PERSONALITY AND CULTURE, THE SOCIAL SCIENCE RESEARCH COUNCIL, AND LIBERAL SOCIAL ENGINEERING: THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON PERSONALITY AND CULTURE, 1930–1934

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The field of personality and culture was given a significant impetus during the 1930s with the establishment of the Advisory Committee on Personality and Culture (1930–1934) by the Social Science Research Council. This committee provided an early formulation of personality and culture that emphasized the interdisciplinary focus on the processes of personality formation within small-scale social settings. The committee's formulation also coupled personality and culture with a liberal social engineering approach geared toward cultural reconstruction. Major social scientists and clinicians were involved in the activities of the committee, including Edward Sapir, W. I. Thomas, E. W. Burgess, E. A. Bott, Robert S. Woodworth, Harry Stack Sullivan, C. M. Hincks, and Adolf Meyer. © 2009 Wiley Periodicals, Inc.

The study of personality and culture exerted an enormous influence over the American social sciences—particularly anthropology and sociology—during the middle decades of the twentieth century. Its influence began to be felt in a significant manner in the 1930s; it reached its peak during the 1940s and 1950s; from the 1960s on, it waned.[1] To many American social scientists, the field, by exploring the interconnection of the human personality with its sociocultural environment, seemed to offer penetrating insight into key aspects of social life while providing integration, and perhaps even unity, to the social sciences. Personality and culture was thus, from its inception, fundamentally an interdisciplinary approach, involving the cross-fertilization of fields such as anthropology, sociology, psychiatry, psychology, and the biomedical sciences. It was also a field that received extensive sponsorship by the foundations and the Social Science Research Council (SSRC); indeed, if the foundations and the SSRC did not precisely give birth to the field, they certainly played a major role in launching it as a major focus of inquiry.[2] Accordingly, for the historian of the social sciences, the role of the foundations and the SSRC in advancing personality and culture can provide significant insight into the manner in which "social needs and assumptions"—as transmitted by institutional structures and organizational trends to social scientists—can shape research agendas and schemes for the production of knowledge (Rosenberg, 1979,

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1. I will be utilizing the phrase personality and culture, rather than the now more commonly used phrase culture and personality, throughout this paper—until the concluding section of the paper, when I refer to the explicit use of the latter phase by social scientists. The phrase personality and culture was consistently used by the SSRC social scientists affiliated with the Advisory Committee on Personality and Culture; the phrase seemed to express the sentiment among this group that personality not be altogether subsumed by culture and that individual agency vis-à-vis culture needed to be thematized. My periodization of the emergence, ascendance, and decline of personality and culture is derived from Piker (1994), Singer (1961), and, to some extent, Inkeles and Levinson (1954). It can also be found in White and Lutz (1992); the latter provide a concise summary of the reasons for the decline of personality and culture in the 1960s and after (pp. 3–4).

2. The SSRC was extensively funded by the Rockefeller philanthropies. As a result, it had close ties to the Laura Spelman Rockefeller Memorial during the 1920s and to the Rockefeller Foundation during the 1930s. See Fisher (1993).

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p. 441); the foundations and the SSRC were not interested merely in knowledge for its own sake but knowledge that could be used for the reconstruction of society and culture during turbulent times. Finally, the field of personality and culture was involved in the elaboration of ideas that were not only to play a fundamental role in the social sciences, but to exercise an important influence on twentieth-century American society in general. Both the idea of personality and that of culture were thus to play important roles in the controversies and movements of last half of the twentieth century—from the civil rights movement of the 1950s and 1960s to the "culture wars" of the late twentieth century.[3]

Over the years, there have been a number of attempts to review and assess personality and culture and the major contributors to the field from a historical perspective. An early historical survey and assessment by Milton Singer (1961) remains a seminal contribution to the history of the field; his formulations will be especially pertinent to this article.[4] Focusing on the elaboration of personality and culture within anthropology and other disciplines from the 1920s to the 1950s, Singer noted that personality and culture was concerned with three major sets of problems: "the relation of culture to human nature; the relation of culture to typical personality; and the relation of culture to individual personality" (p. 15). According to Singer, Margaret Mead's 1928 *Coming of Age in Samoa* was a good example of a work dealing with the first set of problems—in her book, Mead attempted to demonstrate the plasticity of human nature in relation to culture (pp. 16–17). The relation of culture to typical personality preoccupied a number of anthropologists and other social scientists during the years from approximately 1935 to 1950, as these social scientists focused on delineating the typical personality of the group and its relation to the group's culture. Notions such as "basic personality structure," "modal personality," and "national character" were elaborated during this phase, according to Singer (pp. 22–61). Finally, the relation of culture to individual personality, explored by Edward Sapir during the 1920s and 1930s, came to be thematized by a growing number of social scientists concerned with personality and culture, especially after about 1950 (pp. 61–69). This set of problems was concerned with the creativity and variability of the individual personality vis-à-vis culture; the emphasis was on the idiosyncratic ways in which the individual personality adapted to, interpreted, and even rejected aspects of culture. As I intend to demonstrate in this article, this set of problems was a major focus of the SSRC Advisory Committee on Personality and Culture during the early 1930s; instructively, Sapir was a key member of this committee.

My overall aim in this article will be to examine a significant episode in the formation of personality and culture as a distinct field of inquiry and to explore the sociopolitical dimensions of this episode. The establishment and ongoing activities of the SSRC Advisory Committee on Personality and Culture during the 1930s led to the formation of a network of social scientists, clinicians, and foundation officers whose efforts helped to give shape and focus to the field. These social scientists, clinicians, and administrators recognized the extensive damage that the

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3. During the years of the civil rights movement, Martin Luther King, Jr. (1963/2006), in his "Letter from a Birmingham Jail," argued that laws mandating segregation should be resisted because they damaged the personalities of African Americans. In *Culture: The Anthropologists' Account*, Kuper not only examined the major role that the culture concept came to play in anthropology and the social sciences more generally, but noted the manner in which culture came to be widely seen as playing a key role in forming collective identities and inspiring various kinds of contestation during the late twentieth century. See Kuper (1999, pp. 1–20).

