter into the total personality. ^{ck} Culture only takes account of the symbolism of behavior in the social sense; [there are other symbolisms, and (especially) attitudes toward symbolisms, which are personal.] Personality conflicts go beyond the plane of culture, [and we shall have a good deal more to say about this. For the time being, however, the point is that on the individual level] there never can be a mere expression of the cultural pattern. Personality always enters in. ^{r1} ^{ck} The dichotomy between culture and personality is not real, because they reinforce each other at all points.

^{r1}, ^{r2}, ^{ck} In understanding culture [and its connection with the personality, however, it is not sufficient to consider only the particular symbols themselves.] The *placement*¹⁴ of symbols is the important point of view. ^{r1} For example, [think of] a good singer [who performs] an operatic aria at an evening at the opera. ^{r1}, ^{ck} [Now, the idea] that opera is a high form of culture is one of the values accepted by all. But if the singer, unmasked, bursts into song at a tea party, the situation is different. ^{r1} [The aria] is the same cultural form, but in a different placement. At the tea, music exists only as something to be referred to, [not as behavior to be engaged in; and this distinction is often overlooked.] ^{ck} If you had asked any member of the party which they thought more important, a well sung aria or a tea, the answer would be the aria. But this is not taking cognizance of the placement of symbols. The question cannot be answered in the abstract, but must take into consideration time and place. The singer at a tea is not a singer [here and now]; she is a symbol of an important value outside, and is part of the ritual of the tea party. The singer as such is a point of reference in the formality of the tea ritual.

^{ck} Absolutists, [attempting to determine the significance of a behavioral form like the operatic aria,] confuse contexts; they do not place symbols. Most of us are absolutists if caught off guard. But in that situation music did not exist, except as a symbol to be referred to. In

that context it was [not appropriate as behavior, only as] a point of reference.

^{ck, r1} Most of our references are highly symbolic, [and the placement of these symbols in relation to one another is complex. This] structure of symbols makes it difficult for us to see the facts of our society and our cultural environment straight. ^{r1} [Just as] the configuration of elements in a spatial structure [may obscure our perception of any one of those elements individually, so] ^{ck} are we far from seeing our cultural environment [directly, except through this lens. In a sense it is a configuration of illusions:] ^{ck} it is the mapping of symbols that makes it possible for us to be mean to each other when we want to be nice — [that makes it possible for our behavior to be interpreted in some way other than what we intended — and creates a pyramid of misunderstandings that we hold about one another.]¹⁵ In a crisis, like the European war, such illusions are shattered and the pyramid of symbolisms falls.¹⁶

^{ck} [We are confronted by many contacts in ordinary life¹⁷ in which commonplace misunderstandings provide] examples of the placement of symbols. Suppose that A owes B, the head of a great business, twenty-five cents. A might want to pay B, but B says, “No, we will send you a bill.” To him, taking the twenty-five cents would be misplacing symbols, because B at that moment was not B the [representative of the] business but Bill, a friend; and the idea of receiving the twenty-five cents out of context was upsetting. [In this incident A and B differ in their interpretation of the placement of the symbol, the twenty-five cents.] ^{r1, ck} Not all people always interpret the placement of symbols in the same way.

[Perhaps it is not too fanciful to derive from our little tale of A and B some moral for those who like to think of] ^{ck} the “necessary history” of man [and his conflicts.] The needs of the biological organism are few, compared with the complications [introduced by] culture. But if culture complicates the satisfaction of biological needs too much, there comes resentment and anger, and the pyramid of cultural symbols crashes — [making way for] new cultural understandings, new complications, another crash, and so on. [Conflicts and crises, then, may go beyond the plane of culture¹⁸ but they cannot be fully understood except in terms of the relations of individuals to one another through the medium of a structure of complicating, and sometimes misleading, cultural symbols. This is not, incidentally, the view taken by the authors of most ethnographic monographs.] The robots in ethnographic monographs don't

care; they just do what they do, while culture, [by some mysterious means,] “resolves” the conflicts.

[It would be equally mistaken, however, to suppose that cultural symbols, even a lack of agreement on the placement of symbols, must necessarily lead to conflict any more than to its resolution.] ^{r1 ck} Although people do not agree in their placement of symbols, two different people may live in harmony without really meaning the same things. They may even *do* the same things but have them *mean* entirely different things. What is necessary for them to share is only a minimal understanding, concerning the mechanics of the situation. ^{r1} [They may thus appear to agree quite profoundly, yet] their agreement is, [in a sense,] spurious, for it is without any analysis of the situation.

^{r2, r1, ck} You get, therefore, two kinds of sliding scales:

(1) The sliding scale of the placement of symbolism within a cultural pattern — for the symbol may be of high value or low value, depending on its situation; and symbols are placed in different positions in different cultures.

(2) The sliding scale of the placement of symbolism according to personal (individual) values. ^{r1} [As we have said,] not all people interpret the placement of symbols in the same way. People make use of symbols in order to satisfy their own personal needs, [which may, of course, differ. Even] the same person can have different reactions to culture, according to [his or her] personal reactions to the placement of symbols. ^{ck, r1} [And there are also differences in] the degree of personal participation, in an emotional sense, in the cultural situation.

^{r1} Thus the placement of symbols in context [points up] the fallacy of [claiming to] observe the psychology of a culture, [as such.] The psychology of culture only arises in the relations of individuals; the psychology of *a* culture means nothing at all.

[If we take these discussions seriously we must conclude that] ^{r1} the implication of much of the social-psychological literature now being produced is a bit mischievous. [It confuses the two kinds of scales.] and ^{lb} their different strata of “givens.” ^{r1, r2, ck} This is what Mead and Benedict do — they confuse the individual psychology of all members of a society with the “as-if” psychology of a few. I use the term “as-if psychology” to describe the process of projection of personal values by the individual to evaluate cultural patterns, [so that a cultural standard of conduct is seen as if it represented the expression of a personality. This is a metaphorical identification,]^{19 ol} not to be interpreted literally. ^{1937a} The presumptive or “as if” psychological character of a culture is

highly determinative, no doubt, of much in the externalized system of attitudes and habits which forms the visible "personality" of an individual.²⁰ It does not follow, however, that strictly social determinants, tending, as they do, to give visible form and meaning, in a cultural sense, to each of the thousands of modalities of experience which sum up the personality, can define the fundamental structure of such a personality.²¹

*Culture as "As-If" Psychology*²²

[Now, before we continue with our discussion of psychological aspects of culture, a note of caution must be sounded.]^{ck, r1} The term "cultural psychology" is ambiguous,^{99, ck} and there has been much confusion between two types of psychological analysis of social behavior.^{99, r1} The one is a statement of the general tendencies or traits characterizing a culture,^{r1} such as the pattern of self-help in our culture; [as we have pointed out,] different cultures do have certain delineating factors,^{r1, r2} [including attitudes and] psychological standards about emotional expression.⁹⁹ The other is a statement of certain kinds of actual behavior, [by actual individuals,] related to these cultural patterns.^{r1, ck} [In other words it is a statement of] the individual's psychology, and the problem of individual adjustment [to a cultural setting.]^{99, r1} (This confusion is to be found, for instance, in the seven articles by psychiatrists about to be published in the *American Journal of Sociology*.²³ Alexander and Sullivan keep level-headed in their attempts to relate psychiatry and the social sciences, but some of the others are rather confused.)^{ck} These two kinds of psychology are not the same thing, but are in intimate relation with each other.^{lf} [Moreover, the second kind has a further ambiguity, which perhaps we can see if we consider the notion of the individual's] "integration." What do we mean by [this term?] An adjustment to society, on the one hand — or the [coherence of the] thought, ideas, etc. of a man as seen by him, on the other hand? The same things can integrate or dis-integrate two different men.

[If the idea of a "cultural psychology" is so tangled, ought we to speak of such a thing at all? In a sense perhaps we ought not. Strictly speaking,]^{r1, r2, ck} culture, in itself, has no psychology; only individuals [have a psychology. On the cultural plane] there is only [what I call] the "as-if psychology":^{r1, r2} that is to say, there is a psychological stan-

ard²⁴ in each culture as to how much emotion is to be expressed, and so on. ^{r2} This is the "as-if psychology" which belongs to the culture itself, not with the individual personality. ^{ck} [If we call this a "psychology" we are speaking] *as if* this scheme of life were the actual expression of individuality. ^{1937a} The danger of [too literal an interpretation of this process] in the social formulations of the anthropologist and the sociologist is by no means an imaginary one. Certain recent attempts, in part brilliant and stimulating, to impose upon the actual psychologies of actual people, in continuous and tangible relations to each other, a generalized psychology based on the real or supposed psychological implications of cultural forms, show clearly what confusions in our thinking are likely to result when social science turns psychiatric without, in the process, allowing its own historically determined concepts to dissolve into those larger ones which have meaning for psychology and psychiatry.

^{qq. r2. r1. ck} Ruth Benedict's book, *Patterns of Culture*, is a brilliant exposition of as-if psychology, but with confusion about the distinction made here — ^{r2} she is not clear on the distinction between the as-if psychology she is discussing and the psychology of the individual. ^{25 ck} A culture cannot be paranoid; [to call it so suggests] the failure to distinguish between the as-if psychology and the actual psychology of the people participating in the culture. ²⁶ The difficulty with *Patterns of Culture* is that certain objective facts of culture which are low toned are given huge significance. [I suspect that individual] Dobu and Kwakiutl are very like ourselves; they just are manipulating a different set of patterns. [We have no right to assume that a given pattern or ritual necessarily implies a certain emotional significance or personality adjustment in its practitioners, without demonstration at the level of the individual. Perhaps] the Navajo ritual can be considered as just their way of chewing gum. You have to know the individual before you know what the baggage of his culture means to him.

^{ck} In itself, culture has no psychology — it is [just] a low-toned series of rituals, a rubber stamping waiting to be given meaning by you. The importance of cultural differences for individual adjustment [may well be] exaggerated, [therefore, for we may equally well suppose that culture means nothing until the individual, with his personality configuration, gives it meaning.] ^{r1} [In other words,] the apparent psychological differences of cultures are superficial — although they must be understood, of course, to know how to gauge the individual's expressions of his reactions.

¹⁹⁸⁰ [What I want] to bring out clearly [here is] the extreme methodological importance of distinguishing between actual psychological processes which are of individual location and presumptive or “as if” psychological pictures which may be abstracted from cultural phenomena and which may give significant direction to individual development. To speak of a whole culture as having a personality configuration is, of course, a pleasing image, but I am afraid that it belongs more to the order of aesthetic or poetic constructs than of scientific ones.²⁷ [It is a useful metaphor for cultural patterning, but it loses its usefulness if it is taken literally.]²⁸

^{ck, qq} [For this very reason — that one is dealing with aesthetic constructs —] it is easier to apply a thing like Jung’s [classification of] psychological types to cultures than to individuals. If you take the way of life of a community as “a psychology,” it is easy to classify your cultures. ^{qq, r2, r1} On this basis, [one might speak of extraverted and introverted cultures: thus] American culture²⁹ of today on the whole is extraverted, ^{qq} recognizing no efficacy in unexpressed or only subtly expressed tendencies; we are willing to court private ill-will so long as it does not gain public expression. ^{qq, r1, r2, ck} The Chinese and Japanese cultures seem definitely more introverted, [emphasizing] internal feeling (note, [for example, the Japanese custom of] hari-kiri, and the Chinese [type of] suicide [committed] so as to haunt one’s enemy). ^{ck} But this [characterization of the culture] does not mean that the individual is extravert or introvert.

^{ol} [If we consider] the possibility of constructing a typology of culture on the basis of a psychology of individual types, [therefore, we must not lose sight of the fact that] the social psychologies of such cultural types are not to be interpreted literally, but as “as-if” psychologies. ^{md} Culture types are fictitious; but they are useful — [at least] until we have a more powerful knowledge of personality types — ^{ol} as a point of view as regards the relation of the individual to society. ^{bg} In the culture typology, culture is personalized, so that an individual acts extravertedly in adjusting to it.³⁰ If Moreover, the “typology” is important for understanding cultural [integration.]³¹ ^{1934a} The more fully one tries to understand a culture, the more it seems to take on the characteristics of a personality organization.

^{1998a} In other words, we can look upon socialized behavior as *symbolic of psychological processes* not [necessarily] illustrated by the individuals themselves.³²... So we can characterize whole cultures psychologically without predicating those particular psychological reactions of

the individuals who carry on the culture. That is somewhat uncanny, but I think it is a reasonably correct view to take of society.

[In this light let us consider some examples of what we might call strongly introverted cultures.]⁹⁹ [In this sense of the term] some of the Amerind tribes seem introverted, as Benedict shows,^{md, bg} For instance, the Yuman culture of the lower Colorado, with its emphasis on dream experiences, is certainly an introverted type of culture.^{lb, bg} [To them] it is possible to annihilate time and space by dreams and get back to the beginnings of things and to the source of all potencies. If this kind of mechanism — ^{bg} the actualizing of power through wishes and dream creation — ^{lb} which is like the shrinking child's wish-phantasies, becomes habit, values may grow up around it and accumulate, [tending toward] that introverted cast of society (an extraverted society would kill the introverted meaning and recast it; or it may be loaded in another direction at a critical point). When the Yuman says, "I know that this is true because I saw it in a dream," he is in immediate touch with truth, and the symbolic triumph [gives him a] great "kick." This society puts premiums on "as-if" introversion; there is a masking of true extraverts, then,^{bg} for the extraverts are using the mechanisms provided by society, [including] a narcissistic libido expression — no color or glamour.⁹⁹ The extreme romanticism of the early nineteenth century would probably be quite impossible in many of these societies.

^{99, r2} Some of the [other] Amerind religions too, like the Mohave, seem almost neurotically introverted.⁹⁹ In some Amerind religions this goes so far as a real denial of the evidential value of the external world in an annihilation of time, with the shaman going back to the creation and actually seeing standardized events there. This is an introvertedly evangelical religion, then.^{r2} Mohave culture has a strange dreamlike character,^{ck} an introverted [cast,] while the external culture is quite colorless. It is important to recognize that this is generally the case. Usually if the outer life is colorless one is apt to assume [a correspondingly] poor development of the inner life, when [actually] just the opposite is true.^{r1, r2} Introverted cultures are generally correlated with sober and drab material cultures, [because they place] less emphasis on external values.

⁹⁹ It makes good sense, then, to talk about extraversion and introversion in culture as a helpful guard against undervaluation of the development of other peoples who have different values from those of our own culture. The Australians, for example, are probably much less primitive than they seem, because of their extreme introversion.¹¹ I wonder if

some injustice has not been made in styling them as primitive, since they have [such] a complicated mental life. ^{qq, ck, r2, r1} The Eskimo, on the other hand, seem to us more highly developed and further advanced in culture than they really are, because their culture is extraverted, technological and non-fantastic. ^{ck} [Even] their mythology is more novelistic than dreamy. ^{qq} Thus many things in our [own] culture are better developments of things the Eskimo is already interested in, and acculturation would be expected to be easy so far as the purely cultural determinants are concerned. ^{r1} [The Eskimo] adapt easily to our mechanical appliances, for example.

^{lf, bg, md} Hindu culture too seems to be essentially introverted, for it is the most classically timeless. We seldom find dates in Hindu history, and the feeling that past and present meet — that things are not distributed in an evident sequence of years, and that there is not a *before* and *after* — is a typical sign of introversion. ^{lb} [The few] dates [we do have for Hindu history] are given by outside archaeologists and numismatists. In Hindu society there is an almost absurd annihilation of the external world (in contrast to Chinese culture, which is relatively [more] extraverted in its interest in dates). ^{lf} In India, self-contained feeling is as valuable as action; [thus] the custom of self-imposed torture for handling the world is very important. Whereas in Europe asceticism [is considered] a private problem, in India there is the feeling that this asceticism is extremely potent. [This idea of the] vanity of the life of sensations is typical [of introversion, as is the associated Hindu notion that] the pleasures of the senses are sufferings. All forms of life are one; in the course of [existence] you can take different places ([i. e. become different forms of life]), ^{kb, bg} for the self-existent entity is not a temporal one, [but something more like] a concept of a master idea, [or Platonic ideal. Thus] Sanskrit, [in the Hindu view, embodies] an absolute, mystic perfection of sounds and letters. It is a Platonically patternable language, ^{lb} a perfect pattern [against which to compare] the imperfections of reality. These mystic ad hoc realities, which for us are merely part of the stream of possibility, [illustrate introversion's characteristic] regression phantasy and annihilation of the difficulties of existence. ^{33 lf} [And just as] introverts are persuaded more by verbal formulations [than by sensory experience,] Hindu culture is full of verbal fetishism.

^{lf} [In contrast, as I have suggested above,] American culture is essentially extraverted: in American culture action is more important than thought. Success [is measured by] fulfillment in the material world, for

all values are measured with external standards. Thus a scientist gets mad because his salary does not look to him as an adequate return for his archaeological work. ^{bg} Gandhi's passive resistance would be impossible in New Haven.

^{qq, ck} [In addition to the introvert/extravert contrast,] Jung's functional classification can also be applied to culture [in the same manner, and certain contrasts between cultural configurations can thereby be brought out.] ^{qq, r2, r1, ck} For example, there are cultures which as a whole seem to have an intellectual cast, such as the Athenian ^{qq, r1} (and hence our relative ease in feeling ourselves into it, since its type of consciousness — with its intellectual values — is so much akin to ours; it is the temper of the culture, rather than the content, that we primarily appreciate). ^{qq, r2, r1, ck} The culture of the Plains Indians, on the other hand, as contrasted [with the Greeks and also, closer at hand,] with Pueblo and Navaho culture, is characterized by a greater emphasis on the urgency of immediate *feeling*. ^{qq} The Pueblos' nostalgia [(for feelings previously experienced)] seems absent from the Plains because of the urgency there of immediate experience and the ease of having a vision, or enjoying ecstasy, at any time. The Plains [culture] being also extraverted, there is no privacy of feeling, and there is public boasting about visions and bravery, confessions of adultery, etc. ^{r2, r1} (as among the Eskimo also). ^{r2} There is a tremendous rivalry regarding prestige [in these matters.]

^{ck} One who was a psychological sensitive could tell in advance what types of things, games, myths, [and so on] would "take" in a culture, and what would not — and why. ^{r1} [However, it is worth repeating yet again that these] culture characterizations are not definitive. [only suggestive.]

^{ck} [With this caveat we may continue with our typology and notice that] cultures also vary in intuitivism, although here the differences are not as great as between individuals. [Recall that on the level of the individual, the] ^{qq} intuitive [shows] enormous differences in the rate of movement of thought or phantasy, and in the wealth of implication. [What I mean by saying that] ^{r2} certain cultures are more intuitive than others, therefore, is that ^{r1} the wealth of implication differs from one culture to another. ^{qq, r1} American behavior has a remarkable wealth of implication,³⁴ ^{qq} but as to inward life it seems rather lacking in this respect as compared, for example, with the English; the English seem to assume many things without stating them and almost regard it as

indelicate to make them explicit, whereas Americans would be more likely to take a practical, engineering attitude. ^{ck, r1} [But] English intuitiveness is in regard to internal rather than external things; ^{r2, r1} their culture is less intuitive than the American in physical matters. ^{35 ck, r1} An introverted mold, [a pattern of] whimsical fancy is characteristic of English writers, while in French culture – more intellectual [(in Jung's terms)] – epigram, not whimsy, is characteristic.

^{ck, r2} The life of sensation also varies in different cultures. ^{r2, r1} In France, China, and Japan there is a tremendous emphasis on sensation values; yet there is also a selectiveness to the sensation values, and a balance of sensory enjoyment. ^{ck, r1, r2, qq} Although an insistence on sensation for its own sake is conspicuous in French culture, the French do not "go out" for sensation in the way we do, because it does not have the hectic quality that it does for us. ^{qq} The French have educated their sensations; ^{ck} they are discreet and reasonable even in their licence, and do not go the limit and become debauched as do Americans and English. ^{36 r1, r2} While Americans go to the extreme [when they indulge the] sensations because they feel [sensations] to be so bad they cannot be treated nicely, the French go into them restrainedly, for ^{qq} they do not have the good/evil dichotomy which makes us feel we may as well go the whole hog if we are going to break rules at all.

^{qq, ck} It begins to look, then, as if these various cultures had technically limited psychological possibilities. ^{r2, r1} [In other words,] culture limits the opportunity for the personality to express itself in the way it is best suited. ^{qq, ck} Now, how does this affect the individual? ^{ck} [Perhaps we must conclude that the world is full of] "mute inglorious Miltons." Culture is sometimes not rich enough to give an individual an opportunity for expression.

Editorial Note

On the several occasions on which he gave the course after 1928, Sapir apparently changed his mind as to the organization of topics remaining after his discussion of Jung's classification of personality types. Whereas the Outline moves immediately from Jung's typology to an analogous typology of culture, in 1934 Sapir inserted his discussion of the adjustment of the individual after Jung and before embarking on cultural types ("as-if" psychologies). He concluded the course with a

lecture on symbolism, as the mechanism mediating between individual and culture. In 1936, the Taylor notes suggest relatively little emphasis on a typology of culture, the discussion of "as-if" psychologies being framed instead in terms of the social adjustment of the individual and the psychology of personal action. The course apparently concluded with a lecture on "primitive mentality"; if there was a lecture on symbolism, there are almost no notes on its content. In 1937, Sapir expanded the material and began to incorporate into it a discussion of situational analysis and the contextual interpretation of symbols – topics only briefly alluded to in earlier years. These discussions have a rather exploratory air to them. They enter in both before and after the April 12 (1937) lecture on cultural types, and one gets the impression that Sapir was very much interested in these ideas but had not yet integrated them into a tightly coherent argument. Sapir's comments on "primitive mentality" and art are appended to the April 19 (1937) lecture, with little indication in the notes as to how (if at all) he might have used them to draw the whole course to a conclusion.

The 1937 notes present some internal problems for interpretation. Apparently, three and a half lectures are involved: the second half of an undated lecture of late March; April 5; April 12; and April 19. CK seems to have typed the April 19 lecture before the April 5; RI has some duplications that suggest she may have taken notes on someone else's notes as well as her own; and QQ has nothing until April 12.

Since Sapir was evidently rethinking the connections among these topics and what he wanted to say about symbolism, I have followed the 1937 notes for order of presentation and for the discussion of symbolism, even where the notes are sparse (making reconstruction difficult and choppy) and loosely organized. The present chapter is based, therefore, on the lectures from late March, April 5, and April 12, 1937. Material from 1934, 1936, and the Rockefeller Seminar (introductory lecture, undated notes by Leo Ferraro, LF) are drawn upon only for topics where Sapir's ideas are consistent throughout the decade (principally, for the discussions of cultural attitudes and "as-if" psychology). I have also drawn upon Sapir's letter to Philip Selznick (Oct. 25, 1938), as well as Sapir's published works, though with these it has again been important to make sure a quoted passage is fully consistent with Sapir's 1937 statement of his position.

The lecture of April 19, 1937, on individual adjustment, will be taken up in the next chapter, along with the material on this topic from other years. The discussion of "primitive mentality" is relegated to a separate chapter (ch. 11), as is the 1934 lecture on symbolism (ch. 12).

Notes

1. Material from a lecture of late March, 1937. The chapter actually begins in the middle of this lecture, which Sapir had begun by concluding his remarks about Jung.
2. This sentence continues, in the 1934 publication, as follows: "...and which, as it accretes more and more symbols to itself, creates finally that cultural microcosm of which official 'culture' is little more than a metaphorically and mechanically expanded copy. The application of the point of view which is natural in the study of the genesis of personality to the problem of culture cannot but force a revaluation of the materials of culture itself." Though the idea that both personality and culture can be viewed as symbolic systems lending a distinctive configuration to experience is quite consistent with Sapir's 1937 statements, the notion that culture might be just a mechanically expanded copy of personality seems not to be.
3. Reconstruction of this introductory passage is difficult: the three note-takers' brief statements here do not go together in any obvious way.
4. R2 has: "It would be possible to define culture as..."
5. R2 has "All culture has potentiality..."; CK has "In all cultures there is potentiality..."
6. R2 has: "Sapir's obsession is the relation between personality (individual behavior) and culture (cultural behavior)." I have altered the wording to reflect the strictures expressed in an earlier chapter on the contradictory notion of "cultural behavior." R1 does not have this phrase.
7. This section is based on the lecture of April 5, 1937.
8. LF actually has:
 "...A culture can be looked at as having a psychological imprint.
 "We can say: the member of a society belongs to a certain race, and the biological elements tend to express themselves in that way.
 "We can also say: certain cultures have an ideal program that the participants tend to realize; they have a role, culturally imposed.
 "There can also be interaction between the two elements. Is the impossibility of understanding humor an Indian racial characteristic or is it a cultural fact? I don't know."
 I have altered the choppy syntax, paragraphing, and some wording that strikes me as not quite Sapirian, to what I hope is a style closer to Sapir's. In so doing, however, it seemed to me that I had implied a closer link between the biological and the cultural than the LF notes do, a link that would be quite inconsistent with Sapir's position as expressed elsewhere. The bracketed material is inserted to clarify this point.
9. Here LB refers to the psychologist [Edwin B.] Holt.
10. The bracketed material derives in part from other LB notes on European Romanticism.
11. R2 actually has: "In personal situations, there is a balance of spending money on individuals."
12. CK adds, perhaps as amplification of the European attitude: "Bourgeois society appears to be extravagant, but is really careful."
13. LB's notes include this case, along with some other material, under the heading "Sapir on Culture and Neurosis." The material assembled under this heading does not seem to correspond to any one lecture or section of a lecture as recorded by other note-takers, so I have taken the liberty of scattering it through this chapter where topically appropriate.
14. i. e., contextualization. See chapter 5 on the "placement" of a cultural element in a cultural configuration. Sapir's discussions of contextuality and systemic relations seem often to draw upon a geometrical model; see his 1925 letter to Benedict on gestalt psychology and a "geometry of experience," published in Mead 1959:177.
15. The pyramid image occurs at several points in the notes on Sapir's lectures, and in his published writings as well. See, for example, the encyclopedia article on "Symbolism"

- (1934e): "Thus individual and society, in a never ending interplay of symbolic gestures, build up the pyramided structure called civilization. In this structure very few bricks touch the ground."
16. CK continues: "returns to Mother Earth — Biology"
 17. This wording comes from Sapir's 1930 presentation to the SSRC Hanover Conference (1998b).
 18. Earlier in the same lecture CK has "Personality conflicts go beyond the plane of culture."
 19. Wording in the bracketed passage derives in part from CK's "As-if psychology — as if this scheme of life were the actual expression of individuality." This sentence occurs in CK's notes from April 5, but I have placed the quote itself with the April 12 material. See also "The Contribution of Psychiatry to an Understanding of Behavior in Society" (Sapir 1937a) on the "dangerous" metaphorical identification of society with a personality, or of culture with actual behavior.
 20. In the actual text of "The Contribution..." (Sapir 1937a) this sentence continues "... and until his special social frame of reference is clearly established, analyzed, and applied to his behavior, we are necessarily at a loss to assign him a place in a more general scheme of human behavior." Several passages in this paper are reminiscent of material in Sapir's lectures of April 1937.
 21. Sapir evidently concluded the lecture of April 5, 1937 with a critique of works by Benedict and Mead; he took up the critique again in the lecture of April 12, repeating some of the same points. For smoothness of written presentation I have moved some of the April 5 comments to the April 12 section.
 22. The organization of this section is based on the lecture of April 12, 1937, supplemented by material from April 24, 1933 and the Rockefeller Seminar (Ferraro notes) where pertinent.
 23. *American Journal of Sociology*, 42 (6), May 1937, an issue consisting of papers from a symposium of psychiatrists and social scientists on "social disorganization." The psychiatrist contributors are Alfred Adler, Franz Alexander, Trigant Burrow, Elton Mayo, Paul Schilder, David Slight, and Harry Stack Sullivan (see bibliography for full references). Sapir's paper, "The Contribution of Psychiatry to an Understanding of Behavior in Society," comes immediately after the psychiatrists' and comments upon them. The issue continues with articles by sociologists Herbert Blumer, William F. Ogburn and Abe Jaffee, and Mark May (see bibliography).
 24. Later writers on culture and personality used the term "norm" for a similar concept.
 25. Sapir seems also to have suggested that Mead and Benedict projected their own values onto the cultural patterns they describe in psychological terms. RI adds: "Benedict [assesses] Zuni from emot. evaluation | sensory type would ev. Zuni from sensory pt of view — [emphasizing] forms — color — ritual — ..." Sapir's distinction between emotional and sensory personality types derives from Jung; see ch. 8.
 26. CK adds: "(this is Mead)."
 27. The passage I draw upon, in this letter of October 25, 1938, begins thus: "I judge from a number of passages in your essay that you share my feeling that there is danger of the growth of a certain scientific mythology in anthropological circles with regard to the psychological interpretation of culture. I believe this comes out most clearly in Ruth Benedict's book, "Patterns of Culture." Unless I misunderstand the direction of her thinking and of the thinking of others who are under her influence, there is an altogether too great readiness to translate psychological analogies into psychological realities. I do not like the glib way in which many talk of such and such a culture as "paranoid" or what you will. It would be my intention to bring out clearly, in a book that I have still to write, the extreme methodological importance of distinguishing . . ."
 28. The bracketed material is based upon statements in OI and MD's notes. I include it here to avoid suggesting a contradiction between this statement in the Sedwick letter

and the class notes. That Sapir had not abandoned the idea of "as if" psychological pictures in the last years of his life is clear from his lengthy exposition of them in the 1937 lecture notes.

29. QQ has "society" throughout this passage.
30. For one of Sapir's clearest statements about "as-if" psychology, see "Notes on Psychological Orientation in a Given Society," 1926 (1998a), especially the following passage (from which I have extracted a portion, below): "We can say of all individuals who go through the forms of religious conduct that they are acting *as if* they were inspired by the feelings of those who really feel religiously, whether they really are or not...In other words, we can look upon socialized behavior as *symbolic of psychological processes* not illustrated by the individuals themselves...[(after a discussion of French culture)] The point is, the psychological slant given at some time or other in the general configurations we call French culture by particular individuals became dissociated, acted as a sort of symbol or pattern so that all following have to act *as though* they were inspired by the original motivation, as though they were acting in such or such a psychological sense, whether they temperamentally were or not...So we can characterize whole cultures psychologically without predicating those particular psychological reactions of the individuals who carry on the culture."
31. LF has "But the 'typology' is important to understand culture," as the concluding sentence in the paragraph beginning, "What do we mean by 'integration?'"
32. Italics original.
33. LB also mentions, "Chicago Hindu arguing about the *real* 'b' and 'p'." See "Notes on Psychological Orientation in a Given Society" (1998a), in which this anecdote is related in detail.
34. Sapir was probably referring to Anglo-America rather than Native America here, even though QQ has: "Amerind [?] behavior has remarkable wealth of implication,...". R1 has: "Much implication – action – American culture."
35. That Sapir gave some anecdotal illustration of this contrast is suggested in R1: "ques. asked about food on ship bet. Kobi & China – Stewart Richards ob. [?] all right. Of course, only imitation food. – whimsical fancy. – American would attack such a ques. with engineering attitude of attacking fancied problem: then joke. – Typical English attitude."
36. CK adds, "who have not educated their sensations."

Chapter 10. The Adjustment of the Individual in Society

[The Problem of Individual Adjustment: The General View]

^{ri. ol. ak} [Let us turn now to] the problem of individual [adaptation] to the requirements of society: the tacit adjustment between the psychic system of the individual and the official lineaments of the [social and cultural environment.] ^{md} The discussion of personality types that we have [engaged in] heretofore, [with reference to Jung's psychiatric approach, on the one hand, and with reference to its metaphorical extensions on the plane of culture, on the other.] is important not so much [for the types] in themselves as from the point of view of personality adjustment within and to a culture.

[You will recall our suggestion that] ¹¹ the psychology of culture has [two quite distinct dimensions:] (a) the as-if psychology, or the meaning given by culture [to one's behavior,] and (b) the actual, and much more intricate, psychology of personal action. [What we must now ask is, what is the influence of the one on the other?] ^{r1} What is the effect of these cultural "casts" on the individual, whose avenues of expression are provided by society?

[If personality were but the consequence of one's racial inheritance, or if there were no variability of temperament among the members of a society, our interesting problem would not arise. There would be little reason to distinguish between the two dimensions of the psychology of culture in the first place.] ^{11. r1. r2} I believe, however, that the differences in personality are fundamental and that the variation [of personalities] is about as great in one culture as another, the variation only taking different forms in different cultures. [I find myself somewhat skeptical, therefore, about certain recent works on culture and temperament, such as Margaret Mead's writings on Samoa.] ^{bs} Mead's work is pioneering in the sense that she realizes that different cultures result in different personality transformations. She is entirely oblivious, however, to the play of personality differences within a primitive culture, and treats primitive personalities as being all alike on the same dead level of sim-

ilarity. For example, it is likely that in actual fact there are personality misfits among Samoan adolescents brought up under the old free Samoan pattern; yet Mead has nothing to say of this and assumes all personalities developed according to one type.

^{bg} Probably we have in all cultures [individuals of] the same basic personality types to deal with, such types, for example, as Jung depicts in his [book.] The problem, then, is to show the way those basic types are transformed or re-emphasized or re-aligned according to the master idea[s]² of each diverse culture. This is an immense problem, [for whose solution the usual methods of anthropological work are scarcely adequate: it presents us, therefore, with] the difficulty of acquiring new techniques. The broad program would involve:

(1) a thorough study and knowledge of the cultural patterns of a group:

(2) an attempt to study personality types of selected individuals against or in terms of this background, perhaps by keeping a day-to-day diary, or [through a] case study of selected personalities in their relation to each other and in reaction to key cultural situations. But the culture must be analysed beforehand with special reference to its master ideas. Only then can one begin the task of understanding personality transformations that occur through the impact of culture contact on native personality configurations.³

⁹⁴ Defining the process of adaptation to a culture thus involves a definition both of the personality type and of the demands of the culture. ^{ak} [Moreover, in order to define the personality type and understand its adjustments we must remember that] there is a difference between the psychological constitution of an individual — his real characteristics — and that of his group behavior or appearance in the society as a whole.

^{ak} [For example.] the group may admire male aggressiveness toward women, and demand of its male members such clearly masculine characteristics. These are socially suggested and approved in that given culture, and the different individuals reflect this pattern in a variety of forms and degrees. Of course, the prior outlines of the [person's] individuality have the utmost significance. These must be taken into consideration, [but] in order to find the true personality of the individual we have to [go through] an enormous amount of elimination of certain aspects of traits. (The more we know about the culture, the more adequately we shall be able to [speak] about the individual's real personality.) [Thus this culturally-patterned] aggressiveness appears differently

in different individuals. [This is not only because individuals' nuclear personalities differ, but also because] it is in relation to others' aggressiveness in the milieu that one has to organize one's social behavior.

^{ak} [In so organizing their behavior] people act symbolically and not individually. The intellectual general in the army who is an engineer or perhaps a physician is not primarily concerned with, or interested in, aggressiveness and the war affairs of his group. He is perhaps looking for new symbols for his own satisfaction, but he cannot break the social patterns that are required of him. This behavior [(the behavior that conforms with his group's aggressiveness and interest in warfare)] is an indirect expression of group loyalty. He behaves so, not in harmony with his [own] desires, but accommodating himself to "as-if" preferred cultural patterns of his society. Thus, [in a case like his] there is a conflict with the preferred psychological patterning of the society, and the psychological patterns of society are unreal to the personality⁴ in such circumstances.

¹¹ [For this reason,] no adjustment [defined simply] on the basis of an as-if psychology can be acceptable to the psychology of personal feelings. ^{ol} The problem of individual adjustment in society [may involve a variety of] methods of adjustment, successful and unsuccessful. ^{ak} [Moreover,] the energy spent in the process of adjustment to the preferred social patterns differs very much among individuals. The individual, to the extent of the difficulty he encounters, is abnormal in assimilating the psychological aspect of his culture.

[Now, suppose that a person has especially great difficulties of adjustment. The aggressiveness we were just speaking about may also arise as a consequence of this.] ^{ak} [His difficulty would display itself as] unusual aggressiveness, which is [really] cowardice. [For example, consider] an individual who, with a [wish for a] childish [form of] intimacy, wants a considerable hearing; but he cannot [have it] with every single individual member of the group.⁵ So, he hates the group and becomes excessively aggressive. He is not, therefore, "normally" aggressive, [only derivatively so as a result of his difficulties of adjustment. The particular nature of his aggressiveness reveals itself in his unusual acts: for instance,] he may enter the presence of a dignified and respectable elderly professor in a Napoleonic manner, making rationalizations of his own. He continues to be effectively aggressive [only] as long as his behavior is not repudiated by the group, [which it may well be. His case is different from] real aggressiveness, which belongs to the real personality, and receives some recognition among the members of the society.

¹¹ [But it may be the case that the personality's adjustment to a social environment takes a different form, such as sublimation. For example,] to lie [to someone] for [reasons of] good manners is [a form of] sublimation of an original anxiety of circumstances. [One might say that because cultural patterns dictate what "good manners" are and when a lie is appropriate,] culture gives the key to the problem of sublimation. But individuals do not arrive at [this] end-point by the same means. [Moreover, some sublimations will go unnoticed because cultural patterns are available to handle them; but this is not the the sum total of the sublimations effected by all the individuals in a society. We label as] perversions [those sublimations] without a cultural background into whose patterns the sublimation may be made, for those are [the sublimations] that stand out, while culturally handled perversions are absorbed. Culture gives the terrain of normal sublimation effected by the individuals [in the society, and as cultures differ so do the forms of sublimation "normal" to them. The introduction of] peyote and the Ghost Dance could "take" in the Plains but not in Pueblo [culture, therefore, since these forms of sublimation were consistent with "normal" cultural patterns in the one case and not the other.]

^{11, 12} [The psychology of culture thus includes two distinct questions:] What are the general psychological roots of any culture pattern and of the as-if psychology? ¹¹ What is the personal psychology of [those] individuals who tend to follow the first [(i. e., the patterned as-if psychology)] and [what is the personal psychology which,] when divergent [from the cultural prescription,] will be envisaged as a morbid, obvious tendency?

^{md, bg} We know that certain cultures act selectively with regard to certain personality types. ^{1b} The culture pattern, [we might say, shows a kind of] receptivity for a type. A shaman in Chukchi or Eskimo society, [for example, behaves like] an hysteric, [while] shamans are homosexual on the Northwest Coast. ^{6 bg} [Other religions, such as] Christian Science, [also provide avenues and roles for the hysteric and may even capitalize on their behavior], as Arab culture capitalizes on Muhammad's neurosis. ^{7 md} Culture acts acceptingly and electrically in response to significant personalities. ^{1b, bg} The patterns of a culture make it hospitable to a [certain personality] type, but the patterns [too] are continually being tested through the adjustment of individuals to them. ^{bg} While a [certain type of] individual adjusts better in one culture than another, [a cultural] desire to accomodate aberrant personalities may result in new increments of social value. ⁸

[In some cases, then, we see that it is possible to] ^{ak} capitalize on the defects of one's personality. ¹¹ [This possibility is not only a question of the match between an individual and a type of society, but also of the individual's form of] ⁹ compensation — and over-compensation, which is just the former to a greater degree than is necessary or customary. ^{ak} Such personalities [as compensate effectively] are among the most powerful members of society, for it is when in necessity that persons develop their [native endowments, such as their] genetically-endowed intelligence. The better adjustment occurs in the compensating types of personality, and less energy is consumed in the achievement. ¹¹ [In this process] those who associate themselves with the social order are the powerful interpreters of society — the Mussolinis, etc. The timorous man has not this identification with societal necessities, [although his compensations may be effective in other ways.] The tendency not to quite face a situation, but to translate one's lack [of ability to conform to its behavioral demands] into some other form which will be to one's own advantage, is a form of compensation.

[Everyday life is full of examples of forms of compensation. For instance,] ¹¹ an inability to make a flowing hand involves the compensation of [making, instead,] a very severe, fence-post handwriting. [In general, the more] rigid the law or the rules [about something, as with the handwriting] rules of this type, [the more likely they are to be] an example of an escape mechanism or compensation. [Now, to label something a] compensation is not a criticism. [Compensations are necessary and, as we have seen, they are sometimes a positive advantage. Not every personality compensates equally easily, however.] If the individual identifies himself too well with a problem and does not rely on symbolism [to find an advantageous form of behavior], then the job of compensation is harder.

[Thus] ^{ak} the society may expect the person to participate, at least to a certain level and degree, in the aesthetic requirements, to be able to play the piano for instance, and this urge may be imposed by the father upon his son who does not possess so keen an interest in the subject, and whose natural equipment may not be so favorable. This maladjusted person may turn out to be a neurotic in the major role[s] of the society. Yet another person may acquire symbols for adjustment or use, as an escape, humor which is accepted by the group. He willingly admits his defects and gets around the difficulty cleverly by reconciliation. This is overcompensation and over-adjustment. ¹⁰

¹¹ [Indeed.] humor is a good compensatory institution;¹¹ [and as it is an institution, perhaps there is a sense in which] a whole culture can be described in terms of compensation.¹² In present[-day society our] more or less strict social mores concerning sex, saloons, stag parties, and so on are [patterned like] compensations, as is the gross humor of Puritan society. Humor makes good something that has been starved out. Generally humor is valuable only to the individual, [as in the kind of case we were discussing earlier. Serving as the personality's means of adjustment or escape,] it is a purely personal matter. [On the other hand, it is also dependent on cultural patterns; so a certain] cultural adjustment is necessary before certain kinds of humor can be appreciated. The mother-in-law joke [will hardly be appreciated in a culture where the mother-in-law is] taboo.

[These considerations about compensation illustrate the complexity of the problem of individual adjustment to the demands of culture. And it is fundamental to bear in mind that]^{ak} the culture is not just an inert psychological value. [From one point of view, of course,] culture is merely a pattern; it is in process only when the individual participates. These patterns, however, themselves are psychological problems and impinge upon the individual at a very early age. And the various types of adjustment [which the various types of personalities effect] give us a very large number of social-psychological processes.

^{ol} [The variety of] methods of adjustment, successful and unsuccessful. [in turn affect the patterns of culture: as we have said,]^{lb} culture patterns [— though they are historically derived —] are continually being tested in the adjustment of individuals [to them. Which plays the greater role — the weight of anonymous tradition, or the act of the individual?] The anonymity of anthropological method [stands starkly opposed] to the Carlylism of historians [who see history in terms of the acts of great personalities. I should prefer to suggest, however, that]^{bg} the stability of culture depends on the slow personal reinterpretations of the meanings of patterns.^{bg, lb} Adjustment consists of the linking of the personal world of meanings onto the patterned, social world of meanings.^{lb} Thus one's "personal culture" is a pattern [seen] for what it *means* to the individual, [who places] personal emphasis on some values as opposed to others; [and this in turn affects] the viability of the values [over the long term.] [Cultural] vitality [is made] not of impersonal sequences of events, but a pooling of these many case-histories and statistical ironings-out.

^{bg} [Perhaps we can say something more about] the personal world of meanings, [if we consider] ^{1934a} the field of child development. As soon as we set ourselves at the vantage-point of the culture-acquiring child, [with] the personality definitions and potentials that must never for a moment be lost sight of, and which are destined from the very beginning to interpret, evaluate, and modify every culture pattern, sub-pattern, or assemblage of patterns that it will ever be influenced by, everything changes. Culture is then not something given but something to be gradually and gropingly discovered. We then see at once that elements of culture that come well within the horizon of awareness of one individual are entirely absent in another individual's landscape.

^{md} [If we are to understand the transmission of culture, or indeed the whole problem of culture from this developmental point of view,]¹³ the time must come when the cosmos of the child of three will be known and defined, not merely referred to. ^{fn} The organized intuitive organization of a three-year-old is far more valid and real than the most ambitious psychological theory ever constructed. [Yet, our three-year-olds are not all the same.] Our children are fully developed personalities very early; [we do not quite know how this comes about, but it depends considerably on] ^{ak} the interactions between the child and his early environment up to the age of three.¹⁴ ^{fn} [Even within the same family, each child's] world is a different kind of a thing because the fundamental emotional relationships were differently established [depending on his status] as first or second child.

^{bg} In the child's cosmos, patterns of behavior are understood emotionally, [in terms of a particular constellation of relationships].¹⁵ The genetic psychology¹⁶ of the child will show specific emphases of meanings of patterns which are used to handle and control the people and events of the social world. ^{bg, ck} [Thus words and other symbols do not have exactly the same meaning for the child as they will for the adult, for in the child's world] various words have special values and emotional colorations, [taken on through their] absorption [in the child's] emotional and rational [concerns].¹⁷ Later additions of meanings must be seen in the light of the nuclear family complex and its effect on personality development. ^{1934a} It is obvious that the child will unconsciously accept the various elements of culture with entirely different meanings, according to the biographical conditions that attend their introduction to him. It may, and undoubtedly does, make a profound difference whether a religious ritual comes with the sternness of a father's authority or with the somewhat playful indulgence of the mother's brother.¹⁸ [So it is only through patient studies of child develop-

ment, concerned with a limited number of specific individuals, that we may really begin to understand the connections between] ^{lb} childhood constellations and religion, between infantile *Apperzeptionsmasse* [and the meaning of adult activities,¹⁹ [between the child's] hunting in closets and [the adult's] scientific interest in crystallography.

^{ak} As [has been] suggested by Dr. Sullivan, studying a limited number of personalities, for about ten years, by different representatives of the fields of social science will, no doubt, be of great help to understand more clearly the problem of personality. [The same is true for the problem of culture.] ^{ak} This study will take the individual as early as possible in life and follow him through for quite a considerable period of time with utmost care and with cooperation and mutual aid of each system and method of approach involved. ^{1934a} Study the child minutely and carefully,²⁰ with a view to seeing the order in which cultural patterns and parts of patterns appear in his psychic world; study the relevance of these patterns for the development of his personality; and, at the end of the suggested period, see how much of the total official culture of the group can be said to have a significant existence for him. Moreover, what degree of systematization, conscious or unconscious, in the complicating patterns and symbolisms of culture will have been reached by this child? This is a difficult problem, to be sure, but it is not an impossible one. Sooner or later it will have to be attacked by the genetic psychologists. I venture to predict that the concept of culture which will then emerge, fragmentary and confused as it will undoubtedly be, will turn out to have a tougher, more vital importance for social thinking than the tidy tables of contents attached to this or that group which we have been in the habit of calling "cultures."²¹

^{1934a} If we take the purely genetic²² point of view, ... problems of symbolism, of superordination and subordination of patterns, of relative strength of emotional character, of transformability and transmissibility, of the isolability of certain patterns into relatively closed systems, and numerous others of like dynamic nature, emerge at once. We cannot answer any of them in the abstract. All of them demand patient investigation and the answers are almost certain to be multiform. [For, a part of what we are investigating is the emergence of a personal cosmos and, in an important sense,] ^{md, lb, bg} a personal cosmos — a personal world of meanings — is a separate culture. ^{lb, bg} The totality of culture is more many-chambered and complex than we suspect.²³ We take meanings that apply to the majority of individuals in a group and thus create the illusion of an objective entity which we call "culture" or a collective body of meanings. ^{bg} But it is an imaginative abstraction. ^{lb} Thus [— to

recall an argument we made in an earlier chapter —] it is so hard to speak of the “causes” of historical events. ^{bg} Culture history has fate [perhaps, even] necessity, but no causation. ^{lb} The “reasons” [we give to cultural forms are] only harmonizations of our [own] ideas. ^{lb} ^{bt} The true reasons [we draw the abstractions we do] are difficult [to recognize, and] many times would be embarrassing and dangerous [for us were we to do so.]²⁴

^{ol} [Investigating] the problem of individual adjustment in society [has thus led us inevitably to] the concept of pluralism of culture in a given society. [For the patterns of culture are subject to] endless reevaluation as we pass from individual to individual and from one period to another. [We have also seen something of the relationship between] individual and cultural configurations: how they [may] correspond, reinforce each other, overlap, intercross, or conflict. [In this process, culture is reinterpreted and its patterns respond to the individuals adjusting to them; personality does likewise. For] ^{1998b} while several factors may be responsible for individual differences in personality the one of considerable importance socially is to find what the general social patterns mean to individuals who participate in them.

^{1998b} [In sum,] the thesis is that the degree of agreement between the meaning which the individual comes to see in social patterns and the general meaning [which] is inherent (for others) in those patterns is significant for an understanding of the individual’s process of adjustment, as revealing harmony or conflict.

[Individual Adjustment to Changing Conditions]

¹¹ It is said that for one individual one type of society is best; [in fact, we have implied as much in earlier pages.] But this [statement, if it is to be taken as anything more than the acknowledgement that some personalities find adjustment to their social environment particularly difficult,] involves a need for correct analysis of two societies plus one individual — analyses which are not easy to make.

[Suppose however that we consider the case of some one individual who happens to emigrate to a new social environment. Suppose that he is a scatterbrain and, finding that his fellows in his native setting react unfavorably to his behavior, he moves to Paris, where his life is easier. Is he now better-adjusted?] ¹¹ A scatterbrain in Paris does not adjust better there; his adjustment is the same as before. But the type of judge-

ment [the members of the surrounding society make] of his adjustment is more lenient. Such a thing as a foreign accent will [actually] help [his] adjustment, [or rather it will] lessen his own problem of adjustment, by reducing the demands of others. [Their] judgement [is more lenient because, hearing the accent, they recognize him as a foreigner and expect less of him. In this case it is not the mode of adjustment that is at issue, only the society's tolerance of foreigners.]^{r1} Indeed, if one cannot adjust to the society in which one has been nurtured, how can one adjust better to one in which one has come at a late date, except in the way above of charitable misunderstanding on the part of the host society?

[At first glance all instances of immigration might appear to be the same as this one. But that is not so.]^{qq, ck} In contemporary America especially, a society where institutions are changing, important theoretical advances may be made concerning the relation between culture and personality.^{r2, r1} Where conditions are not very stable, as in the U. S., the relation between personality and culture becomes very important: contrary to Europe, the individual has a choice of several as-if psychologies.^{qq} There is a remarkable flux of status and function and a remarkable "selfness" of the individual.^{r1, qq} [Now, while great] importance [is placed on] the individual, and we are meeting individual peculiarities much more hospitably than ever before, [what looks like hospitable accommodation by society to the individual personality in one sense is part of a particular cultural pattern, in another:]^{ck, qq, r2} it is part of the extraverted, intuitive character of American life.^{ck, qq} [Ours is a] rapid pace, pretty much in the open; and this can be thought of as exhilarating or as shallow.

^{qq} What Europeans will accommodate themselves best [to American life? Perhaps they are] those who have the least to lose [by accommodation] — sometimes those least adapted to the older system.^{qq, ck} There will be an attempt to recapture the old [cultural] symbols in the new context; where this is not possible, the old will quite degenerate.^{qq} There is, then, a tendency for those who become successful to adapt themselves by really adopting the new culture.^{ck, r1} In America, complete transvaluations ([i. e., cultural shifts, or] acculturation) are commonplace.^{qq} This acculturative process must be strictly distinguished from the [case of our scatterbrain in Paris, or, analogously, the] process by which the American culture simply makes itself hospitable to, say, an Englishman who preserves or even accentuates his differences from his American fellows.

^{ck, r1} There is no significant acculturation that is not painful, however. [As we have just said,] if the attempt to recapture old symbolisms in

new terms cannot be achieved, disintegration results. Indeed, all the processes of adjustment of the individual to society involve some sacrifice. [There is always some] clash between the demands of a personality and those of a culture. ^{r1} The process of [actively] adjusting or passively conforming to the culture [can be the source of what appears to be merely a] personality problem.

^{r1} Thus the theory that unless one is a neurotic one can adjust to any culture cannot be absolutely correct. ^{r1}, ^{r2} I believe people differ fundamentally in personality — ^{r1} though it is fashionable to believe otherwise — and that personality can be read in terms of explicable factors. Cultures [also vary, so that some cultures,] because of certain values [central to them,] are not as suitable to some personalities as to others. ^{ck} No theory of neurosis is needed to account for the difficulty of the individual in adjusting to the culture. ^{r2} We are too quick to brand many of these personalities as abnormal; actually, every one of them might²⁵ be perfectly adapted to some one as-if cultural psychology, [had it but found itself in the right cultural environment].

^{r1} [If it is the process of adaptation, and not necessarily just the personality itself, that may be the source of maladjustments, there may actually be] two ways maladjusted people can be helped: one [of these] is to change the personality; the other, to change the patterns or concepts [by means of which the personality interacts with its environment. But] perhaps just as some [people are constitutionally] too delicate to survive physically [in the geographical environment in which they find themselves], in the cultural landscape the same may be true of personalities. ^{ck} A certain amount of [psychological] death rate in adjusting the personality to the cultural climate [must be expected, just] as in adjusting physique to [physical] climate. ^{r1} While the strategic placement of the individual in [just the right type of] society may be a possibility theoretically, it is hardly so in practice.

[Can There Be a "True Science of Man"?)

[We have now spent some time discussing] ^{r1} the tacit adjustment between the psychic system of the individual and the official lineaments of the [social and cultural] environment. [It is clear that the life of the individual in society can never be just a simple and direct expression of his own nuclear personality, for it must always take social pressures into account.] ^{r1} The organization of [social] force [impinging on the

individual [comprises] many [forms of coercion,] from the tyranny of one's little boy to governmental force. [From these pressures] we are too cowardly ever to be free.

^{r1} The factors of inner adjustment are difficult to know. ^{r1, ck} The process of adjustment is not only the matter of finding a place in the cultural setting, [a problem each individual might face equally] regardless of what the individual personality needs are. ^{r1} [It is a problem of] the adjustment of the personality [itself, and the form of one's participation in society.]²⁶ Those who are well-adjusted because [their participation subjects them to] less thwarting — [perhaps because their] professional [situation,] etc., [satisfies their personality needs] — are unaware of the concept of carrying around a psyche that is always fighting for psychic existence.²⁷

[So, how are we to approach these problems, from an analytical point of view? What scientific discipline, if any, might] ^{1939c} take on the character of [a sufficiently] inclusive perception of human events and personal relations? [Many of the disciplines constituted as special sciences of man's physical and cultural nature will disappoint us if we look to them for help. Tending to create a framework of tacit assumptions about the nature of man which enable their practitioners to work with maximum economy and generality, they present only fragmentary pictures of man, pictures which are not in intelligible or relevant accord with each other and which tend to become more and more estranged from man himself.]²⁸ ^{1939c} The classical example of this unavoidable tendency is the science of economics, which is too intent on working out a general theory of value, production, flow of commodities, demand, [and] price, to take time to inquire seriously into the nature and variability of those fundamental biological and psychological determinants of behavior which make these economic terms meaningful in the first place. The sum total of the tacit assumptions of a biological and psychological nature which economics makes get petrified into a standardized conception of "economic man," who is endowed with just those motivations which make the known facts of economic behavior in our society seem natural and inevitable. In this way the economist gradually develops a peculiarly powerful insensitiveness to actual motivations, substituting life-like fictions for the troublesome contours of life itself.

^{1939c} The economist is not in the least exceptional in his unconscious procedure ^{r1} [that creates an] economic theory in which psychological factors are not recognized. ^{1939c} In linguistics, abstracted speech sounds,

words and the arrangement of words have come to have so authentic a vitality that one can speak of "regular sound changes" and "loss of genders" without knowing or caring who opened their mouths, at what time, to communicate what to whom... The laws of syntax acquire a higher reality than the immediate reality of the stammerer who is trying to "get himself across"; ^{r1} [but his] speech errors cannot be described or explained, [let alone] escaped, only linguistically. There are psychological reasons [for them too — reasons linguistics has excluded from its concerns.] ^{h2} One can go far in a discipline without placing it in the cosmos of man.

^{1939c} [Perhaps] cultural anthropology and psychiatry [are better placed to make formulations about man and his place in society which can prove accurate when tested by the experience of the individual.]²⁹ Each of these disciplines has its special "universe of discourse" but at least this universe is so broadly conceived that, under favorable circumstances, either of them can take on the character of a true science of man. Through the sheer weight of cultural detail and, more than that, through the far-reaching personality-conditioning implications of variations in the forms of socialized behavior, the cultural anthropologist may, if he chooses, advance from his relatively technical problems of cultural definition, distribution, organization, and history to more intimate problems of cultural meaning, both for individuals and for significantly definable groups of individuals. And the psychiatrist may, if he chooses, advance from theories of personality disorganization to theories of personality organization, which, in the long run, have little meaning unless they are buttressed by a comprehension of the cultural setting in which the individual ceaselessly struggles to express himself. The anthropologist, in other words, needs only to trespass a little on the untilled acres of psychology, the psychiatrist to poach a few of the uneaten apples of anthropology's Golden Bough.

[Perhaps it will be possible to see where the middle ground between our two disciplines might lie if we consider the problem of the relationship between] ^{r1} personality demands and symbols. ^{ck} [It takes no long acquaintance with psychiatry to discover that a human being's] personal strength is augmented by touching society's [symbols] and the individual[s own] symbols at some points. [But what the psychiatrist may overlook is that there are] two orders of symbols — individual and social. [Let us remind him that he needs to concern himself with both, and to recognize that the social plane of symbols touches intimately on the individual's motives and experience, for those symbols are fundamen-

tally involved in our everyday interactions with other members of our society.] ^{r1} [As individuals whose lives intertwine with others,] we use the same symbols as others do so that we can advance our own interests. [It is not because we have transcended those interests and moved into an exalted realm in which we] care about society's welfare — [a matter about which, in any case, we can have no impersonal judgement; we] only have [personal] preferences. ^{ck} [Indeed, the nature of your] individual adjustment colors your philosophy of society. It is the process of adjusting your personality, not your cultural role, [that is so influential in organizing the world of meanings which includes your conception of "society" itself, and in terms of which personal action is undertaken and interpreted].

[By the same token, the cultural anthropologist whose primary interest in symbols lies on their social plane needs to recognize that] ^{ck, qq} cultural considerations alone can never explain what happens from day to day — they are inadequate for predicting or interpreting any particular act of an individual. [The reason for this, in a nutshell, is that in those particular acts] ^{qq} the individual is not adjusting to "society," but to interpersonal relationships.³⁰

[Faced, therefore, with] ^{ak} the difficulty of segregating the [psychological and the social] systems, [and convinced that] the gap between the sociological approach and the psychological approach must be filled and both systems must be used, [I find that] ^{1937a, r1} I am particularly fond of Dr. Harry Stack Sullivan's pet phrase of "interpersonal relations." ^{1937a} The phrase is not as innocent as it seems, for, while such entities as societies, individuals, cultural patterns, and institutions logically imply interpersonal relations, they do little to isolate and define them. Too great agility has been gained over the years in jumping from the individual to the collectivity and from the collectivity via romantic anthropological paths back again to the culture-saturated individual. Reflection suggests that the lone individual was never alone, that he never marched in line with a collectivity, except on literal state occasions, and that he never signed up for a culture. There was always someone around to bother him; there were always a great many people whom his friends talked about and whom he never met; and there was always much that some people did that he never heard about. He was never formed out of the interaction of individual and society but started out being as comfortable as he could in a world in which other people existed, and continued this way as long as physical conditions allowed.

[The study of "interpersonal relations" is] ^{ck} the problem of the future. ^{qq. r1} It demands that we study [seriously and carefully just] what happens when A meets B — ^{r1} [given that] each is not only physiologically defined, but each [also] has memories, feelings, [understandings,] and so on about the symbols [they can and must use in their interaction]. ^{r2. r1} It is also necessary to study variations in individual behavior in different circumstances; ^{ak} [for] the individual's whole behavior is modified in a new situation, and even his facial expressions change. [And it is also necessary that we study the consequences of the fact that] ^{qq} the differences between individuals make different things happen when A and B are different people, ^{qq. ck} or when someone else, C, is with them. ^{r1} Thus A may be very friendly to B when alone and yet not friendly when C is present. And what happens when C substitutes for A? When all three meet? When one of the three is removed and another added? [In each case you have] a new situation. [In any situation] when two people are talking, they create a cultural structure. [Our task, as anthropologists, will be to determine] ^{ck. r1} what are the potential contents of the culture that results from these interpersonal relations in these situations.³¹

^{r2} I think we should abandon [our present] abstract terminology [for a while] and study each situation as it occurs. In this way we will be able to study the values of behavior [in both] individual and cultural [dimensions — the first of] which anthropologists now carefully avoid. [We would be recognizing that we do not have, as our immediate object of study, a culture adapting to a physical environment, but human beings adjusting to actual situations, by means of structures of symbols. It is not usually the physical environment itself that we adjust to in any case, but what we see as environment.] ^{r1} Secondary symbols of the environment are most important, [then, and these are] things we have invented.

^{r2} To do this thoroughly — [to study each situation and all its implications —] is, of course, impossible. But the students of culture must not leave these [considerations] out of account. ^{r2. r1} The student must proceed as follows: (1) study the individual behavior [arising in a particular situation, in] the relation between A and B, etc.; (2) abstract the cultural patterns from it; (3) make the generalizations [that turn out to be pertinent at the level of the totality of culture]. At present most anthropologists work from (3) to (1). ^{r1} [But I think it is not unreasonable to suggest that] every student of culture ought to have [some] feeling for

the relationships of people – [and only] then abstract the forms [we call culture.]

^{r2} [What I wish to propose is that we take seriously the proposition that] cultural, linguistic, and historical patterns are derivative of interpersonal relations, though they are meaningful. ^{r1} [Until we are sure of their] testability in behavioral terms, [we will never be sure of the] import of the cultural “phenomena” abstracted by anthropology.

Editorial Note

This chapter includes material from the end of the lecture of April 12, 1937, and the lecture of April 19, 1937. The Taylor notes (1936) and notes from the lecture of April 24, 1934 (mainly from BG, MD, LB) are also included, as is Sapir’s lecture on “The Adjustment of the Individual to the Requirements of Society” in the Rockefeller Seminar (notes by Ali Kemal, AK). I have also drawn on excerpts from the “Lecture to the Friday Night Club” (Oct. 13, 1933; FNC) and “The Emergence of the Concept of Personality in a Study of Cultures” (1934a), both of which contain discussions similar to the lecture of April 24, 1934.

In 1937, Sapir concluded his discussion of adjustment with a discussion of “interpersonal relations” and what we would now call situational analysis, a topic he had scarcely touched on in earlier years. To fill out the material from the 1937 lecture I have drawn on excerpts from “The Contribution of Psychiatry to an Understanding of Behavior in Society” (1937a) and “Psychiatric and Cultural Pitfalls in the Business of Getting a Living” (1939c).

Notes

1. See Sapir 1998a on the “mentality of races,” and the concluding lecture of the Rockefeller Seminar (RM notes): “To study the problem of the relations of “culture” and “personality” means that one does not consider personality as the mere unfolding of a biological organism.”
2. I have pluralized this term because it occurs in plural form below, and this form seems more consistent with Sapir’s overall argument.
3. See also the various research proposals Sapir wrote or to which he contributed for the Social Science Council and the National Research Council, for example his “Original Memorandum to the Social Science Research Council from the Conference on Acculturation and Personality,” Hanover, 2 September 1930 (appended to Sapir 1998b, this volume).

4. i. e., not native to it?
5. AK actually has: "Unusual aggressiveness is cowardice. The childish intimacy of an individual who wants a considerable hearing cannot do this with every single member of the group."
6. It is not clear from the notes whether Sapir claimed the Chukchi shaman actually is an hysteric, who happens to enjoy an acceptable role, or whether the label "hysteric" applies only to our own evaluation of the cultural pattern of Chukchi shamanistic behavior. Compare Sapir 1998a: "We find among the Eskimo the Shaman or medicine man act as if he were a hysteric. He goes through all the motions of hysteria, and perhaps he is. I don't know, I am not a psychiatrist. Their pattern of medicine man activity demands hysterical conduct. He autosuggests a hysteria complex. I am not in a position to disentangle what happens. The diagnosis of that hysteria is not the same as that of hysteria among ourselves, because the cultural background is notably different in the two cases... [example of homosexuality among medicine men] ... It isn't necessary to suppose that you are really dealing with types of personality that lead to that kind of behavior naturally."
7. BG actually has: "Cultures act selectively in regard to certain types of personality (Eskimo - hysterics). Christian Science; from hysteric, arab culture capitalizes Mahomet's neurons."
8. LB adds "(Plains Sun Dance)" and BG adds "(Christianity)". Sapir evidently provided further illustrations of his point, but the notes do not reveal what he said about them.
9. The wording of the bracketed passage comes from a later section in T1, just following the discussion of compensation: "It is said that for one individual one type of society is best, but..." (see below).
10. AK actually has "overt-adjustment."
11. In the Taylor notes, the discussion of humor as an institution actually comes after the statements, "Can whole culture be described in terms of compensation? In present more or less strict social mores on sex, saloons, stag parties, etc. are compensations, so is gross humor of Puritan society."
12. T1 phrases this as a question.
13. The bracketed material comes from nearby passages in Sapir 1934a
14. AK's notes on the discussion period of this seminar show that "Mr. Dai raised the question of the development of Personality types. Dr. Sapir answered in brief the three stages: 1. Heredity, the somatic implications may mould the character (not so important from our point of view) 2. The maturing period, we do not know quite about, but very important. 3. Interactions between the child and his early environment up to the age of three."
15. BG actually has, "In the child's cosmos, Chinese patterns of behavior are understood emotionally." Sapir presumably contrasted the emotional outlook with the ethnological here, as in "Emergence..." and in the Lecture to the Friday Night Club, which begins, "I cannot be ethnological and be sincere in observing my little boy play marbles. I cannot watch a Chinese mandarin and be psychological." The child does not understand a particular mode of behavior as representative of a culture, "Chinese" for instance, but in terms of its emotional significance for him or her.
16. i. e., developmental psychology.
17. BG actually has: "Special values for various words - emotional and rational absorption." CK has: "Words, for children, have definite value, emotional color. We acquire a rubber stamp attitude toward a word by gradually unloading emotional values from a word." CK's passage seems to be out of order, since it occurs at the very beginning of the notes.
18. See Malinowski, *Sex and Repression in Savage Society*, 1927
19. LB adds: "(hobbies: Holt)".

20. Sapir 1934a adds here "from birth until, say, the age of ten".
21. This quote and the one immediately following both come from Sapir 1934a ("Emergence ..."), but in the reverse order.
22. i. e., developmental.
23. MD has: "A personal cosmos – a personal world of meanings – is a separate culture." BG has: "Culture is a personal cosmos, a personal world of meaning. The totality of culture is more many chambered." LB has: "A personal cosmos is a culture, totality of culture more many-chambered and complex than we suspect..."
24. What BG actually has here is: "Culture history has fate, necessity, but no causation. True reasons are difficult, many times humiliating." What LB actually has is: "Thus so hard to speak of "causes" of historical events. [new paragraph] 'Biography' of Julius Caesar full of clichés of Roman culture, tell us nothing of the personality. History has 'fate' inherent in it, pragmatically no 'cause' for it; for us only 'necessity.' [new paragraph] Interest in ethnology, a running away from the ethnologist's own personal problems: escape from responsibility (Margaret Mead) 'reasons' only harmonize our ideas, real reasons are sometimes embarrassing and dangerous." Sapir seems to have been asserting that statements as different as Caesar's (auto)biography and Mead's ethnography are equally pervaded by ideology and their authors' personal agendas. It is scarcely conceivable, however, that Sapir would have included so rancorous a statement about Mead in any published text.
25. R2 has "would be".
26. Wording of the bracketed passage comes from AK's discussion of individual "participation" and types of adjustment, incorporated earlier in the chapter. R1 actually has here: "in adjustment sociological role not so imp. – but personality". Because of immediately following material in R1 and in CK, I believe Sapir meant to imply that to understand an individual's adjustment it is not sufficient to consider merely his/her sociological role, but more important to consider the personality and how that is adjusted to society in general (including one's role). I do not think Sapir means that one's sociological role is utterly irrelevant (see R1 passage on "professionals").
27. Compare passages toward the end of "Psychiatric and Cultural Pitfalls in the Business of Getting a Living," 1939c.
28. Wording in the bracketed passage is derived from "Pitfalls..." (1939c), a paper whose concerns are relevant to this portion of R1's notes.
29. Wording of the bracketed passage comes from "Pitfalls" (1939c).
30. Reconstruction of the preceding two paragraphs is somewhat difficult. R1 actually has: "Personality demands – and – symbols. We use same symbols as other so that we can adv. own interests. Do not care about society's welfare – only have preferences." CK has: "Personal strength is augmented by touching society's and individual symbols at some points. Two orders of symbols – individual and social. Individual adjustment colors your philosophy of society. The process of adjusting your personality, not your cultural role. Cultural considerations alone can never explain what happens from day to day." QQ has: "The inadequacy of cultural consideration for predicting or interpreting any particular act of an individual. The indiv. is not adjusting to society, but to interpersonal relationships."
31. Compare the concluding passage of "Contributions..." (1937a): "If we could only get a reasonably clear conception of how the lives of A and B intertwine into a mutually interpretable complex of experiences, we should see far more clearly than is at present the case the extreme importance and the irrevocable necessity of the concept of personality. We should also be moving forward to a realistic instead of a metaphorical definition of what is meant by culture and society. One suspects that the symbolic role of words has an importance for the solution of our problems that is far greater than we might be willing to admit. After all, if A calls B a 'liar,' he creates a reverberating cosmos of potential action and judgment. And if the fatal word can be passed on to C, the triangulation of society and culture is complete."

Chapter 11. The Concept of "Primitive Mentality"

^{1932a} [One of my aims in these pages has been to] try to establish a more intimate relation between the problems of cultural anthropology and those of psychiatry than is generally recognized. ^{1937a} [In the study of "interpersonal relations,"] it looks as though psychiatry and the sciences devoted to man as constitutive of society were actually beginning to talk about the same events — to wit, the facts of human experience. [But before we allow ourselves so comfortable a conclusion, we should consider a problem with regard to which psychiatry and cultural anthropology have shown themselves to be much less compatible bed-fellows. This is the problem of the so-called] ^{qq. ol. r1. r2. ck. t2} "primitive mentality." [For in] ^{ol} presupposing a special primitive mentality, [an archaic psychological regime supposedly explaining modes of behavior in the neurotic and among the primitives,]¹ ^{1932a} psychoanalysts have welcomed² the contributions of cultural anthropology, but it is exceedingly doubtful if many cultural anthropologists welcome the particular spirit in which the psychoanalysts appreciate their data.

[Now, how did Dr. Freud, the founder of psychoanalysis, arrive at his version of "primitive mentality," the common ground of his] ^{1928c} inevitable triad of children, neurotics, and savages? ^{1937a} For a long time psychiatry operated with a conception of the individual that was merely biological in nature. This is easy to understand if we remember that psychiatry was not, to begin with, a study of human nature in actual situations, nor even a theoretical exploration into the structure of personality, but simply and solely an attempt to interpret "diseased" modes of behavior in terms familiar to a tradition that was operating with the concepts of normal and abnormal physiological functioning. ^{oc} It is necessary to keep in mind, then, that psychoanalysts are pathologists. They were medical men, not usually psychologists, [and they have often] not been willing to generalize their theories outside of pathology. [This colors their entire approach.]

^{t2} [When we recall that] Freud was a clinical doctor at first, [we will more easily see that] his [early] reports are not really *psychological* [in any sense in which we might now understand that term] but [represent] a jump from clinical notes to vaguer cultural institutions. Hypnotism

was in vogue at that time [among the clinicians with whom Freud trained], but [after some initial experimentation] Freud did not go [in] for that. [Instead.] his idea was that of an early awakening — of [the organism's] going back to early reactions in an attempt to start anew and adjust [to a situation of stress.] As a result of his clinical training he dealt with physical systems; hysteria was his field, [initially,] not so much neurotic obsession. [The concepts of regression and repression that are so fundamental to psychoanalysis emerged in this context of the clinical setting and] ^{nc} the physiological approach to behavior, [rather than] the psychological approach, [although the further exploration of regression and repression led far beyond the organic level.]³

¹² [Like Freud,] Adler and Jung were also medical students in Germany and Austria, [and just as the medical background can be traced in the work of all three, so can the cultural.] The German scholar is very factual, on the one hand, [yet he is often enough to be found] mystically “chasing the blue flower” on the other. [It is consistent with this propensity that] Freud never dismissed anything as trivial, but worked out a great deal of meaning in trivialities. [And it is also consistent with his own social environment that] many of his [ideas and arguments relate to] a background of European culture — the Oedipus complex, for example. This is purely European, [a reflection of the European] patriarchal [family structure.]⁴ [But if we can succeed in putting aside the particular cultural setting we can see how Freud] attaches a great deal of importance to the tangles of early life — the relationships of the child within the family.¹⁹¹⁷ⁱ Among the more readily defined and generally recognized insights that we owe, directly or indirectly, to Freud are the genetic analysis and the treatment of the neuroses...;⁵ the basic importance of the psychic sexual constitution, not merely in its proper functional sphere, but also in connections that seem unrelated; the far-reaching importance of infantile psychic experiences in adult life and the ever-present tendency to regression to them; and the general light thrown on the problem of mental determinism.

^{1937a} It is the great and lasting merit of Freud that he freed psychiatry from its too strictly medical presuppositions and introduced an interpretative psychology which, in spite of all its conceptual weaknesses, its disturbingly figurative modes of expression, and its blindness to numerous and important aspects of the field of behavior as a whole, remains a substantial contribution to psychology in general and, by implication, to social psychology in particular. His use of social data was neither more nor less inadequate than the use made of them by psychology as a whole. It is hardly fair to accuse Freud of a naiveté which is still the

rule among the vast majority of professional psychologists. It is not surprising that his view of social phenomena betrays at many points a readiness to confuse various specific patterns of behavior, which the culturalists can show to be derivative of specific historical backgrounds, with those more fundamental and necessary patterns of behavior which proceed from the nature of man and of his slowly maturing organism. Nor is it surprising that he shared, not only with the majority of psychologists but even with the very founders of anthropological science, an interest in primitive man that did not address itself to a realistic understanding of human relations in the less sophisticated societies but rather to the schematic task of finding in the patterns of behavior reported by the anthropologist such confirmation as he could of his theories of individually "archaic" attitudes and mechanisms.

¹² Hence it is important for the psychoanalyst, [according to Freud and his followers,] to study primitive mentality to see just what familial attitudes remain constant with the European, and so on. ^{1932a} Neurotic and psychotic, through the symbolic mechanisms which control their thinking, are believed to regress to a more primitive state of mental adjustment than is normal in modern society and which is supposed to be preserved for our observation in the institutions of primitive peoples. In some undefined way which it seems quite impossible to express in intelligible biological or psychological terms the cultural experiences which have been accumulated by primitive man are believed to be unconsciously handed on to his more civilized progeny. ¹² [Thus the idea of regression, central to psychoanalytic thinking, connects the neurotic with the child; and when the Freudian] uses [the same logic as] the old evolutionary anthropologists and places the primitive with the child, [the triad is complete.]

^{1932a} The cultural anthropologist can make nothing of the hypothesis of the racial unconscious nor is he disposed to allow an immediate psychological analysis of the behavior of primitive people in any other sense than that in which such an analysis is allowable for our own culture...⁶ And he is disposed to think that if the resemblances between the neurotic and the primitive which have so often been pointed out are more than fortuitous, it is not because of a cultural atavism which the neurotic exemplifies but simply because all human beings, whether primitive or sophisticated in the cultural sense, are, at rock bottom, psychologically primitive, and there is no reason why a significant unconscious symbolism which gives substitutive satisfaction to the individual may not become socialized on any level of human activity. ^{1932a}
The cultural anthropologist's quarrel with psychoanalysis can perhaps

be put most significantly by pointing out that the psychoanalyst has confused the archaic in the conceptual or theoretical psychologic sense with the archaic in the literal chronological sense.

^{o1} [The same criticism we make of psychoanalysis can be made of other] theories that presuppose a special primitive mentality, [such as that] of Lévy-Bruhl. ^{r2} The fact that a method is lacking in sophistication does not make it primitive, [nor does it reveal an archaic mentality in its practitioner. We have only to consider] Aristotle trying to do multiplication, [to recognize the absurdity of assigning him a “primitive mentality” on such a basis.] ^{o1} The apparent differences of behavior [between primitives and ourselves] are due to differences in the content of the respective cultural patterns, not to differences in the method of mental functioning in the two supposedly distinct levels.

^{q9} In passing through Chicago once, Lévy-Bruhl said that he had never met a primitive man and hoped he would be able to stop off for a day or two to see some Indian tribe. ^{r2} Lévy-Bruhl has never visited a primitive group; ^{r1} he does not know “primitive man.” ^{t2} [So it is not from direct experience that he] was so very impressed by the “pre-logical mind,” that “primitive mentality” about which he has speculated so much and has seen so little. ⁷ ^{r1} Anyone who has been in contact with natives knows, [unless he is so devoted to his prejudices as to pay no heed to his observations,]⁸ that the “pre-logical mind” does not exist in them. [At least, it does not exist in them more than in ourselves.] ^{r2} Modern man is just as illogical as primitive man in many respects — politics, for example. ^{r1} The only difference [between primitive man and ourselves lies not in the processes of our thinking but in the fact that] we appeal to more sophisticated supernatural beings [and that we have accumulated a larger store of technical knowledge.] ^{nc} It seems obvious that we must control the brute facts in our environment more than does primitive man; [and once we have acknowledged this, the supposed] naive feeling of [primitive] man as opposed to the sophisticated thinking of civilized man is perhaps not [any longer a tenable] distinction. ^{q9, r1, r2, ck} To say that a primitive man’s experience of the world is considerably less potent than ours is all that needs to be said about “primitive mentality.” ^{r2} [He simply] knows less about the world we live in.

^{r1} Now, the less one knows of the potential factors of the environment [that influence the outcome] of a situation, the more one must speculate — fill in [the gaps in one’s knowledge] with symbols. ^{q9} [In this regard] scientific and magical statements are hardly distinguishable. ^{ck} Whether they be science or magic, [such statements reflect] the desire

to control the world, [on the basis of experience where possible but on the basis of a symbolic cosmology otherwise.]^{r1-r2} Is not the atomic theory, [and other theories about our environment in which we postulate the existence of invisible entities and forces,] really magic, [in its reliance on the speculative?]⁹ [— But what about the scientific method, you may ask, with its] ^{ck} revision of formulations on the light of more experience? ⁹⁹ Indeed, if a negative instance does not cause you to revise [your formulation] you are stupid. ^{99, r1} But such revisions, such reformulations of the magical explanation of unknown phenomena, are constantly occurring in primitive groups. [So they are just as “scientific” in this sense as we are, while] ^{ck} we are just as “magical” as primitive man. ^{r1} The primitive has had less experience with the potential factors which influence the situation, but when he fills in what is not known with abbreviated, [speculative] processes the native [proceeds] just as we do.¹⁰ ^{nc} Both [they and we] use reason, and both [they and we] use magic. ^{ck} ^{r1} For if this wish-fulfilling interpolation is a “magical” thought-process, ⁹⁹ then in being scientific you have to be magical [as well]: that is, you have to act on what knowledge you have, [and fill in the rest as best you can.]

^{r1} It has been pointed out to Lévy-Bruhl that the primitive is very logical in any technological process. ^{nc} Indeed, primitive man has the nicest feeling of the adaptation of means to ends, as Boas [showed us in his studies of the] technology of the Kwakiutl Indians. ^{ck} The primitive is as logical as we are where he can be. [Thus we need not speak of him as if he were a distinct kind of human being with respect to his psychical functioning, for it is no different from our own.] ^{99, ck} We are all logical *where we can be*, and we all fill in the rest with magic. ^{r2} All we know is that certain things will happen given certain circumstances. ^{r2, r1} We are logical only in regard to those particular [areas of life] in which we have experience and which we have analyzed. Over these things we have control; in all other cases, we work on faith.

^{r1} [Surely many of the supposed differences between] magic, science, and religion are really a matter of terminology and not of essence.¹¹ It is vain to look for fundamental psychic differences in human beings; the difference [lies] only in knowledge, [not in the logic of thought processes.] ⁹⁹ The primitive [is as disposed to be logical as we are, but he] is not able to be logical in as many places. ^{99, r1, ck} All human beings, “primitive” and “sophisticated,” have a profound conviction of the causal and logical nexus of their experienced universe, a belief that comes from the continuum of nature and [our] natural wants. ⁹⁹ Where we don't actually succeed in manipulating [the world] as we wish, we

express the wish in a formula, [and try to manipulate the world with its aid.]

¹¹ [Everywhere you look among human beings you will see the] interpolation of quotidian faith in the daily procedure of our lives. [It is an interpolation based] little on the personal application of knowledge, [much more on] the patterns of culture. ^{o1} [In our own case, like any other.] our scientific thinking – [over which we have no monopoly –] does not explain our own culture [patterns.]

¹² [For all these reasons, then, Lévy-Bruhl's speculations about primitive mentality] seem important to the psychoanalyst but not to the anthropologist. [Many anthropologists would prefer to dispense with the idea of a special "primitive mentality" altogether. But before we can do so, we must consider one other version of it that has even attracted some following within anthropology itself: it is a version based on the idea that language plays a quite different role in the mental life of primitives than among ourselves. According to Malinowski, the primitive's exercise of magic comes about because the pragmatic and affective functions of language overwhelmingly predominate in determining the meaning of his speech. Primitive man is not taught the forms of grammar in school, so his speech, we are told, is more closely governed by his hopes and fears and his social purposes, than is our own.]¹²

¹² [It is true that] language has more far-reaching implications than are [generally] assigned to it [by philologists.] ¹⁹²³¹ Language is only in part a coherent system of symbolic reference. To a far greater extent than is generally realized language serves also affective and volitional purposes. [But even if] the *function* of language is not in practice a purely symbolic or referential one, is it not a highly significant fact, nonetheless, that its *form* is so essentially of symbolic pattern? ^{1924c} The outstanding fact about any language is its formal completeness. This is as true of a primitive language, like Eskimo or Hottentot, as of the carefully recorded and standardized languages of our great cultures.¹³

^{1b, 12} Malinowski is an anti-formalist, [however, and in this he is far from alone.] ^{1924c} The normal man of intelligence has something of a contempt for linguistic studies, convinced as he is that nothing can well be more useless. ¹² Everybody hates grammar [who has had to endure in school the traditional mode of procedure which laboriously dissects sentences and arranges Greek aorists into patterns. In reaction to this apparently frigid and dehumanized process]¹⁴ ¹² everybody hates form – you're interested in the color of the word, its function, not whether it is a noun or a verb. We not only dislike it implicitly, but explicitly because we had to learn it in school. [But Malinowski] does not distin-

guish between the grammar that is inherent in our speech, and grammar as it is taught.

[The fact that grammar is taught in schools only for the languages of the "sophisticated" peoples of the classical world and Europe does not mean that other languages have no form, or that European languages have no function.] ^{1924c} The psychological problem which most interests the linguist is the inner structure of language, in terms of unconscious psychic processes... To say in so many words that the noblest task of linguistics is to understand languages as form rather than as function or as historical process is not to say that it can be understood as form alone. The formal configuration of speech at any particular time and place is the result of a long and complex historical development, which, in turn, is unintelligible without constant reference to functional factors. ^{1924c} All languages are set to do all the symbolic and expressive work that language is good for, either actually or potentially. [Whether it is spoken by an Eskimo or an Englishman.] the formal technique of this work is the secret of each language.

[It is not in the study of language, then, that you will find support for] ^{o1} theories presupposing a special primitive mentality. [As we have said,] the apparent differences of behavior [between "primitives" and ourselves] are due to differences in the content of the respective cultural patterns, not to differences in the method of mental functioning in the two supposedly distinct levels.

[Thus our exploration of mental functioning has led us back once again to the importance of cultural patterning and of cultural form.] ^{1928j} No matter where we turn in the field of social behavior, men and women do what they do, and cannot help but do, not merely because they are built thus and so, or possess such and such differences of personality, or must needs adapt to their immediate environment in such and such a way in order to survive at all, but very largely because they have found it easiest and aesthetically most satisfactory to pattern their conduct in accordance with more or less clearly organized forms of behavior which no one is responsible for, which are not clearly grasped in their true nature, and which one might almost say are as self-evidently imputed to the nature of things as the three dimensions are imputed to space. [To "explain" our culture or any other it will help us but little to center our attention on a person's biological makeup, or temperament, or conscious purposes in behaving in some particular way.] ^{sc} [In a sense] culture is self-explaining; [its form cannot be attributed to external causes. Instead, we might do just as well to consider cultural form in terms of the] ^{r1} springs for art in every human being.

^{ol} [For to an extent as yet insufficiently appreciated, aesthetic] imagination is the unconscious form-giver of culture. ^{r1} [Even such a thing as the] musical ability of the Negro, [so often explained as due to the physiology of the race, is far better interpreted as fundamental to his] cultural heritage.

[What role can we envision for the individual, then, in the formation of these patterns of culture?] ^{1998b} It is an unfortunate thing that in arguments about the relative place of cultural conditioning versus biological determinants and fundamental psychological conditioning too little account is taken of the extremely complicated middle ground. [From the standpoint of the personality, I believe that] ^{ol} The struggle for significant form in culture unconsciously animates all normal individuals and gives meaning to their lives. ^{r1} [And just as the individual personality's] tendency to expression may, when sublimated, give rise to patterns [of behavior, so, among constellations of significantly interacting individuals, there is evidently] ^{1998a} some kind of a cumulative process, some principle of selection, according to which certain tendencies to change human activities are allowed unconsciously by society, insofar as it patterns its conduct, and certain others are not allowed... I don't think any of us are powerful enough to quite understand what that means, but the actuality of these drifts, these cumulative processes, cannot be doubted by anyone who has studied history, language, or whatever type of patterned activity he may take up. ^{15 r1} [These are the] cultural patterns [whose emergence, whose locus in specific interactions of individuals, and whose import for the personality we are only just beginning to see.]

Editorial Note

Sapir's 1928 Outline indicates that at that time he planned to conclude the set of chapters on "The Individual's Place in Culture" with a chapter on "Primitive Mentality." Notes from the Chicago period (NE, Dec. 8, 1927), from the final lecture of 1936 (T2), and from the final lecture of 1937 (April 19; QQ, R1, R2, CK) show discussions of this topic. None of them, however, show how Sapir might have linked it with preceding discussions.

Little can be found in Sapir's published works or in the 1933 notes that is directly relevant to the critique of Lévy-Bruhl. Only a brief note in SI (dated April 25, 1933) suggests that Sapir talked about this matter at all that year. Discussion of Freud's "inevitable triad of children, neu-

rotics, and savages" ("Psychoanalysis as Prophet," Sapir 1928e), however, can be found in Sapir's reviews of Freud and Freudian psychiatry, as well as in "Cultural Anthropology and Psychiatry" (1932a) and "The Contribution of Psychiatry to an Understanding of Behavior in Society" (1937a). Because the Taylor (T2) notes indicate a relatively substantial discussion of Freud before the passage on Lévy-Bruhl, I have drawn on these published works at some length to fill out a text whose reconstruction would be too sketchy on the basis of a single set of notes alone.

The discussion of Malinowski is attested only in T2 and, somewhat cryptically, in undated notes in LB. I have drawn here on Sapir's review of Ogden and Richards' *The Meaning of Meaning*, since Malinowski made use of that work.

Finally, it is evident that Sapir concluded the lecture of April 19, 1937 with a few remarks intended to draw the whole course to a close. (Although the class apparently met once more, that session was given over to a guest presentation by Verne Ray.) It is far from clear just what conclusion Sapir drew, since only one note-taker in 1937 (R1) took any notes on it at all, and the end of the 1933–34 course was differently organized. I have interpreted the R1 notes as consistent with a much-abbreviated version of the Outline's final section (on "Society as Unconscious Artist"), and I have also drawn upon the concluding passages from the Chicago course (NE and SE). Much guesswork is involved in reconstructing this passage, however — even more than in the rest of this chapter.

Notes

1. Wording of the bracketed passage derives from Sapir 1932a, "Cultural Anthropology and Psychiatry."
2. Sapir 1932a actually has: "psychoanalysts welcome the contributions. . ."
3. See also "Cultural Anthropology and Psychiatry," Sapir 1932a: "The locus of psychiatry turns out not to be the human organism at all in any fruitful sense of the word but the more intangible, and yet more intelligible, world of human relationships and ideas that such relationships bring forth."
4. T2 actually has: "Many of his things react on a background of European culture, Oedipus complex. This is purely European, it is the patriarchal."
5. The text of the review of Pfister (Sapir 1917i) includes at this point "to a much smaller extent also of the psychoses (forms of insanity); the frequency and radical importance of symbol-formation in the unconscious mind, understanding of which is sure to prove indispensable for an approach to the deeper problems of religion and art: the analysis and interpretation of dreams".
6. The text adds: "He believes that it is as illegitimate to analyze totemism or primitive laws of inheritance or set rituals in terms of the peculiar symbolism discovered or

Part III: Symbolic Structures and Experience (1933–34)

Chapter 12. Symbolism

[1933]

ha Symbolism

^{ha} What is referred to by the word “symbol”? It is not so easy to tell. [Suppose we start with an example: someone bangs on a table and another person calls this action a symbol of violence. Now, if we interpret the action in that way,] a bang on the table has for us no direct connection either with the muscular movement [of the banger] or with the sound waves [he produced. These do not really matter to us; what we are thinking of is the meaning.] It is a direct meaning in an indirect behavior, understandable by a certain convention. The banging of the table may be rather inadequate as expression, but it is a conventional symbol for violent expression.

[Still, it is not impossible to pay attention to the physical activity itself, should we wish to. There are two aspects or sides to the behavior, and] it can be turned¹ to its “natural” side or turned² to its conventional side, since it may be looked upon [either] as non-symbolic ([that is,] natural) or as symbolic (conventional). How we consider it is a question of tendency.

[So perhaps what we need to be concentrating upon is not, at least in the first instance, the symbol itself but in what way human behavior can be understood as symbolic, and when the human mind can be said to be reacting symbolically.] ^{bg} [Let me offer an initial] definition. The human mind is reacting symbolically when some component of experience – [be it] an object of the external world, an idea, an event, [even] a personality, or a behavior pattern – elicits beliefs, ideas, emotions, sentiments or ways of behavior which refer to the *meaning* of this experience [rather than to its objective characteristics.] There is a symbolic

reference, [in other words – a leap from] the symbol to the meaning of the symbol. ^{ha} There are all kinds³ [of behaviors that can be symbolic; what is] ^{dm, hl} constant in symbolism [is not the behavior itself but the fact that it] always substitutes for some closer intermediating kind of behavior. ^{ha} If a given behavior is substitutive to a more direct expression, there is already a symbol. [Moreover, symbols take part in a whole structure of ideas. So] it may also be said, that if you rationalize [in any way about an action or event,] you have already declared your faith in symbols.

^{bg} [Because the object or behavior itself is not the issue in symbolism but the assignment of meaning to it, all kinds of apparently dissimilar things can be] examples [of symbolism].⁴ Mathematical and algebraical signs and figures [are symbols]; colored lights and flags [are symbols, while] the green, red, or white [colors of those flags and lights may have symbolic meaning too in their own right.] There are purity symbols – flowers or dresses [of a certain kind]; and the numbers [we just alluded to as mathematical signs may also have other kinds of significance,] such as [the “bad luck” attaching to the number] thirteen. [The physical characteristics of these symbols, such as the scratches on paper representing “thirteen,” will not take us very far in explaining the significance attached to them, as we may easily see if we consider that] the handshake, the olive branch, and the palm branch [can all be said to symbolize peace even though their “natural” sides are quite dissimilar.]

[Although some symbols may arouse little feeling in their users others are deeply attached to personal or social significances. For instance, symbols like] ^{bg} national flags and the Christian crucifix [bear a great emotional potency for the social groups with which they are associated. Among symbolisms of this kind we should probably also include the]⁵ trappings of royalty, such as the crown, sceptre, and so on, [trappings that can even “mean” or represent the state itself]; totemic animals, or college animals, [are symbols of an analogous kind in their representation of social groups and the feelings one has as a member of the group. And while some people are fond of interpreting objects and events as] psychoanalytic sex symbols, [we must not lose sight of the possibility of interpreting] home and mother as symbols of respectability.

^{bg} [Disparate as these examples may be, it is not impossible to attempt a] classification. [First of all, to the extent that the “natural” aspect of the symbol or symbolic behavior, that is its physical characteristics, has some connection with its meaning,] ^{ha, bg} it is convenient to distinguish between (1) Primary symbols, and (2) Dissociated symbols. ^{bg} For ex-

ample, we have a primary [symbol] when the symbol of a cow is a drawing of a cow; a dissociated [symbol,] when any sign may stand for a certain sound. ^{ha} There is no complete break [between these types,] but a continuous line from the one to the other. [Actually, it might be more accurate to say that] there is a hierarchy of symbols ranging from the [most] direct expression to [the most] highly institutionalized, dissociated, reintegrated forms. [Among these last,] the symbolic meaning may depend upon [the symbol's] belonging to a certain plateau [in the symbolic structure.]

^{bg} [Actually, primary and dissociated symbols can be thought of as taking part in a] classification [of another sort. We might call both of them] *signatory* symbols: [whether dissociated or not,] signatory symbols tend to be simple signs without significant [affective] overtones. [Symbols of this kind contrast with] *assimilative* symbols, [by which I mean those where strong] overtones of feeling are assimilated to the sign. These symbols become foci of emotional grouping and favor the formation of sentiments.

^{ha} There is, however, a long way [from a single symbol] to a symbolic system, [which incorporates another degree of dissociation through configurative patterning.]⁶ The symbolic system is far removed from and dissociated from the original function, but associated within itself. Take for instance the red and green traffic light: the simplest symbolic system. It is highly dissociated, but highly complete in itself; it is not a mirror of reality, but a convenient scheme for orientation [to it]. It is important [to recognize] that the symbolic system as such is highly dissociated from the elements in which it is expressed, but it has its own logic. The most completely dissociated system is mathematics, but language too is a very complicated system of this kind. It must not be too rigid, however, if it is to allow the development of a rich treasure of symbols.

[Formal patterns, that is to say symbolic systems, thus contain a certain complexity: they are not merely assemblages of individual symbols.]

^{ha} A second important quality of a strict symbolic system is the homogeneity of its materials. [With the traffic signals, for instance, the elements of the system consist of] light, in both cases — [either] red or green. Language and mathematics [are perhaps the prime examples that] show this absolute homogeneity. [In contrast, consider some examples of systems that are] not homogeneous, [such as] Casella's music, [with its inclusion of] a real nightingale, and the use of real shell and real hair in connection with a usual oil painting.

^{bg} [In sum, depending on the nature of their connection with a symbolic] structure, symbols differ in certain respects:

(i) There may be a one-to-one correspondence [between the symbol and its meaning,] as compared with over-determination, conditioning [by other dimensions of a symbolic structure,] or assimilation [of affective overtones].

(ii) There may be poverty of content as compared with richness of content.

(iii) Symbols may be more social than individual and vice versa.

(iv) They may be more conscious than non-conscious and vice versa.

(v) [Symbols that participate in a symbolic configuration] may be relatively homogeneous or the reverse, consistent or non-consistent [with one another in their physical components].

da, ^{rm} Signs and Symbols

^{ha} My intention was to use the first lecture on symbols as a way to show what an interesting, but also very difficult and complicated, field this is; and, in a way, to clear the ground for the following hour. [Now we can consider some particular topics within this field, such as the distinction between] sign and symbol, and the many [problems] involved in these concepts.⁷ ^{rm} [We have already indicated that] when the human mind is reacting symbolically, this means that] words, action, gestures coming either from us or from the people around us, [even] objects, in a word all the elements of the environment, stand not only for themselves, but [also] for something else of which they are the sign. [They have not only a "natural" aspect but also a] semiotic character. At a certain point of dissociation of the sign from the physical experience, the symbol will appear. [To put this another way,] the sign becomes symbol when it no longer has a perceptible causal relation with what it refers to.

^{rm} If the distinction is between an actual relation (the sign) and an imputed one (the symbol), can there be any genetic relationship between sign and symbol?⁸ There is certainly a difference between the contextual sign and the full-grown symbol, but it is a logical difference, a difference of definition. [It does not mean that symbols cannot have their genesis in signs.] In fact, symbols have grown out of sign situations by dissociation. For example, [when you shake] the fist to threaten a person out of reach, the action is not completed; a part of it has been dissociated.

There is an interruption. [And eventually, shaking the fist at an imaginary enemy becomes a symbol for anger itself when no enemy, real or imaginary, is actually intended.]⁹ One must establish a great distinction between the logical and the genetic viewpoints.

^{rm} The threat of the fist, considered in its primary meaning, is merely a sign of trouble. It becomes a symbol when the adversary is out of reach, when the situation takes a hypocritical character. [But] there are many intermediate degrees and they represent the genesis of the symbol from the sign. If it often happens that the threatening does not lead to action, it comes to be considered as a substitute for action. That is [simply a product of] the process of socialization. [But] the part of the situation which is dissociated from [the action] and substitutes for it is not necessarily the most important. For example, in a situation of anger the secretion of the endocrine glands, or other bodily phenomena, are more important [parts of the experience] than the clenching of the fist. So sign and symbol must not be taken as an actual antinomy, but as two poles between which the concrete thing or event moves.

^{rm} The sign devoid of its context is always ambiguous. The ambiguity of the sign sometimes leads to a stiffening of the meaning [it bears, and] thus symbols may appear.

^{da} [Clearly,] the field of signs and symbols presents many interesting questions. [Now] I shall read some of the statements made by members of the seminar and point out some of the problems involved in the examples given. ^{rm} These are cases of symbol genesis, [in which members of the seminar have] presented instances of a sign which by dissociation has become a symbol.

^{da} First, the example given by Mr. Marjolin:¹⁰ "Before the War¹¹ people in France used to have on Sundays a special kind of cake in the form of a crescent, just a little bit different from the ordinary bread. It was a sign of good times. During the War food-stuff was scarce, and people could no longer afford to have this special kind of cake on Sundays. But after the War this crescent form of cake was revived, and this was done with great enthusiasm, almost approximating a religious ceremony. People associated this crescent with the old golden days of peace and happiness. Thus the cake became a symbol. Although the material out of which the revived crescent was now made, and the way it was made, may have been different from pre-war practices, the form remained [and it was this form that became the symbol.]"

^{da} This is a fair example showing how a symbol may grow out of a sign. As a matter of fact, we cannot tell when the sign ends and when the

symbol begins; the transition is gradual. But there is always a historical connection somewhere, in which the sign is dissociated from its original meaning, although this historical connection is seldom clear.

^{da} Now, the example given by Mr. Ferrero: "Before the War the three-colored Italian flag was beautiful – it was associated in my mind with beautiful thoughts. But after the War the Italian flag belonged to a party of violence, and it is [now] associated in my mind with bloodshed, persecution, corruption and policemen. I saw the police beat people. The new flag becomes to me, therefore, a symbol of violence."

^{da} This example [given by] Mr. Ferrero is more personal than the one given by Mr. Marjolin, although there may be many other people in Italy who share this feeling. ^{rm} [However, the fact that an example involves personal feelings does not mean it cannot be a symbol, for] there are private symbols [as well as those that are accepted by a whole group.]¹² [Even among signs that have become socialized and have become social symbols in the clearest sense,] most of the time the socialization takes place for the material of the symbol, not for its reference. To be [sure,] everything in this realm of symbolism is partly social, partly individual. Social symbols can [even] give birth to private symbols:¹³ ^{da} in psychotics we see more spectacularly the process of personal affectual evaluation of a common symbol. But the world of the individual is never dissociated from the life of society; and the life of "society" is after all a figure of speech – it is a total of private worlds. All symbols therefore have both social and individual values, ^{rm} although there is always an antagonism between the social and the individual interpretations.

^{rm} We don't know how far we can go in the use of private symbols. For example, there have been poets who have not been understood, because of the private symbolism which they used. ^{da} [On the other hand,] even the private world of meaning of a psychotic patient has its roots in culture – the culture as manifested in his family relations, for example. Therefore we should not draw too hard and fast a line between the affectively-laden symbolism and social symbolism. Nor do we want to make too [sharp] a distinction between conscious and unconscious symbols, or even between signs and symbols.

^{da} [Let us turn now to] the example given by Dr. Maki: "I am greatly impressed by the way Americans use certain humming sounds in connection with their speech, such as m..., n..., etc. In Finland, this mixing of unvoiced sounds with clearly enunciated words would be considered impolite."

^{da} This is an example of the reinterpretation of symbols. In America the use of such "unvoiced sounds" is considered an individual mannerism, not so much as a sign of impoliteness. Women in particular have such mannerisms. Sometimes they make a certain sound by inhaling, in order to show their attention to a man's talk. This may be a kind of primary symbolism.¹⁴

^{da, rm} [Let us now consider] the case of symbol genesis presented by Dr. Beck:¹⁵ "Once I had a rather tiresome talk with a prisoner, and [in greeting him initially]¹⁶ I quite involuntarily played with the prison's keys that I carried around. On noticing this, the prisoner remarked that he realized that he was in prison but that one day he would be free, etc. This involuntary act on my part, therefore, was taken as a sign of institutional power."

^{rm} Dr. Beck presents the instance of a sign which by dissociation has become a symbol. The greeting which he addressed to the prisoner in coming to his cell stands for its whole ordinary context, that is, the world in which the prisoner was living before going to jail. This greeting has a meaning so dissociated, so remote from its intrinsic value that it becomes a symbol. [But there is probably more to say about this example too.] ^{da} The use of hands, in various connections, and gesture in particular, [deserve a considerable discussion.] They represent a kind of symbolism that has not been carefully studied.¹⁷

^{rm} [So although these cases were supposed to illustrate relationships between sign and symbol, now that we have looked at them] the mere opposition between sign and symbol appears too poor to express the reality. We must distinguish several points of view: the relative degree of dissociation, the relative degree of socialization, and so on, [perhaps other dimensions as well.] We need a more elaborate nomenclature, [it seems, and even the examples that seemed at first glance to be the simplest may turn out to be quite complicated.]

^{ha, rm} Take, for instance, the implication of the word "door." It does not merely stand for the single object (of wood, that can be moved on hinges, etc.), but at the same time it also suggests something else — a hall, a corridor, or a room — from which or to which the door is leading. [The word is a symbol for the door, but the door itself]¹⁸ may be a sign for "activities to be completed." [So how are we to describe its semiotic character?] ^{rm} [As we have just said,] the symbol will appear at a certain point of dissociation of the sign from the physical experience, but there is no limit to the transformation of the symbol. Thus the door can become the symbol of the corridor and have "exist" as its only

meaning [(i. e., "a corridor exists")]. The implications [of the door take precedence and there is a dissociation from the physical thing. We react to the implications rather than to the physical object. In the same way] a gesture, [no matter what sort of muscle movement it may involve — and even if it is very gracefully executed —] may be displeasing¹⁸ because of its remote implications.