4. In addition to Singer, Piker (1994) has provided a useful overview of the history of personality and culture. The collection of essays edited by G. W. Stocking, Jr. (1986), has offered incisive depictions of major figures in the field, including Edward Sapir, Ruth Benedict, Margaret Mead, Abram Kardiner, and Melville J. Herskovits. In recent years, much important work has appeared on Mead and Benedict (and their intellectual and personal relationship), including books and articles by Banner (2003), Young (2005), Molloy (2008), and Sullivan (2004a, 2004b). Patterson (2001) and Darnell (1986, 1990) have provided useful information on foundation and SSRC support for personality and culture during the 1920s and 1930s.

Great Depression had inflicted both on the autonomy and well-being of the individual and on the integration and coherence of American culture. Embracing liberal social engineering, this group hoped to reconstruct aspects of American culture—especially those pertinent to the micro-social realm of child rearing, education, and interpersonal interaction within small-scale social settings—in order to foster the development of healthy, cooperative, and socially adjusted personalities. In pursuing this project, a number of the social scientists affiliated with the advisory committee came to believe that they were elaborating a comprehensive social scientific perspective that, by examining in depth the relationship of the individual to culture and society, provided for the integration of the disparate social sciences. I will argue, however, that these social scientists came to neglect the overarching structures of power that shaped American society. Hence, in shifting the purview of social scientific investigation to the dimension of psychological, social, and cultural processes, they tended to lose sight of the large-scale political and economic structures—and the historical transformations of these structures—characteristic of modern American society. Given the importance of personality and culture for mid-twentieth-century American social science, I would suggest that the examination of the formulation of this field during the 1930s under the auspices of the SSRC may be able to shed significant light on the course and perspective of the American social sciences during this period—as well as on their often forgotten relationship with social engineering.

PERSONALITY AND CULTURE, CULTURAL RECONSTRUCTION, AND THE SSRC ADVISORY COMMITTEE

The origins of the personality and culture approach can be traced back to the late 1910s and the 1920s—as social scientists such as anthropologists Edward Sapir, Ruth Benedict, and Margaret Mead, and sociologists William I. Thomas and Ernest W. Burgess began to be concerned with the relationship between personality, on the one hand, and society and culture, on the other. Instructively, these social scientists engaged in cultural and social critique and advocated, at times, the revision and reconstruction of modern culture and society. Sapir (1924/1999c), for example, formulated a trenchant critique of the "spurious" culture of modern machine-age America in a seminal essay that appeared in the *American Journal of Sociology* during the 1920s; he felt that such a spurious culture denied meaningful outlets for individual creativity and satisfaction.[5] Mead, in her *Coming of Age in Samoa*, criticized modern

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5. Stocking (1989) has attested to the importance of Sapir's essay as an expression of the "overlapping of anthropological discourse and the discourse of cultural criticism" during the 1920s (p. 215). He notes that the essay "was a foundation document for the ethnographic sensibility of the 1920s" and that Sapir exercised a major influence over anthropologists Ruth Benedict, Margaret Mead, and Robert Redfield (p. 217)—all of whom seemed to adopt certain aspects of a Sapirian "romantic" critique of modern machine-age American civilization in certain of their writings of the 1920s and 1930s. Thus, according to Stocking, the romantic longing for the primitive and concomitant critique of modern civilization were evident in Mead's *Coming of Age in Samoa*, Benedict's 1934 *Patterns of Culture*, and Redfield's 1930 *Tepotzlan, a Mexican Village: A Study of Folk Life*. See Stocking (1989, pp. 217–247). Nevertheless, although Sapir, Benedict, and Mead all participated in the initiation and elaboration of personality and culture, it is important to note that the three had major areas of difference and disagreement. It was Sapir who most sharply stressed the agency of the individual with respect to its cultural environment; for Sapir the individual was not simply the product of its culture but was able to interpret and adapt to culture, and even shape culture, in idiosyncratic ways. Thus, Sapir did not share Benedict's tendency to emphasize the manner in which cultural patterns shaped the individual (Handler, 1986, p. 149). Moreover, he also expressed skepticism toward Benedict's penchant for applying psychological rubrics to cultures; unhappy with Benedict's characterization of the Dobu as paranoid in *Patterns of Cuture*, Sapir proclaimed to students, "A culture cannot be paranoid" (Kuper, 1999, p. 67). Furthermore, having fallen out with Mead after an affair with her went sour in the mid-1920s, Sapir became critical of her work as well. Thus, in 1929 he indirectly denounced Mead's *Coming of Age in Samoa*, along with Malinowski's work, by alluding to the "smart and trivial analysis of sex by intellectuals who have more curiosity than intuition" (as cited in Molloy, 2008, p. 52).

American child-rearing, familial, and educational practices—and suggested ways to revise and reform these practices. Accordingly, Mead proposed that education within the home and school should take on the task of teaching children not what to think, but how to think (Mead, 1928/2001, pp. 135–170).[6] In his sociological classic *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America*—which included an examination of the interrelationship of "social personality" and "social organization"—Thomas advocated social control and reconstruction in order to deal with the rampant social disorganization brought about by rapid social change (Thomas & Znaniecki, 1927/1958). Burgess addressed pressing social problems connected with family and urban life in his work during the 1920s, with the ultimate goal of fostering social control.[7] As Burgess and his co-author Robert E. Park (1921) noted in their textbook on sociology, "All social problems turn out finally to be problems of social control" (p. 785). Nevertheless, while all of these social scientists were intimately concerned with understanding personality within its sociocultural context—as well as with the ramifications of such understanding for social critique and/or reconstruction—the field of personality and culture remained nebulous during the 1920s.