^{rm} [Now, as soon as we find that we have to mention these remote implications.] that raises the problem of the immediacy of meaning. [If meaning does not lie in the gesture, object, or behavior itself, what is the set of implications in which it does lie?] What is the context of our experience, [from which we are to derive its meaning]? For, any experience must be placed in a totality from which it takes all its significance. ^{ha} And what contexts people see may be very different. ^{rm} [If I speak about an object (such as a door) in the environment,] what ideas and feelings am I raising in the minds of others when I speak? ^{ha} An element of the same environment may not be the same for two persons experiencing it [if they place it in different contexts. I think that if we really tried to study this problem thoroughly] ^{rm} we should find, at last, that the environment is not the same for all the individuals [who experience it.] Any experience has a different meaning for each person, because each of them gives a private sense to a physical thing or event, the meaning of which would seem at first to be universal. That does not mean that there is no possible understanding between them, for the meaning of a part of this environment becomes socialized by convention — the most powerful instrument of which is language.

^{rm} This discovery of the private meanings of things and events leads [us to see the inevitable futility of any]¹⁹ endeavor to understand anything [in human life] by a mere survey of the physical behavior [concerned in it]. It also leads to caution in our dealings with children, [for as an adult] one does not apprehend the true context in which their acts must be placed. [Not yet fully socialized, they do not share the socialized meanings we can attribute to behaviors.] Furthermore, the socialized meanings themselves are different from one culture to another — the meaning of intimacy, for example.

^{rm} [Surely] the study of symbolism will throw light upon the growth of culture, therefore. ^{ha} We must be aware of the semiotic nature of all elements of experience: as signs they speak a language of implications, ^{ha, rm} and the real language is supported by this anonymous language of signs, with all the implications of meaning. ^{ha} [Now as you think about this you may find it instructive to] try to suggest situations where the sign-implica-

tions for two persons may be quite different.^{20 rm} [This may help you avoid the great] danger [in the study of symbolism, which] is to overemphasize its social character.²¹ The social [links in the meanings of symbols]²² are but fragmentary; what can be expressed and understood [in common] is relatively little. The illusion [that meaning, and culture, are shared] comes from this marvelous tool which is language.

^{da} In the last analysis, the study of culture has to be the study of individual lives. What is generally thought of as culture may be said to be an illusion of objectivity, [fostered by language].²³ ^{1934a} The complete, impersonalized "culture" of the anthropologist can really be little more than an assembly or mass of loosely overlapping idea and action systems which, through verbal habit, can be made to assume the appearance of a closed system of behavior. ^{da} [Attention to symbolism should reveal to us, then, that] even in a social situation we are reacting to personalities, [and reacting in terms of meanings and] ^{1938e} cultural definitions which do not apply to all the members of [our] group, which even, in specific instances, apply to [ourselves] alone. ^{da} On the other hand, symbolism manifested by individuals, even in such trivial things as posture, often has a cultural background that is frequently overlooked. [There is no necessary contradiction between these two observations.] ^{1932a} It is not the concept of culture which is subtly misleading but the metaphysical locus to which culture is generally assigned.

^{wb} *Speech as a Symbolic System*

^{wb} Reading poetry we frequently experience [the way in which] the words as well as the whole evocative structure of the spoken poem have symbolic values. [Leaving the question of the poem's overall structure aside,] the symbolism of words is highly dissociated, highly abstracted. [Now, the symbolism in them that is most often and easily experienced is the] referential — referring, that is, to meanings which are not given in the sounds themselves [and that are not "primary," to use the nomenclature I proposed in an earlier lecture.]²⁴ [The referential is often taken to be the essential form of symbolism in language, what we might even call "linguistic symbolism" par excellence.] But in the person speaking, there appear symbolisms very different from the referential symbolism of language, primary symbolisms which are over and above linguistic symbolisms, and which are frequently used consciously or subconsciously by poets and actors, [in their management of] sounds, rhythm,

and intonation. [for example. The meanings conveyed with these symbolisms may turn out to be quite at odds with what the words express referentially. As they say,] "it is the actor's art to use any word to express anything."

^{wb} This observation leads to the question: Have sounds as such a potential quality aside from what they mean? In 1929 I started an experimental investigation in this point, a preliminary report on which is published under the title "A Study in Phonetic Symbolism."²⁵ These studies are still going on, [thanks to] Dr. [Stanley] Newman, [who has taken over the work.]

^{wb} [In the course of] that study it became obvious that there is [something we might call] a "natural phonetic alignment" — that is, that certain meanings which do not come from the situation [itself] are applied to certain sounds. [We found that] there exists a "phantasy vocabulary," that certain vowels "sound bigger" ([or smaller,] etc.) than others. ^{1929m} For instance, the contrast between the vowel *a* and the vowel *i* (the phonetic or continental values are intended) was illustrated in every one of sixty pairs of stimulus words, the subject being requested to indicate in each case which of the two in themselves meaningless words meant the larger and which the smaller variety of an arbitrarily selected meaning. For example, the meaningless words *mal* and *mil* were pronounced in that order and given the arbitrary meaning 'table.' The subject decided whether *mal* seemed to symbolize a large or a small table as contrasted with the word *mil*. ^{wb} About 80% of the subjects' answers attached the imagined [connotation] of something large or big to the vowel *a* ([pronounced] as in "saw"), and the imagined [connotation] of something small to the vowel *i* (as in "it"). The more remote the sounds were from each other, within the scale from *a* to *i* — the larger the "contrast-step," that is — the more certain and distinct was the meaning attached. ^{1929m} It is important to note that the words were so selected as to avoid associations with meaningful words.²⁶

^{wb} [These experiments were never intended to contradict the well-established philological fact that] languages are not built on such principles [as sound symbolisms.] There is no stable and distinct relation between sounds and the "real" linguistic meanings of words. [Instead, what the studies show is that] this vowel-symbolism occurs as an unconscious symbolism which may be conditioned either acoustically or kinæsthetically. There are of course linguistic interferences, and individual differences (probably conditioned by different degrees of sensitivity), which should be and will be studied. Furthermore, the studies should be extended to very young children and to foreign languages.²⁷

[Earlier in our discussion an example offered by Dr. Maki similarly brought to mind a type of "expressive" symbolism as contrasted with the merely referential symbolism we normally recognize.²⁸ It was what Dr. Maki called "unvoiced sounds," such as the] ²⁹ mannerisms of women who make a certain sound by inhaling, in order to show their attention to a man's talk. This may be a kind of primary symbolism [too, like the sound symbolism of vowels. Something rather like this behavior also occurs] in an Indian tribe in northern California, among whom, for example, men and women observe different phonetic rules.²⁹ Thus when a man says 'moon', he says *wak!āra*, while a woman says *wak!—ār^a*,³⁰ the last sound being produced probably by inhaling. I really have no [definite] theory [explaining] this unvoiced speech of women. Such sounds may belong to a category other than ordinary language. Possibly they may represent a kind of primary symbolism, [perhaps] due, [if we are to believe the psychoanalysts,] to women's masochistic tendency.³¹

[Of course the Yana man or woman who produces one or other of these forms is referring to the moon at the same time as symbolizing maleness or femaleness.] ^{1929m} It goes without saying that in actual speech referential and expressive symbolisms are pooled in a single expressive stream. [We might even distinguish among levels of referential symbolism as partaking of this kind of expressiveness:] ^m for instance, [suppose you have an acquaintance who has been your intimate friend, but you sense that he has changed toward you, and you deduce this from his] use of a vocabulary marking a greater social distance than previously. [Notice here that] the referential meaning[s] of language above the average level do not need a special situation to be understood. There can be a direct implication, [so that you deduced the change of attitude directly from your friend's speech.]

[It seems then as if there are in speech] ^{1927b} many levels on which expressive patterns are built... [And] quite aside from specific inferences which we may make from speech phenomena on any one of its levels, there is a great deal of interesting work to be done with the psychology of speech woven out of its different levels.

bg Symbolism and Social Psychology

[The study of language is probably one of the most important avenues to take if we wish to explore the relationship of] symbolism and social

psychology. [But let us speak about that relationship more broadly. First of all, what is social psychology?] Social psychology deals with:

(i) the distinctive elements in the human mind which determine man's social relations;

(ii) interpersonal relations;

(iii) the reaction upon the mind of social relations and the recognized and established usages of social life (institutions, that is).

The study of symbolism is one means of understanding (ii) and (iii), or, in other words, the relations between the individual and society. This may be done by studying the locus of the symbolic complex. The latter may belong to the field of institutions, to unconscious social patterns, or to individual patterns, conscious or unconscious; its relative position depends upon analysis. But in any case, neither the individual nor the social is an isolated entity and the locus is never found entirely and ultimately in the individual mind, nor again in an institution. The distinction between these two is [a distinction between a] relatively minor or [relatively] major extent of the locus. The individual hooks onto society through [his or her] participation, to a greater or lesser degree, in the social symbol.

[A study of symbolism must therefore not take too seriously a classification of symbols into the social and the personal, (say) the psychoanalytic. Although the latter type may appear to concern only the individual personality.] symbolism of a psychoanalytic character is a dynamic cultural fact nevertheless, a fact which is for the time being relatively private and obsessive though it may easily become socially accepted.

On the other hand, the [extent or even] universality of response to a symbol is a measure of the homogeneity of a culture; though here again [it must be pointed out that] relatively few people in a given society fully participate in all the major symbolic patterns of the society (for example its patterns of religious, political, aesthetic, and legal [activity], and so on). This means that there is a drawing together into smaller groups of all those who share to a required degree in one or more of these major symbolisms.

^{1932a} No problem of social psychology that is at all realistic can be phrased by starting with the conventional contrast of the individual and his society. Nearly every problem of social psychology needs to consider the exact nature and implication of an idea complex, which we may look upon as the psychological correlate of the anthropologist's cultural pattern, to work out its relation to other idea complexes and what modifications it necessarily undergoes as it accomodates itself to these, and,

above all, to ascertain the precise locus of such a complex. This locus is rarely identifiable with society as a whole, except in a purely philosophical or conceptual sense, nor is it often lodged in the psyche of a single individual. In extreme cases such an idea complex or cultural pattern may be the dissociated segment of a single individual's mind or it may amount to no more than a potential revivification of ideas in the mind of a single individual through the aid of some such symbolic depositary as a book or museum. Ordinarily the locus will be a substantial portion of the members of a community, each of them feeling that he is touching common interests so far as this particular culture pattern is concerned.³²

^{bg} Thus the study of symbolism provides one of the most valuable and [fruitful] methods of approach to the basic problems of social psychology.

[1934]

^{1934c} The term symbolism covers a great variety of apparently dissimilar modes of behavior. ^{1934e, dm, lb, h1} In its original sense it was restricted to objects or marks intended to recall, represent, or direct special attention to some larger and more complex phenomena — [some] person, object, idea, event or projected activity associated only vaguely or not at all with the symbol in any natural sense. By gradual extensions of meaning the terms symbol and symbolism have come to include not merely such trivial objects and marks as ^{h1} the letter 't', [to indicate a particular sound in speech], ^{1934e, h1} black balls, to indicate a negative attitude in voting, and ^{1934c} stars and daggers, to remind the reader that supplementary information is to be found at the bottom of the page. ^{1934e, lb, h1} but also more elaborate objects and devices, such as flags and signal lights, which are not ordinarily regarded as important in themselves but which point to ideas and actions of great consequence to society. ^{1934e, dm, lb, h1} Such complex systems of reference as speech, writing and mathematical notation should also be included under the term symbolism, for the sounds and marks used therein obviously have no meaning in themselves and can have significance only for those who know how to interpret them in terms of that to which they refer. ^{33 1934e, h1, lb} A certain kind of poetry is called symbolic or symbolistic because its apparent content is only a suggestion for wider meanings. In personal relations too there is much behavior that may be called symbolic.

as when a ceremonious bow is directed not so much to an actual person as to a status which that person happens to fill. The psychoanalysts have come to apply the term symbolic to almost any emotionally charged pattern of behavior which has the function of unconscious fulfillment of a repressed tendency,³⁴ as when a person assumes a raised voice of protest to a perfectly indifferent stranger who unconsciously recalls his father and awakens the repressed attitude of hostility toward the father.

^{1934e, dm} Amid the wide variety of senses in which the word is used there seem to emerge two constant characteristics. ^{1934e, dm, h1, si} One of these, [which we have already mentioned,] is that the symbol is always a substitute for some more closely intermediating type of behavior, whence it follows that all symbolism implies meanings which cannot be derived directly from the contexts of experience.³⁵ The second characteristic of the symbol is that it expresses a condensation of energy, its actual significance being out of all proportion to the apparent triviality of meaning suggested by its mere form.³⁶ ^{1934e} This can be seen at once when the mildly decorative function of a few scratches on paper is compared with the alarming significance of apparently equally random scratches which are interpreted by a particular society as meaning "murder" or "God." ^{1934e, h1, lb} This disconcerting transcendence of form comes out equally well in the contrast between the involuntary blink of the eye and the crudely similar wink which means "He does not know what an ass he is, but you and I do."³⁷

^{1934e, dm, si, h1, lb} It seems useful to distinguish two main types of symbolism. The first of these, which may be called referential symbolism, embraces such forms as oral speech, writing, the telegraph code, national flags, flag signaling and other organizations of symbols which are agreed upon as economical devices for purposes of reference. The second type of symbolism is equally economical and may be termed condensation symbolism, for it is a highly condensed form of substitutive behavior for direct expression, allowing for the ready release of emotional tension in conscious or unconscious form. Telegraph ticking is virtually a pure example of referential symbolism; the apparently meaningless washing ritual of an obsessive neurotic, as interpreted by the psychoanalysts, would be a pure example of condensation symbolism. ^{1934e, h1, lb, si} In actual behavior both types are generally blended. Thus specific forms of writing, conventionalized spelling, peculiar pronunciations and verbal slogans, while ostensibly referential, easily take on the character of emotionalized rituals and become highly important

to both individual and society as substitutive forms of emotional expression.³⁸ ^{1934e} Were writing merely referential symbolism, spelling reforms would not be so difficult to bring about.

^{1934e, h1, lb} Symbols of the referential type undoubtedly developed later as a class than condensation symbols. It is likely that most referential symbolisms go back to unconsciously evolved symbolisms saturated with emotional quality, which gradually took on a purely referential character as the linked emotion dropped out of the behavior in question.³⁹ ^{1934e, h1, lb} Thus shaking the fist at an imaginary enemy becomes a dissociated and finally a referential symbol for anger when no enemy, real or imaginary, is actually intended. ^{1934e, h1} When this emotional denudation takes place, the symbol becomes a comment, as it were, on anger itself and a preparation for something like language.⁴⁰ ^{1934e} What is ordinarily called language may have had its ultimate root in just such dissociated and emotionally denuded cries, which originally released emotional tension. Once referential symbolism had been established by a by-product of behavior, more conscious symbols of reference could be evolved by the copying in abbreviated or simplified form of the thing referred to, as in the case of pictographic writing. On still more sophisticated levels referential symbolism may be attained by mere social agreement, as when a numbered check is arbitrarily assigned to a man's hat. The less primary and associational the symbolism, the more dissociated from its original context, and the less emotionalized it becomes, the more it takes on the character of true reference.

^{1934e, dm, h1} A further condition for the rich development of referential symbolism must not be overlooked — the increased complexity and homogeneity of the symbolic material. This is strikingly the case in language, ^{1934e} in which all meanings are consistently expressed by formal patterns arising out of the apparently arbitrary sequences of unitary sounds. When the material of a symbolic system becomes sufficiently varied [(i. e., complex)] and yet homogeneous in kind, [therefore,] the symbolism becomes more and more richly patterned, creative and meaningful in its own terms, and referents tend to be supplied by a retrospective act of rationalization. Hence it results that such complex systems of meaning as a sentence form or a musical form mean so much more than they can ever be said to refer to. In highly evolved systems of reference the relation between symbol and referent becomes increasingly variable or inclusive. ^{lb} There is never, [in such systems, merely] a one-to-one relation of symbol and referent; [the relation is much more complicated] because of the configurative richness — [the involvement of an

entire] "as-if" parallel system [or orientational scheme in which the symbol participates].

^{1934c} In condensation symbolism also richness of meaning grows with increased dissociation. The chief developmental difference, however, between this type of symbolism and referential symbolism is that while the latter grows with formal elaboration in the conscious, the former strikes deeper and deeper roots in the unconscious and diffuses its emotional quality to types of behavior or situations apparently far removed from the original meaning of the symbol. Both types of symbols therefore begin with situations in which a sign is dissociated from its context. The conscious elaboration of form makes of such dissociation a system of reference, while the unconscious spread of emotional quality makes of it a condensation symbol. Where, as in the case of a national flag or a beautiful poem, a symbolic expression which is apparently one of mere reference is associated with repressed emotional material of great importance to the ego, the two theoretically distinct types of symbolic behavior merge into one. One then deals with symbols of peculiar potency and even danger, for unconscious meanings, full of emotional power, become rationalized as mere references.

^{1934c} It is customary to say that society is peculiarly subject to the influence of symbols in such emotionally charged fields as religion and politics.⁴¹ Flags and slogans are the type examples in the field of politics, crosses and ceremonial regalia in the field of religion. But all culture is in fact heavily charged with symbolism, as is all personal behavior. Even comparatively simple forms of behavior are far less directly functional than they seem to be, but include in their motivation unconscious and even unacknowledged impulses, for which the behavior must be looked upon as a symbol. Many, perhaps most reasons are little more than *ex post facto* rationalizations of behavior controlled by unconscious necessity. Even an elaborate, well documented scientific theory may from this standpoint be little more than a symbol of the unknown necessities of the ego. Scientists fight for their theories not because they believe them to be true but because they wish them to be so.^{2ms} Even "objectivity" must be motivated.

^{dm} [From the perspective of unconscious motivation] the fundamental necessity of the human organism is to express the libido — and all cultural patterns are [oriented]⁴² in one way or another in that direction and operate via the mechanisms of symbolism. ^{si, lb} By an unconscious mechanism of symbolic transfer, an endless consecutive chain of symbols [is built up] in a richly configurative [symbolic structure.] ^{1934e, lb, si}

Thus individual and society, in a never ending interplay of symbolic gestures, build up the pyramided structure called civilization. In this structure very few bricks touch the ground.

^{1934c} [Perhaps this suggestion will be more convincing to you if we consider an example] of some of the less obvious symbolisms in socialized behavior — [such as those that are conveniently summarized as etiquette.] Etiquette has at least two layers of symbolism. On a relatively obvious plane of symbolism etiquette provides the members of society with a set of rules which, in condensed and thoroughly conventionalized form, express society's concern for its members and their relation to one another. There is another level of etiquette symbolism, however, which takes little or no account of such specific meanings but interprets etiquette as a whole as a powerful symbolism of status. From this standpoint to know the rules of etiquette is important, not because the feelings of friends and strangers are becomingly observed but because the manipulator of the rule proves that he is a member of an exclusive group. By reason of the richly developed meanings which inhere in etiquette, both positive and negative, a sensitive person can actually express a more bitter hostility through the frigid observance of etiquette than by flouting it on an obvious wave of hostility. Etiquette, then, is an unusually elaborate symbolic play in which individuals in their actual relationships are the players and society is the bogus referee.

[Now, it is also possible to treat the subject of etiquette as an example of a realm of symbolic behavior and to consider how we might approach its study.] ^{h2} Four kinds of approach [may be compared:]

(1) [One way to study it would be to try to discover the recognized] rules of etiquette [in a given society. This is] the ethnological objective.

(2) [In another type of study,] the rules are assumed; what you try to discover, instead, is how the individual would react to them. This is the psychological type [of inquiry, and it] needs a huge mass of material [if it is to be properly conducted.]

(3) [Another approach would involve] testing the etiquette of the group in definite contexts, [and seeing what kind of] rationale emerges. On the whole, this is the most difficult way [to approach the subject.]

(4) [A fourth possibility would be] a reasoned inquiry into the nature of etiquette itself, ^{bg} and its psychological basis. [Let us pursue this avenue a little way now.]

^{lb, h2, h1, bg} [It is sometimes said that etiquette is a kind of] "luxury of behavior", inherently and obviously trivial. ^{lb} Otherwise it passes over into morals, techniques, or law. ^{h1} But can you conceive of society with-

out etiquette? Historically etiquette was no luxury, [but a matter of deadly seriousness for the individuals whose social fortunes depended on its observance. Perhaps in some quarters] etiquette [is seen] as a game — a diversion [from the sober necessities of life. But it is a special kind of game, then:] I [may] *play at* etiquette, *but not flippantly*.^{h2, lb, h1} [What is fundamental to etiquette is not that it is actually a trivial aspect of life but that it is *seen as*] inherently trivial —^{lb} that its triviality is *recognized*.^{lb, h2} [Indeed, its rule is actually so stern that despite the supposed triviality it amounts to a form of] compulsive tyranny as real as the tyranny of morality, with which it shares a basis in ego-anxiety, [and with which it shares a function of] simplifying human relationships.^{si} [Actually, from this quasi-political point of view that assesses etiquette's tyrannical governance of human affairs we might look at] etiquette as a passport [governing the individual's access to social groups outside his circle of intimates. The forms of] etiquette [pertaining to contacts] between classes [are particularly interesting, therefore],^{bg} [with their symbols of the] rights of status.^{si} [In such contacts we are likely to get a good view of the] advantages and disadvantages of familiarity and unfamiliarity with etiquette.

[Another property of etiquette that bears a paradoxical relationship to its compulsiveness is the]^{h1, lb} freedom of choice [that one supposedly exercises in following its forms,] as if [one behaved not out of necessity at all but out of] spontaneity and gratuitousness. [But like the notion of the] "free gift," [in the rules of etiquette we have only] the fiction of freedom — only theoretically a freedom of choice.

^{bg} The paradox of etiquette, then, is that it combines an obvious triviality with a strong moral necessity and tyranny and a felt element of choice. The strength of the moral necessity depends upon symbols of interpersonal status. [But its presence, and its hidden compulsion, are evidenced in the fact that] breaches of etiquette can rarely be atoned for in [any] thoroughgoing manner. [True, our] society provides [us with a supposed form of atonement in] the apology, but this is never really satisfactory. In societies where breaches of etiquette are atoned for [by harsher means, such as the imposition of] fines, and so on, etiquette merges with morality. So it seems that where the triviality is ostensibly important we have etiquette; where the tyranny is overtly emphasized we have morality.

^{bg} In this connection [it would be a useful project] to check up etiquette situations in Polynesia, especially in terms of the relative triviality involved. For example, seating arrangements at a feast may not be con-

sidered a matter of etiquette since the status of the individual is vitally involved, whereas the relation of chief to commoner, with its "noblesse oblige," may partake more of the nature of etiquette. That is, where rights of status are socially guaranteed and insisted upon, [perhaps] the tendency is to move away from regarding such behavior as etiquette and, instead, to consider it morality, especially where freedom of choice, ^{bg, h2} responsibility and irresponsibility, ^{bg} or voluntary participation are not factors to be considered.

^{h2} [Thus the behaviors we are accustomed to consider "etiquette" have] shifting connotations, [depending on their social context and also depending on the personalities of the individuals concerned.] ^{bg} Personality differences will count in the evaluation of etiquette — a healthy introvert will differ from an extravert in his reaction to etiquette problems. ^{si} The problem of personality is fundamental and enters into every discussion of value. [So we cannot discover the meaning of etiquette in the particulars of the behaviors in which we observe it.] ^{lb} [What matters most is the behavioral form's] *locus in implication*: one's hostility to its tyranny, [say]; [one's sense of it as] a social duty; one's perfunctoriness [in performing it]; perhaps one's use of etiquette as a mask for emotional privacy. The actual concrete symbol doesn't matter so much. ^{lb, si} [What is most important is] the total *configuration* [in which it is placed.] ^{h1} [Like other symbolic forms,] etiquette lives in a world of inarticulate implication.

Editorial Note

The material in this chapter comes from the years 1933–34. Several different Sapir "texts" are represented. The earliest version comes from the Rockefeller Seminar in the spring of 1933, when Sapir conducted several class sessions on symbolism: (1) An initial lecture on symbols on April 20, 1933 (notes by Halvorsen); (2) a discussion on signs and symbols, beginning in the second hour of April 20 and continuing on another occasion with a discussion of cases of symbol genesis presented by students (undated notes by Bingham Dai, and retrospective summaries in notes dated May 9, 1933, by Halvorsen and Marjolin); (3) a continuation of this discussion on May 9, 1933, with comments on the social dimension of symbols (notes by Halvorsen and Marjolin dated May 9 and May 11); (4) a lecture on "Speech as a Symbolic System," May 16, 1933 (notes by Walter Beck).

Sapir seems to have given another lecture on symbolism sometime in 1933 for a different audience, in which Beaglehole was present — or so I surmise from the fact that Beaglehole's notes, though included with his class notes, do not match those of other student note-takers. The terminology and concerns shown in BG have more in common with the Rockefeller Seminar than with the class lecture given the following spring, though the BG notes suggest a tighter organization than in the Rockefeller notes. (Beaglehole's notes on symbolism are separate from his notes on etiquette, which cohere with those of other students in the 1933–34 class.)

Finally, Sapir devoted the final session or two (May 15, 1934, and perhaps some additional hour) of his 1933–34 course to the topics of symbolism and etiquette. He had also just written an article on "Symbolism" for the *Encyclopedia of the Social Sciences* (1934e). Notes by DM, LB, H1, and SI from this lecture are all rather similar, and they show so close a resemblance to portions of the encyclopedia article that it seems reasonable to suppose that Sapir essentially read from that paper in his lecture.

Rather than try to amalgamate all these discussions into a single text, which would have had to include contradictory terminology (among other problems), I have divided the material into a 1933 version (Rockefeller Seminar plus BG's "symbolism" notes), which represents an exploratory discussion, and a 1934 version (other class notes plus encyclopedia article), which shows the much tighter organization and revised terminology Sapir later gave to the topic.

In the 1933 sources there are occasionally difficulties in distinguishing Sapir's statements from other people's comments, since the Rockefeller Seminar notes generally include notes on the discussion as well as on Sapir's presentations. Although most of the note-takers make clear who contributed what, it is harder to sort this out in Dai's notes on "Signs and Symbols," especially since Sapir apparently read and commented upon written examples he had collected from members of the Seminar. There are also some problems concerning the order in which comments are presented in Marjolin's notes as compared with Dai's and Halvorsen's notes for the same session. I have taken some liberties with the order of RM passages, therefore, but few for DA or HA.

For the 1934 lecture I have drawn heavily on passages from the encyclopedia article, merely indicating which note-takers have notes on each passage, and footnoting the note-taker's actual text where it shows some relevant departure from the published version. The class notes do go

beyond the encyclopedia article, however, especially in their discussion of etiquette. While the "Symbolism" article has only a paragraph on etiquette, Sapir clearly devoted much more time to the subject in class, perhaps even a separate class session. In April he had assigned the class the project of making up and answering a questionnaire on etiquette, and BG's notes suggest he based his lecture on a discussion of these class papers. The etiquette section in my text is derived from notes by LB, H1, H2, BG, and SI, as well as the encyclopedia article.

Notes

1. HA has "returned".
2. HA has "remoted".
3. HA has "manners."
4. BG simply lists examples; it is not clear whether Sapir discussed any of them at greater length.
5. The bracketed passage is derived from "Symbolism" (Sapir 1934e).
6. HA adds: "(Dr. Dollard: A symbolic system is more like a Gestalt.)" See also the next passage in HA, on the symbolic system, incorporated below.
7. HA actually has: "The following discussion in the Seminar centered around the many aspects of and difficulties involved in the concepts of sign versus symbol. Professor Sapir admitted that his intention was just to use this first lecture on symbols to show the interesting, but also very difficult and complicated field and in a way to clear the ground for the following hour on the same topic."
8. This sentence actually derives from Andras Angyal's comment in the seminar discussion: "The distinction is between an actual relation (sign) and an imputed one (symbol). It does not seem that there is any genetic relationship between sign and symbol." RM goes on to give Sapir's answer, which asserts that there can indeed be a genetic relationship.
9. The bracketed passage is derived from "Symbolism," Sapir 1934e.
10. In Dai's notes it is not always clear whether a statement should be attributed to Sapir or to some other member of the seminar. In this case we may surmise that Sapir was reading from a statement offered by Marjolin.
11. World War I.
12. This passage comes from an exchange between Sapir and Krzyzanowski (a member of the Seminar). RM has: "*Mr. Krzyzanowski:* There is another criterion to distinguish between signs and symbols. A symbol is a sign which has become socialized. A whole group has accepted it as referring to something definite. *Dr. Sapir:* There are private symbols. Most of the time, the socialization takes place for the material of the symbol, not for its reference. To be true, everything in this realm of symbolism is partly social, partly individual."
13. RM presents this comment as following upon this statement by Dollard: "As used by the psychiatrist, 'symbol' has the character of affective sense or power which distinguishes it from non-symbolic words, gestures, acts. . . . We hit here upon private symbolism. The child, for instance, has a private world which is reshaped by the social environment. To be true, there is no hard and fast line between private and socialized signs and symbols."
14. According to DA and RM, Sapir continued at this point with some remarks about male and female speech "in an Indian tribe in N. California" (presumably Yana). The discus-

- ston is somewhat cryptic. I have moved it to the later lecture on "Speech as a Symbolic System," where Sapir evidently took up the same topic again. With that context it is easier to see what Sapir might have had in mind the first time around.
- 15 Beck had been a criminologist in Germany before joining the seminar.
 - 16 Dai's notes do not indicate that the key-rattling took place during the greeting, but RM's commentary suggests that it must have done.
 - 17 DA actually has: "(The use of hands in various connections and gesture in particular were discussed at some length. It was found that they represent a kind of symbolism that has not been carefully studied.)" RM has: "A discussion takes place about the distinction between meaning and symbol."
 - 18 RM actually has "disphasing."
 - 19 RM actually has "leads to a criticism of the endeavor..."
 - 20 HA ends his notes with the following: "(Professor Sapir asked everybody to try to suggest situations where the sign-implication for two persons may be quite different.)"
 - 21 RM actually has: "The danger is to emphasize too much the social character of symbolism."
 - 22 RM actually has "the social relations".
 - 23 The bracketed material derives from Sapir's discussions of "illusions of objectivity" in other passages and in his published writings, including the excerpt from Sapir 1934a quoted below, where the illusion is linked with "verbal habit."
 - 24 WB actually has: "referential (referring to meanings which are not given in the sounds themselves and primarily)."
 - 25 Sapir 1929m, published in the *Journal of Experimental Psychology* 12: 225–39.
 - 26 WB has: "Control indices brought about that languages are not built on such principles..." Evidently Sapir said something about how the experiments were set up to avoid calling referential meanings to mind. Since the notes do not report this clearly, I have drawn on a passage from Sapir's published paper.
 - 27 WB adds: "As to further and detailed information I refer to the study mentioned above which is published in " (the reference is not inserted).
 - 28 The wording of this passage comes from "A Study in Phonetic Symbolism," Sapir 1929m.
 - 29 See Sapir 1929d, "Male and Female Forms of Speech in Yana."
 - 30 Exclamation mark and vowel marking added in accordance with Sapir's usage in the published text. Sapir 1929d has italic *r* for voiceless *r*, here rendered as R; both the text and WB have the final *a* raised up as superscript.)
 - 31 Note that Sapir indulges in no such speculations in his published work on Yana speech. On the contrary, he suggests that the differences between male and female speech are as conventionalized as anything else in language (Sapir 1929d). Perhaps in his actual remarks in the Rockefeller Seminar he offered his interpretation in a better-hedged version than the notes represent.
 - 32 The essay ("Cultural Anthropology and Psychiatry," Sapir 1932a) goes on to argue: "We have learned that the individual in isolation from society is a psychological fiction. We have not had the courage to face the fact that formally organized groups are equally fictitious in the psychological sense, for geographically contiguous groups are merely a first approximation to the infinitely variable groupings of human beings to whom culture in its various aspects is actually to be credited as a matter of realistic psychology."
 - 33 DM has: "Now flags, mathematics, speech, are symbolic entities in that they have no meaning in themselves. They are significant only in so far as they lead the understanding recipient to wider conceptions." H1 has: "symbolism speech, writing – symbols of reference".
 34. LB has "suppressed attitude, masks?"

35. SI has: "(1) symbolizing = always referring to something which is not directly connected with *context* of action."
36. DM has: "2. Is condensation of energy. Holding latent great amount of emotional energy and meaning in apparently trivial forms." H1 has: "expression of condensation of energy / which is out of proportion to its mere form."
37. H1 has: "transcendence of form. / 'wink': blink = symbol = reflex."
38. H1 actually has: "blended symbolisms / pronunciations, verbal slogans, errors, substitutive form of emotional expression, ritual patterns." SI has: "verbal slogans, emotionalized rituals." LB has "*Blended* in slogans or orthography."
39. H1 has: "Symbolisms which lie in the unconscious are older than those which are referential symbols, which emerge from condensation symbols when the emotional tinge drops away —". LB has: "Condensation older than referential symbols."
40. H1 actually has: "shaking fist, — as if in anger — in the gesture / language."
41. For a discussion of a similar topic, see Sapir 1927a, "Anthropology and Sociology."
42. DM has "directed."

Chapter 13. The Impact of Culture on Personality

III The Study of "Culture and Personality"
(May 1933)

^{III} What problems are worth considering in the field of "culture and personality"? What [problems] do not deserve our spending a great amount of energy trying to solve them?

[Let us begin with a] definition of the field. "Culture," [as anthropologists have traditionally conceived of it,] is not the chief object of concern in the study [of "culture and personality."] ¹ Knowledge of the history of culture, [which is what the traditional approach focuses upon,] can throw only [a] little light on its present meaning, [or its relationship to the individuals who encounter it.] For example, a cathedral may have lost all its [original,] intrinsic meaning and have become the mere symbol of a past greatness. On the other hand, to study the problem of the relations of "culture and personality" means that one does not consider personality as the mere unfolding of a biological organism. So far as the study in point is concerned, then, "culture" is relevant only if it takes [its] meaning in the present psychology of the people, "personality" only if it is referred to its milieu. To be exact, all that can be said about a person is relevant, [and this will include a great deal about the social milieu and cultural background], but it is a question of degree.

The best name for this field of research would really be "social psychology," although this term implies erroneously that there is [such a thing as] an individual psychology. [At any rate, the field which purports to study individual psychology has produced little that has really to do with that subject, should it even prove a useful conception in the long run.] A great deal of what has been written about "individual psychology" is [actually] a blend of physiology and social psychology.

[Another difficulty, from our point of view, with the field of psychology as it has so far been developed is its preoccupation with scientific objectivity.] In the field of "culture and personality," the question of objectivity or subjectivity is not very important. We know, by introspection, that we are always doing some violence to the facts. We cannot

get down to an absolute objective level, [and if we could] it would conceal from us the true meaning of what we are studying. Psychology and sociology are the most dangerous disciplines for the field of social psychology, because they are well systematized and their concepts well defined. Their methods are a lure for the social psychologist [because they offer a spurious sense of accuracy and objectivity.]²

Is social psychology a *science* [anyway? Perhaps it may turn out to be, but in our present understanding of "science"]³ the term is not flexible enough for the indeterminacy⁴ and the great variety of this field. We are concerned with the symbolic interpretation of events, [more than with their physical characteristics; and] one is constantly driven to biographies, to unique events, [rather than to abstract away from these toward the formulation of general laws. In this field] one is concerned with the fate of the development of a certain personality. [You may wonder why I use the word "fate" – perhaps it is a little dramatic, but really] fate is the right word because [it is impossible to pin down definite causes of the way a personality develops. Above all] it is impossible to attribute responsibility for what happens to somebody else. There is a process [of development which from this point of view can only be taken as] inevitable.

[Now, let us return to our initial question. What are the] problems worth considering, [in this field?]

1. *The meaning of culture.* [When I said that we are not principally interested in culture itself as anthropologists have usually studied it, I did not mean we are not interested in it at all.] Culture patterns must be described and their history must be studied. But the emphasis [in the study of culture patterns] must be placed on their meaning. For instance, it is not relevant to say that in general, sport is important. [Instead,] the importance [(or unimportance)] of sport must be studied with reference to the life of the people of each culture. [Similarly,] to have a philosophy or a set of moral values [for assessing culture patterns from the outset] is mischievous, in this field. No cultural pattern is either good or evil. What one has to find is its meaning. [We may not accord importance and value to some predetermined mode or aspect of human existence from the very start of our study; for] what is important is the triumph of life, [not some particular way in which it is led.] That is the first problem [in our field, then]: what the generalized patterns [of culture] mean for people in given cultural areas.

2. *The study of the individual in his milieu.* This [type of] study is conditioned by [and dependent upon] our understanding of the meaning

of culture. [In a sense they go together, because culture can only have meaning *for* someone. But what we emphasize here is the individual rather than the group as a whole.] The most interesting milieu, [if we wish to understand the impact of culture on the personality.] is that of the very young individual. But [this situation in its full complexity] is often difficult to understand.

[If we take the study of individuals in their particular circumstances seriously, we shall have to recognize that] ^{1932a} culture varies infinitely, not only as to manifest content but as to the distribution of psychologic emphases on the elements and implications of this content. According to our scale of treatment, we have to deal with the cultures of groups and the cultures of individuals. [From this standpoint we should find, for example, that] ^m the difference between intra-cultural and inter-cultural conflicts is not real. We have always to deal with inter-cultural conflicts: [it is only the locus of culture that differs.]

3. *The study of the family*. [This is one of our most important areas –] to study the psychological scheme of the affective relationships in the family. Though it would be better to discard the term “psychoanalysis,” the psychoanalytic school has probably contributed more than anybody else to the understanding of the personality. A comparative study of families will reveal different distributions of affections and different symbolisms.

It is often impossible to study “the family” itself [– what one is studying is the relationships of the people in it – just as it is impossible to study the individual in isolation.] Instead of studying individuals alone, we should try to study them in relation to their family. For instance, one could arrive at a perfect understanding of the personality of a political leader only by tracing the mechanisms to which he owes his success back to those he used in his parental home. Any true knowledge of meaning is conditioned by the understanding of this primitive milieu. [In the study of culture,] we are constantly referred to biography.⁵

These three problems – the meaning of culture, the relation of the individual and his milieu, and the distribution of affect in the family and its symbolism – are the three main problems of the field of “culture and personality.” [Still, there are two further tasks worth mentioning, though they are more long range.]

4. *Typology of personality*. We may look forward to a time when we shall be able to build a typology of personality (from which may come a typology of culture). There are three important determinants of the personality: the genetic process; the maturation [process]; and the early

conditioning factors, [the events of] the first two years [of life. If we study a sufficient number of individuals in different milieus] we can expect to discover tangible parallels and establish types of personalities and situations. [It seems to me that this is a task of the utmost importance, for] it is only by means of such a typology of [personal] fates that we can develop a tolerance for [the varying modes of human] life. To try to enter into personalities completely foreign to your own is the most healthy of exercises.

5. *The reality of certain normal processes.* The cultural anthropologist has perhaps developed an excessive sense of relativism. He must see that there are some fundamental meanings which persist everywhere: for instance the affective bonds between the child and its parents or their substitute (the maternal uncle, [or someone else, as the case may be, depending on the particular society and its family arrangements]). Though the affective bonds established in child-rearing may be the clearest example, I believe there are other fundamentals too — perhaps the sense that] the main task of an individual is to lose himself in the love of others. [But however universal a push toward social success may be, its particular requirements will not be compatible with every type of personality.] Often a social success is an individual failure. [From a certain standpoint] this social success may be interpreted as a reconciliation of ourselves with our fate. Nevertheless, [if that reconciliation demands too much of the personality its results will not take the form of true expressive creativity.] The most expressive creations have been [and must be the results of personality] fulfillment, not of thwarting. [It is these modes of fulfillment that we must seek to understand, not only the pathologies.] Psychic normality is the great task of personality study.⁶

[Psychoanalysis has taken the opposite approach and assumed that its main concern is with the abnormal. Still, the psychoanalysts' achievement has been enormous.] One of the greatest discoveries of modern times is Freud's [revelation that in phenomena which seem to be purely psychic] there is a problem of sexual adjustment. [That is, and this is the important point,] there is no break between the mind and the body. To those [personalities] unable to solve their bodily problems this mischievous separation [of mind and body] gives release: they can fly away from their problems. But although they [may] believe they are flying towards God, [what they are doing is] flying from man. The great task of the future will be to ennoble the body.

The problem of sexual adjustment is sometimes solved by dividing it in two: on the one side is sexual gratification; on the other, appreciation

and sharing the life of another. But this appreciation and sharing are only friendship, they are not really love. [So the separation of the two sides of the problem is no true solution; and in any case we should look further into the individual's adjustment to the patterns of the cultural milieu.] The reason for so many sexual maladjustments is perhaps the overdevelopment of the "ego" in our Western civilization, where the fulfillment of the individual is sought in "power," [which for some personalities may not be the compatible avenue.]

[It has not been my purpose here to claim that we have advanced very far into the field that lies open before us, or to convince you of my speculations about what we might find once we got there.]⁷ The main purpose of this Seminar has been to make you feel deeply skeptical about the biological, the psychological, or the sociological viewpoints about "culture and personality." The problems [we encounter in] these sciences spring from the field of the concrete behavior of the people, and that is what we have to study.

bg The Impact of Culture on Personality
(May 1934)

^{bg} [We have now spent a considerable time discussing conceptions of culture, of personality, and of their possible relationships, as well as the various disciplines that have taken these problems as within their purview. Let us see if we can now summarize our discussion by noting a few] general considerations, [particularly concerning] the impact of culture on personality.

[I have said on several occasions that one must begin with a study of the cultural patterns in the individual's milieu. No matter how interested we may be in individuals in their own right, we must not forget that ^{1932a} the individual in isolation from society is a psychological fiction. [It is obvious, for example, that] ^{bg} society classifies individuals in terms of rank, status, and other [attributes and schemes]. [Although one may question the particular category to which one is assigned] the individual is not allowed to question [the social process of classification itself]. ^{1b} ^{1b} What a personality does, therefore, is only in small measure a function of what he is — of himself. It is culture that makes him what he is — ^{1b} [that makes him, to some degree, a sort of] refraction of society.⁸

^{fnc} [So] the difference between culture and personality is not that the data are different, but that the flow of our interests is different. ²⁰⁰ In

anthropology there are two viewpoints, then — the psychological and the sociological — [depending on whether] we wish to hold onto our personality.⁹ ^{bg} The individual in relation to himself is a personality. The individual in relation to others is part of culture.^{1b} One sees *personality* when looking from the inside outwards; one sees *culture* when looking toward the other individual. For in personal relationships, the other person never is himself.

^{inc} The reason for our interest in personality is that we are never tired of looking and peering into ourselves. ^{bg} Indeed, one may study personality only by [striving at the same time to gain] a deeper knowledge of oneself, and through the growth of self-consciousness. On the other hand, the personality needs culture in order to give it [its] fullest meanings. It is the culture of a group that gives the meanings to symbolisms without which the individual cannot function, either in relation to himself or to others.

^{bg, 1b} From one point of view, however, culture is the agreed-upon ghost in the [machine], that catches up the individual and moulds him according to a predetermined form and style.^{1b} [This is the view of culture as the] impersonal, pageant-like Superorganic, as Kroeber [termed it and against which I have engaged in some] polemic.¹⁰ Culture, like truth, is what we make it. [It does not seem to me necessary or suitable to construct as unbridgeable a chasm between individual and culture as there seems to be between the organic and the social.]¹¹ ^{1917a} Social science is not psychology, not because it studies the resultants of a superpsychic or superorganic force, but because its terms are differently demarcated.

^{1917a} [When I have made this point, over the years, I have always begun]¹² to fear misunderstanding. It might almost appear that I considered, with certain psychological students of culture, the fundamental problem of social science to consist of the resolution of the social into the psychic.¹³ [or that I have no genuine interest in cultural patterns in themselves.] ^{kro} Of course I'm interested in cultural patterns, linguistic included. All I claim is that their consistencies and spatial and temporal persistences can be, and ultimately should be, explained in terms of humble psychological formulations, with particular emphasis on interpersonal relations. I have no consciousness whatever of being revolutionary or of losing an interest in what is generally phrased in an impersonal way. Quite the contrary. I feel rather like a physicist who believes the immensities of the atom are not unrelated to the immensities of interstellar space.¹⁴

^{bg} [Perhaps I should find it a more appropriate image to consider culture not so much as the ghost in the machine, as] a form of collective lunacy. [I would hardly wish to deny that culture patterns influence, even govern, our actions even though I believe they are patterns we ourselves have created. Indeed,] ^{h2} so tyrannical are our methods of mapping out experience that we do not do what we think we do; we do not see what we think we see; we do not hear what we think we hear, we do not feel what we think we feel. We know the "functions" [of our actions, and the] "needs" [toward which they are addressed, only] through the activities that try to satisfy them. [It will not do to read a higher purpose into these activities. Perhaps we had best look upon culture as a form of] collective floundering!

^{1998b} [There are many problems I have raised in these lectures whose solutions I must] leave to future investigators. I am not so bold as to suggest anything at all. But as to the reality of the dual problem of seeing the "set" personality – and set alarmingly early, in my opinion – going out into culture and embracing it and making it always the same thing as itself in a constantly increasing complexity of blends of behavior in some sensible meaning of the word "same," on the one hand, and seeing the historically determined stream of culture, which takes us right back to paleolithic man, actualizing itself in given human behavior, on the other – this dual problem set by two opposed directions of interest, is the real problem, it seems to me, of the analyst of human behavior. The difficulty at present is not so much the understanding of the problem as a problem but the convincing ourselves that it is a real one.

Editorial Note

Material for the first section of this chapter comes from Sapir's final lecture in the Rockefeller Seminar: an outline of the field of "Culture and Personality" (May 25, 1933; notes by Marjolin). The second section of the chapter comes from Sapir's concluding remarks to the 1933–34 class (notes by BG, LB, H2). Because these two conclusions seem to be somewhat differently focused, I have presented them separately.

The May 1934 conclusion, though difficult to reconstruct because of the sparseness of notes on it, is the one more relevant to the book as a whole. In presenting it I have also drawn upon some of Sapir's published papers ("Do We Need a 'Superorganic'?", 1917a; and "Cultural

Anthropology and Psychiatry," 1932a); his presentation to the SSRC Hanover conference in 1930 (1998b); a 1938 letter to A. L. Kroeber; Mandelbaum's notes on Sapir's lecture to the Friday Night Club, October 1933; and LaBarre's notes on Sapir's lectures to the Medical Society, 1935–36.

Notes

1. RM actually has "of such a study."
2. Wording of the bracketed passage comes from several passages in the class notes, e. g. H2, referring to "spurious accuracy" in attempts to be scientific. See also 2MS: "technical fallacy": bending knee to technique-established, to protect oneself from scientific mistakes or from the moral blame of intellectual dishonesty."
3. I add this qualification in the light of Sapir's programmatic statements about a "true science of man," cited earlier in this volume.
4. RM has "indetermination."
5. The bracketed passage, indicating that Sapir is alluding to the study of culture here, comes from his remarks in earlier passages on meaning and culture.
6. See also Sapir 1932a, "Cultural Anthropology and Psychiatry": "Cultural anthropology is not valuable because it uncovers the archaic in the psychological sense. It is valuable because it is constantly rediscovering the normal."
7. Wording of the bracketed passage derives from Sapir 1939c.
8. LB has this phrase in quotation marks.
9. 2MS actually has: "In anthropology, then, two viewpoints are these: Psychological – "I wish to hold onto my personality" / Sociological – "I do not wish to hold onto my personality."
10. LB has: "Polemic against impersonal 'pageant-like' Super-organic. 'Culture is the agreed-upon ghost in the culture' (culture like truth is what we make it). (Cf, Sapir versus Kroeber at home)". See Kroeber 1917 and Sapir 1917a on the "Superorganic."
11. Wording of the bracketed passage is derived from Sapir 1917a.
12. The text of Sapir 1917a actually has: "At this point I begin to fear misunderstanding." But Sapir was misunderstood on this, or felt himself to be, long after his 1917 statement, as is obvious from his 1938 letter to Kroeber quoted below.
13. The text of Sapir 1917a continues: "of the unraveling of the tangled web of psychology that may be thought to underlie social phenomena. This conception of social science I have as much abhorrence of as Dr. Kroeber."
14. The letter to Kroeber continues: "In spite of all you say to the contrary, your philosophy is pervaded by fear of the individual and his reality. You find anchorage – as most people do, for that matter – in an imaginatively sundered system of cultural and social values in the face of which the individual has almost to apologize for presuming to exist at all."

Appendices

APPENDIX 1. Classroom Exercises on the Study of American Culture: Smoking and Piano-Playing as Cultural Patterns (1933)

bg [Initial Discussion of] Questionnaires on Smoking and Piano Playing

^{bg} There is much more community of feeling regarding the meaning of smoking than regarding the meaning of piano playing. [Perhaps the distributional facts themselves already suggest this, since] there are more people who smoke than there are people who have studied the piano — in our culture, [at least.] Contrast this [limited distribution of piano playing in America] with the Vienna aristocracy, where all intellectuals — [let us focus] on a group similar to [the members of] this class — take it as a matter of course that everyone plays the piano, and plays it skillfully.

[The questionnaire responses reveal, however, that despite the widespread distribution of smoking, there can be] different symbolisms [associated with it. For instance, some people] consider it less graceful to wave out the match with the hand than to blow it out, while I¹ consider the latter less graceful than to wave out the match along with doing something else.

[Some of these symbolisms may be quite personal, having an emotional significance deriving, perhaps, from an individual's childhood experiences. Were I to attempt this kind of] analysis of my own smoking, [I might discover that I] took up cigarette smoking late in life with the desire to symbolize my solidarity with a [certain] social group. [But why cigarettes?] For me the pipe is "too good." I would like to smoke a pipe, because it symbolizes for me a sort of comfortable adjustment to life; also because a pipe can be smoked without continual breaks to drop ashes, and so on; but it is too late for me to take it up. [Despite] childhood fantasies — based on pictures seen [at an impressionable age] — of the skipper with a pipe having a yarn, or the farmer smoking a pipe, [and despite a persistent] fantasy of the scholar smoking a pipe, book in hand, feet on table — [I remain with my cigarettes.]

[One must not suppose, however, that all those who smoke only cigarettes refrain from pipes for the same personal reasons. Some reasons may even be more socially patterned. For example,] my interpretation of the reason why women took up smoking — but never more than cigarette smoking — is that by smoking the cigarette they sufficiently symbolized their emancipation, but they retain their femininity by going thus only half-way and not taking up the pipe or cigar.

md. hg Park's Report on the History and Distribution of Smoking

^{md} [Park:] A 1535 account of smoking in Haiti [indicates that] the smoking instrument was called *tobacco*. The native name [for the substance being smoked] never was tobacco.

The American distribution [of the use of the substance we call *tobacco* varies according to what is done with it.] Although the pipe occurs everywhere, [tobacco] chewing [is found only in] South America in an area contiguous to coca chewing. Snuff is found in the chewing areas; the cigar, in the Amazon basin.

In Europe, tobacco is supposed to have been introduced in about 1565 by Sir John Hawkins, first to England [and later onto the Continent]. In Spain [tobacco] was first grown as an ornamental garden plant, and later was used for medicinal purposes. But the Spaniards never took to pipe smoking, only adopting the cigar and cigarette. It was from Portugal that tobacco was brought to France and Italy. In France, tobacco was first used as snuff, and so remained until 1800. In Italy [tobacco was first a] medicinal and garden plant, but in about 1610 smoking came in from England. It was Englishmen who principally diffused the trait throughout Europe. In Turkey, the first reference [to tobacco occurs] in 1599, after which its use became extremely widespread. The Portuguese brought tobacco to Persia before 1590.

Why was there such a resistance to the introduction of tobacco? Why also was it so attractive?

Sapir: [Notice the] analogy to the Devil and brimstone. [Also, of course, there is the sheer] strangeness of the custom.

[Park:] In Asia too there was [initially] the medicinal use of tobacco and also the same political resistance to smoking. When the Russians came into Siberia, [however,] they found smoking well established.

Laufer² thinks opium smoking [began as] an analogy with tobacco. The Dutch gave [the practice of smoking] to the Javanese; there the poppy was taken [only] internally.

[As for Africa,] tobacco is first mentioned in 1607 in Sierra Leone. Many accounts mention it later, [and there seem to have been] several introductions. In 1652 the Dutch [introduced it] to the Hottentot. The Portuguese [introduced it] to Madagascar. *Hemp* has been used for smoking only in Africa.

Sapir's Comments

^{md, bg} The difference between originating and borrowing a habit is not a clear-cut thing, as [we suppose] that it might be. ^{bg} The borrowing of a culture pattern is mostly re-creation, the formation of a new synthesis based on the previous habits [existing] in the culture which borrows. ^{md} Originating and borrowing – the two enter into all innovation and fuse to form the new pattern.

^{bg} The report on the history of smoking reveals that our knowledge is really *only* that of the culture historian, and is consequently not very useful to the social psychologist. We have no knowledge of the meaning of the behavior – why it was accepted or rejected, or what was tacked onto it; most explanations are purely marginal. And this is [true despite the fact that] smoking is a really favorable subject because there is in the literature a fair amount of material – material which, however, deals only or mostly with [smoking's] distribution in history. ^{md} Thus even in as favorable an historical case as smoking we actually know very little about the motivations behind the act. People have left little actual experimental record of themselves.

^{bg} What we must do in order to begin to understand such a subject is thoroughly to study and understand its place in our own culture. This will give us clues [for investigating its motivation elsewhere.] Hence the usefulness of the questionnaire.

[As we have just heard,] smoking has had an alarmingly rapid and thorough distribution and spread. How are we to know the reason why peoples all over the world were so receptive to this thing as against others? We can't know, [of course, in any absolute sense.] But we can guess, [at least, that people were attracted to tobacco as] the dreamy stimulant, and that the chewing of tobacco was an easy changeover from the chewing of another plant or nut, and so on. Still, the psychoanalyst gives us what may be the only ultimate explanation: smoking – really, having something in the mouth – [might be explained] as a transference from nipple sucking. The early libidinous activation of the

oral zone is a habit which is reverted to in smoking and is consequently one which is natural and pleasant to nearly everyone (James I evidently excepted).

Report of the Student Committee on Smoking Questionnaires

[(Not recorded)]

*Sapir's Comments*³

^{bg} [We should not be too surprised by the committee's report] that they found any attempt to formulate a new and perfect questionnaire difficult if not impossible. There are many problems that arise in stating questions: one must try not to ask questions that are too suggestive, and try not to get answers that are too simple; one must consider to whom the questionnaire is addressed, how to deliver it, and so on. Really it is better to ask the respondent⁴ to give his initial smoking experience in full, than to ask when he began to smoke, was it because of [this or that,] etcetera.

md, h2 Mrs. Straus's Report on Piano Playing

^{md, h2} [The earliest musical instruments ancestral to the piano were the] psaltery, of "sweet and intimate" tone, and Pythagoras's monochord, the ancestor of the clavichord ([technologically ancestral, that is] – not for the music [played on it]). ^{h2} A similar device was used even before Pythagoras.

^{dm} [Another early instrument related to the piano was] the harpsichord, [including] the "virginal" ([a type of harpsichord] so called because it was a ladies' instrument). It was a mark of higher class to play the harpsichord, and harpsichords became beautiful pieces of furniture.

^{h2} Bach considered the pianoforte too coarse; he preferred the clavichord. [In his time] the piano was popular, but as a house instrument, [not generally as an instrument for solo public performance. Although] the first public performance [on the piano had been given] in England in 1667, the first solo public performance [was not given until] 1708,⁵ by Johann Christian Bach.

^{md} The pianoforte could be readily adapted to [a new cultural emphasis on] the sentimental, at the end of the eighteenth century, [because of

the sounds produced by its] silk strings, called "tubby," and the dreamy effects produced by the sustaining pedals. ^{md, h2} This is true for romanticism [as well, and one could even say that] romanticism and the piano came in together, at the beginning of the nineteenth century.

^{h2} [Technologically an important change occurred in] 1843, with the use of a single casting plate. There came to be more and more metal parts. The modern [piano] frame is cast steel. As for the strings, in the sixteenth century claviers had strings of silver, gold, gut, or silk, but in the modern piano all strings are made of steel. There are sixteen sizes of strings, and 243 [strings in total,] for 88 tones. The average strain per string is 176 pounds. The seventeenth-century clavier had a bar for the hands, and a mirror for the face; [while playing,] no wriggling [was allowed.] Later [instruments had a] higher seat.

Sapir's Comments

^{bg} In this report on the technological history of piano playing [we have heard some suggestions, perhaps not yet more than] vague considerations, of the influence of technological equipment on the nature of composition, in the blur effect [in the music] of post-pedal composers' [writing] for the piano, as against the clearcut music of Bach. Moreover, [we may also begin to gather that] as in many other things, you get various subcultures in music — among the technicians, the artists of different levels, the interested public, and so on.

^{md, h2} [Unlike tobacco and smoking,] the piano belongs to a special class, [a kind of] informal guild, inhabiting a subculture, [or several of these]. ^{md} In our culture some very specialized techniques [are present, for building pianos and for playing them, although these techniques] rest upon very widespread traits.

[You must not suppose, however, that our culture is alone in having specialized subcultures, or that they are only to be found in the industrial world.] In even the simplest of cultures, we get the demand for certain meanings which must call forth specialization of the extremist type. The extreme specialization is thus concomitant with the very conduct of economic life (and this [fact must] refute the ideas of those historians who stress economic aspects [as determining cultural evolution].⁶ [Notice, incidentally, that] humor and its derailments rest on a certain homogeneity of meaning within the culture itself. ^{md, bg} So in fact a good pragmatic test of [the existence] and the homogeneity of a

“sub-culture” is the ability of the participants to joke among themselves to the exclusion, as far as meaning is conceived, of others. [Indeed, perhaps the incentive to make in-jokes and exclude others is itself at the root of specializations on which the jokes can be based.]^{md} Thus [if this is so] ultra-specialization is common to all society.

Secondly, [although I have just emphasized such non-economic aspects of subcultures as humor, it remains a sober fact that] vested interests affect even such a “[cultural] trait” as the piano. Ultimately this instrument, and all instruments, are tied up with a class stratification. The roots [of these instruments trace] back to common folk organs, [but their later history is tied up with the history of classes and elites.]

^{md, h2} Thirdly, [let us not fail to observe] the relevance of the purely technological substratum to the meaning of the culture as a whole.^{md} Musical meanings, that is, must not be set apart from the purely mechanical meanings. Thus the history of the piano is a tale of give and take between need and presentation. Sometimes the new trait came to answer a need; sometimes the new trait was just there, and the musicians proceeded to utilize it.^{h2, md} Technological limitations really help to form your styles — also your [musical] clichés.^{h2} For instance, the [characteristic] broken chord [used] in sonata forms [in the later eighteenth century suggests that] composer and audience are piano-minded. [And consider also, at that period, the use of musical] turns and quavers, at first [introduced] to compensate for the lack of sustaining power [in earlier instruments such as the harpsichord, but] now liked [for themselves and] also as a test of the virtuoso [performer].^{md} The musician always naively believes that his patterns and effects are based upon nature, [upon intrinsic properties of the sounds;] but the actuality of his use of his particular techniques is always based upon the unique tradition of his group.^{h2} The same thing [is true of other cultural traits.] The shape of letters [of our alphabet] is derived from [the properties of] stone [on which they were engraved; the shape of] Chinese [writing,] from the camel’s hair brush.

^{dm, h2} There is not a single thing about our music that you can pick out to which you are not unconsciously prepared to give preferred meanings. No one passively lets music act upon him; the audience conditions art. [Consciously or not, the composer must be aware that the] use of drums [suggests] the masculine or the exotic, [in ways that are affected by the totality of our musical experience,] so that our toying with jazz has weakened some of the effects of symphonic music [and altered the meanings of] some of our previous efforts.^{md} Certain reck-

less rhythms in older compositions no longer have the original meaning because of the interposing of the jazz rhythms [in our musical experience.] Thus we cannot reproduce the time spirit of the minuet — now we regard it as mincing and overdelicate. ^{md, h2, b*} [Instead, in the present age] we are especially sensitive to “blurred” effects, in music and elsewhere in modern art. The psychology of the blur, in art and also in philosophy, [suggests] the anti-logical; [it recalls] James’ idea that somewhere in the world the law of gravity does not apply. ^{b*} Perhaps this blur effect is due to a desire to escape from the brutal logic of the world. ^{md, h2} As an escape from the clear-cut articulations of modern machines [and their movements, the blur acquires a] special value as a symbol of liberation⁷ from the technology that has us in its grip, [constraining us as if it were an] all-prevailing universe.

^{h2} Thus some very technical point may symbolize the general attitude of the age. ^{md, h2} Even a highly functional activity where the meanings of patterns are very obvious on one plateau may yield very different and significant meanings on another. ^{dm} [Whatever the activity and its apparent function.] invariably there are very generalized subtler meanings which crop up and are never definitely eliminated⁸ in the situations themselves. ^{h2, dm} So our first approach to meaning is always an impoverished one, for these added accretions are really the reason for the [persistence of the] patterns — for the inertia of culture. Patterns linger [beyond the expiration of their original function] because of the meanings that have accrued to them.

*Report of the Student Committee on Piano-Playing
Questionnaires*

[(Not recorded)]

Sapir’s Comments

^{bg, h2} The report on the questionnaires raises several points. First of all, is it important that in our society, women teachers predominate for elementary piano lessons? Must this not have its effect on the young learner, and an effect on the role of music [in our lives?] Piano playing, with us, has then an emphatic feminine symbolism; yet, musical achievement is preponderantly masculine.

Secondly: [we observe that] the piano is valued differently by the in-group (i. e., in the sub-culture) of professional musicians as compared

with the valuation of out-groups (sub-cultures) of amateurs and others. ^{bg} By the former, the piano is considered an exceptionally adequate instrument with its complete or nearly complete musical capabilities – its range, harmonic variability, its possibility of nervous response, and so on. ^{h2} [It is considered as being] in possession of as much musical meaning as an orchestra, in miniature. ^{bg} Yet, others find it insufficient as a solo instrument.

Thirdly: to what is the indifference to piano playing, on the part of some people, due – to organismic defects or to sociological conditioning? ^{bg, h2} [To this and to some other questions about interest and] appreciation of music [I suggest] three categories, [or types of] appreciation: the direct, the derived, and the exploratory. (^{bg} [This is a different kind of categorization from a typology of motives.] An appreciation may develop from a sociological or symbolical or psychological motivation and yet be quite direct. ^{bg, h2} For “exploratory,” a better term may be “substitutively direct.”⁹) ^{bg} To what, then, can we attribute some people’s greater interest in reading [musical] scores than in playing or listening? The auditory patterning may be freer, for some people, than the motor ability. Or, [the activity of reading scores] may be somewhat swank. Or possibly it is the symbol of a narcissistic withdrawal from the world. (Compare the greater pleasure some people find in reading a play than in seeing it.)

^{bg, h2} But what is the fundamental meaning of piano playing? ^{h2} [One might as well ask what is the] real value of music [in general – and a final answer will prove equally elusive.] ^{h2, bg} [For the piano soloist, perhaps the meaning is tied up with the] complete physical control [he has over the music,] as compared with the violin or flute [player.] The pianist has within his own power a complete world of control, [involving] a release of motor abilities, and a rich participation in rhythm, with [a sense of] implicit conquest. [For those who do not play the piano themselves, the meaning of piano-playing will surely be different.]

^{h2} [Now when we listened to the report on the technological history of the piano, we did not need to concern ourselves with all these variations. Our investigation of piano playing, therefore, illustrates the two sides] cultural patterns have: cold history, on the one hand, and, on the other – [on the subjective side –] the meanings [invested] in behavior.

^{bg} In continuation of our discussion on the questionnaires, [let us consider the construction of the questions. In addition to the kinds of questions so far posed,] I would suggest a fantasy questionnaire: “Given a certain situation, a certain house, certain people, plus someone play-

ing the piano, how would you feel?" [That is the kind of question, or hypothetical inquiry, I have in mind.] Also, [we need to include] a finder. In our questionnaires [so far,] we take for granted common knowledge of common [cultural] patterns; but the issue is, how far is this true? Do Missourians understand piano playing the same way we do, and mean by piano playing [the same things we mean?] Do all people play the piano and sing of an evening in our own [various] culture areas, and so on? It is interesting to construct¹⁰ a questionnaire to see how much of what we think is common knowledge and common culture is really [held in] common.

[Notice, incidentally, that what we think of as "common knowledge" comes to be known very early in life.] At the age of four, a child has already learned more about culture than he will ever know [that he knows:] the rest of his life is spent in forgetting what he learned. By four, the child knows all the fundamental linguistic patterns, [and we must suppose that he has progressed] similarly in regard to the fundamental cultural patterns. The intense curiosity of a child of four enables him to acquire a profound knowledge of social interaction.

Editorial Note

In 1933–34, Sapir gave his students several assignments which were subsequently discussed in class. The first exercise, assigned early in the fall semester, seems to have focused on the concepts of *culture* and the *social*. The students were to try their hands at composing definitions of one or other of these terms. H2 has: "Write out essential points to be included in defining culture. What is culture in Anthropological sense?" – while MD has: "Write out the criteria for the concept *social* – [its] meaning – uses – connotations." These efforts, for which versions by H1 and DM survive (on the Yale microfilm and in DM's papers respectively), were the background for class sessions on Oct. 17 and 24.

The second exercise, assigned on Oct. 24 to be handed in the following week, was to construct questionnaires on two American cultural patterns and answer the questions. DM has: "Construct a questionnaire in Social Psychology and answer [the questions in] them.

"1. Piano playing – significance – what is it – what relevance to individual.

"2. Smoking.

"Organize logically but not too formally [a] couple of typewritten pages on each of these. Be descriptive but keep in mind meanings."

The same assignment is more briefly noted in LaBarre's notes. Mandelbaum's effort at completing the assignment was found among his papers.

The questionnaires were handed in on Oct. 31 and discussed in a preliminary way. For Nov. 14 and 27, two students were to give reports on the history and distribution of smoking and of piano playing, while committees of two other students — one committee for smoking, another for piano playing — were to examine all the questionnaires and write up a new questionnaire, designed to include everything suggested by the lot.¹¹ The smoking report was given by Willard Park, the piano report by a Mrs. Straus. Notes on the two reports and Sapir's discussion of them can be found in DM, BG, and H2 (piano only). These class sessions are reconstructed in this appendix.

Sapir assigned a similar questionnaire exercise in April 1934, this time on etiquette. Sapir's discussion of that topic may be found in chapter 12. Mandelbaum's etiquette questionnaire survived among his papers, as did his copy of the take-home final exam, assigned at the end of May.

Notes

1. i. e., Sapir. Beaglehole's notes make it clear where Sapir speaks for himself. I render these passages in the first person.
2. See Laufer 1924a, 1924b, 1930.
3. Beaglehole's notes do not specify that the following statements came from Sapir, rather than from the student committee. I infer that they came from Sapir because Beaglehole rarely recorded student statements.
4. BG has "answerer."
5. H2 has a question mark by this date, which is obviously incorrect.
6. The interpretation represented in the bracketed material is questionable.
7. H2 has "escape."
8. This word is unclear.
9. H2 adds, "Cf. language — verbalizing." It is not clear whether the point is that language is a substitute for its referent, or whether an appreciation for language can be categorized in the same way as an appreciation for music.
10. BG has "ask."
11. From BG.

APPENDIX 2: Notes on a Lecture to the
Friday Night Club, Oct. 13, 1933

I cannot be ethnological and be sincere in observing my little boy play marbles. I cannot watch a Chinese mandarin and be psychological.¹

My own past history determines my outlook. When I see my boy, I am not interested in his game, I am interested in his behavior. I am ...

We are afraid to probe too deeply into personality. Our children are fully developed personalities very early and to recognize this would be to blow up the parent-child relationship [that is] so soothing and pleasing to us.

The nature of interest in human behavior is of such a kind that we

1. Classify under authority – what “they” say
2. [Classify under] I – what “I” want

Children accept everything on authority: [they accept something as true] because Daddy said so. That is why *culture is so powerful* – because Authority is Culture, and the Father is the “Great Authority.”

Whatever authority happens to infringe most closely on the child is for him the *valid world*. This culture comes to us with the greatest possible emotional weight. Love is the greatest activating factor, but also there must be germs of hate, of revolt. We never know what our true culture is because we can never depersonalize our emotional tie-ups. A vitalized ...

The difference between culture and personality is not that the data are different, but that the flow of our interests is different.

The reason for our interest in personality is that we are never tired of looking and peering into ourselves.

There is not much difference between the organization called personality, and ...

I think that the so-called objectivity of culture is a myth. It cannot be divorced from the empathizing mind. The only thing you can do is to take ten or twelve personalities and rub out the peculiar vagaries.²

All personality judgement is always an extreme judgement. For instance, personality judgement from primitive people is commonly

flabby. Because his world is the "great World" of impersonalized relationship, his nomenclature is one of great social tradition, not of personality bias.

Our great fear of finding out too much has justly kept us from probing too deeply into the individual psyche. But because of the complexity of our culture – because of the cumbersomeness ... we become more and more interested in personality.

One man has as much personality as another. Personality, I mean, is objective. A "charming personality" is a list of things that look in different directions. For instance, [such a] man is (1) mild mannered; (2) plays the piano.

The best things in the world are compensations for our weaknesses. When we evaluate each other we don't distinguish elements scientifically, but take or reject the whole combination.

Our own attitudes toward peoples then are valuable only insofar as they reveal our own personality.

The biological influence presented is very *important* in the formation of personality. At an alarmingly early age personality differences appear.

The only important events that happen after the first three years of a child's life are catastrophes.

The organized intuitive organization of a three year old is far more valid and real than the most ambitious psychological theory ever constructed.

Their world is a different kind of a thing³ because the fundamental emotional relationships were differently established as first or second child.

Culture just doesn't adhere, it is hooked by the personality and tied into the individual. Thus culture is really only these hooked events monotonously repeated forever.

The ultra complicated world of culture from the psychiatric standpoint is nothing more than the pyramiding of personality pictures.

It is absurd to carry on a grilling psychoanalysis; it is too dangerous, it isn't worth it.

All activity is the same – social or private – all in the nature of personality and culture is merely an abstraction of items so reduplicated that we may call them impersonal. But they bear no meaning aside from the Ego. Also the content has no meaning aside from behavior.

For content consult history.

For meaning consult the individual.

Editorial Note

This Appendix reproduces notes by David Mandelbaum on a lecture given by Sapir. Only a few editorial insertions are included. At several points, Mandelbaum has the beginning of a statement but missed the rest of it; I have represented these gaps with ellipses, rather than trying to complete the sentence. Italics, capitalizations, and spacing (between paragraphs) are all original. The source text is Mandelbaum's handwritten version, not the typescript he later prepared for microfilming along with his class notes.

Notes

1. See Sapir 1934a for what appears to be a fuller version of this opening.
2. Here DM has the word "Examples," crossed out.
3. This word is hard to decipher. In DM's handwritten version it is probably "thing," but might be "theory;" in the typescript it is "one."

APPENDIX 3. Sapir's lists of suggested readings for
 "The Impact of Culture on Personality" (1933-34) and
 "The Psychology of Culture" (1935-36)

Adler, Alfred	Individual Psychology
Benedict, R. F.	Patterns of Culture [1935 list only]
Boas, Franz	The Mind of Primitive Man
Cooley, Charles	Human Nature and the Social Order The Social Process
Dewey, John	Human Nature and Conduct
Dummer, Ethel (ed.):	The Unconscious, A Symposium (Alfred A. Knopf 1927)
Flugel, J. C.	The Psychoanalytic Study of the Family
Freud, S.	Introduction to Psychoanalysis The Interpretation of Dreams The Psychopathology of Everyday Life
Goldenweiser, A. A.	Early Civilization
Hart, Bernard	The Psychology of Insanity
Holt, E. B.	The Freudian Wish
Huntington, E.	Climate and Civilization
Jung, Carl C.	Psychological Types
Kantor, J. R.	An Essay toward an Institutional Conception of Social Psychology (American J. of Sociology 1922)
Koffka, K.	The Growth of the Mind
Kretschmer, Ernst	Physique and Character
Kroeber, A. L.	The Superorganic (American Anthropologist 1917)
Lowie, R. H.	Culture and Ethnology Primitive Society
McDougall, Wm.	An Introduction to Social Psychology
Malinowski, B.	Crime and Custom in Primitive Society Sex and Repression in Savage Society
Ogburn, W. F.	Social Change
Ogburn, W. F., and Goldenweiser, A. A. (eds.)	The Social Sciences and their Interrelations

Rice, S. A. (ed.)	Methods in Social Science, A Case Book
Rivers, W. H. R.	Instinct and the Unconscious
Sapir, E.	Language (Harcourt, Brace and Co.)
	Time Perspective in Aboriginal American Culture
Teggard, F. I. ¹	Processes of History
Trotter, Wm.	Instincts of the Herd in War and Peace
Tylor, E. B.	Primitive Culture
Veblen, T.	Theory of the Leisure Class
Wissler, Clark	Man and Culture

Addenda, 1933. Essays by Sapir:

- "Language and Environment," *American Anthropologist* [1912b]
 "Do We Need a Superorganic?" *American Anthropologist* 1917, pp. 441-447 [1917a]
 "Culture Genuine and Spurious," *American J. of Sociology* [1924b]
 "Speech as a Personality Trait," *American J. of Sociology* [1927h]
 Encyclopedia of Social Sciences:
 "Communication" [1931a]
 "Custom" [1931d]
 "Dialect" [1931e]
 "Fashion" [1931f]
 "Group" [1932b]
 "Language" [1933b]
 "Cultural Anthropology and Psychology [*sic*]," *J. of Abnormal and Social Psychology*, Oct. 1932, pp. 229-242 [1932a]

Editorial Note

Reading lists for these two years of Sapir's course were found among the papers of David Mandelbaum and Walter Taylor, respectively. The two lists are almost identical, except that Mandelbaum adds several of Sapir's own essays (recorded in handwriting at the end of a typed, alphabetized list). The references are reproduced here in the form in which they occur in the Mandelbaum and Taylor papers. For complete references, see the Bibliography.

Note

1. The reference is presumably to Teggard, F. J.

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Section Three
Assessments of Psychology and Psychiatry

Regna Darnell and Judith T. Irvine, editors

Introduction

Although there is no complete or direct record of the timing and content of Sapir's exploration of psychology and psychiatry as he developed his own theory of culture, his series of book reviews in various popular journals in the 1910's and 1920's summarize his response to these disciplines and to increasingly differentiated and professionalized schools of thought within them. In part, of course, Sapir wrote book reviews to obtain copies of newly published or translated works. He could not order such books for the Anthropological Division of the Geological Survey of Canada because its mandate did not include the psychological sciences. Indeed, oral history records that Sapir met his second wife, Jean Victoria McClenaghan, when she visited him in Ottawa to borrow a book on psychoanalysis. Sapir may well have been unique in Ottawa civil service circles for his interest in this topic.

The reasons for Sapir's reorientation of his linguistics and ethnology toward psychology are complex, both personally and intellectually (Darnell 1986a). At Columbia as a graduate student, Sapir did not share the conviction of many of his contemporaries that the courses of psychologist J. McLean Cattell were important for fledgling anthropologists. He seems to have ignored Boas's 1911 pronouncement in *The Mind of Primitive Man* that anthropological questions were ultimately psychological. For Boas, culture was a largely unconscious body of knowledge subject to "secondary rationalization" which was to be dismissed by the anthropologist in favour of his/her own analytic interpretation. Sapir agreed, although he was more interested in language, which – because of its formal structure – was less subject to secondary rationalization than was culture as a whole.

Many of Boas's followers flirted with psychoanalysis during the same period. Alfred Kroeber even became a lay analyst for several years. For Sapir, these intellectual currents gained further relevance from the mental and physical illness of his wife Florence from about 1916 until her death in 1924. Her illness gave him personal motives to explore diagnostic and clinical issues in psychology and psychiatry.

Throughout this period, Sapir was increasingly dissatisfied with the reification of the culture concept common in the social sciences. His

critique of the superorganic in 1917 reflects his increasing reorientation toward the study of the individual in relation to culture. His writing of poetry and literary criticism and dabbling in musical composition in this same period also encouraged attention to the psychological dimension of human life. Indeed, psychology appears to have meant to Sapir a loose analytic focus on the individual rather than on institutionalized structures. Aesthetics and creativity became issues for him in relation to his literary endeavors but came to influence dramatically his model for culture as a whole.

Sapir corresponded with Boas's friend Frederick Wells, a practising clinician who wanted examples from "primitive folklore" to compare with dementia praecox among his patients. Sapir was skeptical of the evolutionary interpretation of the primitive implicit in the Freudian history of the human psyche. Whether or not Freud saw himself as describing real historical events, e. g., in the Oedipus complex, Sapir and his anthropological contemporaries so read his argument. Sapir was further critical of Freud for citing ethnographic evidence out of context, thereby distorting its meaning. Moreover, Freud's scheme was universal, based on species biology, a difficult position for anthropologists habituated to emphasize diversity rather than similarity across cultures.

Nonetheless, Sapir was not prepared to throw out the baby with the bath water. Although his mature position on psychoanalysis and psychiatry would emerge only after his collaboration with Harry Stack Sullivan from 1926 on, these early reviews set the groundwork for Sapir's later position.

In "Freud, Delusion and Dream" (1917), Sapir praised the intuition in Freud's interpretation of a fantasy novel, though he questioned the literary quality of the work. Sapir offered a cultural explanation of the independent match between Freud and the novelist on grounds of shared culture. He saw no relevance of this work to testing the scientific validity of psychoanalysis.

Also in 1917, Sapir reviewed Oskar Pfister on psychoanalytic method. Differences among Freud's disciples appeared to him quite minor. After all the uncritical enthusiasm died away, Sapir saw a core of useful insight – the identification of repressed emotions which could enter into consciousness in various ways. Sapir applied this insight to cultural anthropology through cultural symbolisms. Among his list of positive features of the emerging discipline, Sapir found this the most useful in his own work.

A few years later, Sapir turned to British psychologist and anthropologist W. H. R. Rivers, whose *Instinct and the Unconscious* (1921) persuaded him that psychoanalysis did not have to be Freudian to be credible in relation to anthropology. Indeed, Rivers' position was consistent with British functionalism, then emerging as a major method of anthropological analysis. Mechanisms of psychic organization were compatible with cross-cultural variation. Objecting to Rivers' biological analogies, however, Sapir's claim that early man was no different from his modern counterpart was consistent with the Boasian tradition of his own training.

R. S. Woodworth's book (1922) was a conventional text for non-psychologists by a Columbia professor. Sapir, in line with his own developing position, proposed that the concept of personality would allow Woodworth to integrate behaviorism and physiology with the Freudian unconscious and cultural symbolism. "Individual history" would clarify the nature of the mind. Sapir questioned, however, the ease with which Woodworth assumed he could equate "the inner feel of alien minds" with his own intuitions about his own society; as a fieldworker, Sapir knew it was more complicated.

Frederick Pierce (1922) attempted to provide a textbook of psychological advice for Americans. Sapir found the effort largely unsuccessful but was intrigued by Pierce's unintentional characterizations of American attitudes toward culture and science. Both anthropology and psychology could interpret these artifacts. This argument undoubtedly draws on Sapir's own critique of American society, written not long before this review ("Culture, Genuine and Spurious," this volume).

Sapir's review of Jung's *Psychological Types* (1923) reflected genuine enthusiasm, a breakthrough in his own understanding of personality organization and the incommensurable worlds of introvert and extrovert. As a social scientist, however, Sapir missed case studies which would provide behavioral bases for the psychological types. Reading Jung seems to have provided Sapir with a catharsis: he contemplated his own temperament through these categories.

Jung was generally popular among the Boasians. In the mid-twenties, Sapir and many of his colleagues enjoyed applying the personality types not only to ethnographically familiar cultures but also to familiar individuals. Margaret Mead (ed. 1959) recalled Sapir and Alexander Goldenweiser's enthusiasm for this parlor game at the British Association for the Advancement of Science meeting in Toronto in 1924. Despite the playful quality of such conversations, Sapir believed that his

success in applying such categories to known individuals provided an independent test of the validity and replicability of the Jungian method. In *The Psychology of Culture*, he developed a more extended discussion of Jung and experimented with applying the types to other cultures. Neither Sapir nor any other of his generation, however, seriously attempted to take the next step and apply the categories systematically to other cultures.

Sapir's lack of enthusiasm for Knight Dunlap (1925) reduced him to revamping the author's definition of humour in terms of "an intuitive grasp of certain formal incongruities," an analysis consistent with Sapir's treatment of linguistic form (see *Language*, Sapir 1921d and "Sound Patterns in Language," Sapir 1925p).

The review of anthropologist George A. Dorsey on human behavior (1926) was Sapir's first psychological review for a technical professional audience; it appeared in the *American Journal of Sociology* the year after his appointment to the University of Chicago. Sapir was appalled by Dorsey's popular style and his failure to address the application of the concept of cultural "stimuli" to human behavior; further, Dorsey's definition of culture lacked any focus on symbolism. Sapir did not retreat from his own, incompatible, position.

The review of Jean Piaget on child language (1927) reflects Sapir's exploration of the variety of contemporary schools of psychology. He was impressed by Piaget's methodology for studying child language, which he found parallel to that of the field ethnographer. In line with his own theoretical position, the review focused on the transition from egocentric to socialized speech, the link between the individual and the cultural in life history. Since Sapir saw language as intuitively apprehended symbolism oriented to aesthetic and expressive purposes — an unconsciously developing whole with function secondary to form — Piaget's cognitive psychology was more palatable to him as a psychology of language than was either behaviorism or psychoanalysis. Further, Piaget's emphasis on the emergence of effective communication fit with Sapir's claim that each individual has a unique version of his/her culture.

In reviewing Freud's *The Future of an Illusion* (1928), Sapir was highly critical of the analysis in terms of a primal Oedipus complex. He further objected to the standard psychological equation of children with neurotics and primitives, concluding that Freud was more engaging as clinician than as "social philosopher and prophet."

Psychology and psychiatry had helped Sapir to formulate his own theory of culture, but he rejected most of their classic formulations on grounds of anthropological non-sophistication. The psychiatry he found most suited to his own ideas – that of Harry Stack Sullivan – was still very new in the late 1920's and does not appear in this collection of reviews. Nor did Sapir publish any review of Koffka's *gestalt* psychology, an approach he also found congenial. Even while appropriating some of these insights, however, Sapir remained fundamentally an anthropologist in spite of his fascination with various forms of psychology from 1917 on.

Review of Sigmund Freud, *Delusion and Dream*

Sigmund Freud, *Delusion and Dream: An Interpretation in the Light of Psychoanalysis of Gradiva, a Novel, by Wilhelm Jensen*. Translated by Helen M. Downey. Moffat, Yard & Co., 1917.

To what extent can true psychological insight, not consciously determined by objective experience, be credited to the literary artist? Is there such a thing as an intuition or instinct of psychic verity anticipating, nay transcending, the more laborious constructions of the systematic psychologist? And has the latter nothing but admiration and envy for the great artist's unguided, yet infallible, unravelings of the mysteries of the human soul? Perhaps. At least we may grant without fear of contradiction that modern psychology might rest content with the assurance of but half the grasp of mental phenomena that the great army of Shakespearean interpreters have, at one time and place or another, ascribed to their liege lord. And how does it stand with psychoanalysis? Have the not altogether self-evident psychic mechanisms that Freud has disinterred for us ever been anticipated *in toto* in a work of fiction? It is not a question of whether this or that isolated bit of psychoanalytic theory finds its parallel or confirmation in literature — such convergences of thought may be instanced by the hundred — but of whether there are to be found anywhere a literary plot and an underlying psychological analysis that are comparable to a typical psychoanalytic clinical picture.

The latest addition of Messrs. Moffat, Yard & Co. to their rapidly growing library of psychoanalytic literature undertakes to answer this question. It consists of two parts: a short novel, or *Novelle*, by the prolific German writer Wilhelm Jensen, entitled *Gradiva, a Pompeian Fancy*; and a Freudian interpretation of this work of fiction, *Delusion and Dream in Jensen's [636] Gradiva*. The intrinsic literary merit of *Gradiva* hardly concerns us, except in so far as it puts us in an initially responsive or begrudging mood when confronted by the succeeding commentary. The translator, as usual in these Moffat, Yard & Co. trans-

lations from the German, has done her best to create a haze of literalness separating us from too close intellectual contact with the writer, yet I doubt whether even the best type of rendering would have altogether made credible Freud's own estimate of the aesthetic value of the story. It has the same heavy combination of sentimental fancy and rather coarse jocularity that, in such tales as "Die Nonna" and "Höher als die Kirche," was served up to us in high-school days. The "fancy" wings its flight in comfortable view of German *Gemütlichkeit*. It is with somewhat of a shock that we learn that the Gustav Freitag-Paul Heyse type of sentimentality was still flourishing in Germany in 1903; presumably its germs are still intact. Of the jocular note running through Jensen's fantasia Freud seems a bit oblivious, perhaps because there are weightier matters at hand. And yet, that Freud's sense of humor is not altogether in abeyance and that he is aware of the smallness of the step that separates interpretative acuity from flightiness is shown by the final remark with which he calls a halt to his own resourcefulness: "But we must stop or we may forget that Hanold and Gradiva are only creatures of our author." All psychoanalysts who are capable of making reservations should thank Freud for this sly dig in his own ribs.

Let all this not obscure the fact that Freud makes a case, and indeed a very plausible and sharp-witted one. Aside from certain shortcomings, psychoanalytically considered, of Jensen himself, and aside from a few cases of rather evident overdoing it on Freud's part, the accord of *Gradiva* with psychoanalytic requirements is remarkable enough, however one chooses to explain it, and this despite the obvious fact that the suggestion of anything like psychological plausibility was far from Jensen's conscious mind. That Jensen intended to move almost entirely in the realm of pure fancy is indicated by two or three of his assumptions, assumptions credible only in a fantasia. The reader of the novel must take for granted, without motivation, the complete identity in appearance and manner of walking of Zoë Bertgang, the long-forgotten childhood playmate of Hanold, the archaeologist, and of Gradiva of the bas-relief dug up at Pompeii; the meeting of Zoë and Hanold, who are next-door neighbors in a German town, in Pompeii itself; and the fact of Hanold's strange forgetfulness. The nucleus of the tale is the abnormal interest that Hanold takes in the bas-relief, more particularly in Gradiva's very peculiar trick of lifting the foot in walking. Psychoanalytically, this interest, which leads to fancies of a delusive nature, is interpretable as a substitutive form of expression of the sexual instinct, all direct and normal manifestations of which have been denied an out-

let by the conscious self. The reason for the repression, however, is not evident, for Hanold's intensive preoccupation with classical archaeology is, at best, but an occasion or shaping circumstance, not a sufficient cause. At least so psychoanalysis; Jensen may have other ideas of what constitutes causality in a fantasia. As the only sexually utilizable material antedating the repression is Hanold's childish relations to Zoë, now "remembered" only by the unconscious, it is natural that the dammed instinct should feed on a representation linked, via this unconscious memory, with his childish past. We have, therefore, in Hanold's infatuation with the bas-relief a typical example of the unconscious infantile fixation which is so frequently at the back of neurotic phenomena. His delusional fancies are, in effect, a compromise formation induced by two conflicting volitional streams, the sexual impulse and the repressive force; they "satisfy" the former through the power of an unconscious series of associations, the latter by guaranteeing a flight from sexual reality. The psychoanalytic complexion of Jensen's *Gradiva* extends far beyond this delusional nucleus to a considerable number of details. Emotional transference, rationalization of motive, unconscious symbolization of desire, regression to infantile experiences — all these familiar aspects of Freudian thinking find, or seem to find, frequent illustration in the novel. The very name Gradiva, "splendid in walking," which has been bestowed by Hanold on the girl of the bas-relief, turns out to be, as Jensen himself points out, but the Latinized equivalent of the living girl's surname, Bertgang; that Hanold fancies something Hellenic in the features of the Pompeiian girl is a distorted reflex of the unconsciously remembered name Zoë; his sudden departure for Pompeii, apparently a poorly motivated caprice, is plausibly explained by Freud as symbolizing both his desire for Zoë-Gradiva (consciously rationalized as an absurd quest of Gradiva's peculiar footprints in the lava of Pompeii) [637] and his unconscious fear of Zoë, the work of the repression. To at least some extent Freud's detailed analyses of two of the dreams introduced by Jensen carry conviction, but only to some extent. The treatment of the "latent content" of the dreams is less plausible than the analysis of the delusions. This is precisely as it should be, for the chances of constructing dreams possessing psychological verisimilitude are not very high. Finally, the cure of Hanold's delusions effected by Zoe may be described as an abridged replica of the Freudian psychotherapy.

What are we to make of it all? Jensen himself "testily" denied all knowledge of psychoanalysis. Are we then, with Freud, driven to ascribe to Jensen a high degree of instinctive psychological insight, an artist's

intuition that more than makes up for ignorance of psychological theory? In view of the very moderate artistic ability displayed by Jensen and the obvious lack of deep earnestness in his treatment of the plot, one hesitates to commit himself to Freud's thesis. We might be less disinclined to follow Freud if the author of *Gradiva* were a Shakespeare, a Balzac, or a Dostoevsky. Perhaps we are unfair to Jensen. An unprejudiced survey of his other works might bring conviction. Yet would it, after all, be rash to seek a less ambitious explanation in what the ethnologists term "cultural convergence"? Jensen might have started with the purely mechanical idea of tying an arbitrarily interrupted past to a sentimental present and have hit upon the device of unconscious *sous-entendus* as a convenient means. This would be tantamount to an unconscious aping of the psychoanalytic procedure. It would also explain Jensen's failure to motivate what Freud interprets as a repression. Or, still more plausibly, a modicum of psychological insight, say into the facts of unconscious memory, may have been helped out by such a mechanical device as is here suggested.

However we decide as to the psychoanalytic credentials of Wilhelm Jensen, we may accept Freud's study as a sugar-coated introduction to the subject of psychoanalysis itself. As such it may have its uses. A scientific confirmation of Freudian psychology it can hardly claim to be. While it does not seem to the reviewer to represent a full day's work in the psychoanalytic workshop, it is too good a thing to be dismissed as the vagary of an off day. May not Freud have taken a half-holiday when he wrote it?

Editorial Note

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Review of Oskar Pfister, *The Psychoanalytic Method*

Oskar Pfister, *The Psychoanalytic Method*. Translated by Charles Rockwell Payne. 2nd: Moffat, Yard & Co., 1915.

The Freudian psychology has travelled a course that might have been predicted with tolerable certainty. At first received with mingled derision and disgust, it has now attained a position not only of virtual security but, one is almost tempted to say unfortunately, of very genuine and widespread popularity. Whitmanesque poets sing paeans to Jung's libido, one of the metaphysical offshoots of the psychoanalytic movement, while half-baked doctors fearlessly disentangle homosexual "complexes" at the end of a first half-hour's consultation with hysterical patients. Those who are profoundly convinced of the epoch-making importance of the psychological mechanisms revealed by Freud and, even more, of the extraordinary suggestiveness of numerous lines of inquiry opened up by psychoanalysis, without, at the same time, being blind to criticisms that need to be made of certain aspects of psychoanalytic theory, can only hope and pray that this not altogether healthy overpopularity of the subject prove no hindrance to the study of the perplexing problems with which the Freudian psychology bristles. What is sorely needed at the present time, or will be before many years, is a thoroughly objective probing into the new psychology with a special view to seeking out the paths of reconciliation with the older orthodox psychology of conscious states and to the rigorous elimination of all aspects of Freudian theory that seem dispensable or ill-substantiated. The present militant attitude of the psychoanalysts toward their skeptical schoolmasters is naturally but a passing phase. The opposed schools of psychological interpretation will have to meet each other halfway and effect a common *modus vivendi*.

For the present it is obvious that the personal bias of the brilliant founder of psychoanalysis has given the Freudian psychology more than one twist that is not altogether necessitated by its invaluable kernel — the proof of the existence of the unconscious mind of emotionally

toned "complexes," repressed trends that are directly elaborated out of the instinctive life and that leak out into consciousness in a large number of superficially dissimilar psychic phenomena, for example, dreams, automatic and compulsive reactions, neurotic symptoms. A firm belief in the validity of the main lines of psychological theory set forth by Freud by no means necessitates an unreserved adherence to such incidental concomitants as his apparently one-sided interpretation of sexual perversions or his general conception of the compound nature of the sexual instinct. At the least, very radical shiftings of emphasis are certain to emerge. An analogous development has characterized the history of the theory of organic evolution. Only recently has the original Darwinian bias toward an overemphasis of the factor of natural selection yielded to the proper evaluation of other factors. The inertia of impetus given by the founder of a radical scientific departure is, indeed, one of the most humiliating, one of the most ironically human, things about the history of science. So far there seems to be a disposition on the part of psychoanalysts to accept the whole Freudian programme at practically its face value. What criticism there is within the ranks is chiefly on matters of relatively minor import. Even the Jung sedition, of which so much is made, consists of hardly more, it would seem, than a tendency to generalize and carry further some of the more doubtful elements of Freud's theoretical groundwork. I refer particularly to Jung's handling of symbolization as an interpretative principle and to his reckless application of the principles of individual psychoanalysis to cultural phenomena.

We shall be disappointed if we turn to Pfister's extensive treatise in the hope of finding such a critical and reconciliatory survey of psychoanalytic research. It does not advance the subject very perceptibly in the direction indicated. There is, to be sure, a fair amount of critical comment *en passant* on particular Freudian positions, but the whole is mainly a summary, and a very convenient and useful one, of the typical psychoanalytic interpretations. The greater part of the book deals with the analysis and mechanism of repression, constant use being made of case material. The latter portion deals with the application as a practical technique of the theory developed in detail in the preceding pages. What particularly distinguishes *The Psychoanalytic Method* is the emphasis placed upon the usefulness and future possibilities of psychoanalysis for pedagogic purposes, curative and prophylactic. We learn, for instance, that lack of success in the business of teaching is to no inconsiderable degree due to the presence of powerful repressions in teachers them-

selves. May we hope that when pedagogues and students alike [268] shall have had the obstructive cobwebs cleared out of their unconscious by psychoanalytic examination, we shall be able to bid welcome to an educational regime that with conscious intelligence frames a pedagogical technique bearing a genuine relation to the life problems of its subjects?

The book, while nowhere rising to the brilliance of some of the Freudian writings themselves, is probably the most careful and inclusive presentation yet published in English of the results attained and the theories elaborated by Freud and his followers. It excels in this respect such works as Brill's *Psychoanalysis* and Hitschmann's *Freud's Theories of the Neuroses*. Unfortunately, Dr. Payne's translation can claim only a moderate measure of success. The overliteralness of the renderings has given numerous passages an irksome awkwardness and, occasionally, obscurity. One needs sometimes to translate back to the German to arrive at the intended nuance of meaning.

Let us turn, now, to the theoretical structure reared by the psychoanalysts. We are entitled to ask: Leaving all questions of analytic detail and technique to one side, what are some of the basic contributions of the Freudian school to psychologic thinking? First and foremost, I should say, is the new spirit of attitude and method that psychoanalysis has introduced into the study of the mind. The orthodox psychology, for all its disavowal of the older faculty-mongering, has never really succeeded in grasping the vast network of individual mental phenomena as a single growth rooting in the most primitive type of mental life we know of, the instinctive life. It would be too much to say that psychoanalysis has succeeded in reconstructing the order of differentiation of mental phenomena, but it has taken a more patient attitude toward the actual dynamics of the individual mind and is thus in a better position to ferret out gradually the development of the fundamental instincts into the higher forms of mentality. Psychoanalysis takes hold of chunks of mental life as they present themselves in experience; it does not abstract dribblets of mental experience for the purpose of classifying them and examining them under the microscope. In brief, the older psychology is an anatomy of mind, sometimes refined; psychoanalysis is an entering wedge toward a physiology of mind, generally quite crude for the present. From the clear recognition of this difference of method results the conviction that the two types of psychologic inquiry are not in any true sense opposed to each other. They merely attack their sub-

ject-matter from distinct viewpoints. They will, each of them, in the long run be found to be indispensable and mutually reconcilable.

The second point of capital importance that we must set down to the credit of psychoanalysis is the light it has thrown on the nature and functioning of the unconscious. To psychoanalysis the unconscious is not merely a negative *deus ex machina* which does convenient service in the explanation of memory and in the positing of a continuity of personality. It is a very real and active domain from which are worked the strings that move about the puppets of the conscious self. The naive assumption of a self-contained consciousness whose motivation is safely interpretable in terms of conscious data alone has been exposed by the Freudian psychology as a huge fallacy.

One of the most interesting and promising vistas that have been opened up, though I find it but little stressed by the psychoanalysts themselves, is the quantitative consideration of emotion and will. I am not referring to the measuring of reactions under controlled experimental conditions. When psychoanalysis tells us that the emotion belonging to a certain trend is not always discharged in the consciousness but may in part be inhibited in the unconscious or transferred to other reactions, we are evidently confronted by certain quantitative implications. It seems difficult to avoid the inference of a certain specific, theoretically measurable, sum of emotion or volitional impulse which can be divided up and distributed in a great variety of ways. The elaboration of the concepts that follow on the heels of this hypothesis has been but begun. It would not be surprising if this glimmer of a quantitative understanding of mental functioning blossomed out in time to an exactness of comprehension of psychological processes such as we have hardly an inkling of at present.

Among the more readily defined and generally recognized insights that we owe, directly or indirectly, to Freud are the genetic analysis and the treatment of the neuroses, to a much smaller extent also of the psychoses (forms of insanity); the frequency and radical importance of symbol-formation in the unconscious mind, understanding of which is sure to prove indispensable for an approach to the deeper problems of religion and art; the analysis and interpretation of [269] dreams; the basic importance of the psychic sexual constitution, not merely in its proper functional sphere, but also in connections that seem unrelated; the far-reaching importance of infantile psychic experiences in adult life and the ever-present tendency to regression to them; and the general light thrown on the problem of mental determinatism. Many other

points might be enumerated, some clearly defined, others controversial. Indeed, there has scarcely ever been a new road opened in science that so spontaneously and fruitfully branched out into tributary trails. It is true that hardly anything is known of the psychoanalytic problems and solutions with absolutely satisfying clarity. Yet it takes no bold man to assert that enough has been glimpsed to promise perhaps the greatest fructification that the study of mind has yet experienced.

Editorial Notes

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Review of W. H. R. Rivers,
Instinct and the Unconscious

W. H. R. Rivers, *Instinct and the Unconscious, a Contribution to a Biological Theory of the Psycho-neuroses*. New York: The Macmillan Company, 1921.

The Freudian psychology has ceased to be a mystical body of principles which are either to be accepted holus-bolus, like the half-understood tenets of a cult, or to be rejected outright as an affront to intelligence and decency. The more fantastic elements of this new psychology have separated themselves from the core and have found hospitality in the minds of certain *littérateurs*, while the core itself is becoming steadily integrated with the older psychologies and even with the latest work in physiology. Among the notable efforts to appropriate and interpret what is of patent value in psychoanalytic literature without heated concern for Freudian and anti-Freudian dogma is Dr. Rivers's recent book on *Instinct and the Unconscious*. This volume of modest size is admirable in tone and completely lacking in verbiage. It moves rapidly from idea to idea, clarifies one conception after another, and throws out many valuable suggestions by the way. Above all, it gives us a biological point of view which, whether wholly tenable or not, serves to link psychoanalytic theory more firmly than ever with the general body of research on man as a psycho-physical organism. Dr. Rivers correlates the passing of experience into the unconscious with certain instinctive mechanisms and considers a psycho-neurosis as a "solution of a conflict between opposed and incompatible principles of mental activity," an archaic, undifferentiated type of response and a later, more complex and discriminating system of adjustments to the stimuli of the environment. His main purpose thus becomes the assignment of a definite biological "function" to the phenomena of unconscious repression — "suppression" is the term favoured by Dr. Rivers.

The author frankly recognizes the possibility of errors of interpretation resulting from the selected nature of his data. Dr. Rivers worked exclusively with war-patients, in whom the psychic conflict underlying

the neurosis was presumably connected with the instinctive activities that tend to preserve the organism in the presence of danger. Such typical neuroses as hysteria and Dr. Freud's "anxiety-neurosis" are here seen as morbid responses to danger which dodge the frank impulse to flight without leading to an acceptance by the organism of the effective aggression necessary to survival.

The neurotic symptoms dealt with by Dr. Rivers in his war-work were far too similar to those that Dr. Freud and other psychoanalysts had ascribed to a sexual origin to justify us in considering his neuroses as fundamentally distinct from theirs. We are thus driven to conclude that either Dr. Freud's or Dr. Rivers's interpretation needs correction or amplification at the hands of the other. One may perhaps suggest that too much attention has been bestowed on the causative value of particular types of "complexes," that the frustrated instincts that underlie these complexes are by no means the neatly sundered reaction-systems that they appear to be in psychological discussions, and that the ultimate physiological cause of the neurosis will be found to rest in the particular pattern of nervous activity implicit in the individual organism. This pattern may be conceived of as always in operation and as showing up in a morbid form when certain of its elements have been intensified under the stress of emotion.

All individuals have conflicts of the types that are held responsible for a neurosis, whence it seems to follow that the differentiating factor in a neurosis must be of a quantitative nature. Certain nervous patterns allow of a greater give than others, without essential loss of form. We can hardly hope to understand the rationale of suppression and neurosis until we have a theory of what actually happens to a nervous impulse in terms of relative quantity, speed, acceleration, and diffusion, until, in other words, we can actually lay out the typical nervous rhythms of the individual organism.

Meanwhile, Dr. Rivers's book does undoubtedly indicate that Dr. Freud and his immediate followers have entirely overdone the necessity of sexual elements in conflicts powerful enough to bring on a neurosis, though it probably remains true that the sexual conflict is one of the most potent strains that the human organism can be made to bear. The really valuable contribution of the Freudian school seems to me to lie in the domain of pure psychology. Nearly everything that is specific in Freudian theory, such as the "Oedipus complex" as a normative image or the definite interpretation of certain symbols or the distinctively sexual nature of certain infantile reactions, may well prove to be either ill-

founded or seen in a distorted perspective, but there can be little doubt of the immense service that Dr. Freud has rendered psychology in his revelation of typical psychic mechanisms. Such relational ideas as the emotionally integrated complex, the tendency to suppression under the stress of a conflict, the symptomatic expression of a suppressed impulse, the transfer of emotion and the canalizing or pooling of impulses, the tendency to regression, are so many powerful clues to an understanding of how the "soul" of man sets to work. Psychology will not willingly let go of these and still other Freudian concepts, but will build upon them, gradually coming to see them in their wider significance. Dr. Rivers helps us in this appreciation not so much explicitly as implicitly. His new types of experience, his alternative hypotheses, and his general insistence on mechanism at the expense of typical content give us the invaluable touchstone of contrast.

Dr. Rivers is so hurriedly complete in his survey, so eager to introduce clarity into his concepts, that one wonders if he is not at times the victim of a "definition-complex." I suspect that the exclusiveness of some of his definitions may result in a too rigid handling of terms. The obvious reply to this criticism is that terms do not commit us to interpretations, but merely serve as handy counters in proceeding from point to point of a discussion. Yet it is strange how often the preliminary scaffolding of a scientific structure settles into its unyielding skeleton. I am inclined to believe that the fluidity of some of the Freudian terms is an advantage in the present state of our knowledge. Not only does his love of the clean definition lead Dr. Rivers to make distinctions which are [358] perhaps more convincing in the abstract than helpful towards a profounder understanding, but it betrays him into the acceptance of external analogies as indicative of substantial psychic or biological relationships.

Throughout the book Dr. Rivers is imbued with the typically evolutionary concepts of the former biological "function" or psychic mechanisms that serve no assignable "purpose" today. Endless post-Darwinian speculation of this order flows through many of our psychologies, biologies, and even sociologies. The instincts in particular have been a famous field for the discovery of early forms of invertebrate behavior. With the vast field of organic activity to choose from, and with only an elementary knowledge of the psychic growth of man as race and as individual, what could be easier than to frame evolutionary "explanations" of obscure types of behavior? It would appear that man as a simian tree-climber and as an epigone of the amphibians has been rather

overdone. I am inclined to question the validity of much of Dr. Rivers's own speculations along these lines and, in general, to wonder if the teleological point of view in biology is not a dangerous one, particularly when it is applied to psychic phenomena.

Dr. Rivers's main thesis of the relation between the unconscious of modern man and an instinctive behavior that at one time had freer play is suggestively argued, though whether the thesis is entirely sound must ultimately be decided by closer physiological study. Too little is known as yet of the physiology of human instincts, almost nothing of the physiology that underlies psychic suppression.

Editorial Note

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Review of Frederick Pierce,
Our Unconscious Mind and How to Use It

Frederick Pierce, *Our Unconscious Mind and How to Use It*. New York: E. P. Dutton & Co., 1922.

We Americans are often accused of a lack of interest in the formal aspect of our literary and scientific writing. An essay or a monograph, or, for that matter, an illustrated lecture, we hear it said, will proceed from point to point, from idea to related or unrelated idea, without a greater concern for unity than is implied in the tied interests of the writer or lecturer and with little more appreciation of structure than can be satisfied by scissors and glue or a periodic "To turn to another subject." The present volume suggests that there may be some truth in this criticism. Certainly, the publishers' jacket is a little disturbing, for in the alluring "Partial List of Subjects" we find mentioned endocrine glands, psychoanalysis, auto-suggestion, bringing up successful children, mating problems, and new principles in advertising. The book itself confirms, and more than confirms, the publishers' announcement.

Mr. Pierce's miscellaneousness is by no means the result of wool-gathering. On the contrary, it proceeds from a determined desire, an almost frenetic desire, to be "practical." Mr. Pierce believes in giving just enough Freudian psychology, just enough endocrinology, just enough of a glimpse into the auto-suggestive technique of the "New Nancy" school, to conjure up a background of up-to-date science against which he may throw his conception of how the American human ideal, the "successful" man, can be brought into being. It is just because his eye is so constantly on the practical upshot of all this new psychology, on the possible increase in effective brains, dollars and cents, total output, selling value, and the other well-known shibboleths which may result from psychoanalyzing and from the fixing up of glands, that he fails of clarity and convincingness. This is not to say that there is not something of value in Mr. Pierce's theoretical foundations and practical advice. The point is that in his haste to get to the advice he has not been careful to build the thoroughly intelligible theory of the unconscious that he would need to apply.

The contrast with Freud's *General Introduction to Psychoanalysis* is striking. This book also is intended for a lay public, but it is honestly concerned, first and foremost, with the gradual development of a new and still debatable psychological theory. There is far less cocksureness in it than in the science of Mr. Pierce, who does little more than pick up here and there from psychoanalytic literature, generally diluting and always furbishing with a pretentious terminology. Where Freud silently suggests practical applications of crucial importance, Mr. Pierce trumpets the practice after a few magical passes of his psychoanalytic wand. It is all very impressive — after the fashion of the pointed finger in "Fruitatives." (Mr. Pierce would be the last one to object to the comparison. His final chapter, on the New Psychology in Advertising and Selling, is a real gospel for the tribe of Carter's Little Liver Pills, Grape Nuts, and Dutch Cleanser.) And very harmless, after all. We have been too unreasonably frightened by Freud's Stygian shapes, for here is a psychoanalysis that is "clean," as the publishers have it, and that all but lisps, polysyllabically. There is practically nothing in Mr. Pierce's book that cannot be told to a meeting of Rotarians to which Girl Scouts and the Forward Movement have been invited as guests.

The long chapter entitled "Application to Everyday Life" contains some interesting corollaries of preceding chapters devoted to the unconscious, the foreconscious, and the censor of each domain.

If a child tries to snatch things from others or to use its fists, let it see in the mother's face neither anger nor half-amused tolerance; but quiet, firm disapproval. Let the child at once be removed to another room and kept there for a time without playthings. It is an excellent plan for the mother to sit in the room also, paying no attention to the child and maintaining the expression of disapproval and regret.

Mr. Pierce writes for a race of demigods who know not humor. Apropos of the inevitable dispute between Johnny and Charles as to whether or not the latter has cheated at marbles, Mr. Pierce warns Johnny's parents not to content themselves with comforting their son and assuring him that Charles is a "bad boy." "Why not suggest that Johnny invite Charles to lunch," queries the author, "and then during lunch encourage both of them to talk it over? If necessary, try to secure the cooperation of Charles's parents."

In the next chapter, "Making a Contented Human Group," during which, by the way, the new psychologies put in no appearance whatever, so far as one can see, Mr. Pierce has something to say about "The America to be worked for." He supposes a coming America in which

the policing of the school is in the hands of the scholars, with responsibility divided between boys and girls, and the code of conduct is the Golden Rule, which is inset on a metal plate in every desk, printed on the flyleaf of every book, and *recited in the form of a pledge* [italics not mine] by the entire school at the commencement of each session. This chapter, so fertile in suggestions and prejudices, ends on a clarion note:

The point is to begin doing it [apparently the remodeling of our country] now and not wait until we have forgotten to do it at all; for the American of to-morrow is our job, a job big enough and splendid enough to enlist us all, from the smallest school-child to the mightiest intellect between the two oceans.

But "the salesman himself," to jump into the following chapter, should study and practice the use of very varied similes. They are easily fitted into the sales talk, and any one of them may elicit that slight smile, or change of expression, or unconscious movement of the hand, that tells of a keen interest being touched — which interest often gives a valuable index of habit or tastes.

Sapienti sat! This book is not unimportant. It throws more light on our average American attitude towards the thing called culture and on what we expect of our scientists than a dozen books of ten times its merely scientific value. For it is the genuine folk-utterance of the America that distrusts the individual mind, despises the distinctive as an impertinent abnormality, organizes all movements of the spirit into the frigidity known as "efficiency," and loses its head over "success." And is it not more than a little strange that psychoanalysis, almost the first peep that psychology has given us into personality, should have been appropriated by Mr. Pierce for the apotheosis of a dummy ideal? So powerfully does the unconscious color and warp what finds entry into the conscious!

Editorial Note

Originally published in *The Literary Review of The New York Evening Post*, July 1, 1922, p. 772, under the title "Practical Psychology."

Review of Robert S. Woodworth, *Psychology: A Study of Mental Life*

Robert S. Woodworth, *Psychology: A Study of Mental Life* New York: Henry Holt & Co., 1921.

While Professor Woodworth's *Psychology* is mainly intended for use in college classes, it has a claim to more attentive consideration than textbooks are in the habit of receiving. It is a clearly worded presentation of the main body of doctrine at present held by the orthodox school of American psychology. Substantially, Professor Woodworth is a moderate introspectionist. Unlike the thoroughgoing behaviorists, he cheerfully accepts consciousness as a datum of experience. Many of his observations and "laws" are of introspective origin; but a large portion of his book, being based on inference from controlled experiments, should prove thoroughly acceptable to the behaviorist, even if his theoretical standpoint is not.

But what is Professor Woodworth's theoretical standpoint? He does not define his position in set terms but leaves it to be gathered from his treatment of the subject. He is prepared to accept the findings of any approaches to the science that bid fair to yield intelligible and mutually consistent results. The human mind, one may imagine him to say, is a difficult enough thing to get at in any event. We do not know exactly what it is, nor can we satisfactorily define it in terms of observable activity or of underlying physiology. But we can make shift to piece together some notion of the "mental life" by sidling up to it, as it were, from different points of view. Introspection may be a dangerously elusive method, for the moment of consciousness that we set out to describe can not be strictly synchronous with the moment of observation. In a sense, introspective psychology must be a kind of lifting of oneself by one's bootstraps. Yet common sense has always approved of introspection as a guide to knowledge of the mind, and rightly so. It is merely necessary to remember that the knowledge so arrived at is not gleaned from the whole and steady contemplation of actually existent "states of mind," but is laboriously constructed from such partial glimpses of

mental experience as the memory can hold to. The resulting psychology has not a leg to stand on, yet it possesses a powerful intuitive warrant that no amount of behavioristic heckling can impair. Our survey of the mind is somewhat like the notion a bird gets of his cage. He can not see the whole of the cage, because he is always occupying some portion of it; but by flitting about from perch to perch, the bird, if a philosopher, can formulate a very workable theory of its shape, its size, and of the relations of its parts.

But Professor Woodworth is by no means limited to introspectionist data. He is as firm a believer in the value of the inferences concerning mental process and discrimination yielded by conditioned reflex-experiments and tests as any behaviorist. He assumes (again on the basis of intuitive common sense rather than of a philosophical examination) that the inner feel of alien minds is similar to that of his own, and that he is warranted in hitching on psychic inferences from the behavior of human beings other than himself to the descriptive analysis of mental states and processes that introspection yields him in the first place. Roughly speaking, introspection provides the qualitative basis of psychology, while behavioristic observation introduces measure: but only roughly, for the two methods are interdependent.

It is not a neat discipline, this orthodox psychology of Professor Woodworth's. Confessedly it can but be a thing of compromise, a somewhat patchy structure at the crossroads leading to two mighty sciences of the future — a physiology, delicate, quantitative, and completely integrated, which will have absorbed the present behavior-psychology with the utmost sang-froid; and a self-contained science of consciousness which will be able to build up a functional theory of the psyche without concerning itself in the least with physiological mechanisms. The nature of the relation between these two disciplines will be, as it has always been, a matter of philosophy. There can be no objection to Professor Woodworth's standpoint. As long as neither physiology nor psychology is the delicate and integrated interpretation of personality that it may one day become, a mixed method and a constantly shifting point of view are probably the most acceptable approach to the study of behavior.

Personality is only beginning to be apprehended as the true subject-matter of both physiology and psychology. The orthodox psychologist, in spite of formal denials, has limited himself in the main to a descriptive inventory of selected phases of consciousness or behavior. It is as though one tried to get a unified idea of a house by a close scrutiny of

its parts (doors as doors, a random stretch of brick wall, fire-place, the flooring of a bedroom, and a bit of roof). Only the vaguest conception of the true nature and purpose of a house would emerge. The reading of Professor Woodworth's *Psychology*, and of other psychologies of its type, leaves one with a subtle sense of dissatisfaction. One has a persistent feeling that the mind has been more or less competently anatomized; but that its functioning, its individual history, and its purpose, if one may use a dangerous word, remain obscure.

Professor Woodworth is best in his fundamental chapters, such as those on native and acquired traits, emotion, the feelings, and sensation. He does not carry the reader along with him quite so convincingly in the more synthetic chapters. What he says about such topics as imagination, will and personality, has a decidedly tentative air. Perhaps the strangest thing about the book is its failure to explain fully the nature of thought. Reasoning, which is handled immediately after perception, is but a highly specialized, inhibited, purposively directed, type of thought. Very little reasoning is done by human beings.

Editorial Note

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Review of C. G. Jung, *Psychological Types*

C. G. Jung, *Psychological Types, or the Psychology of Individuation*. New York: Harcourt, Brace and Co., 1923.

To all of us there comes at certain moments of life a poignant sense of the futility, nay the sheer impossibility, of explaining our inmost self to some friend of long standing. He is ready to receive our confidence, his smile of welcome is unforced, but no sooner have we begun to throw out an invisible bridge of understanding than we shrink back from the heavy labor, knowing in the twinkling of an eye that here at least is an abyss that will never be spanned. It may be that he knows our every conscious thought, yet there is something that he is profoundly unaware of, some code of irrational love and delicate aversion to which he has not the key. Indeed, in the rough-and-ready world of conscious motivation, "misunderstandings" are a necessity. They ease the tension between discordant spirits, and they warn us. Life would be too terrible if we allowed ourselves to be guided by our intuitive understandings. The camouflage of behavior is essential. We can not afford to recognize too clearly that there are warring battalions of personality and silent freemasonries of temperament, for the art of behavior is no citadel built about the integrity of an ego. If we were honest, if we were utterly true to the law of our ego, loving and hating consciously where we love and hate unconsciously, culture would lapse at once and we should all be freezing in the rigors of the elemental. There are spirits which brook no compromise, no deceit. The world counts them insane.

In attacking the problem of personality in its most intimate and final sense, the psychoanalyst Dr. Jung dispenses with all preliminary canters. In a book of upwards of six hundred pages he is really concerned with but a single theme, the demonstration of the existence and the essential stability of two radically distinct types of personality or, as he would prefer to say, of two distinct psychic attitudes — the extraverted and the introverted types. No attempt is made to define "character," that ethically-toned facet or remaking of personality with which society has its

semi-official concern; no physiological basis is sought or suggested for the psychic manifestations; there is little or no attempt to balance the influence of the social environment against the congenital slant of the ego; nor are we really shown how the ego sets to work to carry out or subvert the law which nature has given it from the moment of its first awakening. We have here no busy, underground laboratory of analysis in the manner of a Freudian dream-book or psycho-pathology. The book is almost defiantly bare of case-material, for the long and rather taxing sections on Tertullian v. Origen, nominalism v. realism, and the Prometheus and Epimetheus of the Swiss poet Carl Spitteler are hardly case-material in the true sense of the word. They are abstract and somewhat mystical exemplifications of Dr. Jung's opposed types. Nor do the discussions of Schiller's "naive" and "sentimental" attitudes, of Nietzsche's Apollonians and Dionysians, of Jordan's "more impassioned" and "less impassioned" types, of the two contrasted aesthetic processes of abstraction and "feeling-in," of James's "tender-minded" and "tough-minded" philosophers and philosophies, and of Ostwald's "classical" and "romantic" types of scientist do much more than prepare the way for his own antithesis. *Psychological Types* is like a Greek temple, built on the simplest of lines, yet needing space and iteration to give its formula a hold on the eye and on the understanding. It is not until the tenth chapter is reached that we get an explicit description of the types, that is, of the pure types, for Dr. Jung seems disposed to admit that his somewhat rigid formulations do not generally apply without qualification. The succeeding chapter, which is the last, is devoted to a series of definitions of the concepts peculiar to Dr. Jung's psychology. Many of these concepts, needless to say, form no part of Dr. Watson's psychological armoury.

Not until the last page is turned back does one fully realize how extraordinary a work one has been reading. It is often dry, it is sometimes impossible to follow, and it is never very closely reasoned, for Dr. Jung accepts intuitively as given, as elementary, concepts and psychological functions which others can get at only by the most painful of syntheses, if indeed they can find a way to some of them at all. But it is a fascinating book. Its one idea is like the intense stare of a man who has found something, and this something a little uncanny. Some of us are extraverts or tend to be so, and others of us are introverts or tend to be so: surely there is nothing strange or uncanny or new about this classification of personalities. That some of us are interested in the accidents and particularities of the environment is a known fact, that others

are more interested in general ideas and that they tend to turn inward, to reflect and introspect, is an equally well-known fact. Surely there are more basic distinctions than these; the emotional v. the intellectual type, for instance. But to reduce Dr. Jung's antithesis to an order of difference in the relative emphasis of interest, or in the habitual direction of attention, is not to have fully grasped his meaning. It is not a mere question of interest at all.

It is a question of the natural flow of the libido, to speak in the author's terms. The ego finds itself lost in an overwhelmingly potent and complex environment. Convulsively it seeks to save itself, to establish a set of relations and a network of presumptions which enable it to survive, to convince itself that it matters, to feel that it is ever victorious or about to become so. There are two ways of attaining this necessary understanding between the helplessness of the ego and the surrounding insistence of things, and these ways may not be chosen, aside from secondary compensations which obscure but do not efface the underlying psychology. They are dictated by the inherited mechanics of the libido. Whether these inherited differences in the impulse to adjustment are but psychic reinterpretations or summings-up of comparatively simple differences in the rhythmic form or intensity or rapidity or quality of nervous discharge, we do not at all know nor does it greatly matter.

The extravert saves himself by surrendering to the enemy. He refuses to be cowed by the object, to shrink back into a warm privacy of the mind. If he looks within, he is met by the cold cheer of blank walls and an untenanted room. Involuntarily he turns back to the object and becomes oblivious of all but the environment, material and spiritual. With this environment he identifies himself. To miss any of the substance or color of the object is felt as a deprivation, for it is in the object that he realizes himself. [212] The exercise is more or less of an effort, if not actually painful, for it means being thrown back on a world, a system of evaluations, which is not prepared to receive him. To the genuine introvert, the extravert presents a spectacle at once amusing and baffling. He finds him feeding ravenously on the husks of reality, and he is a little piqued to discover that while the personality that he is contemplating has no "Pou sto" from which to become conscious of itself, it does nevertheless get about the universe in an alarmingly effective way. The introvert reflects that it pays to be naive. To the introvert the object has always a shade of the inimical, the irrelevant, the unwarranted. It is not necessarily uninteresting, but it needs to be taken with a grain of salt. The introvert has learned to adapt himself to reality by

pruning it of its luxuriance, by seeing and by feeling no more in it than can be conveniently fitted into the richly chambered form of his ego. While he can not afford to ignore the object, he can translate or interpret it, minimize it, if need be, by some method of abstraction which takes most of the sting out of it, or he may entirely transfigure it. Where the extravert loses himself in the object, the introvert makes it over in such wise as to master it in terms of his psyche, leaving much of its individual quality to fall by the wayside — unsensed or unfelt or otherwise unvalued. It is just because the extravert is ever greedy for experience that he tends to lose the power to become greatly influenced by slight or fleeting stimuli. He believes that the introvert makes a mountain of a molehill, a self-important wealth of a mere dribble of substance, while the latter is prepared to find that his extravert friend labors over a mountain of the chaff of experience to bring forth a poor mouse of reflection, insight or feeling. The extravert is always asking, "Where did he get it?" The introvert wonders, "What will he do with it?"

It is easy to misunderstand the nature of these opposed types. One must be studiously careful not to water Dr. Jung's conception and dissolve it into current notions of successful and unsuccessful adjustment, of conduct right and wrong, of normal and relatively abnormal behavior. Either type has its successes and its failures, its geniuses and its simpletons. Each has its characteristic pathology. But of one thing we may be certain. Neither type in its purity can do full justice to the other. The introvert can never wholly comprehend the extravert because he can not resign himself to what he inevitably feels to be a vicarious existence. To him the extravert must ever seem a little superficial, a chronic vagrant from the spirit's home. Nor can the extravert wholly convince himself that behind the introvert's reserve and apparent impoverishment of interest there may lie the greatest wealth of subjective experience, and such subtlety of feeling as he may hardly parallel in his own external responses. This lack of mutual comprehension may lead to an undercurrent of hostility, or it may fire the fancy and result in strange hero-worships and infatuations.

Those who have read Dr. Jung's *Collected Papers on Analytical Psychology* may remember that in an earlier tentative classification of types he was disposed to identify the introverted with the thinking, the extraverted with the feeling type. These very dubious identifications have now been abandoned. Dr. Jung is perfectly clear, and the reader will be with him, about the independence of a classification based on general attitude (extravert and introvert types) and one based on the

specific functioning of the psyche. Whether Dr. Jung's theory of the existence of four distinct functional types of personality is correct it would be difficult to say. It may be that a given personality tends to find its way in the world chiefly by aid of the intellect, of emotion, of intuitive processes, or of sensation. It would be dangerous, however, to erect the eight neatly sundered types that result from a crossing of the two points of view into a psychological dogma. We may be quite certain that such a classification is too scholastic to prove entirely sound and workable. It is not easy to see, for instance, why a primary concept like that of sensation is paired with something as derivative as reason; nor does "intuition" readily allow itself to be accepted as a fundamental type of psychic functioning. Possibly Dr. Jung's vast clinical experience justifies his setting up these four functional types, but the evidence is not presented in his book.

Why is there something uncanny, something disquieting, about the main thesis of *Psychological Types*? It is because once again we are deprived of the serenity of an absolute system of values. If the orientation of the extravert is as different from that of the introvert as Dr. Jung says it is, it is obviously vain to expect them to pledge loyalty to the same truths. Must we resign ourselves to a new relativity of the psyche and expect no more of psychology than that it render clear to us the ways of a particular kind of mental attitude? It is impossible to believe that the spirit of man will rest content with a schism. It is certain that orthodoxies will be proclaimed to the end of mortal time.

Editorial Note

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Review of George A. Dorsey,
Why We Behave like Human Beings

George A. Dorsey, *Why We Behave like Human Beings* New York and London: Harper and Bros., 1925.

This book, which has already become very popular, contains a vast deal of assembled information on the biological aspects of human behavior. Unfortunately, what might have been an intensely interesting, as well as meaty, work is bothered by a style which can only be described as a St. Vitus dance of words, or as journalese on the rampage. This is a pity, for the author has an excellent knowledge of the subjects he treats of and is far from being the mountebank which he day-dreams himself into being. Never has science been more jazzily served up. One hopes that Mr. Dorsey's contribution does not inaugurate a new era in scientific popularization.

It is strange that an anthropologist such as Mr. Dorsey is should be so allured by the mysteries of endocrinology and the no-mysteries of Watsonian behaviorism as to leave himself no space for a treatment of the properly cultural stimuli to human behavior. Neither lights, liver, nor conditioned reflex arcs "explain," in any humanly significant sense of the word, why given humans behave as they do. All that Mr. Dorsey succeeds in "getting across" is to what extent we behave like mammalian organisms, while the profounder question of why we behave like *human* beings is scarcely referred to in his book.

Editorial Note

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Review of Knight Dunlap, *Old and New Viewpoints in Psychology*

Knight Dunlap, *Old and New Viewpoints in Psychology*. St. Louis: C. V. Mosby Co., 1925.

Old and New Viewpoints in Psychology is a misleading title for a right readable book which consists of five essays that have no more in [699] common than that they express the conservative and largely negative attitude of a single psychologist. There seems to be no reason why a number of scattered papers or addresses should be given a factitious unity by coming before the public in a synthetic guide that is quite foreign to their spirit.

The first of these papers, "Mental Measurements," distinguishes carefully between experimental psychology and mental testing. In the former the individual is merely a random sampling of his type, the results aimed at being such as are capable of general human application in the form of psychological principles; in the latter the psychological differentia which characterize the individual are themselves the object of study. The author seems to believe that between the two of these laboratory procedures the complete human being, psychologically considered, may be captured for definition. But he does not overestimate the diagnostic value of such mental measurements as intelligence tests; he expressly warns us that these are no adequate substitute for specific examinations.

The second paper, "Present Day Schools of Psychology," is a rapid survey of various schools of psychological thinking to which Mr. Dunlap takes exception. He has as little use for the orthodox "introspectionalism" of James as for the behaviorism of Watson and his school; McDougall's instinct psychology is no more acceptable to him than to anybody else, while psychoanalysis gets a scolding in the grand manner. One would like to believe, at the end of Mr. Dunlap's sweeping out of the Augean stables of psychology, that an inadvertent pearl or two lay hidden in the muck, but perhaps the hope is vain, for psychology seems to be the science par excellence in which a step in advance necessitates the complete abandonment of all previous trails.

"Psychological Factors in Spiritualism" and "The Reading of Character from External Signs" are mildly entertaining *causeries*. The conclusion arrived at in each case is that "there is nothing in it." More positive in its claims, if not in its results, is the essay on "The Psychology of the Comic." The comic, Mr. Dunlap thinks, is an expression of triumph at the recognition of our superiority to those unfortunates at whose expense the joke comes into being. His theory is thus a variant of the class of theories of the comic to which Bergson's famous essay *Le Rire* belongs. A profounder analysis will probably disclose their superficiality. The lightning-like response to a capital joke suggests an intuitive grasp of certain formal incongruities which has little to do with such clumsy functional concepts as superiority or awkwardness in practical adjustment.

Editorial Note

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Review of Jean Piaget,
The Language and Thought of the Child

Jean Piaget, *The Language and Thought of the Child*. Translated by Marjorie Warden. New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1926.

What happens when children talk to each other? Do their words leap from mind to mind and establish at once a freemasonry of perfect understanding, in a world of wonder from which the too precise adult is barred by reason of his pedantry? We know, from our daily observation, that a handful of normal children, but newly met, will soon attain to intimacy in a web of verbal excitement. But is this web a finely woven context of mutual comprehension, or is it but the happiness of a common illusion? And what of the very nature of childish speech? Is it but a phase in the much discussed technique of communication by means of verbal symbols? And what of a child's questions? Do they invariably require an answer, and is a "why" all it sounds like?

Questions such as these are asked and answered in M. Piaget's very notable book. The method followed by this able Swiss child-psychologist is, first, the systematic and complete record of the speech of a number of children, under conditions at school which are not too rigidly controlled, but which closely approximate the conditions of spontaneous, everyday life; second, a careful but not too pretentious statistical analysis of these data. The inferences are always duly weighed and offered with caution. One likes the temper of the book, which is at once eager and [351] restrained. It is unavoidable that, in interpreting his material, M. Piaget is often led to questions of fundamental import to the solution of larger problems than he seems to set himself. He is aware of all these implications, but wisely refrains from foraging too extensively in the domains of primitive mentality, the nature of language expression, the relation between verbalism and thought, and allied subjects. From among the many rich suggestions brought by the book, we shall select but three for the very briefest comment.

In the first chapter, which deals with "the functions of language in two children of six," the material is classified into two groups, ego-

centric speech and socialized speech. The former group includes repetition, monologue, and "collective monologue" (in which "an outsider is always associated with the action or thought of the moment, but is expected neither to attend nor to understand"); the latter includes "adapted information," criticism, commands and requests, questions, and answers. If we exclude answers as due to the more obvious demands of the environment and then divide the total of examples of egocentric language by the total of egocentric plus "spontaneous socialized" language, we get a rough "coefficient of egocentrism," a general index of the child's spontaneous functional attitude to language. M. Piaget's figures are interesting. They give the two children who were selected for special study coefficients of egocentrism of 0.43 and 0.47. In plain terms, this means that, as late as the age of six, and after, the child is using language, the communicative technique *par excellence* of adult life, for non-communicative purposes, in close on half the cases in which he uses it at all. This generalization is of great interest, for it helps to give the lie to those theories of linguistic form and development which explain all phenomena of language in terms of its overt communicative function. There is not the slightest doubt that, long before directed communication has shaped itself as the most typical, if not the only, use of speech, the child has already mastered everything that is essential in its content and build. The rapidly growing need of communication utilizes an intuitively apprehended symbolism which has been serving all manner of autistic and expressive purposes. M. Piaget's researches confirm the linguist's feeling that language is, first and foremost, an unconsciously developing esthetic whole, only in the second instance a merely functional organization, though he does not stress this point himself.

Equally fascinating are the chapters devoted to the conversations of young children among themselves, and to the problem of mutual understanding. On the basis of experiments at once simple and ingenious, the author shows that children do not understand each other nearly so well as we might have imagined, but that they are under the chronic illusion that they make themselves perfectly clear and that they get out of a communication precisely what it was intended to communicate. The foundations of faith, of inward certainty, and of a social cohesion that needs no critical warrant are thus securely laid in childhood. Only an up-to-the-minute intellectualist would doubt that it is well that this should be so.

In the last chapter of the book, there is a somewhat elaborate analysis of the questions of a child of six. The "whys" are in a significant major-

ity. But it would be wrong to infer that the child is obsessed by a thirst for causal explanations or logical justification, in the true meaning of these terms. What he often desires is really a psychological motivation. Here, again, we see the child as an egocentric, projecting into the cold, meaningless world of mechanical causality a more naively intelligible world of motive.

Editorial Note

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Review of Sigmund Freud, *The Future of an Illusion*

Sigmund Freud, *The Future of an Illusion*. Translated by W. D. Robson-Scott. New York: Horace Liveright and the Institute of Psychoanalysis, 1928.

The "illusion" of Dr. Freud's little book is religion. Religion, we are told, is the "universal obsessional neurosis of humanity. It, like the child's, originated in the Oedipus complex, the relation to the father. According to this conception one might prophesy that the abandoning of religion must take place with the fateful inexorability of a process of growth, and that we are just now in the middle of this phase of development." There are many who would need a less formidable terminology with which to warn off the future from religion.

Culture, in all probability, "must be built upon coercion and instinctual renunciation." All men are, at bottom, anti-cultural, and if they submit to its demands it is largely, thinks Freud, because of certain terrors, which have been fastened on to them, of the dire consequences which would ensue if the fantasied will of a projected father-image — often referred to as God — is flouted. Really mature human beings manage to see, with the unmythical light of the intelligence alone, that cultural values cannot be maintained without some individual sacrifice of the deeply buried instinctive wishes, such as incest, cannibalism [357] and murder, which are so easily demonstrated to bother Freud's inevitable triad of children, neurotics and savages, but the vast majority of mankind, even a number of psychoanalysts, have not dared to trust their intelligence, but have preferred to get themselves ordered around by the bugaboos of religion. Needless to say, it is the antique remorse for the slaying of the primordial father by his exasperated children — see *Totem and Taboo* for the authorized version of this drama — which motivated the creation of God and his religion.

Is it reasonable to suppose that mankind can forever go on underpinning its culture with such cloudy, fear-born stuff as all that? What neither Atlas nor fabled elephant, even elephant supported by tortoise,

could in the end accomplish for a stable mother earth, that neither ghostly Father nor his dark wishes can be expected to do for culture and right living. To be sure, it is perilous to expose the dread truth, and Freud has some uneasy sentences on this score. "Culture has little to fear from the educated or from the brain workers. . . . But it is another matter with the great mass of the uneducated and suppressed, who have every reason to be enemies of culture. So long as they do not discover that people no longer believe in God, all is well. But they discover it, infallibly, and would do so even if this work of mine were not published. . . . Is there not a danger that these masses, in their hostility to culture, will attack the weak point which they have discovered in their taskmaster? If you must not kill your neighbor, solely because God has forbidden it and will sorely avenge it in this or the other life, and you then discover that there is no God so that one need not fear his punishment, then you will certainly kill without hesitation, and you could only be prevented from this by mundane force."

All of which may prove Freud's courage in braving ostracism from Heaven and its spokesmen on earth, or merely that psychoanalysis is less exciting as social philosopher and prophet than as clinician.

Editorial Note

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Section Four
Reflections on Contemporary Civilization

Richard Handler, editor

Introduction to Sections Four and Five

Edward Sapir's Aesthetic and Cultural Criticism

Too frequently, scholars read the work of the masters who preceded them solely in order to discover how they can be seen to contribute to the current state of whichever disciplines claim them. Since Edward Sapir's death in 1939, we have witnessed the entrenchment of increasingly narrowly defined disciplines in an increasingly bureaucratized academy where scholars are less inclined than ever to read widely and to write on a range of topics for a variety of audiences. In such a climate linguists and anthropologists have found it normal to ignore Sapir's literary reviews and social commentary, assuming such work to be trivial and unrelated to his 'serious' contributions. Yet Sapir devoted a significant portion of his intellectual energies to poetry, aesthetic theory and cultural criticism, particularly in the decade after 1916. Undoubtedly those interests provided an escape from personal worries and professional frustrations, and a release as well from his wide-ranging and absorbing linguistic researches—from the "fastnesses of a purely technical linguistic erudition," as Sapir described it, with mingled pride and ambivalence, in a letter to Ruth Benedict (14 June 1925, in Mead 1959: 180). Yet Sapir's writings outside his linguistic and anthropological specialties represent more than a diversion. We must read them carefully, from at least two perspectives, in order to grasp the full significance of Sapir's humanistic and scientific endeavors.

In the first place, Sapir's aesthetic and cultural criticism is largely concerned with the central themes of his linguistic and anthropological work. In both disciplinary and general writing, Sapir elaborated an aesthetic vision of culture and society, in which the unconscious and tenaciously enduring patterning of human symbols and actions is to be seen in formal and historical, rather than functional or utilitarian, terms. To this understanding of cultural pattern Sapir added a concern for the creative personality, for the interaction of individuals and cultures. For Sapir, such interests could be as provocatively examined in writings about poetry and poets, or about American individualism and the development of a national culture, as they could in technical analy-

ses presented to fellow linguists and ethnologists. Moreover, we cannot separate the development of Sapir's thought in linguistics and anthropology from his thinking outside those fields, for Sapir did not simply apply the fruits of his professional study to non-technical topics. Rather, his philosophy of culture grew out of his work in all the disciplines that engaged him. Indeed, Sapir elaborated some of the most celebrated arguments of his anthropology and linguistics in his writing about poetry, aesthetic theory and modern culture. In short, to understand Sapir's substantive intellectual concerns we must follow his example and disregard the disciplinary and topical boundaries that can be used to separate his writings. We will then find that his aesthetic and cultural criticism can teach us much about his anthropology and, of course, vice versa.

Secondly, a careful reading of Sapir's writings in art, culture and society is necessary in order to place his anthropology in the context of a wider intellectual history. Like many of his colleagues—Franz Boas, Alfred Kroeber, Robert Lowie, Ruth Benedict, Margaret Mead—Sapir was concerned not solely with a scientific theory of culture but, more generally, with culture as an idea of importance to the broader public. Thus Sapir's philosophy of culture represents more than a stage in the development of Boasian cultural anthropology understood as a narrowly specialized scientific discipline. It is also a contribution to a wider debate that engaged the artists and intellectuals of Sapir's time, a debate concerning the nature and status of American culture and the role of the creative personality within—or against—that culture. Only within the context of that debate, for example, does Sapir's concern for literature, especially poetry, take on its full significance. Sapir's writings on poetry and poets speak to the issues of 'genuine' culture and creative genius, issues central not only to his aesthetic and cultural criticism, but to his anthropology.

The writings included in this section of Sapir's *Collected Works* thus bring to bear the concepts of Boasian anthropology on a wider debate and, at the same time, make use of that debate to elaborate and even to rethink some of the more narrowly technical concepts of Boasian culture theory. Enumerating the themes that dominate Sapir's aesthetic and cultural criticism, we find (1) a Boasian conception of culture as an historically conditioned, aesthetically patterned phenomenon, to which Sapir added, as a major concern, (2) the creative personality and its dialectical interaction with culture. To these components of a culture theory Sapir brought (3) an appreciation of the psychoanalytic ap-

proach to creativity and conformity. Also, the Boasian notion of (4) unconscious patterning was extensively developed by Sapir, whose concern for creativity was balanced by a concern for the dangers of too much self-consciousness, and an awareness of the limits of rational control in human thinking. Finally, Sapir used this broad theory of culture and personality to construct (5) a critique of American individualism and American national character. Let us examine each of these components in turn.

The Boasian Basis

Implicit in Franz Boas's approach to the study of culture were two conflicting tendencies. In his battle against evolutionary theories of cultural progress, Boas argued that cultural phenomena resulted from unique historical sequences rather than the operation of universal laws of development. From this perspective, each culture could be seen as an accidental assemblage, and to understand cultures—each unique, each an 'historical individual'—one had to unravel the threads of their history, tracing each cultural element to its 'origins' rather than explaining it away as the mechanical resultant of evolutionary laws. At the same time, Boas realized that to understand alien cultural phenomena one had to transcend or neutralize one's own cultural biases. This required that any cultural phenomenon be studied in context, that is, in its meaningful relations to the rest of a living culture, a cultural totality. Thus in Boasian anthropology historical analysis, which unravels the threads of culture, is counterbalanced by the discovery of patterned cultural meanings in the context of whole cultures (Stocking 1968: 214).

Sapir developed both of these tendencies in important ways. He transformed Boas's historicist critique of evolutionary stages into a sophisticated attack on reification in the cultural sciences, arguing that culture is not located in naturally bounded units but in interactions between human beings, each of whom represents "at least one sub-culture" (1932: 236). Sapir's position is stated most elegantly in his late papers on culture and personality, but he occasionally introduced the argument into writing intended for a general audience, particularly to debunk racist or nationalist assumptions. For example, "Culture in the Melting Pot" (Sapir 1916a) is a friendly critique of John Dewey's call for the creation of a distinctively American culture (Dewey 1916). Like many progressives of the time, Dewey urged Americans to reject the

European past as their cultural ideal and to replace it with a new culture grounded in the realities of modern American society. Sapir agreed with Dewey on the need to transcend the past of "discarded classicism," but he argued that national boundaries were largely irrelevant in a cultural renewal that would occur, if at all, throughout the Western world. America, connected to Europe both historically and by ongoing economic, political and cultural exchanges, could not simply will the existence of a separate national culture: "Culture is not congruous with political lines ... but is strictly dependent on its historical antecedents and on the foreign influences with which it comes into constant contact. Europe's cast-off clothes are our own, though we may be ashamed of them" (Sapir 1916a: 1).

In "Racial Superiority," Sapir made a similar appeal to the Boasian sense of culture as the contingent and ever-changing resultant of historical processes. Arguing against the racist assumption that the maintenance and development of 'high' culture depended on the purity of a 'Nordic' race presumed superior to all others, Sapir suggested that "In the fullness of time other peoples (Chinese, Japanese, Hindus, Negroes—why not?) may have assimilated all of it [world civilization] that is worth assimilating and culture will be safe" (1924e: 210). Thus Sapir not only debunked the belief in the existence of distinctive races, he appealed to the long history of cultural borrowing to deny the existence of the bounded cultures presumed to be associated with them. "The reasonable man," he concluded in "Let Race Alone," will avoid "collective chimeras of one kind or another" (1925d: 213).

Taking the other side of the Boasian equation, Sapir developed an influential conception of cultural harmony based on his aesthetics of language, literature and art. "Culture, Genuine and Spurious," already written by 1918, as Sapir's letters to Lowie indicate (20 May 1918, in Lowie 1965: 27), presents the first theoretical formulation in American anthropology of what was to become a central concept: cultural integration. Sapir's description of the genuine culture—"inherently harmonious, balanced, self-satisfactory" (1924b: 410)—is well known and need not be analyzed here. However, it is worth stressing that Sapir's notion of what constituted cultural harmony was elaborated in a rhetoric drawn from his thinking about aesthetics. For him, art was a privileged domain of culture because culture was collective art. As he put it in a review of a book on the history of writing, "It is not otherwise with language, with religion, with the forms of social organization. Wherever the human mind has worked collectively and unconsciously, it has

striven for and often attained unique form" (1921e: 69). The argument is central in *Language*, where Sapir repeatedly stressed that

form lives longer than its own conceptual content. Both are ceaselessly changing, but ... the form tends to linger on when the spirit has flown — Irrational form, form for form's sake—however we term this tendency to hold onto formal distinctions once they have come to be—is as natural to the life of language as is the retention of modes of conduct that have long outlived the meaning they once had. (1921d, 103–104)

Sapir developed his analyses of patterning most fully in his technical linguistic work, but the same analytic gifts are evident in his writings about both music and poetry. Indeed, his structuralist (as we would now say) understanding of formal opposition, and his particular version of phonemic theory (with its emphasis on the role of subjective discriminations) were discussed in writings on music and poetry before they were fully elaborated in linguistic papers, though Sapir's insights undoubtedly originated in his studies of American Indian languages. In 1916 he wrote to Lowie that "what I most care for is beauty of form ... A perfect style, a well-balanced system of philosophy, a perfect bit of music, a clearly conceived linguistic organism, the beauty of mathematical relations—these are some of the things that ... have most deeply stirred me" (29 September 1916, in Lowie 1965: 21). He returned more than once to the analogy between music, mathematics and language, and it is worth noting that as a field ethnologist he was particularly interested in music. Music, of course, is language-like (or, language is musical) because both are grounded in formal opposition. Formal opposition is the basis of the musical scale, which depends not on the absolute pitch of the tones that compose it, but on the relations (or intervals) between them. Early in his career Sapir reviewed, with evident excitement, the work of the German musicologists Carl Stumpf and Erich von Hornbostel, both of whom recognized the musical scale, and the relational principle it involves, as an important element in the evolution of musical culture (Sapir 1912f, 1913d).

After 1917 Sapir's interests turned from music to poetry. In 1921 he published a remarkable paper on "The Musical Foundations of Verse," which prefigures his theory of the phoneme, sketched briefly in *Language* (1921d: 56–58), but not fully elaborated until the publication of "Sound Patterns in Language" (1925p). "The Musical Foundations of Verse" was intended as a contribution to a debate over the metrical basis of poetry. This had been occasioned by the free verse movement and, more particularly, by its detractors who claimed that free verse,

written without conventional poetic meters, was not poetry. Defenders of free verse, such as the poet Amy Lowell (1914, 1918), countered that poetry depended on rhythm in general rather than the traditional metrical units or 'feet'—iamb, trochee, dactyl and so on—of European poetry. Sapir agreed with Lowell, but went on to provide a sophisticated account of the grounding of rhythm in the play of the opposing formal units of poetic language. To this structuralist analysis of the generation of significance out of formal opposition, Sapir added an idea analogous to a central concept in his theory of the phoneme: that poetic effects could only be achieved in the presence of auditors (or readers) prepared to notice them. In other words, in Sapir's poetics, there is no objective answer to questions such as 'What is poetry?' or "Is free verse poetry?" because according to Sapir, the listener plays a crucial role in constituting the poetic object: "the same passage *is* both prose and verse according to the rhythmic receptivity of the reader or hearer" (1921g: 226). As a "corollary," Sapir warned of "the necessary limitation of machine methods in the investigation of prosodic problems" (p. 224), a statement echoed in the famous closing paragraph of "Sound Patterns in Language," where he questioned "the adequacy of purely objective methods in studying speech sounds" (1925p: 51).

Culture and the Creative Individual

For Sapir, the 'genuineness' of a culture was to be found not only in the formal harmony of cultural patterns, but in the degree of freedom and encouragement provided the potentially creative individual. As he explained in "Culture, Genuine and Spurious," the genuine culture was both rich enough to stimulate creative personalities and securely enough anchored to permit them to "swing free" of tradition by engaging in creative activity destined to transform the culture that fostered it (1924b: 419). Sapir also defined two types of spurious culture: one in which a dead but venerated tradition stifled individual creativity and one without tradition, lacking the aesthetic resources necessary to stimulate creativity: "The former is the decay of Alexandrianism, in which the individual is no more; the latter, the combined immaturity and decay of an uprooted culture, in which the individual is not yet" (1924: 419).

Sapir's concern for the relationship between culture and individual creativity reflected, and contributed to, a wider debate about the status

of American culture and the stature of American artists. His phrase, "the decay of Alexandrianism," refers, one guesses, to Europe, and his "uprooted culture" is America. Sapir agreed with intellectuals like Dewey and Randolph Bourne (whom Sapir eulogized in a 1919 letter to *The Dial*), who sought to reorient American education and culture away from the European past, toward the democratic and industrial realities of modern American society.

The nationalistic frenzy of the First World War increased these concerns of the American intelligentsia, who, witnessing what appeared to be the disintegration of 'high' civilization in Europe, were led to ask more insistently than ever whether their own national culture had at last 'come of age.' As a sign of national maturity they looked for the appearance of great artists, such as might be found in the poetry renaissance to which Sapir contributed. Even before the war the 'new poets'—like Ezra Pound and the imagists and Harriet Monroe and the contributors to *Poetry* magazine—were experimenting with a 'free' verse that shocked and challenged the upholders of Victorian cultural traditions. During the War the figure of the soldier-poet captured the popular imagination, and *Poetry* editorialists like Monroe (1917) and Edgar Lee Masters (1917) wrote of the utility of war in sweeping away a stagnant cultural order, and of the leading role that poets would play in articulating a new vision in a renewed world. Sapir would not follow these spokespersons of the poetry movement in their enthusiasm for the War (his own war poems were militantly pacifistic and anti-jingoistic). However, like Pound, Monroe and their colleagues, Sapir focused on the interaction of creativity and tradition, genius and technique, in much of his writing about modern poetry.

Sapir's essay on "The Poetry Prize Contest" (1920e), a contest organized by the Arts and Letters Club of Ottawa, shows how thoroughly Sapir had incorporated the aesthetic theory and rhetoric of the new poetry movement into his own poetic activities. Sapir was awarded an honorable mention by *Poetry* in 1920 for his translations of French-Canadian folk songs, and he apparently took a leading role in organizing a contest with similar prizes in Canada. In his report on the results of the contest, Sapir discussed the question of poetic failure and success in a passage that recalls the new poetry theorists:

Poem after poem, especially in the class of patriotic efforts, voiced the most distressingly conventional, personally unfeared and unexperienced, sentiments. . . . Barely a dozen poems all told had something original to say or presented a universal assumption in a strikingly original manner. Genuine feeling tended to express itself crudely; competent formal expression seemed to stifle feeling. (p. 350)

Here Sapir suggested that successful art depends first of all on the expression of a unique personal vision. In order to see, to experience, or to feel in a unique manner, the poet must go beyond the clichés and conventions of past poetic practice. To fall back on traditional formal devices is to abandon the possibility of unique experience, because conventional language will irrevocably shape, and even substitute itself for, the poet's experience. On the other hand, form is essential for art. As Sapir phrased it, in a review of Edgar Lee Masters, "An unembodied conception is, in art, no conception at all" (1922n: 334). Thus art requires not merely the rejection of clichéd forms, but the creation of new ones. In sum, for Sapir the inseparability of form and content is essential to art because the poet's 'sincere' or 'genuine' vision can emerge only from a technique that is both proficient and original.

Sapir focused explicitly on poetic technique in two papers on rhyme, a topic which, like meter, had been made timely by the debate over free verse. Some critics of free verse argued that rhyme was a necessary component of poetry. In "The Twilight of Rhyme," Sapir responded that formal devices, though essential to art, had to be ceaselessly invented by the artist who, were he to abandon himself to conventional techniques, would lose the possibility of creative self-expression. According to Sapir, proponents of rhyme confused "form (an inner striving) with formalism (an outer obstacle)" (1917o: 100). In "The Heuristic Value of Rhyme," published three years later, he considered the problem from another angle, arguing that rhyme might serve the poet as a useful "taskmaster," acting "as a valuable stimulant in the shaping of his thought and imagination" (1920a: 309). The later essay supplements rather than contradicts the earlier one, for Sapir never overlooked the artistic necessity of formal discipline, arguing only that historically particular devices, such as rhyme, ought not to be elevated to the status of poetic universals.

For Sapir, then, genuine artists begin with the techniques provided by their culture, but transcend those techniques in the creation of new culture. Moreover, genuine artists will not be culturally limited in their critical responses to the art of alien traditions. Thus Sapir praised the composer Percy Grainger for studying seriously, rather than dismissing, "primitive music." According to Sapir, it is not the "amateur" who will respond positively to "primitive music," but "the musical creator, the composer, whose musical learning does not sit so heavily on him as to crush his instinctive appreciation of the beautiful wherever and however it may be found" (1916d: 592).

The Psychology of Aesthetic Creation

As we have seen, Sapir's philosophy of culture stressed both the formal properties of cultural patterning and the role of the creative personality in reshaping artistic and cultural traditions. Taken together, these concerns led Sapir to envision an ultimate science of aesthetics focused on the interplay of personality and pattern. Thus "The Heuristic Value of Rhyme," which examines how a particular aesthetic device (rhyme) might shape self-expression, ends with a programmatic call for the analysis of "the process of creation": "If aesthetics is ever to be more than a speculative play, of the genus philosophical, it will have to get down to the very arduous business of studying the concrete processes of artistic production and appreciation" (1920a: 312). Sapir's review of a biography of the composer Richard Strauss concludes on a similar note, asking for more study of "how the artist conceives and works" (1917g: 586). And Sapir wanted to apply the same approach to the study of collective, cultural processes. This is evident throughout *Language*, for example, or in Sapir's remarks on the evolution of systems of writing:

Much can be said ... of the controlling power of the medium ... Yet when all this and more is indicated and worked out with laborious detail, we are really no nearer the central question of what psychological forces have hurried the national hand on to that aesthetic balance which is its ultimate style. (1921d: 69)

Given his interest in what he called the 'how' of aesthetic activity, it is not surprising that Sapir was favorably impressed by the new psychology of Freud, Jung and their colleagues, particularly as it might be applied to the problem of artistic creativity. Psychoanalysis had become fashionable in the United States during the 'teens and 'twenties, though Sapir never succumbed to its mystique, cautioning in particular against a too literal belief in the reality of its theoretical entities (see, for example, Sapir 1917b). Nonetheless, Sapir was stimulated by Freud's insights into psychic dynamics and how those dynamics lead both to the organization of a coherent personality and to the sublimated expression (in neurotic complexes, in dreams, in art) of the personality's needs and drives. Sapir was also excited by Jung's theory of basic personality types. Taking the ideas of Freud and Jung together (but always skeptical of what he considered to be misleading reifications or overly-schematic theorizing), Sapir looked to psychoanalysis to shed light on what he saw as the key issue for aesthetics, the question of how personalities expressed themselves in art.

In "Maupassant and Anatole France," Sapir proposed a "'personal' type of criticism" made possible, he argued, by "the advent of the Freudian psychology":

In every work of art, after due allowance is made for traditional forces, there stand revealed, though still largely unread, a hundred symptoms of the instinctive life of the creator. In the long run only criticism grounded in individual psychological analysis has validity in aesthetic problems. (1921 f: 199)

Sapir's literary criticism returns frequently to the "instinctive life of the creator" and its sublimated expression in art. For example, he suggested that Gerard Manley Hopkins could be seen as "an imperfectly sex-sublimated mystic" (1921k: 334), and found "the well-known mechanics of over-compensation bustling over [the] pages" of Ludwig Lewisohn's *Israel* (1926h: 215). In addition to this interest in the artist's personality, Sapir was intrigued by the realistic representation of fictional personalities. In "Realism in Prose Fiction" (1917 f) he advocated narration from multiple "inner" viewpoints in place of the "objective" perspective of an omniscient narrator. And in his reviews of fiction, he paid particular attention to the development of character. It is worth noting that Sapir's sympathy for a psychoanalytic literary criticism and his concern for the portrayal of character coexisted with his talent for structural analysis, as developed, for example, in "The Musical Foundations of Verse." However, Sapir never attempted a synthesis of the two critical approaches.

Finally, Sapir was willing to apply psychoanalytic perspectives to other cultural phenomena, such as racism, religion, and sexuality. Thus he discussed racism in terms of the ego's needs for "psychic security" (1924e: 201) and different religious philosophies in terms of their compatibility with different personality types (1925m). Ultimately he saw all cultural phenomena in terms of the dialectic of aesthetic patterning and creative self-expression; thus he envisioned the application of psychoanalytic perspectives to the study of all cultural processes. As he put it in *Language*, in the celebrated chapter on drift: "A more general psychology than Freud's will eventually prove them [the concepts of repression and symbolization] to be as applicable to the groping for abstract form, the logical or esthetic ordering of experience, as to the life of the fundamental instincts" (1921d: 167–168, footnote 12).

Unconscious Patterning and the Limits of Rationality

The notion that cultural phenomena are grounded in unconscious formal patterns was articulated by Boas in his "Introduction" to the

Handbook of American Indian Languages (1911). There he suggested as well that unconscious patterning is more often rationalized than rationally analyzed. Sapir drew a challenging conclusion from this Boasian premise, arguing that a totally self-conscious or rational control of thought is not possible because thought must always be based on unconscious categories which are, by definition, beyond conscious control. As Sapir put it, "Introspection may be a dangerously elusive method, for the moment of consciousness that we set out to describe can not be strictly synchronous with the moment of observation" (1922x: 619).

Because of his doubts concerning the possibility of purely rational analysis, Sapir was skeptical about the role that social science, or any other form of self-conscious social philosophy, might play in rational social planning. Such skepticism distinguished Sapir from colleagues such as Ruth Benedict and Margaret Mead, who hoped to use the information made available by cultural anthropology as an ingredient in what Benedict called "a true social engineering" (1934: 79). In contrast to such aspirations, Sapir warned against the dangers of cultural self-consciousness, arguing in a famous essay on "The Unconscious Patterning of Behavior in Society" that "in the normal business of life" people needed to trust rather than analyze cultural patterning (1928j: 141). Sapir had elaborated that argument in an earlier review article, where he associated the formlessness of modern culture and the meaninglessness experienced by the modern individual with the critical self-consciousness of modern thought, trained upon itself:

We are all uneasy, all wondering a little about the whither of life. The insouciance of less self-conscious ages, when men could afford to forget the ends of life because they were so trustfully accepted, seems to have gone. Freed from the shackles of positive faiths and superstitions, we now find ourselves clogged by a more mischievous slavery than we ever knew, a bondage to unpatterned and undirected activity masking an inner emptiness. (1921n: 237)

As we shall see, the themes of "slavery," "unpatterned ... activity" and "inner emptiness" were key ingredients in Sapir's critical analysis of American culture.

Culture and the Individual in Sapir's America

In the final paragraph of "Culture, Genuine and Spurious," Sapir hinted that, given "plenty of time," a genuine culture might at last blossom on American soil (1924b: 429). Yet in general the essay paints a

grim picture of American cultural development, and the mild optimism of the end remains unconvincing. Indeed, nowhere in Sapir's aesthetic and cultural criticism do we find sustained enthusiasm for American culture. Though he was frequently generous in his response to particular poets and initially hopeful that the new poetry might signal the beginning of a genuine cultural development, by the mid-1920s he had become disillusioned about both modern poetry and the wider culture it reflected. "The age and I don't seem to be on very intimate speaking terms," he wrote Benedict (29 September 1927, in Mead 1959: 185).

Though Sapir's disillusionment stemmed in part from his relative failure as a poet, he was too good a critic not to recognize his own poetic limitations. Rather, his alienation from the culture of his era was grounded in a penetrating analysis of certain contradictions inherent in American individualism, an analysis facilitated both by his position as a professional intellectual and student of society and by his religious marginality. From the biographical perspective, it is clear that being Jewish placed Sapir (and many of his colleagues) somewhat outside the American mainstream. But he was also ambivalent about his Jewish background and about religion in general. He recognized the richness of Jewish tradition but saw also, as his review (1926h) of Lewisohn's *Israel* suggests, that for some at least among American Jewry, assimilation to the mainstream was an attractive alternative. The same review makes clear Sapir's mistrust of Zionism; he knew that nationalism, even of the downtrodden, could always degenerate into chauvinism and worse. His disdain for chauvinism is also evident in his review of Paul Radin's *Monotheism Among Primitive Peoples* (1924), where Sapir chided those Jews who proudly but mistakenly claim monotheism as a uniquely Jewish invention. (Sapir 1925m)

Turning to a perspective wider than the biographical, and from the critique of minority sensibility to that of majority culture, we can place Sapir's cultural criticism in a tradition that includes Matthew Arnold's *Culture and Anarchy* (1868)—which Sapir certainly knew well—as well as Tocqueville's *Democracy in America* (1835–1840) and Weber's *The Protestant Ethic and the Spirit of Capitalism* (1905). Like Sapir, all these thinkers were troubled by the secularization of Protestant individualism, which entailed the rationalization of unlimited economic growth accompanied by an emphasis on self-development that was ultimately self-defeating. Sapir's critique of the culture of self-development grew out of his conception of the genuine culture as one endowed with rich aesthetic resources, unconsciously anchored in the psyches of those who

participated in the culture by creatively changing it. Sapir's diagnosis of the American cultural malady was simple enough: "the combined immaturity and decay of an uprooted culture," as he phrased it in "Culture, Genuine and Spurious" (1924b: 419), could not nourish individual growth and creativity. That general proposition led Sapir to find a particular paradox in the American case, for American culture, grounded in Protestant individualism, had made of self-development a consciously valued end. Yet the highly self-conscious individualism of the spurious American culture was, in Sapir's opinion, doomed to sterility, for only a genuine culture could give rise to human individuality.

Sapir repeatedly presented his critique of American culture in terms of a distinction he drew between "romanticism" and the "classical spirit," as, for example, in the final paragraph of "The Grammarian and His Language," where he likened linguistics to mathematics and music:

But under its crabbed, technical appearance there lies hidden the same classical spirit, the same freedom in restraint, which animates mathematics and music at their purest. This spirit is antagonistic to the romanticism which is rampant in America today and which debauches so much of our science with its frenetic desire. (1924c: 155)

This classical "freedom in restraint" refers, of course, to the genuine culture, where the discipline of convention stimulates creativity. By contrast, Sapir believed that the "frenetic desire" of romanticism led to abortive art, to misapplications of science and to formlessness and emptiness in the wider culture. According to Sapir, Americans were without the moral discipline and bedrock of accepted values necessary to creative self-development. As he put it in "Observations on the Sex Problem in America," "An individual can create true personal values only on the basis of those accepted by his society, but when nothing is accepted, he has no room for the growth of any values that are more than empty formulae" (1928b: 523). Lacking genuine culture, Americans were, in Sapir's view, willing to use any technique or method to rationalize their prejudices or to create the illusion of individual freedom.

Such an argument is central in "Let Race Alone," one of a series of articles published in *The Nation* during 1925, a time when heightened racism and xenophobia had stimulated liberal thinkers to publicize a critique of such 'scientific' doctrines as those propounded by the eugenicists. Sapir's essay should be compared to an essay by Boas which preceded it. In "What Is a Race?," Boas (1925) confined himself to a sober scientific refutation of the presuppositions of eugenicist doctrine. Sapir, too, debunked racist assumptions, but he was equally concerned to pre-

sent a critique of the culture that readily believed in them. Thus he framed his argument with a telling analysis of the American religion of science.

We live in an age not so much of science as of scientific application. We are not so much possessed of a philosophic criticism that may be supposed to be born of scientific research as we are urged on by a restless faith in the pronouncements of science. We have made it a religion. (1925d: 211)

Sapir went on to point out that Americans had no patience with the tempered, even "dim" and "cryptic" results of scientific research; rather, they sought easy answers, "systematically" using science to rationalize their prejudices. Thus Sapir found scientistic racism to be "as good an example as we could wish of heated desire subdued to the becoming coolness of a technical vocabulary" (1925d: 211).

Here the metaphorical opposition of hot and cold is crucial: scientistic racism transforms the heat of desire into coolness, but in this case the result is not art, but mere jargon. By contrast, in a genuine culture rich aesthetic resources are available to the individual who can use them to transform his desire into art: in successfully rhymed poetry, for example, Sapir saw "the passionate temperament cutting into itself with the cold steel of the intellect" (1920a: 311). But in the spurious American culture Sapir found undisciplined desire, without the means to become 'cold' and 'hard,' yet, enamoured of efficiency, always pretending to be so. Sapir stated this argument most fully (and in terms that directly recall "The Grammarian and His Language") at the end of his 1938 review of Thurman Arnold's *The Folklore of Capitalism*. There Sapir described American culture as

pervaded by an almost morbid fear of formal analysis of any kind. Its urge is the manipulative urge of organization, engineering efficiency is its one great value ... This attitude wills "realism" and hence protects itself with a skepticism that is anti-intellectualist but that is not proof against all manner of incursions from unacknowledged realms of wishful thinking. "Hard-boiled" is the ideal, "romantic" is the deed. (1938d: 147)

Sapir was particularly concerned about romanticism masquerading as realism in Americans' changing attitudes towards sexuality, a topic he explored in "Observations on the Sex Problem in America." Though he sympathized with what he called "the anti-Puritan revolt" (1928b: 527), he believed that the attempt of some to divorce sex from love was yet another example of unrestrained desire deceiving itself with a materialistic jargon made congenial by the scientific world view. And Sapir singled out his own scientific discipline, anthropology, as espe-

cially liable to misuse at the hands of the "wishful romanticists" who found, "in excited books about pleasure-loving Samoans and Trobriand Islanders," proof that in the "primary" experience of "primitive man" sex existed independently of love (1928b: 523).

Sapir wrote in a similar vein in his 1929 review of Boas's *Anthropology and Modern Life*. Sapir praised Boas's anthropology for combining dedication to science with a restraint, "a certain fierce delicacy," which prevented it "from ever declaring more than it manifestly must." According to Sapir, such qualities were not likely to be appreciated "in an age that prizes lazy comfort in thought and that prizes rigor only in dehumanized action." And he warned that anthropology was in danger of becoming "a popular science," useful "to justify ... every form of spiritual sloth" (1929g: 278). Or, as he wrote in a review of Bertrand Russell, modern intellectuals sought nothing other than "a high Polynesia ... built on the unshakeable coral reef of Science" (1929k: 196).

Like Matthew Arnold and Max Weber, Sapir understood that the American religion of efficiency, which brought together "our efficiency-experts and Methodist deacons," as he once put it (1922g: 404), was an unintended consequence of the secularization of Protestant individualism. In a review of James Truslow Adams's *Our Business Civilization*, Sapir sketched a critique of efficiency as it was coming to be applied to personality. Like so many of Sapir's reviews, this begins with a sympathetic reading but develops the implications of the text far beyond the author's intentions. For example, Sapir agreed with Adams's critique of the American "shibboleth of overt success at whatever cost," but went on to attribute it, not to the excesses of the pioneering spirit, as Adams had, but to the secularization of Protestantism:

For there does seem to be an austere religiosity about the contemporary cult of reckless success which justifies a suspicion that it is both historically and psychologically connected with the zealous avoidance of sin which animated in earlier generation. (1930c: 427)

Sapir also took the theme of the shallowness of American character, which Adams had discussed in terms of the American contempt for the cultural graces championed by Matthew Arnold, and transformed it into a suggestive discussion of the individual in mass society. Like Tocqueville, Sapir pointed out that obsessive individualism led to "anonymity," since the egalitarianism which is inseparable from it means that each person desires only to be like all others. "To be a 'regular fellow' ... is not important because it expresses the individual, it is important because it does not express him." Sapir mourned not "the decay

of good speech and good manners," as Adams did, but "their gradual dissociation from the inner core of personality" (1930c: 428).

The theme of the dissociation of expression from personality recurs frequently in Sapir's critical discussions of modern poets. According to Sapir, the formlessness of American culture, combined with a search for personal experience that was both too self-conscious and too external, was poor soil for the growth of a genuine poetic tradition. Thus in a review of A. E. Housman, Sapir doubted "whether we can truly be said to be expressing ourselves until our moods become less frenetic, our ideas less palpable and self-conscious, and ... our forms less hesitant" (1923h: 191). For Sapir, the search for personal development through ardent but undisciplined experience—whether in art or in love—was doomed to failure precisely because the self-consciousness of the pursuit could not coexist with the desired goals of freedom and intuitive self-expression. Thus Sapir criticized Bertrand Russell for treating "love and art" not as "life itself" but as "the 'finer things' of life" (Sapir 1929k: 196). Sapir's assessment of modern poetry ran in a similar vein:

The bulk of contemporary verse ... gives us everything but the ecstasy that is the language of unhampered intuitive living. We have shrewd observation, fantasy, the vivid life of the senses, pensive grace, eloquence, subtle explorations of the intellect, and a great many other interesting things, but curiously little spiritual life. Very few poets seem willing, or able, to take their true selves seriously ... (Sapir 1925f: 100)

On the other hand, Sapir praised such poets as Edwin Arlington Robinson, "H. D." [Hilda Doolittle] and Emily Dickinson because he felt they had achieved self-expression rather than merely expressed their desire to achieve it. He found in Robinson's work, for example, "the genuinely artistic record of a rigorous personality. Mr. Robinson has not merely asked himself to think and feel thus and so; he has taken his sophisticated, bitter soul for granted" (1922t: 141).

* * *

To read the work of Edward Sapir 'across the disciplines' is to read it as he wrote it. Such a reading shows that Sapir created not a culture theory narrowly defined, but a philosophy of culture that remains vital and relevant both for social scientists and humanists and that deserves to be better known to a wider lay audience. It is no accident that the linguist, the mathematician and the musician were praised in one breath by Sapir. For him, science practiced in the classical spirit or art practiced for art's sake represented the finest and most fundamental expres-

sion of our humanity, "the search of the human spirit for beautiful form," as he wrote in *Language* (1921d: 244). To carry out that search with discipline and creativity was the responsibility and joy of individuals who, if their efforts were brought together by the drifts of history, might create a genuine culture—those that come along, as Sapir once wrote, "every now and then within some fortunate crystal-drop of time" (1921m: 238).

Culture in the Melting-Pot

A paper by Professor Dewey on "American Education and Culture," published in the *New Republic* for July 1, points to a fundamental conflict between the traditional ideal of culture and the actual conditions of life in America. A multitude of problems are suggested by it, but I confine myself to a brief reference to a few considerations that have occurred to me in the reading. I beg to be understood as being in the main entirely in sympathy with Professor Dewey's standpoint, i. e., the necessity of humanizing our utilitarian civilization on the basis of a frank acceptance for educational purposes of current modes of thought and action instead of attempting to inject into educational methods the vaccine of discarded classicism. My own remarks are meant rather as supplementary than corrective.

In the first place, it seems to me that Professor Dewey lays too much stress, though more by implication than by direct statement, on the need of a specifically American revision of our ideal of culture. The disparity between tradition and reality is doubtless more glaring on this continent than in Europe, but it is not different in kind in the old country. Everywhere education and, in consequence, the ideal of culture are largely concerned with the acquirement of matter and manner which reflect the conditions of past stages, the necessary adjustment of the educational heritage to present conditions, the resultants of industrialism, being largely left to the individual in the course of his contact with the world. Indeed, it would seem that the lack of accord between culture and the demands of modern life is, if anything, more acute in the case of the English university ideal than in its American correspondent. So far, then, as a thorough revision of our ideals of culture is demanded, the "American" may well be struck out of Professor Dewey's title.

Professor Dewey may retort that it is not a question of a revision of American ideals, but of their very formation. We cannot revise what we do not possess. "The beginning of a culture stripped of egotistic illusions is the perception that we have as yet no culture: that our culture is something to achieve, to create." What passes under the name of "culture" in America, Professor Dewey might add, is merely Europe's

cast-off clothes. Unless I quite misunderstand him, he feels it necessary that America should evolve a distinctive culture of its own, something that could be truly called "American." The readiness with which Americans deplore the lack of specifically American traits in their culture (assuming, for the sake of argument, that we have one) is more than irritating, it is pathetic. It rests partly on an affectation of national modesty (as provincial a pose as the earlier swagger which it has largely replaced among the more educated), partly and more profoundly on a geographical fallacy. America is politically and geographically distinct from the Old World, hence it must needs have a culture of its own. Never mind the fact that our population is almost entirely recruited from the countries of Europe, that it is bound to them by a thousand ties, that there is hardly a single word uttered or idea thought which is not, in the very nature of circumstances, of European origin — we must fly in the face of fact and build us a brand-new culture. If we are not autochthonous, we must become so. And yet it needs only the most casual survey of culture to teach us that culture is not congruous with political lines, nor immediately determined by environmental conditions, but is strictly dependent on its historical antecedents and on the foreign influences with which it comes into constant contact. Europe's cast-off clothes are our own, though we may be ashamed of them. Life and thought in Canada are as like life and thought in the United States as one egg to another. German-speaking Austria and Germany have for several centuries formed pretty much of a cultural unit, and this in spite of the greatest possible political heterogeneity.

And this leads me to one of the salient points in the "historical antecedents" of a culture. It is the matter of language. We hear much of the psychological foundations of culture (national temperament), of the moulding influence of economic conditions and of social organization, of the compelling force of the physical environment, but how many historians have perceived the overwhelming significance of a community of language? It is too trite, too obvious a point to dwell upon, hence its importance is invariably missed. All the great spheres of culture have been and are dominated through the medium of a common language. Give me a group of men who talk my language, whose conversation and speeches I can readily follow, whose books I can read, and whose thoughts I can identify with my own, and I am or soon become a participant in their culture. As long as America is English-speaking, its culture must be fundamentally the same as that of England and Canada and Australia, necessary local modifications notwithstand-

ing. This does not mean that America is condemned to slavish adherence to provincial Anglicisms of thought and habit, but that the culture it shares in is that of the English-speaking world as a whole. It is only when we Americans fully realize this and all that it entails that we shall be able to bring our due influence to bear in the world of science and art. National slogans are of no avail in the development of culture, where they are not justified by the historical nexus of things, they soon become extinct. Is not Walt Whitman's "Americanism" in poetry a merely individual outburst, and is it not highly significant that its formative influence in American culture is practically nil? To summarize, I should say that if we wish to have in America the sort of culture that Professor Dewey dimly foreshadows, it becomes our task not to create an exclusively American product but to join in the work of a general revision of the cultural standards of the Occidental world, and more particularly of the English-speaking part of it.

A word in conclusion as to the relations between culture and social and economic conditions. Professor Dewey writes: "I am one of those who think that the only test and justification of any form of political and economic society is its contribution to art and science — to what may roundly be called culture." And later on: "In short, our culture must be consonant with realistic science and with machine industry, instead of a refuge from them." Personally, I find Professor Dewey's range of significance of the term "culture" too circumscribed, but I would not insist on this, as he has a perfect right to give to so flexible a term what definition he pleases. My main difficulty is with the conception of art and science as a contribution of a special "form of political and economic society," as though the essential nature of the higher aspects of the culture of a definite time and place were directly traceable to current features of the political and economic organism. This is precisely the method of approach which is most popular, the method of nearly all sociological interpreters of cultural history, the method *mutatis mutandis* also of psychological interpreters. A society is seen to be characterized by certain aesthetic and intellectual tendencies, what more "obvious" than that their genesis must be sought in the fundamental conditions of life of that society? Hence arise countless interpretations — sociological, economic, psychological — of any aspect of the life of society you will. They all have this in common, that they conceive of the vast complex of human activities characteristic of a given time and place as constituting a self-contained organism, the significance of any aspect of which becomes clear from a penetrating study of all or certain

of the others. Historical-minded people always have a stubborn difficulty with this conception, one that meets them at every step. It may be that society is gradually evolving towards some such exquisite harmony of life and structure. For the present, the student of cultural history (and under this term I include the data of ethnology) humbly notes that no society is or ever was thus self-contained and self-explanatory. Each of the aspects of social life, say philosophy or music or religion, is more definitely determined in form and content by the past history of that aspect, by its sequential relation to other manifestations of itself in time and place, than by its co-existence with the other aspects of that life. A constant but always very imperfectly consummated tendency is present towards the moulding of these more or less distinct strands into a fabric; countless modifications and adaptations result, but the strands nevertheless remain distinct. In brief, we must allow for distinct levels in cultural history, as we allow for them in psychology. We must beware of being tricked by our inveterately monistic habit of mind. To apply these principles to our quest of an American culture, let us not delude ourselves into the belief that a new art and science will somehow develop from a specifically American set of social and economic conditions. The art and science, the culture, of America will, let us hope, be responsive to these conditions; it will not, for all that, be created by them.

Editorial Note

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Sapir comments on John Dewey, "American Education and Culture," *The New Republic*, July 1, 1916, 215-217. Dewey (1859-1952), an American philosopher, psychologist, and educator, developed (with C. A. Peirce and William James) the philosophy of Pragmatism. He was a leading theorist of the progressive education movement.

Review of Paul Abelson,
English-Yiddish Encyclopedic Dictionary

Paul Abelson, ed., *English-Yiddish Encyclopedic Dictionary, a Complete Lexicon and Work of Reference in All Departments of Knowledge*. New York: Jewish Press Publishing Company, 1915.

There are in New York and many others of our large cities a vast number of intelligent and lettered Jewish immigrants who are hampered in their educational and other ambitions by the lack of adequate knowledge of the language of the country that they have made their haven. They have in many cases not only to cope with the intrinsic difficulties of acquiring a new language and culture under conditions of poverty that leave little leisure for study, and at a time of life that is past the stage of linguistic flexibility, but they have also to contend with a more subtle factor. The tendency of Jewish immigrants to congregate into colonies, combined with the rather high level of taste and culture brought by a large proportion of them from the old world, fosters the development and maintenance in America of a specifically Judeo-German (Yiddish) culture (literature, theatre, social and economic endeavour, and so on), which more or less adequately satisfies the intellectual and aesthetic demands of the immigrants and renders the necessity for their linguistic and cultural assimilation less immediately imperative than might be supposed. Not that the transplantation and further development of this Judeo-German culture is in itself a reprehensible phenomenon, but, if the rapid and thorough acquirement of English be set as a goal, the conditions outlined must frankly be recognized as constituting an obstacle. [141]

While the *English-Yiddish Encyclopedic Dictionary* addresses itself to all Yiddish-speaking foreigners in America that are able to read their mother tongue and are desirous of gaining a knowledge, elementary or thorough, of the English language, it is probably to the more cultured type of immigrant that it will prove of the greatest use. It will doubtless do much to enable him to overcome the cultural resistance that we have indicated. Dr. Abelson and his collaborators deserve our warmest

commendation for their successful solution of a unique and difficult problem. There is here offered to the Jewish immigrant a mass of adequately illustrated information which is hardly inferior in bulk or quality to that contained in the native American's *Webster*.

In fact, one wonders whether the repast is not a bit too sumptuous. It seems fairly obvious that a work of this kind must, in the nature of things, be transitional in character. In other words, its *raison d'être* largely ceases with the fulfillment of its aims, as the scaffolding is demolished with the completion of the structure. Under these circumstances, one is somewhat puzzled to find valuable space devoted to the explanation in Judeo-German (the entries are English, all the explanatory matter is Judeo-German) of such words as *heteratomic*, *quinquefoliate*, *incombustibility*, and hosts of others. Surely, one fancies, the student who feels impelled to seek light on the meaning of words such as these is bound to have progressed far enough in his study of English to be able to consult English works of reference. It seems indeed a pity that space so disposed of — and it forms no inconsiderable portion of the book — was not rather devoted to fuller information on the bread-and-butter topics suggested by the humbler entries. For the greater familiarity thus gained with the form and subject-matter of American thought the inquiring immigrant would gladly, we venture to think, have dispensed with the frills and furbelows. So far, indeed, is the *Encyclopedic Dictionary* from exercising restraint in this regard that nearly every page betrays to the man of normal English speech his depths of ignorance. In the face of the editors' authority I [142] should certainly not care to dispute the existence of such words as *nival*, *nivous*, *ort* (translated into Judeo-German as: 'a remainder, a fragment, that which is left over and is to be thrown away'), *connexity*, *incogitantly*, and *interfenestral*, but I submit that I would have preferred to see these at best nebulous beings housed in some such thesaurus as the *Oxford N. E. D.* than exposed to the quizzical stare of the unappreciative foreigner.

Yet, in view of the magnitude of Dr. Abelson's accomplishment, it seems unkind to insist on such shortcomings as these. To make amends, he has very commendably devoted considerable space to the explanation of idiomatic turns of expression, those bugaboos of all foreigners. Thus, it is refreshing to find justice done to such collocations as *come-down*, *come down on*, *come in for*, *come out with*, *come upon*, *come to the scratch*, and numerous others.

In one important point (and this is the only really serious criticism that I would make) the dictionary proves a disappointment. This is in

the matter of pronunciation. True, Judeo-German, with its simple vocalic system, is certainly one of the languages least adapted to transliterate a language with so difficult a phonetic system as English, but I cannot help thinking that the problem of suggesting an approximately correct English pronunciation might have been more satisfactorily solved. As it is, the transliterations adopted by the editors can only confirm those who use the book in precisely those faults of pronunciation that are characteristic of the Yiddish-speaking foreigners and which are apt to render their speech so disagreeable to Americans. I believe that an almost heroic attempt should have been made by the editors to convey some idea of the qualitative and quantitative nuances of the English vowels. If the use of at least certain diacritical marks would thus have been rendered unavoidable, no matter. If too great an expense would thereby have been entailed, it would have been excellent pedagogy and economy to have greatly decreased the compass of the book. Better half the number of pages and some indication, e. g. of the difference in pronunciation between the vowel of *fan* and that of *fen* (as it is, [143] they are so transliterated as to suggest an identical pronunciation, *fen*, for both). Nor is there anything to show that the *th* of a word like *this* is not identical with the *th* of a word like *thick*. And why, of all transliterations, is one chosen for *w* that necessarily suggests a pronunciation *hw* (incidentally *w* is not distinguished from *wh*)? But this is not the place to analyse the phonetic deficiencies of the work in detail. I wish merely to point out that the handling of the phonetic problem leaves much to be desired.

Editorial Note

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Review of Samuel Butler,
God the Known and God the Unknown

Samuel Butler, *God the Known and God the Unknown*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1917.

Whatever in the spiritual life of man has the highest potency for him, according to temperament or level of consciousness attained, whatever aspect of experience is felt to open the portals to the loftiest flights of creative imagination, is very apt to be projected into his God. The essence of God is sought in those concepts that liberate the caged self and make it supreme in its own world of chosen goods. God is thus the impersonation or source of magic, of power, of immortality, of truth, of art, of morality, of ecstatic vision, of annihilation. All gods, at any rate all useful gods, are anthropomorphic; in so far as the gods of theological and philosophical speculation escape the human mould, they reduce to purely verbal formulae. The Jesus of Christian myth has intense vitality as a symbol of human aspiration, of triumph in degradation; the Holy Ghost can found no cult.

The God of Samuel Butler is no exception to the rule. He possesses the attributes of his creator and incorporates his strongest aspirations. I had come to Butler's essay fresh from *The Note Books*, that curious congeries of brilliant epigrams, dead-ridden hobbies, far-fetched analogies, and penetrating analyses; hence I could not fail to observe the impress of Butler's personality, as revealed by himself in these notes, on his theological speculations. Butler was a man of a very definite, though not easily definable, cast of mind, possessed of very clear-cut likes and dislikes, and fond of hugging certain thoughts, attitudes, and modes of reasoning with a persistency that is occasionally trying to the reader, but indicative at the same time of their high emotional value for Butler. Some of the suggestive traits revealed in *The Note Books* are a pragmatic attitude towards truth that must have seemed paradoxical to his contemporaries (in one passage Butler directly states that that is true which it is most "convenient" to believe); a strong disinclination to take account of any factors not directly yielded by experience; a distrust of

all arguments pushed to their logical extreme; a well-nigh amazing reliance on evidence from analogy (as Butler characteristically puts it, analogy is poor ground for an argument but it is the best we have); and, probably most deep-rooted of all, a habit of bridging all sorts of opposites, which Butler's ingrained love of antithesis of expression leads him to contemplate [193] with genuine interest, into a continuum, so that all life is seen to harbor death and no death to be altogether lifeless, all mind to be associated with matter and no form of matter to be altogether mindless – in short, A to include something of Z and Z something of A. One may, indeed, suspect the last two of these traits to have had over Butler something of the tyrannical sway of compulsive thought-habits. Surely not a little in his theories and fancies is attributable to them.

Through Butler's work runs, further, an earnest, quietly passionate, longing for eventual recognition, a longing now rising to calm assurance, now masking itself in a philosophic humor of indifference that was but half insincere. For the catchpenny recognition of the passing hour he had a genuine scorn, though the note of wistful regret is not absent from his contemplation of the relative failure to achieve literary fame that was his lot. Few men have had such confidence in the morrow succeeding to the day of personal identity, few have had such an abiding sense of the reality of the unity, biological and spiritual, which binds the generations inextricably together. The sense of a personality of flesh and spirit transcending that of individual consciousness is, indeed, the keynote to much of Butler's thinking. It is at the heart of his evolutionary speculations, with his curious identification of memory and heredity, as it, in a measure, also pervades his masterpiece, *The Way of All Flesh*, a novel of four generations. Permanence of a something which, in the midst of endless dissolutions, unfolds towards an unknown goal – the concept is rarely absent from Butler's thoughts, it takes shape in innumerable forms. Between the personal fame for which he longed and the complete submergence of self in a spiritual humus affording nourishment to those that follow, Butler found no true opposition. Life, organic and psychic, is merely the endlessly ramified career of a single personality.

This brings us face to face with Butler's conception of God. His God will, above all things, be one that we can most "conveniently" believe in as doing least violence to our daily habits of thought and most readily following as a synthesis of actual experience. There will be nothing mystical about him, nothing that baffles the understanding. He will be a

modest God, a God in man's own image, and he will no more hold in his hands the key to the riddle of existence than does the least of his creatures. Nor will he hold himself austere aloof in a divine empyrean whence issue strange fulminations and prescriptions; he will be our veriest neighbor, squatting on our own domain. He will, like any phenomenon, be content to fit himself into the analogical scheme of things. And he will be as everlasting as life itself, no more and no less.

In short, Butler's God is identical with that ramified but single personality that evolution knows, whose being is the totality of life. He is the sum total and synthesis of all manifestations of life, animal and vegetable. To be more exact, he is the personalized energy or principle that resides and has, for untold aeons, resided in living matter and mind — for the two are inseparable. The single cell of the animal organism is a perfect and self-sufficient life unit or personality, unaware, or but dimly aware, of the larger whole of which it forms a part, yet existing only for the sake of that whole. In precisely the same manner, argues Butler, each individual in the great sum of animated nature, plant or animal or human being, is a life unit or personality that is unaware, or but dimly aware, of the vast personality or God of which it forms an infinitesimal fragment and which, we may believe, possesses a consciousness transcending ours as this transcends the consciousness of the single cell. Cell, organism, God — these form "three great concentric phases of life." The vast personality indwelling in life is the known God. Whether or not there is a fourth concentric phase, an unknown God, embracing a multitude of Gods analogous to the only one we have direct knowledge of, it is useless to speculate. As the cell knows not our God, so we cannot be expected to know a super-God. Butler's theology leads to no metaphysical solutions of ultimate problems.

This conception of God differs radically not only from that of orthodox theism but from the all-inclusive God of the pantheists. Both of these lack the fundamental essential of an intelligible God — personality. Nevertheless it is easy to perceive that Butler's conception lends itself to a readier approximation to the pantheistic God than to the sovereign God of religion. In the present work Butler is at considerable pains to dismiss the pantheistic conception as unthinkable; yet we learn from his editor's note to the chapter on "The Tree of Life" that the separation of the organic from the inorganic, which is at the basis of Butler's thesis, was later abandoned [194] by him and that he felt impelled, in consequence, to reconstruct his essay. This work however he left undone. It is difficult to see how Butler could in the end have

avoided the pantheism he had opposed. It would have had to be, needless to say, a pantheism arrived at by a series of concentric phases of some sort of evolutionary process.

In his critical study on Samuel Butler Mr. Gilbert Cannan somewhat petulantly remarks: "I cannot believe in his God, simply because he does not write about his God with style. He writes not as one passionately believing, but as one desirous of accounting for a phenomenon, in this instance faith. Since there is faith there must be God, panpsychic." This is not altogether fair. There are not a few passages in Butler's little book where the dialectic flames into imaginative diction. Moreover his God embodies, in the only way possible for Butler, his desire for spiritual perpetuation. Yet, on the whole, there is small doubt that the quest of God had not the burning necessity for Butler's ironical and eminently level-headed temperament that it has for certain other natures. Mr. Cannan could hardly have expected him to write of God with the passionate conviction and the love that are due His especially favored manifestation, Handel.

Editorial Note

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Samuel Butler (1835–1902) was an English essayist, critic, novelist, and philosopher, best known today for his two novels *The Way of All Flesh* and *Erewhon*.

Review of John M. Tyler,
The New Stone Age, Stewart Paton, *Human Behavior*,
and Edwin G. Conklin, *The Direction of Human
Evolution*

John M. Tyler, *The New Stone Age in Northern Europe*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1921.

Stewart Paton, *Human Behavior in Relation to the Study of Educational, Social, and Ethical Problems*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1921.

Edwin Grant Conklin, *The Direction of Human Evolution*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1921.

Toward the end of a readable and enjoyable outline of the main facts of neolithic culture in Europe Mr. Tyler strikes an anxious note. "The *élite* of wealth, learning, and culture today," he complains, "have generally given up the search for ends in life. The old question: 'What is man's chief end?' sounds archaic. We are doubtful as to the existence or desirability of such a thing. We are, in the language of the broker, very 'long' on means, but terribly 'short' on ends, for which there is no market. Some day we shall again find a place for end and purpose in our philosophy and science, as in the systems of Paul, Plato, and especially of Aristotle, with his 'passion for the obvious,' but at present these thinkers are back numbers. Yet we must have ends of life beyond mere survival, comfort, or luxury, and getting a living. Some scale of values, not solely and purely mercantile, would also be useful." This note may be nuanced by each and every one of us to suit the requirements of his temperament, but it cannot be laughed away. We are all uneasy, all wondering a little about the whither of life. The insouciance of less self-conscious ages, when men could afford to forget the ends of life because they were so trustfully accepted, seems to have gone. Freed from the shackles of positive faiths and superstitions, we now find ourselves clogged by a more mischievous slavery than we ever knew, a bondage to unpatterned and undirected activity masking an inner emptiness. Our very keenness of sight has burnt away the significance of

what we look upon. Hence it comes that so much of our writing and lecturing is preoccupied, the ventriloquistic utterance of absent souls.

These three books are no exception to the rule of divided attention. Men sincerely engrossed in the enfoldment of neolithic European culture should not be too anxious to save out of neolithic mentality a reassuring spiritual fundament, attributable to the "common man" which is to help us forward over difficult ways. The text is too remote from the urgency, even though the sermon does not ring wholly false. Again, only one that loves his prejudices more than his science can so depart from the sober task of laying bare the essentials of "human behavior" as to take his cue from chapter headings like *Imperfect Organization and Man and the Progress of Civilization* for self-reheving diatribes — anti-bolshevist, anti-German, anti-pacifist, anti-futurist. A neurologist, no less than his patient, has the right to be nervous and irascible, but we doubt if his psychology has that right. Mr. Paton clearly believes that there are weightier presences in the air than sensori-motor arcs. But the scientist, the artist, and the lover have the momentary privilege of setting the object of their contemplation above the salvation of humanity. We do not readily forgive them a bungled expression because they have been swerved from their idolatry by things that matter. Mr. Conklin's distraughtness is not so apparent, swathed as it is in the gentle language of Chautauqua. But it is there, insidiously, pervasively. We instinctively distrust an evolution that incidentally saves for us our "democratic" ideal and even takes the teeth out of "religion." We would rather it were not quite so accommodating, but went cryptically on its way, disdainful of local comforts. Mr. Conklin comes to us with a message. "The inspiring visions," he whispers, "of prophets and seers concerning a new heaven, a new earth, and a new humanity find confirmation and not destruction in human evolution viewed in retrospect and in prospect, for the past and present tendencies of evolution justify the highest hopes for the future and inspire faith in the final culmination of this great law in

'one far-off divine event

To which the whole creation moves.'"

It is lucky for us indeed that Darwin's old dragon turns out to be Santa Claus incog.

In spite of all the wishful thinking, now sentimental or chivalrous, now stridently eugenic, in spite of all the telescopic, I-dare-you-say-no glances into the future, these books, taken together, are useful for a

philosophy of ends. They afford a certain basis of fact around which thoughts may crystallize.

The fully developed neolithic, or "polished stone," culture of Scandinavia and of Central and Western Europe antedates the dynastic period in Egypt and is ultimately founded on an Asiatic culture which reaches back to 10,000 B. C., if we may trust Mr. Tyler's interpretations of recent archaeological researches at Anau (in western Turkestan) and at Susa. This culture reached probably its most typical development in the Lake Dwellings of Switzerland, but it had many local varieties, exemplified by the megalithic monuments of Western Europe and by the different areas of distribution of types of ornamented pottery. Its basic and most persistent elements were not so much the many beautiful varieties of smoothly finished artifacts of stone or the impressive dolmens, with their religious connotations, as the domestication of several useful animals and the cultivation of cereals. Both of these features are still at the root of our modern economy. The importance of the domestication of cattle far transcended the immediate demand for beef, milk, and leather. The late neolithic use of the ox for wheel-traction and plowing was a necessary step in the eventual development of modern machinery. Neolithic culture forms the basis of European civilization in a more than merely chronological sense, for most of the dominating ideas or cultural determinants in our life of today were then present in germinal or developed form. Add to this the fact that the basic racial types of modern Europe are clearly represented in the skeletal remains that have come down to us from neolithic times, and we get a notion of our substantial fixity over long periods in the midst of overwhelming changes in the apparent run of history. For a philosophy of ends Mr. Tyler's book gives us this thought, that if our free quest of ends is to concern itself with the basic "substance" of our lives, with the conscious manipulation or even creation of specific fundamentals, whether of race or culture, we are likely to be smiled at for our pains. Mendelian inheritance and the historical process have their own ideas about the superman.

The historical process, the cumulative drift of culture that formally transcends the reactions of the individual organism, is not envisaged by Mr. Paton. Like most psychologists and neurologists, he is more familiar with the chemistry of life than with its architecture. Glandular secretions, so it would seem, are more likely to prove the efficient causes of human behavior than the imponderables of tradition. But for this obtuseness to the historical sky-line of human conduct Mr. Paton is

hardly to be blamed, for each discipline creates its own myopia. In his more special province, the nature of human behavior from an organismal standpoint, he has much of value to give us. It is a pity that his book is written in a needlessly heavy style and that the argument moves in so sluggish a current. Mr. Paton recognizes the extreme complexity of the organic determinants of human behavior, also the very provisional character of many of our currently held dogmas as to the nature of this behavior. Probably the greatest service he renders is his insistence on the functional unity of an individual's behavior, physiological and psychic, at any given moment of time. An "idea" rising into consciousness is not simply the psychic correlate of neural activity localized in a certain brain "center," as is so often held; it is rather one aspect of a vast network of activities affecting the whole body at once. These activities include not only sensory stimulations and motor discharges and inhibitions too [238] complicated to follow in detail, but all manner of muscular, visceral, and glandular processes that register explicitly in consciousness only under unusual circumstances. Overstimulate a sense-organ here, or too powerfully inhibit a neural discharge there, and there can be little doubt that the intimate texture and color of the "idea" have in some degree been modified. The more popular and more easily apprehended psychology that rigidly localizes states of mind and attributes specific rather than quantitative differences to them thus relapses into a kind of "scientific phrenology," to use an apt phrase of the behaviorists. Behavior is not a sum of specific activities, each independently set in motion by a given stimulus in the environment, but the rhythmically fluctuating register of the "set" of the organism as it is responding to all the stimuli, inner and outer, to which it is capable of responding. So extremely functional a method of conceiving human thought and activity, if we choose to adopt it, must color our attitude toward the problem of ends. May it not be a vain thing to look for specific ends and may it not be a more comforting thing to value life for the rhythms and patterns of its process?

The Direction of Human Evolution is a discussion, not valuable but lucid, of the commonplaces of evolutionary doctrine. Mr. Conklin draws a commendably sharp line between biological heredity and the "inheritance" of social features, which are acquired characteristics. The distinction once made, however, it is practically ignored. The superficial formal parallels between the process of organic evolution and the course of "social evolution" are made the most of, and the eventual arrival of our troubled human ship into a haven of good things and nice feelings

is said to be the end-point of a single magnificent impulse that began with the overworked amoeba. While Mr. Conklin makes no serious contribution to the problem of the direction of human culture, he makes it clear that the future of man is essentially a matter of culture, not of biology. No significant organismal changes are to be hoped for or feared. In spite of the expert breeders, Shavian and other, it would seem to be not in the least likely that man will make of himself a higher potential instrument than he already is. Man as an animal, as a psychophysical machine, is a *fait accompli*. He has attained biological fixity too long ago to make it worth our while worrying overmuch about his points. Something may be done to eliminate undesirable individuals, but the serious hope of man can only rest in the cultural process itself, not in the nature of the organism that carries culture.

Mr. Tyler's querulousness as to the present lack of interest in the ends of man is intelligible enough. Still more readily intelligible is the lack of interest itself. A clear conviction of the presence and power of the ends which he longs for is possible only if we feel that there is or will be an intelligence that must be gratified by the attainment or pursuit of these ends. This intelligence may be paternal to man; in other words, we may be called upon to do God's bidding. Or it may be projected into the dim future as a dream-realizing humanity; in that case our task should take the form of parental self-sacrifice. Or, finally, the ruling intelligence may be our desire of today; we must then demand the fulfillment of ends here and now. We are in a sorry way at present about the orientation of loyalty. God seems to have died; we are thrown back on ourselves. Unfortunately, we were never less clear about the nature of the individual, of society, and of the cultural changes that are taking place all around us. Is our society but a matrix and a stimulus for individual expression, or is the individual merely a thorn in some massively flowering process that we can know but dimly? The too systematic restlessness of evolution and a too easy command of the externals of our natural environment have conspired to give us the insolence named *hubris* — see H. G. Wells for a passing example of this spirit of the *nouveau riche* which is in us all. We allow ourselves to be hurried into frenzied analyses and undertake to map the endless sea of life, not caring to make a cosmos of the transient wave we ride. From this *hubris* must proceed, first, disgust, and later, a chastened humility.

The concluding remarks of this review are framed in the spirit of the coming humility, so nearly visible indeed. If, as the more serious scientists tell us, the fundamental features of our physical and mental endow-

ment are unalterably fixed, and if, more significantly still, the waves of the historical process conform to an unwilled necessity, are none the less iron for their seemingly infinite fluidity, we may well turn from man as an organism and from his culture as a cumulative inventory of achievement and speculate on the harmony or disharmony of a present culture or of an actual personality, leaving direction, the insistent why and whither, to undiscovered gods and winds. Such an approach to the problem of ends is aesthetic and geometric, frankly non-teleological. It goes so sadly against the prevalent American grain that we may well try it out as discipline.

We are often accused of materialism. To defend ourselves from the grosser implications of the charge we hasten to build educational institutions, compound cultural pellules, and, if we are pathologically inclined, embrace thrice material schemes of spirituality — soul nostrums of varying hue. Being most patently “material” when we aim to be spirit itself, we betray the intimate nature of the malady, which is a blind trust in the specific of life, in the mere subject matter of experience. Form, which is so insistently confused with manner, is ignored or rather unfelt; rhythm is not guessed at. The concept that we need to struggle for is the reconciliation of the individual rhythms of desire with the patterns of social life. When such a reconciliation has been effected, whether in the form of a poem or of participation in a war dance or of a beautiful set in human relations, an “end of man” has been attained more authentic than any abstract ideal yet proposed. A society offering the maximum of harmonious reconcilements is the greatest end we need concern ourselves with. Such societies or segments of society have existed and will again emerge. The problem of ends is not one of time nor of building material. It is solved every now and then within some fortunate crystal-drop of time.

Editorial Note

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Edwin Grant Conklin (1863–1952) was an American biologist associated with Princeton University.

Review of Gilbert Murray, *Tradition and Progress*

Gilbert Murray, *Tradition and Progress*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1922.

[This] is a somewhat curiously assorted group of ten essays, all reprints of papers and lectures previously published. The first five of these pleasingly written essays deal with some of the larger aspects of classical scholarship, the sixth with Literature as Revelation, the remainder of the volume consists of thoughts on social and international ethics. The translator of Euripides is at his best in the earlier papers. He does succeed in setting such topics as the war-satire of Aristophanes, the bitterness of Euripides, the Stoic philosophy, and the poetic definitions of Aristotle in some relation to our interests of today. The paper on Poesis and Mimesis is particularly penetrating in its insistence on the necessity of taking due account, in literary criticism, of the formal genius of the language in which the artist does his work. Not a great deal is to be said of the latter half of the book. Professor Murray oscillates rather comfortably between optimism and despair, makes the usual high-souled march along the smooth ridge of English liberalism, animadverts feelingly on the elements of wickedness and goodness in contemporary politics, and is careful to put in the parentheses needed to prevent a charge of excessive radicalism.

Editorial Note

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Review of Johannes V. Jensen,
The Long Journey

Johannes V. Jensen, *The Long Journey*. Translated by A. G. Chater. New York: Knopf, 1923.

If the literary age is one of lost bearings, lost faith, restless experimentalism, if it seeks to cover up a corroding skepticism with a thousand-fold pursuit of the nuance, the individual gesture, then assuredly the Danish novelist, Johannes V. Jensen, is not of the age. He is either the belated representative of a race of epic poets, magnificently unaware of what lies not in the heart of impersonal man, or he is the harbinger of a new, fiery serenity. It is an astonishing task that he sets himself in *The Long Journey* (Knopf), of which the volume recently published in English comprises the first two parts — there are six in all. In bold, plastic form he essays the story of man from the days when he roamed as a half-simian pack in the jungle down to the sober yesterday of Christopher Columbus' discovery of America. Jensen's work is not history ("history" is too dry a word), it is not romance ("romance" is too tawdry a word), it is sheer epos. And for epos, one had thought, we had lost the courage.

The first instalment, "Fire" and "Ice," makes up a relative unity only, but a satisfying one at that. To what extent Jensen has misunderstood or wilfully misinterpreted the facts of prehistoric archaeology, to what extent he has used the artist's privilege of bending the facts to an artistic purpose, it would be hard to say. As a grandiose, ideal record of struggling man in the stone ages of northern Europe the volume is impeccable; as a proportioned record of what is actually known of man's earliest history it will not bear serious criticism. So colossal is the author's power of imaginative simplification, so easy and magisterial his disposition of time and place and sequence, that it is wasted pedantry to interpose the chapter and verse of archaeology. "So much the worse for the facts," we grumble, as we race on from page to page, following the archetypal doings of palaeolithic man with all the absurd engrossment that is due a contemporary tale of Jack and Jill. Jensen's fundamental

"error" lies in ascribing to the remote northerners of the Ice Age an inventiveness that history prefers to deny them. The great and decisive achievements of neolithic man — the domestication of animals, the cultivation of grain, the invention of pottery, of polished stone implements, and of navigation — did not emanate from Jensen's chosen people, who received infinitely more than they gave. Nor is it demonstrable that it was the inhuman rigors of the frozen north that forced man to become a progressive being, while it was the fate of those who fled southwards before the advancing ice-sheet to stagnate in slothful primitiveness.

I take it that the most sensible way to read *The Long Journey* is to forget all the evidence and to desist from applying race theories, "Nordic" or otherwise, to Jensen's chronicle. It may be that Jensen believed himself to be writing a quintessential history, and to a very appreciable extent of course he was, but the book has too much to lose when judged as mere history to make it worth while reading it as history at all. With the help of fragments of archaeological science, of floating ideas about the nature of early man, of bits of Norse mythology, and of an unflagging imagination Jensen has forged a complete folk-epos. Were we living in the mythopoeic age, *The Long Journey* would become our Genesis.

How is it that Jensen has succeeded in so unpromising a task as the resurrection of Stone Age man? Partly, one ventures to think, because he has been able to compress the whole of man into the prefiguring movements of his characters and hordes. We are curiously breathless in the contemplation of these unpolished ancestors of ours. Uncouth and at times revolting as they are, it is never difficult to identify them with our modern selves. Jensen is not afraid of an occasional jest or humorous ferocity but seems to be temperamentally immune from wit or satire. This is fortunate, for to suggest the Yahoo would have been fatal to the basic significance of the work. A still greater factor in Jensen's triumphant success is the care that he has bestowed on the delineation of his Titan-like figures. The smoking volcano, "The Man," despotic leader of the herd; Fyr, the Prometheus of the tale; the outcast Carl who stays behind to defy the ice, his spouse Mam, the restless White Bear, mothering May, and Wolf, the horse-breaker, have grown in the novelist's hands from obvious cultural symbols into spirits and personalities of no uncertain outlines. We care for their sufferings and victories. The backgrounds are powerfully suggested throughout. Jungle and rain and ice are actual presences, and the animals, too, wild and domesticated, move towards us and away from us.

A final word as to the translation by A. G. Chater. It could hardly be better. I doubt if there is a single passage in this English version that is not supremely acceptable in its own right. One never guesses back to an original.

Editorial Note

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Johannes V. Jensen (1873–1950), a Danish poet and novelist, received the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1944.

Racial Superiority

It is a poor son of Adam who does not feel superior to somebody. It is not only the "Nordic" gentleman who has this delightful sensation as he gazes through blue eyes into that swarthy admixture of inferior types which is composed of Negroes, Chinese, Jews, Slavs, Sicilians, Hindus and other undesirables. I have heard an Indian half-breed of the plains speak disparagingly of the "Chinks" and, when I gently remonstrated with him for what I ventured to consider a hasty judgment, he reluctantly made a show of yielding, but feeling evidently that a scapegoat was needed for his balked sentiment of superiority he hastened to add, "Well, I guess they're better than the Jews anyway." At another time he pointed out to me how much more graceful was the walk of the Indians than that of the whites. Imagine the feeling of a prosperous Scotch real estate agent in some Western town like Calgary, Alberta, on being informed that his energetic, purposeful stride was being considered with amusement and considerable distaste by a "dirty, lazy, ignorant, slouching Indian" from the nearest reservation! Another Indian whom I knew, an old man of the Sacramento Valley in California, was chronically indignant with the Negroes — "white shirt-fronts stuck up on a stump," as he phrased them. And it is well known, of course, that many a darky is profoundly thankful that he is no "dirty Jew." But that many members of the Jewish "race," whether college professors or sellers of old clothes, bow to the verdict of isolated "Nordics," Indian half-breeds and Negroes has not yet been demonstrated.

This feeling of superiority of the members of one ethnic group to the members of another group or the members of all other groups is perfectly natural and even a little charming, provided it remains a mere sentiment and does not translate itself into actively hostile conduct. When this happens, the charm which is part and parcel of all kinds of naiveté disappears, or develops rather into an alarming and dangerous stupidity. It is generally believed that group valuations of the kind that I have instanced are largely due to the evident superiority of certain peoples who, not blind to the indulgence with which Nature has smiled upon them, feel an answering glow in their hearts and the flush of pride in their cheeks. If the Greeks looked down upon all other peoples as

barbaroi, Persians and Egyptians included, it is assumed that they could not help doing so, blessed as they were with the finest natural mentality and with the highest culture of their day. What the various kinds [201] of *barbaroi* thought of the Greeks is generally left out of the reckoning, but we need not doubt that the great majority of them, whether indebted to Greek culture or not, somehow felt themselves superior. If they paid Greek art the homage of imitation and acknowledged with unstinting words the supremacy of Greek letters, we may rest assured that they compensated themselves by contrasting their robust and manly virtues with the duplicity and immorality of the Greeks. In all probability they saw to it that they themselves were not left behind in the scale of ethnic values. And so it is, and must be, today. If the Chinese and Japanese blandly accept our technical scientific achievements, it does not follow — what we are too easily inclined to assume does follow — that they are putting us on a pedestal of ethnic superiority.