It was during the 1930s that personality and culture took form as a distinct field of study. The phrase "personality and culture" began to gain currency as the result of a conference held by the Social Science Research Council (SSRC) in 1930, and a number of American social scientists came to be involved in projects specifically directed toward this field during the 1930s. It is likely that the social conditions prevailing during the Depression years provided a sense of urgency to the formulation of the personality and culture approach. During these years, the relation of the individual to society took on crisis proportions, as the Depression undermined the individual's sense of autonomy and self-reliance and produced an unprecedented sense of social and cultural disintegration. On the one hand, the human personality seemed to have lost its moorings with respect to the exercise of economic agency and, more generally, the sense of being able to participate in a community; it was threatened by large-scale, anonymous social and economic forces that it could hardly comprehend. On the other hand, American culture seemed to be incoherent and disintegrating, and thus unable to provide individuals with a sense of direction in a troubled world. The old ideology of individualism, with its emphasis on individual competition for economic gain, seemed moribund. Meanwhile, various cultural developments—associated with such trends as the increasing importance of the mass media, opinion polling, and popular psychology—subjected the individual to the pressures of standardization and conformity as perhaps never before.[8]

What was needed under these circumstances, according to a number of American social thinkers and scientists, was a far-reaching program of cultural reconstruction, which would

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6. Instructively, Mead seems to have been influenced by W. I. Thomas in her criticisms of both the family and educational methods in modern America in her *Coming of Age in Samoa*. According to historian R. Rosenberg (1982), Mead met Thomas in 1924 and was strongly influenced by Thomas's view "that the small, modern, isolated family could not deal with the emotional energy generated within it" (Rosenberg's words) and thus had become pathological (pp. 221–222). Mead elaborated such a critical view of the family in Chapter 13 of *Coming of Age in Samoa*. Mead also seems to have been influenced by Thomas's criticism of modern education and his proposal for the educational encouragement of the creative development of the individual, as opposed to simply training the individual to conform. Mead devoted Chapter 14 of *Coming of Age* to criticizing current American pedagogical methods and to outlining her own suggestion for an "education for choice." Compare especially Mead (1928/2001), p. 169, and Thomas (Thomas & Znaniecki, 1927/1958), pp. 1906–1907.

7. For Burgess's interest in personality and culture, see Burgess (1930a). For his concern with family and urban problems, see Burgess (1930b, 1926).

8. I consulted the following in writing this paragraph: Lynd (1939), pp. 11, 54–113; Susman (1984), pp. 164–166; Pandora (1997), pp. 63–68; Pells (1998), especially pp. 21–27, 96–125, 319–322; and Frank (1936), pp. 335–344.

shore up the threatened personality of the individual by creating a culture geared toward the needs, values, and health of the personality. Accordingly, Lawrence K. Frank (1936)—the chief promoter of personality and culture within Rockefeller philanthropy—proclaimed that in order to deal with cultural disintegration and the resultant disorientation inflicted upon the individual, "we must face the task of constructing a new culture, with new goals, new beliefs, new patterns and sanctions, but predicated upon the enduring human values that must be continually restated and given renewed expression" (pp. 342–343). Frank assigned personality and culture a large role in this task.

The Advisory Committee on Personality and Culture—initially organized as a Social Science Research Council committee in 1930–1931—elaborated an approach that was in many respects a response to the crisis in the relation of the individual to society and culture described above.[9] Along the lines indicated by anthropologist Edward Sapir, psychologist Edward A. Bott, and sociologist William I. Thomas, the approach formulated by the committee emphasized the individuality of the human personality as manifested during the course of its development. It stressed that the formation of personality occurred within social settings and involved the adoption by the individual of, and the adaptation of the individual to, the culture of the group. Yet personality formation did not entail simply the imposition of the group's culture on the individual; rather, the individual creatively adapted itself to its cultural environment and thereby exercised a degree of agency with regard to the latter. Significantly, SSRC social scientists generally preferred the phrase "personality and culture" to "culture and personality" during the early 1930s, presumably because the former phrase placed emphasis on individual agency vis-à-vis culture. Those affiliated with the committee tended to see the personality and culture approach as fostering the cooperation of social scientists and clinicians, perhaps even as providing a much-needed comprehensive framework for the social sciences.[10] Most importantly, the committee formulated a project of liberal social engineering aimed at reconstructing American culture so that it would foster the needs and mental health of the individual while adjusting the individual to group life. Instructively, according to one of the committee's major reports, the aim of such cultural reconstruction would be the "ultimate control of the larger patterns of collective life" (Social Science Research Council [SSRC], 1934e, p. 102).

The Advisory Committee on Personality and Culture pursued an interdisciplinary approach to the problem of the relation of the individual to society and culture. The advisory committee's efforts were related to (and to some extent coordinated with) other Rockefeller- and SSRC-sponsored interdisciplinary initiatives in the field of personality and culture—including the two colloquia on the investigation of personality held in New York City in 1928 and 1929, the seminar set up at Yale in 1932–1933 to train foreign scholars on the impact of culture on personality, and the seminar on human relations organized by Lawrence K. Frank in 1934. Most importantly, the SSRC committee that succeeded the advisory committee—the Research Committee on Personality and Culture (1934–1940)—furthered and elaborated the interdisciplinary approach to personality and culture of the advisory committee. Significantly, the advisory committee's concerns were closely affiliated with such fields as child development,

9. The Advisory Committee on Personality and Culture was dismantled and reconstituted as an SSRC "research committee" in the fall of 1934. In this paper, I will focus on the advisory committee. In a future paper, I will address the important work on personality and culture of the research committee.

10. Thus, Robert S. Lynd, the organizer of the 1930 SSRC conference that gave birth to the advisory committee, claimed that personality and culture was not simply another branch of social science but rather constituted "the field of all the social sciences" (1939, p. 52, italicized in the original). Hence, for Lynd, the personality and culture approach would provide for the coordination and integration of all the social sciences with each other.

community studies, mental hygiene, and psychiatry—all of which received substantial support from Rockefeller philanthropy during the 1920s and 1930s.[11]

The Advisory Committee on Personality and Culture did not succeed in formulating a comprehensive theoretical framework for personality and culture—comparable, for example, to that elaborated by the seminar in this field organized by Abram Kardiner in the 1930s and 1940s[12]—and it did not directly engender specific research projects in the field. Nevertheless, it did succeed in producing a preliminary formulation of and fruitful approach to the field. Thus, the social scientists involved in the advisory committee made important contributions to discussion and debate among social scientists regarding the question of the interrelationship of personality to its sociocultural environment—and the ways in which this question might be approached—during the formative period of personality and culture as a field of inquiry. Significantly, the committee involved a number of prominent social scientists and clinicians of the era, including anthropologists Edward Sapir, Clark Wissler, and W. Lloyd Warner; sociologists Robert S. Lynd, William I. Thomas, and Ernest W. Burgess; psychologists Edward A. Bott, Robert S. Woodworth, and John E. Anderson; and psychiatrists Harry Stack Sullivan, Adolf Meyer, and Clarence M. Hincks. A series of important memoranda and reports were produced clarifying and elaborating the field of personality and culture; the major report submitted to the committee by W. I. Thomas in 1933 and the Lake George Report of 1934 were especially notable in this respect. Last but not least, the SSRC committee that succeeded the advisory committee spawned a series of publications that contributed to the field (and to related fields), including John Dollard's (1935) *Criteria for the Life History* and *Cooperation and Competition among Primitive Peoples*, edited by Margaret Mead (1937/1961).