Let us try to be clear about the reason for this almost instinctive assertion of the superiority of the ethnic group. I am purposely avoiding the term “race” for the present. There seem to be two facets to the fundamental reason, an inner drive and an outer defense. First of all, the individual ego seeks to preserve itself in the midst of an overwhelming environment, natural and human. The readiest method of gaining a sense of triumph and of psychic security is probably to establish a sense of superiority over the other egos in one’s immediate environment. This process, however, is crossed almost from the beginning by the necessity of compromise with the socially inherited behavior of the group. One soon learns that it does not pay to fight bull-fashion for the primacy of the ego. There are too many stone walls about in the shape of other egos. The primary drive towards victory, therefore, splinters up into an endless number of substitutive reactions, most of which may be reduced to the formula of identification of the ego with the human environment. In other words, in one way or another the ego gradually surrenders its automatic claims to preeminence by incorporating itself to an appreciable extent with its object of attack. The ego becomes socially enlarged. Its thrusts of offense have transformed themselves into tentacles of support.

Thus, a man’s desire to show personal physical superiority to his acquaintances may be indirectly satisfied by membership in a football team or battalion which does battle with complete strangers. The fighting group is more potent than the individual, and by surrendering his impulses to personal combat and putting them at the disposal of the

group, the individual gets a lien, as it were, on whatever credit this group accumulates in the way of prowess. Even if his own share in an encounter is nothing to boast of, he is proud of the victory of his team or battalion. To an appreciable extent *he* has won out. Again, though a particular Englishman is vastly poorer than the average Italian, he feels that he [202] has a right to some measure of pride when he compares the statistics of wealth for England and Italy. In some obscure but perfectly real way he feels that he is wealthier, mightier, grander, and this remains true however bitterly he may resent his employer's treatment of himself and however jealously he may look upon his neighbor's prosperity.

The sentiment of "loyalty" is thus, to the vast majority of men, far more than an acquired virtue; it is the reaffirmation of the ego itself, for the ego has at no time really surrendered, it has merely diffused itself. All this is familiar enough, but what is not so easily recognized is the important fact that it makes very little psychological difference just how and to what extent the enlargement of the ego takes place. Family solidarity, civic pride, national loyalty, race consciousness, religious adherence and the thousand and one other forms of the feeling of group cohesion are but so many historically determined molds into which the enlarged ego has run. The basic fact to consider is not the fact of race or nationality or family organization as such but of the tendency of the individual ego to realize itself in a collectivity of some kind. Not in all individuals is this tendency equally strong, but it can be entirely absent only in cases of dementia.

In the second place, if the ego surrenders, or apparently surrenders, much of its individual clamor for preeminence, it makes amends by resuming its attitude of hostility when it contemplates the more remote environment. The group which is different from one's own group, be it the opposing partners in a game of cards, a neighboring city, the other political party, another nationality, or all those individuals whose hair lies straighter and shines blacker, may be safely looked down upon — now humorously, now in dead earnest — because the responsibility for the hostile attitude and its consequences rests not with the individual ego but with its enlarged image. It is not necessary for a bootblack recruit to possess military science to feel that he has the right to look down upon the enemy force. He can let his general do the incidental work of justifying his feeling of superiority in the science of war. It is necessary neither for the ignorant peasant nor the enlightened anti-Semite to prove that the particular Jew he maltreats is thus and so. It is

enough to know that the particular Jew belongs to the group of individuals known as Jews. The peasant need not even feel grateful to be relieved of the task of proving his personal superiority to Einstein. That was done long before either of them was born. The morale which results from a tacit circuit of "passing the buck" is well-nigh impregnable. But all the while the animus of this hostility derives very appreciably, if not entirely, from those more intimate home hostilities which society disallows and which become subtly transformed or indefinitely deferred. Every one knows that the [203] irritation which comes from failure in business may be relieved by the discovery of all sorts of reasons for despising one's successful rivals, or anybody else, particularly such reasons as put them in an inferior class. It is always relieving to be reminded that one is superior to somebody in the nature of things, and doubly relieving to be allowed to put one's knowledge into the concrete form of hostile action. Hence, one may surmise, the "relief" experienced when nations are plunged into international slaughter.

The opposing group is chiefly constituted by its points of difference from the home group. Almost any such point of difference, physical or linguistic or cultural or moral or merely geographical, is a challenge and is enough to give the ego and its social counterpart the contrast needed to suggest their superiority to the alien group. A striking difference in physical appearance or profoundly discordant religious faiths may be a stronger motive in general practice for the persistence of mutual hostility than differences of costume or of taste in marital customs, but I doubt if they are distinct in kind from these, psychologically speaking. Just as the mere fact of a group with which the ego may be identified is of greater consequence than its precise nature, so it is more important to know that there are contrasting groups to which any given group, any type of enlarged ego, may oppose itself than it is to analyze the differences that may be found between them. This point of view seems justified by the curious ease with which hostilities may be transferred. There is no doubt, for instance, that a nationality as such offers a more definite challenge to the enlarged ego "looking for trouble" than it did five hundred years ago and that it would be far more difficult to produce a Catholic-Protestant war today than it was in the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries. In our personal experience too it is a matter of common observation that new hostilities tend to take away from the vigor of old ones. It almost looks as though all that is really needed to satisfy the normal ego is, first, the opportunity to swell into a vicari-

ously triumphant entity and, secondly, a foil to help shape this entity, to give it the cutting edge of consciousness.

I believe it is of paramount importance to realize that nearly all discussions of racial ability are most powerfully biased by the necessity of the individual ego's triumph in the end. The race of any party to the discussion must be declared triumphant or, at the least, not incapacitated by nature for eventual triumph. It is a very remarkable and a very interesting fact that in the huge volume of racial controversy it is always the race or the supposed race (for it is a wise man who knows his ancestor) of the writer which carries off the palm of victory. It is a strange "science" indeed in which there are very nearly as many answers as there are classes of questioners. When a "Nordic" scientist gravely [204] ascertains that the "Nordic" race is the one truly superior variety of mankind and, still more gravely, opines that a more than proportionate numerical increase in other races is a "menace," it is difficult not to relish the humor of his position. In a tentative way one sympathizes with him in his splendid isolation and impending sterility. Nor is humor lacking in the spectacle of the wishful waiting of an enthusiastic Jew who is ready to bless the world with his "mission." So long as "Nordic" anthropologists fail to discover the racial superiority of the Japanese and so long as Japanese anthropologists (the Japanese, by the way, have done some excellent work in physical anthropology) remain serenely unaware of the racial superiority of the "Nordic," so long may the outsider be pardoned for a shrewd suspicion that superior and inferior race talk is "thin stuff."

If we leave the scientists for a moment and return to the prejudices of the folk, we find that among them the term "race" is used in the loosest possible manner. For all the endless insistence in higher circles on the fundamental biological value of the concept of race and on the approximate reality of "race instinct," the vast majority of mankind has no real interest in race as such. People do not analyze. All they know is that such and such groups of people look slightly different or very different, as the case may be, from themselves, talk differently, are more ignorant, have notions and customs that make it difficult to feel altogether at home with them, and live in or come from certain distant places mentioned in the geography. If the Negroes form such a "race" by virtue chiefly of their distinctive physical characteristics, the Jews form another because of their religion and the historical tradition that holds them together as a people, while the French, distinctive in language, culture, and habitat, are just as certainly a third "race." Negro, Chinese,

Jew, and Frenchman are to the lay mind and to the lay feeling roughly parallel groupings of mankind, differing from its own "race" (say English or Irish) in very much the same way, though in greatly varying degrees. In this unscientific ignorance of the difference between biological race and culture the folk shows a healthy appreciation of essentials. Whether the remote ancestors of two contrasted groups were noticeably different in stature, skin color and length of head, or whether their present differences are the result of purely historical and cultural causes having nothing to do with race in its biological sense is merely of scientific, that is academic, interest. If, in the former case, the two racial strains have become inextricably intermingled, the resulting population, if spiritually unified by the possession of a common language and a common culture, feels as pure and distinct in a racial sense as the most simon-pure "Nordics" (who are, as every honest anthropologist knows, a greatly mixed people) or Negroes [205] of the Gold Coast. If they need a pure racial pedigree for sentimental reasons, their scientists can be trusted to provide them with one. On the other hand, if a racially unified people breaks up into two antagonistic groups, actuated by different cultural ideals, their separateness has all the psychological value of a true racial cleavage and the chances are strong, at least nowadays, that their scientists will discover that they belong to appreciably distinct races after all.

In short, the feeling of group superiority which we have tried to analyze in its barest outlines may on occasion take the name and color of a truly racial feeling, but in its essence it is a far more generalized phenomenon. We may call it the feeling of ethnic superiority; and we may note that it is one of the more public functions of anthropologists and of those who quote and misquote anthropological data to rationalize this feeling in terms of their favorite nomenclature. A plain Englishman (whatever that may mean in racial terms) is content to say, "I am not a Frenchman and, if you ask me, I am rather glad of that fact", but the anthropological way of stating the same feeling is as follows: "I do not at all know what race I belong to individually, not having been properly measured, but my people are a blend of Alpine, Mediterranean, and Baltic or Nordic types, with the accent on Nordic whenever it seems expedient to place an accent. The Frenchmen are another blend of Alpine, Mediterranean, and Baltic types, but the percentages are different from those in my country and I am afraid that I shall have to put the accent on Alpine this time. It seems a reasonable inference (and if you do not agree with me I shall be obliged to call you by some

uncomplimentary names) that the superiority of my people, which consists in greater courage, resourcefulness, steadiness of nerve, tolerance and idealism, not to speak of pugilistic ability and poetic genius, is mainly due, entirely due, to the comfortable margin of Nordic blood which we possess." At the risk of being painfully indiscreet, let me whisper that Prof. R. B. Dixon, an anthropologist with ideas of his own, finds that the "tall, blond, dolichocephalic type which has been termed Baltic or Nordic is merely an ancient blend of Mediterranean, Caspian, and Proto-Negroid types."

Understanding now that what the layman is really interested in is not the disentangling of the hugely complex and bewildering racial history of man but simple ethnic antitheses ("racial," if the scientists will have it so) of "superior" and "inferior," we may pass to a brief consideration of racial superiority in the proper, biological sense of the term "racial." Several remarkable difficulties manifest themselves almost at once. If we contrast a "superior" group like a northeastern English village community of relatively homogeneous "Nordic" blood with an "inferior" group like an African Negro village community of the Nile headwaters, [206] we are struck at once by the great disparity between these groups in both appearance and manner of life. All in all, we are tempted, if not driven, to conclude that the English community is more enlightened, is somehow a "higher" type of human development. It is natural also to feel, in a preliminary way, that the difference in enlightenment is causally connected with the difference in physical type. We crystallize our feeling in the statement that "the Nordic type (or, in more general terms, the white race) is superior to the Negro race." This inference, naively natural though it is, is far from being a strictly logical one.

As we enlarge our acquaintance with the facts of history, of race distribution and of culture and, growing older and more skeptical, as we feel less certain about values than when we made our spontaneous inference, we begin to see how far from logical this was. The more we probe into the facts and into the alleged certainties, the more doubtful we become of just what we meant in the first place. A true critique of the subject of race superiority would require a volume, would resolve nearly all the plausible statements that have been made about it into clusters of unsolved problems in which we are as yet ignorant of the essential terms, and would leave us with a profound feeling of humility. I cannot do more here than indicate in the briefest possible compass what is involved in the statement that race A is "superior" to race B

and why it is that this type of statement, in my opinion, is partly ambiguous or meaningless and partly unsound.

The statement that race A is "superior" to race B assumes at least four propositions: (1) *that we can define a "race" adequately,* (2) *that certain fundamental psychic peculiarities, for example, native intelligence, are correlated with such physical features as we call "racial,"* (3) *that culture or civilization is definitely correlated with such mental endowments of the race,* (4) *that we can give an unambiguous or objective meaning to the term "superior."* Now I believe that not one of these propositions can be affirmed unconditionally and that the last three are either false or contain a highly significant percentage of error.

As to the concept of race, we may quite safely adopt the proposition that there are several distinct racial strains in the constitution of mankind, while remaining fully alive to the great probability that as good as no individuals living today represent pure or even measurably pure types. We literally do not know what are the essential races of man nor how and in what sequence the primary blends have taken place, though we can make certain shrewd guesses, such as that the northern Chinese and the West African Negro are in the main recruited from different basic types; we do not know just what are the truly essential criteria of race, whether head-form, for instance, is as significant as or more significant than color [207] of hair; we do not by any means always know whether a point of similarity between two types of man is significant of kinship or is a mere convergence within overlapping ranges of variation; nor, most disconcerting confession of all, are we at all clear as to whether a given variation is properly attributable to heredity as such or to heredity as modified by secondary factors of an environmental sort. The layman tends to have the same beautiful trust in anthropometric tables and anthropological nomenclature as in any other array of evidence that has a dry, "exact," mathematical visage, forgetting that everything depends on the soundness of the interpretation of these hard-headed data. But it is precisely in method and interpretation that physical anthropologists differ most and the casual reader must be prepared to discover that only too often they flatly contradict each other on the most fundamental points. Granted, then, that race is a perfectly legitimate biological concept, we may be absolutely certain that many of our current races and racial features have not at all the significance which we now attach to them. Anyone who envisages this inevitable development of the science of physical anthropology will find it difficult to get seriously exercised over the "Nordic" race or Alpine short-headedness

or "Jewish" nose. But let us assume, what we have not yet the right to assume, that we know what is what in race and in race mixture.

The second proposition is of far greater interest to the general public, though for a mistaken reason, as we shall soon see. If the average Nilotic Negro is less enlightened or advanced than the average Englishman, it is felt he must have a poorer mental endowment. The naïveté of this inference is evident when we consider, first, that the variation within the Negro race itself on the score of cultural achievement is enormous, the finest woodwork and ironwork of some of the most representative Negro tribes being superior to what the very best handicraftsman in a typical English village of today could turn out, while, secondly, the enlightenment of the English, as everyone knows, is a tolerably recent acquisition as years go in cultural history — it is only a pitiful handful of centuries ago that it was a rare Englishman who could read the alphabet and less than that when witches were being done to death in England with all the solemnity of an African "Voodoo" ceremonial.

One of the most important steps in the history of mathematics is the invention of a sign for zero. This step was not taken by the Greeks and Romans, whose mathematical notation was clumsy. The Mexicans and Mayas, of pre-Columbian days, however, had developed a method of indicating the zero in their calendric counts. If intellectual advance were the same thing as innate mental endowment, we might conclude that the Mexican Indian was the mental superior of Pericles and his compatriots. [208] Common sense warns us that such an inference is not likely to be sound. But we are not so likely to see that the opposite inference, based on the superior enlightenment of the Greeks and Romans in certain other respects, may be equally unsound.

Isolated facts of this sort prove little, but the cumulative testimony of all the historical and ethnological evidence we have is overwhelmingly to the effect that individual intelligence has little to do with the cultural status of a people. It is as preposterous to argue from the general enlightenment and knowledge of the group to individual inherent capacity as to measure the height of trees from sea-level and to assume that a raspberry bush on a hill is higher, as a plant, than a willow at the water's edge. The cultural background of the individual is what his mind plays with or is nourished on, it is not a measure of his native mentality, which can only be estimated by independent opinion or research after elimination of the cultural factor.

Let it be said at once that we know extraordinarily little about the relative native capacities of the different races. If general impressions

are to count for anything, I believe that the average field-worker among primitive peoples would claim that he has observed among them just such variations in intelligence and in temperament as he is familiar with among his own people and that he has known individuals who would rank high in a superior cultural environment by virtue of their innate ability. I have known a Negro-Indian half-breed who was far more alert intellectually, though necessarily somewhat less well-informed on academic subjects, than the vast majority of college students I have met, nor do I consider it in the least paradoxical to assert that a number of fine old Indians whom I have known might easily, in the appropriate cultural milieu, have developed into college professors. That I have met among Indians with as keen minds as I have been privileged to know among the whites I cannot honestly say, but the racial significance of this is seen to be nil when it is remembered that the possible range of mental variation within a small tribe is very much less than among a great nationality. It takes thousands to allow a chance genius to appear at the extreme end of a distribution curve which plots the ability of the group. Such exceptional talents do not automatically render a workaday Englishman superior in innate mental endowment to an average Haida Indian or Negro of the Congo, though they probably accelerate in some degree the advance of the culture of the English people.

But personal impressions, it will be argued, are of no value. We need objective tests. The average laymen, who is likely to be as naive in this respect as the average experimental psychologist, imagines that it is easy to devise strictly objective tests, tests which do not in some insidious form or other allow the irrelevant cultural factor to slip in by the back [209] door. When we reflect that even the simplest types of response — relatively pure sensations or emotional reflexes — are heavily conditioned by the cultural background in the earliest years of childhood, we can have some idea of the constant errors which must vitiate much of the experimental work on the more exotic peoples — all of it, in fact, that does not limit itself to the most elementary types of psychic activity. It is obviously unfair to expect a Somali or a Bontoc Igorot to respond as naturally to the conditions of a psychological experiment as would a Kentucky farmer, for, while these conditions are unfamiliar to both the native and the farmer, they cannot be so in equal degree. Even so, experiments on sensation have shown surprisingly little racial variation, nothing that we have a right to interpret as significant. When it comes to the testing of intelligence, the dice are sure to be loaded against the members of all communities whose cultural habits are markedly dif-

ferent from those of the tester. He may believe that he has eliminated all disturbing factors from his tests, but he is deluding himself if only for the reason that intelligence in the abstract does not exist but needs some sort of a cultural heritage to make itself manifest. Add to this the very serious emotional perturbation of a subject confronted by an examiner and a set of conditions that he instinctively feels to be not altogether sympathetic to him. I do not consider it in the least far-fetched to maintain that the findings of every intelligence or aptitude test on such individuals as are notably different in race or cultural background or both from the tester are materially affected by a margin of error to the disadvantage of the subject. Comparisons of such findings with those obtained under better-balanced conditions could be made only after a proper allowance for the unavoidable error. While I do not think we are justified in saying outright that there are no fundamental racial differences in mental endowment, the burden of proof lies upon those who assert that they exist. So far no clear case seems to have been made for this contention.

After what we have said of the fallacy of arguing directly from culture to the basic psyche of the carriers of culture it will not be necessary to enter at length on a discussion of the third proposition. Culture is an extraordinarily complex set of habits which is maintained, subject to indefinite modification, by a tradition which is partly conscious but in great part also unconscious. It possesses the peculiar property of diffusing easily and rapidly and, so far as we can see, without any special regard to race. Given the favorable environmental conditions and the proper historical bonds, it passes lightly from one area to another, from one race to an utterly alien one. Christianity was not the product of the "Nordic genius" nor did the art of using Japanese cannon descend from [210] the Shoguns. In a certain elementary, but irrelevant, sense it is of course true that no culture is possible without an underlying mentality. What is meant here is simply that the culture of a people is not being constantly created anew by virginal acts of intelligence but that it can be adequately maintained and added to by any normally varied group of human beings, provided they are numerous enough to keep up the mechanics of the culture — a minimum population is required for any given form of culture. Once we have learned to generate electricity and to use it, we must, by cultural inertia, hold on to our knowledge, but we do not all need to be Faradays to keep this particular tradition going. We continue to be a normally varied group, not essentially different in fundamental psychic respects, I take it, from the good old

Europeans who drew the reindeer and the mammoth on the cave-walls of prehistoric France, but with a vastly more complicated leverage for the business of life. It is utterly futile to contrast the "achievements" of the "Nordics" with the "backwardness" of the Chinese or Negroes. The precise historical antecedents and the environmental limitations of the cultures of these peoples differ enormously. The contemporary culture of the "Nordics" is no more truly their creation or expressive of their fundamental, unconditioned mentality than it is the creation and spiritual expression of the Sumerians of Mesopotamia, or of the Neolithic inhabitants of the Mediterranean region, or of the pre-Hellenic peoples of the Aegean, or of the Greeks, or of the Jews of Palestine, or of the Romans. As compared with the cumulative groundwork laid down by these peoples the recent development of certain mechanical devices which happened to take place under partly "Nordic" auspices is surely a minor event. Nor is it necessary to fear that this increment to the cultural goods of mankind will disappear with any loss in numbers of prestige that an unreasonable Providence may have in store for "Nordics" or European "Alpines." In the fulness of time other peoples (Chinese, Japanese, Hindus, Negroes — why not?) may have assimilated all of it that is worth assimilating and culture will be safe. The individual slant and color of culture no doubt change from place to place and from period to period but the splendid cumulative core is not easily damaged. We have not the slightest reason to believe that the great historical process which began with the men who used the crude, unpolished flints of the earliest Paleolithic times will be interrupted for many weary millennia to come, be the racial history of man what it may.

The fourth proposition is difficult to dispose of in a few words. Culture embraces many strands and it is not necessarily correct to use the same concepts of value, improvement, or superiority for all alike. While we have every reason to be proud, for instance, of our rapid [211] mechanical progress and of our ever increasing insight into the scientific explanation of phenomena, it does not follow that every associated feature of our social organization or world of imponderables is of like value or significance for future generations. Why be so sure that our legal procedure and parliamentary machinery proclaim the last word in an enlightened public policy? Is it so certain that our highly organized methods of education result in greater good to the individual and to the community than the less academic methods of bringing up children of more primitive peoples? Is it inconceivable that one may have something to learn from Chinese village life, which successfully disconnects

economic from political activity? We see the grosser aspects of popular Hindu religion, but how do we know that there is not in the religious attitude of the Hindu mystic and even of the superstitious sectary a certain intensity and spiritual insight which have nothing to learn from the more arid and intellectualized dogmas of Christianity and Judaism? We do not need to answer such questions with a straight acceptance or rejection. It is enough to ask them.

It is not unlikely that there are germinal phenomena of a cultural character among politically "backward" peoples of today that are destined, when fused with what is most tenacious of life in our own culture, to come to vigorous and beautiful flower. We have no warrant for the belief that the particular forms of thought and action in terms of which we have come to express ourselves are of an absolute or abiding value. If we take this long view of things, much of the feverish concern with which we contemplate the changing aspect of many features of our culture must seem a little paltry, a little weak-kneed. It is a characteristic illusion that distant peoples and future times cannot be trusted to make over their cultural loans or heritage in what manner they feel most adapted to their needs. The form of Greek life is irrevocably gone, yet we have managed to retain and make over a thousand elements of Greek culture.

It comes to this, that a vast deal of what we call "superior" in our way of life is merely distinctive or different and is, for that very reason, so dear to us that it hurts us to think it may ever pass away or become seriously modified. There is much in the history of culture to remind us of the passing of the generations. We see our children growing up with mingled pride and misgiving. We cannot fail to observe that there is much that we held dear that seems less sacred to them, much that they set store by which is puzzling or even offensive to ourselves. It cannot be helped. We must have faith in the history of culture and leave its precise conformation to the inevitable drifts that are flowing silently and mysteriously under our feet.

A final word as to racial amalgamation. This is not a practical problem as yet and will not be for a long time to come —at least not on [212] a large scale. Yet all the while, furtively it may be, it is taking place. Nothing can stay its eventual consummation. Nor need we fear it. It has often been noted that inbreeding stocks tend to lose their vitality. Just why this is so we do not seem to know, but if it is true, it is obvious that ever renewed amalgamations of surviving stocks will be desirable, as they have been in the past. The fear is often expressed that

if the "superior" stocks do not keep themselves pure to the end of time, it is all up with civilization, for their peculiar virtue will be lost in the melange. If our view of the relation between the stream of culture and the psychic peculiarities of the individuals who carry it is sound, there should be nothing to fear from amalgamation — provided, it is hardly necessary to add, that the specific external conditions attending amalgamation are not in themselves detrimental to the preservation of culture. Moreover, if there are significant differences in, say, the ranges of emotional variation of the two intermingling races, the total resulting range of variation should be greater than in either of the races. The chances of temperaments of unusual power or charm arising are then proportionately greater, for there is reason to believe that marked ability of any sort is conditional on great potential variation. It may then be that, from the strictly biological standpoint, culture will need or continue to need racial amalgamation to keep up its momentum. However, these are little more than speculations in the present stage of our knowledge.

Editorial Note

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Are the Nordics a Superior Race?

There seems to be a popular presumption: (1) that there is a certain very definite 'Nordic' race; (2) that to this race belong the English and the great body of Americans who settled the thirteen colonies; (3) that it is a very fine race, in fact the best there is; (4) that the achievements of the English-speaking world are due to the peculiar excellence of 'Nordic' blood; (5) that these achievements are pre-eminent, if not unique, in the history of the world; and (6) that the 'Nordic' race loses its desirable qualities when crossed with alien blood. In the brief space at our disposal we cannot do more than glance at each of these assertions in turn.

(1) It is unfortunate that, at the very time when serious students are more uncertain than ever before as to just what constitutes a 'race', there should be so much bandying about of races in the popular press. There seem to be no generally accepted principles of racial classification. It is not known if the shape of the head is more stable or less stable, more important or less important, than hair color or stature. Hence the various schemes of classification proposed by anthropologists differ widely. Some see in the Nordic type, with its long head, tall stature, blond hair, and blue eyes, a fundamentally distinct type of man; others, a comparatively unimportant variation of a more widely represented type; and recently a well-known American anthropologist, himself a Nordic, has put forward the theory that the type is a blend of three distinct races. But it would be a grievous error to assume that the populations generally called Nordic are pure representatives of this type, however it be interpreted. A large and important section even of the Scandinavians, who show the Nordic characteristics in their most pronounced form, are distinctly not of Nordic type.

(2) The racial constitution of the English people is exceedingly complex, as we know from both prehistory and historic evidence. Many diverse strains, some of them distinct enough to be assignable to different races, have become inextricably blended in the British Isles. The Nordic type is, undoubtedly, one of these strains, but there are several million sound Englishmen who do not exemplify it at all. In America the conditions are even more complex. The Nordic type was pretty well submerged as a pure type from the start, and has become increasingly

more so. It would be misleading, and even absurd, to identify the 'old' American or 'true' American stock with one of the strains that have gone to its making.

(3) No tangible evidence seems to be forthcoming that the Nordic race is a superior race. That those individuals who believe themselves to belong to it also believe themselves to be superior to other groups of people is natural, and is only what may be expected from human nature. The 'scientific' evidence for this superiority of the Nordics is by no means satisfactory, and rests largely on assertion and unwarranted inferences. The intelligence tests, for instance, which have been said to demonstrate it, are vitiated by the failure of the psychologists to allow adequately for the facts of early environment, education, social status and esteem, and, above all, for the unconscious bias of the individuals who select the questions that are supposed to be useful for the testing of intelligence.

(4) But it is wholly fallacious to assume that the actual achievements of a people, as a collective body, are to be explained by its average native intelligence. We know from the overwhelming evidence of history that cultural achievements are mainly due to historical factors, including favoring environmental circumstances, economic pressure, and the whole, endlessly complicated, tradition which leads up to and serves as a springboard for these achievements. An American farmer selected at random, for instance, does not do better farming than an average Indian because he is endowed by nature with a keener intelligence, but chiefly because he has been brought up in an atmosphere in which the development of such aptitudes as lead to successful farming is comparatively easy, whereas the Indian has had to struggle against a traditional mode of thought and action which render the adoption of a farming career far less easy and far less satisfying to his personality. In other words, the dice of success are somewhat loaded in favor of the American farmer. Generalizing from thousands of such simple examples, we may say that collective achievement is by no means the direct result of the intelligence of the individuals in the group. If we wish to know how the English have come to produce their wonderful literature, we would do better to study the history of the city of Rome and the manners of mediaeval French knights than to collect answers to intelligence tests or to indulge in fancies about the innate mental qualities that go with Anglo-Saxon blood or Nordic hair color.

(5) The currents of history have brought it about that the English-speaking peoples have had an important share in the economic and

cultural development of the civilized world within the last [266] three centuries. The successful colonization of large and remote sections of the globe, the part that the English and their colonists have had in the industrial applications of science, and the impetus they have given to the spread of popular representative forms of government are achievements which must not be minimized. But too often they are spoken of as though they accounted for the whole march of civilization, instead of being but contemporary episodes in it. As compared with the domestication of cattle, the cultivation of grains, the invention of the alphabet, and the development of such monotheistic and ethical religions as Buddhism and Christianity – all of which are cultural advances that were made by peoples now considered ‘backward’ – parliamentary government and electric traction are of somewhat limited importance. Even if cultural achievement were measured by the intelligence of the race – which cannot be admitted – there seems, therefore, no valid reason to argue for the exceptional intelligence of either the English-speaking peoples or of the Nordic race, partly represented by them.

(6) If there is no special connection between racial peculiarities and the development of civilization, the ‘danger’ of crossing the Nordic stock with other strains ceases to be a danger. Moreover, it cannot be shown that the offspring of mixed marriages are inferior to the parents in either physical or mental respects. It sometimes happens that such offspring are looked down upon by the ‘purer’ populations, and are, therefore, handicapped at the start in their moral and intellectual growth, but such cases of deterioration are obviously due to social causes, and not to the weakening of the native endowment.

It is too much to expect the average man to be entirely free from racial prejudices. Tolerance of any kind comes hard. But, at least, let not ‘scientists’ bolster up the prejudices of the laity with unproven and dangerous dogmas. It should never be forgotten that ‘science’, like unsound statistics, can be made to pander to every kind of ill-will that humanity is heir to.

Editorial Note

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Let Race Alone

We live in an age not so much of science as of scientific application. We are not so much possessed of a philosophic criticism that may be supposed to be born of scientific research as we are urged on by a restless faith in the pronouncements of science. We have made it a religion. It tyrannizes over every moment of our conscious lives and gives us but the most narrow and uncomfortable of margins for the exercise of deeper-lying, intuitive capacities. No sooner do our scientific stokers and manipulators demonstrate the possibility of a certain kind and speed of locomotion than it becomes our religious duty to sanctify the possibility into a solemn, interminable line of automobiles. No sacred procession leading its victim to the stake was ever moved by compulsions more austere than those which dictate to us our pleasures and our griefs.

But the "scientific" spirit leads to more serious ailments than such sacrificial tropisms as these. Man is not so constituted as to be either willing or able to submit his dearest problems to the uninspired decisions of science. One wearies of standing in line in its age-long waiting list. And too often, when patience has been rewarded by a hurried consultation at the oracular wicket, the answer is dim, cryptic, even meaningless. It is doubtful if Delphic maid was ever more discreet than science. What happens when we cannot or will not submit our case to this deity of ours and are yet persuaded that it is the voice of science that we should carry away with us is precisely what happens today, a thousand times over. We answer *for* science, we take the echo of our prejudice for its own unprompted opinion, drop out of the waiting list, and come away exultant with our happy confirmations. No age has been free from prejudice, no society, primitive or sophisticated, can do without it, but it is perhaps more particularly our civilized society of today that systematically directs its thinking to the scientific justification of its prejudices. We have neither the firm but pallid courage of science, with its slender retinue of opinions, nor the robuster courage of prejudice, but a mixed behavior which affects the serenity of the one and indulges in the antics of the other.

The current wave of race prejudice, which is nowhere more virulent, more systematic, and more dangerous than in certain scientific circles, both real and supposed, is as good an example as we could wish of

heated desire subdued to the becoming coolness of a technical vocabulary. Race prejudice is no new thing, but it has been reserved for nineteenth- and twentieth-century thinkers, if the word may be applied to the Gobineaus, Houston Chamberlains, and their contemporary like, to smuggle this variety of prejudice into the cathedral service of science and to serve it up with a vigorous Nordic hymnology.

There used to be a time when a Nordic was a rather undistinguished type of barbarian. His strenuous virtues were of some literary value to a Tacitus in need of a cudgel with which to punctuate his moral ideals, but there is no especial reason why we should feel more anxiously impressed by those far-away metaphors and nostalgias than by Chateaubriand's exercises in praise of the noble Red Man. Today the Nordic stands in no need of Tacitus's condescending voucher. To explain fully why so many of us do honestly think that a dolichocephalic Protestant of the Ozark Mountains has greater cultural and biological stuff in him than a dolichocephalic Catholic from the barbarous shores of Sicily, pestered as they are by the ruins of his ancestors' civilization, would be a task for a cultural historian, a psychologist (with a psychiatric squint), a sociologist, a philosophic biologist, and a humorist rolled into one. The tale is much too long and complex for the summarizing. May we modestly suggest instead that the *fact* of Nordic superiority ("Anglo-Saxon" version) is one of the afterthoughts bred in reflective minds by a chain of events that was set going by the defeat of the Spanish Armada and culminated in the growth of English-speaking America and the development of sea-power and industrialism in England? (Not that the English and their colonial derivatives can be fairly said to represent the Nordic race with measurable purity. This does not greatly matter, for it is essential to the peace of the latter-day scientific conscience to square, with what approximate accuracy it may, a unit born of collective pride, say "Anglo-Saxondom," with a scientific unit suggested by the measuring rod, say the "Nordic race.") The scientific *proof* of the "fact" of Nordic superiority would seem to lie in the inferential application to selected chapters of history of certain technical ideas on the nature of biological heredity. These were given form by researches on the cross-breeding of different varieties of peas undertaken by Abbé Mendel, an Austrian Catholic, it is true, and presumably a member of the somewhat inferior "Alpine" race — but one can always learn from one's inferiors.

Let us, for a perilous moment, overlook the fact of Nordic racial superiority and content ourselves with the mere concept, or whim, of

racial superiority in the abstract. What does this concept rest on? On the obvious fact that there are physically contrasting groups of people (the races and sub-races of man), on the presumption that their physical differences are more or less closely associated with significant mental differences, on the observation that certain groups of people (classes, nationalities, or even whole races) have a more highly evolved culture than others, and on the inference that these differences of culture are but expressions of the presumed innate differences in mentality which go with the physical differences. Thus, we observe that a Chinaman is appreciably different in his physical constitution from an Englishman. It is therefore hard to believe that he has essentially the same innate mental endowment as the latter. Moreover, we see, as a matter of fact, that he behaves quite differently from a sensible Englishman. He is not nearly so clever in handling machinery, he has absurd beliefs about his ancestors and rather unappetizing food habits, he has not the right ideas about God, and his music can be called such only by courtesy. Who can doubt that his conduct, both as an individual [212] and as one of a group, stamps him the inferior of the Englishman? And is there any particular reason to doubt that the chromosomes, endocrine glands, and other biological things to swear by that are responsible for his yellowish skin and oblique eyes are also to blame for his un-English and un-American behavior? Books on race do not often present this line of argument quite so baldly or childishly, but I cannot see that I have essentially misrepresented the typical argument for racial inferiorities.

Let us see what happens when substantially the same notions are applied to individuals within a supposedly homogeneous group, say to A and B, both residents of one of our more expensive suburbs, both, in fact, of pure Mayflower stock. A is rather short of stature, has a shortish head (mesocephalic, we will say, with a dangerous leaning toward brachycephaly), and has brown eyes which are habitually animated by a shrewd twinkle; as for his cultural attainments there is little to say except that his chief recreation is poker and the telling of obscene jokes, that he believes the Kaiser caused the great war, and that he is useful to society because he sells hats. B is very different in both anatomical and cultural respects. He is a fine example of a six-footer, has a head that any physical anthropologist would spot at once as dolichocephalic (index 50), and his eyes are as blue as the sky. He seldom smiles — whether because his ideas are too weighty or because, as his friends suggest, he cannot bring them into action quickly enough to see the

point of a joke. He is very cultured, reads only literature above the level of the *Saturday Evening Post*, and, if the truth must be told, teaches one of the "ologies" at a major university. A and B rarely speak to each other, though the bosom of each swells to the same pride of nationality.

Now for method. It is easy to see that these individuals belong to utterly distinct types of humanity. Dare we call them "races"? Why not? A belongs to a short, brachycephalic, brown-eyed "race," the technical name of which is left to the reader's imagination. This "race" is rather poorly endowed, not merely because we can hardly believe that any brachycephal is capable of prolonged mental concentration but because the proof of the pudding is in the eating. Any man that wastes his time on poker, has patently childish notions about the mainsprings of contemporary political action, and gets no higher in the world than selling hats (we forgot to mention that A sells hats on a moderate scale) is distinctly inferior to a professor who plays chess, who knows that the Kaiser was not the only one responsible for the war, and who confines his reading to the very best that this weary world has produced. A's "race" is inferior to B's. If observation is worth anything it tends to prove that short, brown-eyed brachycephals (even mesocephals) cannot expect to rise above the poker-playing, hat-selling stage, while the dizzy heights are reserved for tall, blue-eyed dolichocephals. If eugenists had their way we fear that they would not hear of A's children marrying B's.

And now A's friends and the higher critics of the philosophy of race rush to the rescue and let loose a furious volley of destructive remarks. It is not possible to set down all of these remarks, but here are some of them. A is as good a man as B; in fact, his is the keener intellect by nature. There are plenty of brachycephalic professors and any number of dolichocephals who sell hats. The attempt to associate A's and B's physical appearances with their respective innate mental endowments and these in turn with their cultural tastes and habits is all rubbish. The human gamut of moron to genius can be recruited equally well from the totality of sellers of hats and from the totality of professors, nor does this gamut fail to appear when the principle of selection is dolichocephals or brachycephals or tall or short people or blue-eyed or brown-eyed people or any combination of these physical traits. Furthermore, we are told that A sells hats and plays poker not because he was born wrong but merely because his breeding was not as well-baked an undertaking as B's. It is the old story of cultural setting as the all-important factor in the external development of the individual; and the equally old

story, less often remembered, of the irrelevance of the external cultural behavior of an individual for close inferences as to his inherited mental endowment. On due reflection we find ourselves moved by the arguments of the higher critics. We are so much drawn to them, in fact, that we forthwith declare the following principles to be sound and, so to speak, self-evident. First, that it is vain to look for correlations between the major physical characteristics of man (such, in fact, as are being habitually used to define "race") and mental endowment; second, that any selection of individuals on normal physical grounds will include samplings of all grades of innate ability; third, that what is ordinarily called "culture" is the result of historical and environmental factors that are in essence independent of race, in its proper biological sense, and that it does not proceed, in any intelligible fashion, from inherited mental qualities as such.

At this point some of the higher critics take alarm and raise protests. It is all very well, they maintain, to pooh-pooh the physical and cultural differences between A and B, but you can't be so generous when you are talking about a Negro or a Chinaman. There the physical differences *do* count and the cultural ones too. But why? What difference does it make to Nature and the machinery of chromosomes if we pull A under cover of the "Nordic race," say, and announce that he is merely at the tail-end of a distribution curve and not really a racial alien to B at all, but deny that statistical privilege to an "Alpine" from southern Germany or a Jew or Hindu or Chinaman or Negro? There are greater and less differences in physical and cultural respects between individuals and groups of individuals, but if the kind of leap that is typified by the passage from A to B is declared non-significant for inferences as to natural endowment, then I cannot see that the greater leap from the group that includes both A and B to the mass of individuals known as Jews or Chinamen does justify such inferences. To find that Nature makes racial correlations (as to physical appearance, mental endowment, and culture) but that it refuses to make closely parallel sub-racial correlations after a certain point can hardly be explained otherwise than on the principle of the "projection" in nature of what has formulated itself in the observing mind and desiring heart.

At best we know tantalizingly little about human heredity. The selection of particular traits, both physical and, especially, mental, as "desirable" is hopelessly subjective. The attempt to make of such "desirable" traits a matrix for the development of a culture prejudged as "desirable" is unphilosophic and uninformed by the facts of history. In dealing with

nature we are always arguing without our host; in dealing with culture, scarcely less so. [213] If human culture has shifted its geographical center so frequently without serious loss to mankind as a whole and if the physical history of man is crowded with, indeed consists of, wholesale amalgamations of varying types, we would seem to be needlessly alarmed about the racial and cultural future. It cannot have been such a bad regime that for a few hundreds of thousands of years has managed to bring intact to us of today both man the animal and his steadily evolving culture. Why should we try utterly new methods because a number of well-meaning and patriotic scientists are in the habit of philosophically misinterpreting the larger bearing of some Mendelian experiments?

A little learning is a dangerous thing. The reasonable man will feel about all the race talk that it is an exceedingly muddled affair. He will adopt for his practical policy the maxim, "Let race alone." That is, he will try to act as though, for cultural purposes, race did not exist. He will do his level best to act courteously to individuals of all races and he will pay them all the compliment of assuming that they are essentially similar in potentiality to himself and his like. A healthy instinct will tell him that whatever be the alleged facts about race, it is ethically debilitating to raise it as an issue, because in so doing he shifts the emphasis from the individual to collective chimeras of one kind or another. If he is in some measure mistaken about the matter, he will be robust enough to prefer to go wrong with the classical and outmoded thinkers of the Age of Enlightenment than further wrong with the truculent and romantic race-mongers of today. And if the worst comes to the worst, he can always fall back on those childhood prejudices which, he may be sure, he has never wholly eradicated and which, if he is an unmarried Nordic, will probably prevent him from dragging the first Negro woman he meets to the hymeneal altar. Even the reasonable man is irrational enough to hang on to what stores of prejudice he possesses under cover of philosophic innocence. Only, being reasonable, he much prefers his prejudice "straight." He does not like the adulterated scientific variety.

Editorial Note

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This article was one of a series on the "Nordic myth" which appeared in volume 120 of *The Nation* in 1925. The others include: Franz Boas, "What is a Race?," 89-91; Melville Herskovits, "Brains and the Immigrant," 139-142; Konrad Bercovici, "You Nordies!," 288-290; Hendrik Willem Van Loon, "Our Nordic Myth-Makers," 349-350; Albert Goldenweiser, "Can There Be a Human Race?," 462-463; Harry Elmer Barnes, "The Race Myth Crumbles," 515-517; Manuel Ugarte, "A Latin Looks North," 568-570; and Herbert Adolphus Miller, "Race Pride and Race Prejudice," 622-623.

Notes

1. The German version has to read a little differently.
2. Still less the Germans.

Undesirables — Klanned or Banned?

It is a good thing for a man to get shaken up a bit in the course of his travels. It does him good to be thrown together with strange and uncomfortable bedfellows, provided they are but human. "I think nothing human to be foreign to me," was said wisely in ancient days. And he must be a poor sort who can chaff a Negro, exchange notes on the weather with a Chinaman, and get poked in the ribs by an Irishman without coming away from these random contacts a slightly saner, more tolerant, and more human man. For what divides man from man and race from race is not color of hair, nor shape of nose, nor even the opinions of one's ancestors, sacred as these are, but that stubborn pride of the soul that is somehow not proud enough to throw open its gates to all chance comers of the highways but must needs seize upon any stick of an excuse to bar the way to as many intruders as it dare hold off. Thus is a fundamental fear turned into a spurious pride.

It is not easy for the soul to come out of its hiding place and battle, unprotected and gleefully in the open, with other souls. It is so much easier to devise formulas of the body, so that the soul may slumber on undisturbed, dreaming of triumphs which it has never been called upon to win. If it can somehow be assumed that all hook-nosed individuals who bear the name of Cohen have been assigned by nature to an "inferior" category, then, clearly, all stub-nosed individuals who bear the name of Sweeney have a good chance to secure a valuable victory with a minimum of soul effort. Everybody knows how convenient it is to have certain people know their place. It is only a shade less convenient to know their place for them should they be so uninstructed as to have any doubts about the matter.

Those who are more interested in the spirit of man than in the dimensions of his shell have every reason to be grateful to the noble order of the Ku Klux Klan. These gentlemen have been urged on by some secret and glorious light of the imagination. With a Quixotic earnestness worthy of our applause they have set themselves the task of welding together into newer and nobler unities heterogeneous masses of men hitherto eyeing each other a little askance. Driven into each other's arms by the magnetism of a slogan, the Jew, the Negro, and the Catholic are

now citizens of the same Republic of the Undesirable. This is a negative kind of republic, one might object, unattended by the blare of periodic elections and united by no attempted adherence to a constitution.

But it is possible that the thinkers of the Ku Klux Klan have subtler heads than the unsympathetic portion of our press give them credit for. It is possible that they understand that communities of mind are not necessarily vouched for by conscious accords or other explicit machinery. They may grow up in a thousand indirect ways, through common interests only dimly felt or through a common grievance but vaguely realized or through a mere negation flaunted in the face.

What have the Jew, the Negro, and the Catholic in common that the statesmen of the Ku Klux Klan are so insistent on creating a touching and almost Utopian community of feeling? The Negro is a dark-skinned individual who, through no fault of his own, has had a remarkably tough time of it. Deprived of his due share of the opportunities for training and advancement extended by a civilized regime, he has turned out rather fewer doctors, lawyers, and journalists than would be sufficient to impress a statistician of the Ku Klux Klan as presumptive evidence for his inherent fitness to have much to say in the direction of this civilized regime. Some maintain that this proves that he has turned out too many doctors, lawyers, and journalists as it is.

The Jew rarely resembles the Negro in physical appearance. Ranging in color from light to swarthy and exemplifying a considerable variety of cephalic indices, nasal forms, and statures — it is necessary to mention these details, for this is the day of the "science" of race — the Jew is a little more difficult to spot than the Negro. A careful attention to details, however, such as his habit of talking above a whisper at summer resorts, will generally enable those who desire to detect him to do so, though we must hasten to add that a deplorable percentage of Jews tend to be taken for what they are not. Mr. Belloe has some moving pages on this subject.

Having had a reasonable share in the opportunities already referred to, the Jew has not been behindhand with his quota of doctors, lawyers, and journalists. Indeed, if we understand the statistical philosophers of the Ku Klux Klan rightly, he has had far too many of them. But, in truth, the occupations of the Jew are quite varied. Some are known to pick rags, while a very small percentage of this people has been reported as picking flaws in the orthodox theory of gravitation.

The third section of our brotherhood of undesirables does not seem to be clearly marked off by any insignia or stigmata of a physical char-

acter. Even the anthropologists of the Ku Klux Klan would be disposed to admit that the average cephalic index of the Catholics of America is a figure of dubious significance. They would probably prefer to take their stand on a higher moral ground. Nor would they allow themselves to be either intrigued or repelled by the poetic oddities of the Irish Renaissance, being for the most part blissfully ignorant of mere beauty. They would go straight to the mark and, with ominous voice and sly wink, appall themselves with the contemplation of the dire consequences to our land of an access of Catholic power or, to speak more accurately, of an access of power in such individuals as are enrolled in the Catholic columns of our statistical books of reference.

Should the American people be so misguided as to allow one of these Catholics to slip into the White House, be he ever so merely statistical a Catholic, there is little doubt, dream the prophetic patriots of the Ku Klux Klan, that this fair land of ours would at once become an annex to the colossal domains which are so stealthily ruled by that dreadful Italian gentleman known as the Pope. Merely to contemplate this possibility is to fall into abyss upon abyss of horror.

The Negro, the Jew, and the Catholic are a symbol — of what? Of dark and misguided humanity? But this vast mass of human beings, differing so radically among themselves in color, in faith, and in their historical backgrounds, embracing all conditions and varieties of men and women, from the moron to the philosopher, is humanity itself. Can it be that the self-denying philanthropists of the Ku Klux Klan have desired, by some desperate implication, to leave themselves out in the cold, in some outer realm that but grazes the confines of humanity?

But it is high time that we ceased to trifle and that we recognized the fact that the historians, the moralists, the anthropologists, and the mythologists of the Ku Klux Klan agree in upholding an ideal. It is those who correspond to this ideal, and they only, who are truly predestined by nature to occupy and to rule the United States, a land originally settled by English-speaking Puritans, Quakers, Cavaliers, and Catholics, by Dutch and Swedish Protestants, and by French and Spanish Catholics. (The Negro share of the settlement was largely involuntary; most of the Jews came when the settling was well over.)

Forgetting the important share that the Catholics and various continental European peoples have had in the opening up of our country, taking the preliminary sentences of the Declaration of Independence and of the American Constitution with a heavy dose of salt, and aided by the light of inward contemplation, many thinkers have constructed

as their ideal of American citizenship an individual of "Anglo-Saxon" descent, of "Nordic" race (preferably with blue eyes, fair skin, and a long or dolichocephalic skull), of Protestant faith, of tremendous resourcefulness in coping with natural difficulties, and of great moral integrity. These traits are said to cohere with remarkable uniformity.

Negroes, too, are dolichocephalic, but their dolichocephaly does not count for much. "Nordic" dolichocephaly does, because it contrasts with the "brachycephaly" or short-headedness of central European peoples. The artistic genius displayed by Greeks, Italians, and Chinese is, or was, all very well in its way, as was the bravery and idealism of the Greeks, the genius for political organization of the Romans, and the psalm-singing of King David, whose Hebrew contemporaries are now safely dead.

But all such accomplishments of mind and body tediously set forth in the histories (was it Mr. Ford who said that history was "all bunk?"), somehow pale into insignificance when put beside the deeds and the potentialities of, let us say, the "Anglo-Saxon" dolichocephalic Protestants of the Ozark Mountains, Missouri. Jews, Mohammedans, Buddhists, and even Catholics have been known to give up their all for the mere sake of a moral conviction. In vain. The only conviction that really deserves God's hundred-per-cent rating is such as is held by Protestant dolichocephalics of English speech.

It does not really matter that no intelligent person can define the term "Anglo-Saxon," which has no heavier content to an anthropologist or historian who is not also a Klansman than the term "antediluvian" has to a geologist who goes to church infrequently. It does not matter in the least that the "Nordic race" is little more than an anthropometric formula and that its claims to have invented the steam-engine, the typewriter, and representative government are as intelligible as an endocrine gland's boast to have founded the world religion known as Christianity. Nor does it seriously matter that Klansmen and those vociferous gentlemen who do the thinking for them have no greater knowledge of the incredible debt that American culture owes, at last analysis, to the Mediterranean, central European and west Asiatic peoples than, as the Russian Jews have it, a cat may carry away on the tip of its tail.

The idealists of the Ku Klux Klan are too admirably stubborn to be dissuaded by the facts of observation and of history. They burn for an ideal and they have found it by looking into a mirror. Some mirrors have a distorting curvature, it is true, but when you go hunting for an ideal you have to take a chance.

How long can the human variety, real or supposed, which has been honorably segregated by the military experts of the Ku Klux Klan afford to look down from their mountain fastnesses on the lesser varieties of humanity which people the plains? Is it not conceivable that these Supermen will become "fed up" with their splendid isolation and will yawn in the very faces of their leaders? When that day comes, a new generation will have been born, the humorists of Ku Klux Klan, who will declare the philosophy of their forebears to have been a hoax born of a teasing desire to swashbuckle with mask, shirt, tar, and feather. They may well add as a postscript that this philosophy was made in Germany anyway, in the days when toys used to be imported from Nürnberg.

Editorial Note

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The Race Problem F. G. Crookshank,
*The Mongol in Our Midst: A Study of Man and His
Three Faces.* New York: E. P. Dutton, 1924.

Hermann W. Siemens, *Race Hygiene and Heredity.* Translated by Lewellys F. Barker. New York: D. Appleton, 1924.

Jean Finot, *Race Prejudice.* Translated by Florence Wade-Evans. New York: E. P. Dutton, 1907 (reprinted 1924).

J. H. Oldham, *Christianity and the Race Problem.* New York: George H. Doran, 1924.

A good meal generally begins with a nibble of celery and so we can hardly do better in plowing through some nineteen hundred pages of race matter, now minatory, now pacificatory, than to start with Mr. Crookshank's fantastic brochure on the Mongol in our midst. It is as light as the vegetable, but it is completely devoid of vitamins. The author's thesis need only be stated to be refuted with a laugh. Mr. Crookshank is a man of considerable literary taste who knows how to quote aptly from Sir Thomas Browne, and one would like to believe that his interest lies in the whimsicalities rather than in the truth of his race theories, very much as Charles Lamb is known to have relished the manner of his Hooker and Burton without being in the least disquieted by their ponderous matter. Our guess, however, would be that he is serious. Should it appear, in the wash, that Mr. Crookshank has been holding a huge chuckle in reserve, we should be the first to take off our hat to him as one of the most brilliant hoaxers in contemporary scientific literature.

The thesis may be summarized as follows. Man is derived from three distinct apes, the orang, the gorilla, and the chimpanzee. The descendants of the orang are the peoples of Mongolian race and the so-called "Mongolian" imbeciles among the whites, whose resemblance to the true Mongolians is generally regarded as superficial. The gorilla is the ancestor of the negroid peoples. From the chimpanzee stem the whites, particularly, it would seem, the Semites. The chief evidence for these genetic theories is furnished by instinctive posture and by characteristic

lines of the palm. The Mongolian or "orangoid" posture is the one illustrated by the sitting Buddha, who, one may irrelevantly remark, was a Hindu invention. Orang, "Mongolian imbecile," true Mongolian, and sitting Buddha form a series. Chimpanzee, cases of dementia praecox, and whites form another. It all works out rather neatly and we learn many curious bits of information by the way. The temptation to quote a number of charming passages is great, but we must limit ourselves to two. "It is ... singular," says Mr. Crookshank, "that the Mongolian imbeciles should not only love to sit like a Buddha but to sway the head, backwards and forwards, like a porcelain Mandarin, whilst I have seen a baby Mongolian idiot prostrate himself in his cot, for hours at a time, doing the kotow. Now, when an English idiot of Mongolian physique performs in his cot the symbolic act of humiliation practiced by the Chinese race, and does it *instinctively and persistently*, it is idle to declare that no real homology is involved!" Cultural anthropologists to the rescue! But they are probably too busy to take up light skirmishing. Further on we read: "Mongolian imbeciles speak late, and it is remarkable that they alter many consonantal sounds, saying 'lellow' for 'yellow' and so forth, like a stage Chinaman, whilst they never construct long sentences. They tend, in fact, to employ only monosyllabic and asyntactic forms of speech." Chinese monosyllabism, one infers, is an instinctive reaction of the Mongolian-orangoid-imbecile stock. The fact that English has more and more tended to a Chinese-like structure must, we fear, be construed to mean that Anglo-Saxon civilization is going to the oranges.

Why such books are published it would be hard to say, but it is undeniable that they are delightful interludes in the grim and weary drama that we are in for these days. Mr. Siemens's book, to which the translator has appended a very useful bibliography and a technical glossary, is of a very different sort. It consists of two parts, an admirable and not too technical introduction to the theory of Mendelian heredity and a far less closely reasoned section on the degeneration which he believes to be threatening the more valuable strains in German society – and in European society generally. His fears for the future of European culture are grounded in biology pure and simple, not in a philosophy of culture such as a liberal anthropologist or historian could honestly follow. The gist of his thesis – for the sober chapters on heredity merely pave the way for a thesis – is probably contained in the following passage: "Now the threat of extinction of all existing European culture lies precisely in the fact that the leading circles, which

include with respect to both bodily and mental make-up the greatest number of the best hereditary stocks, are succumbing in the struggle for existence with those that they lead, because their fertility is not great enough even to maintain their present numbers. Thus, gradually, all those hereditary stocks that are capable of preserving and advancing our civilization are being exterminated from the earth by a progressive *'proletarianization of our rising youth.'* The disappearance of so many noble and patrician families is only one symptom of that great 'dying out' which, more frightful than the most terrible war, demands its sacrifice from the peoples of European culture." And "the first task," he proceeds in italics, "of the racial hygiene of today seems to me, therefore, to lie in an attempt to arrest the dying out of the socially higher classes which seems now to be in full swing." The conservative wing of eugenist opinion could hardly be stated more bluntly. In other passages of his book the author takes it quite for granted that the mingling of German and alien, particularly East European, blood is tantamount to the introduction of biologically inferior strains into the German-speaking dominions.

Like so many biologists concerned with the problems of society, Mr. Siemens sees in cultural achievement a direct indication of the working out of the physical and psychic traits of the hereditary endowment. He suffers from the characteristic illusion of the biologist, who is persuaded into accepting his genetic technique as a sufficient interpretative guide to the cultural behavior of man. It requires but little consideration of the data of history and of the social sciences to realize that the levels of culture, both within the national group and as between nationalities, are the complex and cumulative product of historical factors which possess continuity not on the biological plane but on that of social inheritance. Now the process of social inheritance is simply the continuous imitation, both consciously and unconsciously, of socially, that is conventionally, significant reactions of an acquired, non-instinctive, and indefinitely plastic sort. The cultural process is carried by human organisms, to be sure, but it is no more truly explainable in terms of biology than the ever-changing aspect of the wind-blown sea is explainable as a specific resultant of the chemistry of sea water. Such terms as "our civilization," "noble and patrician families," and "backward peoples" are highly derivative concepts of a cultural, historical order. They have no relevance for the biologist whatever, and if the biologist, as biologist, does nevertheless insist on being interested in them he indulges in an application of his science which is not in essence different from the

astrological labors of the early astronomers. It is very remarkable that in the earlier part of his book Mr. Siemens is at the greatest pains to prove that the acquired or "parakinetic" features of the organism are of no influence on its properly hereditary or "idiokinetic" features but in the later chapters forgets or misapplies his own principles. The colossal assumption that the conventional values ("higher" and "lower") that we assign to different types of cultural behavior are at the same time intelligible as [41] corresponding biological differentia can only be "excused" if we remember the average biologist's contempt of history.

Race Prejudice is a reprint of a work that appeared in the first decade of the present century, but it may still be read with profit. Finot's manner is rather that of the eloquent and idealistic publicist than that of the scientist who has the air of examining his data without knowing until the last chapter what conclusions they lead to. This is not to say that there is not in his book a great deal of telling criticism of the claims made by Gobineau and his tribe for the cultural significance of race, of the supposed differences in the basic psychology of different peoples, of the "Aryan" and "Latin" legends, and of many other exercises in mythology. It is only fair to say, however, that Finot unduly minimizes the biological importance of race.

Mr. Oldham's book is in many ways the most interesting of the four. It is lucid, sympathetic, and admirably free from any taint of bitterness or polemic heat; it exhibits familiarity with the practical aspects of race contact and race conflict and a sufficiently firm control of the biological and anthropological background of race theory — indeed, the chapter on *The Significance of Race* is the best untechnical summary of the fundamental facts of human heredity that we have seen; and it combines a willingness to see the unpleasant or disturbing facts of the rough-and-tumble world with an obviously sincere and determined Christian idealism.

If anything, Mr. Oldham understands too clearly what are the obstacles that seem to make impossible a simple, sweeping application of the Christian ethic to contemporary and impending race problems. He has no spiritual insight to offer that can burn away prejudice, injustice, political tyranny, and commercial exploitation. The communion of saints in whom color of skin is invisible is hardly more than a verbal formula; it certainly is not a flaming vision. This Christianity of Mr. Oldham's — and we believe it is as sincere a variety as our parliamentary, Protestantized world has to offer — is an exceedingly modest, patient, and well-behaved faith. It is at least as familiar with the interroga-

tory give-and-take of the committee room as it is with the thunder of the pulpit, the madness of crusade, or the ecstasy of revelation. Perhaps it is ungenerous to expect fervor and the courage of paradox from the guardians of the sublimest and most paradoxical of religious messages—the gospel of Jesus Christ. This is a “reasonable” age, a trimmer’s age, in which courage has been surrendered to the limbs and to the angry heart while faith sits frozen and ashamed. The gospel of Christ is not concerned with the philosophy of the germ plasm, nor does it wait on the statistics of intelligence tests for its mandates to become operative. A conditional Christianity will not bring conviction to a world already riddled with inner conflict and skepticism.

“In a church which is conscious of its mission to the world,” says Mr. Oldham, “there can be no exclusion or separation on the ground of race. This does not mean that as a matter of convenience members of different races living side by side may not worship in separate congregations. If there are differences of disposition and aptitude between races the genius of each will doubtless find its best expression if the religious life of each is allowed to develop on its own lines. There is nothing in this contrary to the catholicity of the Church of Christ.” To quote only this passage, we hasten to add, is not entirely fair to the spirit in which Mr. Oldham’s book is written; but the passage is ominously indicative, none the less, of what has happened to the essential gospel of Jesus. A too insistently instrumental habit of thought has tortured this gospel into the semblance of a program buttressed by science and expediency. The gospel itself, smothered by these kindly ministrations, lies either dead or in a state of indefinitely prolonged coma. Only the humblest of incidental services may be expected from its tradition in the solution of race problems.

Editorial Note

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Review of Paul Radin,
Monotheism among Primitive Peoples

Paul Radin, *Monotheism among Primitive Peoples*. Seventh Arthur Davis Memorial Lecture, delivered before the Jewish Historical Society at University College on Sunday, April 27, 1924. London: George Allen and Unwin, 1925.

Even the most sophisticated Jew is proud of at least two things. While he may have no personal use for a Savior, it pleases him to think that his ancestors gave one to Christendom; and though comfort and enlightenment may long have disabused him of the necessity of a God, he takes satisfaction in the thought that his remoter ancestors invented the purest kind of a God that we have record of, the God of monotheism. Such a Jew has one of the keenest of known pleasures, which may be defined as the art of endowing others with a priceless boon that one finds it more convenient to dispense with for one's own part.

The slightly less sophisticated Jew has still other spiritual vanities. He is likely to believe that ritual circumcision arose among his people as a prevision of the hygienic surgery of today, that the dietetic laws known as Mosaic were formulated out of the spirit of sanitation. Such minor delusions as these have been sadly exploded by our busy muck-raking friends, the anthropologists. If primitive tribes in Australia and Africa and South America practice ritual circumcision, obviously without the slightest knowledge of or concern for physical hygiene, and if there is hardly a group of savages on earth that has not its rigidly enforced food taboos, often strangely analogous to the food taboos enumerated in the Pentateuch, it is difficult to maintain with any seriousness that these old Jewish practices owe anything to scientific insight. The disappointed Jew may be congratulated on being taken down a peg, which is generally considered a good thing for one's soul.

The little brochure before us might almost be described as blasphemous, were it not so modest, so gentle, so disarming in its simplicity of style and in its unobtrusive array of facts. If it does not take the sophisticated Jew down a peg, it should at least deflate him sufficiently to jog

him down half a peg. Dr. Paul Radin is one of our best known American anthropologists — his researches on the Winnebago Indians are already classic — and is so far from wishing to make express havoe with the Jewish claim to have alone developed the monotheistic conception of religion that he hardly so much as mentions the words "Jew" and "Judaism." The mischief he does is all by implication. For if he is correct — and why should he not be? — monotheism ceases to be a distinctively Jewish idea. Nay more, and worse, it ceases to have quite that unique value in the evolution of religious conceptions which has generally been assigned to it.

The first of these two theses is the one which more particularly interests the Jew. Unfortunately it is the easier to demonstrate, for a competent anthropologist like Dr. Radin has merely to go through his ethnological monographs, glean his facts, and set them before us with as little comment as possible to make it disconcertingly evident that monotheism is sufficiently widespread among the less advanced peoples of the world. So long as monotheism was lightly assumed to have been developed only in the highly complex and institutionalized forms in which we find it in Jewish, in Christian, and in Mohammedan belief, it was not difficult to show that the Jews had a very special claim on the historian's [525] attention, for the monotheism of both Christianity and Mohammedanism are clearly but derivatives of the monotheism of the latest phase of the Old Testament tradition. The existence of Supreme Beings or High Gods among various primitive peoples has been recognized for a long time but the significance of this fact has been too often denied by the unwarranted assumption that these deities are merely late borrowings, merely suggestions picked up from native contact with missionary teachings. This question-begging type of criticism is on a par with the glib and once popular method of "proving," that is, baldly asserting, that any primitive Flood legend that happened to be noted by an ethnological student was simply a distorted bit of biblical lore. We know better now. Flood legends, both of the Noah type and of other types, are well nigh universal. Their distribution is so definitely continuous and they are so heavily integrated with the culture of the natives that the theory of biblical origin is in most cases ruled out of court at once.

Dr. Radin briefly but skilfully analyzes the different types of Supreme Being that the primitive data acquaint us with. He distinguishes various degrees of explicitness in the recognition of the principle of monotheism, shows how a conditional monotheism may well go hand in hand

with a belief in the existence of less puissant but humanly more accessible divinities or spirits — very much as Mariolatry may coexist with an official monotheism — points out the “otiose” character of many primitive High Gods, who may be projected by thought but never actively approached by prayer, and discusses the relationship, which is sometimes an identity, between the concepts of Supreme Being and Transformer or Culture Hero, the legendary benefactor of mankind. The illustrative material is culled from a very wide range of reading and first-hand knowledge, though a natural emphasis is placed on the aboriginal peoples of North and South America.

In some cases the native formulation of monotheistic belief is singularly pure, as among the quite primitive Kagaba of South America, whose Supreme Being is an All-Mother. Dr. Radin quotes the following interesting passage from his source, Dr. K. T. Preuss: “The mother of our songs, the mother of all our seed, bore us in the beginning of things and so she is the mother of all types of men, the mother of all nations. She is the mother of the thunder, the mother of the streams, the mother of trees and of all things. She is the mother of the world and of the older brothers, the stone-people. She is the mother of the fruits of the earth and of all things. She is the mother of our younger brothers, the French and the strangers. She is the mother of our dance paraphernalia, of all our temples, and she is the only mother we possess. She alone is the mother of the fire and the Sun and the Milky Way. She is the mother of the rain and the only mother we possess. And she has left us a token in all the temples, a token in the form of songs and dances.” This is fully as elevated in spirit as some, at least, of the early biblical passages that might be quoted in reference to the Hebrew Yahweh. Very interesting, too, are the esoteric beliefs of the medicine-men among the Dakota (or Sioux) Indians. The commonalty believes in a large number of distinct deities but to the properly initiated medicine man all these gods are but so many aspects of a single Great Mystery, the Wakan Tanka.

Monotheism, then, is by no means absent or even rare among primitive folk. Everything goes to show that this religious conception was arrived at not once but many times in the history of man. The monotheism [526] of the Old Testament is not a unique contribution to the development of religious ideas, though it remains, of course, by far the most important historical embodiment of the High God or One God concept. The next point to take up, and the one that more particularly interests Dr. Radin, is whether or not it is necessary to consider monotheism as a more evolved stage in religious expression than the polytheism which

we are generally in the habit of looking upon as more primitive or as less pure. Quite aside from the question of the intrinsic value of a monotheistic view of the supernatural world and of man's guidance in that world, a number of unorthodox anthropologists have felt themselves driven by the facts to assume that monotheism is one of the very earliest types of religious thinking, that it tends to antedate, rather than to follow, a full-fledged polytheism. Andrew Lang held to this view as, more recently, did the famous Austrian anthropologist and linguist, Father Wilhelm Schmidt (see his *Ursprung der Gottesidee*). To such speculative students it is the plastic variety of the Greek and Roman pantheons and the pluralistic complexity of Hindu belief and ritual which are the "evolved" or more highly civilized forms of religious life, while the Hebraic monotheism and its modern Christian derivatives are specialized and intensified forms of a far more typically pristine religious impulse.

Dr. Radin thinks — and rightly, I cannot but think — to take direct issue with any ironclad theory of religious evolution. To him both monotheism and polytheism are primarily the reflections of fundamentally distinct temperaments, the one concerned with the subjective, simplifying world, the world of the introvert, the other with the objective apprehension of experience, the world of the extrovert, who is not satisfied unless he has grasped a given class of reality at as many points and under as many symbolisms as experience makes possible. The historical problem of monotheism then becomes not one of place in a schematic religious evolution but of the unraveling of the particular factors, environmental, it may be, or economic or social or all or none of these, that gave the victory to one rather than another temperamental expression of the religious impulse, with a resulting violence, one may suppose, to those temperaments that would more naturally have found themselves expressed in other forms. As Dr. Radin puts it, "The historical problem connected with monotheism, implicit and explicit, is, as I see it, not how monotheism arose but what made it the prevailing and exclusive official religion of a particular people."

The cultural philosophy which serves as Dr. Radin's background for the development of his ideas on the monotheistic "slant" in religion — primitive and sophisticated alike — is well put in his concluding sentences. "It must be explicitly recognized that in temperament and in capacity for logical and symbolical thought, there is no difference between civilized and primitive man." Monotheism "is dependent not upon the extent of knowledge nor upon the elaboration of a certain type of

knowledge, but solely upon the existence of a special kind of temperament. When once this has been grasped, much of the amazement and incredulity one inevitably experiences at the clear-cut monotheism of so many primitive peoples will vanish and we shall recognize it for what it is — the purposive functioning of an inherent type of thought and emotion." So frank an anti-evolutionary attitude towards the history of religion, towards cultural history in general, will not prove congenial to all of Dr. Radin's readers, but it is an attitude that has been making itself increasingly felt in anthropological thought. The day of plausible but too [527] easy theories of necessary sequences in cultural history is gone. More and more we are getting to see that all cultural phenomena need for their ultimate explanation a psychology of personality and an understanding of what expressions are most appropriate to a given type of personality. A cultural form, such as a type of religious thinking or a literary method or a political ideal, is at last analysis suitable only to a portion of the individuals who make use of it, though the rest may be hardly at all aware of their subtle opposition. A complete theory of cultural phenomena must, then, first aim to disentangle the psychological factors which make them intelligible as human expressions; and, secondly, it must show why and how a certain psychological slant rather than another becomes institutionalized as the normal conduct of the group — over the heads, as it were, of personalities which are fundamentally hostile to the triumphant slant.

Returning now to the sophisticated Jew with whom, rather flippantly, we began our comments on Dr. Radin's brief but very far-reaching study of monotheism, we can see more clearly that it means little or nothing to be proud, or to refrain from being proud, of the supposedly distinctive contribution that Judaism has made to religious thought and feeling. Psychologically, monotheism is not a Jewish trait, no more than it is any other kind of national trait. Historically, it so chanced that the particular form of monotheism that had been developed by the Jews proved stimulating in the further development of other forms of monotheism in alien lands. The cultural and spiritual significance of monotheism, as of every other pattern of conduct, is not implicit in itself but depends altogether upon what sustenance living human beings may derive from it, or, to speak more accurately, may put into it. Monotheism as such is neither good nor bad, neither high nor low, precisely as a sonnet as such is neither good nor bad or as parliamentary government as such is neither high nor low. And surely a dead monotheism is

not a greater spiritual force than a live polytheism or animism or other type of religious behavior that the simplifying theorists choose to call "low" or "primitive."

Editorial Note

Originally published in *The Menorah Journal* 11, 524–527 (1925), under the title "Is Monotheism Jewish?"

Paul Radin (1883–1959), an American anthropologist, pioneered (with Sapir) the field of studies in culture and personality, and the use of autobiography in anthropology.

Review of Ludwig Lewisohn, *Israel*

Ludwig Lewisohn, *Israel*. New York: Boni and Liveright, 1925.

Mr. Lewisohn's *Israel* is one of those books that it is almost impossible to judge without bias. There are very few readers, Jewish or Christian, who will be able to see the author clearly, as he presents himself in this volume; fewer still, one suspects, who will be in a position to consider his evidence and his thesis apart from their own favorite readings of the Jewish question — or, if one prefers, absence of a Jewish question. Those who find their prejudices or benevolences confirmed by Mr. Lewisohn will deem this an important and even a great book and will dismiss its shortcomings as of no account. Just as surely, the reader whose attitudes are questioned in Mr. Lewisohn's pages will not lightly absolve him from the charges of unfairness, or an emotionally impelled misreading of the facts, perhaps of insincerity. Conversations that I have had with a number of readers of *Israel* have disclosed a gamut of opinions ranging from enthusiastic acceptance, through stolid indifference, to condemnation and rage. Jewish and Christian opinion are at one in being divided. Obviously Mr. Lewisohn has precipitated a cause, however much he may have desired to give us a book. In this review I shall try, with however little warrant of success, to see the book as a purely individual production, not as a jumping-off place for the airing of a question.

The first thing that one notes about *Israel* when one has got well into the volume is a slight, but none the less persistent, hollowness of style. The book is far from being badly written — indeed, there are many glowing and beautiful pages in it — but it has nowhere the very personal excellence of *Up Stream*. That book flowed along with a resistless current of its own; its passion so convinced that our private misgivings washed back as so many irrelevant chips floating beyond the main channel. There the coolness of criticism could not easily penetrate; here it is quite otherwise. Under the passionate phrases of *Israel* a sensitive reader may sometimes discover a spirit not utterly convinced of itself, needing to egg itself on in its predetermined course. In *Up Stream* one rushed down current despite the title of the book, in *Israel* one paddles

up current much of the time. At its worst this book indulges in sheer propagandism, and an ungenerous critic might excerpt a great many passages which have the labored brilliance of proclamations. In short, one is made aware of some flaw in the impulse which directed the writing of *Israel*.

It may be that Mr. Lewisohn's inability to quite convince us through the medium of his style is merely the reader's unwillingness to trust his own eyes and ears. It is difficult to believe that one brought up in the essentially non-Jewish way that Mr. Lewisohn has so carefully explained he was brought up in can adequately assimilate [215] the spirit of Jewish life on the wave of a personal protest. For there can be no reasonable doubt, after *Up Stream*, that the fire of *Israel* owes much of its illumination and certainly all of its heat to the intenser flame of a thwarted personal ambition. I think Mr. Lewisohn would have been less open to the charge of an insidious and perhaps entirely unconscious insincerity if he had spoken with a more troubled conviction. The dubious, wistful note would have given his declarative enthusiasm the warrant that it somehow needs. Yet it would be manifestly unjust to prod too insistently under the surface texture of the book. It is enough to say that its manner is a little disquieting and that one wishes one were not constantly being induced to see the well-known mechanics of overcompensation bustling over its pages.

Mr. Lewisohn is very bitter about the assimilationists. Assimilation, he thinks, has been tried and found wanting, in America no less than in Germany. But he seems to overlook some very simple facts and to refrain from certain very simple reflections. In the first place, when in the history of mankind has ethnic assimilation been a comfortable and easy process? Had Mr. Lewisohn taken a bird's eye view of human relations, instead of seeing the Jewish problem as the utterly unique thing which it is not, he would have realized the inevitability of conflict, now overt and sanguinary, now peaceful but insidious, between any two cultures or religions or peoples that offer as many points of difference as do the Jews and the traditions and peoples they have come into such close contact with. But instead of envisaging this conflict as a perpetually insoluble one, as a sort of fatal conundrum of history, he would, furthermore, have made the less dramatic but far more sober observation that the psychological distance which separates the Jew from the non-Jew today is, by and large, perceptibly less great than it has ever been. Ku Klux Klans and pogroms and the stiffening of Jewish disabilities here and there do not prove that assimilation is impossible, but

they prove that it is a far less easily consummated process and a more tortuously winding one than some idealists would like to have it. They reiterate, in short, one of the annoying truisms of history. Mankind has never been unyielding, it has merely been stubbornly disposed not to yield.

Mr. Lewisohn is quite wrong, I believe, in ruling out assimilation as a solution of the Jewish problem. It is, patently, a very possible and a very excellent one in thousands of individual cases — in spite of the embarrassing fact that many highly educated Jews or very many wealthy Jews are debarred from membership in clubs that are deemed desirable of entry. But he is perfectly correct in finding also another solution, for there is no reason whatever to believe that but one solution was preordained. For one thing, it is altogether likely that large masses of Jews will continue to lead a somewhat distinctive life in the midst of other peoples. This too is a “solution,” as such things go in that flux of human affairs which always refuses to reach the particular equilibrium desired by those who decide upon the course of events. For another, the Zionist experiment to which Mr. Lewisohn pins his hopes is an admirable solution insofar as it satisfies the aspirations of many thousands of courageous Jews, inspired by a number of distinct motives. One gains nothing by closing one’s eyes to facts and by declaring, out of the rhetorical fervor of one’s preference, this or that turn to be the right and only solution. For there is not one Jewish problem, there are many — keenly personal ones of all [216] sorts, and varying group problems conditioned by local circumstances, economic and cultural. Mr. Lewisohn would not have hurt his plea for Zionistic support if he had frankly recognized the possibility of some measure of assimilation, for assimilation on a grand scale is obviously not possible in the immediate future.

Most books about the Jew have an unpleasant flavor of the apologetic about them. *Israel* is free from this taint. It presents the case for the Jew as a creator of cultural values with pride but not with partisanship. Mr. Lewisohn knows too much about the cultural history of Europe to indulge in a rhapsodical cataloguing of Jewish exploits in the arts and sciences. He puts most of his emphasis on the peculiar, narrow, over-intellectualized, yet always intense and vital Jewish culture of eastern Europe and has it meet the more comfortable but also the more flabby and fragmentary culture of Anglo-Saxon America with outward deference and an inner awareness of a half useless superiority. In all this he is doing both Jew and non-Jew an immense service. No Ameri-

can, after reading Mr. Lewisohn's book, can continue to feel that the uncouth Jewish immigrant from Poland or Lithuania comes to this land as a spiritual mendicant. Most Americans, one fears, had rather taken for granted just that. A clearing of the atmosphere makes for health all around.

"House of Bondage," the chapter in which the bases of Jewish life, its historical background, and its peculiar problems are well described, is probably the most important in the book. I cannot refrain from quoting a passage on the psychological significance of the Jewish faith and legends as viewed by a non-believer. "I have come to see," says Mr. Lewisohn, "that the relation of Jews to their faith and legends and traditional wisdom is not like the relation of the peoples of the West to their religion. Primitive Christianity is Jewish and has never converted the Gentiles. The pomp of Rome and her gods is in the South; Germanic festivals and legends and epics rule the North. Hence the Christian world whose religion is divided from its national culture has lost the conception of an autonomous, national faith. We Jews need not believe in our religion even as enlightened Greeks did not believe in gods or oracles. It is the still veracious symbol of our national character and history. The Torah and the Prophets, the wisdom books and legends of later ages — these are our Iliads and Nibelungen Lays; they express our national character, our essentially eternal traits. The chivalric warlike Gentile does not find himself in the Gospel. He has to be converted again and again. When it suits him he abrogates the teachings of his faith, and preaches hate in the name of Jesus. The Jew need believe nothing. But when he reads of Joseph asking concerning the old man, his father, and weeping; when he reads that the ground must lie fallow every seventh year for the poor and must not be held in perpetuity since it is God's; when he reads of the Jubilee year in which all wrongs are to be righted and every man returned unto his own; when he reads of Gideon's refusal of power; when he reads that a young poet and musician was chosen to be king; when he reads in Isaiah of a golden age not in the past but in the future, a golden age whose name for all peoples shall be peace — when he reads these things he comes home to his people and himself. For these ideas and events express his innermost self; they are today, as they have been in the past, the exact image of his innate character and modes of thought."

Some of this sounds, perhaps, as though righteousness and idealism were [217] Jewish inventions but it is none the less interesting for the light it throws on the necessity of having a cultural background if one

is to be oneself. Personalities seem to differ in the degree of this necessity and Mr. Lewisohn, individualist more in will than in the essential form of his mind, has a greater cultural necessity, it may be, than the average. It is natural, therefore, that when his non-Jewish European-American background failed him he must at all costs discover the Jewish background he had not even abjured but to which his unwelcoming American hosts implacably referred him.

There is much excellent descriptive matter in the book — a graphic account of the unspeakable conditions in Poland, many splendid passages on the work the Jews have already done in Palestine. Unfortunately Mr. Lewisohn has to confess — albeit his humility seems to be a proud one — that he knows little of statistics. Now colorful impressions make splendid reading but they do not always establish a case. It may be that the Palestinian chapters of *Israel* have a wealth of factual material behind them and are not builded mainly of personal glimpses and of roseate hopes. One comes away with a disquieting feeling, however, that not all the objective facts have been properly evaluated.

One is particularly disturbed by Mr. Lewisohn's persistently idealistic glasses. Granted that the fundamental drive of Zionism is strongly tinted by idealism, it can hardly be maintained with any show of seriousness that there is a natural probability of the effective continuance of the sheer spirit of idealism among the colonists and their successors. Insofar as the Jewish community in Palestine is to hold its own in the workaday political and economic world, it will be forced to insist on values and on methods that are more practical than ideal. Mr. Lewisohn's conception of the Jewish task in Palestine is that it is not to institute a new nationalism, another mushroom growth of prejudices and localisms, but it is to introduce a polity animated by the ideals of internationality and pacifism. It is just a little difficult to see how such a movement as Zionism, actuated as it is by the reawakening of the spirit of Jewish nationalism, is to keep itself unalloyed by the necessities and foibles that attend any nationalist undertaking. Perhaps Jewish nationalism, as Mr. Lewisohn would have us believe, is a permanently broadminded and self-sacrificing faith, perhaps there *is* an abiding something that is different and finer about the temper of Zionism, an idealism made local through necessity rather than through choice. But the gentle sceptic, fed on history and on a sad belief in the essential sameness of human psychology in every nook and cranny of the world, can only shake his head with that bitter-sweet smile that is at least as Jewish a symbol as the clear-eyed confidence of the nationalist.

It seems to me that if there is anything distinctive about the temper of Jewish thought today, it is that it has largely transcended the limits of any localism, however vast or powerful. This temper has been as often the subject of abuse as of favorable comment. Jewish "disloyalty" and "negativism," however, are but terms of disparagement for a spirit that is abroad in the world today and which it is the "mission" of the Jew — if the romantic philosopher of history must give him a mission — to foster as best he can. This spirit runs counter to the current nationalism which is perhaps more articulate than truly vital. It is not so much a destroyer of folk values as a solvent of them. It refuses to make a fetish of any localism or lineage but [218] insists on utilizing the cultural goods of all localisms and of every lineage for a deeply personal synthesis. It is this spirit which Mr. Lewisohn has most truly at heart, unless I misread all the signs. But, baffled as he is by the difficulty of living such a life of personal values, unequal to the task and privilege of serenity in the face of injury to pride, he has sought to find this spirit in Zionism. Zionism has its own justification but I cannot but think that Mr. Lewisohn is in error in identifying its philosophy with the critical, transnational philosophy that so many Jews have helped to create

Editorial Note

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Review of Frank H. Hankins, *The Racial Basis of Civilization*

Frank H. Hankins, *The Racial Basis of Civilization: A Critique of the Nordic Doctrine*. New York: Alfred H. Knopf, 1926.

Professor Hankins' book on race and its significance is admirably free from the excesses of the usual writers on the racial determination of culture. He is as hard on the Gobineaus and Houston Chamberlains and Madison Grants as any cultural anthropologist of the "Boas school," but he differs radically from this school in his insistence on the reality of the racial factor in the origination and intensification of cultural values. Dr. Boas, impregnably cautious in the face of evidence and lack of evidence, has never committed himself, to be sure, to the direct denial of the presence of importance of such racial factors. He has never said, in so many words, that the psychic potentiality of the average Negro or of the average Australian native is equal to that of the average white, but the general feeling has been that his verbally non-committal attitude masked an emotional "slant" in favor of the theory of substantial racial equality. The manifest differences in cultural achievement have always been explained by environmental and historical factors of various sorts. At no time has race itself — that is, the psychic limitations or advantages of one race as against another — been invoked as an efficient explanation of the vast differences in degree of cultural development.

All the while, the conviction has been growing that there are significant correlations between bodily structure and psychic disposition. E. Kretschmer's observations on the relation between physical types and certain forms of insanity, including temperamental types tending in the direction of such forms of insanity, are not quoted by Professor Hankins, but they would not be irrelevant to his discussion. Granted that the definition of significant differences of temperament is far from clear, that Kretschmer's correlations are only an exceedingly rough approximation to the truth, at best, and that it remains to be proved that the bodily variations — within a homogeneous group — which he deals

with are strictly analogous to race differences, it must be admitted that the culturalist and the environmentalist can no longer throw the whole burden of proof on those who argue for at least some measure of racial determination.

Yet one may not be willing to go nearly as far as Professor Hankins, who, though sensible of the importance of historical factors in the development of civilization and of the absurd lengths to which the race protagonists have gone, is very much a eugenicist — not a glib eugenicist nor a rough and ready one, but still a eugenicist. He too is haunted by the specter of what ominous things are happening and of what still more ominous things are due in the blind shuffling of Mendelian traits. One cannot allay his fears, for one neither knows whether there are true fears to be allayed nor, if true they be, just where the enemy is to be scotched. Truth to say, one cannot even be sure which genes in a given individual are to be welcomed and which deplored. From a practical point of view, *The Racial Basis of Civilization* advances us no further. Theoretically, the culturalist may still ask whether individual and racial differences of a psychic order are really as important determinants of the main lines of culture as they are currently assumed to be. Further, are these differences to be lightly disposed of in accordance with the convenient but possibly naive categories of “superior” and “inferior”? If only because the righteous, Spartan dream of the sterilizing eugenicist is such a nightmare to the rest of us, we must hope — we dare believe — that the time will come when the questions we now ask of race and culture will be “solved,” because no longer asked by an absent-minded posterity.

For one thing we must be grateful to Professor Hankins. He holds no brief for racial purity. On the contrary, he advises mixture, being merely concerned about the respective qualities of the blending races, or rather of the specific individuals concerned. The spectacle of Anglo-Saxon intermarrying, say, with Jew he watches with equanimity, even approval — always provided the genes are in order — and one can readily forgive him the few very slight shafts of anti-Semitic rattery with which he relieves the tension of the amalgamating process and of an exceedingly earnest book.

Editorial Note

Originally published in *The New Republic* 53, 146 (1927), under the title “A Reasonable Eugenicist.”

Observations on the Sex Problem in America

If the writer ventures to make a number of analytical suggestions on the sex problem which is agitating so many men and women in America today, it is not because of any very special knowledge which he possesses of the subject, but merely because some acquaintance with anthropological data and with the anthropological approach to social data, fertilized by such observation of American facts and tendencies as has come his way, has given him a point of view which is perhaps a little personal. At any rate he cannot hope to give much cheer to either the radicals or the conservatives and he suspects that he may be accused of having tried to please both. It is peculiarly difficult to keep prejudice and sentiment out of a problem of this nature, and he cannot flatter himself that he has succeeded in attaining true objectivity. Some of his readers may even suspect, and no doubt with some justice, that there is little herein set forth which is not a rationalization of personal bias. In the present state of ethical unrest and of limited knowledge of the facts one can perhaps do little more than make articulate the peculiar nature of one's prejudice and the rationalizing process by which he hopes to make that prejudice acceptable to others.

There are two measurably distinct aspects of the sex problem which are constantly being confused, though nothing seems more obvious than that every attempt should be made to keep them apart. [520] The purely practical problem of sex, physical and psychological, is absorbing so much attention that the ideological or cultural problem of sex is likely to be lost sight of. That every human being, as an organism desiring health, needs and has the right to demand sex gratification is, stated baldly, pretty much of a truism, though it is a truism which it has taken us much labor to convince ourselves of. But what is by no means evidently true is the assumption that the full content, or the major portion, of the question of sex is merely a matter of individual satisfactions. Sex, like every other natural function which is not purely vegetative, brings with it many intimate questions of personal adjustment, of the adjustment of the individual to society, and of the fulfillment or flouting of ideals of conduct that have grown up about the organic nucleus. All of civilization is, in a sense, an elaborate screen which humanity has

put between itself and nature, with its tyrannical insistence on the necessities of biological functioning and with its sovereign disregard for the sentiments, the peculiar preferences, which men have chosen to develop out of a primordial chaos of instinct and emotion. Any philosophy of sex that begins with the feeling that it constitutes its own peculiar class of individual and social phenomena starts with an illusion. The problem of sex is fundamentally like any other social problem in that it deals with the attempt of human beings to reconcile their needs with cultural forms that are both friendly and resistant to these needs. It is necessary to stress this point, simple as it is, because so large a proportion of modern psychiatric writing seems almost deliberately to ignore the cultural point of view.

It is strange how readily we tend to believe that if only we can understand sex in terms which are applicable to the individual we have nothing further to worry about. We are constantly assuming for the field of sex conduct what it would never occur to us to accept as natural in any other field of human conduct. Much of human life has grown up around the necessity of preserving the organism, of securing sufficient food, clothing, and shelter. Yet these problems, urgent as they are, can never be viewed from the standpoint of the behavior of the individual organism alone but must be seen in their historically determined cultural setting. It is only in times of extreme crisis, when society and its mechanisms fall to pieces, that we can actually see the individual hungering and [521] thirsting as a natural organism, and even then he is more likely than not to give some hint of the restraining and molding influences to which he has been subjected by society. Around the simple acts of eating and drinking has grown a vast economy, with an accompanying symbolism of power, of comradeship, and of other significant human relations that go far beyond the organic necessities of food and drink. And the ritualism of meals, meaningless from a merely physiological view-point, has come to seem so natural to the average civilized man that he would feel acutely uncomfortable if he were doomed for the rest of his life to supply his bodily needs without its ceremonial sanction. Why should the sex impulse, which is certainly of no more urgency in the life of the individual than the satisfaction of hunger and thirst, escape from the historical law of the conditioning of fundamental impulses into forms that take on the character of social values?

We are told by many modern thinkers that we have at last discovered the startling fact that sex is a "good" in itself and that, being such, its demands must be satisfied sooner or later. It would be far more correct

to say that sex is neither a good nor an evil. It is merely a fact of nature. The concept of a good cannot be associated with it except in so far as human beings in society have come to look upon certain modes of conduct and certain states of mind which lead to and from the satisfaction of the sex impulse as good or valuable conduct or attitudes. To the extent that people withdraw from it their evaluating attention and leave it to the exigencies of nature, they reduce it to the unconditioned primary level to which belong the purely instinctive satisfactions of hunger and thirst and the random and unevaluated forms of motor conduct of an untaught child. The truth of the matter is, that to say that sex is a good in itself has as much or as little meaning as to say that it is good to breathe or to eat raw flesh. For men organized in society goods or values come not from a consideration of the simple satisfaction of impulses but from the heightening of the meaning of such satisfactions through the symbolisms of social intercourse.

A rather artificial divorce has been made between the sex impulse and love, or perhaps it would be more correct to say that the modern chafes at the supposedly unnecessary accretions which the sex impulse has received, that he wishes to free this primary value [522] from those trimmings which make love of it. If anything were needed to prove the inveterate romanticism of the present age, which never tires of the boast of its hard-headed realism, it would be this very unwillingness to recognize the naturalness and the universality of the emotion of love. One hears it said that among the truly enlightened love, in so far as it exists at all, is merely the casual association of the sex impulse with certain warm feelings of companionship or friendship and that nothing is more natural than that this fortuitous association should be constantly interrupted or broken up.

There is, of course, a reason for the present emphasis on the legitimacy of sex as such, as contrasted with the sentimental justification for sex relations on the basis of love. This reason is not far to seek. The old Puritan morality which looked upon the sex act as inherently sinful is still too painfully near to us, and the revolt which was bound to set in sooner or later has concentrated all of its energies on the annihilation of this notion of sin. Naturally enough, it has had little patience with the arduous task of retaining that in the inherited ideology of sex which was psychologically sound or, at any rate, capable of preservation as a value without violence to nature. What has happened is that the odious epithet of sin has been removed from sex, but sex itself has not been left a morally indifferent concept. The usual process of overcorrection

has invested sex with a factitious value as a romantic and glorious thing in itself. The virus of sin has passed into love, and the imaginative radiance of love, squeezed into the cramped quarters formerly occupied by sin, has transfigured lust and made it into a new and phosphorescent holiness. Love, a complicated and inevitable sentiment, is for the moment sickening for lack of sustenance.

We are in the habit of complimenting ourselves on the healthy attitude which is coming to prevail in America toward questions of sex. There is some justification for this, for it is obvious that an attitude that looks upon sex as intrinsically evil, and that seeks to rescue it from condemnation by confining it into conventionally fixed and approved channels, is a repressive and unhealthy one. But I am not willing to grant, for all that, that the present excited and puzzled attitude, shifting back and forth in a single individual's [523] mind all the way from orthodox acceptance of the restraints of Puritanism to a reasoned religion of promiscuity, is a healthy attitude. The very notion of health implies the presence of a certain balance and of a fundamental surety of the significant outlines of behavior. The most that one can say for the sex mind of radical America is that it is in a state of transition and that a certain willingness to experiment dangerously is in the long run a safer thing than a premature striking of the balance. This may be a just interpretation of the few; of the many, who bless you for a formula for noble weakness, it is but psychology gulled. A realistic view of actual sex opinion and sex behavior leads to the feeling that on every hand life is being measurably cheapened by an emotional uncertainty in matters of sex, matters that no healthy society can long brook uncertainty of. An individual can create true personal values only on the basis of those accepted by his society, but when nothing is accepted, he has no room for the growth of any values that are more than empty formulae. The "enrichment of personality" by way of multiple "experiences" proves to be little more than a weary accumulation of poverties. These shibboleths are given the lie by the uneasy eyes of the bored adventurers who drawl them out. Human culture, it seems, is so constituted that the individual dare never face his own organismal responses skeptically. These fundamental responses must somehow be taken care of, by implication, in the patterns of social conduct, and the individual who is constantly being called upon to create such patterns anew never gets beyond the point of struggling with nature. His "freedom" is but the homelessness of the outlaw.

The present sex unrest has been nibbling at more or less reliable information reported by anthropologists from primitive communities. Any primitive community that indulges, or is said to indulge, in unrestricted sex behavior is considered an interesting community to hear from. Such a community is at once equated with "primitive man" in general and has the great merit of bringing us back to that primary and glorious man that wishful romanticists have always been dreaming about.

It does not seem to occur to the readers of excited books about pleasure-loving Samoans and Trobriand Islanders that perhaps these communities are not as primitive as they seem, that there [524] are perhaps other primitive groups that have developed an ideology of sex that is not so very different from that of our happily extinct Victorian ancestors, and that in any event there may be social determinants in such societies that make the question of value in sex conduct of lesser urgency than among ourselves. It is true that many primitive societies allow of erotic and marital arrangements that shock the sensibilities of our conservatives. But what should be denied is that sex conduct is truly unregulated even in these societies. A closer examination shows that the community has certain very definite ideas as to what is allowable and what is not allowable. As the native ideology of the permitted and the illicit, however, in such groups is rarely calculated to interest us unless we happen to be objective students of primitive culture, it is not so obvious why we should think of the license, or approximate license, that we read into their sex behavior to be of special concern to us. If we cannot sympathetically understand their sex taboos, why do we pretend to understand their freedom from our sex taboos? Obviously they are in no better case than we ourselves. Historical factors have set certain specific bounds to the expression of the sex impulse in these societies, as they have set more or less specific bounds in our own, and a primitive reformer who attempted to break down every possible barrier to the free play of sex would receive small comfort from his fellowmen.

But it is simply not true that sex freedom is the norm for primitive societies. It is, as a matter of fact, very much the exception, and the presence of sex taboos, of institutionalized deferments of sexual gratification, and of all manner of sex ideals, so far from justifying us in wringing our hands at the perversity of mankind, might more rationally be expected to lead to a psychological inquiry into the reason why human beings have so persistently gone out of their way to put obstacles in the way of the immediate satisfaction of the sex impulse. A certain

type of historian is ready with his answer. He tells us that these restrictions have merely come in as a by-product of the conception that women are a form of property. This is one of those theories that are too plausible to be true. The institutionalizing of marriage in terms of property can be amply illustrated in both primitive and sophisticated societies — this no one doubts — but we are far from [525] having the right to take it for granted that ideas of ownership are the root of sex restrictions. We know too little as yet about the psychological causes of sexual modesty and secrecy, of the universal dread of sex squandering, of the irresistible drive to hedging sex about in one way or another, but we may be certain that these causes are not of a trivial nature and that they are not to be abrogated by a smart and trivial analysis of sex by intellectuals who have more curiosity than intuition. For reasons which can only be dimly guessed at, man seems everywhere and always to have felt that sex was a quintessential gratification that it was not well to secure at too easy a price, that it held within it sources of power, of value, that could not be rudely snatched. In short, mankind has always known that sex needed to be conserved in large part and made over into more than sex. Freud's theory of sublimation has always been man's intuition, and sex has always restlessly striven to become love.

Nothing seems more difficult than to convince the all-wise modern that the emotion of love, quite aside from the momentary fulfillment of desire, is one of the oldest and most persistent of human feelings. It is far from being the secondary or adventitiously superimposed thing that it is so often said to be. On the contrary, much that is generally interpreted as primitive, because unromantic, may well be interpreted as a superstructure imposed upon the sex life by considerations of a relatively sophisticated nature — economic, social, religious, or political.

It may be well at this point to relate a brief story which I collected a number of years ago from the Sarcee Indians of Alberta, Canada. The story goes back to the early days, before the Indians were seriously bothered by the white man's morality or his license. It will seem all wrong to some, for it is nothing more nor less than an old-fashioned love story from anywhere and anytime.

Here, once upon a time, they were camped in a circle. They were putting up the Sun Dance.¹ This one young man was making love to her; he and the [526] girl had love for each other. Every time that she came in she would sit down close to where the people were singing and her young man would peep in between the lodge-poles which were lean-

ing against each other. And so it was that his face paint would always be left on the poles.

After a while it was said that they were about to go on the warpath, so this young man went to his sweetheart and said to her, "Do not get lonesome for me. We shall see each other again." And then the girl gave him a little of her hair which she had cut off and she tied it up and they kissed each other and parted. Now they went off to war and the girl's heart dropped.² When the Sun Dance was over, the people broke up camp; they were to come together again at this place and at a stated time. They moved off in different directions. Now, as to these people who had gone off on the warpath, they were sighted by the enemy, who sat down in ambush for them. When they got in sight of the enemy, they were attacked and all of them were killed.

When a long time had elapsed the people came together again at the place that had been mentioned, and when they were all assembled the news was brought that those who had gone off to war had all been killed — so it was said. This girl heard about it. And then she went to the Sun Dance lodge and came here to the place where her sweetheart had been in the habit of peeping in. She saw his face paint on the pole against which he used to lean. And then she returned to her people's lodge and, having arrived there, she took a rope. And then she went back to the Sun Dance lodge and climbed the pole which stood in the center of it. She tied the rope to the pole and looped the other end of it about her neck. And then she sang the song which her sweetheart had been in the habit of singing. After a while a certain one discovered the girl and what she was doing, how she was singing while seated up there on the pole. He spoke of it. They rushed out to her, but before they could reach her she had jumped off and strangled herself with the rope. Though they cut the rope off at once, she was already dead. That is how the girl strangled herself.

This story proves nothing, but it gives pause for thought. It contains all the elements of romantic love and it subjects that romantic love to the final test of all values, which is the test of tragedy. It is not an isolated instance, by any means, though I should not like to be misunderstood as claiming it to be an average or even a typical incident of primitive life or of any other form of life. It is one of those comparatively rare but basically typical examples of the form that a natural value will take in almost any culture if it is supported by an underlying passion which is both pure and intense. To speak of frenzy or madness

is useless, for, as [527] the psychiatrist knows better than anyone else, frenzy is the climactic test of any value.

What is the meaning of this strange passion of love, which crops up at all times and in all places and which the modern rationalist finds it so difficult to allow except as a superficial amplification of the sex drive under the influence of certain conventional ideas and habits? It is as difficult to state clearly what the emotion consists of as it is easy, if one is willing to be but honest for a moment, to comprehend it. The sex nucleus is perfectly obvious and no love that is not built up around this nucleus has psychological reality. But what transforms sex into love is a strange and compulsive identification of the loved one with every kind of attachment that takes the ego out of itself. The intensity of sex becomes an unconscious symbol for every other kind of psychic intensity, and the intensity of love is measured by the intensities of all non-egoistic identifications that have been transferred to it. It is useless to argue that this is madness, for in a sense it is, but we have yet to learn of a value or an ideal that is not potential madness.

Why is it, then, that a sentiment which is as much at home in our despised Victorian yesterday as in the obscure life of a remote Indian tribe needs to be discussed with so much apology today? There is a complex of factors which explains the present temper and we need only mention them to make us realize how transitory is likely to be that temper. I have already spoken of the anti-Puritan revolt, which is much more than a revolt against sex repression alone but is a generalized revolt against everything that is hard, narrow, and intolerant in the old American life, and which sees in sex repression its most potent symbol. Many young men and women of today who declare themselves sexually free are really revolting against quite other than sex restrictions. They glory in the reputed "sin" because they see it as a challenge to the very idea of repression.

The revolt complex is powerfully strengthened by an insidious influence exerted by modern science. It has been one of the cheerless, yet perfectly natural, consequences of the scientific view of life that nothing in human conduct is supposed to have reality or meaning except in the ultimate physiological terms that [528] alone describe life or are said to describe life to its scientific analyst. If life is nothing but physiology, how can love be other than sex, with such immaterial reinterpretations as no hard-headed modern need take seriously?

Even more important, at least in America, is the great psychological need of the modern woman to extend and make firm her symbols of

economic independence. Every attitude and every act that challenges the old doctrine of psychic sex difference is welcomed, no matter where it leads. The most obvious differences of motivation between the sexes are calmly ignored and a whole new mythology has been evolved which deceives only the clever. The virulence of this reinterpretation of the significance of sex differences is tending to die down, but the psychological aftermath of the feminist revolt is still with us. Every psychiatrist must have met essentially frigid women of today who have used sex freedom as a mere weapon with which to feed the ego. And this all too common sacrifice of love and the possibility of love on the alter of an ambition which is essentially insatiable, because it is so much of a compulsion, is met by the complementary need of "fair-minded" men to accept the free woman at her word. Hence the cult of pseudo-nobility, what Wyndham Lewis so aptly calls the new "sex-snobbery," which makes an intellectual fetish of "freedom" and abolishes jealousy by a fiat of the will.

The psychological falsity of these attitudes and liberations is manifest enough and leads to a new set of most insidious repressions which owe their origin to the subordination of impulse to reason. It is questionable if these new and hardly recognized repressions, these elaborate maskings of the unconscious by the plausible terminologies of "freedom," of "cumulative richness of experience," of "self-realization," do not lead to an even more profound unhappiness than the more normal subordination of impulse to social convention that we hear so much about.

The truth of the matter is that in the life of the emotions one can make too few as well as too many demands, and the life of love is naturally no exception to the rule. Men and women who expect too little of each other, who are too nobly eager to grant each other privileges and self-existences that the unconscious does not really want, invite a whole crop of pathological developments. First of all, the chronic insistence on the notions of freedom and [529] self-expression is itself contrary to the natural current of the sex life, which flows away from the ego and seeks a realization for the ego which is in a sense destructive of its own claims. Sex as self-realization unconsciously destroys its own object by making of it no more than a tool to a selfish end. There can be no doubt that much modern sex freedom is little more than narcissism. Applied narcissism, in our particular society, is necessarily promiscuity.

A further consequence of an uncritical doctrine of sex freedom is the lack of true psychological intimacy between lovers or between husband and wife. Abstract freedom is poor soil for the growth of love. It leads

to an unacknowledged suspicion and watchfulness and a never-satisfied longing which in the end kill off the finer and the more sublimated forms of passion. The modern man seeks to save the situation by analyzing sex attachment into the fulfillment of sex desire plus such intimacy as constant companionship can give. This is, of course, totally false psychologically. It is merely a feeble synthesis of dissociated elements arrived at by an inadequate analysis. The easy accessibility of the sexes to each other at an early age, the growth of the "pal" spirit between them, with sex itself thrown in as a bribe or as a reward — all this, so far from bringing the sexes together in a finer intimacy, has exactly the opposite effect of leaving them essentially strangers to each other, for they early learn to know just enough to put the more intuitive seeking stupidly to sleep. Is it a wonder that the sexes unconsciously hate each other today with an altogether new and baffling virulence?

In extreme cases — one dreads to acknowledge how appallingly frequent these extreme cases are becoming — the constantly dampened, because never really encouraged, passion between the sexes leads to compensation in the form of homosexuality, which, if we are reliably informed, is definitely on the increase in America. This surely is a strange point of arrival for a gospel of delivery from repression, but it is a perfectly explicable one. Love having been squeezed out of sex, it revenges itself by assuming unnatural forms. The cult of the "naturalness" of homosexuality fools no one but those who need a rationalization of their own problems.

In estimating the significance of the social and psychological currents which are running in the sphere of sex today, it is important [530] to do justice to both cultural and personal factors. It is dangerous to ignore either. Our culture of today is not the creation of the moment, but the necessary continuation of the culture of yesterday, with all its values. These values need revision, but they cannot be overthrown by any scientific formula. The intellectuals who declare them dead are very much more at their mercy than they care to know. It is not claimed that all individuals can or should make identical adjustments, but in an atmosphere in which no norms of conduct are recognized and no values are maintained, no man or woman can make a truly satisfactory individual adjustment.

It is peculiarly dangerous in dealing with the sex problem to let pretty verbal analogies do the work of an honest analysis. The problem of jealousy is an excellent illustration of this. Owing to the highly individualistic and possessive philosophy of so much of our life, the image of

possessiveness has been plausibly but insidiously transferred to the marital relation, finally to the relation of love itself. Sex jealousy is therefore said to imply possessiveness. As one emancipated young woman once expressed it to me, it would be an insult to either her or her husband to expect fidelity of them. Yet what is more obvious than that jealousy can no more be weeded out of the human heart than the shadows cast by objects can be obliterated by some mechanism that would restore to them an eternal luminosity? Every joy has its sorrow, every value has its frustration, and the lover who is too noble to be jealous has always been justly suspected by mankind of being no lover at all. It is not the province of men and women to declare out of their intellectual pride what emotions they care to sanction as legitimate or admirable. They can only try to be true to their feelings and to accept the consequences of their fulfillment or denial in whatever terms nature sees fit to impose.

The supposed equivalence of sex jealousy to the emotion of resentment at the infringement of one's personal property rights is entirely false. Sex jealousy, in its purest form, is essentially a form of grief, while the combative feeling aroused by theft or other invasion of one's sovereignty is of course nothing but anger. Grief and anger may be intermingled, but only a shallow psychologist will identify them. Perhaps the linguistic evidence is worth something on this point. It is remarkable in how few languages [531] the concept of sex jealousy is confused with the notion of envy. Our use of the English word "jealous" in two psychologically distinct senses has undoubtedly been responsible for a good deal of loose thinking and faulty analysis. It is an insult to the true lover to interpret his fidelity and expectation of fidelity as possessiveness and to translate the maddening grief of jealousy into the paltry terminology of resentment at the infringement of property rights. These crowning psychological absurdities were reserved for the enlightened mentality of today.

The psychiatrist understands better than anyone else how much we are swayed in the unconscious by obscure but potent symbolisms. There is a certain logic or configurative necessity about these symbolisms which it is very hard to put into words, but which the intuitively-minded feel very keenly. Sex conduct offers singularly potent examples of the importance of such symbolisms and of their arrangement in a series of cumulative values. I refer to the general symbolism of human intimacy.

Every normal individual is unconsciously drawn toward or repelled by another individual, even if the overt contact is but brief and superficial. These feelings of intimacy and withdrawal have their symbolisms

in gesture and expression, which differ from individual to individual but tend none the less to take typical forms under the influence of social forces. Of necessity, the most potent symbols of intimacy are those that lead to the touching and handling of bodies. To put the matter crudely, we are not in the habit of embracing people to whom we are indifferent and of standing frigidly aloof from those that we are psychologically intimate with, unless, of course, there is a conflict that paralyzes expression. Now, of all known forms of intimacy among human beings the sex relation is naturally the most far-reaching. It necessarily takes its place in the unconscious series of symbolisms of intimacy as the most valued and the final symbol of all. I do not claim that all human beings are equally sensitive to symbolisms of this sort, but there is enough of a psychological common ground in most of us to make it impossible for the normal person to transgress the unformulated laws of symbolic expression beyond a certain point. It is exceedingly likely, it seems to me, that the obscure, though of course unacknowledged, feeling of shame felt by prostitutes and by those who indulge in promiscuity is by no means entirely due to the [532] fact that they transgress the social code, laying themselves open to a conventional censure. It is likely that this shame is also in large part the resultant of an elusive feeling that a natural scale of values is being transgressed because the expressions which are their symbols are, by implication, arranged in a psychologically impossible sequence. In a deeply symbolic sense, then, the prostitute is "illogical," and her only psychological escape is to refuse to identify herself with her body. And it is no mere accident that so many of the protagonists of sex freedom despise their own bodies.

In sober fact the erotic landscape in contemporary America is by no means as depressing as these observations may lead one to believe. I have wanted rather to point out the psychological fallacies in the contemporary cult of sex freedom and the ultimate implications of those fallacies than to give an accurate description of contemporary sex life. Sex irregularities, while numerous, are not necessarily as indicative as they seem to be of the deeper-lying set of our erotic philosophy. Unless I sadly misread the mores of America, there are many reassuring signs that the reign of so-called Puritan morality is not likely to come to a sudden end even among the sophisticated and that, while the negative elements of that morality are sure to be cast aside by the intelligent and their rigor mitigated by all, its essential core will survive. Europe may laugh and shrug its shoulders but America can be shockingly stubborn on what she feels to be the fundamentals of life. It would be nothing

short of a cultural disaster if America as a whole surrendered to continental European feeling and practice. With religion in none too healthy a state and with the aesthetic life rudimentary and imitative, America needs an irrational faith in the value of love and of fidelity in love as perhaps no other part of the occidental world needs it today.

The moral atmosphere in America is only superficially similar to that of continental Europe. One of the surest signs of the essential difference in outlook is the rapidly increasing divorce rate. Bewailed by domestic moralists and deplored by our European visitors, the ease of obtaining divorce in America is actually an indication of our restless psychological health. Were the institution of marriage and the family actually divorced in sentiment from [533] the sphere of sex indulgence, there would be no reason why a tolerance of marital infidelity should not come to be accepted in America, as it has long been in France. But any one who imagines that America can with a clear conscience settle down to the reasonable and gracious distribution of individual pleasures and familial ceremonies that seems to suit the French genius knows very little about the American temper. The very intellectuals who are clamorous in their determination to "go the limit" are unable in practice to "play the game," for they cannot learn the rules. Do what one will, sex relations in America have a way of calling up romantic images and implications of fidelity that make this country seem a mysterious, an incredible, realm to the emancipated foreigner. Incompatibility of husband and wife of necessity leads more speedily to divorce than in sophisticated Europe. I am leaving Russia out of the picture, for we know too little about the psychological realities of contemporary Russia to speak of it with profit.

Closely connected with this stubborn unwillingness of the typical American to save marriage and the integrity of the family at the cost of erotic honesty is his peculiar unwillingness or inability to make a fine art of sex indulgence. The "kick" of sex freedom in America lies precisely in its being "sin," not an honest way of life. Americans make poor Don Juans. Nor does the graceful and accomplished hetaira of French life seem to flourish on our stubborn soil. Many young women have tried the part but even the most successful of our amateurs in the erotic arts seem compelled by the very nature of the culture in which they have been reared to pay a heavy price. Our intellectual mistresses of sin play a sadly pedantic part, their ardors are in the head rather than in the heart or even the "erogenous zone." To put it bluntly, the "free" woman of sophisticated America, whether poetess or saleslady, has a hard job

escaping from the uncomfortable feeling that she is really a safe, and therefore a dishonest, prostitute. The charge seems unreasonable to the mind, but the spirit cannot wholly throw off the imputation. The battle shows in the hard, slightly unfocused, glitter of the eye and in the hollow laugh. And one can watch the gradual deterioration of personality that seems to set in in many of our young women with premature adoption of the new sophisticated sex standards. Psychiatrists have often burned their [534] fingers in this matter and perhaps there is nothing they need to keep more steadily in mind than that in proffering advice in matters of sex they are addressing themselves not merely to intelligence and to desire but to certain obscure and unacknowledged values that cannot be flouted with impunity. If they are of foreign birth and culture, it would be well for them to take a little more seriously some of the "resistances" they encounter and to ponder, on occasion, the possibility that in exploding a personal "complex" they may incidentally be shattering an "ideal." That American men and women coarsen on a fare that seems to agree with the sophisticates of the Old World is both a warning and a reason for optimism. It points the way to a reaction of feeling that Europe will not understand.

Americans tend, in the most disconcerting way, to be both realistic and conservative in the matter of sex. That psychological health demands sex satisfaction at a much earlier period than the general postponement of marriage makes possible is coming to be generally recognized. It is clear, however, that a true tolerance for illicit relationships of a promiscuous sort is not likely to become prevalent. Such suggested institutions as the companionate marriage lead one rather to suspect that America is feeling its way toward a loosening of the institutional rigors and responsibilities of marriage by the growth of new types of sex relationship. It is difficult to say just what is likely to emerge from the present period of unrest and experimentation, but one thing seems certain. America will not be a docile pupil of Europe, and the sophisticates of this country who are taken in by the apparently easy solutions of their European brethren, whom they so vainly admire, are likely to find themselves in a strangely unsympathetic clime. That new institutions of an erotic and marital nature are slowly maturing is obvious. It is my belief that it is no less obvious that these institutions, whatever their forms may be, will not mean a surrender to license but will have for their object, however obscurely and indirectly, the saving of love and the perpetuation of the romantic intimacy and of the ideal of fidelity by

those who are capable of this intimacy. And it is more likely than not that the average American, for a long time to come, will have the delusion, if it is nothing else, that he is capable of just this experience.

Editorial Note

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Prepared by request. This study is the first of a series of contributions from outstanding authorities in the various social sciences which The Journal will publish from time to time.

This article was reprinted under the title “The Discipline of Sex” in *The American Mercury* 16:413–420 (1929), with minor changes and the first five paragraphs omitted. The *American Mercury* version was reprinted in *Child Study*, March 1930, with seven passages deleted and several subheadings added.

Notes

1. The Sun Dance is the most important communal ceremonial of the tribes of the Plains, and the most sacred object in the ritual is the center pole of the Sun Dance lodge.
2. The native equivalent for “she was broken-hearted.”

Review of Waldo Frank, *The Re-Discovery of America*

Waldo Frank, *The Re-Discovery of America: An Introduction to a Philosophy of American Life*. New York: Charles Scribner's Sons, 1929

It is not easy to give in a few words the thought of this book, which originally appeared as a series of articles in the *New Republic* and which may be looked upon as a sort of philosophical follow-up to Mr. Frank's *Our America*. The author would be the first to admit that his approach is not strictly scientific, that metaphors weighty with pregnant symbolisms are made to do much of the work that is ordinarily assigned to logical analysis of facts and figures. Mr. Frank is at once philosopher, artist, historian, and prophet. The complete absence of either humor or modesty in this diagnosis of American civilization makes it somewhat laborious reading but it would be too easy to dismiss the book as useless.

It is, as a matter of fact, informed by a very earnest — though not necessarily altogether sincere — awareness of the fragmentariness of our culture and by a passionate desire to see American life come through unscathed, well integrated, and free of European intellectual dominance. Much in the book is obviously little more than a hieratic and unctuous projection of personal turmoil, yet something of value remains. I believe that Mr. Frank is at his best when he speaks of the artistic currents in America. When he leaves the field of literature and art, concerning which his observations are always sensitive, however grandiosely expressed, [336] and turns to those wider cultural problems which should be, but never are, adequately handled by the anthropologist and the sociologist, he becomes at once lyrically portentous. We are then shoved into a hot jungle of psychoanalytic images in which biology, psychology, and social science are melted down into some strange alloy of the fancy. In Mr. Frank's thought all the colors run, every outline is blurred, every content is charred and dimmed. It is a pity that he disdains lucidity and courts the "vatic" pose, for I doubt whether most Americans are quite as romantic as Mr. Frank believes them to be and, in any event, as he himself undoubtedly still is in spite of all his attempts to be hard and "modern."

Editorial Note

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Waldo D. Frank (1889–1967) was an American writer, and the founder and editor of *The Seven Arts* magazine.

What is the Family Still Good For?

Is it really true that the family is about to disappear? Is it really true that parents have been found wanting and are about to resign their sovereignty into the hands of the commonwealth? That children have found out their elders and are about to declare their independence? That the sex relation has been discovered freed from a matrimonial frame? That mothers have no further claim for the rearing of children than a useless affection and had better resign themselves to the up-to-date pre-school nursery and devote themselves in the absence of their children to the ever-growing necessities of club life?

Now these things are more than a flippant jest. Perhaps never before in the history of mankind has the family been so lightly regarded as in contemporary America. Twenty-five years ago the family seemed as secure as the rocks both as institution and as sentiment. And now we hear it said that it is a shaky, unwilling institution and a begrudging sentiment at best. The family seems to be literally up with its back against the wall, faced by an immense crowd known as "the young," aided and abetted by the figures of the sociologist, the revelations of the psychologist and the sneers of the anthropologist. This picture of opinion about the family is confessedly inexact. It is a lurid one, but surely it is of some significance that it is possible to draw the picture without too great a show of shame or hesitation.

It would be interesting to go fully into the reasons for this threatening dissolution of the family, if we could. [32] It is an involved business, very much mixed up with the tangled question of sex relations and with the industrialization of society. To understand the family is to understand all of modern life, intimate and public. It is sufficient to mention four of the more obvious causes of the weakening of the modern family. These are: First, the multiplication of labor-saving devices; second, the cramping of living quarters; third, the automobile; fourth, the growing economic independence of woman.

The family as an industrial unit, as a self-contained, mechanically bound group which works toward definite ends of a practical nature, is pretty well a thing of the past. There is no use pretending that it is not. There are still husbands to be found who will take off a Sunday morn-

ing to shingle the roof or lay down a concrete floor in the basement, as there are wives who keep a crowded apartment in uncomfortable abeyance while a particularly elaborate birthday cake is in progress in the kitchen. Common sentiment applauds such efforts, common sense deplores them. No elaborate statistics are needed to prove that family self-help on a large scale is out of date. If sentiment did not lag perceptibly behind the cold judgment of mechanical prudence, there would be even less to keep the family at family work than there is today. For better or worse, large scale industry has invaded the family, and the family must readjust its habits and its sentiments as best it can to this cool and obliging stranger who enters without knocking at the door. A thousand threads bind the family to agencies of effective adjustment, and these have rarely the desire or the opportunity to humanize the mechanical relations between the family and work done for the family. The most that we can hope for is that the milkman talk politely to the maid. [33]

The most significant by-product of the industrialization of society, so far as the family is concerned in its outward aspects, is the cramping of its quarters. As there is less and less for the family to do, less and less room is required to do it in. This growing discouragement of the need for room is powerfully supported by the growth of land values, the two being indeed nothing but the negative and positive aspects of a single process. The modern family does not arrange itself commodiously in space, it tucks itself away in corners of greater or lesser snugness. A relentless system of hinges folds up space into a nicely delimited design of little compartments, which are merely the minimum containers of buttons, knobs, lines, cabinet doors and a score of other strap-hanging devices. The family no longer dwells; it occupies quarters. What this shrinkage in space means psychologically is that the members of the family suddenly discover that they are but a limited number of individuals, who have to make doubly sure of their apartness from each other by escaping into vast hinterlands of space. Thus, the street, the lecture hall, and the hotel lobby become the necessary backyard of the modern home.

Family quarters are inadequate not merely in the physical sense, in a more intangible and symbolic sense, too, they fail to correspond to the traditional family ideals. The spatial symbol of an institution has much retroactive influence on the dignity of the institutional concept itself. Thus, it is difficult to feel strongly about a university degree obtained in a correspondence course, for scholastic pride seems to need a tangible habitation to which it can point its finger. Again, a god worshipped in

a mean, pinchbeck house of worship may be verbally noble, but we may suspect that he assumes mean, pinchbeck proportions [34] in the hearts of his worshippers. It is not otherwise with the family. If its home is insecure, casual, cramped, external to the personalities of its members, these attributes of the symbol infest the thing symbolized, and so we need not be surprised that the family itself tends to become insecure, casual, cramped, and external to its own personalities.

The American family is not only cramped and insecure in space, it is also unstable in time. Travel is constantly absenting one or other member of the family from the rest. Such absences were once considered events in the history of the family; they are now part of its kaleidoscopic texture. It is easy to make light of the rapidity with which the actual personnel of the family changes from day to day. In the long run these rapid shifts must have a profound symbolic influence on the individual's conception of himself as a member of the family. A family which is constantly breaking up and reassembling is like a rule which has too many exceptions — such a rule ends up by ceasing to be a rule. In all this coming and going, the automobile is of course the most potent factor. Under certain circumstances and in certain localities the automobile, enlarging the confines of the home and giving its members new avenues of escape from the home's dullness, tends to have something of a unifying force, but it seems to me that its influence is on the whole more disruptive than stabilizing. This is of course particularly true of the wealthier families, which own more than one car. Even where the automobile does not directly act as a disruptive force, it tends to do so indirectly because it affords a ready means of escape from the visible home, thus aiding materially in the weakening of the symbolism of the home.

[35] The increasing economic independence of women owes much of its destructive power to the model which has long been set in America by the husband. Gainful occupation and home have come to be antithetical concepts, and woman, herself long debarred from economic activity, has come to be dangerously identified with the home. It is often said that the home is losing its character because women are finding it possible to identify themselves with objects of interest which lie beyond the family sphere. It is of course biologically true that the home clusters, in a very special sense, about the woman, but it seems that we have dangerously overshot the mark in America and have allowed ourselves to drift insensibly into a position which considers the husband as an economically powerful visitor to the house. The proud indifference of

most American husbands to their homes and everything that beautifies the home, the assumption that domestic affairs are, after all, things for women to worry about – all this has a note of tragedy in it. Now that modern life has shown women how they may enter upon gainful pursuits, the implied stigma which had attached to the stay-at-home, carries over to the women of the household. If it was possible for the husband to be a bit disdainful about domestic details, however carefully his light contempt was guarded from himself, it is the sheer logic of the unconscious that the economically emancipated woman too should accept man's symbolic indifference as a badge of her freedom. To be sure, this is not the whole story. Where both the husband and the wife are breadwinners, there cannot but be some divergence of interest and association, and this adds its important share to the loosening of family bonds.

There are no doubt still other forces which make for [36] this loosening, and perhaps none of them is really as important as certain far-reaching changes of opinion in regard to the relation between men and women, husband and wife, parents and children, which modern experience and speculation have brought, but the four trends that we have picked out will serve as a convenient formula to make intelligible to us what seems to be happening within the family. Putting ourselves into the traditional attitude, let us now see what seems to have been lost in the course of development of the modern family. We should say, first of all, that the family is no longer a self-going concern, no longer a self-sufficient castle in a semi-hostile world. Furthermore, parental authority has perceptibly lessened. There are other factors than those we have mentioned that are responsible for this, but it is implicit in them. In the third place, personal relations within the family, the attitude of brother to sister, of sister to sister, son to mother, daughter to father, have no longer quite that self-evident or pre-ordained quality which seems to go with defined kinship status. One assumed, for instance, that brothers and sisters were friends, though one knew from sad experience that they were not necessarily so. Finally, we can no longer lightly assume that woman is the sacred guardian of the domestic hearth. She may or may not be that, but she is likely to be a great many other things as well.

Are these truly losses, or are they really gains in disguise? They are certainly not unmixed evils. That the family is no longer a self-going concern is part loss, but it is part gain as well. The traditional family tended to be a little ingrown, rather selfish in its outlook upon life. Its happiness tended to be smug; its unhappiness bred all the poisons of secrecy. That the family is now more [37] directly plunged into the gene-

ral economic scene has at least this advantage, that the average man and woman of today develops a greater concern for the fundamental mechanisms of society. He loses something of his dignity as a personality because he is rarely a primary economic agent, yet the indirect and even fictitious part which he plays in life does bring him significantly nearer to his fellowmen. There is an altogether new willingness to see the family as but a unit in a larger whole.

Few are so held by the illusions of the past as to claim that the lessening of parental authority is nothing but evil. There was a time when to be a father was to know what was good for one's children. In those days the word "mother" connoted an all-wise affection and was as mysterious and as immutable as the law of gravitation. And, reciprocally, to have a father and a mother was construed as equivalent to doing what you were told and being thankful therefor ever after. We have traveled a certain distance from these dull mythologies. Thanks to Shaw, to psychoanalysis, and to liberated common sense, we now know that a devoted mother can be silly and pernicious; that an idolatrous affection for the son may and often does go with a corroding hatred of the husband. It is well that we tend to take little for granted in the parental relation. It is well that fathers and mothers are beginning to discover that it is hard work making their children's acquaintance and that before they have done this it would be just as well not to bank too heavily on the innate love and wisdom which the mere fact of parenthood is supposed to give them. There is no reason why parents and children may not be the best of friends, but it is getting to be believed that frankness is a [38] better preface to such friendship than the mysticism of blood.

It is not merely that much of the mythology has been squeezed out of the parent-child relation, but the greater independence of the individual within the family has brought with it the necessity of taking some effort to establish valuable relations instead of taking them for granted as *a priori* necessities. Brothers and sisters have to earn each other's esteem. Temperamental differences disqualify the close of kin for long-enduring friendship as they disqualify complete strangers in the world outside the family. That the younger brother fags for the older is no longer felt to be a law of nature, nor need one make it a point of honor to distribute his deferences evenly between the maternal and paternal kinfolk. Grandparents are no longer semi-divine. Kinship is a glorious opportunity for the meeting of minds and hearts. In itself it constitutes neither an obligation nor a privilege.

Finally, who can regret that woman has become a real person, not merely the imprisoned symbol of an institution? That there are as many kinds of mothers and as many kinds of wives as there are kinds of women is a little disconcerting but should no longer shock us. It used to be possible to say to a woman, "You are not behaving like a *real* mother" or "You are not behaving like a *real* wife." Nowadays it seems more appropriate to find other terms in which to couch the sentiment back of the antique terminology. It would be wiser to say, "I am afraid we don't agree about the bringing up of the children" or "You have every blessed right in the world to behave as you do, but I want to tell you frankly that I don't like it a bit." On the whole, the latter method is a technical improvement. Normal men and women will [39] often do as individuals what they are not so keen on doing as "fathers," "mothers," "husbands" or "wives." It is not well for any human being to be identified with an institution. The normal woman will want to discover wifehood and motherhood through the flesh and the symbolisms of the flesh, which lead to the deepest sentiments we know of, rather than be reading the breviary of family duty.

Do these changes in the constitution of the family and in the psychology of family relationships mean nothing more than a negation of everything that is significant in the family, or are they but a killing off of useless symbols and attitudes in order that the ground may be prepared for a new family? Is it too much to hope that this new family may prove to be all the more significant because little is expected of it officially? Is it possible that the weakness of the present-day family in America lies not so much in certain destructive tendencies as in our persistent attempt to combine a verbal loyalty to the traditional family with a sneaking acceptance of its loss of integrity? Perhaps the American family seems insecure not because the father's authority is little, but because we still secretly believe that it ought to be great but that he is too cowardly to act out his wishful tyranny; not because the love of a husband and wife cannot in the nature of things be a sufficient basis for family life, but because our inherited sense of the sinfulness of sex has made us unwilling to believe that love is sufficient; not because a woman's career outside of the home is really inimical to its preservation, but because a sense of daring sin still lingers about her choice of an independent career. The inertia of social sentiment is stronger than the inertia of social form. Long after the family has changed its form men and women still [40] continue to think and feel that its older implications of sentiment are still extant, or that if they are not, they ought to

be. I think one may contend, with no sense of paradox, that the family is likely to remain as important a psychological factor as it has ever been, that we are mistaking surgery for murder, that we have been thinking too much about institutional and therefore secondary aspects of the family and too little about the biological and psychological foundations of the family institution.

It is possible for an institution to become so top-heavy, so accreted with secondary features as to cease to answer to the very determinants that originally brought it forth. A government may become so corrupt that there is nothing to be done with it except to destroy it. The relief which follows such destruction, however, is always brief and illusory. One always builds a new government, hoping that it may be better than the old. Those who have suffered from the maladjusted family seek some measure of relief in the hope or fancy of its decline. It is an illusory hope and a vain fancy. The continuance of the family does not depend on the continuance of its old solidarity, nor on the authority of the parents, nor on keeping woman within the home. Guaranteed as the family is by certain biological and psychological necessities, we shall not be able to indulge ourselves in the luxury of seeing it vanish before our eyes but shall have to submit to the psychological reinterpretation of a family preserved against our perverse will. The family is not being killed off. It is being scraped clean of irrelevances and fitted to become the bearer of richer meanings than it has ever had.

Sex desire alone is no secure basis for the family. Sex activity plus children may be biologically sufficient to give [41] us the nucleus of a family, but our modern mentality is not satisfied with a family so constituted. A sociology which treats of the family merely in terms of sex desire, mating, economic security, care of offspring, always carefully avoiding the word "love" as though it were a sentimental bugaboo, is not a realistic sociology. Such a sociology is stupid, however accurate its fragmentary analysis, for it is of the very essence of the modern American mind that it is gropingly trying to establish the only kind of a family that it still believes in, namely a man and a woman who, loving each other, do not wish to live apart. Whether such a union is blessed by offspring or not is immaterial. Whether or not it has been sanctified by civil or ecclesiastical authority is immaterial. This intimate companionship, which dare never be confused with the casual exercise of sex, is a minimum and all-sufficient definition of the family. Everything else is incremental, however importantly so. Of this new American family we are barely conscious, for its image is clouded by memories of "sin"

and, among certain sophisticates, by the correlative defiance of "sin" which is promiscuity. The ease, not say the waywardness, with which the young now enter upon marriage is significant because it shows, first of all, that the growing American ethos is willing to base the family on mutual affection and understanding, unaided and unhampered by any other consideration; and, secondly, that the mere satisfaction of the sex impulse is not enough to satisfy the deeper erotic craving of the normal young man and young woman. This purely psychological marriage, as it might be termed in contrast with the older marriage institution, is too flimsy a thing for the conservative mind, too burdensome a thing for the mere sex-monger. It is the cornerstone of the new family. [42]

Normally a married couple will want one or more children. Ineffective as the family has often proved to be, we are not likely to find a more satisfactory matrix for the rearing of the young than the family. Where marriage has been on the basis of love, the arrival of children, whether consciously desired or not, is not so much a new biological sanction for the continuance of the family, as an affirmation of the old sanction. In the older family, which tended to put an undue emphasis on the child because it looked upon itself as a holy institution rather than as a psychological necessity, the erotic relationship between the husband and the wife not infrequently suffered because of the very arrival of the child. In the new family the attention on the child is oblique rather than direct, and this is excellent both for the mental health of the child itself and for the continuance of a sound relation between the husband and wife. The old family was always doing things "for the children," even to the extent of strangling itself in unhappiness. In the new family the child is the symbol of a true marriage and a charge to be carefully nurtured that it may eventually be delivered to society. The child does not need to be smothered with a love which is half stolen from husband or wife. It requires an undemanding affection which flows over, as it were, from the primary love which built the family. For this healthy and necessary atmosphere of unobtrusive affection, there is, so far as I know, no institutional substitute.

The truly effective family has more than one child. Whatever may be the merits of the practice of limiting offspring — and surely certain superficial merits are obvious enough — it would seem psychologically unsound voluntarily to limit the number of children to one. After [43] the years of infancy, the normal relationship between human beings should be a relationship between age mates. In a healthy community the contact between the older and the younger generation has always

something tangential about it. The child needs other children with whom he can learn to iron out his difficulties and share the affection of his parents. The important thing about the brother-sister relation is that it trains the child for social participation in an unobtrusive manner. Where the relations of the parents are sound and do not interfere with the growth of their children, a group of brothers and sisters will unconsciously develop an understanding of complex affectional bonds with tolerance all round of individual differences of taste and temperament. The importance of this as an image of later adjustment to life is incalculable. It is a commonplace that children who grow up without brothers and sisters develop certain very real and peculiar problems of behavior.

The psychological family is important not only for the maturing of the erotic relationship of the parents, it is important also as the background image for the development of the child's own future love life. If one's own erotic life is to be sound, it would seem that a background of parental happiness is essential. We are only beginning to understand the importance of the family as a sort of nursery of images which are later to come to potent fruition in the lives of the children. Surely it is not the family as such which forms an unfortunate matrix for the development of the child. It is the frankly unhappy family, whose poison he carries with him through life; or, even worse, the only superficially contented family, which masks intricate maladjustments that do not escape the intuitions of the child for a minute. [44]

To conclude, we are not confronted with the threatened dissolution of the family, we are promised a clearing away of institutional clogs of all sorts which do not correspond to modern mentality and of indulgences in sentiments which we are beginning to see are harmful. All this does not mean chaos, rather the emergence of clearly defined psychological patterns which have intimate relevance for the life of the individual at the expense of superimposed institutional patterns which take little or no account of individual psychology. We may say that the family is needed for the following primary purposes: First, to give the sex relation its greatest emotional value; second, to rear children in an atmosphere of intelligent affection; third, to prepare the individual for the give and take of society; and fourth, to prepare the child unconsciously for satisfactory mating in the future.

The current dismay at the apparent weakening of the family is no more justified than the dismay of men when they discovered with Darwin that they were descended from lower forms of life. For a time it looked as though they had ceased to have the right to feel human, for

they learned that they were not only human but animal as well. In this wider kinship we have since learned to feel a nobler pride than in the old biological snobbery of isolation. The old family institution, walled about by a make-believe psychology of status, ignored the elementary truth that the individuals within the family were essentially the same people as the self-same individuals outside the family. A belated recognition of this truth creates some dizziness, but when the gasps have subsided and the eye is opened again, the family will be seen to be still there, a little cleaner, a little more truthful, a little happier.

Editorial Note

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Review of Franz Boas, *Anthropology and Modern Life*

Franz Boas, *Anthropology and Modern Life*. New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1928.

In spite of Dr. Boas' undisputed eminence in every phase of anthropological inquiry, it is difficult to point to any general work of his own writing which aptly summarizes the methodology of his science. Nor is it easy to gain a clear view of his philosophy of culture. Students of anthropology have had to be satisfied with short but pregnant papers on a variety of theoretical topics and, more important still, with the implications of his technical volumes. Perhaps only such a mind as Boas' could pack away so much honey of wisdom in the crevices of a forbidding landscape as may be found in the paper which bears the unconsciously whimsical title of "A Study of Alaskan Needlecases," and which is more for the hard-thinking theorist than for the appraiser of Eskimo knick-knacks.

It is clear that Dr. Boas' unconscious long ago decreed that scientific cathedrals are only for the future, that for the time being spires surmounted by the definitive cross are unseemly, if not indeed sinful, that only cornerstones, unfinished walls, or even an occasional isolated portal are strictly in the service of the Lord. It is as though his unseen structure were compacted of such intense feeling that it needed, for Dr. Boas himself, but little formal exteriorizing, only so much as a massive accumulation of data on this or that point might force him to. Those who find Boas' thinking not to their taste are likely to call it inconsequential because incomplete in expression, while those who know him best feel it to be both rigorous and emotionally vital, yet prevented by a certain fierce delicacy from ever declaring more than it manifestly must.

Boas is not the man to articulate implications, and there is no use expecting him to. Only such readers as do actually expect the impossible of him have a right to be disappointed in *Anthropology and Modern Life*. These may find much in it too remote or tangential or marginal or academic — let them use what adjective they will — to fructify their

sense of life. There would be no quarreling with their judgment except to demand of them that they meet Boas at least half way, probably more, with what they have themselves gathered of life and its meaning. But this, again, is an unreasonable demand in an age that prizes lazy comfort in thought and that prizes rigor only in dehumanized action.

It is a great pity that Boas cannot give himself more passionately and more completely, for he has much to give. A hint of the deeper meanings of Boas' cultural philosophy is given in his chapter on eugenics, which is healthily impatient of the tinkling heavens which our fashionable romantic biologists are roughing out for us. Unfortunately Boas is too little accustomed to integrate his feelings with his intellectual doctrines, so that his dislike of mere comfort will seem hardly more than petulant and sentimental to our nimble Utopians, who have spent far more of their lives than Dr. Boas in proving black white. It should, of course, have been the other way round.

Dr. Boas' book brings home the fact that anthropology is in a somewhat dangerous position at present. It has become a popular science, which does not necessarily mean that a deeper understanding of the relativity of human values will be acquired by its camp followers, rather that its data and its varying interpretations will be chosen *ad libitum* to justify every whim and every form of spiritual sloth. *Anthropology and Modern Life* is a brave warning against [279] such misuse of the comparative study of culture, but the warning is vain. Already a generation of "applied anthropologists" has begun. What we have been waiting for is already on sale. It is brilliant now and then, like Malinowski's *Sex and Repression in Savage Society*; more often it will be cheap and dull, like Margaret Mead's *Coming of Age in Samoa*.

Editorial Note

Originally published in *The New Republic* 57, 278–279 (1929).

Franz Boas (1858–1942) was a pioneer in the professionalization of anthropological studies and founder of the American school of anthropology. He established rigorous standards of methodology in physical anthropology, archeology, linguistics, and cultural analysis, emphasizing cultural relativism, and influencing several generations of anthropologists, including Edward Sapir, one of his students at Columbia University, where Boas served as the first chairman and professor of anthropology from 1899 to 1936.

Review of Bertrand Russell, *Sceptical Essays*

Bertrand Russell, *Sceptical Essays*. New York: W. W. Norton and Company, 1928.

These seventeen essays once again give evidence of Mr. Russell's incisive mind, freedom of outlook, and splendid lucidity of style. Their content is just about what we might expect from an acquaintance with the previous writings of that part of the philosopher which is a publicist. Only one of the essays, an excellent survey of philosophy in the twentieth century, is in any sense technical, and that is only mildly so. The rest of them discourse clearly, sometimes entertainingly, always simply, on such topics as the temper of science, rationalism, the machine age, values, ideals of happiness, freedom of thought, the stupidities of politics, the probabilities on the cultural horizon of tomorrow.

In short, we have a logician and a mathematical philosopher of the highest rank turning his restless mind to the maddening human scene to which he too must somehow reconcile himself. Again and again Mr. Russell takes a deep breath, that he may for the moment hold back the weariness and disillusionment which somehow manage none the less to seep through the words of his message. Again and again he advances, innocently but firmly, to his fellow man and stares him gently out of countenance while he analyzes out for him the elementary concepts which — so he says — are packed into and distorted in the shibboleths on which man feeds. And again and again Mr. Russell assures his listener, with such hopefulness as he can still muster, that all may yet turn out for the best, provided —

Here is a sample of Mr. Russell's "provided": "There are two simple principles which, if they were adopted, would solve almost all social problems. The first is that education should have for one of its aims to teach people only to believe propositions when there is some reason to think that they are true. The second is that jobs should be given solely for fitness to do the work." Behind the sweet reasonableness of the proposal to adopt two such "simple principles" as these lurks something

which one distrusts a little. To be frank, the patience of Mr. Russell seems a little taut, a little dangerous.

We lay down the book with wonder that we are not more deeply stirred by its sincerity and by its spirit of fair play. This deplorable world in which Mr. Russell is so able to spot weaknesses which he is so willing to help remedy is surely the same old world that we knew all along was far from perfect, but which, being the field of our loves and hatreds, we had decided to continue to live in. Yet it is hard to make up one's mind to continue to live in the world of these *Skeptical Essays*. Even after it has been revised by the application of two simple principles, it remains too simply unreal. We have the premonition that in this world no propositions are going to be proved to be true anyway, and as for jobs being distributed to the fit, we have a sinking feeling at the heart that we, at least, will have to remain jobless.

On second thoughts we wonder if the two worlds that we had identified are even potentially the same, and whether, after all, Mr. Russell hasn't really been asking us to trek to a nicer world than any we know — a world in which concepts stay put and in which, for our daily bread, we build unassailable propositions out of them. The incidental leisure which such a world gives in abundance could be used for doing what we jolly well pleased. We could produce art, which Mr. Russell thinks to be a form of love, we could have two husbands, or two wives, we could do or have anything, in fact, which the slightly jaded intellectual faculty, craving a release of tension, might ask of a high Polynesia that is built on the unshakeable coral reef of Science.

We begin to resent, in other words, that subtle dissociation which the pure intellectualist is always effecting between life and his dream of life. The aloofness of which such an intelligence as Bertrand Russell's is sometimes accused is by no means the aloofness of noble indifference, which can always be forgiven as a form of naïveté, nor is it the aloofness of a truly dispassionate analysis, which can smart without rankling. We do not see the eyes of Mr. Russell fixed in loving abstraction on the stars, nor fixed on ourselves with a "savage indignation." We see them fixed, rather, in a not wholly serious bemusement on a static world of mirror images. In his *Time and Western Man*, a huge and admirable pamphlet, Mr. Wyndham Lewis finds Mr. Russell's mind absorbingly interesting but fundamentally lacking in seriousness. He finds Mr. Russell's philosophy to be essentially a craving for "amusement." It is likely that Mr. Lewis, one of the most deadly and intuitive intelligences of our day, has hit clean to the mark. Though Mr. Russell speaks often of the

importance of love and art and the "finer things" of life, these have with him nearly always an air of not being truly life itself, but rather, a splendid toying around in those moments of relaxation that make life's (or philosophy's or justice's) rigors livable. He seems not sufficiently to love what he hates to make his hatred salutary. His charity is too cosmic to touch us, too remote to discover for us the virtues of our defects. And so his skeptical thoughts glance by us like meteors that bring but cold and momentary illusions.

Editorial Note

Originally published in *The New Republic* 57, 196 (1929), under the title "The Skepticism of Bertrand Russell."

Bertrand Russell (1872–1970), English mathematician and philosopher, was known especially for his work in mathematical logic; he received the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1950.

Two Philosophers on What Matters

F. C. S. Schiller, *Tantalus, or the Future of Man*. New York: E. P. Dutton and Company, 1924. 66 pp.

Bertrand Russell, *How to be Free and Happy*. New York: The Rand School of Social Science, 1924. 46 pp.

Here are two pamphlets that are actuated by diametrically opposed spirits. The English pragmatist is all nerves, the mathematical philosopher speaks with the cheerful serenity of one who has learned the catechism of despair. Mr. Schiller, in setting out on his adventurous Cook's tour into the future, with a desperately instrumental philosophy for godmother's blessing and Tantalus for a guide, is all for overhauling his ropes and pulleys that he may negotiate the precipices sadly indexed in his Baedeker. Mr. Russell is too busy dandling the baby on his knee to pay much attention to the hubbub of departure; all Mr. Schiller will get out of him in his present mood is an absent-minded, whimsical, *nous verrons*. Clearly they are not meant to be congenial traveling companions. We suspect that Mr. Schiller would be annoyed by his fellow philosopher long after he had ceased to be amusing to Mr. Russell. There is only one thing that unites them, and that is that neither has the heart to say *Après nous le déluge*. Both really care.

Which is the saner man? We fear that there is no telling, that this is a clear case of *de gustibus*. Mr. Schiller speaks in the unbroken faith of a man who believes that life is, or should be, a rational undertaking, that we know what is good for us, that we can see if the works run smoothly, if we but knock off an hour or two to peer about in the engine room, and that, having found out what, if anything, is wrong, we can, and most certainly should, set about putting it to rights. There is nothing strikingly new about Mr. Schiller's diagnosis of the parlous state of contemporary civilization. He finds that the fostering solicitude of modern humanitarianism plus the declining birth rate of the abler classes has reduced the conduct of affairs to a drab and wearisome incompetence. Flabbiness reigns supreme and mediocrity is rampant. If we are not mighty careful to do something about it, civilization will soon be engulfed in an ocean of feeble-mindedness.

This is not a cheerful prospect, particularly as it does not parenthetically occur to Mr. Schiller to suggest that Asia and Africa may conceivably help us out in the proximate future by taking civilization off our hands for a few centuries. His remedy is nothing more novel than eugenics, but he goes into no technical details on the art of belling the cat. All he can offer is the assurance that "it is really one of the great advantages of eugenics that it cannot proceed upon any cut-and-dried scheme, but will have to be guided by the results of experiment and discussed by an intensely interested public." A page or two farther on, however, he is less disposed to leave the cure of our ills entirely to eugenics. "As time passes," he says, "and sheer destruction may overtake us before eugenics have made much difference, it would be highly desirable if some means could be found to accelerate the change of heart required." Pills and injections are dismissed as unlikely to be of substantial assistance. "On the other hand there does seem to be a science from the possible progress of which something of a sensational kind might not unreasonably be expected." The name of this science is Psychology. It has not been up to much so far but it is slated for great things. In fact, "a pragmatically efficient Psychology might actually invert the miracle of Circe, and really transform the Yahoo into a man." Which reminds us that we have been traveling in Laputa.

It is a relief to turn to Mr. Russell's lecture, simple and profound. Mr. Russell has perhaps the most rational and disciplined intelligence in the English-speaking world today. Small wonder, then, that he sees the vanity of a rationalized scheme of life and the nullity of taking elaborate thought for the morrow. What is wrong with civilization today is not a high or low birth rate but a feverish concern with things that do not matter, with the complexities and irrelevances of external values. Applied science has mechanized life and impoverished the spirit of man. There is only one way to regain spiritual health, and that is to shift all significant values to the realm of the personally apprehended spirit, pocketing the material advantages of science with indifference rather than with gratitude. Social programs avail little. What Mr. Russell recommends, in the homeliest of terms, is nothing less than the rediscovery of the individual soul. "If you have a human being that you love, or a child, if you have any one thing that you really care for, life derives its meaning from that thing, and you can build up a whole world of people whose lives matter." A platitude? Hear the corollary: "But if you start with the nation — 'Here am I; I am a member of a nation; I want my nation to be powerful' — then you are destroying

the individual. You become oppressive, because whether your nation is powerful depends upon the regimentation of people and you set to work to regulate your neighbor." And a little further on in this quest of freedom and happiness Mr. Russell remarks, "The great thing is to feel in yourself that the soul, your own thoughts, your own understandings and sympathies, that is the thing that matters and that the external outward decor of life is unimportant so long as you have enough to keep you going and to keep you alive. It is because we are so immersed in competitiveness that we do not understand this simple truth." These appealing and "dangerous" doctrines were once crowned by a crucifixion. Can it be that a jaded humanity is prepared to follow the disillusioned and the sceptics in a renewed search for Christ?

Editorial Note

Previously unpublished; from an undated typescript, with corrections in Sapir's hand, in the possession of the Sapir family.

Ferdinand C. C. Schiller (1864–1937), an English-American philosopher, was influenced by William James.

Review of M. E. DeWitt,
Our Oral Word as Social and Economic Factor.

London and Toronto, J. M. Dent and Sons; New York, E. P. Dutton and Co. 329 pp. \$2.25.

The keynote of this strange and personal book is given in one of the paragraphs of the "Introductory":

"Personally we cannot look upon the oral word from a local or even a one-nation point of view. It is far too much a part of our international lives, and with every month our lives are less local, which makes the oral word mean more to the English-speaking people as a whole and thereby to the world at large. They are those who are interested in social and economic problems, particularly through women's clubs and the myriad other organisations, who will soon realise that a dozen 'best' dialects do not belong to any national programme of education. We no longer educate our nomadic millions for one state, shire or province, or for one section of a land or even for one land alone. Why, then, should we give them in the oral word anything which does not sound world-well? We are in a new era, an era in which the air itself connects all villages and far-flung communities within the single moment of the uttered word."

Miss De Witt is not always easy to follow. This is because of the breathless and emotional quality of her thought and a style which constantly borders on the quaintly pedantic. She is a well-known student of phonetics and of correct English and French speech. Her technical competence is attested by the "Old World euphonetigraphs" which appear in the second part of the volume — in plain English, phonetic transcriptions of samples of the connected speech of some fifty-nine representatives of upper class England, such as John Galsworthy, Esq., the late Sir Edmund Gosse, C. B., LL. D., and Dr. Annie Besant. These supplement the "New World euphonetigraphs" already published in the companion volume, "EuphonEnglish and World Standard English."

Two main ideas emerge. The first is the paramount importance and indefinite continuance of Anglo-American power, which must not be

muddled by any blendings of other races with the Anglo-American race. This great power and race is mystically united by the sea with "its long, slender, tendril fingers" which "twine their way in, out, round-and-about." The Atlantic, as is shown in a design of her own drawing, is really a river spanned by a bridge.

The second idea is the necessity of perfecting and conserving for this great ethnic unity a noble form of speech, which is correct and uniform in pronunciation, possesses a natural beauty, and is to be made still more beautiful with the help of "tonetics for the world-good speech melody of a given language; and voice training, the spiritual blender of the other two [elements, i. e. euphonetics and tonetics], which gives the tone quality, production and control." Miss De Witt does not approve of the "Western or General" form of American pronunciation, which she dubs "the School of the Curly Tongue," but prefers a common ground of cultivated English speech based on British and eastern American models.

Anglo-American power, the sea, a particular norm of English pronunciation, and beauty of vocal utterance are inextricably blended in Miss De Witt's planetary dream. Tangentially she touches the fascinating and intricate problem of the social and political significance, in a symbolic sense, of differences of pronunciation within a given language. Is there a true will, in the unconscious, for such phonetic unity of speech as she advocates? Is not the resistance to such unity a far profounder sociological and psychological fact than most of us are willing to believe? she neither explicitly raises nor answers this question but merely wishes it away. But her book at least suggests its interest and stubborn importance.

Editorial Note

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Review of James Truslow Adams, *Our Business Civilization*

James Truslow Adams, *Our Business Civilization: Some Aspects of American Culture*. New York: Albert and Charles Boni, 1929.

This excellent book should have a salutary effect in shocking the American public into a more painful awareness of the shortcomings of our contemporary life than is ordinarily managed by books of its type. The criticism offered by so original a book as *Our America*, by Waldo Frank, for example, is too easily met by counter-charges of windiness, irrelevant estheticism and an all-round exoticism of spirit that was never intended by God or nature to find a mystically satisfying domicile in these poor States. Much of the annoyance that colors the pages of such writings proceeds from perfectly real sources of discomfort, but the typical American, be he merchant or professor, will not listen, because the annoyance which is expressed does not harmonize with his own humbler exasperation. The indices which are given of our lack of true culture tend to be too remote from normal experience to seem to matter. But in Mr. Adams's book the indices of our busy barbarism are presented in all their homely actuality and, while the inspiration of some of the chapters is the somewhat conventionally aristocratic outlook of the New England Brahmins, the total indictment is telling because the details of conduct that lead up to the charge have been well observed. They ring dreadfully true. The laughter of amused recognition dies away quickly.

It is true, for example, that we are a lawless people. Much of our lives is an uneasy vacillation between "watching our step" and "getting away with it." One watches one's step, not because of a deep-seated respect for the rights of others, not because a success conditioned by the discomfort of others is spiritually humiliating, but quite frankly because it does not pay to be on bad terms with one's neighbors. But once one has "got away with it," the retrospective possible virtue of having "watched one's step" disappears like a spell of hard work stayed off by an unexpected vacation. We live, then, in an ethical forward

and backward in which hypothetical virtues are dissolved by merely problematical vices. The old "Handsome is that handsome [427] does" has lost its Puritan stiffness and taken on the much more obliging texture of a "Handsome is that does handsome."

There is no doubt about Mr. Adams's facts, but one wonders whether the explanation that he offers is quite adequate. No doubt the shibboleth of overt success at whatever cost comes to some extent from the necessities of a pioneer life that brooked no fumbling and no control from a distance. But is it too far-fetched to see in our tolerance of the lesser ill of law-breaking and our complementary insistence on the sheer goodness of "making good" a kind of made-over avoidance of sin, the pure thoughts and manifest righteousness of man in the eyes of God having imperceptibly become secularized into those meritorious ambitions and smashing successes which make every individual, however obscure his pedigree or his intentions and however undistinguished his mental or moral baggage, a possible darling of the people? For there does seem to be an austere religiosity about the contemporary cult of reckless success which justifies a suspicion that it is both historically and psychologically connected with the zealous avoidance of sin which animated an earlier generation. It is excusable to come a little late because of the crowded streets, but it seems to be far more inspiring just to "make it on time" if one has not actually killed the pedestrian who all but got in the way of one's triumphant car. Where it is sinful to succeed below the acme of possible success a little absent-minded law-breaking can do no harm.

Mr. Adams very rightly stresses our infatuation with "doing" versus "being." Even when there is nothing visible to be done one can at least "step lively" and thus make a clearance for those more fortunate ones who have something rapid on hand as well as hasten one's own chances of arriving at some place or other where something clamors to be done. It is doubtful if one can any longer be properly said to "be" in America; the state nearest to quiescence seems to be "to have got that way," which offers but a precarious equilibrium at best. The philosophy of doing is exceedingly far-reaching in its effect on personal relations in America, the itch for jumping off to a point of vantage threatening at any moment to shatter even the most peaceful and unassuming of human constellations. It is precisely doing as contrasted with being that makes an easy-going familiarity our daily business and friendship so unattainable. What passes for friendship is generally a chronic [428] exercise of the art of mutual "boosting."

One of the most telling chapters in Mr. Adams's book is that on "The Mucker Pose." He has here put his finger on one of our profoundest symbols of anonymity. To be a "regular fellow," to pretend to a "lower brow" than comports with the actual size of one's head, to scatter careful shoddy over one's speech — all this is not important because it expresses the individual, it is important because it does not express him. The ideal implicit in Mr. Adams's "mucker pose" is really the "poker face," the sphinx whose inscrutability has been relaxed into a self-imposed stupidity. At the heart of this sphinx there is no mystery, merely the fear of being caught in the sinfulness of failure, the cunning is fear's press-agent, counseling silence and watchful waiting, masked, if the poker face must talk, by a barrage of earnest vulgarity. It is not so much the decay of good speech and good manners that Mr. Adams has to mourn as their gradual dissociation from the inner core of personality, which seeks safety from the glare of the public eye by blaring forth inanities meant to disarm.

Our Business Civilization is chiefly valuable because it is an honest burst of anger with the steadily mounting shoddiness of American life. The realization of this comes particularly hard to one who has so completely identified himself with the none too easily won culture of old New England. Hesitatingly he looks to old England but something tells him there is no solution there. Were Mr. Adams as ruthless a psychologist as he is a historian of manners, were he less interested in the retention of graces and values that no longer belong to America, he would be looking not to the lost past but to the darkly emerging future.

Editorial Note

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James Truslow Adams (1878–1949) was an American historian and writer; he received the Pulitzer Prize.

Review of Thurman W. Arnold,
The Folklore of Capitalism

Thurman W. Arnold, *The Folklore of Capitalism*. New Haven: Yale University Press, 1937.

The Folklore of Capitalism richly deserves its success. Anyone who has been as fed up with the indirections and stalemates of contemporary legal and economic thinking as any probable reader of his book must be cannot but be grateful to Mr. Arnold for this joyous carnage of clichés. Whatever afterthoughts may qualify his first, spontaneous approval, he will not begrudge the author sincerest thanks for releasing him — partly in fact, partly in fantasy — from that vast verbal oppression that Dickens in his day had some preliminary knowledge of when he pondered the circumlocution office.

The book runs through the thick of recent American economic history, though there are many rapid forays into other times and places — the primitives, the middle ages, the days of Adam Smith. In similar fashion the book runs a double ideological course. There is discussion of contemporary American maxims or principles of law and there is constant linkage of these principles with general problems of symbolism, with untiring emphasis on the fictional or mythological nature of our inherited social concepts and on our increasing need to circumvent them in a practical world which is no longer organized in the terms of their original implications. This nervous back and forth between the glare of the immediate present and fitful gleams out of the night of history, between the urgency of the immediate question and the stubbornness of the universal question, gives Mr. Arnold's writing its peculiar quality of intelligent haste. Calmly analytic minds may be more irritated than instructed by it in the end, but those of us who have at least a dash of the intuitive, who are not fearful of strategic overstatement, since statement and overstatement are themselves but symbolic steps in the passage of thought, will know how to assimilate it without disturbance, indeed with many hygienic chuckles.

The Folklore of Capitalism should not be dismissed as a legal sparrer's cynical holiday. We find its core of philosophy in these passages: "There

is plenty of 'realism' in this country today, but it is the realism that leads to cynicism. In other words, modern realists are still too emotionally bound by the mythology that the facts which their honesty compels them to admit only make them sad because the human race is not different" (page 390); and, "The greatest destroyer of ideals is he who believes in them so strongly that he cannot fit them to practical needs" (page 393). Mr. Arnold, in short, trusts life in its organizational forms and the pressures in that life more than formulations about it. He is a "cynic" not in the sense that he cheerfully finds men derelict to high principle but that he finds them persisting in verbal loyalty to gods turned ghosts.

Very effective, though perhaps overdone, is the author's armament of "debunking" words and phrases. A group of people who guard an ideology that is no longer relevant to human needs, say the more conservative justices of the Supreme Court or the current expositors of economic theory, constitute a "priesthood." The windings of legal procedure are a "ritual." Learned treatises of interpretation, particularly when such interpretation is more ingenious than obvious, build up an honored "literature." The conceptual content of such literature and, indeed, the habitual thinking of the majority of people about the nature and conduct of government and business are "mythology," which in its more remote and austere reaches is presided over by certain "divinities." Such divinities, say [146] democracy or the American constitution, are so variably interpretable that few need fear sacrilege in approaching them with invocations. The sort of man who is appealed to when a decision has to be made as to what literature must be selected in order than an orthodox mythology may be kept going with least strain to its presiding divinities is known as the "thinking man." Naturally, the abuses of language, the subtle confusion of the thing referred to (the "referent") with the means at hand for such reference (the "symbol," ordinarily a word or series of words), are pointed out. In this much talked about area (see, e. g., the chapter on "The Magic of Words" in Ogden and Richards' *Meaning of Meaning*) everybody can take comfort, it seems to us, from the thought that even the most subtle philosophers, mathematicians and logicians have been taken in at times by the pseudo-thingness of symbols. Mr. Arnold is particularly unfriendly to "polar words," those right-wrong, good-bad symbols which paint so lurid and inaccurate a reality. Alas! Are not all generic symbols, at last analysis, incurably polar in character?

Speaking of language, we may turn to a passage (pages 146–47) which seems to rest on the quaintest of misunderstandings of what linguistics is all about. “Mencken’s book, [*The American Language*],” says Mr. Arnold, “is outstanding because he is not interested in grammar or the correct use of words. History of the development of language is told not from the point of view of how it ought to be spoken, but how it is spoken. In reading this book, I obtained for the first time a grasp of language as a living force, reflecting the moods and spiritual struggles of a people in the strange new words, bad and good, which were constantly flooding in. Groups which experience the greatest conflict between respectable attitudes and practical needs are the source of most new words; i. e., the nonrespectable classes, engaged in *sub rosa* but very necessary social activities. Seeking a way to describe themselves, since society has denied them a position of dignity, they create a language of subtle satire and attack.” Quite aside from Mr. Arnold’s tribute to an admirable book, this passage harbors a number of very serious misconceptions. Linguists are not to be confused with grade school, high school, college, or literary preachers about “how language ought to be spoken.” What Mr. Arnold dismisses as “grammar or the correct use of words” is either wishful thinking about dignified language (e. g., rules like: “say “I shall go” but “you will go”) or a calm analysis of the relatively stable structural features of a language at a given time and place (e. g., rules like: “The man does,” not “The man go,” but “The men go,” not “The men goes”; or, in compounds of type “railroad” stress the first syllable, not the second). The former kind is of little or no interest to the linguist, who cares far less about the “ought” of speech than Mr. Arnold does. The latter kind is of great interest to the linguist, though it is probably too dull a business to stir Mr. Arnold’s pulse. The linguist must defend his sober science of analysis from confusion with the advice generally given by pedagogues and nice people generally. Mr. Arnold’s irritation is no more and no less justifiable than if he, in almost the same breath, derided chemistry, first, for its dullness and uselessness in working out the structural analysis of water; second, for its high-toned effrontery in trying to tell us that we ought to drink water rather than Scotch; and, third, wishes to goodness that chemistry might help us to understand why, in the long run, Scotch is sure to win out. To which Mr. Arnold would be the first to answer that chemistry does not properly include either ethics or history. The linguist’s modified answer is that linguistics is primarily concerned with structural analysis, not at all with ethics as such, and only in the second place with history. Fur-

ther, Mr. Arnold's conception of what constitutes significant linguistic history is highly selective, not to say picaresque and romantic. One would have thought it all but obvious that the most fundamental changes in speech are not concerned with words as such but with minute and cumulative [147] changes in sound patterns and in the formal patterns of words and sentences; further, that any important cultural changes, say the Renaissance influence on English culture in the sixteenth century or the impact of Christianity on hundreds of societies, bring with them numerous adaptations of the vocabulary. But we must cheerfully agree with Mr. Arnold if all that he is really doing is to plead for a more serious study of language as sociological factor and index. That is a large order and not in the least adequately taken care of by epigrammatic remarks about respectable people and bad words.

The title of Mr. Arnold's book and the whole tenor of its content lead us to expect an unusual degree of hard-boiledness or cool realism. Yet he is not only sometimes romantic, as we have just seen, but also metaphysical — or shall we say folkloristic? On page 25, for instance, he tentatively describes one of "the elements which all social organizations share in common" as "A creed or a set of commonly accepted rituals, verbal or ceremonial, which has the effect of making each individual feel an integral part of the group and which makes the group appear as a single unit. This is a unifying force and is as mysterious as the law of gravitation." In other words, it would seem, Mr. Arnold is not seriously interested in a patient research into the psychology of the individual and in a discovery of how and why it is that his daily relations with other individuals induce him, in the fulness of time, to feel his way with the symbolic instrumentality of such mental constructs as "society," "organization," and "culture." Why does Mr. Arnold's insight into the manifold abilities of men to kid themselves along suddenly desert him at this point? Can one not admit the extreme usefulness of the "folklore" of sociology and anthropology without being entranced by it into a sympathetic stare at the "mysteriousness" of the law of gravitation? If Mr. Arnold were a true mystic instead of a fragmentary one, we would have no criticism to offer, for to a mystic one thing is as mysterious and as necessary as another.

We may be pardoned, in concluding our remarks on *The Folklore of Capitalism*, if we suggest that its chief interest lies in its symptomatic character for an understanding of a widespread intellectual attitude in contemporary America. This attitude is pervaded by an almost morbid fear of formal analysis of any kind. Its urge is the manipulative urge of

organization, engineering efficiency is its one great value. An underlying spirit of fairness or decency is always present, not as following on principle but as irrationally bursting through in the moment of action. This attitude wills "realism" and hence protects itself with a skepticism that is anti-intellectualist but that is not proof against all manner of incursions from unacknowledged realms of wishful thinking. "Hard-boiled" is the ideal, "romantic" is the deed. As to history, it is not felt through as a vast cosmos of human experience but is rather intuited as a debris that rushes through the narrows of the present into an immediately impending fulfilment of desire.

Editorial Note

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Thurman W. Arnold (1891–1969) was an American lawyer and author, a member of the U. S. Court of Appeals, D. C., and a professor at Yale Law School.

APPENDIX

American Education and Culture John Dewey *The New Republic*, July 1, 1916

One can foretell the derision which will be awakened in certain quarters by a statement that the central theme of the current meeting of the National Educational Association is cultural education. What has culture to do with the quotidian tasks of millions of harassed pupils and teachers preoccupied with the routine of alphabetic combinations and figuring? What bond is there between culture and barren outlines of history and literature? So far the scene may be called pathetic rather than an occasion for satire. But one foresees the critics, the self-elected saving remnant, passing on to indignant condemnation of the voluntary surrender of our educational system to utilitarian ends, its prostitution to the demands of the passing moment and the cry for the practical. Or possibly the selection of cultural education as a theme of discourse will be welcome as a sign of belated repentance, while superior critics sorrowfully wonder whether the return to the good old paths is sought out too late.

To those who are in closer contact with the opinions which hold conscious sway in the minds of the great mass of teachers and educational leaders there is something humorous in the assumption that they are given over to worship of the vocational and industrial. The annual pilgrimage of the teachers of the country to European cathedral and art gallery is the authentic indication of the conscious estimate of the older ideal of culture. Nothing gets a hand so quickly in any gathering of teachers as precisely the sort of talk in which the critics engage. The shibboleths and the sentimentalities are held in common by critic and the workers criticized. "Culture and discipline" serve as emblems of a superiority hoped for or attained, and as catchwords to save the trouble of personal thought. Behind there appears a sense of some deficiency in our self-conscious devotion to retrospective culture. We protest too much. Our gestures betray the awkwardness of a pose maintained laboriously against odds. In contrast there is grace in the spontaneous uncouthness of barbarians whole-heartedly abandoned in their barbarism.

While the critics are all wrong about the conscious attitude and intent of those who manage our educational system, they are right about the powerful educational currents of the day. These cannot be called cultural:—not when measured by any standard drawn from the past. For these standards concern the past what *has* been said and thought—while what is alive and compelling in our education moves toward some undiscovered future. From this contrast between our conscious ideals and our tendencies in action spring our confusion and our blind uncertainties. We think we think one thing while our deeds require us to give attention to a radically different set of considerations. This intellectual constraint is the real foe to our culture. The beginning of culture would

be to cease plaintive eulogies of past culture, eulogies which carry only a few yards before they are drowned in the noise of the day, and essay an imaginative insight into the possibilities of what is going on so assuredly although so blindly and crudely.

The disparity between actual tendency and backward-looking loyalty carries within itself the whole issue of cultural education. Measured in other terms than that of some as yet unachieved possibility of just the forces from which sequestered culture shrinks in horror, the cause of culture is doomed so far as public education is concerned. Indeed, it hardly exists anywhere outside the pages of Mr. Paul Elmer More, and his heirs and assigns. The serious question is whether we may assist the vital forces into new forms of thought and sensation. It would be cruel were it not so impotent to assess stumbling educational efforts of the day by ideas of archaic origin when the need is for an idealized interpretation of facts which will reveal mind in those concerns which the older culture thought of as purely material, and perceive human and moral issues in what seem to be the purely physical forces of industry.

The beginning of a culture stripped of egoistic illusions is the perception that we have as yet no culture: that our culture is something to achieve, to create. This perception gives the national assembly of teachers representative dignity. Our school men and women are seen as adventuring for that which is not but which may be brought to be. They are not in fact engaged in protecting a secluded culture against the fierce forays of materialistic and utilitarian America. They are, so far as they are not rehearsing phrases whose meaning is forgot, endeavoring to turn these very forces into thought and sentiment. The enterprise is of heroic dimensions. To set up as protector of a shrinking classicism requires only the accidents of a learned education, the possession of leisure and a reasonably apt memory for some phrases, and a facile pen for others. To transmute a society built on an industry which is not yet humanized into a society which wields its knowledge and its industrial power in behalf of a democratic culture requires the courage of an inspired imagination.

I am one of those who think that the only test and justification of any form of political and economic society is its contribution to art and science—to what may roundly be called culture. That America has not yet so justified itself is too obvious for even lament. The explanation that the physical conquest of a continent had first to be completed is an inversion. To settle a continent is to put it in order, and this is a work which comes after, not before, great intelligence and great art. The accomplishment of the justification is then hugely difficult. For it means nothing less than the discovery and application of a method of subduing and settling nature in the interests of a democracy, that is to say of masses who shall form a community of directed thought and emotion in spite of being the masses. That this has not yet been effected goes without saying. It has never even been attempted before. Hence the puny irrelevancy that measures our striving with yard sticks handed down from class cultures of the past.

That the achievement is immensely difficult means that it may fail. There is no inevitable predestined success. But the failure, if it comes, will be the theme of tragedy and not of complacent lamentation nor wilful satire. For while success is not predestined, there are forces at work which are like destiny in their independence of conscious choice or wish. Not conscious intent, either perverse or wise, is forcing the realistic, the practical, the industrial, into education. Not conscious deliberation causes college presidents who devote commencement day to singing the praises of pure culture to spend their working days in arranging for technical and professional schools. It is not conscious

preference which leads school superintendents who deliver orations at teachers' meetings upon the blessings of old-fashioned discipline and culture to demand from their boards new equipment, new courses and studies of a more "practical" and appealing kind. Political and economic forces quite beyond their control are compelling these things. And they will remain beyond the control of any of us save as men honestly face the actualities and busy themselves with inquiring what education they impart and what culture may issue from *their* cultivation.

It is as elements in this heroic undertaking that current tendencies in American education can be appraised. Since we can neither beg nor borrow a culture without betraying both it and ourselves, nothing remains save to produce one. Those who are too feeble or too finicky to engage in the enterprise will continue their search for asylums and hospitals which they idealize into palaces. Others will either go their way still caught in the meshes of a mechanical industrialism, or will subdue the industrial machinery to human ends until the nation is endowed with soul.

Certain commonplaces must be reiterated till their import is acknowledged. The industrial revolution was born of the new science of nature. Any democracy which is more than an imitation of some archaic republican government must issue from the womb of our chaotic industrialism. Science makes democracy possible because it brings relief from depending upon massed human labor, because of the substitution it makes possible of inanimate forces for human muscular energy, and because of the resources for excess production and easy distribution which it effects. The old culture is doomed for us because it was built upon an alliance of political and spiritual powers, and equilibrium of governing and leisure classes, which no longer exists. Those who deplore the crudities and superficialities of thought and sensation which mark our day are rarely inhuman enough to wish the old régime back. They are merely unintelligent enough to want a result without the conditions which produced it, and in the face of conditions making the result no longer possible.

In short, our culture must be consonant with realistic science and with machine industry, instead of a refuge from them. And while there is no guaranty that an education which uses science and employs the controlled processes of industry as a regular part of its equipment will succeed, there is every assurance that an educational practice which sets science and industry in opposition to its ideal of culture will fail. Natural science has in its applications to economic production and exchange brought an industry and a society where quantity alone seems to count. It is for education to bring the light of science and the power of work to the aid of every soul that it may discover its quality. For in a spiritually democratic society every individual would realize distinction. Culture would then be for the first time in human history an individual achievement and not a class possession. An education fit for our ideal uses is a matter of actual forces not of opinions.

Our public education is the potential means for effecting the transfiguration of the mechanics of modern life into sentiment and imagination. We may, I repeat, never get beyond the mechanics. We may remain burly, merely vigorous, expending energy riotously in making money, seeking pleasure and winning temporary victories over one another. Even such an estate has a virility lacking to a culture whose method is renunciation, and whose triumph is finding a place of refuge. But it is not enough to justify a democracy as against the best of past aristocracies even though return to them is forever impossible. To bring to the consciousness of the coming generation something of the

potential significance of the life of to-day, to transmute it from outward fact into intelligent perception, is the first step in the creation of a culture. The teachers who are facing this fact and who are trying to use the vital unspiritualized agencies of to-day as means of effecting the perception of a human meaning yet to be realized are sharing in the act of creation. To perpetuate in the name of culture the tradition of aloofness from realistic science and compelling industry is to give them free course in their most unenlightened form. Not chiding but the sympathy and direction of understanding is what the harsh utilitarian and prosaic tendencies of present education require.

Section Five
Aesthetics

Richard Handler, editor

Percy Grainger and Primitive Music (1916)

I have often thought that one of the surest tests of a true musical instinct is the ability to sense melody and rhythm in the music of primitive peoples. The frequent presence of such disturbing elements as unfamiliar intonations, a too forceful handling of the voice, loud and monotonous drum or rattle accompaniments, and interspersed whoops prevent many a supposed lover of music, many an individual blessed with all the endowments of "musicianship" from perceiving the pure gold that lies buried only a little below the surface. In the measure that spontaneous aesthetic appreciation is independent of the bias determined by the conventional garb of art must such appreciation be deemed sincere and sound. Thousands of "art lovers" accept without question second and third rate productions, provided they be dressed in the usual accoutrements of art, who would shrink from a masterpiece treated in a totally different style. Hence it is not, as a rule, the musical amateur, learned or unlearned, who is the most ready to acknowledge the profoundly musical quality of much of the music of primitive folk, but rather the musical creator, the composer, whose musical learning does not sit so heavily on him as to crush his instinctive appreciation of the beautiful wherever and however it may be found. The case in music is precisely analogous to that in primitive plastic art. The layman who talks glibly of Rembrandts and Dürers would fain have us believe his soul is being constantly bathed in art, yet he finds some exquisite bit of West Coast Indian art merely "interesting" (generally a pretentious way of saying "funny") where the genuine artist frankly says "beautiful" or "great."

And so we need not be surprised to find a Debussy rejoicing in the exotic fragrance of javanese music or, to come nearer home, a MacDowell or Cadman finding frank inspiration in the tunes of the American Indian. There is, however, a gap between such aesthetic appreciation and the laborious field and laboratory study of primitive music undertaken by the musical ethnologist. The interest of a MacDowell and of a von Hornbostel do not readily or, at any rate, frequently combine. Hence my keen gratification at coming across an example of this potentially rare bird only recently, in looking through the July, 1915,

number (vol. 1, no. 3) of *The Musical Quarterly* (published by G. Schirmer, New York [593] and London). The purpose of this note is to call the attention of ethnologists who are interested in primitive music to a paper by the Australian composer Percy Grainger on "The Impress of Personality in Unwritten Music" (pp. 416-435). Grainger is well known in the musical world both as pianist and as orchestral composer; he is particularly noteworthy for his daring and extensive use in his orchestral scores of such unusual instruments as the guitar and xylophone. In the article referred to Grainger shows himself to be not merely a cultivated musician who is half-condescendingly disposed to take from the storehouse of folk and primitive music a hint or two for his own purposes but, on the contrary, an enthusiastic and painstaking collector of such music who freely acknowledges the complexity of the problem, and is convinced of the necessity of studying with all seriousness the subtleties of intonation and rhythm which such music presents. Grainger's ideal falls nowise short of that of the scientific ethnologist. And his sympathetic understanding of the primitive background again creates a common bond with the professed student of primitive culture. I shall be content, for the rest, to let Grainger speak for himself, so as to give the reader of the *American Anthropologist* some idea of how a topic near to him strikes one of the foremost of English-speaking composers.

Symptomatic of the general attitude of the musical routinier towards the objective study of all music but that of the academy is the following (p. 433):

Experience of primitive music is not in any way thrust upon the budding musician. When I was a boy in Frankfort my teacher wanted me to enter for (I think it was) the Mendelssohn Prize for piano playing, and I remember asking him: "If I should win, would they let me study Chinese music in China with the money?" And his reply: "No, they don't give prizes to idiots."

The most enthusiastic interpreter of primitive life could hardly do greater justice than Grainger to the superior possibility of individual participation in art among primitive communities than in our own. He says (p. 418):

With regard to music, our modern Western civilization produces, broadly speaking, two main types of educated men. On the one hand the professional musician or leisured amateur-enthusiast who spends the bulk of his waking hours making music, and on the other hand

all those many millions of men and women whose lives are far too overworked and arduous, or too completely immersed in the ambitions and labyrinths of our material civilization, to be able to devote any reasonable proportion of their time to music or artistic expression of any kind at all. How different from either of these types is the bulk of uneducated and [594] "uncivilized" humanity of every race and color, with whom natural musical expression may be said to be a universal, highly prized habit that seldom, if ever, degenerates into the drudgery of a mere means of livelihood. ... Now primitive modes of living, however terrible some of them may appear to some educated and refined people, are seldom so barren of "mental leisure" as the bulk of our civilized careers.

Of the complexity of "unwritten" music and of the incapacity of the general public, through sheer ignorance, to fathom and enjoy this complexity, Grainger remarks (p. 417):

While so many of the greatest musical geniuses listen spellbound to the unconscious, effortless musical utterances of primitive man, the general educated public, on the other hand, though willing enough to applaud adaptations of folk songs by popular composers, shows little or no appreciation of such art in its unembellished original state, when, indeed, it generally is far too complex (as regards rhythm, dynamics, and scales) to appeal to listeners whose ears have not been subjected to the ultra-refining influence of close association with the subtle developments of our latest Western art-music. ... As a rule folk-music finds its way to the hearts of the general public and of the less erudite musicians only after it has been "simplified" (generally in the process of notation by well-meaning collectors ignorant of those more ornate subtleties of our notation alone fitted for the task) out of all resemblance to its original self.

The following is of interest to the folk-psychologist, though personally I am inclined to believe Grainger may go too far in his generalization (p. 423):

The whole art [of folk and primitive music] is in a constant state of flux; new details being continually added while the old ones are abandoned. These general conditions prevail wherever unwritten music is found, and though I may never have heard Greenland or Red Indian music I feel pretty confident that as long as it is not too strongly influenced by the written music of our Western civilization it will evince on inspection much the same symptoms as those dis-

played by the folk-music of British, Russian or Scandinavian peasants, or by natives of the South Seas, and we may always be sure that the singing of (let us say) an unsophisticated Lincolnshire agriculturalist of the old school will in essentials approximate more closely to that of Hottentots or other savages than it will to the art-music of an educated member of his own race living in a neighboring town.

My own experience would lead me rather to emphasize the quite definite stylistic peculiarities of the folk-music of different tribes and peoples. However, much depends on the perspective adopted. The measuring rod of the musician must needs be differently graduated from that of the ethnologist. [595]

For the following breath of fresh air let us be duly thankful (pp. 427-430):

What life is to the writer, and nature to the painter, unwritten music is to many a composer: a kind of mirror of genuineness and naturalness. Through it alone can we come to know something of the incalculable variety of man's instincts for musical expression. From it alone can we glean some insight into what suggests itself as being "vocal" to natural singers whose technique has never been exposed to the influence of arbitrary "methods." In the reiterated physical actions of marching, rowing, reaping, dancing, cradle-rocking, etc., that called its work-songs, dance-music, ballads and lullabies into life, we see before our very eyes the origin of the regular rhythms of our art-music and of poetic meters, and are also able to note how quickly these once so rigid rhythms give place to rich and wayward irregularities of every kind as soon as these bodily movements and gestures are abandoned and the music which originally existed but as an accompaniment to them continues independently as art for art's sake. In such examples as the Polynesian part-songs we can trace the early promptings of polyphony and the habits of concerted improvisation to their very source, and, since all composing is little else than "frozen inspiration," surely this latter experience is of supreme importance; the more so, if there again should dawn an age in which the bulk of civilized men and women will come to again possess sufficient mental leisure in their lives to enable them to devote themselves to artistic pleasures on so large a scale as do the members of uncivilized communities.

Then the spectacle of one composer producing music for thousands of musical drones (totally uncreative themselves and hence compara-

tively out of touch with the whole phenomenon of artistic creation) will no longer seem normal or desirable, and then the present gulf between the mentality of composers and performers will be bridged.

The fact that art-music has been written down instead of improvised has divided musical creators and executants into two quite separate classes: the former autocratic and the latter comparatively slavish. It has grown to be an important part of the office of the modern composer to leave as few loopholes as possible in his works for the idiosyncrasies of the performer. The considerable increase of exactness in our modes of notation and tempo and expression marks has all been directed toward this end, and though the state of things obtaining among trained musicians for several centuries has been productive of isolated geniuses of an exceptional greatness unthinkable under primitive conditions, it seems to me that it has done so at the expense of the artistry of millions of performers, and to the destruction of natural sympathy and understanding between them and the creative giants.

Perhaps it would not be amiss to examine the possible reason for the ancient tendency of cultured musicians gradually to discontinue improvisation, and seek some explanation for the lack of variety with regard to scales, rhythms and dynamics displayed by our western art-music when compared with the resources of [596] more primitive men in these directions. I believe the birth of harmony in Europe to have been accountable for much; and truly, the acquisition of this most transcendental and soul-reaching of all our means of musical expression has been worth any and every sacrifice. We know how few combinations of intervals sounded euphonious to the pioneers of harmonic consciousness, and can imagine what concentration they must have brought to bear upon accuracies of notation and reliability of matters of pitch in ensemble; possibly to the exclusion of any very vital interest in individualistic traits in performances or in the more subtle possibilities of dynamics, color and irregular rhythms.

With the gradual growth of the all-engrossing chord-sense the power of deep emotional expression through the medium of an unaccompanied single melodic line would likewise tend to atrophy; which perhaps explains why many of those conversant with the strictly solo performances of some branches of unwritten music miss in the melodic invention of the greatest classical geniuses — passionately as they may adore their masterliness in other directions — the presence

of a certain satisfying completeness (from the standpoint of pure line) that may often be noticed in the humblest folk-song.

It always seems to me strange that modern composers, with the examples of Bach's Chaconne and Violin and 'Cello Sonatas as well as of much primitive music before them, do not more often feel tempted to express themselves extensively in single line or unison without harmonic accompaniment of any kind. I have found this a particularly delightful and inspiring medium to work in, and very refreshing after much preoccupation with richly polyphonic styles. Now that we have grown so skilful in our treatment of harmony that this side of our art often tends to outweigh all our other creative accomplishments, some of us feel the need of replenishing our somewhat impoverished resources of melody, rhythm and color, and accordingly turn, and seldom in vain, for inspiration and guidance to those untutored branches of our art that have never ceased to place their chief reliance in these elements. I have already referred to the possibilities of "inexact unison" evinced by Maori and Egyptian music. Similar rich and varied lessons might be learned from Red Indian, East Indian, Javanese, Burmese, and many other Far Eastern musics.

Being, moreover, the fortunate heirs to the results of those centuries of harmonic experiments in which ever more and more discordant combinations of intervals came to be regarded as concordant, we are now at last in a position from which we can approach such music as the Rarotongan part-songs and similar music of a highly complex discordant nature with that broad-minded toleration and enthusiastic appreciation which our painters and writers brought to bear on the arts of non-Europeans so many generations before our musicians could boast of an equally humble, cultured and detached attitude.

A broad-minded tolerance and an enthusiasm for the aesthetic value of all that is genuine and distinctive in art, whether or not countenanced by academic sanction, are here united with a sure sense of history that, on the whole, seems rather uncommon among creative musicians. [597]

I cannot close this already lengthy note without quoting from the last part of the paper (pp. 433-434):

I believe the time will soon be ripe for the formation of a world-wide International Musical Society for the purpose of making all the world's music known to all the world by means of imported performances, phonograph and gramophone records and adequate not-

ations. Quite small but representative troupes of peasant and native musicians, dancers, etc., could be set in motion on "world tours" to perform in the subscription concerts of such a society in the art-centers of all lands. One program might consist of Norwegian fiddling, pipe-playing, cattle-calls, peasant dances and ballad singing, another of various types of African drumming, marimba and zanze playing, choral songs and war dances, and yet another evening filled out with the teeming varieties of modes of singing and playing upon plucked string instruments indigenous to British India; and so on, until music lovers everywhere could form some accurate conception of the as yet but dimly guessed multitudinous beauties of the world's contemporaneous total output of music.

Quite apart from the pleasure and veneration such exotic arts inspire purely for their own sake, those of us who are genuinely convinced that many of the greatest modern composers ... owe much to their contact with one kind or other of unwritten music, must, if we wish to behave with any generosity toward the future, face the fact that coming generations will not enjoy a first-hand experience of primitive music such as those amongst us can still obtain who are gifted with means, leisure or fighting enthusiasm. Let us therefore not neglect to provide composers and students to come with the best *second-hand* material we can. Fortunes might be spent, and well spent, in having good gramophone and phonograph records taken of music from everywhere, and in having the contents of these records noted down by brilliant yet painstaking musicians; men capable of responding to unexpected novelties and eager to seize upon and preserve *in their full strangeness and otherness* just those elements that have least in common with our own music. We see on all hands the victorious on-march of our ruthless western civilization (so destructively intolerant in its colonial phase) and the distressing spectacle of the gentle but complex native arts wilting before its irresistible simplicity.

Grainger's enthusiastic proposal doubtless meets with little more than a humorous smile from the average musician. To the ethnologist it opens up a vista full of interest and profit.

Editorial Note

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Literary Realism

We are no longer under any illusions as to realism, naturalism, and the other ism's in the literary art. Whether or not the now ancient realism of Zola, the Hauptmann of the earlier plays, and the rest is really, as some would have it, a new-fangled romanticism, the truth of the matter is that we are no longer interested, if indeed we ever sincerely were, in mere chunks of life, be they represented with all the photographic fidelity you please, in mere assemblages of human happenings selected from a hundred tiresome notebooks. We want the eager scent, the indefinable feel of life, to be sure — want it more imperiously than ever before — but are careless of the outer garment in which this feel is clothed. We want to sense in our characters and motives the play of fundamental human impulses. So long as the literary craftsman seizes firmly on these and makes them real for us, in other words brings us vividly face to face with certain aspects of ourselves, he is at liberty to be as romantic or symbolistic or naturalistic as he likes. He may serve his dish in whatever sauce he favors. The Maeterlinck of *The Intruder* is a symbolist, as labels go, but I find him a more ruthless realist than the muck-raker of *Mrs. Warren's Profession*. And you may characterize the Claudel of *The Tidings Brought to Mary* as a modern mystic, but he bares the soul of man unflinchingly for all that; he is a truer realist than the playwright of *Ghosts*. Where the older realism took infinite pains with the accidents of time and place that lend color to the interplay of human wills, the newer realism, or rather the newer trend in literary art (for it would be forcing the facts to speak of a specific neo-realistic school), is often content merely to suggest these accidents and to focus searchingly, sometimes impertinently, on the birth and growth and the decay and death of passions, of attitudes, of human relations — in short, on the significant aspects of our psychic life. *Spoon River Anthology* and *Jean-Christophe* well typify this modern trend. In them the body is not so much given a soul as is the soul perforce provided with a body; the habitation of the body is often not much more than suggested. I find this newer realism more “real” than the other. Which is the “real” house — the thing of foundation and girders and roofing not seen by the eye,

or the visible, respectably clad thing of brick rows and windows and green shutters?

If the outer garb in which the writer clothes his analysis of the life of the soul is relatively indifferent to us, this does not at all mean that certain styles of certain techniques may not be intrinsically better adapted than others to the realistic ideal. For one thing it is obvious that the dramatic form most adequately meets the requirements of realism in its usual sense. In a sincere modern play there is no room for mere verbiage or theatrical sleight of hand. Each phrase should come out clear and sharp as a rapier thrust, revealing by its gleam the personality of the speaker. The technical limitations of the dramatic form, the removal of all descriptive and most narrative matter from the text of the work to a primitive appeal to the eye and the necessity of developing character and motive through self-revelation, give it an admirable conciseness and verisimilitude that the great dramatists have cherished. A false note is instantly detected, just as in life the slightest disturbance of the credible flow of things startles us. Yet this very sensitiveness of the dramatic form to the relentless demands of current reality strains its capacity to represent the more fundamental factors of psychic reality. Men and women do not in real life wear their psyches on their sleeves. The great verities of life are not bandied about in speech. They are revealed in the unuttered promptings of individual souls, in half-ashamed, often incompletely self-apprehended, impulses and fancies. No wonder then, that an Ibsen, more concerned with probing the depths of the soul than the chronicling of surface reality or with technical theatrical evolutions (master technician though he be), has been constrained at times to push his dialogue beyond the realm of the strictly plausible, of the strictly realistic, to translate unspoken thoughts, feelings, impulses into terms imposed by the medium of his art form — spoken dialogue. The more "real" a realistic dramatist wishes to be, the less merely realistic he can afford to be. An ironical contradiction, but an inevitable one. Inevitable, indeed, unless we frankly deny to the stage the right or the inherent capacity to reveal psychic realism at its profoundest. It is significant that the keenest modern playwrights have most deeply felt this curious dilemma and have sought to escape from it, with varying degrees of consistency, by an abandonment of realism in its narrower sense. Hence such allegorizing extravaganzas as *Peer Gynt*, hence the symbolistic play of Maeterlinck and the mystery play of Claudel, hence too the Shavian farce, most pregnantly real when most outrageously unrealistic.

And yet, in spite of these and other types of escape from the normal realistic drama, whatever their purely aesthetic excellences, the theoretical ideal of accomplishment in the dramatic form would seem to be the union of flawless, punctilious realism with the unforced revelation, whether by subtle implication or otherwise, of the most powerful, the most significant determinants of the life of the soul. Has this idea ever been realized? I am not so sure that it has; not improbably it is an impossible one. Of a serious attempt to dramatically portray life as it really and unpretentiously is, quite without any admixture of the "grand style," there can be no serious talk until the latter part of the nineteenth century. That the Greek tragedians, Shakespeare, and Goethe were magnificently "real" it would be impertinent to point out, but slavish adherence to the humble actualities of life was not an ideal sought by them. And Ibsen, the master realist of dramatic literature, makes no insignificant demands on our bread-and-butter credulity. Why deny it? I am afraid we sometimes allow ourselves, willing captives, to be hoodwinked by his superb technique. Does he not taste a bit "theatrical" every now and then? Strindberg seems not essentially different in this respect for all his brutal frankness. But there is little comfort to be had making the rounds. Nothing is more depressing than the discovery that hardly a single realistic play remains strictly realistic when the depths of the soul are being plumbed, when the moment of revelation arrives. Perhaps Schnitzler in his *Lonely Way* comes the most perilously near to the impossible ideal — at least nothing occurs to me at the moment that so fuses the casual commonplaces of everyday intercourse with a sense of the unutterable longings and fateful limitations of life. Perhaps Chekhov also solves or nearly solves the problem in the wistful *Seagull*.

It may be objected that our standpoint is unreasonable, that we can hardly expect the dramatist to show us people who talk about the weather or the price of potatoes and at the same time reveal to us their loves and gnashing hatreds and hypocrisies unknown to themselves. This is impossible, on the stage. That is precisely why *the drama cannot portray real life in its fulness*. It can be meticulously realistic, in which case it does not plumb deep; or it tears the soul to shreds, but in an atmosphere which is higher, lower, at any rate other than that of the human world we know.

Evidently we want some form of literary expression which has as few purely technical limitations as possible, a medium so flexible as to mould itself to whatever uses we will. It must be capable of the clean objectivity of realistic drama, it must allow of the conveyance of all

nuances of the mind and heart, and it must above all provide us, explicitly or implicitly, with a profound understanding of the causal nexus of human relations. Need one say that the narrative form, or a form built up on a primarily narrative basis, most adequately fulfils these requirements? For us of today this necessarily means prose narrative — the short story and the novel. The poetic epic, so powerful an implement in the past, has, as a form, practically outlived its significance. To most of us there is something inherently incongruous in chaining the expression of the jostling, hurrying stream of life to an artificially measured form.

Prose fiction is easily the greatest common denominator of all forms of literary art. No doubt it is a leveler, which means that it is compelled to forego much of the particular flavor of the more distinguished forms. The loss in formal individuality is nevertheless more than counterbalanced by the added facility, flexibility, and completeness of expression. The sheer narrative gives us the spectacle of life; motivation can be readily worked in by added comment; where necessary, the prose can rise to impassioned lyric heights; skilfully constructed dialogue in fiction may have all the verve of dramatic dialogue. Prose fiction occupies the same relative position in literature that belongs to orchestral music in the realm of music generally. The string quartet, the unaccompanied chorus, the pianoforte solo all have their individual aromas that are only in part reproduced in the heavier and more nuanced fragrance of the orchestra; yet there can be no question of the generally greater musical serviceableness of the latter. Needless to say, it would be unwise to press the analogy.

Editorial Note

Previously unpublished; from a typescript draft with ms. editorial changes in the possession of the Sapir family. This is Part I of a longer essay; part II was published as "Realism in Prose Fiction" (Sapir 1917f), which follows in this volume.

Realism in Prose Fiction

Prose fiction is the vehicle *par excellence* for a realistic ideal. But I wish to call special attention to a somewhat embarrassing feature of the realistic technique of nearly all prose fiction, further to suggest a method — not a wholly new one — for the development of a fictional technique that differs materially from the normal, excelling it, in my opinion, in its purely psychological possibilities. If one rummages in his memory of short stories and novels — such of them as can be fairly conceded to strive for realism — he will, I believe be prepared to admit the justice of a somewhat unexpected thesis, that those succeed best in giving a sense of the flow and depth of inner life, in attaining both outer and inner realism, that do with the smallest number of essential characters, or, to put it rather differently, that do not attempt to individualize all the characters with equal care. The thesis will not hold rigorously, to be sure, but in a large way it undoubtedly possesses much truth. In the measure that it is sound, it is merely the symptom of a wider principle, which we shall define in a moment.

What gives a play its power of realistic illusion? Evidently the simple fact that the action and dialogue are directly revealed to us, not left to the imagination. This means that we can readily identify ourselves with the various characters as they follow one another. Being passive spectators, our minds work kaleidoscopically without serious effort, without too great an exercise of creative imagination. The drama is predigested food. For the lyric poem a greater degree of creative imagination is required of the reader. He must identify the mood of the poem with a potential mood of his own. As a rule, he is aided in this task by the singleness of the mood represented. Economy of attention makes for strength and vividness of mood-realization. Thus, the essential technique of both the drama and the lyric makes it a simple matter for us to live through the experiences that the artist aims to have us feel and sense with him.

What are the tacit assumptions in fiction? Generally speaking, the writer does not identify himself, and through himself the reader, with a central character alone but claims an unconditional omniscience. He enters with equal freedom into the psychic privacy of all his characters.

His outlook upon the events and motives that comprise the narrative seems to be directed now by one of his characters, now by another. This conventional omniscience of the author's goes by the name of objectivity. It is a power that the reader is supposed to share with him; indeed, it is considered so much of a *sine qua non* in the art of story-telling that it can hardly be said to be generally recognized as a tacit assumption at all. The reader, at the mercy of his omniscient guide, turns one imaginative somersault after another. Hardly has he ensconced himself in the head and heart of one individual, hardly has he begun to feel the warmth of vicarious self-consciousness, when he is mercilessly bundled out of his retreat and required to take up new quarters. Incidentally he is asked to cut his former self dead, at any rate to exhibit no more than a purely external acquaintance with him. Needless to say, he may be called upon at any moment to race back into his old skin, or even to adopt a third alias, a fourth — indeed, there is no limit to the demands made upon his reincarnative capacity but the charity of the writer. All this makes good gymnastics for the reader, and he develops a flexible, bouncing multi-personality that keeps him ever alert. There is not one of us who has not rejoiced in the exhilaration of this exercise.

But let us not forget that the test of a truly realistic technique is the relative ease with which the reader or hearer or spectator can be made to live through the experiences, thoughts, feelings of the [504] characters. He must himself be these personalities and develop as them. In the drama, as we have seen, this self-identification with a number of personalities is rendered a comparatively easy matter by the very nature of dramatic technique. In fiction, however, it requires a more distinct effort of the imagination to project oneself into a character's soul life. To do this for several characters and to shift rapidly about from one psyche to another may be fatiguing. More than that, it is, psychologically considered, a not altogether convincing procedure. Once we have identified ourselves with a definite personality, our imaginative pride demands, provided always that the artist can hold our interest, that we be left to the isolation imposed by our new shell, that we watch the progress of events from our own point of vantage and follow the psychic lives of the other characters, not as revealed by themselves, but as affecting or as reflected in the soul that we have made our own. If the artist chooses to impose this limitation on the narrative form, two things inevitably result. The arena crowded with significant characters, one of the features of the older, romantic and semi-realistic, types of fiction, becomes an impossibility. It is significant of a striving for a

subtler understanding of reality that modern fiction has, on the whole, progressively moved away from this crowding of the arena. Further, the degree of individualization of the characters needs to be carefully shaded. It will not do to bring them all into the foreground, for that would belie our naive outlook on our environment. The self stands strongest in the light. Further removed are a small number of individualities whose lives are closely interwoven with that of the self but whose inner experiences can only be inferred, sometimes truly (that is, in a manner roughly coinciding with the viewpoints of their own selves), more often mistakenly. Still further removed are a larger number of personalities whose inner life is of little or no consequence to the central self, whose only function is to lend dash and color to the stream of daily experience that makes up the outer life of this self. And in the dim background bob up and down the merest ghosts of psychic entities, pale gleams, fragments of a suggested multitudinous world beyond. So we are fated by self-consciousness and the limitations of attention to live our life. So we may be made to live an imagined world at the artist's bidding. This psychic perspective is of greater importance than the unity of plot and the rest of the academic requirements of literary art. For want of it many a well-conceived narrative, excellently motivated, proves "jumbly." In a picture everything is illumined by a single light that has direction. We would not think much of an exterior in which the central figure is lit up by daylight that runs counter to several subordinate daylights showing up the rest of the group. Yet we do not seem to have developed a very keen sense of the value of the strict analogue in literary art of consistent lighting — a self-consciousness that sets all the elements of inner and outer life in comprehensible, livable relations. Singleness of outlook by no means limits the writer to the short story or to labors of unambitious scope. Indeed, one of the Works which seem best to answer to our ideal, though it has not by any means altogether eliminated cross-lights, is a prose epic in ten volumes — "Jean-Christophe."

At this point the reader may object that while this method pretends to be sweepingly realistic, to aim to grasp a bit of life and imprison it in narrative form, it yet is the merest subjectivism, an egoist's dream in which everything is hopelessly out of plumb, in which the valid relations of the objective world are badly muddled. Nor would he be altogether wrong. And yet, what is life, as we really and individually know it, but precisely "an egoist's dream in which the valid relations of the objective world are badly muddled"? Objectivity, one might say, is romance. But

he would need to add that we crave and demand this romantic objectivity, this mad seeing of things "as they really are," and that the literary artist has therefore a perfect right to choose between rigorous realism, the method that is frankly subjective, and objective realism, the romance of reality. There is, indeed, always room for the narrative embodying more than one psychological viewpoint, for the "cross-light" technique. Some of us, however, [505] will continue to look upon the subjective, or better "single-light," technique as the more subtle and aesthetically satisfying.

Yet it is at least possible to combine the peculiar advantages of these two contrasting techniques by the use of a third method of realistic representation. Look at the three human beings seated around a dinner table, nibbling at jejune bits of conversation. If you and I, like the psychologist of the behaviorist persuasion, merely described what we saw and heard, the reader of our story would not thank us. Insipid twaddle he would call it, for all our pains. If we identify ourselves with the host and take the reader into our confidence, revealing to him the stormy soul life hurtling along under the placid surface of conventional table talk, he would begin to feel interested. Yet he might tire of so purely one-sided, so merely subjective an interpretation of what was happening at the dinner table. On the other hand, if we identify ourselves now with the host, now with the hostess, now with the guest, pretending omniscience, some of us get restive, say "jumbly," and talk of cross-lights. What if we tell it all three times — as seen, heard, and felt by the host, by the hostess, and by the guest? Should we not succeed in being subjective in three different ways, in other words, in being objective? For may not objectivity be defined as the composite picture gained by laying a number of objectivities on top of one another, the most romantic of all wish-fulfillments, the successive jumping out of our skin in as many distinct manners as we fancy? Thus we reclaim the gift of omniscience that we had modestly discarded for the "one-light" technique, but with a difference. Before, we let our nine lives out of the bag all at once, now we live them in succession.

The reader will not fail to have observed that we are not dealing with an altogether novel literary device. It is as old as "The Ring and the Book" and has latterly been the subject of experiment at the hands of Arnold Bennett and Joseph Conrad. Yet I doubt if the tremendous possibilities of "The Ring and the Book" method of the conveyance of a certain attitude toward realism have been clearly recognized. The method is of far greater significance than as a more or less interesting

technical device; it is one of the major approaches to a profound and all-embracing realistic art. It sacrifices neither the depth, the inner truth, of subjective realism, nor the external completeness of motivation of objective realism. It unites the two in a new synthesis of boundless resources. As a method for the artistic presentation of ideas and the analysis of life, it is bound to come into its own and reap a large harvest. That it can never become *the* method of narrative fiction is obvious, if only because it violates what we may call, with apologies to the jargon of the economists, the law of diminishing returns in narrative interest. Let us acquaint ourselves with some of its implications.

One thing is obvious enough. This method of varied repetition makes somewhat serious demands on the technical ability of the writer. Mere repetition of incident and dialogue with appropriate variations in motivation is out of the question. No mere human beings would long tolerate the resulting dullness, were they animated by the best of wills. One of the great tasks of the literary craftsman working with the normal narrative technique is to make a satisfactory synthesis of the disparate elements — of character, incident, and motive — that go to make up his story. He is always fearful lest he fail, explicitly or implicitly, to arrange his materials so as to bring out his point with maximum effect. The weaving of threads becomes an obsession with him. In our suggested method of repetition, however, the threads need rather to be unraveled. The total material to be put before the reader must be distributed, with naturalness and nicety, among the successive versions. In this way each version brings something new with it, while the actual repetitions must be charged with ever-changing significance. Needless to say, the arrangement of versions would normally be such as to produce the effect of cumulative energy, of a steadily growing comprehension of the meaning of the whole. Like all inductive processes, the method requires a high degree of mental alertness in the reader, an alertness that finds its reward in the fullness of realization finally attained. [506] Attention may be called to a further technical feature of interest. In the usual narrative it is always difficult, sometimes impossible, to avoid explicit analysis of character and motive. Even when we cordially like such analysis, we cannot altogether ward off a sneaking irritation at the disturbing influence it exercises on the flow of the narrative. Our method reduces the necessity of explicit analysis to a minimum. The tacit comparison of even two skilfully constructed versions gives opportunity for a wealth of implications, many of which would need express mention in a single version. We gain a perspective of motive as we pass from one subjective

viewpoint to another, just as we gain our knowledge of space relations by shifting the angle from which we look at a number of objects.

There are many other interesting corollaries of the method. There is one in particular that should appeal mightily as opening up exquisite possibilities of a purely aesthetic order. We have all of us often observed the peculiar individuality that a specific light lends an object. A house is not the same thing in the chilly gray of dawn, in the blazing light of a clear noon, in the soft glow of sunset; it is not the same thing under a hard winter sky as in the hazy warmth of summer. Each version of a repeated story is doubly subjective. The focal character brings with him not merely a psychic perspective, a center of motivation, he brings with him also a temperament and a mood. His version receives an emotional atmosphere all its own. As we pass from one version to another, we not only shift our standpoint, we also attend in a different mood. This feature of change of emotional approach can be utilized to give the most profound, the most poignant interpretations of life. One and the same series of events may be apperceived in varying, even contradictory, manner — as a merry jest, a tragedy, a clever play of circumstance, an irritating bungle.

Need one say that in the promised land is displayed a signboard bearing the following inscription, in letters writ large: "Tinkers beware. Only artists allowed"?

Editorial Note

Originally published in *The Dial* 62, 503–506 (1917). The previously unpublished "Literary Realism" was the first part of an essay of which this article was Part II.

The Twilight of Rhyme

In a time that now seems strangely remote I happened to drop in on a meeting of an Ottawa debating club in which President Wilson's peace note to the belligerent nations was being discussed. After we had been treated to a couple of innocently academic utterances, the floor was taken by a rather elderly, choleric-looking Englishman of very determined manner and voice. He woke us up. In a rambling discourse that had little connection with the ostensible subject of debate, he aired his views and feelings mightily. He convinced those of us that had a mind to be convinced that President Wilson's policy had been marked by a consistent pusillanimity worthy only of contempt, that the American people as a whole (and he knew all about it, for he had only recently visited the United States) were criminally lukewarm about the war, and that the only permanent hope for world peace lay, not in any professorial, Wilsonite notes, but in the strong arm of British sea-power. All of which, it need scarcely be said, was liberally punctuated by blazing eyes, waving arms, and clarion intonations. Some of us later, incautiously and vainly, looked for an intelligible argument or two in the Englishman's flow of rhetoric. No matter — we were all carried away at the moment, and when he ended up with a triumphant snort and a bang, our answering applause was nothing if not sincere. Only the cultured elite can resist mere eloquence. I lay no claim to membership in that very exclusive species of humanity. Yet I was vain enough to take a certain pride in my failure to respond as unreservedly as most of the audience to our orator's fiery outburst of British patriotism. It was the old man's fault. Had he not quoted rhymed poetry at the tail end of his peroration, I should have drowned with the rest. That poetry of his was just the straw needed for a drowning man's clutch. It tided me over nicely. Indeed, after a fitting interval of surcharged silence, the memory of those rhymes, still tingling like a box on the ear, inspired me with courage to get up and, in the very teeth of the storm raised by the great man, to put in an apologetic word for Mr. Wilson.

This was what the orator quoted, with a fervor that sent shivers down our backs:

Breathes there a man with soul so dead
 Who never to himself hath said,
 "This is my own, my native land!"

and some more to the same effect. "Aha!" said I to myself, "is it some of Scott's old doggerel you are trying to palm off on us?" But it was Max Eastman who was uppermost in my thoughts just then. His "Lazy Verse" crusade had branched off even into the wilds of Canada and I was still vicariously smarting from the whip blows he had administered the lazy practitioners of the free-verse habit. Quick as lightning I saw my chance; in a second I had Mr. Eastman by the throat. Here was a moment of intense social consciousness, [99] of patriotic emotion vivid and sincere, demanding aesthetic resources, it would seem, for its consummate expression. The old man, in his instinctive groping for a climax, felt the need too — and chose a bungling anticlimax! Had he but called in the aid of measured blank verse or, preferably, free verse, he might have succeeded in producing a truly climactic effect. But what had such inane jingles as dead—said, shed—bed, Ted—Fred, to do with the expression of heightened feeling? What concern had we, stirred to the patriotism that dealt and suffered death, to do with pretty boudoir tricks and rococo curtseys? It was the most magnificent test case one could have desired. The verse came quite unexpectedly, the emotion was already there to be definitely crystallized. In my own case, alas! it suffered collapse. Evidently rhyme had *not* stood the test. Mr. Eastman, in so far as he lays stress on rhyme as a sincere aesthetic device, might question the diagnostic value of my experience. He might accuse the evident tawdriness of the lines themselves of the disconcerting effect produced upon me, not to speak of other psychological analyses less flattering to my aesthetic sensibility. No doubt the lines stand in somewhat helpless contrast to the emotion they are supposed to call forth, but I do think it was quite specifically the rhyme as such that shunted me on the wrong track.

Rhyme, I decided, might do very well for certain lighter forms of poetry, the fluffy ruffles of literary art — drinking songs, sentimental but not too seriously felt love ditties, *vers de société*, popular ballads, and quite a number of other genres one might mention. In short, its value seemed purely decorative at best and not indispensably decorative at that. I decided that one could allow for it where graceful trifling or purely technical sound-effects were in order, but that its employment in conjunction with deep feeling was perilous, to say the least. I had for years had an instinctive dislike for the jingle of rhyme in all but the

lighter forms of verse, and it seemed that my dislike had experimentally justified itself in a flash of insight.