While the Advisory Committee on Personality and Culture did not formulate a comprehensive theory of personality and culture, it nevertheless did formulate a coherent agenda pertinent to research in the field.[13] Thus, at the risk of some oversimplification, the personality

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11. Under the auspices of the Harvard Committee of Industrial Physiology, W. Lloyd Warner received substantial Rockefeller funding for his study of Newburyport, Connecticut ("Yankee City"). See Warner and Lunt (1941, p. xi); Gillespie (1991, pp. 118, 156). For Rockefeller support of Robert S. Lynd and Helen Merrell Lynd's *Middletown* project, see Smith (1994, pp. 131–132); for Rockefeller support of research in child development, see Bryson (2002). According to Raymond Fosdick, the Rockefeller Foundation initiated its support for the National Committee on Mental Hygiene shortly after its inception in 1913; the foundation continued to support this organization for several decades. Moreover, beginning in 1933, the Medical Sciences Division of the Rockefeller Foundation, under the direction of Alan Gregg, launched a major effort in support of research and teaching in psychiatry. See Fosdick (1952, pp. 127–134).

12. The key concepts in Kardiner's theoretical approach were those of the "basic personality structure," the "primary institutions," and the "secondary institutions." According to Kardiner, the basic personality structure was derived from the primary institutions—the family and significant kinship groups, as well as the organization of subsistence activities—of the group. The basic personality structure, in turn, provided shape and content to the secondary institutions of the group—religion, folklore, myth, etc.—which acted as the repositories of repressed urges projected onto these institutions by persons sharing the group's basic personality structure. By examining the child-rearing and subsistence activities of a group, along with its religious beliefs, folklore, myth, and so on, Kardiner felt that he could arrive at a clear understanding of the basic personality structure of the group. Kardiner's theoretical formulations were inspired by the seminar—initially focused on the theme of psychoanalysis and social science—that he organized in 1933 at the New York Psychoanalytic Institute. In the late 1930s, Kardiner and anthropologist Ralph Linton teamed up to facilitate the seminar, and, in 1939, it was moved to the anthropology department at Columbia University. Anthropologist Cora Du Bois was also a major participant in the seminar; it was Du Bois who formulated the concept of "modal personality," a concept that combined Kardiner's dynamic, explanatory emphasis with a more statistical and descriptive orientation to personality. For more on Kardiner's and Du Bois's formulations and the Kardiner seminar, see Kardiner (1939, 1945), Manson (1986); Singer (1961, pp. 29–36); Piker (1994, pp. 8–11).

13. Agenda is defined by the American Heritage Dictionary (2001) as: "A list or program of things to be done or considered" (p. 17). The advisory committee was able to elaborate a coherent and detailed program of issues and questions to be considered, procedures and methods to be followed, appropriate specialists and venues to be involved, etc., in pursuing research in personality and culture. It is important to recognize that this agenda was concerned not only with investigating the field of personality and culture but was linked to an agenda of social intervention. This will become especially evident with the 1934 Lake George Report.

and culture research agenda advanced by the advisory committee might be summarized along the following lines:[14] Teams of social scientists and clinicians—including specialists in such fields as psychology, psychiatry, anthropology, and sociology—were to collaborate in the study of the development and adjustment of the individual within the context of the local community (for example, an urban neighborhood, an immigrant community, a rural area, or an American Indian community). They would study the cultural patterns prevailing in the community along with other aspects of community life, but they would be especially attentive to the formation of the personalities of individuals within the community. To further this project, the social scientists and clinicians would observe the behavior of individuals, collect and examine life-history materials, conduct psychiatric interviews, and administer psychological tests. A special emphasis would be placed on the processes operating within the microdimensions of social life—seen as a kind of natural habitat for the formation of personality[15]—in advancing the field of personality and culture. Thus, the micro-social processes of child rearing, education, family and marital life, and neighborhood interaction—all thought of as contributing to the development and adjustment of the individual's personality—would be scrutinized in detail.

Such a research agenda would yield significant knowledge on the relationship of the individual to its sociocultural context, particularly with respect to the adaptation or maladaptation of the individual's personality to this context. But this approach also had its drawbacks. The very focus on micro-social processes within local communities would tend to occlude consideration of the overarching structures of power acting upon these communities, as such structures generally originated and operated well beyond the confines of these communities. Moreover, the "scientific" stress on the operation of uniform processes within local communities betrayed a desire to escape from consideration of the complexity of historical transformation (and, concomitantly, the changes in the structures of power associated with these overall transformations). As Dorothy Ross (1994) has observed, in embracing the study of process, early twentieth-century American social scientists "deliberately reached below the structures that shaped economic, social, and political conflict to search for the harmonizing processes embedded in society itself."[16] She continues, "Structures of power are also structures of history, and process provides an escape from history as well as conflict" (p. 182).

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14. The somewhat schematic account delineated here does not, for example, altogether do justice to the 1933 Thomas report. Nevertheless, Thomas shared with other SSRC social scientists the emphasis on micro-social processes pertinent to development of personality within cultural contexts. Instructively, notwithstanding the Thomas report, there is considerable continuity between Sapir's report/proposal for the 1930 Hanover subconference on personality and culture and the 1934 Lake George Report with respect to the research agenda outlined in the two documents, as we will see below.

15. See Pandora (1997) for a treatment of the manner in which psychologists such as Gordon Allport, Lois Barclay Murphy, and Gardiner Murphy adopted a "natural history" approach toward the study of personality during the 1930s; they thus came to investigate personality within its natural habitat.