Incidentally, I could not help feeling impressed by the purely ethnological consideration that rhyme is rarely, if ever, found in the lyrics of primitive people, whereas there is probably not a tribe that does not possess its stock of measured songs. Whatever our attitude to the problem of strictly measured or polyphonic verse in our own artistic levels, it is very evident that a set rhythm at least does answer to a primal human trend, that rhyme, on the other hand, is no more than a bit of technical flavoring that happened to become habitual in Occidental poetry at a certain period not so far removed from the present after all. Rhyme is merely a passing notion of our own particular cultural development, like chivalry or alchemy or falconry or musical canons or a thousand-and-one other interesting notions now dead or moribund. Some of these notions, like rhyme, still vegetate (for that matter, canons are still composed by students of counterpoint), but they cannot be allowed to cumber the earth forever. No doubt rhyme will some day be thrown into the limbo that harbors its first cousin, alliteration. Some day all sensitive ears will be as much outraged by its employment in passionate verse as by the musical expression of flaming desire in the pattern of a formal fugue.

Mr. Eastman contends that rhyme, like rhythm, has a certain disciplinary value which is of direct aesthetic benefit, in so far as it imposes a wholesome restraint on the artist. Rhyme sets definite technical limitations that tax the poet's ingenuity. He has to solve technical problems, and in their solution he is braced to the utmost limit of his powers of concentration, of clarity of vision, of self-expression. A chastening halt is put to a too easily satisfied, a too glibly facile flow of expression. The aesthetic product, which must of course appear perfectly natural and unhampered, is all the more refined and potent for the painful struggle that has preceded its birth. The dynamic value of the overcoming of conflict in aesthetic production is by no means to be lightly set aside. Where Mr. Eastman errs, it seems to me, is in the narrow and specific applications he makes of the principle. Just as soon as an external and purely formal [100] aesthetic device ceases to be felt as inherently essential to sincerity of expression, it ceases to remain merely a condition of the battling for self-expression and becomes a tyrannous burden, a perfectly useless fetter. The disciplinary argument is then seen to belong to precisely the same category as the conservative plea for the educational value of Latin or for the wholesome restraining influence of an

outlived body of religions belief. In other words, there is no absolute standard by which to measure the validity of a formal aesthetic device. Necessary or self-evident in one age, it is an encumbrance in another. Perfection of form is always essential, but the definition of what constitutes such perfection cannot, must not, be fixed once for all. The age, the individual artist, must solve the problem ever anew, must impose self-created conditions, perhaps only dimly realized, of the battle to be fought in attaining self-expression. It would be no paradox to say that it is the blind acceptance of a form imposed from without that is, in the deepest sense, "lazy," for such acceptance dodges the true formal problem of the artist — the arrival, in travail and groping, at that mode of expression that is best suited to the unique conception of the artist. The "best" may, of course, be many; it is necessarily conditioned by temperament. Mr. Eastman's error, then, would seem to be the rather elementary confusion of form (an inner striving) and formalism (an outer obstacle).

But Mr. Eastman seems to go further. He would not merely preserve rigid metrical forms and even rhyming schemes as essential to the satisfaction of our craving for poetic form, but he seems also to have regard for virtuosity as such. He speaks almost as if the greater the number and difficulty of formal limitations, the greater or more admirable the aesthetic result. This should mean that the pinnacle of poetic art has been reached in the Skaldic verse of Old Norse literature, perhaps the most artificial verse patterns ever devised. Here we have alliteration, assonance, extreme brevity of lines, and the use of highly conventional metaphorical modes of expression — four difficult masters to serve at the same time. *De gustibus!*

In truth there is no greater superstition than the belief in the ever-growing complexity of all the outer forms of life and art. Progress in both means, on the contrary, an ever-increasing will and ability to do without the swaddling clothes of external form. The "freedom" of primitive culture is only an illusion, gained partly by the freshness of contrast with our own order of restraints, partly, and chiefly, by the imperfectly developed techniques of lower levels. Formally the great languages of modern civilization are very much simpler, very much less virtuoso-like, than most of the languages of aboriginal America. Roman Catholic ritual seems rich and complex to us, but it is a mere bagatelle in comparison with the endless elaboration of the ritual life of the Pueblo Indians. Northwest Coast Indian art is relatively crude in its delineation (at its best, superb), but the purely formal limitations set on the artist's activity

would seem to us almost to preclude the possibility of individual expression at all. In lower levels of culture the number of things that one *must* do is great; in higher levels the number of things one *may* do is vastly greater, the number of things one must do relatively less. Progress, if it means anything at all, may be ideally defined as the infinite multiplication of things one may profitably do, think, and enjoy, coupled with the gradual elimination of all things one must not do.

We may seem to have gone very far afield, but the truth is that a proper historical perspective of such a problem as that of the use of rhyme can hardly be gained on a less broad foundation. The historical and psychological considerations affecting rhyme are by no means peculiar to it, but necessarily apply to countless other elements of art and life. Briefly, then, aesthetic progress cannot mean that we hold on to such a feature as rhyme because it is a valuable conquest, a complexity that we have achieved in passing from a less to a more subtle grasp of form (this *was* true in its day), but that we leave it behind as already belonging to a more primitive stage of artistic consciousness. Once a resplendent jewel, it is now a pretty bauble. In time it will have become an ugly bauble.

Editorial Note

Originally published in *The Dial* 63, 98–100 (1917).

Review of Romain Rolland, *Jean-Christophe*

Romain Rolland, *Jean-Christophe*. Paris: Ollendorff, 1905–1912.

Imagine yourself in a salon adorned by a gathering of choice spirits exhibiting the last degree of refinement. Here you may admire the impeccably dressed gentleman, a Greek god in evening dress; there the beautifully waxed mustaches of the man leaning against the piano. Art can go no further. Yet the women are still more exquisite. You hold your breath in the presence of all this loveliness. When your ecstasy has been gathering speed for some little time, you are suddenly startled by a noise. The door is burst open and in walks a nonchalantly whistling fellow – he might be a lumberman – with firm step and confident air, looks about unconcernedly for a moment or two, says, "Excuse me, I made a mistake," and walks out again, slamming the door after him. You have had time to get a good look at him, enough to ascertain that he is a man. And the rest? Ninnies.

This roughly defines the relation of Romain Rolland with his "Jean-Christophe" to most of his contemporaries in the world of French letters. When you are fresh from the ten volumes of "Jean-Christophe" – you have read them without a halt in rapid succession – and make mental notes of comparison with some of the best that the rest of recent French literature has to offer, you find it difficult to repress an impatient outburst. In the enthusiasm of the moment you berate yourself for your hitherto zealous worship of the idols. Of course you have a sneaking realization of the fact that you are allowing your critical judgment to go napping, but you resent being mixed up with any charge of mere sobriety. You want to berate yourself; you take a fierce pleasure in making firewood of your beautifully carved idols, as did Jean-Christophe himself during his "Revolt" with the hallowed idols of musical tradition. You have found a real man where you hoped only to make the acquaintance of an artist – you had not experienced a similar misadventure since parting company with Tolstoy – and are so intoxicated with the find that the mere artistry of the rest seems rather an impertinence.

This feeling that Rolland gives us in "Jean-Christophe" is as unique as it is simple and direct. To enjoy an imaginative work of unusually sustained conception with sheer aesthetic delight and at the end of it all to exalt the man that animates the artist above the artist himself — in few monuments of literature are we impelled to do this. It is not an accident that Rolland has written a "Life of Tolstoy." Tolstoy and he are kindred spirits. But whereas in Tolstoy the love of humanity is tinged on the one hand by a stern, impatient indictment of the causers of misery, on the other by a mystical idealization of the poor and the humble of spirit, Rolland's love of humanity has never anything intemperate or maudlin about it. It is shot through with a sublime reasonableness, a truly Gallic clarity of vision, a temper ever controlled by an irony now censorious, now playful, now tinged with pathos.

Irony is the quality we always look for in a great French writer; its forms are protean. Anatole France and Maupassant are perhaps the virtuosos of modern French irony, and it is instructive to contrast their use of it with that of Rolland. The writer of "Le Crime de Sylvestre Bonnard," "L'Isle des Pingouins," "Thaïs," and "Les Dieux ont Soif" runs through a considerably nuanced gamut of ironies, from the ineffably tender to the savage. But in all these nuances I find the same essential hopelessness, the same stoically pessimistic stare into the fathomless void; the gentle smile and the savage leer are strangely akin. There is no malice in this irony of Anatole France, but it does not brace you; it teaches you indifference. As for Maupassant, who can be misled by his polish of phrase and anecdotal finish of structure into blindness to the snarl, the aggressive or inhibited contempt of his irony? Some day it will be possible in our critical analyses to express these and other types of irony in terms of sex sublimation. Even now one can more than guess the sadistic strain in Maupassant's irony. Rolland is clearly more normal, more buoyant. His irony, though plentiful enough, is the sauce of the discourse, never the meat. It frankly rebukes the hero with a slap on the shoulder or slyly nudges the reader at the expense of Rolland's creations, but it never stands in the way of your faith. It does not [424] poison idealism with its ridicule; on the contrary, it encourages it by clearing the atmosphere. Irony is by no means the essence of Rolland's art, but it is on that account all the more symptomatic of his spirit.

I have said that Rolland's love of humanity is neither intemperate nor maudlin. His idealism does not crane its neck cloudward, leaving the actual world of men and women shivering at its feet; nor does it hug the world with a sloppy sentimentalism. There are many passages

of "Jean-Christophe" that in their clean, fervid idealism are anticipatory of the essays in "Au-dessus de la Mêlée," but these are precisely not the passages that seem to me to be most convincingly indicative of Rolland's intense humanity. There can be no doubt in them of his sincerity. They are eloquent. Moreover, Rolland's instinctive good taste and humor prevent him from falling into any semblance of the dreary twaddle that disfigures so much of, say, "The Kingdom of God is within you." For all that, he is not at his best when frankly and rhetorically idealistic. I get an uncomfortable feeling of whipping myself on and of marching at the head of columns. The truth is that Rolland is so human in his narrative and analysis of character that one wonders why his humanity yearned to express itself in more abstract form as well. We are reminded that the artist, like every other human being, mistrusts his strongest weapon. The loftiest idealism rays out, by some mysterious process of implication, from Rolland's handling of the most vulgar and commonplace scenes and characters. His, or his hero's, "impure" impulses are somehow cleaner than the rectitude of others.

What is the secret of this intense humanity of Rolland's art? The answer may not be easy to give. Or let us say rather that it is too easy to give, that it seems trivial. Rolland loves humanity so well that he has the patience and the audacity to see life as it is. Many idealists love humanity, provided we allow them to define it as an adumbration of themselves, their own personal virtues and desires, projected into a future. They love the vision. Rolland loves the vision, too, but meanwhile he also loves the poor flesh and blood that will one day make the vision incarnate. He has the true artist's respect for his material.

In speaking of Rolland's patience in depicting life as it is, I am far from wishing to imply that he is one of the item-listing tribe begotten of Zola. Those who delight in miniature accuracy stained in plenty of local color will find him a decidedly impatient craftsman. The atmosphere of locality and outward circumstance is deftly enough created where Rolland so wills it, but it is truly remarkable how little of it either he or his reader wills in the course of the huge epic. "Jean-Christophe" is preeminently a study of human hearts, of human hearts lovingly and patiently disclosed. The more uninteresting to external gaze, the less dramatic his man or woman, the more warmly glows Rolland's heart as he draws the picture. I know of no characters in fiction that seem so tenuous in outline, so devoid of content, as some of those that he lures us with — irresistibly. Charcoal sketches that pulse with warmth.

Think of Louisa, the mother of Jean-Christophe. Now Louisa is one of those good, patient, ignorant women that we would probably not waste more than a moment's thought on if we knew them in the world we live in. Mothers of heroes are not generally interesting, still less so, good mothers. Why, then, do we love Louisa? And think of the magic of the good, serene old Gottfried, the brother of Louisa. If I were to give you a brief summary of what he is and thinks and does — what little he does — you would yawn apprehensively with fear of the oppressive dullness of the good. But Gottfried is sturdy for all his humility and goodness. You look him in the eye, and somehow you begin to feel very small. A Tolstoyan conception — a German version of Artzibasheff's Ivan Lande, only far more lovable. Schulz, the obscure music-lover who reveals Jean-Christophe to himself, is an even greater favorite of mine. There is absolutely nothing to relieve his unabashed goodness; by all the canons of modern realistic art he should inspire nothing but disgust. Again Rolland fools you. You may be heroically cynical in real life, but in the land of "Jean-Christophe" you can no more escape hugging the old man to your heart than an iron bar can help leaping to the magnet. And what shall we say of Sabine, the lovely, silent, pensive, dainty-footed Sabine, one of those pathetic girls (she is a widow, but her youth entitles her to the privilege of girlhood) who are made to live a [425] sweet, lingering life only to die and make us grieve? She, at least, is not so very "good"; she comes within a hair's breadth of yielding to temptation, of depriving Jean-Christophe of his youthful innocence. "Good," you say as you rub your hands, "Rolland has some consideration for us, after all." But I warn you that Sabine is endlessly good in spite of, or because of, or quite apart from it all — it doesn't really matter what view you take of it. For Rolland knows what we all dimly know but what only one in a thousand will admit (woe to morality if we gave way!) — that men and women are not good and bad by virtue of what they do, but by virtue of what they are. Oh, sweet heresy! Once we have it flashed upon us, who can rob us of it? At least in Ada, the vulgar wench, have we not an unlovable bit of humanity? No. I, at least, like her, or perhaps I like her only because Jean-Christophe loves her for a spell. It would be safer to say that I like her because Rolland will have it so — Rolland, who, for all I know, detests her.

Nowhere is the mystery of Rolland's human art more subtly shown than in Antoinette, the heroine of the volume that bears her name. Antoinette is made to be loved and to love, but it is her destiny to sublimate all her passion, all her instincts, into the spirit of endless self-

sacrifice. As she toils and scrimps and suffers to give her weak, neurotic brother entry into the larger life, she brushes against the world's muck, but her inner self seems ever to move apart in a cloistered garden scented with the fragrance of rare flowers. It is impossible to convey in a few words a sense of the peculiar loveliness of this adorable girl. There are other pure maidens in literature who compel adoration, but few, if any, haunt us with so tender, so poignant a feeling of frustration. She is our mingled yearning and self-pity objectified into beauty. Hence she is at one and the same time remote from and inexpressibly near to us.

Wherever we turn in "Jean-Christophe," we are confronted by some cranny of our soul. The cheap coquetry of Colette, the volcanic and moody passion of Françoise, the dark, flaming soul of Emmanuel, the seething, ice-girt passion of Anna, the wistful waywardness of Jacqueline, the gentle Goethean serenity of Grazia Buontempi (is not the melody of the name a symbol?), the youthful egotism of Aurora and Georges in love — these and much besides are our very selves, actual or imagined. Everywhere a few strokes of the pen, and a warm, luminous individuality stands close to us. Nowhere a complication of plot or a stage overcrowded with characters, but always the surge of life — loving, hating, aspiring.

And through it all unfolds the soul of Jean-Christophe himself, the musical genius, Beethoven reincarnated in the present. No greater error can be committed than to assert with P. Seippel ("Romain Rolland, l'Homme et l'Oeuvre") that "Jean-Christophe" is not for those who do not love music. Those who love music will drink deepest in the joys of Rolland's epic, but, aside from certain pages of musical criticism in "La Foire sur la Place" (aesthetically the weakest volume of the series, though thoroughly absorbing), there is little that requires more than a bare tolerance of music, if tolerance is all the reader can sincerely give. The passionate, striving temperament of the hero carries all before it. What matters it whether we can enter into the technicalities of his musical career? Such a sum of life-force, of unswervingly sincere living and yearning, needs no label to make it real. Jean-Christophe is tingling flesh and blood at every step — in his sufferings and joys, in his triumph and defeat, in his tempestuous youth and serene old age. But he is also a symbol of absolute sincerity in life and art; and herein Rolland has attempted a herculean task — to merge the humanly real, pitfalls and all, with the ideal. In the first four volumes and in "Le Buisson Ardent," Rolland has eminently succeeded. Elsewhere Jean-Christophe seems often on the point of dissolving into an ideal abstraction, into the pas-

sive carrier of Rolland's aesthetic and humanitarian message. At such times he is all force and light — and colorless. I would give much if Rolland could have induced himself to dispense with the critical discussions of French music, literature, and life that make up so much of "La Foire sur la Place" and "Dans la Maison." I would he had saved them for another setting, for we cannot afford to miss them.

Jean-Christophe is the impulsive, creative, universal side of Rolland's temperament. But there is also a reflective, critical, ironical side that needed expression, a subtler, more characteristically Gallic spirit. Olivier Jeannin is the friend and counterfoil of Christophe. He represents the purest ideals of French art [426] and thought, but, Hamlet-like, he is crippled by his doubts and scruples. I get a curious feeling that Rolland has left him a torso, that he has incorporated in him certain more intimate elements of his own personality but has not been able to clothe him in all the flesh and blood he had originally intended. Rolland fights shy of something. He wraps Olivier in a wistful haze that even his bosom friend Christophe cannot altogether penetrate. At times the symbolic wins the upper hand over the human. And Olivier cannot hold Jacqueline's love.

I mentioned Rolland's audacity. Many artists have sought evil in their heroes and heroines and set it by the side of their good. Many have pictured the waywardness of fate with a detached wonder. But they generally put a "but" between the good and the evil, between the ideal and the actual. Rolland's audacity leads him, and with unerring psychologic instinct, to put an "and" between them. Jean-Christophe lives with the common-souled Ada. There is no conflict in his soul; he merely breaks off all relations in a moment of revulsion. Olivier's friendship for Christophe is of the very warmest. When Olivier marries, he drifts away from his friend with a strange rapidity. Emmanuel hates Christophe. And his love for Christophe is the same emotional current, differently colored. Jacqueline loves her son to distraction, but she suddenly loses interest in him. If you have been fed up on the relatively conventional psychology of most realists, you may not feel altogether at home in some of Rolland's arbitrary-looking conflicts of will. By and by you realize that you are not asked to fit the patterns that you have brought with you. You are walking in the strange path of life and had better see and be silent.

Of the style, of the thousand and one observations on life, nationality, art, and politics, of the structure of the work, of its aesthetic and ethical ideals — of these and other aspects of "Jean-Christophe" I shall say

nothing. The virile and loving human note vibrating from end to end of the great prose epic is its strongest bid for immortality. If critics grant French letters light but deny it warmth, let them be silenced by "Jean-Christophe."

Editorial Note

Originally published in *The Dial* 62, 423–426 (1917), under the title "Jean-Christophe: An Epic of Humanity."

Romain Rolland (1866–1944) was a French novelist, playwright, and biographer, who received the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1915.

Review of Henry T. Finck,
Richard Strauss, the Man and His Works

Henry T. Finck, *Richard Strauss, the Man and His Works*. With an appreciation of Strauss by Percy Grainger. New York: Little, Brown and Co., 1917.

This is a useful survey of the external facts touching the life and musical compositions of Richard Strauss. It is also, as the writer seemed to be very eager it should be, a reasonably entertaining volume, liberally besprinkled, as it is, with anecdotal matter and journalistic chit-chat. But it does not, on the whole, suggest that it has been a labor of love. Mr. Finck makes it abundantly clear in the course of his remarks that his reason for writing the book was rather the fact that Strauss is considered one of the greatest, if not the greatest, of living composers than that he himself considers him to be such. And the general tone of Mr. Finck's book is blasé, sometimes yawningly so. His own spontaneous reactions to Strauss are so consistently unsympathetic that he evidently fears at times to create in the reader an impression of unreasoning prejudice; he therefore protects himself by calling on copious testimony from other writers. "You Straussianer just fight it out among yourselves," he seems to say, and steps back with a shrug of the shoulders.

Mr. Finck's lack of sympathy is only partly due to Strauss's obvious shortcomings — his crass realism of conception, his lack of a distinguished melodic vein, his frequent want of restraint and tendency to lapse into sheer vulgarity. We could hardly expect Mr. Finck to forgive Strauss these sins. In one of the most charming essays on Chopin that I have seen he has implied how much he understands and values the jeweled and the chastened in art, how ardently he loves the limpid flow of perfect melody and the delicious echo of subtle and softly pedaled harmonies. But melody and the glow of harmonic sequence, precious as these are, are not the whole of music. The more massive qualities exhibited by Strauss at his best — the power to fill a large canvas with color and movement, the titanic artistic unity and inner coherence attained through polyphonic mastery, and, above all, the will and power

to give concrete musical expression to large thoughts and unbridled passions, to the Rabelais and to the madman both that are latent in all of us — these are not to be lightly ignored. Here precisely it is that Mr. Finck seems not quite adequate to his task. He has evidently [585] little genuine love for polyphony as such, for the interweaving of independently moving melodic lines. That the polyphonic technique has frequently degenerated into mechanical virtuosity need not be denied. It is doubtful, for all that, whether the history of music records any means of expression more virile and resourceful than the free polyphony of modern music. Mr. Finck is also doubtful, it would seem, of the legitimacy of such wealth of expression in pure tone as Strauss gives us. He may be right, but only one prepared to meet Strauss at least half way in his artistic presuppositions is genuinely qualified to interpret him to us. That is why Mr. Ernest Newman's far shorter study of Strauss seems so much more vital; the few pages that Romain Rolland devotes to Strauss in his "Musiciens d'Aujourd'hui" also reveal a deeper understanding of the musical personality of this composer.

Underneath all Mr. Finck's hesitations and shrinkings in the presence of Strauss's tone poems and operas, may we not discern a more fundamental clash of temperaments, the refined irritation of the cultivated Sybarite who looks on at the capers of a healthy barbarian, a spirit attuned to Tennysonian felicities subjected to the uncouth liberties of a Walt Whitman? Something of the kind is conveyed by Percy Grainger in the following words, taken from his interesting introductory essay:

Strauss is not a musician's musician like Bach, Mozart, Schubert, Grieg, or Debussy, capable of turning out flawless gems of artistic subtlety and perfection, but rather is he a great cosmic soul of the Goethe, Milton, Nietzsche, Walt Whitman, Edgar Lee Masters caliber: full of dross, but equally full of godhead; lacking refinement, but not the supreme attributes; and uniquely able to roll forth some great uplifting message after gigantic preliminaries of boredom and inconsequentialness.

(Do Schubert and Grieg quite belong to the first list? Do Goethe and Milton feel quite at ease with their neighbors in the second?) It is the "dross," the "lack of refinement," and the "gigantic preliminaries of boredom" that too fatally affect Mr. Finck; the "godhead" and "supreme attributes" seem altogether lost in the scramble.

In the section devoted to "Program Music" Mr. Finck has a splendid opportunity to analyze the psychology and aesthetics and trace the development of one of the most interesting musical phenomena of the last

hundred years. I cannot feel that he has made very serious use of the opportunity. The externality that characterizes his account of Strauss's career and his description of the musical compositions themselves is in evidence in this section as well. The inevitable anecdotes, random remarks on various specimens of programme music (MacDowell's piano-forte sketches come in for warm appreciation), a determined and gallant attempt to convince us that the symphonic poem has reached its artistic culmination in Liszt, and divers evidences of Strauss's inferiority to his Hungarian precursor fill up space that one would have liked to see devoted to the rationale of the programme movement and to the varying ideals that have animated its representatives. We are not given even a serviceable notion of the nature of Strauss's aesthetic procedure, of the manner in which he aims to reconcile the conflicting demands of literary conception and musical treatment, of the symbolic significance of leading motive, instrumental individualization, and polyphony. And what of the evolution of musical form in the composition of Strauss, the acknowledged master of form? In brief, we nowhere feel that we are being brought to a realization of the nuclear conceptions of Strauss the artist. How then can the reader justly estimate the place to be assigned Richard Strauss in the history of programme music, whether his tone poems represent a logical and healthy development of ideas that owe their most authoritative formulation to Berlioz and Liszt or, as Mr. Finck would have it, mark the degeneration of the programme tendency?

Be that as it may, there is little doubt that for the present programme music has reached its apogee. Signs of revolt have been in evidence for some time; the cumbrous literary constructions that were meant to give form to elaborate tonal creations seem to crumble of their own weight. It is probable that the programmists have attempted too much, that they have tried to get as much service out of Pegasus as out of a willing dray-horse. The future alone can tell whether they have indeed attempted the impossible or have merely sought the arduous conquest with means too coarse and untried, have mistaken a Rosinante for the real Pegasus. Meanwhile, a clear swing back to the absolutists, Brahms notwithstanding, is a sheer impossibility. However music may tend to be chastened of its luxuriance of symbol, the spell of fancy and mood that the romanticists and programmists have cast over it will not disappear. Self-determination [586] of form and emotional expression — if these alone remain, their attainment by way of the perhaps circuitous route of the programmists will have justified the Liszts and Strausses.

Yet all the while I find myself seriously distrusting the psychological validity of the current classification of composers into absolutists and programmatists or impressionists. To an altogether unwarrantable extent we have been taking musical artists at their own valuation, at the surface value of their titles and programmatic analyses. Is it not possible, nay likely, that an appalling proportion of the musical "programmes" authorized by composers are afterthoughts designed, consciously or unconsciously, to lure the public, always an essentially unmusical body? Or to give an external conceptual frame, of subjective associative value, to a lyric impulse that has already untranslatably expressed itself in tone? We know that Schumann gave titles to his pieces after he had composed them; the conceptual label, in other words, was probably more a flourish of the pen, a *Finis*, than a genuine aesthetic stimulus. The wayward whimsy or burning passion was there from the beginning, but it needed no other than purely musical expression. May not even some of our impressionists, Debussy among them, entertain a fundamentally identical attitude toward their material? Is there not the least shade of hypocrisy in these pagodas and goldfish and engulfed cathedrals and moons descending on temples that were? Strange, otherwise, that we seem to breathe a larger air and to feel the tow of a mightier current in the music itself than in the bric-a-brac world its titles introduce us to. Conversely, there is little reason to doubt that a great deal of absolute music, so-called, has been wrought out of conceptions and emotions that were all but ready to burst into impassioned speech. What are some of those curious *recitativo* passages in the Beethoven sonatas, glades in the wood, but tortured questionings and strivings bound in musical constraint? Before we can profoundly approach the psychology of programme music, there is much underbrush to be cleared away. We must know better than we do how the artist conceives and works and care less how he labels. Perhaps it is well that artists tell us little, but we can often guess back of their paraphernalia of labels if we will but hearken to the music.

Editorial Note

Originally published in *The Dial* 62, 584–586 (1917), under the title "A Frigid Introduction to Strauss."

Richard Strauss (1864–1949) was a German composer and conductor. Sapir develops his thoughts on programme music further in "Representative Music" (1918, this volume).

Representative Music

The contest between the absolutists and the supporters of "programme" in modern music has often been characterized by extreme and mutually irreconcilable attitudes. On the one hand we have the purists or formalists, who either explicitly deny or evade acknowledgment of any necessary relation between musical forms and states or functions of mind occurring in other than musical experience. To these a sonata or even a bare musical "theme" is aesthetically satisfying by virtue of its own inherent beauty of melody, rhythm, harmony, construction, or color, quite regardless of any non-musical "meaning" it may be thought to possess. Such people would be annoyed rather than helped by the interpretation of a certain Beethoven sonata as suffused by a spirit of moonlight pensiveness. Why mar the sheer beauty of a self-sufficing art-form by attaching to it a label of extraneous origin?

No less decided are some of the "programme" enthusiasts. While not denying to melody, rhythm, and the other means of musical expression an inherent sensuous beauty, and to musical construction the essential beauty of all design, they maintain that the enjoyment of such merely sensuous or structural beauty is an aesthetic one only in a more or less elementary phase. To a piece of music must, properly speaking, be denied the term art-form in its highest sense unless it does more than tickle our sense of rhythm or color or evoke our admiration by its skilful handling of the purely formal aspect of the musical problem. It must have vitality (to use a much abused word), that is, it must be associated in the mind of both creator and public, and this by virtue of its intrinsic quality, with some element or elements of their experience. [162] It dare not stand coldly aloof, on pain of degenerating into clever trifling, from the more definitely articulated currents of life, but must seek to gain in significance, and therefore in aesthetic value, by embodying, in its own peculiar way, one or more of the incidents or phases of that life. The nature of such embodiment may vary indefinitely. In some cases the music may be content to picture a mood, in others to catch some aspect of nature, in others to define an idea, in still others to mark a succession of moods or ideas that in their totality comprise a "story."

The progress of musical art is thus toward ever increasing complexity and definiteness of emotional and conceptual expression. In other words, music must tend to be "representative" in character. Music has lagged far behind plastic art and poetry in this respect, but this is due primarily to the great lapse of time which it has taken the art to develop a technique rich and flexible enough to fulfil its higher mission.

If the history of aesthetic criticism teaches us anything, it is the futility of trying to mark off the legitimate province of an art or an art-form. Over and over again a critic has demonstrated, to the complete satisfaction of the discerning, certain inherent aesthetic limitations. He proved his point, but some genius has generally managed to override his formula and consign it to the dust-bin of things that were. My own aim is, therefore, not the presumptuous one of a definition of the proper sphere of music but rather an attempt to state what music seems to me best able to accomplish.

To begin with, can the absolutists really succeed in eliminating an emotional substratum, of varying vividness, from the appreciation of a musical composition? I do not refer to the emotional components of musical appreciation that are evident in the enjoyment of any of the elements of musical expression as such (such as pleasure in certain instrumental combinations or delight in the recurrence of a well-defined rhythmic figure or the more subtle pleasure derived from consideration of a certain balance of form), but only to a mood or attitude of mind induced by the composition as a whole and to which the former types of pleasure must normally be considered as subsidiary. As a matter of fact, it is difficult to listen to one of the greater compositions even of pre-programme days without finding ourselves put into a rather definite mood, a mood which to all intents and purposes defines the meaning of the music for us. And does not the verdict of the present in judging of the relative merit or appeal of musical works of the past often clearly imply just such an emphasis on [163] the aesthetic importance of definite emotional quality? Thus, it is no exaggeration to say that most of the Mozart sonata movements, despite their spontaneous flow of melody and finish of external form, are of lesser aesthetic value to us than many of the simply constructed Bach preludes of the "Well-tempered Clavichord." These preludes belong to a remoter period of musical history, but their deep-felt, though restrained, quality of emotion (think of the devotional spirit of the very first prelude manifest enough without the Gounod Ave Maria pendant; or of the mood of serene sadness that permeates the beautiful E flat minor prelude of the first set) keeps them

alive where the Mozart sonatas, on the whole, must be regretfully admitted to have become a respectable and faded musical tradition. Craftsmanship, no matter how pleasing or ingenious, cannot secure a musical composition immortality; it is inevitably put in the shade by the techniques of a later age. True, such craftsmanship may be admirable, as a dynamo or a well played game of billiards elicit admiration; yet admiration does not constitute aesthetic enjoyment.

Aside from the emotional substratum which we feel to be inseparable from a truly great and sincere work of musical art, are there not in the earlier supposedly absolutist art plenty of instances of direct realistic suggestion, sometimes intentional, no doubt, at other times a spontaneous product of association on the part of the listener? Is it possible, for instance, to listen to certain of the Beethoven scherzos without sensing the gamboling faun (or convention-freed ego) kicking his heels with a relish? But Beethoven, the idol of the absolutists, was no more an absolutist than Aristotle, the idol of the scholastics, was a scholastic. I do not think it would be going too far to say that all musical art worthy of the name has implicitly, if not avowedly, some of the fundamental qualities of so-called "programme" music; from a musical standpoint it should make little difference whether the emotional appeal is left to declare itself in the mind of the sympathetic listener or is trumpeted at him by means of a formidable printed analysis.

We have turned our backs on the uncompromising absolutist. Are we therefore to receive his most uncompromising opponent with open arms? I have already indicated in a general way the aims and procedure of representative music. It either uses all of its technical resources to define a mood or emotion, or it may, by the use of some special element of technique or combination of such elements, depict a selected feature of the external world [164] (rapid passage work may be utilized to symbolize the flowing brook or the falling rain or the roaring wind, the high pitched piccolo tones may do service for the shrieking of the tempest or the chirping of birds, the loud discord of clashing harmonies may suggest a battle scene or the clangor of a foundry). Now there seems to me to be a profound psychological difference between those two types of procedure, intertwined as they necessarily often are in practice. That the former touches our emotional life while the latter plays upon our sense experience is obvious. The distinction I have in mind is more deep-seated. Realistic suggestion must make use of the principle of association, and the fact of such association becomes obvious to the listener on reflection. By the musical equivalent of a figure of speech, a feature

common to two otherwise totally dissimilar phenomena (the thing symbolized and a certain mass of sound) is made to identify them. If, for some reason or other, the experience of the auditor has been such as not to make the association obvious, the suggestion loses all its force and the artist, insofar as he is writing merely representative music, has with that auditor failed of success. On the other hand, music is able to put us into more or less well defined emotional states without such associative intermediation, or, perhaps more accurately, the associative links are of so obscure and intimate a nature as never to rise into consciousness. In other words, the emotional effect of music is gained directly or, what amounts to essentially the same thing, gives the impression of being so gained. Once this point is clearly grasped, it becomes obvious that the function of music, insofar as it has aesthetic aims of other than a sensuous and formal nature, is primarily the expression of the emotional aspect of consciousness, only in a very secondary sense the expression of the conceptual aspect. This primary function is thus of poetic quality and may be briefly described as the interpretation of emotional quality in terms of sensuous and structural beauty. A still more concise way of putting the matter is to define music as an idealization of mood by means of tone.

It has often been instinctively felt that music which makes too free a use of realistic suggestion lays itself open to the charge of superficiality, of the abandonment of its own highest artistic capabilities. Even the greatest composers, in its employment, seem often to sail between the Scylla of triviality and the Charybdis of absurdity. And yet there is no doubt that it is capable of affording keen aesthetic pleasure. Probably the simplest and most fundamental element in such pleasure is the sheer delight [165] that the mind seems to find in generalizing by analogy, in meeting familiar friends in new and unexpected guise; it is the tonal correspondent of the childish phantasy that interprets cloud shapes as battleships and monsters and human faces. More careful analysis, however, shows that this type of pleasure is, in the best examples of musical suggestion, powerfully reinforced by another though not always clearly distinct factor. The melodic, harmonic, rhythmic, or other musical idea which serves as the symbol of the concept represented has in such cases an independent sensuous beauty of its own, a beauty whose appeal transcends our normal interest in the concept itself. Hence such music amounts to an idealization of some aspect of the external world. To our greeting of a friend in disguise is added the much greater pleasure of finding him transported to a higher plane of being. And this brings us

to a third and yet more significant phase in the use and appreciation of realistic suggestion, that in which the concept is not idealized for its own sake, is not merely represented as such, but is utilized as a symbol of the emotion simultaneously called forth by the music. Obviously this means a very considerable heightening of the quality of the emotion itself. The finest examples of realistic suggestion derive much of their charm from this very factor. In other words, realistic suggestion in music is most successful when it ceases to be merely what its name implies but contributes to the enrichment of the emotional aim of music. Thus even in so obviously suggestive a bit of music as the delightful "Jardins sous la pluie" of Debussy, the secret of the appeal, it seems to me, lies not so much in the clever devices of rhythm, melodic progression, and shading which symbolize the pitter-patter, the gustiness, the steady fall, and the tempestuous downpour of the rain as in the delicate and wistful line of emotion that runs through the composition; the rain but voices human feeling. And such humanizing of the external world via emotion is a significant indication of the primary function of musical art.

We have just seen that realistic suggestion may assist us in the definition of the mood (thus, the suggestion of the shepherd's pipe may reinforce a mood or atmosphere of rustic peacefulness, a dancing rhythm of break-neck rapidity may accentuate a mood of reckless gaiety). In representative music, however, the emotion created by the music is conversely often employed to suggest an associated concept, concrete or abstract. When a certain harmonic progression, for instance, in one of Strauss's tone poems is used to symbolize a mountain, it is clear that the only [166] associative link is furnished by the feeling of all-embracing massiveness suggested by the chords in relation to each other (I say "all-embracing," for a feeling of vast extension would seem to be implied in the sudden chromatic modulation at the close of the figure, the immediate juxtaposition of two harmonically remote keys being the musical equivalent of a bringing together of the widely removed in space; the feeling of "massiveness" is conveyed by the use of full compact chords in the bass). My claim here is that, considering the music itself as our starting point, the interpretation suggested by the composer is by no means the only justifiable one, psychologically speaking. Adopting the formula of "all-embracing massiveness" as expressing the quality of emotion conveyed by the passage in question, it seems clear that a quite unlimited number of alternative interpretations are possible (the vastness of the sea, Mother Earth, grim fate, eternal justice), each conditioned by considerations of personal interest and experience in the audi-

tor. If the conceptual interpretation of a single musical passage of definite emotional quality is thus multiform without limit, how much more must this be the case with the conceptual interpretation of a series of such passages, in other words of an extended musical composition! The "story" which we are expected to read in a composition of the "programme" type must be considered as relevant only insofar as it conveniently summarizes in conceptual terms the emotional stream immediately expressed by the music. As such it may be highly welcome. Whether the composer wills it or not, the particular story suggested by his title or analysis is only a more or less arbitrary selection out of an indefinitely large number of possible conceptualizations. We cannot refuse him the right to his own interpretation, to be sure; no more can he refuse each one of us the right to his. All he has done or can do, aside from the possibility of direct realistic suggestion, is to determine for us the character and sequence of our moods. He may modestly direct attention, by means of his programmatic apparatus, to the conceptual genesis in his own mind of this emotional stream or, probably more often than is generally thought, to his own merely secondary interpretation thereof, but he cannot via a non-conceptualizing medium, i. e. music, force any particular stream of thought on us except insofar as we surrender into his hands our own individuality of judgment and association. In short, the music does not "tell" the story but the story tells or rather guesses at the music. If the composer absolutely must appeal conceptually, as well as emotionally, to his hearers, he must have recourse to [167] the conceptual implement which society has evolved, i. e. language. In other words, he must supplement his own expression of emotion by calling in the aid of the poet. His art then takes on the special forms of the song, music drama, oratorio.

I have said that all the composer can do is "to determine for us the character and sequence of our moods." It is not worth while for him to aim at a purely representative ideal; his highest success in this direction will fall miserably short of what is attained by the merest balderdash in literature. In the expression of the emotions, however, he has a field the unending fruitfulness of which is hardly realized by most people. We think it a field of narrow range because words, mere conceptual symbols, are lacking to indicate its infinite nuances. Select a half dozen musical examples of the expression of any typical emotion, say unbridled mirth or quiet sadness or poignant anguish, and compare them. The feelings they arouse in us are identical only when translated into the clumsy conceptual terminology of language. In actual fact they will

be found to be quite distinct, quite uninterchangeable. It is literally true that the aesthetic expression of mood in tone is an exhaustless field of human endeavor. Does not the very potency of music reside in its precision and delicacy of a range of mental life that is otherwise most difficult, most elusive of expression? Nay more, does not music oftentimes create nuances of feeling, nuances that add in profound measure to the more external enjoyment of its own sensuous and formal beauty?

Editorial Note

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Review of Gilbert K. Chesterton, *Utopia of Usurers*

Gilbert K. Chesterton, *Utopia of Usurers and Other Essays*. New York: Boni and Liveright, 1917.

Whether it is merely because Chesterton has given us a characteristic and, in its own way, peculiarly illuminating study of Shaw or because a subtle spiritual comradeship, underlying all their obvious differences, holds them bound in memory, I find it difficult to keep Shaw out of my mind when reading his fellow-craftsman in the art of paradox. When Chesterton makes a neat point or flares out with some unexpected antithesis, I find myself wondering how Shaw would have put the same idea. Both use their paradoxical panoply for the purpose of charging on us with what they really think or, at least, with how they even more really feel. They are always deadly in earnest. This is the reason why they can afford to laugh so boisterously, for only such as know what they are about and have found a foothold in the shifting sands of idea can find time and energy and, above all, courage to laugh. The well-balanced individual is too busy pairing off alternatives, too busy finding a sensible middle ground, to be capable of more than a preoccupied smile. Laughter presupposes comfort; the proverbial seat on the fence, advantageous as it may be in other respects, is too spiked for comfort.

Yet, like all similar things, Shaw and Chesterton are vastly different. Shaw's main concern is with ideals and with romance; he has a great joke on humanity because he alone sees that ideals and romance are but decorations that humanity has built about the commonplace, though I fancy, to judge from sundry wistful passages in the [26] Shavian writings, that he sometimes wishes his sight were duller. Chesterton's concern is also with ideals and with romance; but his laughter springs rather from a zestful sense of their abiding presence in the commonplace, from a feeling of security in the essential goodnesses and rightnesses of life that leaves him free for quips and fine scorns and puns — beastly ones sometimes. Shaw laughs heartily on an empty stomach, Chesterton eas-

ily on a full one. Shaw sees with amazing clarity the just beyond, while the present lies shadowed in a penumbra; Chesterton sees the just beyond only a trifle less clearly, but he sees it as a distorted shadow cast by the present and the past, especially the mystic past. Shaw wanders about in search of his perfect No Man's Land, struggling all the while against the foul machinations of sorcerers who invest spades with glamour; no wonder that he tilts a lance at an occasional windmill. Chesterton accepts the machinations of the sorcerers for the wonderful actualities they are. Were Shaw desophisticated and dehumorized, he would be Don Quixote; were Chesterton desophisticated but not dehumorized, he would be Sancho Panza.

But as sophistication and Shavian humor are what the biologists call acquired characters, we are left scientifically free to equate Shaw with the illustrious Don, Chesterton with his no less illustrious squire. And once we have accustomed ourselves to interpreting them in the light of an exegesis borrowed from Cervantes, much becomes doubly clear. Nature is never more purposeful than when she seems inattentive and accidental. Need we now wonder that Shaw is thin and humane, that Chesterton is fat and human? Are not Shaw's women as unclaspable as the famed Dulcinea del Toboso, and might not Chesterton find beauty and love in any country wench? But note chiefly this: Shaw scorns the governance of a mere island, his fancy must hold sway over vaster realms, the realms of a humanity untainted by localism. As for Chesterton, he is eminently qualified to govern an island. Let Shaw found the world state, he will be content to rule merry England (Chesterton's England will be merry, as she has been) and pontificate for all of Christianity that is worth saving.

In *Utopia of Usurers*, a series of reprints of essays first published in periodical form, Chesterton has much to say about his island. He is in a bad humor. Things have not gone well with the island. Not only is a dastardly foe threatening it from without, but there is cause for endless disgruntlements within. The "all's well with the world" frame of mind of *Orthodoxy* has given way to scowls and apprehensive shakings of the head. Even the cheery mysticism of that book and of so many of its successors (*The Innocence of Father Brown* and *Magic* are types) is somewhat less in evidence than it should be in writing coming from Chesterton's pen, though faint-hearted, vestigial formulae are not absent ("Robespierre talked even more about God than about the Republic because he cared even more about God than about the Republic").

The proverb-like epigrams that we naturally look for (it will be remembered that Sancho Panza reveled in proverbs) are with us again, but too many of them are burnished with the anger of the moment to be readily quotable out of their context. Still, there are some exceedingly good ones. For instance: "the materialistic Sociologists, ... whose way of looking at the world is to put on the latest and most powerful scientific spectacles, and then shut their eyes"; or "when we talk of Army contractors as among the base but active actualities of war, we commonly mean that while the contractor benefits by the war, the war, on the whole, rather suffers by the contractor." Nor is that charming whimsicality, so often edged with as much naïveté as paradox, for which Chesterton is most to be loved, entirely absent. Take this opening of an argument, for instance, which has the matter of a Swift and the temper of an angel: "An employer, let us say, pays a seamstress twopence a day, and she does not seem to thrive on it. So little, perhaps, does she thrive on it that the employer has even some difficulty in thriving upon her." But all through the volume of essays runs a genuine anger, an anger that is by no means always careful to clothe itself in neat turns and whimsicalities but, on the contrary, may even break out into crude petulance ("And if anyone reminds me that there is a Socialist Party in Germany, I reply that there isn't").

What is it that angers Chesterton and fills him with grim forebodings for the future of his island? Many things and, especially, many persons. But chiefly the capitalists, the upper middle class, the usurers, or however they may be termed, and the fear of the servile state, the state in which art and literature and science and efficiency and morality and everything else that has value in the eyes of mortal man become the humble servants of the money-changers, in short, the "utopia of usurers." In this state the Venus of Milo advertises soap, and college professors have to put up with such mental pabulum as can be digested and manages [27] to get published by the captains of industry. Hear Chesterton's own summary of the nine essays devoted to the dismal utopia: "Its art may be good or bad, but it will be an advertisement for usurers; its literature may be good or bad, but it will appeal to the patronage of usurers; its scientific selection will select according to the needs of usurers; its religion will be just charitable enough to pardon usurers; its penal system will be just cruel enough to crush all the critics of usurers; the truth of it will be Slavery; and the title of it may quite possibly be Socialism." There is exhilaration in the defiance of this from "The Escape":

The water's waiting in the trough,
 The tame oats sown are portioned free,
 There is Enough, and just Enough,
 And all is ready now but we,
 But you have not caught us yet, my lords,
 You have us still to get.
 A sorry army you'd have got,
 Its flags are rags that float and rot,
 Its drums are empty pan and pot,
 Its baggage is — an empty cot;
 But you have not caught us yet.

And this, at the end of the poem, will serve to mark the Chestertonian contempt:

It is too late, too late, my lords,
 We give you back your grace;
 You cannot with all cajoling
 Make the wet ditch, or winds that sting,
 Lost pride, or the pawned wedding ring,
 Or drink or Death a blacker thing
 Than a smile upon your face.

Other causes for Chesterton's scorn there are in the book — the mean-spirited attempt of those infernal bores, the well-meaning people, to deprive the workingman of his ale; the dunderheadedness of parliaments and administrators; the incredible mendacity of the press; the absurdity of Sir Edward Carson in the role of loyal patriot; the shameless ignorance of public affairs exhibited by the well informed; the impertinence of Puritan meddlers — but the capitalist and his utopia, the servile state, are at the back of these ills, present and to come. Don Quixote (in his Shavian avatar) is right. The nefarious enchanter, capitalism, is triumphant; he has cast his evil spell on all the springs of genuine, straightforward being; he is nigh unto choking the soul of humanity. It is high time that the Quixotes of the world bestirred themselves. It is well that the doughty Sancho Panza is caparisoned for the fray. He will give a good reckoning of his stewardship of the island.

Editorial Note

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Gilbert K. Chesterton (1874–1936) was an English journalist, poet, essayist, dramatist, novelist, and critic.

A Note on French-Canadian Folk-songs

It is doubtful if the old treasury of French folk-lore is anywhere so well preserved as in the Province of Quebec. [211] The great currents of modern civilization have, until recent days, left practically unaffected this colony of old France, where the folk still observe customs, use implements, recite tales, and sing songs that take us right back to the sixteenth and early seventeenth centuries. Indeed, many of the songs may be shown, by their wide diffusion on the continent of Europe or by internal evidence, to go back to a much greater antiquity than that. Some of them have a definitely mediaeval cast. Mr. C. M. Barbeau, who has gone exhaustively into all aspects of French-Canadian folk research, and has, within the last few years, made himself incomparably its greatest authority, finds that fully ninety-five percent of the four thousand songs and song versions that he and his collaborators have gathered are clearly of old-world origin. Relatively little in the way of folk literature originated in Canada.

This vast mass of folk-song material — and it is being constantly added to — has been recorded both in text form and, for the most part, on the phonograph. Many transcriptions have already been made by Mr. Barbeau himself, some of which have appeared, with full texts, in a recent number of the *Journal of American Folk-lore*. More are to follow from time to time.

No one who cares to acquaint himself even superficially with these folk-songs can doubt their historic and aesthetic value. The music, without which they can hardly be adequately understood or appreciated, itself constitutes an illuminating chapter in the European history of the art. [212] Modes and rhythms but scantily recognized in the straight highroad of "art" music here flourish luxuriantly. The songs have been collected from all parts of the province — from the remote fisherman of Gaspé, the little farming villages along the St. Lawrence, the French sections of Montreal. They embrace a bewildering variety of metrical forms and of functional types. Some of these types are: drinking songs; lyrical and narrative love songs; "pastoral" songs; the *matrimoniales*, of unhappy married couples; the *coeurs*, jocular songs of deceived husbands; round dances and other types of dance songs; satires, not infrequently on religious themes; festival songs; working songs of strongly

marked rhythm — fuller's, paddling, marching, and others; little *vaudevilles* or duets for two singers; ballads; *complaintes* or complaints, a more solemn or tragic type of ballad, but the term is employed rather loosely; *randonnées* or rigmaroles; cradle songs; shanty-songs.

Readers of the four folk-songs included in this number of *Poetry* will probably welcome a few specific indications, which I owe to Mr. Barbeau. *The Dumb Shepherdess* is a religious *complainte*, and is known in the lower St. Lawrence region, both north and south shores. *The King of Spain's Daughter* is a work ballad, especially used as a paddling song, and is based on versions from Temiscouata and Gaspé counties. *The Prince of Orange* is another paddling song, collected at Tadousac, one of the oldest French settlements in Canada, on the lower St. Lawrence. *White as the Snow* is a good example of the genuine ballad; it is [213] one of the best known folk-songs of Quebec, having been recorded in no less than twelve versions. All of these songs have old-country analogues. *White as the Snow* and *The King of Spain's Daughter* have an especially wide diffusion in France. *The Dumb Shepherdess* is probably the oldest of the group; it is not unlikely that the French text, as recorded in Canada, goes back to the fifteenth century. *The Prince of Orange*, of course of much later date, is one of a category of well known French songs that mock the House of Orange.

In the English versions, of which these are a selection, I have adhered as closely to the original rhythms and stanzaic structure as the prosodic differences of the two languages would permit. Pedantic literalness was not always possible, yet there are no serious deviations, least of all from the spirit of the songs as I have conceived it. Not all the originals, it may be noted, make use of strict rhymes; assonances are often used instead. In *The Dumb Shepherdess* I preferred to do without rhyme, aside from the very end of the poem, so fearful was I of spoiling its peculiar charm.

Editorial Note

Originally published in *Poetry* 20, 210–213 (1919). Sapir's translations of the songs discussed in this note, not reprinted in this edition, appeared in *Poetry* 21, 175–185 (1920); they were also published in *Folk Songs of French Canada* by C. Marius Barbeau and Edward Sapir (New Haven: Yale University Press, 1925), which contains 41 folk songs collected by Barbeau with translations by Sapir. Unpublished translations of an additional six songs are included in the Sapir family archives.

Review of Rabindranath Tagore,
Lover's Gift, Crossing, Mashi, and Other Stories

Rabindranath Tagore.

Once more the poet-seer of Bengal offers us, through the medium of a series of prose poems and free verse lyrics, contact with his world of beauty, a beauty subtly compounded of the passion of sensuous experience and the insight, symbolic and intuitive, that Tagore, true to his lineage, calls "truth." Those whom an apt metaphor or a mystic and beautifully phrased paradox can thrill into blissful apprehension of the deeps of reality, of the futility of sense, of the eternity of the soul, of the abiding presence of the behind and the beyond, will in "Lover's Gift" and "Crossing" receive fresh sustenance for their faith, for their desire. Those who are too heavily burdened by the veil of matter to see clearly into Tagore's esoteric world of reality but are not, for all that, obtuse to the loveliness of swift metaphor and exquisite diction will be well content to accept the beauty and to look upon the "truth" as a highly interesting facet of a typically, and traditionally, Hindu personality. Indeed, we would be churlish if we could not, for the sake of poetry, even lull ourselves into a momentary acceptance of Tagore's truths. It is not so very much that he requires of us. It is not so very difficult to persuade ourselves that the beauty of the beloved is indeed but a symbol of the beauty of all life, that our love for the beloved is a cosmic love, that death is the door to the eternal life that was dimmed for us at birth. All this and much more we might accept, provided always the thought be well garmented.

Fortunately, the thought is, for the most part, well garmented. One can hardly give Tagore greater praise than to say that he yields but rarely to the temptation to fall into extravagance, to allow the freshness of his feelings to choke in turgid weeds. In an art and a philosophy such as Tagore's simplicity of diction and convincingness of imagery are doubly difficult of attainment. Their attainment by Tagore means that he is, first and foremost, a poet. Whether he is also a seer seems, after this, a bit irrelevant. Felicities of metaphor or expression meet one

at every turn, while now and again the feeling, too intense for the bonds of symbolism, bursts into untrammelled lyric utterance. I cannot forbear to quote at length at least one of the "Lover's Gift" set:

I thought I had something to say to her when our eyes met across the hedge. But she passed away. And it rocks, day and night, like a boat, on every wave of the hours the word that I had to say to her. It seems to sail in the autumn clouds in an endless quest and to bloom into evening flowers, seeking its lost moment in the sunset. It twinkles like fireflies in my heart to find its meaning in the dusk of despair, the word that I had to say to her.

For a moment Tagore here seems to allow the passion of the opening words to drift away, but he recovers it, poignant and elusive, at the end. In another poem we read of "the lonely night loud with rain." How effective and unexpected the word "loud," in its amazing simplicity, and how stark the contrast of "lonely" [138] and "loud"! Only poets think of such self-evident things.

Not that Tagore is flawless. Particularly in "Crossing," a long series of symbolizations of the passage from life into the realm ruled by Death, we are occasionally annoyed by such sentimental paradoxes as

"Sleep, like a bird, will open its heart to the light, and the silence will find its voice."

or by such unrealities as

"When the morning came I saw you standing upon the emptiness that was spread over my house."

but rarely by such uglinesses as

"For the boisterous sea of tears heaves in the flood-tide of pain."

Yet we have never long to wait for a reconciling felicity, for a line or a phrase that clothes extravagance of symbol in a delicate simplicity, such a line as

"Rebelliously I put out the light in my house and your sky surprised me with its stars."

Felicity is the word that recurs to one's mind as he passes from lyric to lyric. It is not an unmixed compliment. It argues a certain detachability, a certain independent glitter, in each stone of the mosaic. Powerfully unified works of art leave little elbow room for felicities. Right here, I venture to think, lies concealed why Tagore, greatest as lyric poet, nevertheless falls short of membership in the choir of supremely great

lyrists. Tagore's method is the fusion, as we have seen, of the symbolic or "eternally true" or of an intangible state of mind, with the sensuous, the outwardly real. Whoever essays such fusion must do homage to each Janus face, the face looking out upon the inner truth and, no less, the face directed to fleeting reality. It is my quarrel with Tagore that he is not impartial in his worship. The inner truth not infrequently triumphs at the expense of the outer. To be more precise, I find it characteristic of Tagore's method that his symbolic perception of his feeling, seeking to clothe itself in sensuous terms, chooses image after image, each beautiful or striking, it may be, but with little relevancy, perhaps, in their relation to one another. One does not altogether feel that a bit of outward reality has been keenly apprehended, that it grows and grows in the mind of the poet, taking on the richness of shadow and overtone, until, by imperceptible degrees, it finds itself wedded to an attitude of mind, to a mood. In other words, the world of sense does not so much seem a powerful suggestion for a deeper world, as a casket of jewels, to be idly selected from for the adornment of a world already defined and felt. Many a poem, admitted abounding in single beauties or even at no point fairly open to criticism, does nevertheless leave upon the mind of the reader a feeling at once glittering and blurred. The feeling that it embodies seems, now and then, a little insecure, a little hollow. I am convinced, however, that this is an illusion, that Tagore is practically always master of the spiritual concept and of the feeling, but that he loses more than he perhaps realizes in passing from the unseen world to the world of imagery. Translations are rarely completely satisfying.

It may well be that to the devotee of Tagore criticism such as this is no criticism. To me, who am not in the least concerned with Tagore the seer, but only with Tagore the poet, it seems, in so far as it is valid, very damaging criticism indeed.

"It is little that remains now, the rest was spent in one careless summer. It is just enough to put in a song and sing to you, to weave in a flower-chain gently clasping your wrist; to hang in your ear like a round pink pearl, like a blushing whisper, to risk in a game one evening and utterly lose."

"To hang in your ear like a round pink pearl, like a blushing whisper." There we have it in a nutshell. "It is just enough" — here is the sentiment, [139] with its subtle note of regret, that fills the poet, thrills him so with its abstract intensity that he has no care for the incongruity

of hanging it in his beloved's ear "like a round pink pearl" and "like a blushing whisper." An equally good example from "Crossing" is

The day is dim with rain.

Angry lightnings glance through the tattered cloud-veils

And the forest is like a caged lion shaking its mane in despair.

On such a day amidst the winds beating their wings, let me find my peace in thy presence.

For the sorrowing sky has shadowed my solitude, to deepen the meaning of thy touch about my heart.

A mood picture of the presence of death, genuinely enough felt — but how is it with the concrete perception? I find myself unable to run the first and last lines into the same picture as the rest; the fourth line undoes the work of the third. The whole is a series of really fresh images that, nevertheless, result in a blur.

It is not often, perhaps, that Tagore mixes his metaphors so badly, but these examples illustrate fairly, I imagine, the dangers of his method and the poetic limitations of his view of the world. Of the extremely limited range of experience voiced in both "Lover's Gift" and "Crossing" (fancy saying seventy-eight symbolic times that one is in the presence of death and that it is well thus!) it is hardly necessary to speak. One must accept a poet's subject matter; one must meet him more than half way in his orientation of that subject matter. Still, it is only human to admit that the volume we have been considering creates an inordinate hunger for reality, not the "reality" of Tagore, but the very crass reality of Spoon River and Coney Island.

Tagore himself takes us a few steps nearer to this reality in "Mashi and Other Stories," though we never quite get there. It is as well, for stark realism is not Tagore's forte. Interesting and effective as most of these stories are, I have designedly left myself little space to speak of them. As a short story craftsman, Tagore does not belong in the first rank. There is too often a lack of deftness in the unfolding of the theme, in the handling of climax, in the placing of the point. Sometimes, as in the Maupassantish "The Auspicious Vision," "The Riddle Solved," and "My Fair Neighbour," the point of the tale (and all three of these depend for their effect almost entirely on "points") is obvious at a dismally early stage of the proceedings. Sometimes, again, a really promising story, like "Stubha," is spoiled or rendered trivial by an anticlimax or by a too clumsy touch of irony towards the close.

A number of tales, on the other hand, are highly beautiful and effective. Such are "Mashi," "The Supreme Night," "The Postmaster" (per-

haps the best in the volume), and "The River Stairs." Characteristically enough, these tales depend for their power not so much on incident and character as on the poignancy of passing mood, further on a blend of idealistic mysticism with a realism that is not too complexly apprehended. "The Postmaster," in which "point" is perhaps at a minimum, has something of the quality of Chekhov. The love the poor orphan girl Ratan bears the not greatly distinguished village postmaster is subtly drawn. It is not destined to lead to either fulfilment or tragedy. Nothing happens. The postmaster, who is fond of chatting with Ratan, finds life too dull at his post and resigns. He leaves the village. She weeps. It is all very real and meaningless, it is life at its least stagey and its most affecting. "The Trust Property" is a horrible story of bygone Bengal, and is in a class by itself. In it Tagore combines most successfully, one might almost say unexpectedly, the sheer horror of Poe's "Cask of Amontillado" with the brutal irony of Maupassant. The utilization of an old folk-custom, the burying of a live [140] victim who is to serve as the guardian spirit of a secret treasure, lends an added ethnological interest to the tale.

Over and above their specific qualities, these stories of Tagore's are well worth reading for the moments of intimate contrast they afford us with present-day and recently past life in Bengal. It is good to assure ourselves that the Bengali is as human and real as ourselves, if, indeed, he is not more so. It does no harm to discover that caste and reincarnation can be made to seem at least as inevitable as the Democratic party and the Presbyterian hymnal.

Editorial Note

Originally published in *The Canadian Magazine* 54, 137-140 (1919), under the title "The Poet-Seer of Bengal."

Sir Rabindranath Tagore (1861-1941), Bengali poet, novelist, composer, and painter, received the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1913.

Review of Cary F. Jacob,
The Foundations and Nature of Verse

Cary F. Jacob, *The Foundations and Nature of Verse*. New York: Columbia University Press, 1919.

It is only natural that the rapid development of freer forms of verse should be attended by a recrudescence of interest in problems of prosody. The old problem of the essential basis or bases of English verse is now being threshed out all over again. The relation in point of rhythm between prose and verse has become a curiously live question. Some see in prose and verse two naturally distinct and unbridgeable forms of expression; others consider them as merely the poles of a continuous gamut of possible forms, some of which are only now being consciously explored as artistic media.

In his conscientious if somewhat dull book, Dr. Jacob takes us over a great deal of familiar ground, leads us, with shrewd deliberation, into many a blind alley of negation, leaves himself apparently little or no ground to stand on, and triumphantly concludes with a statement of principles and natural limitations. Too much space is devoted to preliminaries — acoustic, ethnographic, psychologic. It is difficult to see, for instance, what meat the humble prosodist is expected to extract from the lengthy chapter on pitch, with its array of citations from technical treatises on acoustics and from antiquated works of an ethnographic nature. On the whole one gathers that Dr. Jacob's psychologic and purely musical equipment is superior to either his culture-historical or his linguistic equipment. This may well be erring on the right side, but it also tends to limit his perspective in a way that is not always fortunate. Phonetic phenomena are as good as ignored. Again, the problems of English verse structure are not set against a historical or comparative background that would serve to bring out in proper relief its own essential peculiarities.

The book offers nothing really new. To the devotees of freer prosodic forms it will prove a disappointment. No natural basis, however broad, is pointed out that would justify free verse as a realm of artistic promise.

Between the accidental rhythms of prose and the more or less rigidly recurrent metric units of normal verse Dr. Jacob throws no bridge. The book strikes one, despite its liberal employment of psychologic and prosodic authorities, as needlessly narrow in outlook. Like many prosodists, Dr. Jacob attaches probably too great importance to the purely objective and experimental study of rhythmic [100] phenomena. A subtler and ultimately more fruitful analysis would have demanded a wide definition of the concept of periodicity and a greater willingness to evaluate the more intimately subjective rhythmic factors. The same stanza may be truly verse to one subject, just as truly prose to another, according to whether or not a rhythmic contour (not necessarily a rigid metrical pattern) is clearly apperceived by the reader or hearer.

Editorial Note

Originally published (unsigned) in *The Dial* 66, 98, 100 (1919).

The Heuristic Value of Rhyme

The employment of rhyme always presents a problem. We like to think that the poet, carried away by his vision and the passion of his theme, has his rhymes coming to him spontaneously, that there is in the creation of rhymed verses no too deliberate process of selection. We like to think that form and subject matter are wedded from the beginning in an indissoluble unity. But all art is largely technique, and technique involves experimentation, rejection, selection, modification of the originally envisaged theme. Undoubtedly the actual practice of poets differs widely as regards the discovery of their rhymes. We shall not go far wrong in assuming that it is only in the rare case that thought and form come to the creator as a God-given unit. Perhaps we may speak of "God-given" rhyme in some of the very best lyrics of such poets as Robert Burns and Heine. Normally rhyme must prove a taskmaster; not infrequently it must coerce the poet into dulling, if ever so slightly, the edge of his thought here or padding out a little its range there. It does not in the least follow that the compulsion he is under to satisfy the taskmaster renders his work any the less satisfying in the end. Indeed it is more than probable that the very feeling of compulsion often serves as a valuable stimulant in the shaping of his thought and imagination.

The strained image or the far-fetched phrase is a price paid all too frequently by the poet to the necessity of rhyming. Even the best of poets cannot always escape these sins, when he has set himself the task of squirming about in a difficult form pattern. Rhymes *ad hoc* are common in the work of our more facile poets. It would be possible to quote more than one passage from John Masefield's work in illustration of this melancholy truth. Thus, I find the following from "Truth," one of the poems published in *The Story of a Round House*, to contain a weak, rhyme-compelled line:

Stripped of purple robes,
Stripped of all golden lies,
I will not be afraid.
Truth will preserve through death;
Perhaps the stars will rise,
The stars like globes.
The ship my striving made
May see right fade.

Masefield here set himself a rather difficult verse pattern. He had to find a rhyme in his two-footed sixth line to match the "robes" of the first. His solution of the difficulty, "the stars like globes," is hardly fortunate. A repetition of "the stars" is bad enough, "like globes" leaves the reader in sad wonder. It has pertinency neither as idea nor as imagery.

Another example of the made-to-order rhyme in Masefield's verse is to be found in "The Wanderer." We read:

So, as though stepping to a funeral march,
 She passed defeated homeward whence she came,
 Ragged with tattered canvas white as starch,
 A wild bird that misfortune had made tame.

The "white as starch" seems dragged in by the heels.

It would be a far more difficult but also more thankful task to point out the heuristic value of rhyme, the stimulating, or even directly creative, effect that the necessity of finding a rhyming word may exercise on the fancy of the poet. There can be no doubt that imbedded in the smooth surface of great rhymed verse there lie concealed hundreds of evidences of technical struggles that have resulted in a triumph of the imagination, a triumph that could hardly have been attained except through travail. Many a felicitous fancy, many a gorgeous bit of imagery, would have forever remained undiscovered if not whipped into being by the rhyming slave-driver. One of the prettiest examples that occur to me I select from the work of Robert Frost, who of all poets will not readily be accused of an undue adherence to conventional patterns. In "Blueberries," one of the poems of *North of Boston*, I find the lines:

Blueberries as big as the end of your thumb,
 Real sky-blue, and heavy, and ready to drum
 In the cavernous pail of the first one to come.

[311] It is impossible to prove anything about these lines without direct inquiry of the writer, who, moreover, may have forgotten the circumstances of composition. But I have always instinctively felt that the beautiful "drum" image was evoked in response to the rhyming necessity set by the preceding "thumb."

Nuances of feeling may receive an unexpected sharpening, a poignancy of contrast, by way of rhyme that its absence may have allowed to remain unrevealed. Turning the pages of *The Man against the Sky*, I find this very characteristic bit of Edwin Arlington Robinson from "Lisette and Eileen":

Because a word was never told,
 I'm going as a worn toy goes.
 And you are dead; and you'll be old;
 And I forgive you, I suppose.

Nothing could well be more casual, ostensibly, than the "I suppose" of the last line. Yet how better could all the poignant irony, the frenzy, the passionate resignation of Lisette have been expressed? One wonders if this superb fourth line could ever have fashioned itself in Robinson's brain if he had allowed himself to work in a freer medium.

Somewhat similar in its general effect is the following bit of humorous irony from "The Cake of Mithridates" (included in John Davidson's *Fleet Street and other Poems*):

With that the baker, breathing spice,
 Produced the cake hot from the fire,
 And every vizier ate a slice,
 Resolving to be less a liar.

There could be no more fittingly impertinent summary of the whole spirit of the poem than the unexpectedness of the final rhyme. The poem could not possibly have ended on a more appropriate note.

Both Robinson and Davidson are distinguished by a rare combination of intellect and passion. Perhaps it is precisely the passionate temperament cutting into itself with the cold steel of the intellect that is best adapted to the heuristic employment of rhyme. The temperament and the triumphant harnessing of form belong, both of them, to the psychology of sublimation following inhibition. [312]

I may be pardoned if I once again quote Masfield. Masfield has passion, vigor, swiftness, a fine frenzy that stamps him a belated Elizabethan. He has caught in his verse the physical throb and external color of the present, his spirit belongs irredeemably to the past, to the romantic past at that. Few poets of his stature are so innocent of intellect. As luck would have it, shortly after I had noted the fire...liar rhyme in Davidson, I ran across the following instance of the identical rhyme in "The Daffodil Fields":

But all my being is ablaze with her;
 There is no talk of giving up to-day.
 I will not give her up. You used to say
 Bodies are earth. I heard you say it. Liar!
 You never loved her, you. She turns the earth to fire.

Little comment is necessary. The external logic-chopping of these lines only serves to emphasize the unbridled, not to say unarticulated, pas-

sion. To the modern sensibility, is the last sentence felt as "in the drawing"? Have we not here again a facile rhyming technique seeking shelter and justification behind an all too uncritically evaluated rush of feeling? Tomorrow these lines will seem strangely cold. Robinson's cold lines will still burn.

It is not often that the artist can or cares to reveal much of the intimate processes of his work. Perhaps in most cases he is himself unable to analyze the process of creation with any degree of satisfaction. Where he can, however, it will certainly be of the greatest interest for a sound study of aesthetics to have him record something of this process. We have much too little material of the sort to work with. If aesthetics is ever to be more than a speculative play, of the genus philosophical, it will have to get down to the very arduous business of studying the concrete processes of artistic production and appreciation.

Editorial Note

Originally published in *Queen's Quarterly* 27, 309–312. Typographical errors in the original have been corrected without comment, based on Sapir's ms. notes on his copy.

The Poetry Prize Contest

[The first three paragraphs of this article are here omitted. They consist of a list of the poems awarded prizes in The Canadian Magazine's 1920 contest; a statistical breakdown of the genres into which entries fell; and a discussion of those genres. —Eds.]

What of the quality of the poems submitted to the three judges? Let it be frankly confessed that the general average of merit exhibited was far below what the judges believed they had a right to expect. The prize offered was worthy of any poet's serious consideration; the response seemed hardly adequate. Poem after poem, especially in the class of patriotic efforts, voiced the most distressingly conventional, personally unfelt and unexperienced, sentiments. Even where the technical execution was satisfying, the thought and feeling and imagery had a disconcerting way of harking back to well-worn poetic models. Gray's "Elegy in a Country Churchyard" was perhaps the most persistent ghost, the Kiplingesque line with its jaunty anapests was another. "In Flanders Fields" was responsible for a whole crop of war poems, to the extent of frequent quotation of the characteristic title words. Barely a dozen poems all told had something original to say or presented a universal sentiment in a strikingly original manner. Genuine feeling tended to express itself crudely; competent formal expression seemed to stifle feeling.

The prize-winning poems of the open class illustrate, on a poetically successful plane, these contrasting tendencies. "The Pioneer" is clearly stimulated by a genuinely felt sentiment, but the beauty of the poem, it seems to me, is essentially a beauty of rhythm and words, rather than of conception. It is altogether different with "A Revelation," which makes perhaps severer demands on the interpretative sympathy of the reader. This poem has, in some degree, the faults of its merits. It throbs throughout with the passion of a religious emotion that has so mastered the diction and style as to cut away all verbiage, to the point of occasional obscurity of expression and a too turbid rhythmic movement. These critical remarks are only intended to bring out the fact that each has room for rich development in the mastery of a difficult craft. They

must not be interpreted so as to read slightly. All three judges feel strongly that both poems, as well as Mr. Bourinot's sonnet, are worthy of very high praise.

It seemed to the judges that the disappointing nature of the mass of poetry sent in could be due to only one cause – that the majority of the best poets in Canada had, for one reason or another, failed to respond. [351] Possibly this is due to insufficient advertising of the proposed award: more likely to a certain hesitancy that the poet who has "arrived" or is about to arrive feels in joining the merry throng of competitors. This brings up the question of the purpose of a poetry prize. Is such a prize to be awarded for the purpose of encouraging talented amateurs to take up more seriously an art they might otherwise neglect – and who can deny that the cultural atmosphere of our country is only passively sympathetic, if at all, to the serious development of the art of poetry? Or should a prize give public recognition to good work done within a stated period, no matter by whom or under what auspices? In other words, which is the more useful function of a poetry prize, stimulation towards creation or recognition of the created work? If so external a stimulus as a prize could, in any true sense, be held to encourage the actual production of a work of art, there would be much to be said for such prizes as those recently awarded by the Arts and Letters Club of Ottawa. One suspects, however, that a poem written entirely under the compulsion of desire to win a competitive prize is apt to be an indifferent thing at best; that an artist worthy of the name, while needing all the encouragement he can get, will find other and more powerful sources of inspiration than the prize-lure; and that the few poems of value generally elicited by a prize contest are such as had been lying around in manuscript before the announcement of the prize. But here precisely lies a difficulty. Everyone that is at all professionally connected with poetry knows very well how difficult it often is for a poet to get himself a hearing. It is simply not true that all poems of great merit find a ready market. For poetic work, particularly for poetic work of marked originality, we need some more adequate method of reaching the Canadian public than is at present available. The literary magazines are few and far between and necessarily devote but an inconsiderable portion of their space to poetry. The costs of publication of a volume of poems are so great and the commercial returns so uncertain that we can hardly blame the publisher who turns down anything that does not tally with the standardized wares he is most comfortable with. On the other hand, a poetry prize is too isolated an event to help materi-

ally in the solution of this very real problem of getting at the public. What young poets, and old ones, for that matter, need is not so much the hectic hope of a rare and disproportionate emolument as the opportunity to have their work brought to the attention of the poetry-loving public. It seems to me that there is only one way in which this can be done. It is the establishment of a substantial journal, financially guaranteed, if possible, devoted solely or mainly to the publication of poetry and critical articles dealing with poetry. A few such journals exist in England and the United States, and it is perhaps not too much to say that such periodicals as *Poetry*, *Contemporary Verse*, and the English *Poetry Review*, far removed though they be from the ranks of best sellers, are doing more to stimulate public interest and original production in poetry than the whole run of popular magazines, whose chief relation to poetry would seem to be the occasional publication of a properly sentimental sonnet as a stop-gap. Canada is developing rapidly along material lines. She is also showing numerous indications of a breaking of the chrysalis-shell of provincialism. Should it not be possible to find a welcome for a Canadian poetry journal?

These remarks do not dispose of the prize question. There is no reason why the prize should not be used to give recognition to especially praiseworthy poems that have already reached the public, whether in book form or in magazines. The general [352] public has no idea how poorly poetry is paid. The average editor would be ashamed to tell his readers how much he expends for even his best poetic contributions, if, indeed, he pays for them at all! Under these circumstances anything that can be done to crown the poet's work with hard cash is a graceful tribute to his genius and a welcome addition to his income, which frequently is slender. More than that, money prizes of this sort do, in an indirect but far-reaching manner, help to encourage the sensitive poet by putting him in more sympathetic touch with his public. The fact that the poet uses mere words tends to blind the public to the realization that he is as truly an artist as the brother-craftsman that works with tone or color. The award of money prizes would help, in a crude way, to accentuate this fact. Were there in existence in Canada such a poetry journal as I have spoken of, its editorial staff could properly undertake the task of organizing the giving of prizes. As it is, it ought to be possible for a number of literary organizations in Canada to pool a certain proportion of their resources, appoint a staff of three or four judges, and invite the submission by poets of works published during the year. There are other methods of organizing prize awards that may seem

more effective. My own suggestion is a purely tentative one. In any event, we can hardly do too much to elevate the status of serious poetry in Canada or to gain some slight increase in emolument to the poet for his ill-paid art.

Editorial Note

Originally published in *The Canadian Magazine* 54, 349–352 (1920).

The Musical Foundations of Verse

Miss Amy Lowell's paper on "The Rhythms of Free Verse" is particularly important for the attention it calls to the concept of a time unit in certain types of verse as distinct from the metric unit determined by syllabic structure alone or by syllabic structure dominated by stress. To quote Miss Lowell: "For years I had been searching the unit of *vers libre*, the ultimate particle to which the rhythm of this form could be reduced. As the 'foot' is the unit of 'regular verse,' so there must be a unit in *vers libre*. I thought I had found it. The unit was a measurement of time. The syllables were unimportant, in the sense that there might be many or few to the time interval." This passage was all the more pleasing to me in that I found confirmation in it of a feeling that had gradually and strongly come to be borne in on me in the reading of certain types of free verse, the feeling that in some of the more artistic products of the imagist school, for instance, there was present a tendency to a rhythm of time pulses that operated independently, more or less, of the number of syllables. A line of verse, for instance, that had considerable length to the eye might quite readily, I conceived, be looked upon as the exact prosodic equivalent of a line of perhaps but half of its length, if the rates of articulation of the two lines differed sufficiently to make their total time-spans identical or approximately so. Hence the metrical "irregularity" of one type of free verse might be and, in at least some cases, as I felt convinced, was consciously or unconsciously meant to be, interpreted as a merely optical but not fundamentally auditory irregularity. This, in musical terminology, would be no more than saying that two equivalent measures (metric units) may, and frequently are, of utterly different constitution both as regards the number of tones (syllables) in the melodic line (flow of words) and the distribution of stresses. What is true, as regards prosodic equivalence, of lines of unequal length may, of course, also be true of syllabically unequal portions of lines.

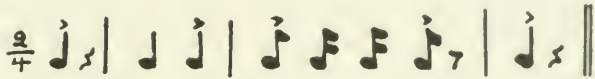
A very crude, but striking, exemplification of the unitary value of such time pulses is afforded by a series of orders delivered [214] by a drill sergeant at intervals, we will say, of exactly two seconds:

March!
 Right face!
 Right about face!
 Halt!

The ordinary prosodic analysis resolves into this:

—
 — —
 — ∪ ∪ —
 —

— an irregular bit of “verse” involving in its four humble lines no less than three metric patterns. Of course, the truth of the matter is something like this:



a perfectly humdrum and regular type of rhythmic movement. The metric unit of the drill-sergeant’s “poem” is not properly — or — — or — ∪ ∪, but a two-second time-span. To lend variety to the contour of the discourse, he might, quite in the manner of some of the more realistic free verse of the day, substitute a rapid nine-syllabled oath for a military order without breaking the time-metrical framework of the whole. Such an oath might be analyzed, let us say, as:

∪ — — — ∪ — ∪ ∪ —,

but it would be the precise time-metrical equivalent of the “March!” of the first line.

That in much free verse relatively long lines or sections are meant (sometimes, perhaps, only subconsciously) to have the same time value as short lines or sections of the same stanza seems very likely to me. The first stanza of Richard Aldington’s beautiful little poem “Amalfi” reads:

We will come down to you,
 O very deep sea,
 And drift upon your pale green waves
 Like scattered petals.

The orthodox scansion:

∪ ∪ — ∪ ∪ — (or: ∪ ∪ — — ∪ —)
 ∪ — ∪ ∪ —
 ∪ — ∪ — ∪ — ∪ —
 ∪ — ∪ — ∪

may be correct or approximately correct stress-analysis of the stanza, but it does not, if my own feeling in the matter is to be taken as a guide, being out the really significant form units. If the four lines are read at the same speed, an effect but little removed from that of rhythmical prose is produced. If the speeds are so manipulated as to make the lines all of equal, or approximately equal, length, a beautiful quasi-musical effect is produced, the retarded hovering movement of the second and fourth lines contrasting in a very striking manner with the more rapid movement of the first and third. I should go so far as to suggest that the time-units in this particular stanza are more important metrical determinants than the distribution of stresses. The last five lines of the poem are clearly intended to move along at a markedly slow rate:

We will come down,
 O Thalassa,
 And drift upon
 Your pale green waves
 Like petals.

The repetition of the earlier

And drift upon your pale green waves

as

And drift upon
 Your pale green waves

is no doubt an attempt to express to the eye the difference in speed intuitively felt by the poet. The splitting of the line in two must not be dismissed as a vagary. Whether the current methods of printing poetry are capable of doing justice to the subtler intentions of free-verse writers is doubtful. I shall revert to this point later on.

It would be manifestly incorrect to say that all writers of free verse feel with equal intensity, or feel at all, the unitary value of time pulses. Not all that looks alike to the eye is psychologically [216] comparable. In ordinary metrical verse the stress unit or foot tends to have a unitary time value as well. The prolonged coincidence of stress units and time units, however, leads often to an unpleasantly monotonous effect. To avoid this, as is well known, retardations and accelerations of speed are introduced that give the movement of the verse greater fluidity or swing. This process of disturbing the coincidence of time and stress units is the obverse of the unification by means of time units of the irregular stress groupings of free verse. Both "unitary verse," to use Dr. Patterson's and Miss Lowell's not altogether happy term, and time-disturbed metri-

cal verse are "irregular" or "free" in the sense that two unit streams of different nature fail to coincide. It is by no means a foregone conclusion that the latter type of verse, ordinarily accepted without question as unfree, is more "regular" in all cases and to all ears than the former. Much depends on the sensitiveness of the reader or hearer to the apprehension of time pulses.

It would be a mistake to suppose that the feeling for time units in regular verse manifests itself only in connection with the foot or with equivalent groupings of feet. The time unit is by no means always congruous to the metric unit or sequence of such units, but may make itself felt more or less independently of the metrical flow, may, in extreme cases, so blur this flow as to well nigh efface it altogether. Thus, a heavy syllable, with following pause, may stand out as the time equivalent of the rest of the syllables in the same line, though metrically of only a fraction of their weight. An interesting example of such a conflict of two prosodic principles seems to me to be the lines:

Us, in the looking glass,
Footsteps in the street,

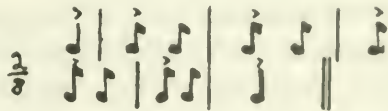
of Walter de la Mare's "The Barber's," one of the delightful rhymes of *Peacock Pie*. The metrical structure of the poem, as exemplified by the immediately preceding

Straight above the clear eyes,
Rounded round the ears,
Snip-snap and snick-a-snick,
Clash the barber's shears.

is clearly reducible to the formula:

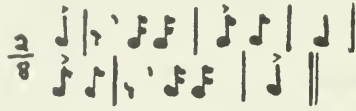
- (○) - ○ - (○) -
- ○ - ○ -

[217] The strict application, however, of this formula to the two lines first quoted results in a lifeless interpretation of their movement and in a meaningless emphasis of the "in" in each case. The reading



is intolerable. It seems that "us" (one foot) is the time equivalent, or approximately so, of "in the looking glass" (three feet), "footstep" (one foot) of "in the street" (two feet). In the first line, "us" and the first syllable of "looking" are strongly stressed, "glass" weakly, "in" not at

all; in the second, the first syllable of "footsteps" and "street" are strongly accented, "in" weakly, if at all. In other words, the proper four-foot and three-foot structure is resolved, under the influence of a conflicting time analysis, into a primarily two-pulse movement:



which may be interpreted, in prosodic symbols, as:

$$\begin{array}{l} \acute{ } (\acute{ }) \cup \cup \acute{ } \cup \acute{ } \\ \acute{ } \cup (\acute{ }) \cup \cup \acute{ } \end{array}$$

the (˘) representing a silent or syncopated secondary stress. To speak of a "caesura" does not help much unless a reference to time units is explicitly connoted by the term. Needless to say, the sequence $\acute{ } (\acute{ }) \cup \cup$ ("us, in the") differs completely, to an alert ear, from the true dactyl $\acute{ } \cup \cup$. These lines of De la Mare's are a good example of the cross-rhythmic effect sometimes produced in English verse by the clash of stress units and time units. They differ psychologically from true "unitary verse" in that the metrical pattern established for the ear by the rest of the poem peeps silently through, as it were. This silent metrical base is an important point to bear in mind in the analysis of much English verse. The various types of dimly, but none the less effectively, felt rhythmic conflicts that result have not a little to do with the more baffling subtleties of verse movement. Meanwhile it is highly instructive to note here a formal transition between normal verse and "free verse." The line of demarcation between the two is, indeed, a purely illusory one. [218]

The normal foot of English verse is ideally determined in three ways — by a single stress, a definite syllabic sequence, and a time unit. These three elements are, in practice, interwoven to form more or less complex and varied patterns, for foot, line, or stanza. As is well known, the syllabic structure and time pulses of normal verse are particularly liable to variation, but stresses also are handled more freely than is generally supposed, particularly if we go back of the ostensible metrical scheme that stares coldly at us on the printed page to the actual rhythms of the living word. Generally these prosodic determinants are functions of each other. In other words, the streams of stress-units, syllabic groups, and time pulses are not completely independent factors but tend to be concomitants or multiples of each other. They are synchronous phe-

nomena. It is only by some effort of analysis that we learn to convince ourselves that each determinant, more or less regardless of the other two, may form the basis of aesthetically satisfying rhythmic sequences. In English metrical verse, stress is the main determinant; in "unitary" free verse, it is the time pulse; in normal French verse, the syllable group. Where these noticeably fail to coincide, we may speak of inter-crossing rhythms or non-synchronous verse patterns. "Unitary verse" illustrates one type of non-synchronous verse pattern, but others are to be found here and there within the precincts of traditional metrical verse.

Stress-verse, time-verse, and syllable-verse, if we may coin these convenient terms, have or may have, however, this in common, that they are periodic forms, that their ground patterns recur with a high degree of regularity. The unit of periodicity is marked by the line alone or by regular, though often complex, alternations of lines, conventionally grouped in stanzas. The determinants of periodic structure are, besides stress, time, and syllabic sequence, the use of perceptible pauses (one of the most important, if explicitly little recognized, rhythm-definers) and the rising and falling (also strengthening and weakening) of the voice. The periodic nature of some of the free types of verse is often obscured to many by their failure to evaluate rightly the factors of time, pause, and voice inflexion.

Alliteration, rhyme, assonance, and simple repetition of words or phrases are, in modern English verse, generally of a decorative or rhetorical rather than primarily metrical significance. [219] The fact that they are recurrent features, however, gives them, particularly in the case of rhyme, a period-forming or metrical function at the same time. The metrical value may even outweigh the decorative or rhetorical, as in the case of the older Germanic alliterative verse and the typical rhymed verse of French; in the latter, sectioning into syllable-periods would be somewhat difficult without the aid of rhyme because of the lack of stress guidance and because of the intolerably mechanical effect that would result from the use of regularly recurrent pauses. It is highly interesting to observe that the sectioning power of rhyme, independently of either stress, syllable, or time patterns, has been seized upon by some of our modern poets as a means of attaining a comparatively novel and, if skillfully handled, oftentimes delightful type of movement. Robert Frost is especially clever in this technique. Take, for instance, the following lines from "After Apple-Picking":

For I have had too much
 Of apple-picking; I am overtired
 Of the great harvest I myself desired.
 There were ten thousand thousand fruit to touch,
 Cherish in hand, lift down, and not let fall.
 For all
 That struck the earth,
 No matter if not bruised or spiked with stubble,
 Went surely to the cider-apple heap
 As of no worth.

The sectioning here is mainly the result of the irregularly distributed rhymes. It forms a rhythmic flow that intercrosses with the simultaneous iambic stress-rhythm of the poem. We made the acquaintance a little while ago of time-stress intercrossing; here we have a related, but very distinct rhythmic principle — rhyme-stress intercrossing. The lines of irregular length are, in my opinion, only superficially analogous to those of “unitary” free verse. It would be highly artificial to assign to such a line as “For all” a time value equivalent to that of “For I have had too much.” There is no retardation of tempo in the short lines analogous to that of the only deceptively similar lines from Aldington. The tempo in Frost’s poem is, to all intents and purposes, as even as that of normal blank verse; barring the rhymes, its movement may, indeed, not inaptly be described [220] as that of non-periodic blank verse. The iambic foot is the only stress-time-syllabic unit; the unmeasured rhyming line is the only higher periodic unit.

In this example of Frost’s, rhyme-sectioning is clearly indicated to the eye. Rhyme-sectioning may, however, be subordinated to another periodic principle of greater psychologic importance and therefore be deprived of external representation. The sporadic interior rhyming in ordinary metrical verse is an example of such subordinate sectioning that is at the same time synchronous, not intercrossing, with the metrical period. Various types of subordinate rhyme-intercrossing are possible. An interesting example is furnished by the third “stanza” of Carl Sandburg’s “Cool Tombs”:

Pocahontas’ body, lovely as a poplar, sweet as a red haw in November or a paw-paw in May, did she wonder? does she remember? . . . in the dust, in the cool tombs?

This is written as a connected whole probably because the refrain, “in the dust, in the cool tombs,” which occurs at the end of the other three stanzas as well, is the determinant of a periodic structure that dwarfs the sub-sectioning. Nevertheless the stanza that I have quoted may be readily analyzed into time units of the “unitary verse” type:

Pocahontas' body, lovely as a poplar,
 Sweet as a red haw in November or a paw-paw in May,
 Did she wonder?
 Does she remember?

.....
 In the dust, in the cool tombs?

The rhyme-couplets (haw – paw-paw, November – remember) produce an inter-crossing sectioning that is distinctly subordinate, but none the less appreciable. It would be as misleading, psychologically speaking, to print the stanza in the manner of Frost's "After Apple-Picking," thus emphasizing the rhyme sections at the expense of the time sections, as to print the latter as blank verse, ignoring the rhyme-sectioning.

The term "periodic structure" is most conveniently used when the formula of recurrence is capable of expression in simple mathematical terms, generally on the basis of an ideal time measurement. "Sectioning" is a wider term that includes the former, implying merely a division into appreciable psychological [221] pulses, short or long and of regular or irregular relations. So long as the sectioning is clearly apprehended by the mind, some sort of rhythmic contour results. This contour may be aesthetically significant even if there is no definite prosodic system, as ordinarily understood, at the basis of the sectioning. A single strong stress or an unusually long pause at the end may be enough to mark off a section. A poem may be periodic in reference to one of its units of length, non-periodic in reference to another. Thus, the foot may be a periodic unit, while the line and stanza are not; the rhyme-sectioning may be strictly periodic in form, while the metric system is not; the stanza may be perfectly "free," presenting no clearly defined periodic features, yet may itself serve as a rigid pattern for periodic treatment; and so on through all manners of complications and intercrossings. As an example of stanza-periodicity in free verse I may quote the following:

TO DEBUSSY

"La Cathédrale Engloutie"

Like a faint mist, murkily illumined,
 That rises imperceptibly, floating its way nowhere, nowhither,
 Now curling into some momentary shape, now seeming poised in space –
 Like a faint mist that rises and fills before me
 And passes;

Like a vague dream, fitfully illumined,
 That wanders irresponsibly, flowing unbid nowhere, nowhither,
 Now flashing into a lurid flame-lit scene, now seeming lost in haze –

Like a vague dream that lights up and drifts within me
And passes;

So passes through my ear the memory of the misty strain,
So passes through my mind the memory of the dreamy strain.

The first two stanzas, it will be observed, follow a perfectly periodic scheme with reference to each other (precise recurrence of rhythms and word repetition), but show no rigid periodic features as such. This form is most easily of service where there is a natural parallelism of thought or feeling.

The preceding unsystematic observations on the structure of verse, if developed to their logical outcome, lead to the conviction that the possible types of verse are very numerous — more so than assumed even by the *vers libristes*, it would seem — that they are nowhere sharply delimited from each other, and that, in particular, it is impossible to say where metrical verse ends and “free verse” begins. The rhythmic contour or contours of any type of verse result from the manner of sectioning employed in it. “Rhythmic contour” includes here not merely the flow of foot on foot or of syllable group on syllable group but, equally, of stanza on stanza or of free-verse time pulse on time pulse. A strictly analytic classification of the possible prosodic varieties would have to consider:

1. Whether the primary unit of sectioning is determined by stress, time, number of syllables, alliteration, rhyme, assonance, repetition, or other element.

2. Whether the primary sectioning is in short or long units; in the latter case we might speak of a long-breathed rhythmic contour.

3. To what extent, if at all, the smaller section units are built up into large ones.

4. Which, if any, of the orders of sectioning are of a periodic nature.

5. Whether, if there is more than one rhythmic contour, these are synchronous or intercrossing.

Anyone who takes the trouble to think out to some extent the implications of such an approach to the problems of verse structure will soon be led to conclude that only a very small number of possible forms have been at all frequently employed. Considerable rhythmic discipline would be needed to learn to assimilate readily some of the more long-breathed types of structure and the subtler types of intercrossing. There is no reason to doubt that our ears will grow more sensitive to the less conventional developments of the rhythmic impulse as genuine artists give us more and more convincing examples on which to feed the impulse. One does not spontaneously assimilate and enjoy the cross-

rhythms of a Scriabine or the irregular thematic repetitions of a Debussy, but one gradually learns to do so and, in so doing, one rises to a more and more subtle consciousness of the infinite possibilities of rhythmic appreciation. I have advisedly said nothing of the satisfactory or unsatisfactory nature of the cadence or swing of verse not formally regulated by stress. This is an important but difficult matter to reduce to analysis. No doubt there are frequently brought into [223] play intercrossing relations of various rhythmic factors, so adjusted as to give a sense of hidden periodicity under an apparently irregular contour. I have, further, purposely avoided any necessary reference, in the five criteria of verse classification, to a specific rhythmic determinant, say stress. The feeling for sectioning of some kind is, I believe, the basic factor in the psychology of verse appreciation. The how of the sectioning is an exceedingly important detail, but still only a detail in a fundamental theory of prosody.

It is now time to ask what relation verse bears to prose. If sectioning, whether into short or long units, is to be accepted as the fundamental criterion of verse, it is clear at the outset that it would be just as vain to look for a hard and fast line of formal demarcation between prose and verse as between metric verse and free verse. If we could substitute "periodicity" for "sectioning," we would be better off, and, indeed, it will be found in practice that comparatively little of even free verse is totally lacking in some form of periodicity. Nevertheless we have not the right to narrow our definition of verse in such a way as to exclude any type of rhythmically articulated discourse, however irregular the contours yielded by analysis. Since it is obvious that all prose, even such as is not carefully modulated in pleasing cadences, is capable of being sectioned off into shorter and longer units, whether of stress or time or pause-marked syllable groups, it would almost seem that we have allowed ourselves to be driven into the paradox that all prose is verse. This would be improving M. Jourdain's interesting discovery. Have we been talking verse all our lives without knowing it?

Were we to depend entirely on an external and purely mechanical analysis of the phenomena of sectioning, we should indeed have to despair of ascertaining any completely valid differentia of verse. A rhythmic contour of some kind is as inseparable from the notion of prose as from that of verse. Fortunately we possess an extremely simple criterion to guide us, so simple that we need not wonder that it has been consistently overlooked. It is the psychological principle of attention, of rhythmic self-consciousness. Of two passages that are perfectly homolo-

gous in rhythmical respects, so long as a merely formal analysis is made of their stresses, time phrases, and [224] syllables, one may be verse because the rhythmic contour is easily apperceived as such, demands some share of the reader's or hearer's attention, the other prose because, for some reason or other, the same rhythmic contour, while necessarily making a vague impress on the fringe of consciousness, has not succeeded in clearly obtruding itself on the attention. In the former case the rhythmic construction of the passage is present, as an analyzable factor, both phonetically and aesthetically; in the latter, phonetically but not aesthetically. As far as art is concerned, rhythm simply does not exist in the latter case. (An immediate corollary of these considerations, should they be accepted as valid, is the necessary limitation of machine methods in the investigation of prosodic problems. If the evaluation of rhythm did not unavoidably involve the subjective factor of fixation of attention, it might be possible to arrive at completely satisfactory results with the aid of such methods alone. As it is, it is doubtful if it will ever be possible to dispense wholly with introspective analysis, welcome as are the data yielded by rigorously objective methods.) Verse, to put the whole matter in a nutshell, is *rhythmically self-conscious* speech or discourse.

If anyone doubts that verse and prose may be perfectly homologous from the rhythmic standpoint, he can readily convince himself by simple experiments with both prose and verse. He may so read a prose passage as to make all its rhythmic characteristics stand out in over-clear relief. In spite of himself an effect of nervous, irregular verse will be produced; not infrequently he will find himself reading blank verse. The contrast between the sharpness of the rhythmic contour and the inappropriately prosaic character of the diction or thought may make the reading painfully stilted, but he will be reading verse none the less. If he succeeds in substituting words of poetic content, without changing the rhythmic pattern, he will be reading poetry as well. The book that lies nearest to hand at the moment is *America through the Spectacles of an Oriental Diplomat*, by Wu Ting Fang, LL. D. Opening it at random, the first sentence that strikes my eye is: "Uniforms and badges promote brotherhood." I am convinced that this is meant to be prose. Nevertheless, when I read it many times, with ever-increasing emphasis on its rhythmic contour and with less and [225] less attention to its content, I gradually find myself lulled in the lap of verse:

± 0 ± 0 ± 0 ± 0 ± 0 ±

Had Wu Ting Fang chosen to clothe his rhythmic pattern in words of poetic connotation, say:

Thunderbolts come crashing in mad turbulence,

the effect of verse latent in all prose would have risen to the surface far more rapidly.

Conversely, one may take a passage of undoubted verse and turn it into prose, subjectively speaking, by the simple process of reading it with diffused rhythmic attention. It requires some practice to do this convincingly, though I have heard more than one lecturer, when quoting poetry for illustrative purposes, succeed with little apparent effort in producing this effect. Free verse, even the most strikingly rhythmical free verse, may very easily thus lapse into prose. If prosaic diction is substituted, without destroying the rhythmic pattern, even the most palpable metric movement may be made to seep away into an unarticulated prose. The first four lines of "H. D."s "Oread" run:

Whirl up, sea –
Whirl your pointed pines,
Splash your great pines
On our rocks.

These lines, though not based on a metric scheme, are in the highest degree rhythmical. The following approximate verse-homologue:

I say, Bill!
Come, you silly boob,
Fetch your old pate
Back to town

introduces itself with every apology but believes it proves its point. The verse pattern set by the original poem is so clear-cut in its rhythmic outline that even this travesty is not wholly devoid of rhythmic effect and is, to that extent, verse. Nevertheless it is undeniable that a casual reading of the lines suggests a far weaker degree of rhythmic self-consciousness. In short, it is not enough for a rhythm to be discoverable; it must disclose itself with alacrity. Verse rhythms come, or should come, to us; we go to the rhythms of prose.

All this means, if it means anything at all, that there is not only no sharp dividing-line between prose and verse, as has been so often pointed out, but that the same passage *is* both prose and verse according to the rhythmic receptivity of the reader or hearer or according to his waning or increasing attention. The very lack of sympathy that is so often accorded the freer forms of verse frequently brings with it an

unavoidable transmutation of the verse into prose. A and B are quite right in calling the "same poem" prose and verse respectively. They are talking about different things. Poetry does not exist in its symbolic visual form; like music, it addresses itself solely to the inner ear.

There are, naturally, several factors that tend to excite the rhythmic apperception of a series of words, to deepen prose into verse. The isolation and discussion of these factors would be one of the most important tasks of a psychologically sound theory of prosody. Foremost among them is perhaps the choice of words, the diction. Whatever be our favorite theory of the nature of diction in poetry, it must be granted unreservedly that any lexical, grammatical, or stylistic peculiarity that is not current in prose helps to accentuate the rhythmic contour if only because the attention is more or less forcibly drawn to it. "Wherefore art thou come?" is necessarily more rhythmical than its prose equivalent, "What made you come?" not so much because of inherent metrical differences as of the practical impossibility of reading the former sentence with the carelessness, the diffused rhythmic attention, so inevitable in the reading of the latter. It does not in the least follow that conventionally "poetic" diction is necessarily justified in poetry. Poetry has to follow more masters than rhythm alone. Any striking or individual intuition, such as we have a right to look for in poetry, is bound to clothe itself in correspondingly striking expression, in some not altogether commonplace choice of words. That is enough for that heightening of attention which is so essential for the adequate appreciation of rhythmic effects. Curiously enough, we are here brought to a realization of the fact that, however justifiable in general theory the separation of the formal aspect of poetry (verse) from its distinctive content, [227] in practical analysis this separation can hardly be enforced. Prosody divorced from poetic intuition is very much of an abstraction.

We must, further, freely grant that periodicity in sectioning is a particularly powerful stimulus for the awakening of rhythmic consciousness. This is inevitable because of the rapidly cumulative effect on the attention of repetition of any kind. Even sectioning is more easily seized upon than uneven sectioning. Hence it lends itself more readily to utilization in verse. It is no more rhythmical *per se* than a rhythmically well apperceived passage with uneven sectioning; it merely helps solve the problem of attention by so much. Should we, for the sake of avoiding the appearance of hairsplitting, grant to periodicity as such an intrinsically prosodic character, we should have to conclude that the gamut of forms that connects normal prose with strophic verse is twofold: a

gamut depending on a progressive application of the principle of periodicity (the shorter and more numerous the periodic units, the more verse-like the form) and a gamut depending on the degree of apperception of the rhythmic contour (the more self-conscious the contour, the more verse-like the form). Only we must be careful not to identify the principle of periodicity with the particular applications of it that are familiar to us in metrical verse. Theoretically speaking, any particular form of discourse will be best thought of, not as flatly verse or prose, but as embodying the verse principle in greater or less degree. With those who prefer impersonal abstractions to subjective realities there is no need to argue.

The inestimable advantages of the art of writing, in poetry as in music, have been purchased at a price. Impressions originally meant for the ear have been transcribed into visual symbols that give at best but a schematized version of the richly nuanced original. Symbolization tends to rigid standardization, to a somewhat undue emphasis on selected features at the expense of others. We have become so accustomed to taking in poetry through the eye that I seriously doubt if the purely auditory intentions are as clear to all as is light-heartedly assumed. Is it easy to grant that an eye-minded critic (and more people tend to eye-mindedness than ear-mindedness) who has silently read an immensely greater volume of poetry than he [228] has heard is always competent to discuss free verse or any verse? One wonders sometimes what a dispassionate psychological investigation would disclose. To a far greater extent than is generally imagined I believe that the pleasurable responses evoked by metrical verse are largely conditional on visual experiences. The influence of visual stanza-patterns in metrical verse, on the one hand, and the somewhat disturbing effect of uneven lines in free verse, on the other, are not to be too lightly dismissed. Much of the misunderstanding of the freer forms may well be due to sheer inability to think, or rather image, in purely auditory terms. Had poetry remained a purely oral art, unhampered by the necessity of expressing itself through visual symbols, it might, perhaps, have had a more rapid and varied formal development. At any rate, there is little doubt that the modern developments in poetic form would be more rapidly assimilated by the poetry-loving public.

Most people who have thought seriously of the matter at all would admit that our poetic notation is far from giving a just notion of the artist's intentions. As long as metric patterns are conventionally accepted as the groundwork of poetry in its formal aspect, it may be that

no great harm results. It is when subtler and less habitual prosodic features need to be given expression that difficulties arise. Free verse undoubtedly suffers from this imperfection of the written medium. Retardations and accelerations of tempo, pauses, and time units are merely implied. It is far from unthinkable that verse may ultimately be driven to introduce new notational features, particularly such as relate to time. It is a pity, for instance, that empty time units, in other words pauses, which sometimes have a genuine metrical significance, cannot be directly indicated. In Frost's lines:

Retard the sun with gentle mist;
 Enchant the land with amethyst.
 Slow, slow!

is not the last line to be scanned

[o] + [o ÷ o] + [o ÷]?

The silent syllables are enclosed in brackets. What would music be without its "rests," or mathematics without a zero?

Editorial Note

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A shortened version of this paper was prepared by Sapir, under the title "What is Verse?," but was never published.

Note

1 *The Dial*, Jan. 17, 1918.

Maupassant and Anatole France

Two types of aesthetic, as distinct from historical, literary criticism are in vogue, the objective and the impressionistic. Objective criticism seeks to judge a work of literary art regardless of the personality of either writer or critic, assigning it its niche in the realm of aesthetic values according to certain standards. At least this is its aim, for in a world of strong personal bias and constantly shifting standards it is ever doomed to partial failure. Essentially more honest, if generally even wider of the mark, is the impressionistic method, which aims to set forth clearly the subjective attitude of the critic towards the art material before him. Objective criticism tends to reveal the work, impressionistic criticism the critic. Neither reveals the writer.