16. Ross (1991) has argued that early twentieth-century American social scientists such as W. I. Thomas embraced the idea of process, an idea that, while emphasizing rapid social change, nevertheless conceived of change as an orderly series of events resulting in the maintenance of social harmony and stability. Following Hannah Arendt, Ross noted that the idea of process involved the "convergence" of history and nature, as the former came to be conceived in terms of the continuity of quasi-natural series of phenomena (pp. 317, 386–389). Thomas's conceptualizaton of the social psychological process of organization–disorganization–reorganization—the process he believed that immigrant communities underwent—demonstrates how the idea of process operated. Leaving behind the organization of peasant society, immigrants confronted the disorganizing conditions of life in America; ultimately, however, the immigrant community was able to reach a state of reorganization (Ross, 1991, p. 353; 1994, p. 186). As Ross (1994) put it, such "cyclic processes, repeated throughout American history, continually restored the natural harmony of American society" (p. 186).

As we will see below, Ross's observations can aptly be applied to the efforts of the SSRC social scientists studying personality and culture during the 1930s.

<center>SAPIR, PERSONALITY AND CULTURE, AND THE 1930 HANOVER CONFERENCE</center>

Anthropologist Edward Sapir played a significant role in formulating the approach to personality and culture of the SSRC Advisory Committee on Personality and Culture. A student of Franz Boas, Sapir—along with fellow Boasians Margaret Mead and Ruth Benedict—had already started to elaborate the personality and culture approach during the 1920s, as we have noted above. Sapir's major concern was the relation of culture to individual personality. Critical of reified notions of culture such as Alfred Kroeber's concept of the "superorganic," Sapir emphasized that individuals were not altogether controlled by culture, but rather could interpret and even creatively interact with culture. To be sure, the human personality was profoundly shaped by cultural patterns, but this did not preclude the possibility that the personality could exercise some degree of agency vis-à-vis these patterns (Sapir, 1932/1999b, 1934/1999d). Moreover, endorsing what he saw as the psychiatric approach to personality,[17] Sapir emphasized—in his 1934 entry on personality for the *Encyclopaedia of the Social Sciences*—the "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." Sapir was not sure precisely when the "total configuration of reactive tendencies" congealed, but he suggested that it was the result of hereditary and "prenatal and postnatal conditioning" and would probably take its permanent form within the first few years of the child's life. Sapir suggested that Freudian psychoanalysis would be of special value to the student of personality development, but he also indicated that Carl Jung, with his theory of psychological types, as well as Alfred Adler and Emst Kretschmer might have something to offer (Sapir, 1934/1999e, pp. 314, 315).[18]

Sapir had been brought to the University of Chicago in 1925 with Rockefeller funding, and he was an active participant in SSRC and Rockefeller-sponsored committees, conferences, and seminars. For example, he attended and participated in the First and Second Colloquia on Personality Investigation, held in New York City in late 1928 and 1929, respectively. He also attended and gave presentations at the SSRC annual Hanover Conferences. Thus, in a paper given at the 1926 Hanover Conference, Sapir offered an early formulation of personality and culture. In this paper, entitled "Notes on Psychological Orientation in a Given Society," Sapir (1926) argued that cultures could be viewed as characterized by psychological orientations, such as introversion or extroversion.[19] He noted that while these psychological orientations were not necessarily related to the temperaments of the individuals living

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17. Clyde Kluckhohn (1944) has stressed the important role Sapir played in integrating the psychiatric approach into anthropology. While crediting Benedict and Mead for their contributions to the integration of psychiatry and anthropology, Kluckhohn asserted: "it was Sapir who made possible some real fusion between the two disciplines. . . . Only Sapir . . . supplied the necessary corrections to anthropological theory which were demanded by psychiatric knowledge. . . . The tough insights which Sapir drew from psychiatry not only forced a basic reconstruction of anthropological postulates but lead [*sic*] to new types of specifically pointed field work. The subtle, tantalizing leads he threw out shaped the basic conceptualizations not only of his immediate pupils and associates (such as Opler, Mekeel, and Dollard) but of many other workers who had no formal relationship to him (Linton, Hallowell, and many others)" (p. 601). While Kluckhohn's somewhat invidious contrast between Sapir, on the one hand, and Benedict and Mead, on the other, was unfortunate, he did make a good case for acknowledging the real achievement of Sapir with regard to the infusion of the psychiatric approach into anthropology.

18. Useful treatments of Sapir include Darnell (1986, 1990); Handler (1986); Murray (1986).

19. Ironically, Sapir criticized Benedict during the 1930s for applying to cultures descriptive terms appropriate to personalities. See note 5 above.

within these cultures, nevertheless, personality maladjustments could result from discrepancies arising between a culture's psychological orientation and the temperaments of particular individuals belonging to it. Sapir also contributed much to the formulation of the personality and culture approach at the 1930 Hanover Conference—and, later, as a participant in the advisory committee that emerged from this conference. Moreover, he directed the Yale Seminar on the Impact of Culture on Personality in 1932–1933.[20]

Although Sapir was not especially interested in social engineering, his formulations on personality and culture were, in important respects, congenial with the social engineering slant placed on this approach by social scientists and administrators affiliated with the SSRC and Rockefeller philanthropy. As we have seen, Sapir was critical of American culture, suggesting in his essay "Culture: Genuine and Spurious" that American machine-age civilization could not provide a genuine culture in which individuals could creatively participate and cultivate spiritual values (Sapir, 1924/1999c). Though he made no explicit suggestions by means of which Americans could reconstruct their spurious culture into a more genuine culture, the stress in his writings on the role of individual personality and the importance of the psychiatric approach had significant implications for the project of cultural reconstruction. An approach such as Sapir's, which emphasized the study of personality within its cultural context and the major role psychiatrists were to play in its understanding, seemed to imply a cultural–therapeutic approach to social engineering—that is, an approach in which experts such as psychiatrists and anthropologists played an important role in formulating cultural practices that fostered healthy personality and its development, thereby ameliorating pressing social problems.[21]

Sapir chaired the special conference on personality and culture held as part of the 1930 Hanover Conference; it was out of this conference that the Advisory Committee on Personality and Culture emerged. A number of major figures in psychology, psychiatry, and the social sciences attended the Conference on Personality and Culture, which took place from August 29 to September 2, 1930 in Hanover, New Hampshire. These included, besides Sapir, anthropologist Robert Redfield; psychiatrists Harry Stack Sullivan and Adolf Meyer; psychologists Mark A. May, John E. Anderson, Floyd Allport, Gardner Murphy, Kimball Young, and Bott; and sociologist E. H. Sutherland. The initial focus of the conference seemed to be acculturation, the process by which individuals raised in one culture were placed in a position necessitating their adjustment to the ways of a second culture (as the result of immigration, conquest, and so on)—but as the conference proceeded, the focus shifted to the exploration of interdisciplinary approaches pertinent to the study of personality in its interrelationship to culture in general. This field was seen by SSRC secretary Robert S. Lynd, the organizer of the conference, as a "melting-pot" in which research in sociology, cultural

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20. See Darnell (1986, 1990) for Sapir's involvement in SSRC and Rockefeller-sponsored committees, conferences, and seminars.