And yet a story or play or poem is first and foremost the refracted, because conventionally moulded, expression of a personality. It cannot well be more significant than the personality that gives it birth. It may be more harmonious, more pleasing, yet it will always fall somewhat short of the intensity, depth, and range of the artist's psyche. What we might call the "personal" type of criticism, the criticism that accepts the personality of the artist as its starting point and endeavors to trace the main, and indeed aesthetically determining, features of this personality in the art work, is frequently found mingled in crude form with both objective — better absolutistic — and impressionistic criticism, but rarely as the frankly avowed object of the critic. This is not surprising. Until recent times psychology has, on the whole, contented itself with the same sort of colorless and generalized abstractions as characterize aesthetic systems. There has been little attempt to seize upon the concrete personality as a unit and to ascertain its distinctive trends. Yet obviously this is the only kind of psychology that a "personal" criticism could utilize.

With the advent of the Freudian psychology matters have changed somewhat. Imperfect as that psychology is and must long remain, it has given us the first solid approach to an understanding of individual personality on the basis of a study of the fundamental impulses, their development, sublimation, and pathology. As this new psychology gains in refinement and certainty, its application to aesthetic problems be-

comes more and more assured. In every work of art, after due allowance is made for traditional forces, there stand revealed, though still largely unread, a hundred symptoms of the instinctive life of the creator. In the long run only criticism grounded in individual psychological analysis has validity in aesthetic problems. At present we are still largely obsessed by the notion of justifying our literary estimates by reference to a set of aesthetic canons that hover mysteriously [200] in a rarefied atmosphere of eternal truth. And we are still at the game of strait-jacketing all temperaments into an ideal frame.

The vast network, partly conscious and partly unconscious, of trends, inhibitions, and symbolizations that go to make up the sex impulse, raw and sublimated, has been duly, at times unduly, stressed by the Freudian psychologists. It goes without saying that no even remotely adequate understanding of a personality can be had without knowledge of its sexual life. By this is meant not so much the external facts of sexual relationship as the deeper sexual dispositions which, though they may never explicitly come to light, nevertheless do have a far-reaching influence in shaping the personality's general attitude towards life. Probably no writer of real significance, no writer whose work is a sincere reflection of his individuality, can be fundamentally interpreted without reference to the special characteristics of his psycho-sexual constitution.

Masters of irony — the Maupassants, Anatole Frances, Nietzsches, Oscar Wildes, Swifts of literary history — seem to offer very special interest from a psychoanalytic standpoint. The sting of their irony, in so far as it is sincere and not a mere imitative pose, rests on its genetic connection with the element of pain-infliction so frequently found associated with the sexual impulse. In *The Picture of Dorian Gray* Oscar Wilde goes so far as to say that there is an element of cruelty in all pleasure. Exaggerated as this dictum undoubtedly is, it deserves to be reckoned among his flashes of intuitive insight. The pain-inflicting component of the sexual impulse takes either an active (sadistic) or passive (masochistic) form. In the latter case pleasure is gained from the endurance or self-infliction of pain. In actual experience, however, the two forms are frequently combined, though generally with emphasis on the one or the other. Moreover, the general nature of the sexual disposition greatly complicates the operation of these pain-inflicting impulses. It would therefore be natural to find that their literary sublimation may proceed in different ways and that types of irony that at first sight seem directly comparable are to be credited to fairly distinct sources.

One of the very best examples of a pure sadistic irony, an irony that takes frank delight in the tortures it inflicts, is that of Maupassant. I refer particularly to the short stories, in which we have Maupassant at his most characteristic. Equally typical, among the novels, is "Bel-Ami," to a less extent also "Une Vie." In such a novel as *Fort comme la Mort*, however, the typical Maupassant pungency is largely lacking. It would almost seem as if there were, hidden under a smooth surface, a strong, turbulent flow of energy in Maupassant's spirit, that needed a rapid and explosive outlet and that tended to evaporate if too long husbanded. The nature of this energy I conceive to be aggressive, and indeed blindly so. Examine very carefully a number of the ironical stories — and few of the stories are not ironical — and you will notice before long two striking facts about Maupassant's irony. In the first place, he rarely, if ever, shows or implies any sympathy for either the victims or the instruments of his irony; for both sufferers and causers of suffering he has generally nothing but quiet contempt. Lest his readers be beguiled into a sentimental sympathy for his human playthings, he is apt to take good care to add insult to injury by giving them a ridiculous touch. The ignorant peasant of "A Piece of String" that plagues himself to death might have aroused our active commiseration, were he not so much more interesting as a joke than as a mere human being. We watch his expiring evolutions with the same fiendish glee with which the bad boy observes the wiggling of a fly that he has made wingless and footless. [201] Perhaps he suffers — *quien sabe?* But really, he is too funny. Let's get our fun out of him. This is the essential Maupassant.

In the second place, I find little or no tendency in Maupassant for the irony to revert to the writer. Maupassant is throughout very much aloof, he is in no haste to identify his own soul with the souls of his job lot of humanity. In this respect also he is the overgrown small boy. This absence of the self-prodding so characteristic of many another ironist removes Maupassant from the necessity of receiving our sympathy. To some temperaments it outlaws him. Other temperaments find his delicate cruelties quite *chic*. It is not altogether to the point to speak of the "objectivity" of Maupassant's art, as a rejoinder to our analysis. In so far as "objectivity" is not merely a name for a dehumanized and frigid art, of little psychological or aesthetic interest, it denotes a particular type, or group of types, of "subjectivity." Non-introspective temperaments are most themselves, most "subjective," when consciously engaged with anything but themselves. On the other hand, the attempt of an essentially introspective type of mind to produce "objective" art

generally leads to disaster. The special evaluation of "objective" art is clearly nothing but an academic shibboleth which mistakes the fruit of a specific type of temperament for conformity with an aesthetic ideal.

That there is an especially strong sexual vein in Maupassant is too obvious to need elucidation. A large number of the stories, moreover, directly exhibit this vein as strongly colored by the pain-inflicting impulse. I would refer to certain scenes in "Une Vie" and especially to "The Vagabond," one of Maupassant's most self-revealing tales. In this story everyone is furious with everyone else, in the case of the hero for reasons of hunger, at bottom for the sheer fun of hating, attacking, inflicting pain. "He grasped his stick tightly in his hand, *with a longing* to strike the first passerby who might be going home to supper." "Male and female peasants looked at the prisoner between the two gendarmes, with hatred in their eyes and a *longing* to throw stones at him, to tear his skin with their nails, to trample him under their feet." As for the "objectivity" of this, remember that these people know absolutely nothing about the vagabond and the offense he is supposed to be guilty of.

A much more subtle and interesting psychological problem is afforded by the literary work and personality of Anatole France. The irony here is of much finer texture and of greater variety of emotional depth. In *Le Crime de Sylvestre Bonnard* it is tenderly playful, in *Le Grand Saint Nicholas* and *Les Sept Femmes de Barbe-Bleue* the irony is still playful but fantastic and at times mordant, in *Les Dieux ont Soif* it gets to be intensely sardonic, in *Thais* the irony is savage and sex-ridden. The chief difference between the irony of Maupassant and that of France, however, does not lie in its quality, but in its direction. All of the more important of France's creations are himself; hence the irony, particularly when it rises, as in *Thais*, to passionately cruel heights, is essentially self-directed. Wherever we turn, France mocks at himself. He is mainly concerned with the task of demolishing his own faiths.

In the very first paragraph of *L'Ile des Pingouins* we read of the recluse Maël: "Il partageait ses heures, selon la règle, entre le chant des hymnes, l'étude de la grammaire et la méditation des vérités éternelles." Strange company for "the eternal truths"! But why not, seeing what trivial baggage "eternal truths" are wont to be? The ostensible irony in such passages as this is directed against the monastic ideal, the Church, the principles of the French Revolution (France's principles!) [202], or what not, but this irony is only a mask — perhaps an unconscious one — for the deeper irony that grins at one's own fond illusions. Perhaps only such a mind as France's, weaving graceful fanta-

sies out of an utter void, could have fathered the delightful "Putot," the much-talked-of gentleman who does not exist. Putot is a symbol of France's inner world of values – charming, noble, but non-existent.

There are many indications in France's work of the temperament that denies reality and, as surrogate, constructs a cloistered world of its own imagining. His predilection for hermits, celibates, men who stand aloof and introspect, is no merely accidental fondness. Most significant for a fundamental understanding of France's personality is the study of the monk Paphnuce in *Thais*. Here we learn what a stream of passion seethes at the bottom of France's soul and of the doom that withholds from this passion its fruition. The same inner check is discernible in modified and somewhat conventional form, in *Le Lys Rouge*, still more clearly in *Les Dieux ont Soif*. The self-directed cruelty, the tendency to shrink from the world into a self-created domain, the blind alley of frustrated passion – all these are symptoms of the introverted temperament. We can not but suspect that in France the instinctive life, of unusual passionateness, has not solved the problem of outer adjustment and has been content to fume, unconsciously it may be, in ceaseless non-satisfaction. We may suspect the soul of France's irony to lie in the element of baffled impulse and self-reproach, which is so characteristic of the introverted temperament. In a nutshell, the peculiarities of France's art are best understood as a sublimation of the impulses of such a temperament.

The psychoanalytic approach that I had rapidly sketched to these two masters of French literature is only an approach. It does not pretend to explain in detail, nor in all probability can it ever explain in detail, the art-structures that they have reared. It aims only to disclose the nature of the individual instinctive life which, according to the Freudian psychology, necessarily determines, in broad outlines, all forms of self-expression.

Editorial Note

Originally published in *The Canadian Magazine* 57, 199–202 (1921).

Guy de Maupassant (1850–1893) was a French novelist and writer of acclaimed short stories. Anatole France was the pseudonym of Jacques-Anatole-France Thibault (1844–1924), a French writer, literary critic, novelist, poet, and dramatist, who received the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1921.

Review of Gerard Manley Hopkins, *Poems*

Poems of Gerard Manley Hopkins. Edited, with notes, by Robert Bridges. London: Humphrey Milford, 1918.

When the author's preface and the editor's notes are eliminated, we have here but a small volume of some eighty-five pages of poetry, and of these only a scant sixty-three consist of complete poems, the rest being fragments assembled from manuscripts in the Poet Laureate's possession. The majority of them date from the years 1876 to 1889; only three earlier poems are included. Hopkins is long in coming into his own; but it is not too much to say that his own will be secure, among the few that know, if not among the crowd, when many a Georgian name that completely overshadows him for the moment shall have become food for the curious.

For Hopkins' poetry is of the most precious. His voice is easily one of the half dozen most individual voices in the whole course of English nineteenth-century poetry. One may be repelled by his mannerisms, but he cannot be denied that overwhelming authenticity, that almost terrible immediacy of utterance, that distinguishes the genius from the man of talent. I would compare him to D. H. Lawrence but for his greater sensitiveness to the music of words, to the rhythms and ever-changing speeds of syllables. In a note published in *Poetry* in 1914, [331] Joyce Kilmer speaks of his mysticism and of his gloriously original imagery. This mysticism of the Jesuit poet is not a poetic manner, it is the very breath of his soul. Hopkins simply could not help comparing the Holy Virgin to the air we breathe; he was magnificently in earnest about the Holy Ghost that

over the bent

World broods with warm breast and with ah! bright wings.

As for imagery, there is hardly a line in these eighty-odd pages that does not glow with some strange new flower, divinely picked from his imagination.

Undeniably this poet is difficult. He strives for no innocuous Victorian smoothness. I have referred to his mannerisms, which are numer-

ous and not always readily assimilable. They have an obsessive, turbulent quality about them — these repeated and trebly repeated words, the poignantly or rapturously interrupting *oh*'s and *ah*'s, the headlong omission of articles and relatives, the sometimes violent word order, the strange yet how often so lovely compounds, the plays on words and, most of all, his wild joy in the sheer sound of words. This phonetic passion of Hopkins rushes him into a perfect maze of rhymes, half-rhymes, assonances, alliterations:

Tatter-tassel-tangled and dingle-a-dangled
Dandy-hung dainty head.

These clangs are not like the nicely calculated jingling lovelinesses of Poe or Swinburne. They, no less than the impatient ruggednesses of his diction, are the foam-flakes [332] and eddies of a passionate, swift-streaming expression. To a certain extent Hopkins undoubtedly loved difficulty, even obscurity, for its own sake. He may have found in it a symbolic reflection of the tumult that raged in his soul. Yet we must beware of exaggerating the external difficulties; they yield with unexpected ease to the modicum of good will that Hopkins has a right to expect of us.

Hopkins' prosody, concerning which he has something to say in his preface, is worthy of careful study. In his most distinctive pieces he abandons the "running" verse of traditional English poetry and substitutes for it his own "sprung" rhythms. This new verse of his is not based on the smooth flow of regularly recurring stresses. The stresses are carefully grouped into line and stanza patterns, but the movement of the verse is wholly free. The iambic or trochaic foot yields at any moment to a spondee or a dactyl or a foot of one stressed and three or more unstressed syllables. There is, however, no blind groping in this irregular movement. It is nicely adjusted to the constantly shifting speed of the verse. Hopkins' effects, with a few exceptions, are in the highest degree successful. Read with the ear, never with the eye, his verse flows with an entirely new vigor and lightness, while the stanzaic form gives it a powerful compactness and drive. It is doubtful if the freest verse of our day is more sensitive in its rhythmic pulsations than the "sprung" verse of Hopkins. How unexpectedly he has [333] enlarged the possibilities of the sonnet, his favorite form, will be obvious from the two examples that I am going to quote. Meanwhile, here are two specimens of his more smoothly flowing verse. The first is from "The Leaden Echo," a maiden's song:

How to keep – is there any, is there none such, nowhere known some, bow
 or brooch or braid or brace, lace, latch or catch or key to keep
 Back beauty, keep it, beauty, beauty, beauty ... from vanishing away?
 Oh is there no frowning of these wrinkles, ranked wrinkles deep,
 Down? no waving-off of these most mournful messengers, still messengers,
 sad and stealing messengers of grey?
 No there's none, there's none – oh no, there's none!
 Nor can you long be, what you now are, called fair –
 Do what you may do, what, do what you may,
 And wisdom is early to despair:
 Be beginning; since, no, nothing can be done
 To keep at bay
 Age and age's evils – hoar hair,
 Ruck and wrinkle, drooping, dying, death's worst, winding sheets, tombs and
 worms and tumbling to decay;
 So be beginning, be beginning to despair.
 Oh there's none – no no no, there's none:
 Be beginning to despair, to despair,
 Despair, despair, despair, despair.

This is as free as it can be with its irregular line-lengths and its extreme changes of tempo, yet at no point is there hesitation as the curve of the poem rounds out to definite form. For long-breathed, impetuous rhythms, wind-like and sea-like, such verse as this of Hopkins' has nothing to learn from the best of Carl Sandburg. My second quotation is from "The Wood-lark," a precious fragment: [334]

Teevo cheevo cheevio chee:
 Oh where, where can that be?
Weedio-weedio: there again!
 So tiny a trickle of song-strain;
 And all round not to be found
 For brier, bough, furrow, or green ground
 Before or behind or far or at hand
 Either left, either right,
 Anywhere in the sunlight.
 Well, after all! Ah, but hark –
 "I am the little wood-lark."

This is sheer music. The stresses fall into place with an altogether lovely freshness.

Yet neither mannerisms of diction and style nor prosody define the essential Hopkins. The real Hopkins is a passionate soul unendingly in conflict. The consuming mysticism, the intense religious faith are unreconciled with a basic sensuality that leaves the poet no peace. He is longing to give up the loveliness of the world for that greater loveliness of the spirit that all but descends to envelop him like a mother;

but he is too poignantly aware of all sensuous beauty, too insistently haunted by the allurements of the flesh. A Freudian psychologist might call him an imperfectly sex-sublimated mystic. Girlish tenderness is masked by ruggedness. And his fuming self-torment is exteriorized by a diction that strains, and by a rhythmic flow that leaps or runs or stamps but never walks.

Here is "The Starlight Night," one of his most characteristic sonnets – white-heat mysticism forged out of what pathos of sense-ecstasy!

Look at the stars! look, look up at the skies!
 Oh look at all the fire-folk sitting in the air!
 The bright boroughs, the circle-citadels there!
 Down in dim woods the diamond delves! the elves'-eyes!
 The grey lawns cold where gold, where quickgold lies!
 Wind-heat whitebeam! airy abeles set on a flare!
 Flake-doves sent floating forth at a farmyard scare! –
 Ah well! it is all a purchase, all is a prize.

Buy then! bid then! – What? – Prayer, patience, alms, vows,
 Look, look: a May-mess, like on orchard boughs!
 Look! March-bloom, like on mealed-with-yellow sallows!
 These are indeed the barn; within doors house
 The shocks. This piece-bright paling shuts the spouse
 Christ home, Christ and his mother and all his hallows.

"Ah well! it is all a purchase." You cannot have it for the asking.

And, finally, this other sonnet, addressed to his own restless soul, "with this tormented mind tormenting yet":

My own heart let me have more pity on; let
 Me live to my sad self hereafter kind,
 Charitable; not live this tormented mind
 With this tormented mind tormenting yet.
 I cast for comfort I can no more get
 By groping round my comfortless, than blind
 Eyes in their dark can day or thirst can find
 Thirst's all-in-all in all a world of wet.

Soul, self; come, poor Jackself, I do advise
 You, jaded, let be; call off thoughts awhile
 Elsewhere; leave comfort root-room; let joy size
 At God knows when to God knows what; whose smile
 's not wrung, see you; unforeseen times rather – as skies
 Between pie mountains – lights a lovely mile.

But how many "lovely miles" could there have been [336] on the long, rocky road traversed by this unhappy spirit!

In face of this agonising poem one can only marvel at the Poet Laureate's imperturbable exegesis of the word "betweenpie": "This word might have delighted William Barnes if the verb 'to pie' existed. It seems not to exist, and to be forbidden by homophonic absurdities." From our best friends deliver us, O Lord!

Editorial Note

Originally published in *Poetry* 18, 330–336 (1921).

Review of
William A. Mason, *A History of the Art of Writing*

William A. Mason, *A History of the Art of Writing*. New York: Macmillan, 1920.

The history of our alphabet and of other systems of writing historically connected or unconnected with it has been often told. Yet there is room for a new synthesis of the vast array of facts, something, say, that would bring the lay reader into touch with the later finds in the Mediterranean region and with the newer theories based on these finds. Even more welcome than a merely historical survey of the systems of writing as such would be a general review of their development from the standpoint [69] of art. Writing at all times has constituted a plastic as well as a symbolic problem. The conveyance of thought has been only one of its uses; the delineation of pleasing contours, now severe and statuesque, now flowing in graceful meanderings, has always been something more than a by-product. As one passes from ideographic system to system and from alphabet to alphabet perhaps the thing that most forcibly strikes one is that each and every one of them has its individual style. This is corrected by the obscurely divining, converging hands of thousands of artists, until, at a given moment, the characters stand forth as a unique and unified work of art, as self-contained and as definitely stylized as any architectural tradition. The historian has no difficulty in showing how a certain starting-point gives a slant or drift to the future development of the system, how the particular forms, for instance, of the medieval black-letter are largely prefigured in the Phœnician alphabet. But he does not so clearly know just how and why the various styles develop, just how it is that the Arabic hand, the Roman type, the Armenian, the Hindu alphabets, all derived as they ultimately are from a single prototype, have so widely diverged, have their individualities so stamped upon them, that the proof of their common genesis is but the coldest of archaeological businesses.

Much can be said and has been said of the controlling power of the medium. Stone is different from papyrus and the pen is different from

a camel's hair brush. Yet when all this and more is indicated and worked out with laborious detail, we are really no nearer the central question of what psychological forces have hurried the national hand on to that aesthetic balance which is its ultimate style. We are not concerned to solve the baffling problem; we are merely concerned to state its actuality. It is not otherwise with language, with religion, with the forms of social organization. Wherever the human mind has worked collectively and unconsciously, it has striven for and often attained unique form. The important point is that the evolution of form has a drift in one direction, that it seeks poise, and that it rests, relatively speaking, when it has found this poise. It is customary to say that sooner or later a literary or sacerdotal tradition enjoins conservatism, but is it altogether an accident that the injunction is stayed until the style is full-grown? I do not believe in this particular accident. To me it is no mere chance that the Chinese system of writing did not attain its resting-point until it had matured a style, until it had polished off each character, whether simple or compounded of "radical" and "phonetic" elements, into a design that satisfactorily filled its own field and harmonized with its thousands of fellows. A glance at the earlier forms of Chinese writing convinces one that it did not always possess true style, interesting and original as some of the early characters are.

Mr. Mason's *History of the Art of Writing* is a rather unpretentious introduction to this large subject, making no claim to completeness and developing no new ideas. The pictographic and ideographic origin of writing is stressed in the orthodox manner and some idea is also given of the way in which most systems have taken a phonetic turn. The book gives enough fact and illustrations to make a useful summary, but hardly more. Obviously Mr. Mason too much lacks the necessary linguistic and ethnological equipment to have succeeded in giving his book the tone and background we should have liked to have. Far more might have been done in half the space. The "Turanians" stride across these pages as though they were still living in the reign of Max Müller, and many a passage could be quoted that indicates a docile trust in authorities and speculations that were. A little annoying, too, is the author's insistent sentimentalism. He finds it hard to resist the "quaint." Historical anecdotes *en passant*, good Queen Bess's correspondence, and the lines on Shakespeare's tomb leave the sober narrative sadly waiting by the roadside. One would have gladly exchanged for all this, some account of the interesting Hindu derivatives of the Phoenician alphabet (via the South Arabian forms) and of the Tibetan, Burmese, Siamese,

and Cambodian offshoots of these Hindu alphabets. In this way, Mr. Mason would not only have introduced his readers to some of the most fascinating and stylized alphabets that have ever been evolved but would have splendidly reinforced the point that practically all known systems of writing that are in use today were born either on the eastern shores of the Mediterranean or in China. Surely it is a matter worth reflection that the same original historical impulse eventually provided a means for the literary expression of two cultures as mutually antagonistic as those of Occidental Europe and of the forbidden highlands of Tibet.

Editorial Note

Originally published in *The Freeman* 4, 68–69 (1921), under the title “Writing as History and as Style.”

Review of
Edwin Arlington Robinson, *Collected Poems*

Edwin Arlington Robinson, *Collected Poems*. New York: Macmillan, 1921.

There are poets whose authentic work emerges somewhat precariously from the interaction of subtly conflicting motives. The chances of a flaw appearing somewhere in the too delicate workshop of their spirit are so great that the one exquisite success must needs be anticipated by a run of half-successes or be followed by a failure. Such a spirit is Mr. Edwin Arlington Robinson, whose eight volumes have now been assembled in a book of *Collected Poems*. One fancies, as one turns these pages, that a truer idea of Mr. Robinson's very individual artistry might have been conveyed in a smaller volume limited to his perfect and more nearly perfect poems — to *Merlin*, all or very nearly all of *The Man against the Sky*, the best lyrics of *The Children of the Night* and *The Town down the River*, *Isaac and Archibald*, one or two other things perhaps from the *Captain Craig* volume ("Captain Craig" itself is interesting rather than satisfying), and little or nothing from the last three volumes — though possibly "The Mill" and "Lazarus" might have been saved out of *The Three Taverns*. As it is, the inclusion of the inferior work blurs the picture that we must form of Mr. Robinson's poetry if we are to do it not more than justice.

To blurt out our case against the *Collected Poems*, Mr. Robinson's poetic range is too limited for quite so large a volume. Aside from *Merlin*, which has been received with an incredibly obtuse frigidity where a public truly alive to poetic values would at once have rubbed its eyes in glad amazement — aside from this most splendid of poems, Mr. Robinson's comment on life is too icy for bulk. Again, his interest in the color and detail of the human scene is too languid to save his work from a cumulative monotony. Mr. Robinson's art does not, in any deeply valid sense, reflect life; it is an error to make the parallel with Browning. His art sets in nearly always where life has unravelled itself and is waiting for its tart, ironic epitaph.

Having said all this in preliminary disparagement, we have really said little that is pertinent. For when we look away from the unsuccessful pieces, weed out of our critical selves any lingering sentiments we may still possess in regard to an artist's subject-matter, and ponder the smaller volume of achievement that lies scattered within the published volume, we realize clearly enough Mr. Robinson's position in contemporary American letters. Mr. Robinson is the one American poet who compels, rather than invites, consideration. We may like or dislike Mr. Masters or Miss Lowell, but we are not likely to feel in their work the presence of a spirit which, for the moment, annihilates us. We may like or dislike Mr. Robinson — we may both like and dislike him, but his accents are too authentic, his aloofness too certain, to give our spirits the choice whether to attend or not. Mr. Robinson has neither programme nor audience. He gives us the essence, singularly intense and cerebral, of his lonely, perhaps casual, experience of the world. We note instinctively how the cold matter of his thought is vouched for by its rhythmic expression and have no recourse but to conclude that in this man thought is not far from feeling, that what we behold is the genuinely artistic record of a rigorous personality. Mr. Robinson has not merely asked himself to think and feel thus and so; he has taken his sophisticated, bitter soul for granted and has shown how beauty may blossom in an artist's desert. There can be no more scientific demonstration of the futility of discussing art in terms of content than to look from Mr. Robinson's arid acre to Mr. Masters's tumultuous village or Miss Lowell's garden of magnificent paper flowers.

Need one hesitate to apply the term "beautiful" to this poetry? Does Mr. Robinson's desperate irony comport with "beauty"? I can not see that an apology is required. Beauty is neither thing nor flavor; it is a relation, a strange accord between content and form. Mr. Robinson's forms fit his matter inexorably. If they seem at times a little luxuriant for their drab content, it is because this content is often but a superficies behind which one must feel back to the fuller emotions. This inferential art, with its pulsing silences, is probably the fruit of a Puritan reticence, overhauled and reinforced by a newer bitterness. At any rate, it is characteristic of Mr. Robinson's best poetry, as of all great poetry, that we believe its rhythms rather more than its letter-press.

Mr. Robinson has wrung strange values out of worn meters. Some of his ballad-tunes and variations of ballad-tunes seem to mock their own movement with a grim flippancy. In "Bokardo," for instance, the too

insistent melody, wedded to an argumentative diction, give us a knowing kind of doggerel, at once sad and jaunty:

Well, Bokardo, here we are;
 Make yourself at home.
 Look around – you haven't far
 To look – and why be dumb?
 Not the place that used to be,
 Not so many things to see;
 But there's room for you and me.
 And you – you've come.

In "The Clinging Vine" the nervous energy of the clipped lines freezes behind us as we read:

No more – I'll never bear it.
 I'm going, I'm like ice.
 My burden? You would share it?
 Forbid the sacrifice! [142]
 Forget so quaint a notion,
 And let no more be told;
 For moon and stars and ocean
 And you and I are cold.

Very complex in feeling is "John Everdown." Its movement creates a sense of breathless mystery on which John's senile lewdness floats as hardly more than a suggestion or symbol. Almost equally complex is "John Gorham," perhaps the most perfect short poem in the book. In this lovers' quarrel the "story," as regularly in Mr. Robinson's work, is built up retrospectively by the leakage of a stray bit or two of narrative reference – information withdrawn as quickly as it is charily ventured. But it is neither inferential narrative nor even drama that makes the interest of the poem, rather the confrontation of John's caustic disillusionment with the girl's mingled coquetry, vexation, and clinging womanliness. The drama is not so much psychological interplay and background as it is a scaffolding for the momentary display of states of mind. The technique of "John Gorham" is flawlessly precise. The syllables, rapid and retarding, carry a felicitous blend of colloquial and only less colloquial images. If ever English rhythm succeeded in fusing wit and sentiment, it is in these lines, so familiar and so remote.

It seems to be customary to think of Mr. Robinson as a pessimistic dramatist who has chosen the lyric form because he could in this way best practice his arts of compression and inferential diagnosis. I believe that this opinion seriously misconceives the nature of Mr. Robinson's poetic impulse. His observation is far too static for the natural develop-

ment of a dramatic interest. His methods of inference are only plausibly and in second degree a sophisticated technique; much more truly they are an evasion of the dramatic problem. A thoroughly vigorous dramatic awareness presupposes the ability to assimilate and project narrative, an ability that Mr. Robinson can not well be credited with. The core of his poetic personality is lyric, and lyric alone. This is indicated, it seems to me, not only by the feeling that he so often transfers to his rhythms but by the very fact that he can get at the flow of life only as something hastily inferred from the vantage-point of an irrevocable moment.

Possibly the famous Shakespeare poem is somewhat to blame for the current view of Mr. Robinson's genius. Now, while it is obvious that "Ben Jonson Entertains a Man from Stratford" is an amazingly successful dramatic portrait, I think it is legitimate to say that this poem is somewhat of a *tour de force*, that it does not adequately represent the deeper Robinson, and that there is an air of strain about much of it. It is exceedingly fortunate that we have the *Merlin*, not only for its own sake but because it enables us to see the general poetic output of its creator in a just light. *Merlin* is a narrative poem, it is true, but it is a slow narrative. Its essential beauty lies in its lyric qualities. Here we have the imagery that Mr. Robinson had been wistfully reaching out for in all his previous work but which he had never quite allowed himself to seize, so habituated had his soul become to the denial of sense in the world of bitter reality.

Keener than any of Mr. Robinson's own ironies is the irony which doomed him, the unbeliever, to a Puritan asceticism. That part of him which was speech could not accept the pagan beauty of the world which the rhythms of his spirit so ardently desired. None knew better than Mr. Robinson himself what he was about when he lost himself in Arthurian romance. If the lyric impulse finds little growth in a world too blighted for anything but caustic blooms, it has the right to burrow into a subsoil of the fancy. Half of Mr. Robinson, the lyric poet, is in the rhythms of his poems of the denial of life, half in the passion and imagery of *Merlin*. Mr. Robinson the psychologist is a somewhat unconvinced and sullen substitute for the undivided lyrist.

Editorial Note

Originally published in *The Freeman* 5, 141-142 (1922), under the title "Poems of Experience."

Review of
Maxwell Bodenheim, *Introducing Irony*

Maxwell Bodenheim, *Introducing Irony, a Book of Poetic Short Stories and Poems*. New York: Boni and Liveright, 1922.

This volume should become the gospel of sincere and exasperated futurists. It is sardonic to a degree, is totally unacquainted with the lisps and babblings of marketplace or home, and handles words with the deft remorselessness of a slave-driver. *Introducing Irony* is far more than a remarkable or disconcerting document. It is the ironic supplement to the more fanciful *Minna and Myself*, the two together expressing the most mordant poetic genius that America possesses. Not addressing itself to the thinking mass, but rather to the thought-feeling few, it would not know what to do with popularity. We observe in it the same eerie familiarity with the secrets of words that Mr. Bodenheim's work has always shown. If there is any sign of a let-up, it is, possibly, a tendency to slip here and there into the too clever smoothness that has been made fashionable by Mr. T. S. Eliot, as in the lines:

And so the matter ends: conservative
And radical revise their family-tree,
While you report this happening with relief
To liberals and victorious cups of tea.

It is only rarely that Mr. Bodenheim condescends to such glibness and urbanity. Passages like

Snobs have pockets into which
They crowd too many trinkets

and

Two figures on a subway-platform,
Pieced together by an old complaint

have that savage exactness of his for which felicity is too prim a word. The ten prose pieces at the end of the volume are less authoritative than the verse. It is difficult to see why Mr. Bodenheim should bother to write these semi-narratives.

Editorial Note

Originally published in *The New Republic* 31, 341 (1922).

Maxwell Bodenheim (1893–1954) was an American poet, novelist, and essayist.

Review of Maxwell Bodenheim, *Introducing Irony*

Maxwell Bodenheim, *Introducing Irony: A Book of Poetic Short Stories and Poems*. New York: Boni and Liveright, 1922.

It is a tragic temptation to shuffle the American poets and look for the aces. I am foolish enough to yield to the temptation and, with hesitant gesture rather than assurance, to lay them on the table. If Mr. Robinson, Mr. Fletcher, Mr. Aiken, and Mr. Bodenheim are not the real aces (and I regret that my pack, not intended for pinochle, limits me to four aces), I still believe that Mr. Bodenheim is one of the four. He does not seem to be as well known as he should be, being a poet for partly "unpoetic" reasons.

Mr. Bodenheim has been called a poet of word overtones. This is a true statement so far as it goes, but it is a little misleading. He gets his "overtones" not by insisting on the word, not by listening hard for the dying clang of its marginal associations, but by a somewhat high-handed, and therefore refreshing, method of juxtaposition. His words, as he sets them down in sequences, make strange companions. They put each other to acid tests, cutting irrelevances out of each other's vitals, and constructing themselves into lines of thought that have the freshness of corroded contours. Mathematics runs through all of his work, as he himself explains in the exhilarating Talmudic exercise entitled "An Acrobat, a Violinist, and a Chambermaid Celebrate." Take this passage from "The Turmoil in a Morgue":

Impulsive doll made of rubbish
On which a spark descended and ended,
The white servant-girl, without question or answer,
Accepts the jest of a universe.

It is a summary, very precise and appropriately impertinent, of the white servant-girl's erotic experience and cosmic philosophy. It has almost as little grease in it as one of those tortuously simple demonstrations, that we remember to have witnessed, of Euclid's more difficult theorems.

What makes Mr. Bodenheim a poet, and not merely a surgeon and applied geometrician, is his fancy. This quality of his work appears even more clearly in *Minna and Myself* (which deserves a vastly greater accessibility than its publishers have given it) than in the present volume. In "Old Man," "Seaweed from Mars," and a number of other pieces the fancy is elaborate and, if artificial, legitimately so. Numerous images, such as "the rock-like protest of knees," have a value far beyond that of a merely intellectual symbolism. Yet it cannot be denied that Mr. Bodenheim's fancy plays with less abandon in *Introducing Irony* than in his previous work. His passion for the knife has led him to prune too much; in excising the irrelevant he has also cut into the quick of his imagination and drained it of some of its life-blood. It is a pity that bitterness should have made a murderer of his fancy. In *Minna* it was more of a dreamer. And *Minna*, while less intellectual, is better poetry.

The sardonic intellectualism of this book proceeds not from heartlessness, not truly from philosophic aloofness, but from suffering. It is impossible to disentangle the poet's love and his hatred, to dis sever derision from his pity. Irony is here a substitute for tears. The following passages from "The Scrub-Woman," significantly styled "a sentimental poem," illustrate Mr. Bodenheim's method of dodging the direct expression of the pity that he feels:

Time has placed his careful insult
 Upon your body ...
 Neat nonsense, stamped with checks and stripes,
 Fondles the deeply marked sneer
 That Time has dropped upon you. ...
 When you grunt and touch your hair
 I perceive your exhaustion
 Reaching for a bit of pity
 And carefully rearranging it.

And perhaps the paralyzing turmoil of love and hate has never been more poignantly rendered than in the closing lines of "Jack Rose":

And when her brother died Jack sat beside
 Her grief and played a mouth-harp while she cried.
 But when she raised her head and smiled at him
 A smile intensely stripped and subtly grim
 His hate felt overawed and in a trap,
 And suddenly his head fell to her lap.
 For some time she sat stiffly in the chair,
 Then slowly raised her hand and stroked his hair

Editorial Note

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Review of
John Masefield, *King Cole*

John Masefield, *King Cole*. London, William Heineman, 1921.

An Indian tribe of Vancouver Island has a quaintly beautiful belief that for a brief space during one unknown night of the year all things are loosed from their moorings to hover in a drowsy glamour. The sea comes up into the land, the houses shift about fluid and gentle, and the sober tyranny of usual things is suspended. No one has even been known to witness this holiday of nature, for there is no warning of its coming and there is an insidious drowsiness in the air which lulls mortals into an unwilling slumber. Yet were anyone thus to catch things on the turn, he would be greatly blessed with the fulfilment of his prayers.

If I understand Mr. Masefield aright, his eye is set to catch the glamorous twinkles in life. Once caught and nursed in the sympathy of his imagination, they are united with hard and bracing actualities. The spirit of Mr. Masefield is thus ever striving to realize in a strange, picaresque unity the lust of the real and a less tangible longing which he himself is in the habit of spelling Beauty, sometimes Wisdom. This does not mean that he digs so deep into the earth that, sooner or later, he strikes gold. Mr. Masefield is not akin to Mr. Conrad. His interest in life is only surface-deep. Of its intimate texture, his imagination seizes clearly the exposed rim, item on item; of its diffused fire, only such flames as blow out at vent-holes. Thus the beauty that Mr. Masefield fashions out of life comes but rarely or never from an exploration of its recesses. It is rather a beauty caught in certain dazed moments, when the hard exterior of things, stared at rather than stared through, suddenly takes on a glamorous mist that melts away all rigidities and obscures the relief. Rephrasing one's analysis of Mr. Masefield's aesthetic sensibility from the standpoint of craftsmanship, one may say that it seems to move on from the laying out of isolated, though numerous, points of observation to the application of a patina. [549]

The leap from Mr. Masefield's "real" to Mr. Masefield's "beautiful" does not necessarily deliver him to sentimentality, though it tends to do

so. What does result is that it is difficult for Mr. Masefield to convince us of his integrations. Only too often, as in "The Daffodil Fields," do the observed life and its romance separate into strata. If he has given us both the quest of glamour in many of his sonnets, and daubs of crude life, it is not so much because he is securely himself on various unrelated levels as that the kind of imaginative blending which he intuitively craves is a too delicate undertaking. It is an interesting symptom of his sensibility that he runs in his expression to opposite poles. A synthesis such as he demands is possible, but I do not believe that he has often compassed it. Wholly successful is perhaps only "The Tragedy of Nan," which appears to me to be the poet at his best.

King Cole is an unconscious exposition of Mr. Masefield's sensibility and method. The Showman and his company, their bedraggled vans, their disappointments and their ambitions, embody the particular kind of reality, jaunty rather than coarse, plain-spoken rather than veracious, which Mr. Masefield likes to single out for his background. King Cole, the eternal piper, incarnates that other, remoter scheme of values which is the romance of the folk. When the Showman's luck had slid from bad to worse,

... King Cole
Slipped from the van to head the leading team.
He breathed into his flute his very soul,
A noise like waters in a pebbly stream.

And lo, a marvellous thing, the gouted clay,
Splashed on the wagons and the horses, glowed,
They shone like embers as they trod the road.

The glamorous moment of transmutation has come, the drab world of the ordinary is loosed from its moorings, and for the rest of the narrative the spirit of King Cole reigns once more. The Showman's luck turns, a prince and all the town march out to visit the circus, and when King Cole fades away at the hour of twelve, it is another troupe that he leaves behind him. Blessings have softened the heart of humanity.

The real, the folk-loristic, and the symbolic are skilfully mingled in this most typical of Mr. Masefield's poems. The mingling can not and does not generate the power that grows from a unitary conception, but within its fundamental limitations *King Cole* is a highly successful poem. In it the poet has chosen a theme, a background, and a simple motivation that exactly suit his genius. In no sense does it reflect the spirit of our age. Like most of Mr. Masefield, it is the Chaucer of the

Prologue filtered through the Romantic poets. The verse is not as brilliant as the best passages of *Dauber*, but it is as warm and as rapid as anything that Mr. Masfield has yet done. Unfortunately it has some of the usual evidences of his too speedy facility.

Editorial Note

Originally published in *The Freeman* 5, 548–549 (1922), under the title “The Manner of Mr. Masfield.”

Review of John Masefield, *Esther and Berenice*

John Masefield, *Esther and Berenice: Two Plays*. New York: Macmillan, 1922.

There is no reason why poets should not enjoy the human privilege of inconsistency. Now that we have our Masefield well in hand as a gilt-edged, romanticizing, and altogether lovable swashbuckler, it is quite in order that we should allow ourselves to be shocked, ever so slightly, by the entry of gentle John Masefield, Englisher of the pleasant melancholies and decorous passions of Racine, one-time dramatic historiographer in the manner, somewhat dead, of Louis Quatorze. It would be folly to look this little gift too curiously in the mouth. The adapter-translator goes half out of his way to parry criticism when he states in his preface that the adaptations "were made for the use of a little company of amateur players who wished to try their art in verse-plays, yet found that of the many fine poetical plays in the English language, not many suited their needs." The innocence of the result is fairly commensurate with the innocence of the intention. Only here and there is there a Masefieldian touch that refreshes us, notably in *Esther*. Most of the book jogs along in placid semi-prose, and occasionally drowns off into prose simple. The volume adds nothing to our knowledge of Masefield unless it be to remind us forcibly of the careless good nature of his artistic conscience. Nor does it introduce Racine to English readers. The French have always held religiously to the sweet, polished Alexandrines of this tragedian, whose charm too evidently disappears in foreign vesture. Mr. Masefield's English versions but rub and denature the originals. Their rhetorical bulk is somewhat reduced, but the courtliness of phrase is gone.

Editorial Note

Originally published in *The Freeman* 5, 526 (1922).

John Masefield (1878–1967) was an English poet, playwright, and novelist; he was Poet Laureate of England for many years.

Review of Edgar Lee Masters, *The Open Sea*

Edgar Lee Masters, *The Open Sea*. New York: Macmillan, 1921.

Of the excessive badness of Mr. Masters's new volume of poems there can be no doubt. There may be those who will mistake a big programme for a great conception, an awkward and breathless awareness of things for vitality, and an unleashed rush of words for the flow of fire, and who, so confounding crude intention with the rapid and exquisite deliberateness of art at work, find it no grotesque thing to speak of poetry here. One hopes there are not many such readers.

Mr. Masters never claimed to be nice with his chisel, but the headstones of Spoon River were hacked out with an economy and with a ferocity that fairly entitled them to be classified as a new kind of poetical sculpture. Somehow it seemed a healthful and invigorating thing to take a day off for a visit to Mr. Masters's cemetery, sprawl on our bellies, and peer at these inscriptions. In the delight of overhearing kitchen gossip combined with the pleasure of watching the anatomist demonstrate on the human carcass, we found ourselves entertained and purged. We vaguely remembered our Aristotle and crowned Mr. Masters poet laureate.

Mr. Masters had every reason to infer that he had achieved a notable volume. He then set about the practically inevitable business of following up his achievement with a series of undistinguished collections, packed with all manner of juvenilities, screaming with a rhetoric sadly unhumorous, displaying in ever clearer outlines the spirit of a man at once stridently in revolt and not deeply dissatisfied with the limitations of his soul and of his environment. His incisiveness did not desert him at once, but with each volume Mr. Masters seemed to be progressively losing himself in a slough, out of earshot of the cleaner-cut, alerter poetry which is quietly raising its voice in America. The word ceased to interest him, the rush of feeling seemed in itself sufficient warrant for what expression it momentarily shaped itself into. Meanwhile, Mr. Masters was forgetting the cruel truth that banality comports well with the red-hottest feeling. Had he had the incredible restraint to leave the *Spoon River Anthology* without a successor, Mr. Masters would now be

fresh in our memories, as is the author of the lone *Shropshire Lad*. As it is, the later Masters is almost forcing us to forget our early, spontaneous acceptance of his bitter gift. He insists on becoming *vieux jeu*.

It is wellnigh a pity to have to quote from *The Open Sea*, yet such harsh criticism as we have ventured needs justification. There is in this book sheer, dead ugliness of phrase, as in:

The Queen and Antony
Had joined the Inimitable Livers, now they joined
The Diers together,

or:

He's fifty-six, and knows the human breed,
Sees man as body hiding a canal
For passing food along, a little brain
That watches, loves, attends the said canal. [334]

There are yard-lengths of inferior journalistic prose cut up into line-lengths of "blank verse." Let one passage suffice:

Few years are left in which he may achieve
His democratic ideas, for he sought
No gain in power, but chance to do his work,
Fulfil his genius. Well, he takes the Senate
And breaks its aristocracy, then frees
The groaning debtors; reduces the congestion
Of stifled Italy, founds colonies,
Helps agriculture, executes the laws.
Crime skulks before him, luxury he checks.
The franchise is enlarged, he codifies
The Roman laws, and founds a money-system;
Collects a library, and takes a census:
Reforms the calendar, and thus bestrode
The world with work accomplished.

Had not Mr. Masters bethought himself of the hoary privilege of inversion ("luxury he checks"), we should not have guessed that this was indeed poetry. The lifelessness of many of the lines is appalling; for example:

I step from my door to a step, and from that right into the street,

or:

I'm surprised.
I know more mathematics than they do,
And more of everything. I thought an officer
Was educated. Well, I am surprised.

And so are we. Mr. Masters is almost too good to be true when he waxes indignant. It is downright malice to quote from "A Republic," which the author himself, one hopes, regrets having failed to throw into

the wastebasket immediately after composition (possibly Mr. Masters does not know that this is a favorite pastime with nearly all his fellow-poets), yet it is hard to resist the last two lines:

A giantess growing huger, duller of mind,
Her gland pituitary being lost.

And all because the wretched republic voted dry!

Like Shakespeare, Mr. Masters does not mince in the matter of historical appropriateness. At the Mermaid Tavern they talk of the "working class" of Caesar's day and do not hesitate to use the psychological jargon of our time ("reaction"); Marat is referred to as a "nihilist." Such anachronisms are due to the carelessness of ignorance or genius. Were the literary workmanship of the book not so fantastically below all thinkable aesthetic standards, it might have been of some interest to consider Mr. Masters's historical themes — the conception of Brutus-Charlotte Corday-Booth (mistaken tyrannicide) vs. Caesar-Marat-Lincoln (savior of the people) or the modernizations of New Testament episodes. But it is useless to discuss the conceptions or philosophy of a book which can hardly be said to exist. An unembodied conception is, in art, no conception at all. One piece should perhaps be excepted from the general condemnation. "Charlotte Corday," while hardly a poem, is good rhetoric moulded into an excellent dramatic scene.

The saddest, the most chastening, thought that *The Open Sea* suggests is that of the essential rawness and primitiveness of a culture in which poetry of this type can be allowed to come to flower. Mr. Masters himself can not bear the entire blame. A decidedly "extroverted" type of personality, he has not found within his own soul the subtlety of apprehension that his cultural environment has so signally failed to encourage. *Spoon River Anthology* showed clearly enough that there is a distinctive bite to Mr. Masters's spirit. His artistic failure is, to a disconcerting degree, the measure of the formlessness and aridity of our American culture of today. This is not the whole story, of course, but it has an important share in it.

Editorial Note

Originally published in *The Freeman* 5, 333–334 (1922), under the title "Mr. Masters's Later Work." Also published in *The Canadian Bookman*, April, 1922, 132, 140, under the title "Spoon River Muddles."

Edgar Lee Masters (1869–1950) was an American poet, novelist, and biographer.

Review of Edgar Lee Masters, *Children of the Market Place*

Edgar Lee Masters, *Children of the Market Place*. New York: Macmillan, 1922.

[This] is not so much a historical novel as an attempt to be a history and novel at one and the same time. The history centers in the personality of Stephen Douglas, the great northern Democrat of the decades before the Civil War. The rapid development of Illinois, the slavery question, the advent of Lincoln, come in for a treatment that is neither informative nor distinguished. The novel that elbows its way through Mr. Masters' historical lumber is curiously devoid of human interest. The characters are as placidly dead as those found in any rural album of family photographs, and a number of them are the excuse for a bit of harmless philosophizing to boot. The deadness of the book is in contrast to its galvanic and not always grammatical style. Closing this volume one blinks with incredulity. One remembers the prophets who concluded their reviews of *Spoon River Anthology* with the remarks that Mr. Masters had the instinct of portraiture, that he had strayed into verse under a slight misunderstanding, and that he ought and probably would turn to prose narrative. These prophets were not wholly wrong.

Editorial Note

Originally published (unsigned) in *The Dial* 73, 457 (1922).

Review of Gilbert Murray,
Tradition and Progress

Gilbert Murray, *Tradition and Progress*. Boston: Houghton Mifflin, 1922.

[This] is a somewhat curiously assorted group of ten essays, all reprints of papers and lectures previously published. The first five of these pleasingly written essays deal with some of the larger aspects of classical scholarship, the sixth with Literature as Revelation, the remainder of the volume consists of thoughts on social and international ethics. The translator of Euripides is at his best in the earlier papers. He does succeed in setting such topics as the war-satire of Aristophanes, the bitterness of Euripides, the Stoic philosophy, and the poetic definitions of Aristotle in some relation to our interests of today. The paper on Poesis and Mimesis is particularly penetrating in its insistence on the necessity of taking due account, in literary criticism, of the formal genius of the language in which the artist does his work. Not a great deal is to be said of the latter half of the book. Professor Murray oscillates rather comfortably between optimism and despair, makes the usual high-souled march along the smooth ridge of English liberalism, animadverts feelingly on the elements of wickedness and goodness in contemporary politics, and is careful to put in the parentheses needed to prevent a charge of excessive radicalism.

Editorial Note

Originally published (unsigned) in *The Dial* 73, 355 (1922).

Review of
Ellen C. Babbitt, *More Jataka Tales*

Ellen C. Babbitt, *More Jataka Tales*. New York: Century, 1922.

All children, young and old alike, will welcome a second volume of Buddhist "birth stories" that has just appeared. There are twenty-one short tales in this volume, and they are nearly all about our animal cousins – tricky wolves and foolhardy wolves, vainglorious lions, wise goats, and friendly elephants, woodpeckers, turtles and deer. We learn a great deal about these beasts and about their strategems, disappointments, and heroisms; and we also learn, by inference, what is generally considered more important, something about the mental and moral constitution of Man, the most active member of the animal kingdom. For a pleasing introduction to the sciences of folk-lore, zoology, psychology, and ethics it would be difficult to find a match for this slender volume, which contains, moreover, much good-natured, whimsical, and sly-winking drama, a form of entertainment not often found in the more formal treatises devoted to natural and historical science.

It is not easy to say exactly wherein consists the charm of these unpretentious tales. There are many little stories for children that are simply told and well, but I have read few which so unerringly use the right words; moreover, they are quite free from that over-simplicity which is condescension to the child. Mr. Ellsworth Young, the illustrator, contributes a good deal to the effect with his spirited and charmingly decorative charcoal-sketches. I like particularly the picture on page 45, which shows how the monkeys passed from one mango tree to another over the back of their devoted chief, who had made a bridge of himself with the help of his long tail.

More subtly appealing than the style of the translator or the lines of the illustrations, however, is a certain gentleness of spirit that pervades the stories themselves. It would be interesting to compare them on this score with Grimm's fairy tales and with the fables of Aesop. The folk-world of the Grimm stories is "uncensored" to a degree. The delighted ego indulges in unheard-of triumphs and tramples on its resistant envi-

ronment with cruelty and joy. There is a drastic completeness in the victory of Cinderella that arouses misgivings. Has it ever been pointed out that her horrid sisters deserved at least the pretence of consideration? Recollecting what an uncomfortable time they had with their bleeding feet, I find it difficult to forgive the ultra-moralistic birds for depriving them of their jealous eyesight. Grimm's fairy tales have all the egoistic ferocity of a day-dreaming child who has just been given an undeserved spanking. Aesop is a terribly efficient schoolmaster, squeezing all the life and fancy out of the Oriental tales that fell into his hands. It is agreeable to remember that this Hellenic grandfather of our efficiency-experts and Methodist deacons was only a slave after all. It has not yet been satisfactorily explained by historians how his master was able to tolerate him.

The Jataka tales are not so humanitarian as entirely to rule out a primitive wish-fulfilment that mauls the opposing personality, nor do they hesitate to wave a careless hand at the moral anxiously awaiting round the corner; yet their prevailing tone is civilized, restrained, casual. There are not a few passages, and there are even a couple of entire tales, that must seem a bit pointless to the strenuous day-dreamer or uplifter, and yet they embody the essential charm of the book as a whole. Punishment is meted out, but without vindictiveness. In "The Brave Little Bowman," the big man who takes undue credit to himself for his page's archery is punished by the exhibition of his own cowardice, not by having his ears lopped off, as would undoubtedly have happened in Grimmland. In short, these ancient Jataka stories reflect the courteous, humane, and nuanced sentiments of a folk that had long learned the art of gentle living. Between their innocent lines there is much food for our spirits.

Editorial Note

Originally published in *The Freeman* 5, 404 (1922), under the title "A Peep at the Hindu Spirit."

Review of
Louis Untermeyer, *Heavens*

Louis Untermeyer, *Heavens*. New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1922.

This book is neatly gotten up and has a futuristic cover design and frontispiece. The contents consist of first, what purport to be extravaganzas on the nature of heaven in the respective manners of Chesterton, Wells, George Moore, Cabell and Sinclair Lewis, with a prologue and four intermissions; second, five "previews" (a "preview" is carefully defined on the publishers' jacket as "a review of an unwritten book"), the last of which parodies seventeen American poets, ranging from Edwin Arlington Robinson to Robert W. Service.

There is an air of good humor and high spirits in this collection of parodies and literary chit-chat. But if one is not exactly primed to meet Mr. Untermeyer halfway, or a bit more than halfway, he will find that the cleverness seems obvious, the allusions too thick-set and insistent, and will accumulate weariness as he proceeds. Parody, one fancies, is a dangerous art, requiring to be stunningly well done if it is to be done at all. Mr. Untermeyer is rather the alertly gesticulating and amused cicerone than the irresponsible, sprightly, yet somewhat nonchalant Ariel that he should be. His unflagging, urban up-to-the-minuteness has the flattening effect of an interminable run of electric lights on Broadway, 10 p.m.

It is impossible to avoid the comparison with Max Beerbohm. The Wells, for instance, of *Heavens* is an industriously assembled pastiche of the various items that Mr. Untermeyer had entered in his unwritten concordance to the works of his victim. Mr. Wells is cut up but does not bleed. In *A Christmas Garland* Mr. Beerbohm gives Wells a gay run for his life and manages to get him. His good humor and grace capture the victim just because these qualities are but the last refinement of a lust for blood. While Mr. Beerbohm cannot leave himself out of the game — for it is, after all, his game — Mr. Untermeyer, keen and voluble, does not succeed in getting himself into it.

Editorial Note

Originally published in *The New Republic* 30, 351 (1922).

Louis Untermeyer (1885–1977) was an American poet, editor, and anthologist.

Review of
Edward Thomas, *Collected Poems*

Edward Thomas, *Collected Poems*. New York: Thomas Seltzer, 1921.

There are many sweet bits to reward the reader of Edward Thomas's poems, but in all justice it cannot be denied that this volume of his collected work is somewhat of a disappointment. It is not so much that his range of expression is limited, that he exercises too severe a restraint, or that he is content to treasure moments of too evanescent a substance. These shortcomings are no less virtues than defects. But Thomas's limitations of theme and form seem to result from the abandonment rather than the mastery of experience. It is a deep sense of futility, even fear, that leads him to toy with the sweet names of things; to hold on to the dear, safe memories of a past whose grief has lost its passion. It is as though the poet had not carved a tiny and precious demesne for himself out of the vast jungle of life, but had been shouldered out to its confines and was satisfied perforce to hug to his heart the minimum of things.

The technique of these poems requires a word. It is said that Thomas was much influenced by our own Frost, and in a rather loose way the resemblances between the two poets are obvious. But whereas Frost's drabness has a dry compactness that just prevents his verse from being as dull as it ought to be, Thomas's more slender talent and more refined sensibility need a less leisurely and prosaic diction than he chose to use. The stubborn rhythms too frequently lack poignancy, and his studied simplicity of phrase runs more often to flatness than to the naive and unpretentious grace that the poet strove to capture. What Thomas might have done if he had looked more sharply to his syllables we may only surmise from an occasionally beautiful stanza.

Editorial Note

Originally published in *The New Republic* 32, 226 (1922).

Edward Thomas (1878–1917) was an English poet, critic, and essayist.

Review of Arthur Davison Ficke,
Mr. Faust

Arthur Davison Ficke, *Mr. Faust*. New York: Frank Shay, 1922.

Mr. Faust is a four-act play that was produced at the Provincetown Players theater, New York, early in 1922. Mr. Faust himself symbolizes the philosophic spirit of man, aloof, disillusioned, but not cynical. His two friends, Brander and Oldham, stand respectively for romantic acceptance and escape from reality. Satan has lost his horns and other picturesque attachments; his mission is to throw alluring negations in the path of man, sensual delight and the quest of power for the coarser-grained, self-obliterating Nirvanas and Christian humilities for aspiring souls. There is uncertainty in the workmanship of this play. The blank verse lacks flow, the diction seems to hesitate between the colloquial and the "poetic," and the action has not the reality that is powerful enough to attract us to a symbolic interpretation. *Mr. Faust* is very much the kind of play we should expect from an averagely good lyric poet.

Editorial Note

Originally published (unsigned) in *The Dial* 73, 235 (1922).

Review of George Saintsbury, *A Letter Book*

George Saintsbury, *A Letter Book, selected with an Introduction on the History and Art of Letter-Writing*. New York: Harcourt, Brace, 1922.

A title of Mr. Saintsbury's acquaintance with the byways of literature would caparison a normal knight of today's reading world for the high-ways. Mr. Saintsbury has the gayest freedom of both road-systems, including all connecting lines. He both delights and affrights us by the devouring gusto of his relishes in letters. The long Introduction is full of bantering erudition and has as pleasing irrelevances as are needed to introduce a casual kind of anthology. The book itself, an "appendix" to the introduction, begins with a proper sprinkling of classical letters and picks its way, not too systematically and with good editorial tips, through the imposing volumes of English "epistolers," to use Mr. Saintsbury's word, from the dim Pastons down to Robert Louis Stevenson. To presume to say whether the precisely right choice is here offered is to pretend to an encyclopaedic vision such as not even a reviewer can possibly possess.

Editorial Note

Originally published (unsigned) in *The Dial* 73, 235 (1922).

George Saintsbury (1845–1933) was an English critic, journalist, and educator.

Review of Selma Lagerlöf, *The Outcast*

Selma Lagerlöf, *The Outcast*. Translated by W. Worster. New York: Doubleday, Page, 1922.

The Outcast is another example of the somewhat disjointed, episodic novel which is so peculiar to the genius of this Swedish story-teller. There are passages in it which recall the homely strength and simplicity of the old Icelandic sagas. Its atmosphere, as in so much of Selma Lagerlöf's work, is a curious blend of the archaic mood of the folk and the soil and the all-suffering, all-forgiving Christ idea. The characters, though they speak with a Swedish accent, are members of an elemental and timeless commonwealth; their bodies are but vessels for devouring ideas and feelings, they move towards the borderland of insanity. *The Outcast* lacks the firmness of *Jerusalem* and suffers, possibly, from a not completely convincing germinal idea. It is doubtful if the cannibalism of the hero and his Arctic companions, under the direst extremes of hunger and delirium, can be rightly assumed to evoke quite the passion of loathing which Miss Lagerlöf demands. There is an unfortunate strain here; too much is made of our instincts. Nor was it necessary to disprove the charge, so far as the hero was concerned, at a sentimental last moment.

Editorial Note

Originally published (unsigned) in *The Dial* 73, 354 (1922).

Selma Lagerlöf (1858–1940), a Swedish novelist, was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1909, and was the first woman member of the Swedish Academy.

Review of Edwin Björkman,
The Soul of a Child

Edwin Björkman, *The Soul of a Child*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1922.

It is not unlikely that the first three decades of the twentieth century will come to be remembered as the period of the gradual lifting of sex taboos in writing, in open discussion, in conversation, in the privacy of one's thoughts – for who can doubt that the most tyrannous "verboten" of all is that which is issued, with the unconscious cunning and hypocrisy of silence, by the ego to its lone, bewildered self? We are in the exciting thick of this lifting of the taboo, hardly more, it may be, than a feverishly self-conscious return to a lost freedom. It is not strange, therefore, that we tend to shift the emphasis from the uses to which our new-found defiance may lead us to the fact of defiance itself. We tolerate on the wave of our release much rubbishy flotsam and jetsam of the sexual genus, seeing rather to what outlines the wave than to what the wave carries. Later on, when the facts of sex, normal and abnormal, will have been calmly accepted as the mere facts that they are and the mention of sexual activities, performed or desired, will, as activities, no more make a piece of literature than an apple tree, as apple tree, makes a beautiful landscape, it will be possible to forget about the discovery of sex and to look to the added range and power that may have come to literature in the process of discovery. A literary artist can hardly have the *entrée* to too many sorts of really existing human fancies and human relations. Meanwhile, whatever helps along the growing sexual honesty should be welcome.

Mr. Edwin Björkman's first novel, if novel it may be truly called, is such an honest book. Not that it revels in sexuality or even that it devotes a great part of its volume to sexual matters. The important point is that it does not dodge either the existence or the significance of sexual curiosity and sexual desire in the years of innocence which precede full-blown adolescence. Vague and mysterious stirrings trouble young Keith from time to time, "bad boys" give him a snickering half

knowledge of things which he feels are somehow waiting for discovery, he experiences a tentative satisfaction in the blind alley of autoerotism. All this comes in for no more than casual and matter-of-fact treatment; sex is here neither a romantic island in a sea of drabness nor a carefully tucked away zero. And this is as it should be. It is agreeable to find a reporter of childhood who is doubly honest, being neither discreetly silent nor clamorous and hectic. Only a frenzied prude could lift up his voice against Mr. Björkman, only such spotless denizens of Eden as keep "gentlemen cows" in their menageries. Less immaculate mortals will find his pages perfectly cool and white and rather more honest than the records of Tom Sawyer and [79] Huck Finn. Such a book as *The Soul of a Child* does indeed light up the artificiality of Mark Twain's conception of roughneck boyhood, that blissful state of desperate and lovable wickedness flowering out of a snow-covered soil of innocence.

Far be it from me to deny the uses of *Huckleberry Finn*, delectable and romantic. But if the truth, too, has its value — and we seem to be minded these days to know something of it — there can be no question that Mr. Björkman has more of it to give us than our humorist. His book is hardly a "novel," despite the publisher's quite legitimate attempt to persuade us that it is. It is a sober, categorical narrative of a poor boy's life, inner and outer, in the not very colorful Stockholm of Mr. Björkman's memory. It is just because the author has refrained from composing his incidents and characters into a story, has set down his little irrelevances as they occur to him in retrospect, and has refused to mould his Keith to a preconceived type that we trust him implicitly. We know that what he has to tell us is true. There is nothing strange, nothing unexpected in his narrative, but there is plenty of that stubborn individuality of the real that we all harbor in our recollections and that no novelist has ever succeeded in inventing out of whole cloth. How grandma stays in the kitchen with apologetic pride, how a well-to-do playmate fraternizes and snubs at one and the same time, how a severe and virtuous aunt lets out advice, such incidents Mr. Björkman tells clearly and simply. They have value for us, as disconnected and unexciting pictures out of our childhood have never ceased to seem worth holding on to.

Keith's childhood is typical of a certain style of boy. He is an only son, sensitive and impressionable. His mother attaches him firmly to herself, far more compellingly than is going to be good for him. Psychoanalysts see a "mother fixation" forming which is destined to hold him

for many troublous years. Thrown back largely on himself, for his father comes home tired and moody, the boys downstairs are not nice, and home is too cramped to make guests other than a nuisance, Keith develops into a quiet, timid and introspective child. He tends to hero-worship, to lone friendships. A growing sense of his parents' poverty and social inferiority create a mingled self-contempt and resentment in his soul which will one day find shape and compensation in a radical faith. The love of beautiful things lies dormant in him, there is little or nothing to stimulate it into expression. Petty virtues and meaningless faiths are all about to strangle him. Between his father and himself there is an abyss of silence, a growing misunderstanding which expresses itself too sparsely to come to a head; the mother is both too clinging and too imperious in her love to be of intelligent assistance. Books are his refuge, knowledge his ideal. Keith is rapidly becoming an "introverted" personality and though, at the end of the book, he revolts against the compulsions of school life and seeks independence in an office, it is a fair guess that he will need greater luck or a more kindly and understanding sympathy to weather the coming storms than the average boy can count on.

There is nothing lugubrious or clinical about *The Soul of a Child*. The shadows, present and threatening, are offset by many cheerful episodes. There is [80] Christmas, with endless gifts and lots and lots to eat, and there are pleasant vacations in the country. But as one lays down the book, he asks, with a lingering wistfulness, "Is childhood really so happy as we would have it?" and finds it strangely difficult to peer into the mist that hangs through the life of emotion of our early years. As the child looks forward to the time when he will be grown up and free, so we, one suspects, have created for ourselves the myth of childish irresponsibility and freedom. The child and the adult escape into the dream of the other's far distant happiness. Certainly Keith, as he is presented to us in this book, was not what we should gladly call "happy," but perhaps it takes the retrospective analysis of as keen and retentive a mind as Mr. Björkman's to prove how far from happy he was and to imply how happy he might have been. Such books as *The Soul of a Child* do more to create sympathy for the very real sufferings of childhood than any amount of psychological research and theory.

Editorial Note

Originally published in *The Double Dealer* 5, 78-80 (1923).

Review of A. E. Housman,
Last Poems

A. E. Housman, *Last Poems*. New York: Henry Holt and Co., 1922.

Laying down this little volume, as bitter as it is wistful and as gentle and strong to break futile things as a man's strength on a twig, one muses back to its predecessor of nearly thirty years ago. How *A Shropshire Lad* sang out honestly from gallows' heights, how it gave sadness and the beauty of the countryside a new hardness, and how, beside its clear, silver, inexorable voice all the organ music of the aesthetes quickly hushed into dead velvet — all this we remember. *Last Poems* speaks with a slightly new accent, while telling of the same spiritual country. The former volume drew exact lines on the land and noted carefully the passionate steps of puppets, each on his given line, each to his useless point. In *Last Poems* there is less drama, less interested amusement in the process, a more explicit concern with the journey's end. Where *A Shropshire Lad* was athletically grim and waved its pessimistic formula with a blitheness that was not all mockery, the later poems reflect and mutter and sigh. 'Tis the same tale, but there's a different telling on't. And so, while our memory of the more significant book is as of a clear view in the cool, green morning, we come out of its successor's pages with eyes half-closed and with a dreaminess of sunset.

The contrast finds illustration within the covers of the book itself, for some of it is pure *Shropshire Lad*, notably "Eight O'clock":

He stood, and heard the steeple
Sprinkle the quarters on the morning town.
One, two, three, four, to market-place and people
It tossed them down.
Strapped, noosed, nighing his hour,
He stood and counted them and cursed his luck:
And then the clock collected in the tower
Its strength, and struck.

This is as tart and unwinking as you will, with all of its philosophy carefully held down in the implications. There are no remarks, there is no squeal. Its futility is not a meditated thing, rather fate's impertinence

thrust into the impatience and the lust of life, for of the hours we are told that he "counted them and cursed his luck." They are still worth the counting. Futility has not yet sunk into the heart of man. Elsewhere we are told:

Could man be drunk forever
 With liquor, love, or fights,
 Lief should I rouse at morning
 And lief lie down of nights.
 But men at whiles are sober
 And think by fits and starts,
 And if they think, they fasten
 Their hands upon their hearts.

Explicit futility, a nicely cherished disgust that the poet has made over into a pessimism too sweet to smart. Such poems as this make of *A Shropshire Lad* a sort of protesting hillock on the smooth, verdant plain of Victorian-Georgian paisa. The "continuous excitement" of 1895 that Mr. Housman speaks of in his preface had lifted him safely above the plain. He walks the plain now, not in the dead-earnest fashion of a real Victorian-Georgian, to be sure, rather with a foreign grace, with a reserve which somehow fails to realize the company he is in. We even find stratified poems, poems in which an honest workmanship of any perfectly honest squire ("Oh, to the bed of ocean, To Africk and to Ind") supports (or undermines) another layer ("And the dead call the dying And finger at the doors").

A Shropshire Lad had in much of its imagery something cold, sharp, precipitated, something of the momentaneous power that we attribute to an unexpected rustle in dead leaves. There is less of this quality in *Last Poems*, but it is present. The first poem is full of it:

The sun is down and drinks away
 From air and land the lees of day, [190]
 The long cloud and the single pine
 Sentinel the ending line,
 Oh lad, I fear that yon's the sea
 Where they fished for you and me.

These strangenesses are not awkward, not sought. They have more suddenness than ingenuity; they suggest omens, possibly, rather than pictures. Even the slightly euphuistic passages ring true, such as:

And let not yet the swimmer leave
 His clothes upon the sands of eve.

It is ungracious and pedagogical to contrast, to mark off epochs. Yet a brief glance at our current exasperation, the better to fix Mr. Hous-

man for our envy, a cordial good-bye to what is no longer strictly ours, and a vain question will not be thought too heavy a load of analysis. For, having laid down the *Last Poems* and mused of the lad, we find ourselves automatically closing the little book – and the manner of its closing is a symbol – not curtly, with a businesslike indifference, nor too lingeringly, with many browsings back and forth between the reluctantly closing covers, but slowly and decisively. We should like to feel ourselves more excitedly in the midst of Mr. Housman's work, but it will not go. A truth that we nearly hate whispers to us that there is no use pretending, that these lines lilt too doggedly and too sweetly to fall in quite with our more exigent, half-undiscovered harmonies, that many of the magic turns catch us cruelly absent-minded. And, most disappointing of all, for we are a little disappointed, and vexed at being so, we cannot seem to pool Mr. Housman's pessimism with our own. We seem to feel that our zero does not equate with his, that each has a different mathematical "sense" or tendency.

We discover, as we prove into our puzzling discord, that we already love the Shropshire lad as we love our Coleridge and our Blake and begin to divine that we were a little hasty in dating our modern drift from Mr. Housman's first volume. Its flare and its protest were a psychological, a temperamental phenomenon, not a strictly cultural one. Its disillusionment was rooted in personality, [191] not largely in a sensing of the proximate age. Hence while Mr. Housman seems to anticipate and now to join with us in our despair, he is serene and bitter where we are bitter and distraught. His cultural world was an accepted one, though he chose to deny its conscious values; our own perturbations, could they penetrate into the marrow of his bone, would not find him a sympathetic sufferer. In the larger perspective his best work is seen to be a highly personal culmination point in a poetic tradition that is thoroughly alien to us of today, and nothing demonstrates this more forcibly than the apparent backwash in some of the *Last Poems*. There is no backwash in spirit or in style, there is simply the lessened intensity that allows general, underlying cultural traits to emerge. His zero and our zero do not equate for the reason that his is personal where ours is cultural.

Finally, the vain question. Such work as Mr. Housman's, admirably simple and clear, classical, as it is, once more raises the doubt as to whether we can truly be said to be expressing ourselves until our moods become less frenetic, our ideas less palpable and self-conscious, and, above all, our forms less hesitant. Our eccentricities have much interest

and diagnostic value to ourselves, but should it not be possible to cabin their power in forms that are at once more gracious and less discussible? One wonders whether there is not in store for English poetry some tremendous simplification. One prays for a Heine who may give us all our mordancies, all our harmonies, and our stirrings of new life with simpler and subtler apparatus. There is room for a new Shropshire Lad.

Editorial Note

Originally published in *The Dial* 75, 188–191 (1923) under the title “Mr. Housman’s Last Poems.”

A(lfred). E(dward). Housman (1859–1936) was an English poet and scholar.

Twelve Novelists in Search of a Reason

A Sort of Review

The Novel of Tomorrow and the Scope of Fiction, by Twelve American Novelists. Indianapolis: Bobbs-Merrill, 1922.

(Enter EDITORS OF THE NEW REPUBLIC, *They proclaim through a great, flaring megaphone which hides their individual faces*): Oyez, oyez, oyez! Be it known that we do hereby exile into the Great American Desert all triflers and tellers of idle tales. And in especial have we singled out for our early displeasure a round dozen of this folk, so they may find them and their kind a dwelling in the desert. But if they come to us bearing a fit reason for this their habit of speaking vain words, then may we relent and reassign them, for their sole use, sundry garrets in our beloved city of New York. (*Exeunt* EDITORS.)

(Enter, dolefully and in alphabetical order, SAMUEL HOPKINS ADAMS, MARY AUSTIN, JAMES BRANCH CABELL, FLOYD DELL, WALDO FRANK, ZONA GALE, JOSEPH HERGESHEIMER, ROBERT HERRICK, HARVEY O'HIGGINS, HENRY KITCHELL WEBSTER, WILLIAM ALLEN WHITE and EDITH FRANKLIN WYATT.)

CABELL: So this is the Prairie! — But where is the Gopher?

WHITE: Under the Prairie.

CABELL: And where is Queen Pollyanna? They told me of her in my dreams.

WHITE: Under the Gopher. Lowest, but perfectly legitimate, level. Subterranean Marshmallow, one might say — but I'm not a highbrow. (*Eyes Frank provocatively. Frank seems not to have heard; meditates*.)

CABELL: And where is Main Street?

HERGESHEIMER: Every pebble on this prairie has a Main Street running right through it. Every Main Street bisects the universe into two useless halves.

WEBSTER (*a little impatiently*): Well, friends, our topography is a bit mystical. Where shall we sit down and have it out? Or rather let us sit down anywhere and begin at once. One chunk of reality is as real as another, one acre of prairie as comfortable as another. I suggest

MISS WYATT (*interrupts quickly*): Oh dear no! We must have [192] preferences. Can not some one annihilate this prairie and bring us to the sun-lit spaces? (*Looks sweetly at ZONA GALE.*)

(ZONA GALE *whistles long and musically. Pegasus comes sailing down. Halts before the novelists, who all believe they should have been poets. Instinctively they clamber on his back, but before they have disposed themselves securely, they are being whisked through space in improvised attitude. ZONA GALE hugs the horse's neck, FRANK stands on his back in magisterial unconcern, WHITE clings one-handed to his tail; others ad libitum lectoris. They are landed softly on a cloud; Pegasus disappears.*)

CABELL: Another alcove. One should be able to talk beautifully here, if not convincingly. There are no listeners.

DELL (*with the excitement of a new discovery*): And off yonder observe the Prairie, how it shimmers in softest gold! We do not know what is really there, but nothing hinders our turning it all into the most beautiful and intelligible of fairy tales. The millions of Main Streets now weave themselves into a close tapestry . . .

FRANK: Of which the pattern is ourselves, our creative fantasy; not the miserable truth of the warp and woof – what is realism anyway? – but the creative truth in the artist's eye and in his heart.

WHITE *and* WEBSTER (*sotto voce*): Tut, tut!

ADAMS: Anyway, I am glad I've come. There is here not a whiff of the malodorous Society for the Prevention of the Perpetration of Vice in Literature. I die happy. (*Having no taste for argument, he sinks into a peaceful slumber.*)

HERRICK: And there at last is America, the Prairie, looking up to us with mute and pathetic appeal. Too long have the Gopherites and sub-Gopherites doped themselves, between whiles, with that treacly romance which is better known as slush. They are now in a fit mood . . .

WHITE: If slush is what the gopher wants, give him slush, say I. Gophers are not fond of Paris green. What's the use of highbrow-beating them into it?

HERRICK (*pays no attention*): They are not in a fit mood to be rightly diagnosed, to be properly done.

HERGESHEIMER: High time too! they've done us long enough. I could tell you royalty tales that would make your hair stand on end.

THREE LADIES: Oh Mr. Hergesheimer! We are on a fleecy cloud. This is no place for puns. Royalties are an impertinence here!

(*Seven other waking Gentlemen have a far-away, dreamy, noble look.*)

HERGESHEIMER (*mutters savagely*): Hypocrites!

HERRICK: To be properly done. It is very possible that the emotional soil of the Prairie is too thin for business. In that case we shall have to wait – a little longer. Rome was not built in a day nor can the [193] Great American Novel expect to be born when its parents have scarcely met. In any event, it is not mainly a question of craftsmanship. We are all, I take it, perfectly competent craftsmen – if *The New Republic* doesn't know what's what, who does? – perfectly competent. But one must be more than competent. One must happen to be living at the right time and in the right place. Give the Prairie time and it will become a greater, heavier, profounder Prairie. Give the gophers time and they will become subtler, more interesting psychologically and more interested in psychology – in a word, more like Russian gophers, or whatever name they are known by out there. Then and only then can one of us or all of us hope to write something that won't look silly when put on the shelf alongside of "The Idiot." Then and then only can an American novel have a reasonable chance of being favourably reviewed in *The Dial*.

WHITE: Why *The Dial*? *The Saturday Evening Post* is good enough for me.

CABELL: But why can't we simply pretend the gopher is all he might be, all we wish him to be, all he might have been, and pay no further attention to him? It seems to me the proper method is simple enough. We retire into the privacy of a comfortable and inexpensive alcove, close our eyes, forget the Prairie and its overrated inhabitants, and systematically and ingeniously dream of a land of our own devising, till the Great Reaper, finding us blissfully absent-minded, makes short work of us.

MARY AUSTIN: Your frivolity, Mr. Cabell, is shocking. Our task is a serious one, or, if yours isn't, mine is. You are apparently one of these newly named, if not newly invented, what you may call 'ems? (*Looks appealingly at FLOYD DELL.*)

DELL: Introverts.

CABELL: And why not? Why not leave me to my centaurs and harmless contraptions of one kind and another? Though I suppose that even so harmless a thing as a staff must be psychoanalyzed and called a spade!

DELL: Absolutely! Only a staff is never a spade in psychoanalysis.

O'HIGGINS: And is it psychoanalysis ye're talking about? I'm with you. Do you know, I consider it absolutely useless to talk of the form, the scope, and the every other abstract noun that can be put in front of the novel, while under our cut-and-dried thinking is a vagabond of a

dreamer who knows too much about reality to be taken in by it. Every time you go to sleep you have a new dream and wake up with a new reality – or an old headache. So what's the use of talking?

CABELL: O'Higgins, I think we might develop a mutually satisfactory philosophy. We seem to have been born under the same sign.

MARY AUSTIN: The trouble with most of you gentlemen is that you'd rather be thought mistaken but clever or original or paradoxical or [194] something else that is equally useless than mistaken though honest. What we need is not dream psychology but sociology, or rather social psychology. We need a more intimate contact with the collective mind. We must feel the rhythms of the group vibrating sympathetically with our own, we must learn to be at home in all the shifting backgrounds of the Prairie. Above all, we must think less consciously of art and style and words and more of the life that we seek to understand and interpret. Never mind form just yet. It cannot be perfected until the life about us is molded into an organic unity. A prematurely ripened form will bear as little relation to the unformed life it undertakes to report as a grand piano misplaced on a haystack bears to the farm population.

HERRICK: Though I do think, Mrs. Austin, that outward realism is far less important than inner truth.

ZONA GALE: Oh thank you, Mr. Herrick, I'm sure there is an independent spiritual world that it is the duty of each and every one of us to look for. Esoteric beauty is the only beauty that really matters. The glitter of the external should be contemplated only by the short-story writers of the magazines, it seems to me. What a pity that while we have all worked hard to make of the old fatty novel a bare and powerful instrument, ready for the subtlest of revelations, we have not yet done much more than skirmish about in preliminary jousts and canters! We seem to be confounding the husk of reality with its mystic kernel. Right in our commonplace midst is an all but undreamt of world of remoter, spiritual beauty. It is useless to write novels as long as "Pamela" or Wells' "Outline of History" unless they are borne aloft on the wings of that understanding which is synonymous with the quest of beauty.

MISS WYATT: And you, Zona, have shown us how to go about the quest. What unexpected beauty leaps out of the simplest and most commonplace scenes in your tales! And it does seem to me that we dream our novels not to escape from life but to realize life. We dream true, getting some hint within the covers of a book of all those multitudinous forms of life that are so sadly denied us in reality. In the novel we meet

many delightful people that we could not afford to be seen with. For my part, I am more at home with your disreputable acquaintances, Mr. Hergesheimer, than with my relatives of flesh and blood. Zona dear, the day is lovely. Let us look for the little blue flowers that the German idealistic poets used to talk about before 1870. This is a likely place for them. (*To the rest*): We shan't be long. (*Exeunt Zona Gale and Miss Wyatt.*)

WHITE: Say, I hope this isn't going to develop into a stag party.

HERGESHEIMER: And all the while there is no blinking the fact that people don't read our great novels — even the super-Gopherites don't. Who's going to read "Rahab" when it's so much easier to buy the New Republic and glance at the literary editor's review of it? Time's too [195] valuable and, besides, society has no place for literature. Literature today is merely a genteel echo which is useful to soften the grim silence of efficiency. It should be heard of, not heard. And how long do you suppose society will condescend to hear of it? Do I catch someone remarking that only beauty is more durable than time? True, but who or what wants to endure these days?

WHITE: You're an incurable pessimist.

HERGESHEIMER (*proudly*): Of course I am. Who but an incurable sap-head is not?

WHITE: Easy now, easy. The fact is you're complaining of not getting lowbrow royalties on highbrow stuff. You can't have your cake and eat it, man. If you and Frank and the rest of you insist on purveying for the half dozen freaks that live on toadstools and caviar, why rail at the regular, roast-beef fellows for not shelling out? And why get red in the face when the marshmallow hordes, the bulk and possibly the pride of our citizenry, imagine Mr. Hergesheimer's "Java Head" is a new plug tobacco? Take it from me: there are three levels. Each level has its consumers, who care not a rap for what is served upstairs or downstairs. And posterity doesn't give a whoop for any of us.

FRANK: Speak for yourself, sir! It is not the business of the artist to wheedle Tom or coddle Dick or slap Harry on the back. Nor is it his business to record or interpret this somewhat accidental thing called life. Still less can he condescend to dream it away. He neither chronicles nor forgets. He creates. He creates life. He gives meaning and value to what without his ministrations is but a protoplasmic jelly. And if the people of that incredible Prairie out there do not realize this, do not recognize in the artist their saviour and their god, it is they who will be the losers. Society cannot long endure on the crumbs of the past. It

does not know its own yearning, it needs the artist's creative expression of its unrest, which is his own. For creation is but the objectifying of impulses that clamor for a voice, for birth.

WEBSTER: This, I presume, is the *accoucheuse* theory of the novel. For my part, I like to think of the poor reader. I like even to flirt with the heresy that the novel exists only in its readers. The novelist must have some onlooking intelligence in mind — at the very least the onlooking intelligence which is the part of himself that is not writing the book.

DELL: You advocate dissociation of the personality?

WEBSTER: Never mind ideas, is what I say. Let universality and all that kind of hocus pocus severely alone. Just give the reader your experience as you have honestly experienced it and as he sees it, for the two are not as distinguishable as the professors of the unconscious have it. Do not look away from the concrete facts of experience. Do not ask yourself, "Is that experience drab or is it colorful?" If you cannot find your subject in it, you have nothing to write about, for you will not interest your reader in what you cannot give chapter and verse for. [196]

CABELL: Would you object to an occasional centaur?

DELL: Anyhow, this experience that Webster speaks of is not the self-evident, tangible, recognizable thing that he fondly imagines it to be. We never know what it is that impinges on our selective, evaluating consciousness until we have assimilated the normative feeling of the past — in other words, until we have learned the fairy tales of our ancestors. Sooner or later experience gives the lie to our stock of fairy tales. It is up to us to supply new and ever new bits of folklore, so that the chasm between life and our understanding of life may not so widen as to imperil our sanity and comfort.

FRANK: Life grows with what our mythopoeic intuitions bring to it.

CABELL: And the more you live the more you have to lie to get out of it.

(Zona Gale and Miss Wyatt come rushing in, breathless.)

ZONA GALE: There is not a moment to lose! He's coming.

ADAMS *(suddenly awakening)*: Is it the Vice Crusade?

Enter PEGASUS (bowing to the company): Ladies and gentlemen, I am afraid I have made a grave mistake, for which, I fear, the historian of American literature will take me to task. When I heard the whistling call down below, I thought it was the American Poetic Renaissance asking for a free ride and a change of scene. Since then I have learned — it would not be courteous to explain how or where — that you are a perfectly respectable gathering. I humbly apologize. Will you kindly

take your seats in alphabetical order? (*They do so.*) I shall be more careful this time. (*He sails down slowly, without making disconcerting or discommoding movements of any kind. He lands the novelists on the Prairie. They dismount, whereupon Pegasus sails off to headquarters in Chicago.*)

Enter EDITORS OF THE NEW REPUBLIC *as before.* (*Through their megaphone*): We have heard you coming. What tidings, pray, do you bring us from the Desert?

TWELVE NOVELISTS (*all at once. Each gives his own report. In the ensuing babel one can but faintly distinguish a few catchwords, such as "highbrow," "lowbrow," "truth," "lies," "creative," "psychoanalytic"*).

THE EDITORS (*in despair, throwing away their megaphone*): Never mind. What's the use of bluffing? We have found, since you left us and the home folks have been limited for Sunday diversion to our editorials and book-reviews, that the less innocent forms of vice have multiplied appallingly. Come, then, and may the Lord prosper you in your trade.

(*The Novelists and Editors enter the city, not necessarily in alphabetical order, arm in arm amid the plaudits of the multitude.*)

CABELL (*murmurs to himself*): And the more you live the more you have to lie to get out of it.

Editorial Note

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Review of
H. D., *Collected Poems*

Collected Poems of H. D. New York: Boni and Liveright, 1925.

Seldom does a volume of collected poems present so even, so unchanging a texture as this. The consistency of form is remarkable, and it is a form which is neither more nor less convincing in the latest pieces than it was in *Sea Garden*, which manifested a swift and perfect control of free verse such as perhaps no other American poet — or English poet, for that matter — has attained. There is no rhythmic fumbling in H. D.'s work. Monotony there is, but it is the necessary and excellent monotony of waves that tell always the same story and yet never the same. In some of the later poems there is rhyme, even regular stanzaic pattern, as in the beautiful "Lethe." These incidental concessions to, or echoes of, the tradition neither contradict nor perfect the prevailing line of the verse. The occasional rhymes are but faint fire-fly illuminations of a form which is already sufficiently well defined as movement, of a delicately modulated speed which is always a little brusque yet always flowing. The clipped, eager cadences of such poems out of *Sea Garden* as "The Helmsman":

But now, our boat climbs — hesitates — drops —
climbs — hesitates — crawls back —
climbs — hesitates —
O be swift —
we have always known you wanted us.

or "The Shrine":

You are useless,
O grave, O beautiful,
the landsmen tell it — I have heard —
you are useless,

are the same, psychologically if not prosodically, as the exquisitely high-whimsical dance of, say, "Holy Satyr," which belongs to the latest volume, the *Heliodora* set:

Most holy Satyr,
 like a goat,
 with horns and hooves
 to match thy coat [212]
 of russet brown,
 I make leaf-circlets
 and a crown of honey-flowers
 for thy throat.

There it was the full rush and impact of the wave – breaker and spray; here it is the same wave on the recoil, smoothed and foaming.

This poet is individual – it has been said over and over again – and very beautiful. Is it therefore necessary to say that she is strangely un-American or that she is a Greek, out of time? As for her Hellenism, I find it as little in her work as in the very French hexameters of Racine or in the lush beauties of the completely English Keats. H. D.'s world of content is either a highly personalized sea and rock and overlooked flower or it dissolves into the warmer lineaments of Aegean figures. Each world is symbol and nostalgia. But there is this difference, that the exquisite harshness of the earlier world was a more direct and intuitive expression of the poet's spirit; the later is more carefully discovered, more studiously colonized. For this reason I think there can be little doubt that for those who are more interested in the quick way of the spirit, however remotely it may happen to fall out from the known haunts of expression, than in the rediscovery of ancient and beautiful ways made apt once again for the hungry spirit – for such cultural dissenters *Sea Garden* remains H. D.'s most valuable gift. And this – need one expressly say? – is not to make light of the poems in which she has chosen the more easily recognizable, yet, for her, more devious, symbols.

H. D. is not un-American – far from it. Personal and remote as are her images, there breathes through her work a spirit which it would not be easy to come upon in any other quarter of the globe. The impatience of the rhythms and the voluptuous harshness and bleakness of the sea and shore and woodland images manifest it. Such violent restraint, such a passionate pleasure in the beauty of the denuded scene and the cutting thrust, themselves but inverse symbols of caress, could only develop in a culture that hungers for what it despises. H. D. is of those highly characteristic and most subtly moving American temperaments that long for an emotional wealth of expression, whether in terms of culture or of personal experience, that they cannot wholeheartedly desire – and must not, if they are to be true to themselves.

Editorial Note

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H(ilda). D(oolittle). (1886–1961) was an American poet and novelist.

Review of Emily Dickinson, *The Complete Poems*

Emily Dickinson, *The Complete Poems of Emily Dickinson* With an introduction by Martha Dickinson Bianchi. Boston: Little, Brown and Co., 1925; Martha Dickinson Bianchi, *The Life and Letters of Emily Dickinson*. New York: Houghton Mifflin Co., 1925.

Though Emily Dickinson has been dead these forty years, it is doubtful if it is quite time to read her poetry aright. There is some brush-clearing to be done before we can begin to see her true significance. It is customary to speak of her work as a forerunner of the contemporary spirit of American verse, if such a spirit there be. It would be far more to the point to describe it as the forerunner of a spirit that has not yet succeeded in shaping itself. In the wiser chronology of the future history of American literature, she is likely to be counted the spiritual successor, and possibly destroyer, of our belated romantics, cerebralists, and vendors of "jeweled bindings."

This may seem an unnecessarily tall program for a slender woman who wrote verse but furtively and with a painful lack of ease, but it is not half so arduous as it sounds. Emily Dickinson's distinction and importance lie in the groove of her superficial limitations. She was not "in the swim" of anything, she had but casual contacts with the culture of her day; and, above all, an unhappy love experience shut her in for the whole period of her creative life within the austere halls of a passionate spirit. She was left to herself and her own devices. She gained solitude, and held on to a despair that was linked to joy by their common ecstasy. Hence all her poems, the very poorest with the fine and beautiful ones, are protected from the slightest alloy of sham. Where she failed — and she failed [99] or only half-succeeded perhaps as often as she won through to complete expression — it was never because her vision was unsure, but over and over again because she had no tools ready to hand. Yet so ardent was her spirit that an almost comic *gaucherie* in the finding of rhymes could not prevent her from discovering to us the promise of a fresh, primitive, and relentless school of poetry that is still on the way.

This "primitive" school may be detected in occasional poems or lines or images among our contemporary poets, chiefly among the lesser known names; it has certainly found no commanding voice. In order to understand it in even the vaguest way it is necessary to do a little of the brush-clearing that more competent critics may be trusted to do in circumstantial detail. The American Poetic Renaissance, as we are sadly beginning to discover, is as yet no true rebirth but merely a strange medley of discordant voices. The Walt Whitman tradition, contrary to the usual critical formula, is not a vital one for poetry, and has probably done us at least as much harm as good. It is valuable in so far as it has cleared away the literary detritus that clogged sincere expression; but its frantic attempt to find the soul in anything but the soul itself, its insistence on the mystic beauty of an externalized world, and above all its maudlin idealization of democracy, could not but lead to the deterioration of poetic values. So far from combating the materialistic ideal, it has fed it by vainly attempting to read spirit into it. The results have [100] been disastrous. Poetry has become externalized, and the intuitive hunger of the soul for the beautiful moulding of experience actually felt, not fiddled with or stared at, is not often stilled. The bulk of contemporary verse, with its terrifyingly high average of excellence, gives us everything but the ecstasy that is the language of unhampered intuitive living. We have shrewd observation, fantasy, the vivid life of the senses, pensive grace, eloquence, subtle explorations of the intellect, and a great many other interesting things, but curiously little spiritual life. Very few poets seem willing, or able, to take their true selves seriously without either indulging in irrelevant biography or fleeing into the remoter chambers of some ivory tower.

Emily Dickinson was able to discover herself because she was powerfully assisted by two negations. She drank very sparingly, as we have seen, of the stream of literary culture, and she was somehow unaware of the fact that we are living in a material age. The materialism that was even then weighing on sensitive spirits she had neither to conquer by embrace nor evade by flight. This naive and necessary obliviousness of hers, lacking all resentment, is the primary requisite for further advances in American poetry. Nothing is more dangerous to the poetic spirit than to have its energy stung into intellectual fury or impassioned protest or fear. If we turn to the best of Emily Dickinson's poems, we find the fruits of her healthy ignorances in a strange, unsought, and almost clairvoyant freshness — in such lines as: [101]

A wounded deer leaps highest,
 I've heard the hunter tell:
 'Tis but the ecstasy of death,
 And then the brake is still.

Or:

And kingdoms, like the orchard,
 Flit russetly away.

Or the whole poem beginning "Through lane it lay," from which we quote the last two stanzas:

The tempest touched our garments,
 The lightning's poignards gleamed;
 Fierce from the crag above us
 The hungry vulture screamed.

The satyr's fingers beckoned,
 The valley murmured "Come" —
 These were the mates, and this the road.
 Those children fluttered home.

Because of this perennial freshness of sight it was natural for Emily Dickinson to use the homeliest images of the fireside in the expression of ecstasy, or agony, or joy in nature. Only a primitive could have followed the lines:

Transporting must the moment be,
 Brewed from decades of agony!

in a poem of death imaged as belated homecoming, with:

To think just how the fire will burn,
 Just how long-cheated eyes will turn,
 To wonder what myself will say.

And only one undeterred by cultural associations could have made such a discovery as: [102]

Nature was in her beryl apron,
 Mixing fresher air —

or could have written such a poem as "Bring me the sunset in a cup," with its "debauchée of dews" and

Who counts the wampum of the night,
 To see that none is due?

Some of her most magical efforts are reached by means as homely as these, as in:

You cannot fold a flood
 And put it in a drawer –
 Because the winds would find it out,
 And tell your cedar floor.

This is at once too simple and too strange to be merely quaint. Distance from the hopelessly beloved, and the emotional nearness to him which is brought by the hourly acceptance of releasing death, flow intuitively into the household image of a door ajar:

So we must keep apart –
 You there, I here –
 With just the door ajar
 That oceans are,
 And prayer,
 And that pale sustenance,
 Despair!

Another example of this familiar magic is the poem, "I started early, took my dog," too long to quote.

Emily Dickinson is often abstract, sometimes even verbal, but she is always saved from the merely allusive cleverness of our cerebralists by the passion which runs [103] through all her poetry like a consuming flame. Of no other American poet can it be so truly said that the spirit burns out the body. She has herself best expressed her conception of the life of the soul in the wonderful poem beginning, "Do you see a soul at the white heat?" The luminous impatience of the spirit could not be more exactly apprehended than in its last two lines:

Least village boasts its blacksmith,
 Whose anvil's even din
 Stands symbol for the finer forge
 That sounds tugless within;

 Refining these impatient ores
 With hammer and with blaze,
 Until the designated light
 Repudiate the forge.

Her spiritual passion is all the more a thing of wonder because it so steadfastly refused to identify itself with any of our accepted faiths or symbols. "God" is hardly more than one of the marginal landmarks of the spirit; in the love-poem, *Doubt me, my dim companion!* he is impetuously subordinated to earthly love. But earthly love is not what defines the spirit; her love is no amatory frenzy, it is simply one of the temporal embodiments of an ecstasy which has life in its own right. In short, Emily Dickinson's poetry leads straight to the conception of an intu-

itively felt spirit which can be subordinated neither to any of its experienced forms nor to any kind of absolute standing without. As she puts it,

There is a solitude of space, [104]
 A solitude of sea,
 A solitude of death; but these
 Society shall be,
 Compared with that profounder site,
 That polar privacy,
 A Soul admitted to Itself:
 Finite Infinity.

It is because she asks nothing further of the soul than that it be itself and because she can think of nothing essential to add to its inherent dignity that she is able to say, almost casually:

Lay this laurel on the one
 Too intrinsic for renown.

We have left ourselves no space for discussion of the technical qualities of Emily Dickinson's verse. This can be pretty well dispensed with, as her importance in American poetry, which we believe to be very great, does not lie in technique. It is enough to remark that while her outward patterned form is frequently unsatisfying even within its unpretentious range, the essential significant form, as idea in imaged embodiment, is nearly always perfect and sometimes transcendently beautiful.

The specific nature of her imagery is worth a word or two. Its vitality is dependent not so much on the eye, in spite of the primitive freshness of Emily Dickinson's vision, as on a sense of movement that gives the verse an interior excitement, velocity, and imminence, a quality that she shares with other intuitive poets, such as Shelley. Here is an example of two out of a countless number: [105]

While I stare – the solemn petals
 Far as North and East,
 Far as South and West expanding,
 Culminate in rest.

The overtakelessness of those
 Who have accomplished Death,
 Majestic is to me beyond
 The majesties of Earth.

The *Life and Letters* are an interesting pendant to the *Poems* but they add little to what is implicit in these. Emily Dickinson's life was all of a piece, her poetry and her letters are but a single expression

Because of the many ellipses in thought, and their highly figurative style, the letters are more difficult to follow than the poems. Her correspondents must have been at a loss at times to interpret her whimsicalities and flights of fancy. They are full of inspired nothings, as when she remarks that "Life is so fast it will run away, notwithstanding our sweetest *whoa*"; or, "It is lonely without the birds today, for it rains badly, and the little poets have no umbrellas." Here is her conception of life:

You speak of "disillusion" — that is one of the few subjects on which I am an infidel. Life is so strong a vision, not one of it shall fail. Not what the stars have done, but what they are to do, is what detains the sky.

And here, finally, is what she has to say to Colonel Higginson about poetry:

If I read a book, and it makes my whole body so cold no fire can ever warm me, I know that is poetry. If I feel physically as if the top of my head were taken off, I know that is poetry. These are the only ways I know it. Is there any other way?

Editorial Note

Originally published in *Poetry* 26, 97–105 (1925), under the title "Emily Dickinson, a Primitive."

Emily Dickinson (1830–1886) was an American poet; her works were published posthumously.

Review of Edwin Arlington Robinson,
Dionysus in Doubt

Edwin Arlington Robinson, *Dionysus in Doubt*. New York: Macmillan, 1925.

This latest volume of Mr. Robinson's seems neither to add nor seriously to detract from his poetic achievement. The four long poems, with the possible exception of "Mortmain," are rather like studies in the Robinson manner — indirection, hiatus, and pregnant hint — than vivid further contributions to the Robinson matter. There is a too self-conscious tartness about the speeches. Dionysus sneers and scolds too much, and we are not greatly interested. "Mortmain," too heavy to be wholly convincing, has at least a new theme: locked in love with her brother, who has died many many years ago, the cultured and sympathetic spinster cannot resign herself to her friend and lover, who, if he analyzed less, might perhaps have carried her away by storm — so one likes to guess. One is thankful, too, for the magnificent lines that conclude the narrative:

He went slowly home,
Imagining, as a fond improvisation,
That waves huger than Andes or Sierras
Would soon be overwhelming, as before,
A ship that would be sunk for the last time
With all on board, and far from Tilbury Town.

It is the eighteen sonnets of the book that save it. "The Sheaves," which will be much quoted, for it is a lovely poem, makes us wish that Mr. Robinson had found it in his heart to yield more often to his ever recurring impulse to sensuous imagery. There were a few such surrenders in *The Man against the Sky* and *Merlin* too betrayed the fact that Mr. Robinson was not all austerity and tragic chuckle. It is a great pity, this splendid reticence of his, for in sober truth he is by Nature's intent a lyric poet, not the gingerly dramatist his proud introspection doomed him to be.

Most of these sonnets are difficult — they would hardly be Mr. Robinson's if they were not — but they well repay repeated reading. They

are full of that peculiar gaunt strength that is next door to quaintness, like the knuckles of a New England farmer, or even drollery, though generally of a dolorous cast:

... and to our vision it was plain
 Where thrift, outshivering fear, had let remain
 Some chairs that were like skeletons of home.
 And from the fulness of his heart he fished
 A dime for Jesus who had died for men.

Now and then the utmost simplicity, following on a chain of indirections, will yield a new and rather unexpected strength, as in:

The same old stars will soon be overhead,
 But not so friendly and not quite so near,

which should be read in its context (see the sonnet "Reunion").

Yet when all is said; after one has fully mastered and savored the irony of "New England" or "If the Lord would make Windows in Heaven," and overcome the sheer difficulties of such sonnets as "The Laggards" and "As it looked then," one is not truly satisfied. It is becoming increasingly clear that the time for all these subtleties of doubt and failure and mockery is well nigh exhausted, that the voice of John the Baptist, destroyer of old ways and prophet but not builder of the new, is not a voice in the wilderness but a formula in the lecture hall. We cannot live forever on even the most neatly turned of negations. A considerable number of the younger American poets have addressed themselves with what talents they possess to the recapturing of beauty, even of ecstasy. To such the doubts of Dionysus and the involutions of sonnets which are little more than question marks will not seem of the utmost consequence. They are willing to have learned something from irony and cerebralism, which is the post-Robinson dispensation, if only to be in the modern swim, yet Heaven's doors cannot forever remain unassailed, even in these days of obvious Hell. To glimpse the hardly less obvious bits of Heaven that half-opened doors disclose is given only to certain of those who are willing to take a chance, who are brazen enough or indifferent enough to be caught unhumorous and rapt.

Editorial Note

Originally published in *Voices*, November 1925, 64-65, under the title "The Tragic Chuckle."

Preface and Introduction to *Folk Songs of French Canada*, Marius Barbeau and Edward Sapir (1925)

Preface

The present volume is an outgrowth of the work of the Canadian National Museum. Both collaborators belong to the staff of this institution. In his study of Huron folklore Mr. Barbeau came to realize that some knowledge of European traditions was necessary to separate the native elements from those which the Indians owe to their white neighbors. This led to the independent investigation, by Mr. Barbeau and his assistants, of the whole subject of French Canadian folklore—tales, songs, beliefs and industries.

Out of the wealth of original material secured by these investigators for the Museum, we have selected for this volume some forty folk songs. In the separate introductions we have referred to all the accessible French parallels. It was our intention to avoid the two extremes of technicality and of sentimentalism, and we have tried to reach both the folklore student and the general reader who wishes to get a taste of a fascinating folk literature.

Mr. Barbeau is responsible for the French texts, the general introduction and the shorter explanations prefacing the songs, and for the musical transcriptions; Mr. Sapir, for the English translations of the songs and a revision of the explanatory matter. But each of the collaborators has gained far more from the counsel of the other than can be indicated by stating his separate share in the work.

A word as to the translations. Those interested in the problem of rendering the spirit of folk song into a foreign language may judge for themselves what measure of success has been achieved. While extreme literalness is neither attainable nor desirable, we have allowed ourselves no serious departure from the original. The rhyme schemes, assonances and metrical forms have usually been preserved. The reader will bear in mind that the song burdens, which are printed in italics, and the repeated lines are given in full only in the first stanza.

In conclusion, we desire to thank the Director of the Museum, Dr. William McInnes, for permission to use the source material in this book of folk songs.

Marius Barbeau,

Edward Sapir.

Ottawa, February 28, 1924.

Introduction

Folk songs were once part of the everyday life of French America. They seemed as familiar as barley-bread to the pioneer settlers of the St. Lawrence Valley; and they escorted through rain and shine the *coureurs-des-bois* in their early ventures along the trails and rivers of the Far West. So we read in our century-old chronicles of travel and exploration. The raftsmen on the eastern Canadian rivers, as late as forty years ago, enlivened the woods with the echoes of their rustic melodies; threshing and winnowing in the barn moved on to the rhythm of work tunes, as did spinning, weaving and beating the wash by the fireside.

Not many song records, however, have come down to us that antedate 1860. Larue, about this time, broached the subject in *Le Foyer canadien* of Quebec, and in 1865 Ernest Gagnon published his *Chansons populaires du Canada*. The idea soon went abroad that these efforts, modest though they were, had drained the fount of local tradition. When modern life hushed all folk singers alike, few doubted that song, tale and legend had vanished forever, along with most other relics of a bygone age.

We shared this illusion ourselves, until some significant survivals by the roadside piqued our curiosity. Our researches then unexpectedly disclosed wide vistas. It was no longer possible to believe that the traditions of a people could sink into oblivion from morning to night. The trails of the past were not so quickly obscured, their luxuriant byways not so easily forsaken. The newly recovered domain of French folklore in America has proved immensely rich. Tales and anecdotes by the hundred and songs by the thousand have in the past few years of investigation fallen into our hands from all parts of eastern Canada and New England. Yet the work is far from done, the resources of the field are still unspent.

A small sheaf from this song harvest—forty-one numbers in all—is here presented to the reader; and we claim no higher merit for it than that it is fairly representative of the main types.

Our discovery lured us into the hope of spying folk songs in the making. Such compositions, according to a theory inherited from Grimm and still current in the English-speaking world, were the fruit of collective inspiration. A handful of singers would spontaneously burst into song on the spur of the moment. Genius, usually denied the individual, would at times grace the latent powers of the mob and give birth to poems and tunes that were worthy to pass on to posterity.

In the light of this presumption we chose our field of observation among the isolated and unspoilt settlers of the lower St. Lawrence Valley. There, among our rustic hosts assembled in singing parties, we might find the object of our quest—the song anonymously begotten from the midst of the motley crowd.

We were not wholly disappointed. The people were still fond of evening gatherings devoted to song, the dance and the old-time conviviality. Solo and chorus alternated freely while we took down the words and registered the melodies on the phonograph. From Charlevoix County in Quebec we passed to Chicoutimi; and, in the following summers, to Témiscouata, Beauce, Gaspé and Bonaventure. A few collaborators—MM. E.-Z. Massicotte, A. Godbout, A. Lambert, and others—extended the search to the neighborhood of Quebec and Montreal, even to New Hampshire. As a result, over five thousand song records, all from oral sources, are now classified and carefully annotated in the files of the National Museum of Canada, at Ottawa; and problems of origin have again come into their own.

Our expectation meanwhile was to find the country-folk in the mood of untrammelled utterance, in the yet unobserved process of song-making; we overlooked no likely opportunity, on the seashore or in the fields, by the fireside or in occasional festive gatherings. Our folk singers were genial and talented, their memory was prolific and their stock of songs nearly inexhaustible. But they lacked the very gift which was to enlighten us in our quest. They would not give free rein to impulse or fancy, they would not tread new paths, would not venture beyond the mere iteration of what had passed down to them ready-made from their relatives and friends, from untold generations of peasant singers. Nor was this due to an unlucky star, for all the country-folk we met were much alike; they were not creators of rhymes or tunes, but only instruments for their preservation. True enough, we heard of some poets of the backwoods who could string rhymes and stanzas together on a given theme to suit the local demand. But these were without mystic power. Their manner seemed not unlike that of ordinary poets, but far cruder.

They plodded individually over their tasks and tallied their lines to a familiar tune. The outcome was invariably uncouth and commonplace. There was nowhere a fresh source of inspiration; only imitation, obvious and slavish.

There is thus a wide discrepancy between our observations and the theory of Grimm *et al.* on the mysterious flashes of the communal spirit in the folk songs of the past. This we could no longer ignore. How puzzling it all seemed when set beside the report of American negroes and humble peasants of the Balkans still indulging in spontaneous poetic effusions when gathered together for group singing! Our folk singers were not their inferiors; we found them keenly intelligent, if uneducated. Their conservatism still resisted the blight of industrialism, they remained faithful to the tradition of their ancestors who, in the days of Richelieu, landed on these shores from the northwestern provinces of France. If illiterate folk truly possess the collective gift of lyric utterance, why not they as well as their forefathers or the Serbians or the negroes of the lower Mississippi?

The reader may decide as he will. For our part, we have lost all faith in the century-old theory as applied to the French field in America. Tabulating our five thousand song variants and comparing them with the records from the French provinces, we find that, say, nineteen out of twenty songs are ancient; they have come with the seventeenth-century immigrants from overseas to their new woodland homes. The remainder form a miscellaneous group from the pen of unknown scribes and clerics or from the brain of rustic bards.

Among the first—the songs from ancient France—we count our most valuable records, and they are many. The bulk is of a high order for both form and content. The style is pure and crisp, the theme clear-cut and tersely developed. There prevails throughout a fragrance of refinement, sometimes there is a touch of genius. Here is decidedly not the drawl of untutored peasants nor a growth due to chance, but the work of poets whose mature art had inherited an ample stock of metric patterns and an ancient lore common to many European races.

Our folk songs as a whole were an indirect legacy from the troubadours of mediaeval France; so we were at first inclined to think. But we had reasons to demur. Troubadour and minstrel songs were written on parchment mostly for the privilege of the nobility; they belonged on the whole to the aristocracy and the learned, not to the people; they affected the mannerisms, the verbosity and the lyrical finesse of the Latin decadence; and they were preferably composed in the Limousin and

Provençal dialects of southern France. The troubadours themselves labored between the eleventh and fourteenth centuries, while many of our best songs belonged to the two hundred years that followed. What is more, upon going through collections of their poems we failed to meet the familiar landmarks; the spirit, the technique and the themes had little or nothing in common with those of our records. They were two worlds apart; and we fail to see how the chasm can ever be bridged.

The origin of our songs, the folk songs of ancient France, still remains a problem. If our experience in the North American fields serves to dispel a few current misconceptions, it has not gone far enough to unravel the puzzle of ultimate authorship. Our only surmise is that, while the troubadours journeyed from castle to castle and penned their meticulous lines for the lords of the land, another class of poets sang their songs among the common people, who were not so easily beguiled by a more fashionable art.

We have read of the humble *jongleurs de foire* and *jongleurs errants* of the ancient days, whose pranks were sometimes derided in the manuscripts of the troubadours and the minstrels. Their profession was naturally the butt of society. But as they were not apparently addicted to writing, no tangible evidence is left to vindicate their memory. A student of medieval France, Jeanroy, has already pointed out that while the troubadours had their day in the south, an obscure literary upheaval, freer from Latin influence, took place in the *oil* provinces of the Loire River, that is, in the very home of most of our traditional lore. Who were the local poets if not the *jongleurs* of the north themselves? And if their art was oral, why should it not have taken root in the soil among the older traditions of the time? Why should not our folk songs be their work, now partly recovered or disfigured?

Whatever these Loire River bards be called, they were no mere upstarts, if we take their lyrics into account. At their best the composed songs which not only courted the popular fancy but which, because of their vitality and charm, outlived the forms of academic poetry. Their prosodic resources, besides, were not only copious and largely different from those of the higher literature, but they went back to the very bedrock of the Romance languages. Unlike the troubadours, who were the representatives of medieval latinity, these poets had never given their allegiance to a foreign language since the birth of the Low Latin vernaculars in France, Spain, Portugal and Italy. They had inherited and maintained the older traditions of the land. Thus we find that the metric rules in their songs are comparable to those of Spanish, Portuguese or

Italian poetry rather than to the rules proper to Limousin and written French verse. In other words, the folk songs of France as recovered in America mostly represent an ancient stratum in French literature, one that was never wholly submerged by the influx throughout the Middle Ages of Neo-Latin influences from the south.

The folk singers we consulted by the score were not poets, with the best will in the world. They proved most disappointing when approached in that light. It was merely their wont to rehearse what had come down to them from the dim past. They would give us a song five centuries old next to one dating back two generations. Some Gaspé fisher-folk would call the age-worn *complainte* of "The Tragic Homecoming" by the name of Poirier, a singer still remembered by the elders. Others claimed that the canticle of "Alexis" was as much as a hundred years old, while it is more nearly a thousand. It soon became evident that their notions of origin were not worth serious consideration.

One endowment, however, was strikingly their own. This is their memory. Not everyone could sing; and only a few, at this late day, could boast of an extensive repertory. But we can only admire the gifts of the best singers we have known, such as Saint-Laurent, de Repentigny, Roussell, Lambert, Mme. Dorion, Hovington, Soucy, Louis "l'aveugle," Mme. Bouchard, and many others. Without the slightest effort they dictated to us from day to day numerous songs ranging in length from ten to seventy and, in rare cases, over one hundred lines. Both Saint-Laurent and de Repentigny exceeded three hundred songs each, while others were not far behind. And yet folk memory is not as retentive as it used to be; reading and writing have played havoc with it.

The only rich havens of folk tales and folk songs now left among the French settlers in America lie in rather isolated districts—the more remote the richer, as a rule. Peasants, lumbermen and fisher-folk in their hamlets recite the ballads without faltering, whereas the chance singer in town is unable to muster more than scraps, unless he is country born and bred.

Songs were learned from relatives and friends early in life, almost invariably between five and sixteen years of age. Octogenarians delighted in the songs of their teens and groped in vain for those of their maturity. Thus, in one way at least, youth stubbornly survived into old age. And it seemed strange for human memory to surrender, as repeatedly happened, a whole ballad or a chantey that had not been sung in the last fifty or sixty years.

There was often some difficulty in remembering the very existence, or the initial lines, of a song; not in its full utterance, once a hint was furnished or the notion of it had flashed upon the mind. Aware of this, most singers resorted to a mnemonic device as a guide to their mental stores. One would think of his mother's or his father's songs, or those from other sources, one after another, as they had marked the course of his life. François Saint-Laurent, a fisherman from La Tourelle (Gaspé), never experienced any trouble in listing his possessions, for they were all neatly sorted out in his memory according to the cardinal points. Now he would dig out his songs of the north or of the south, then of the northwest, the west, and so forth. The hitch occurred only when the three hundredth number was reached, for the assorted piles were spent and the only one left was a "heap in the corner," a mixed lot without mental tag.

The work of collection in our field had to proceed with discrimination; judicious elimination was a necessary part of the experience. The songs, particularly at points within reach of town, were not all of folk extraction. A singer's repertory was like a curiosity shop; trifles or recent accessions vied with old-time jewels. The French "romances" of 1810 or 1840 occurred from time to time. They were once the fashion. Not a few found their way, in print or otherwise, into America and filtered down into the older strata of local lore, where they still persist, such as the satires on Bonaparte, long after their demise in the homeland. Compilations printed in Canada and ballad sheets imported from France (*imageries d'Epinal*) spread their influence to many quarters. The archaic canticle of Saint Alexis, for instance, might occur in two forms; the first, out of the *Cantiques de Marseilles*, the oldest song-book known in Canada, and the second from hitherto unrecorded sources of the past. Many songs, moreover, would pass from mouth to mouth until they no longer remained the exclusive favorites of school or barracks. Some singers would be on the lookout for just such novelties as a folklorist is careful to dodge.

The songs as they come from the individual interpreters are not all in a perfect state of preservation; far from it. Centuries have elapsed since their inception and have left them with many scars. Words, when they do not belong to the current vocabulary, are at times deformed; the lines are not infrequently mangled, the rhymes lost; and the stanzas do not always appear in their proper sequence. The student is thus confronted by a question of method in gathering and preserving his

materials. If these are faulty, must he rest satisfied with single versions? Must he publish his records as they stand, blunders and all?

While the integral presentation of these documents may be a matter of choice or circumstances, everyone will agree on the value of as many versions as can be compiled, particularly when they issue from divergent sources. The peregrinations of a song cannot be understood without them. No two recorded occurrences or versions are quite the same, unless they are directly related; their variations increase in proportion to the lapse of time and to their distance from each other. To a folk song these versions are like the limbs of a tree. They appear in clusters at the top, but can be traced to older branches which ultimately converge to a single trunk at the bottom. Our few Charlevoix versions of "The Passion of Our Lord," for instance, were fairly uniform throughout, although somewhat different from those of Témiscouata, across the St. Lawrence. A real gap, however, intervened between them and the Acadian records from New Brunswick. Upon comparison we found that both forms were fairly ancient and went back to a bifurcation that had taken place long ago in the ancestral home overseas.

Flaws and local deviations cannot long escape scrutiny. Being sporadic, they tend to eliminate each other in the light of many versions from widely scattered areas. A song can thus be rendered more satisfactory in every way and may even be restored according to the original intention of the author who fashioned it long ago.

The French field in the New World may appear to an outsider as somewhat lacking in variety. But let us not be deceived! The nine thousand original settlers who landed on these shores before 1680 were, it is true, mostly from northwestern France, that is, from *oïl* provinces. They embarked at Saint-Malo, on the English Channel, or at La Rochelle, on the Atlantic, according to their place of origin—Normandy or the basin of the Loire River. Aunis, Poitou and Anjou, on the very frontiers of *oc*, in the south, furnished large numbers, and the northernmost districts not a few. The immigrants belong to many stocks and spoke various dialects. Never quite the same in the past, they still preserve part of their individuality. The French Canadians of Quebec and the Acadians of New Brunswick, Nova Scotia or Louisiana, have long felt their differences, even, at times, to the point of mutual antipathy. Quebec itself, though more compact, consists of three groups—those of Quebec proper, Three Rivers and Montreal—which are not interchangeable. This variety of tradition cannot be ignored by the folklorist, else

valuable historical clues might be lost, variants neglected and the local sources confused in a hopeless tangle.

The best claim to recognition of the French folk songs of America undoubtedly rests in their comparative antiquity; for they have largely remained unchanged since the days of Henri IV and Louis XIII, three or four centuries ago. Sheltered in woodland recesses, far from the political commotions of the Old World, they have preserved much of their sparkling, archaic flavor. And, in the years to come, they cannot fail to contribute materially to the history of the folk songs of France and of the rest of Europe.

Editorial note

Folk Songs of French Canada, co-authored by Marius Barbeau and Edward Sapir, was published by Yale University Press (New Haven, 1925). Reprinted by permission of Yale University.

Review of
Harold Vinal, *Nor Youth nor Age*

Harold Vinal, *Nor Youth nor Age: Poems, 1924-1925*. New York: H. Vinal, 1925.

This slender and beautifully printed volume is far from negligible. It makes no obvious bid for this or that kind of recognition, indulges in no ear-marked profundities, treats diction with a courteous normality, is never strained. Mr. Vinal is a poet of chaste and convincing rhythms and of a distinction which results from the somewhat curious and all too rare art of constantly skirting the commonplace yet rarely attaining it. His mind is graceful, beautifully poised, refreshingly at home.

It is difficult to lay critical hands on an art that is so alertly bland, so subtly obvious and disconcertingly individual in its very obviousness. Perhaps a careful study of Mr. Vinal's technique would reveal the fact that his most successful effects are attained by refraining from the use of words and phrases that a less urbane artist would have been too naive to steer clear of. One gets the effect throughout the volume of rigor toned down to softness, of a passionless air in which crispness is nicely commingled with mellowness.

Here are some lines that seem to me to illustrate Mr. Vinal's manner, which it would be as unrewarding to imitate as Racine, so intimately do its light gestures proceed from a temperament rather than a method.

She is as water to the mind.

Only the things unseen between the earth
And heaven have a chance of an escape.

Far from his father's blowing corn
And closer to a fall of ax,
He finds a wall to sit upon,
Where the spruce boughs are dripping wax.

But miles of water hot with sun.

Yet sometimes standing on the outer rim
Of pastures when the heaven was a flood
Of moody stars and the land seemed good to him,
He felt the smarting sod take wing and bud.

Every now and then one is startled by faint recall of voices long thought dead, by an entirely irreproachable return to a feeling not of this age but of the late, pre-romantic eighteenth century. The following passages may be ventured in support of this impression:

But when long shadows touch a spar
With darkness, homesick eyes can mark
The outline of a door ajar,
A fading barn against the dark.

A robin flurries from a tree
And takes a red-streaked flight elsewhere.

Day for you will never break,
Nor the tender fledgeling cheep:
Rust will gather on the rake,
Wool grow heavy on the sheep.
Now the dark swords overtake,
Have your centuries of sleep.

Though Mr. Vinal does not tower or stand out sharply, he quietly and persistently has a very special distinctiveness among American poets of today. His work amply repays a gently peering, patient, listening kind of reading.

Editorial Note

Previously unpublished; from an undated typescript in the possession of the Sapir family.

Review of Mabel Simpson, *Poems*

Mabel Simpson, *Poems*. New York: Harold Vinal, 1925.

Of any liquid but the cool and purest spring water there is something to be said, but of this most grateful draught there is hardly anything to say except that it slakes the thirst better than any other thing that could be thought of. And so it is with these poems of Mabel Simpson's. There is little that one can say about them, they are so tiny and so radiant in their simplicity. The diction is not rich, the thought is not involved, the imagery is simple and often even obvious. They are the limpid, sedulously undecorated outpourings and musings of a highly inward spirit, intuitive to a degree, preoccupied with the divested self and with the barest and most fundamental of spiritual values. The environing world is not grasped in its richness, it is clairvoyantly apprehended in its simplest terms — earth, grass, tree, wind, river — and then more as symbol than as fact. Yet these poems are strangely satisfying, as the cool draught of water is satisfying, to return to our metaphor.

The volume is not likely to satisfy those who demand close-woven textures of sensation, as in Keats, or of feeling, as in Francis Thompson. But it will go clean to the heart of the intuitives, those who sense the lie of warp and woof better than the tapestry. To put it somewhat differently, it will appeal to such as find the spare and leaping quality of Blake and Emily Dickinson not trying nor strained but easy and natural. It is the leaping quality of the ideas, the irrational thought sequences, set in an utmost simplicity of rhythm, that give many of these poems their "magical" air, say "Lonely Autumn Wind":

Yellow leaves
Everywhere,
Who will come
Comb my hair?

Rolling burrs
Murmuring,
Who will hear
When I sing?

Sleepiness
 On the hill,
 Do not come ...
 I am still.

This is perhaps an artless, folk-song quality, as is the refrain, which Miss Simpson sometimes uses with an almost heart-breaking effect, as in "Earth":

We all come back to her again,
 Certain as seasons and the rain.
 Though drinking deep from other streams,
 Though wandering in other dreams,
 We all come back to her again,
 Certain as seasons and the rain.

Simple as are the rhythms of this poet, she can often evoke the most poignant of feelings through rhythm alone. Unless my ear deceives me, it is to the mingled speed and retard of the last two lines of "Vesper" that the beauty of the poem is mainly due:

I heard a meadow breathing grass
 On a silent summer day,
 I saw a glimmering insect pass,
 And a petal drop away.
 I laid my cheek against the ground,
 My joy was as sharp as a grief,
 The wind went by with a lovely sound,
 And the night fell like a leaf.

But analysis is little rewarding in these poems. They should be read and heard as slow rains are heard and seen, with a rapt attention that catches something beyond the monotonous fall and soft water-light. I shall close by quoting the two poems that seem to me to be the most beautiful in the book and among the most beautiful in contemporary American and English literature. The first is "Song":

O Earth, how lonely you would be
 Without the Wind, without the Sea.
 We come and go, we live and die,
 At last within your breast we lie.
 And all the lovely words we say,
 And all the lovely prayers we pray,
 Are put away, are put away,
 Only the Winds and Waters stay.

And "Vigil," which has a most fresh and lovely excitement, and which no editor or committee would ever dream of giving a prize to, so beautiful is it:

No one will ever really know
Where I come from nor where I go.

This is not I, this body's mold,
The hair that you touch nor the hands you hold.

A voice to hear and a face to see,
These are the outward signs of me.

Come close, come close, come near, come near,
I am keeping a vigil here.

Here in a little house of clay
Something is now that will go away.

Something leaping and something light
To go like a flame on a windy night,

To go like a flame in a windy sky,
O this is I, this is I!

Editorial Note

Previously unpublished; from a typescript in the possession of the Sapir family.

Review of
Léonie Adams, *Those Not Elect*

Léonie Adams, *Those Not Elect*. New York: Robert M. McBride, 1925.

Those Not Elect is a volume of beautiful poems. The word "beautiful" is so sadly abused, so much a habit of lazy criticism, that it requires a little courage to choose it as the sign manual of a body of verse. Yet there is no other word that describes Miss Adams' work half so accurately. Her poetry is beautiful in a pre-eminent degree and in every sense of the word. It is beautiful in diction, beautiful in its highly sophisticated rhythms, beautiful above all in the quality of its feeling and in the movement of its thought, at once sensuous and mystical. The very titles are beautiful — "Companions of the Morass," [276] "Night of Unshed Tears," "Heaven's Paradox" — not so much, one feels, out of a desire to escape the obvious as because it is natural for Miss Adams to express herself beautifully.

Cease to preen, O shining pigeons!
A jewel eye and breast of quiet.
Rainbow neck, will purchase here
Never rest nor wholesome diet.

And —

Lovers said then too of death
How more than the worm's mouth was owing
One that drew a flower of lust:
And then were no such churls to yield
Delicacy like hers to dust.

Such passages as these have the same certain self-contained beauty in the very presence of what is unlovely as a queen might in the midst of squalor and want.

Beauty, however, is but a first approximation toward the definition of Miss Adams' very peculiar quality. If her verse is beautiful, this does not mean that it is notably graceful or felicitous. The obviously graceful and the merely felicitous are, indeed, almost religiously eschewed for graces more difficult and withdrawn — and more subtly rewarding, for

Miss Adams has but the air of playing with precious things. In essence her style is never precious, never a thing of technique, but always the subtle, even tortured, embodiment of a spirit that is at least as subtle and as tortured. Were Miss Adams more obviously, instead of completely, modern in feeling, she would have shrunk from the consistent use of verbal beauties, she [277] would have feared to be caught in rapture over Elizabethan turns of phrase. It is the charming paradox of her finest poetry that it creates an utterly fresh and breathless beauty out of materials that are almost worn with loveliness.

The spirit that animates these poems is, frankly, the lovely unhappiness that the Germans have dubbed *Weltschmerz*. There is nothing strident about it, it has no self-pity, though it is not lacking in a certain naive, disarming self-indulgence. Yet the naiveté, one fears, is sophisticated rather than unconscious. As Miss Adams puts it in the very first stanza of the volume:

Never, being damned, see Paradise.
The heart will sweeten at its look;
Nor hell was known, till Paradise
Our senses shook.

And, later, in the same poem:

Never taste that fruit with the soul
Whereof the body may not eat,
Lest flesh at length lay waste the soul
In its sick heat.

Miss Adams has chosen to withdraw, she neither apologizes nor glories. A little back of the surface of reality, which shines with a beauty she prefers to neglect, are many faint paths, some worn, some hidden in underbrush, that take her to another world, where beauty is more nearly of her own devising. This world holds her seriously, she does not often glance wistfully at the commoner world of easy, yet hopeless, bliss. It is a question [278] if the artist has not a complete right to citizenship in whatever world of values his spirit creates for itself. Yet there are limits beyond which it seems dangerous to travel, and some at least of Miss Adams' admirers will be a little apprehensive of her future. They will feel that withdrawal may be the impulse for a supremely beautiful first harvest but that the gods of denial are not permanently alert with blessings. In a sense, however, all this is not criticism but speculative biography, and therefore to be ruled out of court.

Perhaps no poem in the volume so well illustrates Miss Adams' power to move us with the gentle strangled passion of desolation as "Bird and Bosom — Apocalyptic." I shall close with this exquisite poem:

Turning within the body, the ghostly part
Said, When at last dissembling flesh is riven,
A little instant when the flesh is cast,
Then thou most poor, steadfast, defeated heart,
Thou wilt stay dissolution, thou thus shriven,
And we be known at last.

This holy vision there shall be:
The desolate breast, the pinioned bird that sings,
The breast-bone's whited ivory,
The bird more fair than phoenix-wings.
And hurt, more politic to shun,
It gentles only by its sighs,
And most on the forbidden one
Drop pity and love from the bird's eyes;
And what lips profit not to speak,
Is silver chords on the bird's beak.

Alas!
At the dream's end the ghostly member sad,
Before these walls are rotted, which enmesh
That bird round, is the sweet bird dead.

The swan, they say,
An earthly bird,
Dies all upon a golden breath,
But here is heard
Only the body's rattle against death.
And cried, No way, no way!
And beat this way and that upon the flesh.

Editorial Note

Originally published in *Poetry* 27, 275–279 (1926).

Léonie Adams Fuller (b. 1899) was an American poet.

Review of James Weldon Johnson,
The Book of American Negro Spirituals

The Book of American Negro Spirituals. Edited with an Introduction by James Weldon Johnson. Musical Arrangements by J. Rosamond Johnson. Additional numbers by Lawrence Brown. New York, The Viking Press, 1925; 187 pp.

The Book of American Negro Spirituals has now been before the public for several years and a *Second Book* has come to prove the popularity of the first. It is a deserved popularity, not wholly due to the present vogue of the spiritual on the concert stage but to the intrinsic merits of the book itself. Mr. Johnson is not a scientific student of music, he is an enthusiast who is fired with the desire to proclaim the beauties of Negro religious poetry and music to a white public sentimentally disposed, more or less, to agree with him. A laborious analysis and qualification of his views, expressed in a long and rather unnecessary preface, is hardly warranted, for the book is essentially an anthology, not a monograph.

That Mr. Johnson is a better lover of his folk than a dispassionate critic of its verse is evident. Consider the following passage (pp. 15, 16): "The white people among whom the slaves lived did not originate anything comparable even to the mere titles of the Spirituals. In truth the power to frame the poetic phrases that make the titles of so many of the Spirituals betokens the power to create the songs. Consider the sheer magic of [ten selected titles of spirituals] and confess that none but an artistically endowed people could have evolved it." Yet what could be more threadbare in the English poetic tradition than such titles – to quote but two of those that Mr. Johnson cites – as "Singing with a Sword in my Hand" or "Death's Goin' to Lay His Cold, Icy Hand on Me?" Does not Mr. Johnson know that death has been "laying his cold, icy hand" on generations of unfortunate whites? And if the point of the second title lies in the charm and naiveté of the "goin' to" and "on me," what is that but a point of silent conspiracy on the part of the whites to give the negro idiom the benefit of a charming and naive interpretation?

Mr. Johnson's enthusiasm also gets the better of his judgment when he says: "Among those who know about art it is generally recognized that the modern school of painting and sculpture in Europe and America is almost entirely the result of the direct influence of African art, following the discovery that it was art." I do not know how far back Mr. Johnson would date "the modern school of painting and sculpture in Europe and America," but surely even the most up-to-date interpretation of the phrase would hardly justify one in attributing to African wood-carving more than a part influence in the moulding of modern art tendencies. It is not necessary to overstate a case.

And so with Mr. Johnson's analysis of American Negro music. That the Negroes have a wonderful musical gift — or, what probably comes to the same thing in a practical sense, a rich musical tradition that goes back to the pre-slave days of Africa — is doubted by none. That a group of Jewish or Irish or Italian slaves, living in conditions precisely parallel to those in which the Africans evolved their Americanized culture, could have developed the spirituals and blues is all but inconceivable. It does not follow, as Mr. Johnson seems to think, that American Negro music is merely a carry-over of a specifically African tradition, that it owes little or nothing to the white man's musical stock in trade. The truth would seem to be far from simple and not at all easy to state either historically or psychologically. No doubt the African tradition as such was entirely lost, or nearly so, but in adapting themselves to the new environment the Negroes could not take over the hymnology of their masters without allowing certain deep seated habits of musical delivery to ring through. In spirit Mr. Johnson may be essentially sound but his formulation is certainly far too specific. It is simply not true, for instance, that the rhythms of American Negro music are African rhythms. The most that one can say is that they are European-American rhythms unconsciously modified by habits which require for their explanation a soil of forgotten African rhythms. In this, as in countless other cultural cases of a similarly complex nature, one may speak of a "predisposition," provided one is prudent enough to steer clear of commitments on the score of racial inheritance in a biological sense.

But I shall not rest content with stating my own opinion, which is perhaps only a bias. There has just come to hand, opportunely enough, an excellent article on *African Negro Music* in the first number of a new journal, edited by Diedrich Westermann, entitled *Africa, Journal of the International Institute of African Languages and Cultures* (January 1928; pp. 30–62). This article is by Erich M. von Hornbostel, probably the

most competent authority on primitive music that we have. As for the African background, the following citation will be significant: "In African music, three features stand out above all others, and have been noticed and stressed accordingly by all those who have heard Negroes sing: antiphony (here understood to be the alternate singing of solo and chorus), part-singing, and highly developed rhythm." But as for the supposed continuity (I mean culturally, not merely psychologically) of American Negro with African Negro music, this is what von Hornbostel has to say: "The African Negroes are uncommonly gifted for music — probably, on an average, more so than the white race. This is clear not only from the high development of African music, especially as regards polyphony and rhythm, but a very curious fact, unparalleled, perhaps, in history, makes it even more evident; namely, the fact that the negro slaves in America and their descendants, abandoning their original musical style, have adapted themselves to that of their white masters and produced a new kind of folk-music in that style. Presumably no other people would have accomplished this. (In fact the plantation songs and spirituals, and also the blues and rag-times which have launched or helped to launch our modern dance-music, are the only remarkable kinds of music brought forth in America by immigrants.) At the same time this shows how readily the Negro abandons his own style of music for that of the European."

In another passage von Hornbostel states that "the gulf between African and European music" has proved to be so wide that any attempt at bridging it is out of the question. African, like any other non-European music, is founded on melody, European music on harmony ... African rhythm springs from the drummer's motions and has far outstripped European rhythm, which does not depend on motion but on the ear." Possibly there is something about the American Negro's swaying of head and body and the irregular balance of the right-hand beat against that of the left, which Mr. Johnson says is so essential to the production of the "swing" characteristic of the spirituals, that is derivative of the habits of the African drummer and dancer dominated by the spirit of the drum. If this is so — and it would require a pretty piece of research to prove it — we would have between African and American Negro music a connection on the plane of socialized motor habit, a far deeper and more elusive plane than that of specific cultural patterning. It would not be difficult to find analogies. Thus, in the speech of thousands of New Yorkers, not necessarily themselves Jewish, a sensitive ear may readily detect melodic contours that are plainly derivative of some

of the cadences peculiar to Yiddish, a language which may be utterly unknown to the speakers.

It is a great pleasure to turn to the songs themselves. Many of them, needless to say, are beautiful. It is hardly necessary in a review of this sort to do more than point to the nobility of feeling manifested in such songs as "Go down Moses" or "Swing low sweet chariot" or "Up on de mountain," which, simple and austere, is in the reviewer's opinion perhaps the most wonderful song in the book. Mr. Johnson would probably pick out "Go down Moses" as his especial favorite — and not without reason, though its melodic curve is of a more obviously acceptable nobility than the strangely elusive, long-breathed line of "Up on de mountain." Often the nobility of the songs is relieved by a delicately toying spirit, as in the case of "Somebody's knockin' at yo' do'" or, with more abandon, in "Who'll be a witness for my Lord?" or "Little David play on yo' harp." This spirit never degenerates into the vulgarity of jazz.

The settings, most of which are by J. Rosamond Johnson, are excellent. In the case of a number of the songs, such as "Somebody's knockin' at yo' do'," the musician has introduced just enough counter-rhythm in the accompaniment to bring out the latent rhythmic feeling of the song itself. But always with discretion. The settings hold close to the essential rhythmic quality of the songs and are done with a fine, musicianly tact.

Editorial Note

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Review of Clarence Day, *Thoughts without Words*

Clarence Day, *Thoughts without Words*. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1928.

"There are times," says Mr. Day, "when a man doesn't care to talk or write to his friends." There are indeed. Words, those chronic errand-boys of man, suddenly go leaden to the ear. We would have more lightning-footed messengers, capture some of that complex dispatch which does business for us in eye leaping to eye, in the involuntary slip of foot or hand, in all that by-play of intercourse which so often takes the words out of the mouth of speech, turning it into a belated, and not even an accurate, echo of its own intention. There is no doubt that our world of thought is a heavily verbal one. But why should the tracks of words, running in endless mazes from ear to ear, be endlessly rehearsed?

Words, and therefore thoughts, have been lit up in the forge of society with the kaleidoscopic comment of revealing motion and poise. This comment is far from self-explanatory in a purely physical sense, it is all of words and more — unspoken. The gesture accompanying "Mark my words" (see page 74 of Mr. Day's book) is a significant message only, or primarily, in so far as it can be glossed as "Mark my words"; it is probably not a "universal" token in that vaster world in which words are not even a nuisance, for there they are not at all. In this world, which is naturally that of the artist pure and simple, belong pictures of an honest-to-goodness cat, however abbreviated as to line, or of a woman holding a child, or, for that matter, a checkerboard design. Such pictures can, of course, be verbified too, and the less purely aesthetic one's reaction, the greater will be the tendency to so verbify, but they do not require the explicit comment of formulated, word-bound thought.

Mr. Day's excellent fooling in line does require just such comment, and he is far from spoofing us when he remarks, "Some writers may object that they cannot draw. Neither can I. But it isn't works of art that we're speaking of; it's merely picture-writing." Only, to be complete, Mr. Day might have added, "picture-writing in a style that clamors for a

verbal interpretation." And, on second thought, this is probably what he means when he remarks, "All that any one needs is a legible style." The title of the book is correct, therefore, only if it is understood to mean "To-be-verbalized thoughts, with only such actual words vouchsafed as one needs to get on to the draftsman's notions." Frequently the interpretation of word and drawing is complete and satisfying, as in "The resurrection of Mrs. Eliza Bainwick Kelly, as imagined by herself" (p. 79). Such a picture may be said to be word-saturated. If there were no such word as "resurrection" in our language, with all that it connotes of American theosophic speculation against the background of a decayed meeting-house ideology, the picture would be all. Just as elaborately buzzing with verbal overtones is the colloquy of Original Sin and Mr. Chitt (p. 81). Again, the title "Chivalry" (p. 54) would barely make the picture come off, but the whimsical rhyme,

To rescue a damsel in distress
Is an absolute rule of the old noblesse,

quickens our whimsical zest, shoves the poor fellow in the scowl-like rowboat a perceptible couple of paces toward the quarter of the horizon sacred to Don Quixote, and, all in all, lets us in for quite a bit of social philosophy. Now and then Mr. Day's imagination advances to purely evocative line, as in the benign, circumambient mysticism of "The Egg" (p. 6), or in the rollicking, sliding abandon of the men's legs in "The Spinster" (p. 18), or in the world-old concern in the Dryad's father's face (p. 28).

This book of drawings and rhymes is an excellent thing to have and to pore over at odd moments of an evening. There is much philosophy in it, but the philosophy is not too maliciously keen. Humor healthily outweighs wit. The sort of sophisticate for whom *Thoughts without Words* is intended is not of the enraged type; rather is he of that wisely tolerant category which, one knows, is destined to come to fruition in our country when the exotic, analytical savagery of the current European intelligence shall have nibbled all along the roundness of our original bonhomme sufficiently to carve it into a shape not unworthy of a true culture. Mr. Day guarantees for us that our America, over which so many intelligent New Yorkers shake their heads, is neither decaying nor exploding. It is good to know there are people as sane as he.

Editorial Note

Originally published in *New York Herald Tribune Books* 4, xii (1928).

Review of Knut Hamsun, *The Women at the Pump*

Knut Hamsun, *The Women at the Pump*. Translated from the Norwegian by Arthur G. Chater. New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 1928.

This novel lacks the strong grain and the intensity of *Growth of the Soul*, but it displays once more Hamsun's superb mastery of Norwegian small-town types and daily talk. The plot is not so much a plot as a skillful accumulation of episodes, or hints for a number of plots, built around sundry firmly conceived, though by no means elaborately drawn, characters. In the earlier portion of the book the episodic technique, accentuated by Hamsun's chatty, sardonic whimsicality, lulls the reader into a certain undemandingness as to structure. But as the story rounds to its own particular kind of climax, at once casual and wilful, the reader is suddenly confronted by a well planned, retrospective picture in which the loosely assembled story is in the background, while the characters are the subject.

Hamsun is nothing if not a portraitist. But his people — and herein lies his peculiar excellence — are not so much insets in life as autonomous existences which by their secret and necessary hostilities create life, with its deceptive smoothness of texture. This means that Hamsun, for all his apparent realism, is at heart an anti-cultural romantic, ever creating the light in which he sees his people out of the heat of his own none-too-carefully-masked loves and angers. It is strange and refreshing in this day to experience a writer who is romantic and dogged, stubborn, not romantic and soft. If to be "modern" is to be yielding but callous, Hamsun is no modern.

Editorial Note

Originally published in *The New Republic* 56, 335 (1928).

Knut Hamsun was the pseudonym of Knut Pedersen (1859–1952), Norwegian novelist, poet, and dramatist; he was awarded the Nobel Prize for Literature in 1920.

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Index

- Abstraction, see Methodology
Abyssinia, 502
Acculturation, 200, 246–48, 328, 596, 612–13
Adams, James Truslow, 955–57
Adams, Leonie, 1023–25
Adams, Samuel Hopkins, 991–97
Adaptation, 399, 473, 496, 534, 573, 603, 613, 627 (see Individual adjustment)
Adler, Alfred, 316–17, 555, 622, 677
Aesthetics, 370, 426, 430, 460–61, 482–83, 493, 494–95, 524, 532, 534, 537–42, 552, 557, 588, 607, 627–28, 643 (see Art; Music; Literature)
Africa, 503, 665
African languages, 516
Agriculture, 499–500, 502
Aiken, Conrad, 964
Alaska, 508
Aldington, Richard, 931–32
Alexander, Franz, 345, 592, 601
Algonquian(s), 141
Algonquin languages, 516
Allport, Floyd, 147, 150
Allport, Gordon, 148, 201, 204–06, 234, 243
Alphabet, 360, 487, 500–02, 508 (see Language – orthography)
Altaic culture area, 506
Ambivalence, 225–26
America, 477, 483, 494, 500, 602
– society and culture, 423, 431, 467, 469, 482, 494–95, 535, 541, 542, 547, 575, 587, 594, 597–98, 602, 608, 612, 637, 663
American culture, critique of, 44, 57, 60–61, 178, 240, 269, 691, 709–10
American Ethnological Society, 507
American family, 299
American Negro, 95
American Psychiatric Association, 33, 147, 173
Amerindians, 477, 595
Analytical, 161
Anatomy of mind, 701
Anderson, John E., 174, 175, 183–84, 192, 201, 244
Anderson, William, 201, 204–06
Anecdote, 87
Anglo-Saxons, 540
– peoples and culture, 476, 477
Angyal, Andras, 410, 651
Animism, 140
Anthropogeographers, 481
Anthropology, autonomy of, 27
Anthropology, 391–92, 394–96, 433–37, 441–46, 448, 450–57, 459, 461–63, 468–475, 490–91, 497–99, 502–506, 512, 525, 545–48, 554–57, 580, 587, 593, 615, 623, 639, 655, 657, 658, 660, 662
Boasian –, 395–97
– compared with economics and linguistics, 615
– compared with history (discipline of), 608
– compared with psychiatry, 588–89, 615, 621, 624, 626
– compared with psychology, 580–81, 585
(see Archaeology, Ethnography, Ethnology)
–, term of, 92
Arab culture, 606
Arapaho, 114, 444
Arbitrariness of classification, 34
Arnold, Thurman W., 858–62
Art and artists, 47, 66–67, 301, 329–30, 433, 448, 450, 453, 467, 484, 493–95, 511, 528, 537, 539, 568, 587, 628, 633

- Navajo sand-paintings, 426
 Northwest Coast art, 521–22, 539
 (see Aesthetics)
 As-if personality, 73
 As-if psychology, 399, 591–603, 605–06,
 612–13
 Asia, 506, 511
 Athabascans, 104
 Athens, society and culture, 47, 68, 71,
 424, 597
 Attitude, 54, 64, 100, 140, 158
 Austen, Jane, 549
 Austen, Mary, 991–97
 Australia, aboriginal, 101, 104, 107, 114,
 256, 491, 499, 595–96
 Austria, 622
 Archaic, 285
 Arrow of experience, 370
- Babbitt, Ellen C., 976–77
 Bach, Johann Sebastian, 29, 537, 903
 Background, 61, 63, 94, 95, 126, 129, 173,
 180, 191, 216, 372
 Baker, N. D., 335
 Bantu, 114
 Barbeau, C. Marius, 913, 1009
 Beaglehole, Ernest, 252–53, 402, 406,
 408, 507, 650, 672
 Beaglehole, Pearl, 403
 Beck, Walter, 403, 408, 637, 649, 652
 Beethoven, Ludwig van, 538, 543, 576,
 901, 902, 904
 Behaviour, religious, 133
 Behaviourism, 156, 711–12, 719, 720
 Belief, 137, 140
 Bella Coola, 180, 539
 Benedict, Ruth, 21, 25, 44, 73, 343, 363–
 64, 367, 396, 399, 420, 507, 527, 591,
 593, 595, 600–01, 677
 Bennett, Arnold, 883
 Bentley, Madison, 327, 329–30
 Bergson, Henri, 577, 583
 Berlioz, Hector, 900
- Bias, 91, 313
 Bible, 508
 Bingham, 331
 Biography, 443, 444, 620, 656, 657
 Biology, 439, 441–42, 445, 447, 452–53,
 457, 461, 468, 470, 486, 510, 580, 628
 Biological needs, 482, 484, 494, 590
 Discipline of –, 446, 448, 504, 549, 659
 – of individual organism, 398, 433,
 436, 441, 482, 547–49, 552, 587, 618,
 627, 646, 655
 – vs. history, 472, 623
 Bjorkman, Edwin, 984–86
 Bismarck, Otto von, 568
 Blackfoot, 139, 150, 186, 505
 Blake, Francis, 327
 Blake, William, 575, 989, 1020
 Blatz, William A., 174, 189
 Blossoming (of culture), 61
 Blumer, Herbert, 174, 194, 343, 601
 Blurred distinctions, 77
 Boas, Franz, 21, 26, 30, 40, 99, 195, 255,
 280, 395–96, 487, 504, 508, 625, 677,
 816, 845–46
 Boas school 30, 32, 691
 Boasians, conflict among, 27
 Bodenheim, Maxwell, 962, 963–64
 Borderland fields, 328
 Borrowing, cultural, 432–33, 503 (see
 Diffusion)
 Bott, Edward, 201
 Bowman, Isaiah, 201, 235–237, 328
 Brahms, Johannes, 900
 Brill, Abraham Arden, 507
 British Association for the Advancement
 of Science, 529
 British Columbia Indians, 425–26
 Britten, Marion Hale, 327
 Brownell, Baker, 133
 Bull-roarer, 499
 Burgess, Ernest W., 147, 150, 174–75, 192
 Burns, Robert, 922
 Burrow, Trigant, 601

- Bushmen, 47
- Butler, Samuel, 577, 756–59
- Cabell, James Branch, 991–97
- Cadmus, 500
- Caesar, Julius, 620
- California, 488, 508, 524, 641, 651
– tribes, 104, 247
- California, University of (Berkeley), 402
- Calvin, John, 564
- Canadian Indians, 477
- Cannan, Gilbert, 759
- Capitalism, 484
- Captain of industry, 9
- Caribbean area, 402
- Carlson, Fred A., 487
- Carlyle, Thomas, 438, 608
- Carnegie, Andrew, 564
- Casamajor, Louis, 174, 175
- Cattaraugus, 508
- Cattell, J. McLean, 327, 689
- Caucasus, 473
- Celtic peoples, 471
- Chamberlain, Houston Stewart, 788, 816
- Chapin, Stuart, 201
- Chase, Stuart, 133
- Chauncey, Johnny John, 447, 499
- Chekhov, Anton Pavlovich, 430, 878
- Chesterton, Gilbert K., 909–12, 978
- Cheyenne, 505
- Chicago, city, 511, 602, 624
- Chicago, University of, 389, 392–93, 403, 404, 406–08, 413, 437, 527, 529, 530, 628, 629
– sociology, 100
- Children/childhood, 435, 447, 454, 472, 476, 495, 501, 511, 536, 548, 551–53, 555, 558–60, 567–70, 577, 595, 609–10, 619, 621–23, 638, 651, 658
- China, 403, 588, 598, 602
- Chinese society and culture, 85–88, 226, 256, 284, 304–05, 413, 423, 424, 431, 432, 506, 538, 543, 594, 596, 619, 673
– language, 540, 668
- Chinese language, 164
- Chitambar, Theodore P., 403, 408, 581
- Chopin, Frederic, 898
- Christianity (see Religion)
- Chukchi, 606, 619
- Civilization, 28–29, 32, 40, 48, 57, 324
- Class, social, 270–71, 422–28, 438, 483, 519, 571, 648 (see Social status, Social differentiation)
- Classification, principles of, 295
- Classification, unconscious, 297
- Claudel, Paul, 876, 877
- Clifford, Charles, 487
- Clinical psychology, 316
- Cobb, Stanley, 327
- Cohen, Morris R., 99
- Cole, Fay-Cooper, 133
- Coleridge, Samuel Taylor, 563, 577–78, 989
- Cologne cathedral, 512, 537
- Columbia University, 392
- Columbus, Christopher, 500
- Commodities, 368
- Community, 178, 260–61, 469, 594
- Comox, 529
- Complex whole, 40
- Complexity, 30, 44, 110, 112, 237
- Conceptual science, 37–38
- Condensation symbolism, 319, 321–22
- Confession, 183
- Configurative psychology, 81
- Confucian literature, 508, 540
- Congo, 478
- Conklin, Edwin Grant, 761–64
- Conrad, Joseph, 577, 883, 967
- Consciousness, 519, 534–36, 541, 547–52, 573, 597, 610, 627, 634, 636, 643–45
Self-consciousness, 429, 660
(see Unconscious)

- Consensus, 356–357
 Consumer, 273
 Control, 59, 60
 Controlling idea, 340
 Convention, 257
 Convergence, cultural, 698
 Cooke Smith, Anne, 402, 406, 408
 Cooley, Charles Horton, 677
 Cowan, William, 411
 Crazy Dog Society, 180, 182
 Creativity, 61, 63
 Cree, 402
 Creeks, 104
 Critical anthropology, 104, 219
 Criticism, spirit of, 65
 Crookshank, Francis Graham, 799–800
 Crystallography, 39
 Culture
 Acquisition of –, 609–10 (see Socialization)
 Analysis of –, 307, 348
 –, American, 750–52, 797, 818–32, 835–44, 855–57, 858–62, 863–66, 999
 – areas, 504–06
 – as program, 587, 689
 – as world of thought, 547
 Causes of –, 394–95, 456–57, 467–88, 489, 611, 620, 627
 Change in –, 396, 430, 445, 453, 468, 471, 474, 500, 503–04, 516, 531–43, 608–09, 611, 620, 628, 655, 661 (see Development; Progress; History)
 Complex, culture, 158
 Conceptions of –, 21, 24, 43–71, 77, 199, 256, 391–94, 396, 398–99, 401–, 421–39, 441–66, 468, 484, 489, 490, 496, 524–27, 546–47 (as world of thought), 588, 594, 600, 608, 610, 620, 628, 646, 655–57, 659–60, 689, 693
 Construction of –, 31
 Creative possibilities of –, 492, 494, 496–97, 586
 Cultural anthropology, 21–22
 Cultural pattern, language as, 24
 Cultural relativism, 44, 363, 365
 Cultural sentiments, 569
 Cultural theory, culturalists, 484, 585, 615–17
 ‘Culture and personality’, field of, 25, 209, 363–64, 410, 618, 655–59
 Definitions of –, 397, 421–39, 441, 451–57, 465, 484, 489–90, 496, 525, 547, 610, 620, 628, 647, 659–60
 Emergence of –, 400, 591, 610, 616–17, 628, 639
 Givenness of –, 310
 Growth of –, 309
 Homogeneity and internal variation in –, 397, 398, 421–28, 455, 469, 473, 476, 532, 545–47, 586, 603–04, 611, 617, 639–40, 643–44
 Inertia/conservatism of –, 477, 481, 498, 499, 512, 515–16
 Integration of –, 594
 Locus of –, 278, 281–82, 286, 288–89, 304, 397, 442, 445, 452, 455–56, 461, 547, 608, 628, 639, 643–44, 649, 657
 Opportunity for expression in –, 586, 598, 603, 606, 613, 615, 628, 647, 660
 Symbol, culture as, 26, 690
 Totality of –, 443, 525, 545, 547, 557, 586, 594, 610, 617
 Traits, elements, inventories of –, 26, 393, 395, 399, 410, 432–33, 467, 471, 478, 480, 489–510, 525, 526, 587, 592, 610
 Typology of –, 399, 594–98, 657 (see Patterns and configurations of culture)
 Cumulative tradition, 75
 Custom, 255–63, 265, 267
 Cycle of fashion, 268

 D’Annunzio, Gabriele, 578
 Dai, Bingham, 403, 408, 619, 649–51
 Dakota, 247
 – Farmers, 500

- Darnell, Regna, 403, 410
 Darrow, Clarence, 133, 392
 Darwin, Charles, 29, 700
 Davidson, John, 924
 Day, Clarence, 1030–31
 Debussy, Claude, 430, 438, 465, 869, 901, 906, 937, 939
 Defoe, Daniel, 578
 De la Mare, Walter, 933–34
 Dell, Floyd, 991–97
 Descartes, Rene, 563
 Detachment, 65
 Development
 – of individual, 439, 536, 555, 609–10, 619 (see Socialization; Childhood)
 – of culture, see Culture change
 Developmental cycles in culture, 532, 537–42
 Dewey, John, 563, 577, 677
 DeWitt, M. E., 853–54
 Dickason, Z. Clark, 147, 150
 Dickinson, Emily, 1001–06, 1020
 Dickens, Charles, 564
 Dictionary, 456, 465
 Diffusion, 106–107, 233, 497–500, 598
 (see Borrowing; Culture traits)
 Disharmony, 259
 Dixon, Roland B., 564, 582, 776
 Dobu, 593
 Dollard, John, 393, 651
 Dominicanian, Leon, 197
 Doolittle, Hilda, 941, 998–99
 Dorsey, George Amos, 444, 692, 719
 Dorsey, J. Owen, 353–55, 358
 Dostoevsky, Fyodor, 430
 Doukhobors, 250
 Draper, George, 147, 150
 Dream/vision, 90, 142
 Dreams, 587, 595
 Drift, cultural, 36, 78, 80–81, 83, 265, 762, 955
 Drift, linguistic, 234
 Duke University, 402
 Dummer, Ethel, 155, 677
 Dunlap, Knight, 720–21
 Durkheim, Emile, 138
 Dutch, 664–65
 Dyk, Walter, 174, 403
 Dynamic psychology, 277, 303, 317
 Eastman, Max, 887–89
 Economics, 394, 410, 423–27, 427, 460–61, 477, 481–84, 493–94, 496, 520, 564, 588, 614
 Coinage, 509–10
 Economic behaviour, 77
 Economic determinism, 394, 481–84, 494, 508
 ‘Economic man’, 367–68, 371, 410, 460–61, 482, 614
 Education, 403, 431, 436, 490, 493, 502, 536, 542, 553, 563, 627, 630 (see Socialization)
 –, American, 749–50
 Efficiency, 54
 Eggan, Fred, 401, 404, 408, 527
 Ego, 274
 Egypt, 501
 Einstein, Albert, 534, 576
 Elizabethan drama, 78, 212, 219
 Elliott, Thomas Stearns, 962
 Emeneau, Murray, 27
 Emotion, 339, 422, 423, 427, 429–30, 438, 450, 456, 472, 473, 498, 552–53, 567, 610, 617, 619, 649
 – and race, 473–74 (see Temperament)
 – and symbolism, 454, 456, 631–34, 363, 643–46, 649, 653
 Attachment to group, 470, 473, 486
 Emotional development, 555, 559, 609
 Feeling and thinking, 571
 ‘Feeling’ type of personality, 568–74, 577, 579–80, 597, 602
 Feeling vs. —, 571, 583
 Investment in activity/situation, 471, 570, 591

- Norms of emotional expression, 592
 Reaction to cultural pattern, 546, 588, 591
 Transference, 552, 555
 Encyclopedia of Social Sciences, 255, 265, 293, 313, 349
 England, society and culture, 413, 422–24, 476, 495, 501, 507, 538, 571, 597–98, 602, 612, 664, 666
 English
 – language, 441, 454–55, 476, 513–14, 516–17, 528, 540–41, 546, 627
 – race, 471
 – plural, 162–163
 Energy, 58
 Enrichment, 239
 Environment, 470, 474, 475, 477–81, 483, 488, 532–33, 559, 562, 564, 570, 580, 606, 613, 617, 624–25, 627, 638, 651
 – as symbol, 634, 638
 Cultural –, 569, 586, 590, 603, 613
 Cultural definition of –, 478, 617
 Eskimo, 58, 88–89, 104, 179–80, 183, 317
 – language, 428, 469, 626, 627
 – society and culture, 478–79, 487, 493, 501, 596, 597, 606, 619
 Ethics, 447–48, 464
 Ethnicity, 770–75
 Ethnocentrism, 449, 454 (see Methodology)
 Ethnography, 394, 410, 433, 485, 545, 590–91, 620 (see Anthropology; Ethnology; Methodology)
 Ethnology, 26, 432, 437, 449, 451, 455, 459, 478, 496, 497, 502, 512, 539, 543, 564, 619–20, 647
 English school of –, 504
 Kulturkreis school of –, 527
 (see Anthropology; Ethnography)
 Etiquette, 240, 323, 393, 434, 367, 493, 586, 606, 647–49
 Etruscans, 533
 Eugenics, 28, 470, 761, 800–02, 817
 Europe, 506, 541, 564, 573, 588, 590, 596, 612, 622, 623 (see Western Society)
 Everyday (behaviour), 244
 Evolution, 37, 92, 470, 504, 531, 623, 700
 Evolution, critique of, 101–05, 338
 Evolution, social, 28, 100, 338
 Evolution, social vs. organic, 28, 30
 Exotic, purveyor of, 24, 173, 256, 309, 349, 364
 Exotica, 44, 67
 Experimental irresolvability, 37
 Experimentation, 119, 175, 711
 Extravert, extraversion, 85–91, 559–65, 579, 582, 594–97, 649, 714–18 (see Introvert; Personality)
 Family relations and kinship, 105–06, 424, 425, 429, 438, 474, 493, 499, 503, 535, 555–56, 559, 586, 609, 622–23, 632, 636, 659
 Fancy, 236, 239, 259, 696
 Fantasy, 271, 360, 380, 690
 Fashion, 258, 265–74
 Faulkner, William, 379
 Feeling, 163, 222
 Feeling-tone, 47
 Ferrero, Leo, 403, 408, 543, 599, 601, 636
 Fetishism, 14
 Fichte, Arthur Davison, 981
 Fiction, 695
 Field, Henry E., 174, 194
 Field ethnographies, 692
 Fieldwork, 186–188, 277
 Finck, Henry T., 898–901
 Finland, 410, 636
 Finot, Jean, 802
 Fire-making, 472, 532–33
 Flugel, John Carl, 677
 Folk cultures, 296
 Folk songs, French Canadian, 913–14, 1009–17
 Folk tales, 339
 Food and cooking, 429, 452, 478, 479–80, 489, 493, 494, 510, 602, 635, 648–49

- Ford, Guy S., 201, 235, 243
 Ford, Henry, 564
 Form
 — and function, 477, 491–93, 507, 512, 518–19, 528, 541, 626–27
 Cultural —, 45, 109–11, 159, 394, 436, 476, 479, 483–84, 491, 510, 524–25, 538–41, 547, 565, 581, 586, 588–89, 592, 627–28
 Development of —, 537–38, 628
 Ideal —, 429, 433
 Linguistic —, 396, 454, 476, 493, 513–19, 524–25, 528, 540–41, 626–27
 — of behavior, 399, 429, 435–36, 444, 462, 489, 491, 510, 515, 547, 649
 — of symbols, 398, 644
 Formalism, 53, 84
 Formality, 429, 589
 Foster, Michael K., 411
 Foy, Karl, 489
 France, Anatole, 577, 892, 945–49
 France, society and culture, 403, 413, 429, 430, 438, 598, 602, 612, 664
 Franklin and Marshall College 402
 Frank, Lawrence, 147, 149, 174–75, 187–88, 200–03, 206–08, 227, 229–30, 235
 Frazer, Sir James, 354, 504, 508
 French culture, 51–52, 84–85
 French language, 515–16, 541
 Freud, Sigmund, 152, 281, 292–93, 313, 316–17, 346, 400–01, 409, 420, 275, 555–56, 559–60, 566–67, 578–79, 581, 584, 621, 628–29, 677, 690, 692, 695–98, 699–701, 705–06, 708–09, 715, 725–26
 Friday Night Club, 404, 408, 420, 618–19, 662, 673
 Frost, Robert, 923, 935–37, 944, 980
 Function, 50, 58, 74, 100, 109–11, 159, 396, 475, 491–97, 501, 507, 512, 518–19, 525, 570, 646, 661
 — as cultural purpose, 494–97
 — as meaning in language, 513, 528
 Jung's 'functional types', 565–79, 597
 — of language, 626–27
 Physiological —, 435, 452, 621
 Psychological —, 475, 477, 408, 579, 582, 624–25, 627
 Functionalism, 435, 461, 462, 466, 480, 507, 525, 543, 691
 Gagnon, Ernest, 1010
 Gale, Zona, 528, 991–97
 Galton, Francis, 28
 Gandhi, Mohandas, 597
 Geist, 428–30, 438
 Geneva, 403
 Genius, incidence of, 29
 Genius, of a nation, 46, 50–51
 Genuine culture, 43–71
 Geography, 394–95, 442, 447, 466, 473, 477, 479–81, 499, 502–06, 613, 645, 652 (see Environment)
 Geological Survey of Canada, 689
 Geology, 38
 German
 — language, 515–17
 — philosophers and scholars, 428, 622
 — society and culture, 403, 410, 428, 431, 436, 438, 622, 652
 Gesell, Arnold, 174–175, 192, 244
 Gestalt psychology, 155, 693
 Gesture, 169, 435–36, 445, 453, 487, 510, 580, 600, 634–35, 637, 644, 647, 651
 Ghost Dance, 606
 Gierlichs, Wilhelm, 410
 Gilman, Charlotte Perkins, 133
 Glueck, Sheldon, 147, 150
 Gobineau, Arthur de, 788, 802, 816
 Goethe, Johann Wolfgang von, 431, 978, 899
 Golden bough, 375
 Goldenweiser, Alexander, 27, 31–32, 99, 195, 677, 691
 Gorky, Maxim, 430
 Gothic language, 540

- Gourmont, Remy de, 433, 438
 Gounod, Charles Francois, 903
 Graebner, Fritz, 489, 498, 500, 505, 507, 509–10, 527
 Grainger, Percy, 869–75, 899
 Grammar, 307
 Grant, Madison, 816
 Greek
 – ideal, 428
 – language, 428, 540, 626
 – society and culture, 480, 500, 532, 535, 537, 548–49, 597
 Green Corn Festival, 447
 Grieg, Edvard Hagerup, 899
 Grimm, Jakob, 503
 Group, 293–301
 Group psychology, 300
 Groves, E. R., 148
- Habit, 70, 80, 218, 257–58, 328
 Habitual behaviour, 91
 Haida, 103, 106–07, 109, 111, 114–15, 147, 179, 539
 Haile, Father Berard, 26
 Hallowell, A. Irving, 27, 327, 332–33, 410
 Halvorsen, Henry, 403, 408, 649, 650
 Hamilton, G. V., 92, 94–95
 Hamsun, Knut, 1032
 Hankins, Frank H., 99, 816–17
 Hanover Conferences, 73, 199, 396, 404, 409–10, 581, 582, 601, 662
 Harcourt, Alfred, 23, 389, 390, 403, 410, 413
 Harris, Zellig, 390, 410
 Hart, Bernhard, 227–28, 677
 Harte, Bret, 582
 Harvard University, 402, 403, 564
 Hauptmann, Gerhart, 876
 Haviland, C. Floyd, 175
 Hawkins, Sir John, 664
 Hayden, Joseph, 537
 Hays, Carlton, 201, 241–43, 335
 H. D. (see Doolittle, Hilda)
- Healy, William, 148–149, 174, 184
 Heine, Heinrich, 922
 Hem lines, 269
 Heredity, 433, 436, 441, 452, 454, 506, 552, 559, 580, 581, 607
 Hergesheimer, Joseph, 991–97
 Herrick, Robert, 991–97
 Herskovits, Melville, 133, 246
 Herzog, Elizabeth, 390, 401, 410
 Herzog, George, 390
 Hill, Dorothy, 403
 Hill, Willard W., 402, 403, 406, 407
 Hincks, C. M., 201–02, 235
 Hindu culture, 85–88, 317, 413, 431, 432, 565, 569, 596, 602 (see India)
 Hindu yogi, 158
 Historical
 – conditioning and determinism, 435–36, 448, 450, 472–75, 477, 481, 483, 491, 593, 608, 623, 636, 661
 – development and change, 432, 487, 500, 536, 547, 618
 – inference, 22
 – particularism, 30
 – reconstruction and interpretation, 459, 498, 500–03, 509–10, 547, 615
 – spirit, 65
 History, 29, 32, 38
 – and sense of time, 431, 476, 531, 587, 596
 – as contingency, 428, 458, 498, 500–01
 – as continuity, 433–34, 436, 441–43, 451, 453–54, 501, 541
 – as cultural strata, 505, 510
 – as particulars, 432, 442, 452, 458
 – as scholarly pursuit, 565, 574, 608, 628
 – ignored by psychologists, 475 (see Culture, change in)
 Hitler, Adolf, 483
 Hoijer, Harry, 27
 Holt, Edwin B., 600, 619, 677

- Homer, 548
- Homosexuality, 95
- Hopi, 106, 114, 139, 187, 247
- Hopkins, Gerard Manley, 950–54
- Horace, 422, 428
- Hornbostel, Erich M. von, 869, 1027–28
- Hottentots, 429, 467, 626, 665
- Houseman, Alfred Edward, 987–90
- Hugo, Victor, 430
- Human nature, 483, 484, 614, 621, 623
- Humanistic tradition, 44–45
- Humor, 511, 587, 602, 607–08
- Hunch, 86, 91, 96, 151
- Hungary, 410
- Hunter, W. S., 332
- Huntington, Charles Clifford, 487
- Huntington, Ellsworth, 477, 487
- Hupa, 141, 524
- Hysteria, 178–179
- Ibsen, Henrik, 576, 582
- Iconoclasm, 62
- Illusion, 77, 161, 212, 725
- Imaginary [cultural] groups, 338
- Immigrants, 611–13
- Impact of culture on personality, 21, 200, 203, 206, 248, 255
- Impersonal, 279, 282
- India, 402, 403, 431–32, 488, 506, 596 (see Hindu culture)
tribes of —, 107
- Indigenous language labels, 22
- Individual, 394, 621, 655
— adjustment, 394, 399–400, 431, 434, 445, 452, 472, 483, 496, 533, 535, 545–46, 553–55, 559, 561–63, 566–71, 573, 578, 586, 592–94, 603–20, 623, 658
— and relationships with other individuals, 391, 400, 434, 444, 446, 461–62, 493, 535, 546–47, 588, 590–91, 593, 604–05, 615–17, 628, 642–43, 647, 657, 660
— and society, 397, 400, 433–34, 445, 469, 472, 493, 535, 545, 547, 550–51, 553–55, 557, 580, 585, 601, 603–20, 636, 642–43, 645, 647, 652, 659, 662
— and symbolism, 400, 471, 656, 642–43 (see Symbolism personal)
— as bearer of culture 444, 475, 487, 545, 547, 551, 594, 616, 657
— as starting point for cultural analysis, see Methodology
— as world of thought, 547, 616, 656
— creativity, 399, 401, 453, 475, 498, 588, 658
- Cultural basis of individual's experience, 586–89, 636
— development, 493, 532 (see Education; Socialization)
Influence on culture, 401, 433, 453, 475, 487, 593, 606–08, 611, 628
Psychology of —, 396, 398, 445, 447, 525, 531, 592, 593, 603–20, 628, 655 (see Personality, Psychology)
- Individualism
Cultural —, 467, 476, 480, 548
Methodological —, 410, 660, 662 (see Psychology as 'cause' of culture)
- Individuality, 228
- Indo-European, 501, 517
- Industrialism, 47, 55, 270
- Inertia, 57, 82
- Informants, 392, 458, 545
- Innovation, 267
- Instinct, 704–07
- Institute of Juvenile Research, 175
- Intelligence, 471–73, 475, 498, 568, 571, 607
- Intensification, 58
- Interaction, (see Social interaction)
- Interactional psychology, 277
- Inter-correlation, 245
- Interdisciplinary, 147, 150, 155–56, 175, 200, 255, 278, 367
- Interest, 294, 298, 304–06, 324
- Internationalism, 68–69, 113, 241, 243
- Interpersonal relations, 33, 41, 343–44, 351, 400, 591, 616–17, 660 (see Social

- interaction: Individual and relations
 with other individuals)
 Interpretation, multiple, 296, 309, 343, 346
 Interpretive anthropology, 108
 Intimacy, 181–182, 188–189
 Introspective/introspection, 711–12, 720
 Introvert, Introversion, 85–91, 399, 432,
 438, 559–67, 578–80, 582, 594–96,
 649 (see Extravert; Personality), 714–
 18
 Intuition, 161, 164, 191, 216, 274, 511, 513,
 573–77, 579, 597, 695
 Iowa farmers, 512
 Irish, 500, 508
 Irony, 48, 376–77
 Iroquoian society and culture, 104, 111,
 114, 508
 Ishikawa, Michiji, 410
 Islam (see Religion)
 Italy, 210, 403, 505, 538, 588, 636, 664

 Jacob, Cary F., 920–21
 Jaffe, Abram, 601
 James, Henry, 577
 James, William, 577
 Japan, 410, 483, 503, 506, 588, 594, 598
 Javanese, 664
 Jeffers, Robinson, 377, 430
 Jensen, Johannes V., 767–68
 Jerusalem Center for Anthropological
 Studies, 403
 Jespersen, Otto, 197
 Jews, society and culture (see Religion –
 Judaism)
 Johnson, Alvin, 255
 Johnson, J. Rosamond, 1029
 Johnson, James Weldon, 1026–29
 Johnson, Samuel, 569
 Jones, Rufus M., 134
 Joyce, James, 550
 Judaism, American, 753–55, 804, 808–
 09, 810–15 (see Religion)
 Judd, Charles H., 202
 Judgment, 123–24, 210, 222, 355, 374
 Jung, Carl Gustav, 74, 152, 160, 313, 316–
 17, 398–99, 409, 417, 420, 555, 559–
 84, 594, 597, 598, 600, 601, 603–04,
 622, 677, 691, 692, 699–700, 714–18
 Jutes, 471
 Kantor, Jacob Robert, 677
 Kardiner, Abraham, 25
 Keats, John, 575, 577–78
 Kemal, Ali, 403, 408, 618
 Keesing, Felix, 247
 Kelley, Truman L., 92, 95, 174–175, 191
 Kempf, Edward J., 148
 Keppell, Frederick P., 201–02
 Key terms, 327
 Kilmer, Joyce, 950
 Kilpatrick, William, 99
 Kinship (see Family)
 – terminology, 424
 Kipling, Rudyard, 564, 578
 Klamath, 503, 508
 Kline, George M., 148, 175
 Klineberg, Otto, 252–53
 Kluckhohn, Clyde, 40
 Knight, Frank H., 148–49
 Koerner, Konrad, 411
 Koffka, Kurt, 155, 398, 527, 677, 693
 Koran, 508
 Korea, 506
 Kreisler, Fritz, 467
 Kretschmer, Ernst, 473–74, 487, 677, 816
 Kretschmer, Otto, 315
 Kroeber, Alfred, 26–41, 45, 195, 255, 265,
 303, 327, 329, 397, 399, 410, 467, 660,
 662, 677, 689
 Krzyzanowski, Jan, 410, 651
 Kultur, 43
 Kulturkreis school, 527
 Kwakiutl, 110, 114, 593, 625

 LaBarre, Weston, 402, 404, 406, 408, 411,
 662, 672
 Labels, value attached of, 47

- Lagerlof, Selma, 983
- Lamb, Charles, 799
- Lang, Andrew, 807
- Language, as exemplar, 208
- Language, origin of, 321
- Language, 441, 450, 468, 476, 487, 493, 498, 513–19, 524–26, 528, 531, 540–41, 563, 578, 626–27, 638–41
- Accent in –, 441, 612, 645
- Acquisition of –, 476, 640
- and emotion, 454–55, 569, 626, 644–45
- and nationalism, 750–51
- as example of culture, 396, 448, 454–56, 491, 498, 503, 512–19, 546, 660
- as symbolic system, 398, 456, 479, 487, 491, 513, 518–19, 580, 626, 633, 639–41, 632–45
- as verbalization of thought, 562, 569, 576, 596
- Configuration/pattern in –, 454–56, 513–19, 526, 528, 596, 626–27, 645
- Continuity and change in –, 441, 463, 476, 487, 498, 500, 503, 515–16, 543, 615, 617, 627–28, 640
- Conversation, 396, 400, 434, 511, 617, 620, 637 (see *Social interaction*)
- Function of –, 626–27
- Grammar, 396, 456, 469, 476, 513–19, 524–25, 528, 540, 615, 526–27
- Lexicon, 396, 421, 434, 443–44, 450, 454, 465, 490–92, 499, 500, 504, 511, 513–14, 519–20, 526–29, 562, 580, 637, 639–40
- No correlation with race, 468
- Orthography, 477, 511, 596, 602, 643–45, 652 (see *Alphabet*)
- ‘Psyche’ of –, 476
- Simplification in –, 476
- Social evaluation of usage, 446, 636
- Sound system in –, 434, 356, 458, 513, 516–18, 528, 580, 596, 614–15, 636–37, 640–41, 643–45
- Speech errors, 615
- Standardization of –, 429, 626
- Style in –, 580
- Translation, 491, 513
- Uniqueness of –, 162, 689
- Variation in –, 487, 503, 580, 637, 641, 652
- (see *Linguistics*, *Literature*, *Meaning*, *Symbolism*)
- Language psychology, 119
- Lasswell, Harold D., 24, 173–75, 177–79, 185, 188, 353, 367
- Latin language, 428, 514, 531, 540, 557, 569
- Lauder, Harry, 228
- Laufer, Berthold, 664, 672
- Law, sociological, 39–40
- Lawrence, David Herbert, 950
- Le Bon, Gustave, 28
- Levy, David, 175, 186, 192
- Levy-Bruhl, Lucien, 196, 400–01, 417, 420, 624–26, 628–30
- Lewis, Wyndham, 826, 848
- Lewisohn, Ludwig, 810–15
- Liberia (Gweabo), 208, 219–20
- Library of Congress, 403
- Life history, 32, 273–74, 185, 190
- Linguistic behaviour, 128
- Linguistic Institute (Ann Arbor), 389
- Linguistic relativity, 208
- Linguistic usage, 258
- Linguistics, 396, 403, 455, 460, 512, 580–81, 614–15, 626–27, 860–61 (see *Language*)
- Linton, Ralph, 202, 246
- Lippert, Julius, 499, 508
- Liszt, Franz, 900
- Literalness, 696
- Literary suggestiveness, 349
- Literature, 422–25, 427, 441, 484, 540–41, 564, 568, 577–78, 598, 630
- Chinese –, 423
- English and other European –, 539, 548, 563–64, 575–78

- Nootka —, 503
 Persian —, 568, 573
 Tibetan —, 541
 Tradition of —, 541
 Written vs. unwritten —, 427
 (see Poetry)
- Lloyd, George David, 577
 Localism, 68
 London School of Economics, 402
 Longshoremen, language of, 209
 Lowell, Amy, 930, 932, 959
 Lowes, John L., 578
 Lowie, Robert H., 26, 30, 45, 99, 196, 255, 677
 Lowrey, Lawson G., 175, 181
 Luria, 205
 Luther, Martin, 564
 Lynd, Robert, 202, 242, 251
- MacDowell, Edward Alexander, 869, 900
 Machen, Arthur, 583
 Madagascar, 665
 Maeterlinck, Count Maurice, 876, 877
 Magic, 624
 Maki, Niilo, 410, 636, 641
 Maladjustment, 57, 191, 204
 Malinowski, Bronislaw, 196, 328, 400–01, 420, 439, 492, 555–56, 619, 626–27, 629–30, 846
 Mana, 141
 Mandelbaum, David, 21, 23, 27, 278, 344, 390, 402, 404, 406–08, 410, 411, 420, 630, 662, 672, 675, 678
 Mann, Albert R., 202
 Marjolin, Robert, 403, 408, 635–36, 649–51, 661
 Marlowe, Christopher, 539
 Mars, observer from, 168
 Masfield, John, 922–25, 967–69, 970
 Mask, 211
 Mason, William A., 955–57
 Master ideas, 280
 Masters, Edgar Lee, 876, 899, 959, 971–73, 974
 Mastery, 59, 66–67
 Mathematics, 114
 Matthew, gospel of, 90
 Matthews, Shailer, 92
 Maupassant, Guy de, 892, 918–19, 945–59
 May, Mark, 148, 150, 175, 201, 206, 327–328, 330, 601
 Mayo, Elton, 92, 94, 148, 601
 McClenaghan, Jean Victoria, 689
 McConnell, Francis J., 133
 McDougall, William, 677
 McGovern, William M., 133
 Mead, George Herbert, 343
 Mead, Margaret, 25, 27, 73, 343, 363–64, 399, 403, 420, 439, 507, 527–28, 591, 600, 601, 603–04, 620, 691, 846
 Meaning, 397–98, 423, 434–36, 450, 452, 456, 462, 485, 489, 494, 502, 505, 509–21, 525–26, 528, 532, 541, 547, 561, 585–86, 592, 609, 628, 657
 — as anthropologist's problem, 450, 485, 502, 615, 656
 — as subjective orientation, 547, 565
 Emotion —, 546, 551, 657
 — for groups of specific individuals, 462, 615
 — in language, 396, 456, 513–19, 526, 528, 580, 630, 643–46, 652
 — of symbols, 398, 642, 509, 526, 547, 631–54, 660
 Personal/private —, 462, 538, 561, 568, 608, 610–11, 615, 636, 638
 Social/cultural —, 423, 434–37, 452, 485, 489, 494, 608, 610–11, 615, 636, 638, 657
 Measures (quantitative), 431–32, 517 (see Statistics)
 Mecklin, John Moffatt, 485, 488
 Medical Society (Yale), 404, 408, 543, 662
 Medicine bundle, 142
 Mediterranean, 435, 473, 563
 Mekeel, Scudder, 247, 253

- Melanesia, 141
- Memory, 426, 438, 459, 466, 472, 548, 553, 617
- Mencken, Henry Lewis, 860
- Mendel, Gregor, 29
- Memomini, 247
- Mental functioning, 114
- Mental health, 367
- Mental life, 711
- Merriam, Charles, 73, 237
- Mesopotamia, 480, 500
- Metaphor, 40, 55, 61, 80, 84, 160, 309, 319, 344
- Methodology, 74–75, 391, 394, 397, 400, 441–46, 449–51, 491–93, 526–27, 545, 564, 593–95, 604, 647, 656
- Abstraction, 397, 443–46, 451, 454–55, 457–58, 467, 475, 485, 490, 545, 550, 561, 576, 610, 617, 656
- Case studies of child development, 610
- Comparison, 458, 467–70, 484, 491, 493, 499, 517, 538, 541, 566, 595
- Classifications, 458, 491–93, 504, 507, 510, 516, 559–60, 565–67, 586
- Confusing individual with group, 591–93, 602, 622
- Description, 493, 509, 590–91, 604
- Discovering pattern, 443–44, 450, 451, 454–55, 491, 511, 519, 524–25, 529
- Importance of context, 444, 509–12, 514, 517, 520, 526–27, 589–91, 600, 638 (see Symbolism – placement of)
- Indexes of traits and patterns, 395, 489–91, 493, 509 (see Culture traits)
- Influence of observer's preconceptions/personality, 449, 451–52, 459, 467, 482, 494, 499, 512, 525, 601, 611, 656–59
- Interpreting individuals' behavior, 588, 593 (see Individual; Personality)
- Methodological individualism, 367, 410, 660, 662 (see Psychology as 'cause' of culture)
- Psychological tests, 471, 565
- Relation with informant, 458, 545
- Situational analysis, 399–400, 458, 456, 462, 564, 588, 591, 616–17, 621, 638, 647, 652
- Starting from specific individuals, 399–400, 461, 493, 545–48, 604, 610, 615, 639, 656, 657
- Technical fallacy, 656
- Using native terms, 396, 450, 455, 491–92, 499, 503, 519
(see Statistics)
- Meyer, Adolph, 200, 202, 207, 230–34, 243, 327
- Milton, John, 598
- Minnesota, accent, 441
- Minnesota, University of, 402
- Missourians, 671
- Mixed type, 38
- Modern life, 144
- Modernism, 62
- Mohave, 88, 595
- Mold, culture as, 51
- Money, role of, 216
- Monotheism, 804–09
- Montague, William P, 99
- Mores, 257
- Morgan, W., 253
- Moulton, Harold G., 92, 95
- Mozart, Wolfgang Amadeus, 903, 904
- Muhammad, 606, 619
- Murphy, Gardiner, 201, 205, 207
- Murray, Gilbert, 766, 975
- Murray, H. A., 327
- Museums, 65, 504, 643
- Music, musicians, 438, 447, 467–68, 486, 493, 495, 498, 528, 537–38, 553, 568, 576, 589, 607, 628, 645, 663, 666–71
- Chinese –, 538
- European –, 430, 438, 537–38, 576
- Jazz, 503, 537–38
- Navajo chants, 426–27
- Nootka songs, 516, 519–22
- , representative, 902–08

- Mussolini, Benito, 483, 607
- Mythology, 425, 502-04, 508, 521, 596-97, 601
- Nagas of Assam, 108
- Napoleon, 35, 550, 605
- Nass River Indians, 529
- Nation, nationality, 119, 470, 505, 564, 569, 632, 644
- National character, 73
- National Museum (Washington), 403
- National Research Council, 303, 327, 618
- Nationality, 109
- Nationalism, 50-51, 68-69, 241, 432
- Natural man, 55
- Natural selection, 28
- Natural sciences, 443, 449, 457-58, 462, 485, 531, 534, 541, 576, 596, 610, 625, 646
- Navajo, 189, 204, 245, 247, 250, 253
 - language, 515-16
 - society and culture, 402, 426-27, 469, 471, 508, 593, 597
- Nazis, rise of, 355
- Neanderthal Man, 480, 532
- Neapolitan culture, 435
- Needs, emotional and aesthetic, 44
- Negroes, 474, 503, 628
- Neurosis, 451, 588, 606, 607, 613, 621-30, 644
- New countries, 61
- New Haven, 502, 575, 597
- New Zealand, 402
- Newman, Stanley, 132, 403, 406-07, 410, 527, 543, 583, 640
- Needs, economic, 170
- Nietzsche, Friedrich Wilhelm, 64, 563
- Nile Valley, 480
- Nootka, 112, 114, 141
 - language, 515-16
 - society and culture, 409, 416, 419, 499, 503, 516, 519-25, 527, 529
- Nordic peoples, 486, 501
- Normal curve (statistics), 472
- Normality, 210, 284-85, 365, 372
- Normans, 471, 500
- Norms for behavior, 399, 421, 456, 487, 591-93, 602
- North America, 503, 505
 Indians of -, 401, 413, 444, 474, 487, 503, 505, 508, 535, 587
 Languages of -, 403, 409, 515, 528
- Northwest Coast Indians, society and culture, 243, 408, 425, 426, 438, 481, 504-505, 524, 529, 539, 606 (see Kwakiutl; Nootka; etc.)
- Norway, 403
- Nuclear family, 105
- Nuclear personality, 223
- Objective validity, 46
- Objective world, fixity of, 35
- Objectivity, 185, 203, 266, 306-07, 309, 330, 337, 355
- Observation, 160
- Oedipus complex, 555-56, 622
- Ogburn, William Fielding, 32, 45, 99, 255, 601, 677
- Ogden, Charles Kay, 409, 629, 630, 859
- Ogham, 501
- O'Higgins, 991-97
- Ojibwa, 135, 142
- Oklahoma Indians, 472
- Oldham, Joseph Houldsworth, 802-03
- Omaha, 103-04, 110, 114
- Organic, culture as, 64
- Organization, complexity of, 157
- Orientation, psychological, 63, 73-97
- Ottawa, Sapir Centenary Conference, 410-11
- Outhwaite, Leonard, 92, 95, 148, 153
- Oxford accent, 441
- Pacifism, 45
- Palestine, 403

- Palestrina, Giovanni Pierluigi da, 537
- Park, Robert, 147–49
- Park, Willard, 403, 410, 664–65, 672
- Participation (-observation), 238, 305
- Partridge, G. E., 148
- Paton, Stewart, 761–63
- Patterns and configurations of culture,
83–84, 394, 396–98, 401, 427, 431–33,
442–45, 447, 449–57, 465, 475–76,
478–79, 489–97, 500, 503, 506, 509–
30, 538–39, 542, 551, 558, 574, 585,
590, 593–95, 597, 600, 610, 624–25,
627–28, 631, 642–43, 645, 656–57,
660
- Accommodation as –, 612
- are like grammar, 524–25 (see Language – configuration in)
- as psychological problem, 475–76,
509, 551, 608, 660
- Classifications of –, 490–93
- Definition of –, 454–, 496, 512, 520,
524, 585
- Discovering –, 396, 442–45, 454, 491–
92, 518–19, 524–25, 529, 545
- influence personality, 560, 573, 588–
92, 605–20, 628
- must be felt, 545–46
- Native terms and –, 396, 450, 454–55,
491–92, 503, 511, 519
- Pattern of feeling, 112
- Psychological roots of –, 606
- Rebellion as –, 588
- Systematized by individual, 610
(see *Topati*)
- Perry, William James, 488
- Persia, 568, 573, 582, 664
- Persona, 151, 212, 215
- Personality, 123, 149–53, 173–74, 194,
208–27, 291–92, 313–17, 364, 433,
528, 545–58, 585–86, 602, 658–62,
712
- and symbolism, 588, 600, 615–16,
631, 639, 649, 657
- 'As-if personality' as normative stan-
dard, 399, 591–603, 605 (see *As-if*
psychology)
- as model or metaphor for culture,
398–99
- as organization, 399, 550–51, 555,
558–59, 561, 570, 600, 609, 615
- Concept of –, 396, 398–99, 433, 548–
54, 585, 600, 620, 655
- Conservatism in, 585–86, 661
- Cultural analysis takes precedence
over –, 589, 593, 602, 604, 659
- Cultural effect on –, 475, 483, 495–96,
586, 592, 603–20, 655–62
- differences (within group), 474, 560,
561, 587, 603–05, 613, 627, 649
- Genesis/formation of –, 550, 552–56,
559–61, 579, 586, 600, 604, 609–10,
656–58, 661
- influences culture, 400, 476, 498, 611,
628
- needs cultural definition, 475
- Patterns/configurations in –, 550–54,
556, 561, 585, 594
- Typology of –, 64, 399, 485, 554–55,
559–84, 594, 603–04, 619, 657–58,
718
- Peyote cult, 402, 606
- Pfister, Oskar, 401, 409, 629, 699–703
- Phoenicians, 500–01
- Physical types, 473–74
- Physiology, 434–36, 442, 445, 449, 452,
479, 491, 495, 548, 549, 622, 628, 655
- Physiology of mind, 701
- Piaget, Jean, 692, 722–24
- Pierce, Frederick, 708–10
- Plains Indians, 103, 107, 111, 137–39, 179,
181–83, 205, 245, 247, 328, 481, 499,
503–05, 525, 597, 606, 619
- Plant, James S., 175, 188
- Plasticity, 104, 188
- Plateau culture area, 488
- Poe, Edgar Allen, 951

- Poetry, 528, 538–39, 541, 563, 573, 575, 636, 639, 643, 646 (see Literature)
 –, American, 958–61, 999, 1001–06, 1007–08, 1019
- Poland, 410
- Political Science, 460, 505
- Politics, 422–23, 441–42, 447, 483, 511, 564, 624, 642, 646, 657
- Polynesia, 250, 252, 488, 648
- Polysynthesis, 164
- Population, 469
- Portugal, 664, 665
- Potlatch, 438, 499, 520–22, 525, 529
- Pragmatism, 111
- Pre-cultural child, 195, 315
- Preston, Richard, 402, 410
- Preuss, Konrad Theodore, 806
- Primitive, 58–59, 92
- Primitive folklore, 690
- 'Primitive mentality', 400, 621–30
- Primitive sociology, 100–03
- Private symbolism, 223–24, 290–92, 324
- Progress, 56, 468, 531–39, 541–42
- Projection, 100, 113
- Proust, Marcel, 554
- Psychiatry, 398–400, 404, 455, 459, 582, 592–93, 601, 615, 621–22, 629, 631
 – as approach to personality, 551–54, 585, 621
 – as source of theories in anthropology, 554–58, 593
 – ignores social/cultural factors, 588, 622–23
- Psychoanalysis, 462, 551–52, 554–55, 559, 561, 579, 621–24, 626, 633, 642–44, 657–58
- Psychoanalysts as pathologists, 621–22
- Psychological
 – 'authority', 566, 573
 – needs, 476–77, 479, 614
- Reality, 119
 – significance (see Meaning)
 – tests, 565
- Psychology, 38
 – as 'cause' of culture, 394, 461, 471–72, 475–77, 484, 498, 660, 662
 – as perspective on culture, 501, 505, 510, 516, 585–602, 652, 655, 660
- Behaviorist –, 449, 464–65, 556
- Conception of –, 396, 398, 401, 582, 594
- 'Cultural psychology', 592
- Developmental –, 435, 609–10 (see Children; Socialization)
- Discipline of –, 389, 391, 398, 400–01, 445–46, 448–49, 457, 460–62, 475, 477, 546, 565, 578, 581, 585, 622, 647, 655–56, 659, 660
- Freudian, 945–49, 953
- Generalizations about –, 422, 497, 593
- Gestalt –, 398, 510–11, 527–28, 552, 556, 600
- Individual vs. group –, 472, 591–98, 605, 655
- Quasi-psychology, 461, 462
- Social –, 461–62, 475, 556, 591, 608, 622, 641–43, 655–56
 (see Personality; Temperament)
- Psychology of culture, 25, 33, 363
- Psychology and psychiatry, 23, 689
- Psychosis, 471, 474, 562, 623, 629, 636
- Public intellectual, 15, 335
- Pueblo Indians, society and culture, 104, 110, 114, 139, 179, 205, 284, 438, 472, 505, 597, 606
- Pukapuka, 402
- Puritans, 495, 507, 619
- Qualitative, 173
- Race, 335–37, 394–95, 435, 468–75, 484, 487, 536, 559–60, 587, 618, 623, 628, 774–83, 784–86, 787–92, 794–97
 White –, 473–74
- Racial difference, 97
- Racial inheritance, 283

- Racial unconscious, 284
- Racism, scientific, 787–92, 799–800
- Radcliffe-Brown, Alfred Reginald, 439, 461–62, 466, 491, 507, 582
- Radical wing of anthropology, 363
- Radin, Paul, 27, 32, 196, 804–09
- Randomness, 75, 87
- Rank, Otto, 555
- Ray, Verne, 27, 403, 629
- Reactive system, 314
- Realism, literary, 876–79, 880–85
- Realistic psychologist, 227
- Reconciliation, 66
- Relativity, cultural, 452, 482, 525, 537, 657
- Religion, 133–145, 402, 441, 444, 448–50, 455, 458, 461, 489, 491, 493, 495–96, 539, 602, 606, 610, 624, 629, 642, 646
- Amerind —, 595
- and cultural comparison, 491
- and function, 475, 495–96
- as explanation, 470
- Christianity, 449, 464, 482, 498, 500, 502, 503, 531, 536, 563, 564
- Christian Science, 562, 606, 619
- Church and religious institutions, 422–23, 444, 448, 482
- compared with magic and science, 625–26, 630
- Ghost Dance, 606
- Islam, 506, 541, 606
- Judaism, 413, 424–25, 427, 483, 508
- Mystics, 572
- Navajo —, 426–27, 469, 593
- Peyote cult, 402, 606
- Puritan —, 495
- Scriptures, 424, 508, 564
- Spirituality, 430, 432, 531, 534–37
- Totemism, 519, 629–30, 632
- (see Hindu culture; Ritual)
- Renaissance, 65, 270
- Redfield, Robert, 200–201, 204, 248
- Referential symbolism, 319, 321–322
- Relativity, 216, 347
- Religion, 725
- Rheims, 535
- Rhyme, poetic, 886–90, 920–21, 922–25, 930–44
- Rhythm, 127, 158
- Rhythmic configuration, 113
- Rice, Stuart A., 202, 678
- Richards, Ivor Armstrong, 409, 629, 630, 859
- Rickert, Heinrich, 239, 429, 438, 457, 466
- Ritual, 58, 139, 143, 311
- and ceremonialism, 426, 471, 503, 516, 519–20, 521–24, 589, 593, 601, 609, 629–30, 635, 645
- , neurotic, 585, 644
- Rivers, W. H. R., 678, 691, 704–07
- Robespierre, Maximilien Francois M I de, 564
- Robinson, Edwin Arlington, 923–25, 958–61, 964, 978, 1007–08
- Rockefeller Foundation, 24–25, 200, 207
- Institute, 392
- Seminar, 392–93, 405, 408, 410, 543, 581, 599, 601, 618, 649, 650, 652, 659, 661
- Roheim, Geza, 491, 507
- Rolland, Romain, 876, 882, 891–97, 899
- Roman Catholic church, 11, 138
- culture, 620
- Roosevelt, Franklin Delano, 483
- Rouse, Irvin, 402, 406, 408
- Rouse, Mary Mikami, 402, 406, 408
- Rousseau, Jean-Jacques, 212, 548, 588
- Ruggles, Arthur, 148–149, 175
- Ruml, Beardsley, 201–202, 235, 238–241
- Russell, Bertrand, 133, 847–49, 850–52
- Russia, society and culture, 413, 430, 438, 664
- Sauntbury, George, 982
- Salmon-spearing, 55
- Samoa, 603, 822, 846
- Sandburg, Carl, 936–37, 952
- Sanskrit, 540, 596

- Sapir, Jean McClenaghan, 22, 390, 410
 Sapir, Philip, 410
 Saskatchewan, 477
 Saxons, 471
 Scale (of treatment), 288
 Scandinavia, 245
 Schlesinger, Arthur M., 202, 241, 243
 Schilder, Paul, 601
 Schiller, Ferdinand Canning Scott, 850–51
 Schmidt, Father Wilhelm, 489, 510, 527, 807
 Schizophrenia, 173, 182, 189
 Schubert, Franz Peter, 899
 Schumann, Robert, 901
 Science (see Natural science; Social science)
 Schnitzler, Arthur, 878
 Scriabine, Alexander, 939
 Secret societies, 110
 Selection, principles of, 36–37
 Self-consciousness, 31, 36–37, 95
 Seligman, R. A., 255
 Selznick, Philip S., 363–65, 409–10, 599, 601
 Semitic, 501
 Sentiment, 133
 Setzler, Frank M., 403, 406–07, 527, 543
 Shakespeare, William, 212–13, 430, 538–39, 548, 878, 961, 973
 Shaw, Clifford, 148–50, 181
 Shaw, George Bernard, 577, 877, 906–10
 Shelley, Percy Bysshe, 575
 Siemens, Hermann, 800–02
 Sierra Leone, 665
 Simpson, Mabel, 1020–22
 Sinaitic, 501
 Sioux, 141, 143, 253, 505, 515
 Siskin, Edgar, 403, 404, 406, 408, 409, 465
 Skepticism, 75
 Skinner, B. F., 465
 Slawson, John S., 175, 184
 Slight, David, 601
 Smith, Allan H., 410
 Smith, Anne M., see Cooke Smith
 Smith, Grafton Elliot, 480, 488
 Social
 – class (see Class)
 – construction, 485
 Definitions of –, 393, 433–34, 442, 445–49, 464, 620
 – determinism, 35
 – differentiation, 397, 469, 472, 560 (see Class; Topati)
 – infection, 356
 – inheritance and tradition, 48, 433, 441, 452, 453, 468, 487, 553, 562, 568
 – institutions, 525, 562, 612, 623, 637, 642
 – interaction, 398–400, 434, 461, 462, 553, 556, 615–17, 620, 628, 642–43
 – organization, 441–42, 447–48, 455, 458, 553, 572, 614, 615
 – psychology, 74, 462, 475, 556, 591, 608, 622, 641–43, 655–56
 – relationships, 400, 453, 535, 554, 615–17, 623, 628, 641–43, 647, 657
 – roles, 461, 548–50, 553, 587, 620
 – sanctions, 397, 434, 464, 498, 560, 568, 573, 576, 604, 607, 612, 614, 628, 647
 – science, 391–92, 394, 448–51, 453, 457–62, 485, 581, 582, 585, 592, 601, 610, 613–20, 656, 660, 662
 – status, 495, 503, 508, 519, 520, 548–51, 558, 644, 647–48, 659
 Social Science Research Council, 24, 73, 199, 328, 404, 409–10, 618, 662
 Socialization, 398, 403, 429, 434, 436, 442–45, 462, 554, 573, 594, 609–10, 624, 635–38, 651
 Social sciences, 27, 35, 40, 74–75, 99, 193, 239, 243, 248, 317, 345
 Social vs. individual behaviour, 156–159
 Society, 25–26, 29
 – as cultural construct, 397, 454, 616, 636, 652

- Concept of —, 393, 433–34, 442, 445–48, 449, 451, 454, 464, 550, 573, 594, 602, 616, 620, 636, 643, 652
 — in relation to culture, 393, 433–34, 442, 446, 448, 453–54, 557
 Sociology, 389, 400, 446, 447–48, 464, 507, 519, 550–51, 558, 561, 593, 601, 615, 656, 659, 660
 Solidarity, 74
 Solution, cultural, 55
 Sophistication, 56, 58, 62, 65–66, 112, 268, 364
 Sound pattern, 166–168
 Sound symbolism, 176
 South America, 503, 664
 Southern Illinois, University of (Carbondale), 402
 Southwest Indians, 505
 Spain, 664
 Spencer, Herbert, 28, 338
 Spengler, Oswald, 340, 429, 583
 Spier, Leslie, 23, 390, 409–10
 Spirit (of a culture), 83
 Spiritual maladjustments, 44
 Spiritual serenity, 135
 Stages, evolutionary, 48
 Stalin, Josef, 483, 558
 Standpoint, 48, 51, 62, 76, 81–83, 120, 137, 152, 167, 176, 190, 197, 220, 223, 240, 257, 289, 297, 323, 328, 360, 711–12
 State, 69–70, 109, 113, 505, 632
 Statistics, 100, 192, 372, 460, 462, 483
 Normal curve in —, 472
 Stevenson, Robert Louis, 578
 Strauss, Richard W., 335, 898–901, 906
 Style, 270
 Subcultures, 472
 — as specialization, 477
 Submerged configuration, 167
 Sullivan, Harry Stack, 24, 41, 73, 132, 147–48, 150, 173–74, 180–83, 194, 200, 203, 206–08, 228–30, 252–53, 277, 293, 327, 331–32, 343, 383, 367, 398, 400, 592, 601, 610, 616, 690, 693
 Sun Dance, 444, 619, 823–24
 Supermind, 74
 Superorganic, 22, 27–41, 278, 282, 293, 303, 327, 329, 368, 397, 445, 467, 660, 662, 690
 Survivals, 260, 379
 Sutherland, Edwin H., 201–03, 207
 Swadesh, Morris, 409, 528
 Swinburne, Algernon Charles, 951
 Symbol/symbolism, 84, 88, 100–01, 114, 124, 129, 133, 143, 189, 267, 319–24, 395, 465, 491, 526, 547, 574, 588, 600–01, 610, 615–16, 631–54, 656, 692
 — and social psychology, 641–43
 — as basis of economic need, 481–83
 Cultural —, 423, 588, 591, 600, 612, 646, 690, 691
 Culture as symbolic field, 496, 600, 646
 Food —, 479, 635
 — fills gaps in knowledge, 624–25
 Medium of interaction, 397–98, 400, 462, 469, 496, 590–91, 615–17, 638, 642, 660
 Objects as —, 489, 490, 522, 634, 637–38, 643 (see Technology and material culture)
 — of differences between peoples, 470, 486
 — of feelings, 570
 — of participation, 471, 549, 550, 605, 647
 — of prestige, 498, 503, 519, 647
 — of progress, 542
 — of psychological processes, 594, 602
 — of situation, 565
 Organization, integration, and structure of —, 399, 515, 541, 589–91, 610, 613, 633–34, 645–46
 Personal —, 551, 555–56, 588, 591, 607, 615–16, 634, 636, 642, 651
 Phonetic —, 583, 639–40

- Placement (contexts) of —, 455, 509, 511, 520, 589–91, 600, 612, 635, 638, 642, 646, 649, 652
 Psychoanalytic —, 623, 630, 632, 642, 644
 Signs and —, 634–35, 637–39, 651
 Social —, 400, 435, 436, 464, 553, 605, 615–16, 632, 634, 636, 638, 642–43, 649
 Symbolic equivalences, 452, 496, 509, 513, 518
 Typology of —, 634–46, 700
 Words and speech as —, 443, 454, 562–63, 620, 634, 637, 639–41, 643–45, 651, 652
 (see Language)
 Systems of ideas, 151
- Tagore, Rabindranath, 915–19
 Taste, 265
 Taylor, Lyda Averill, 402, 406, 408, 411, 557, 581, 599, 618, 619, 629
 Taylor, Walter W., 402, 404, 406, 408, 557, 581, 599, 618, 619, 629, 678
 Tchaikovsky, Peter Ilich, 430
 Technology and material culture, 397, 450–51, 458, 465, 469, 472, 478, 480, 483, 489, 493, 532–34, 537–38, 596, 624–25
 Teggart, Frederick John, 678
 Telephone girl, 55
 Temperament, 398, 473–75, 486, 602, 603, 627
 Teutonic tribes, 102
 Theory (by natives), 90
 Thomas, Dorothy S., 175
 Thomas, Edward, 980
 Thomas, William Isaac, 148, 155, 174–75, 179–180, 183–184, 192, 194, 200, 202, 204, 244, 248, 255
 Thorndike, L., 327
 Thurnwald, Richard, 533, 543
 Thurstone, Louis, 148, 150, 526, 530
 Tibetan, 541, 543
 Time perspective, 22
 Tipi, 481
 Tittle, Ernest F., 134
 Tlingit, 103, 112, 187
 Todas, 101, 284
 Tolstoy, Count Lev Nickolaevich, 52, 64, 430, 891–92
Topati ('privilege'), Nootka concept, 419, 519–25, 527, 529–30
 Totemism, 102, 115, 142
 Tozzer, Alfred M., 201
 Trade, 480, 511
 Tradition, 48, 257
 Training fellowships, 327
 Transfer, 112–113, 226
 Transference and transfer of attitudes, 427, 495–96, 552, 556
 Trobriand Islands, 555, 822, 846
 Trotter, Wilfred, 678
 Tsimshian, 103, 110, 539
 Turgenev, Ivan, 430
 Turkey, 403, 664
 Turkish-Altaiic, 506
 Twain, Mark, 985
 Two Crows, 353–59, 487
 Two Guns, Alice, 499, 508
 Tylor, Edward Burnett, 140–41, 196, 354, 433, 436–38, 441, 445, 464, 678
 Tylor, John M., 760, 762, 764
- Ugro-Finnic, 501
 Unconscious, 101, 115, 119, 129, 145, 216, 270, 322, 368, 519, 561, 574, 580, 587, 610, 623, 627, 634, 636, 639–40, 643, 644, 646, 653, 691, 699, 702, 704–07, 708
 — as unawareness of pattern, 443, 503, 519, 528, 546
 (see Conscious)
 — patterning, 155–72
 — symbolism, 125, 269
 — value, 281

- Unilinear evolution, 104
 Unit of analysis, 329
 United States, 469, 535, 575
 Universes of discourse, 373–74
 Untermeyer, Lewis, 978
 Ute, 402
- Validation, 82, 137–38
 Validity, 207
 Value, 47–48, 58, 83
 Value-behaviour, 206
 Values, 34, 37, 57, 63, 89, 114, 259
 Veblen, Thorstein, 678
 Vedic poetry, 508
 Vendryes, J., 197
 Verbalism, 96
 Vienna, 663
 Vinal, Harold, 1018–19
 Visions, 178–79
 Voegelin, Erminie, 402, 408
 Voltaire, Francois M. A., 430, 438
 Vygotsky, 205
- Wagner, Richard, 537–38
 Wallace, Alfred Russell, 29
 Wallis, Wilson, 27, 99
 Warfare, 81–82, 168, 480, 490, 493, 503, 521, 524, 535–36, 564, 590, 635, 636
 Ward, Lester, 28
 Warner, W. Lloyd, 327, 329–32
 Watson, John B., 150, 465, 475, 715, 719, 720
 Wealth, manipulation of, 170–72
 Webster, Henry Kitchell, 991–97
 Weinreich, Max, 410
 Wells, Frederick Lyman, 92, 94, 96, 148–50, 153, 690
 Wells, H. G., 764, 978
 West Coast Indians, 170–72, 331, 409, 425, 438, 529
- Western society, 427, 493, 699
 White race, 473–74 (see Race)
 White, William Alanson, 147–49, 153, 175, 991–97
 Whiting, Beatrice Blyth, 403, 406, 408
 Whitman, Walt, 541, 563, 899, 1002
 Wilde, Oscar, 946
 Wilson, Woodrow, 564, 880
 Wirth, Louis, 401–410
 Wissler, Clark, 133, 196, 247, 254, 255, 255, 327, 491, 502, 507, 525, 678
 Woodlands Indians, 481
 Woodworth, Robert S., 92, 95–97, 327, 332, 691, 711–13
 Word investigation, 176
 Word invention, 218
 Wordsworth, William, 563
 World of meanings, 278
 World War I, 69–70
 Wright, 228–29
 Wundt, Wilhelm, 477
 Wyatt, Edith Franklin, 991–97
- Yale University, 359, 392, 394, 402–08, 410, 437, 630, 671
 Yana, 164–66, 515, 517–18, 528–29, 641, 651–52
 Yiddish language and culture, 753–55
 Yoakum, Charles S., 92–93
 Yokuts, 403
 Young, Kimball, 148–49, 201–03, 205, 207
 Yuchi, 111
 Yuman, 595
 Yurok, 524
- Zionism, 812–15
 Zola, Emile, 876
 Zuni society and culture, 139, 465, 471, 601
 Zuni-Hopi, 106

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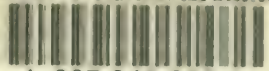
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