21. Sapir's former friends and coworkers in personality and culture, Mead and Benedict, were very interested in the social engineering possibilities of personality and culture. For Mead's interest in social engineering, see Sullivan (2004a, pp. 101–114). For Benedict's concern with social engineering, see Handler (1986, pp. 150–152). Morever, Sapir's close male associates, Harry Stack Sullivan and Harold Lasswell, both had proclivities toward social engineering. Thus, in 1934, Sullivan observed that psychiatry had "fostered the mental hygiene movement and a growing appreciation of the possibilities of psychiatry for individual and social welfare." Moreover, Sullivan became interested in how psychiatry could assist with problems of mobilizing public opinion and promoting morale during World War II and, after the war, with the problems of postwar reconstruction and the alleviation of international tensions. See Sullivan (1964, pp. 9, 120–191, 267–331). In 1930, Lasswell formulated the notion of "preventive politics," by means of which social scientific experts and administrators would attempt to attenuate social conflict by "reducing the level of strain and maladaptation in society." See Lasswell (1930/1960, p. 197).

anthropology, and social psychology could interact (SSRC, n.d., 1930a, 1930b; Lynd to S. Walker, March 18, 1930).

Lively discussion and debate characterized the conference. Research proposals, including Sapir's "Study of Acculturation and Personality among the American Indians" and W. I. Thomas's "Crime and Insanity in Scandinavia," were considered and debated, along with Frank's proposal to organize a seminar on personality and culture for foreign scholars. Moreover, much discussion and debate took place in response to presentations on topics pertinent to personality and culture given by Murphy, Anderson, Sullivan, Frank, and others. Papers relevant to this field were also given during the evening sessions of the Hanover Conference (SSRC, 1930a; Sapir, 1999a, 1930b).

An especially instructive exchange—which presaged the sociopolitical and research orientation of the Advisory Committee on Personality and Culture—occurred during the evening session in which psychiatrist Clarence M. Hincks delivered his presentation "Mental Hygiene and Social Science." Hincks called in his talk for social scientists to join clinicians in participating in research aimed at advancing mental hygiene. Among the major points made by Hincks was that the longitudinal study of the development of individuals over a span of years within "their natural every day [sic] settings," conducted by interdisciplinary groups of social scientists and clinicians, would do much to foster the cause of mental hygiene (Hincks, 1930, pp. 100, 104–105). During the discussion session following Hincks' presentation, Frank noted that mental hygiene as a distinct project might indeed disappear in the future, as the objectives of mental hygiene came to be implemented in educational, governmental, and industrial institutions. For this to happen, Frank observed, social scientists would have to take on the role of rebuilding institutions (Hincks, 1930, p. 111). A few minutes later, Robert S. Woodworth suggested that the psychiatrist—as a member of a team of social scientists engaged in the conducting of longitudinal studies—might elaborate criticism of prevailing institutions insofar as they affected the individual. He remarked that Freud was "very critical of our civilization as bearing upon mental health" (Hincks, 1930, p. 114). Frank then reentered the discussion with the query:

> May I ask Dr. Woodworth if he is suggesting that the work of the psychiatrist will tend to show that there are difficulties and hazards in the institutional life which are in themselves responsible for the creation of mental disorders; further that we may approach the limits to which individuals can go in adjusting themselves to this unfavorable institutional life, and at that time it may become necessary for the psychiatrist to turn to the social scientist to help in developing new institutional patterns which are better designed to meet the needs of wholesome, sane living? (Hincks, 1930, p. 114)

In response, Woodworth commented on the position of the "culturist" with respect to that of the psychiatrist: "When we hear a culturist talk about culture as forming the individual we tend to get the impression that that is something inevitable and unchangeable almost, and almost as if the individual had no limitations or demands to be taken account of by culture and institutions. The psychiatrist it seems to me stands pretty clearly for the opposite point of view. That is to him I think the individual would be the measure of [how] all things and institutions stand or fall as that measure marks them up or down" (Hincks, 1930, p. 114–115).

In engaging in this discussion on mental hygiene, Frank and Woodworth were formulating the basics of the research agenda and the goals of what was to become the personality and culture approach. Both Frank and Woodworth suggested that the psychiatrist and the social scientists collaborate in criticizing and reconstructing culture in order to gear it to the individual's mental health. Moreover, both agreed that the psychiatrist would have to play a

special role in ascertaining the limits of individual adjustment to the demands of culture and institutions. The psychiatrist, it seemed, would take the individual and its mental health as the "measure of all things and institutions." The social scientists, on the other hand, possessed special expertise on social institutions. Hence, the psychiatrist and the social scientists would have to work together to suggest ways of altering "institutional patterns" so that individuals might adjust to them in a healthy manner. According to Frank and Woodworth, the emerging personality and culture approach would involve teams of social scientists and clinicians who would collaborate to study the development of the individual within social settings, with the goal of not simply adjusting the individual to these settings, but rather of reorienting the social institutions to the needs and mental health of the individual (Hincks, 1930, pp. 104–106, 111, 114–115).[22]

A memorandum written by Sapir, recommending that the SSRC set up a "Committee on the Interrelationships of Personality and Culture," was adopted by the participants in the conference and sent on to the Council for consideration. The memorandum provided a succinct but important outline of the personality and culture approach. It began by stressing the importance of personality research for the social sciences. It was in the actions of human personalities, Sapir explained, that the data of each social science "find their origins and functional manifestations." Most significantly, the "behavior manifestations" of individuals should be seen as originating from "processes" associated with "inner components," on the one hand, in conjunction with processes associated with cultural patterns, on the other.[23] The inner components consisted of factors pertinent to "the specific functioning of [the] organismic constitution," the neurological apparatus, drives, desires, motives, sentiments, predispositions, complexes, repressed affects, and so on—while the cultural patterns consisted of "mores, customs, institutional patterns of behavior, fashion, etc." As Sapir summarized, "Personality research must study the interdependence of 'inner' components and available cultural patterns" (Sapir, 1930a, p. 3).

Sapir was concerned that the "the ordinary behavior of every-day people" was not accessible to social scientists, although he acknowledged that psychiatrists and researchers studying children had made some progress in the study of behavior. To remedy this problem, Sapir recommended that social scientists undertake the systematic observation of various modes of behavior; collect life-history materials ("self observations recorded in diaries, journals, letters, and other literary form[s]"); conduct "performance tests" on various aspects of individual behavior; subject individuals to "guided interviews supplemented by free-fantasy, as used by the psychiatrist"; and utilize historical records pertinent to past behavioral performances (Sapir, 1930a, pp. 3–4).

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22. Hincks expressed agreement with the views explicitly formulated by Frank and Woodworth. Instructively, Mark A. May, the chair of the evening session, remarked immediately after Woodworth's comment regarding the culturist versus the psychiatrist that the "question [of the role of the two kinds of specialists vis-à-vis the individual in relation to culture and institutions] has just been settled in the Committee of Personality and Culture . . . we have at least one psychiatrist [Sullivan] and at least one culturist [Sapir] here who have come to agreement." Indeed, as the result of this "agreement," a new field was given major impetus: personality and culture. Moreover, as May's comment indicated, the phrase "personality and culture" had come into use by the conclusion of the 1930 Hanover Conference. Accordingly, in his presentation given in the evening session of August 31, Sapir referred to the "tangled field of personality and culture." For May's comments, see Hincks (1930, p. 115). For Sapir's comment, see Sapir (1930b, p. 73).

23. Significantly, Sapir referred to "processes" pertinent to personality research several times in his memorandum. Thus, according to Sapir, research useful to the social scientist and the clinician "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." See Sapir (1930a, p. 3).

Perhaps reflecting the influence of his Chicago colleagues in sociology, Sapir stressed the importance of studying the behavior manifestations of individuals within the context of local communities.[24] He suggested that the proposed research program focus on "relatively small groups possessed of well-developed cultural patterns" (as opposed to mainstream American communities). He noted that American Indian communities (for example, those of the Navajo or the Plains Indians) or immigrant communities (such as the Scandinavians in the Northwestern section of the U.S.) could be utilized for this purpose. Community studies would entail, according to Sapir, "studies of the life of the group as a whole," presumably focusing on the dominant cultural patterns of the group; "intensive personality studies" of members of the group; and studies of individual and group modes of behavior with regard to "environing cultural factors actually incorporated into some of the individuals." Interdisciplinary cooperation would be required for this research program to succeed. As Sapir put it, "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" (Sapir, 1930a, p. 4).

THE ADVISORY COMMITTEE ON PERSONALITY AND CULTURE

After considerable debate within the SSRC on whether or not to establish a committee on personality and culture and over the question of which research issues should be addressed by this committee, the nucleus of the committee was finally formally constituted—as the Committee on Behavior and Personality—in February 1931.[25] The committee originally consisted of three members: Canadian psychologist Edward A. Bott; Canadian psychiatrist Clarence M. Hincks; and Charles H. Judd, educational psychologist at the University of Chicago. The choice of these three figures was highly significant; all three had important affiliations with perspectives and organizations oriented toward social engineering (SSRC, 1931a, 1931b; Bott, 1931). For example, both Bott and Hincks allied themselves with mental hygiene efforts in Canada and the United States. Thus, Bott had become the research director of the Canadian National Committee for Mental Hygiene on its founding in 1918. As chair of the Department of Psychology at the University of Toronto, Bott emphasized research pertinent to mental hygiene—such as the study of the adjustment of normal children and the study of individual functioning within everyday settings, including the family, the workplace, and especially the school (Pols, 1997, 2002). He also embraced a developmental perspective, noting in a December 1930 memorandum for the SSRC that the "principles" for studying personality and behavior should be "sought in the light of developmental trends followed over sufficiently long periods" (Bott, 1930, p. 10). As historian Hans Pols (2002) has suggested, Bott championed a "natural history model of research," examining individual functioning, adjustment, and development within actual social circumstances, and not simply within the laboratory or clinic (pp. 137–139). Along such lines, Bott suggested that the community itself

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24. See Murray (1986) and Darnell (1990, especially pp. 202–222), for Sapir's relations with his colleagues in sociology at Chicago. As both Murray and Darnell have made clear, interdisciplinary collaboration between Sapir and the Chicago sociologists was limited—especially within the context of the university itself. As Darnell noted (p. 216), Sapir and the Chicago sociologists seem to have more frequently exchanged ideas at foundation-funded interdisciplinary conferences than on the university campus. In any event, it is not unreasonable to suppose that the emphasis on community studies at Chicago exerted an influence on Sapir. Instructively, as Murray observed (p. 243), Sapir's interest in the life-history approach may well have originated from his "exposure" to the methods of his colleagues in sociology at Chicago.

25. For more on these debates and disputes, see below.

could become a kind of laboratory, as experiments with regard to modifying practices pertinent to human welfare were performed within the community (Bott, 1930, p. 10).[26]

Clarence M. Hincks, a psychiatrist who had worked on testing for "feeblemindedness" during the 1910s, helped to found the Canadian National Committee for Mental Hygiene in 1918. Initially taking the position of secretary of this organization, Hincks became its medical director in 1923. By 1931, he was also working as medical director for the U.S. counterpart to this organization (Pols, 1997, 2002). As we have seen, Hincks' presentation at the 1930 Hanover conference called for social scientists to collaborate with clinicians in research oriented toward mental hygiene. He felt that such collaboration would be especially pertinent for the goals of "prevention [of mental disorder] and the enrichment of the mental life." As he put it: "it is absolutely essential [in order to further these goals] that we get the active cooperation of men in the social science world. It is not enough for the psychiatrist to call in the psychologist and the educationalist and the sociologist for advice. Men from these disciplines are needed on the ground floor, for strategy and policy planning" (Hincks, 1930, p. 106). Hincks shared Bott's research agenda, with its stress on studying the development and adjustment of individuals within "their natural habitat" in order to advance mental hygiene (Hincks, 1930, p. 111). Thus, Hincks, like Bott, envisioned utilizing the community as a laboratory for research. Along these lines, he advocated in March 1932 that the SSRC Advisory Committee on Personality and Culture go beyond simply supporting "purely scientific" projects and sponsor "projects that are formulated to assist in bettering the educational, cultural and health arrangements in our civilization" (Hincks, 1932).

Charles H. Judd, psychologist and educational reformer, had been the director of the School of Education at the University of Chicago since 1909. He had studied under Wilhelm Wundt at the University of Leipzig and received his PhD from that institution in 1896. While studying with Wundt, he came to be influenced both by the experimental psychology advocated by Wundt and by his *Völkerpsychologie*, with its emphasis on the significance of culture and language (Buswell, 1947; Judd, 1932; Smith, 1997, pp. 509–510). Judd wanted to develop a science of education that would focus on how education fostered the "socialization" of the individual with respect to the "social institutions" of society. He thus emphasized the adaptation of the individual to society's institutions—the most fundamental of which was language—as well as the fostering by the educational process of the recognition of the importance of language and other social institutions as the collective achievements of humankind (Judd, 1926, pp. 1–4, 335–337; 1934, pp. 224–228). Nevertheless, Judd did not lose sight of the individual; he wanted to gear the learning process to the capacities of individual students, encourage independent reading by students, and adjust secondary education to the specialized concerns of students (Judd, 1934, pp. 240, 244, 257). Judd brought to the committee a concern with analyzing personality by examining "the psychological history and . . . present personality pattern of the individual" as well as an emphasis on elaborating "methods of studying cultural patterns" (phrase underlined in the original) (Judd, 1931, p. 191). As an advocate of liberal social engineering, Judd wanted to advance the social sciences in order to achieve "the mastery of man's relations to his fellows" (Judd, 1926, p. 330). By the 1930s, he was advocating the creation of a "cooperative civilization" and the redistribution of economic resources in the United States (Judd, 1934, pp. 265–266). Significantly, Judd was extensively

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26. Kurt Danziger has aptly characterized the mental hygiene approach in these words: "Interpreting social life in terms of metaphors of health and illness, the mental hygiene movement projected hopes of a better future that was to emerge, not through the conflict of collective social interests, but through the 'treatment' of individual maladjustment by appropriate agencies of social control." See Danziger (1990, p. 164).

involved with the activities of the American Council of Education; in 1931, he was engaged in conducting a survey on the interest of American colleges and universities in "the physical and mental development of human beings" (Bott, 1931, p. 24).

During the deliberations preceding the formation of the advisory committee and continuing into the early summer of 1931, there was disagreement among SSRC social scientists over the orientation and even the name of the committee. For example, doubt was expressed on whether or not the anthropological and the psychological approaches could be combined in the same committee.[27] These disputes seemed to be based, in large part, on the disciplinary and intellectual orientations of the social scientists involved in these deliberations. Thus, psychologist Edward Bott preferred the designation "behavior and personality"—and for a time he got his way, presumably because of his position as the new committee's chair. (SSRC President Edwin Wilson, a statistician, also preferred the rubric "behavior and personality.") Sociologist William F. Ogburn, on the other hand, wanted the term "culture" to be included in the title of the committee, while psychologist Robert S. Woodworth wanted the committee's field to be designated "group culture and individual behavior" (SSRC, 1931a). Others, such as John E. Anderson, a psychologist involved in the field of child development, wanted "human development" to be the designated focus of the committee, and for a period in the of 1931, it appeared that this would be adopted as the title of the committee (SSRC, n.d., p. ix; 1931d, p. 37). By late June 1931, however, the committee had decided to retain the original rubric "personality and culture." According to Bott, the "committee felt that 'personality and culture' described more fully what they wished to accomplish, since stress in the investigations would be placed on studies relating to the progressive development of the individual in his life span rather than on a statistical approach" (summary of Bott's words, 1931d, p. 37).

Perhaps the move to return to the original rubric was a consequence of the decision to include an anthropologist in the committee. The latter issue was decided in May 1931, when Sapir was invited to join the committee (SSRC, 1931c); Sapir was very likely a forceful advocate for the designation "personality and culture." (Instructively, during one meeting of the SSRC Problems and Policy Committee, Ogburn had suggested that either Sapir *or* Margaret Mead serve as the representative from anthropology. Ogburn had been Mead's mentor while she was studying at Barnard [Molloy, 2008, pp. 85–86], and he seems to have taken an ongoing interest in her career. Not surprisingly, however, members of the Problems and Policy Committee preferred Sapir, whom they no doubt perceived as one of their own. Sapir had worked on SSRC committees [SSRC, 1934a] and attended Hanover conferences for a number of years; indeed, as we have seen, he wrote the proposal that led to the formation of the advisory committee.) Chicago sociologist Ernest W. Burgess was also added to the committee at

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27. According to an official SSRC (n.d.) account of the history of the advisory committee: "A small group called together [in the fall of 1930] . . . in Boston by the President and the Chairman of the Council felt that the anthropological and psychological points of view were so widely separated that it would be difficult to draw them together. . . . Uncertainty as to the orientation of this field was evidenced in the discussion by Problems and Policy of suggested titles ranging from 'behavior and personality' to 'culture.' It was variously suggested on the one hand that anthropology and psychology should be joined in a study of the relationship between personality and culture, and on the other that culture, in the anthropological sense, be eliminated" (pp. viii–ix). The Boston gathering referred to by the SSRC account seems to have been a meeting held in early December 1930, attended by SSRC President Edwin Wilson, Chairman Arthur M. Schlesinger, psychologists Gordon Allport and Frederic L. Wells, psychiatrist C. Macfie Campbell, sociologist P. Sorokin, anthropologist A. M. Tozzer, and several others. Participants in this meeting expressed the sentiment that anthropologists such as Sapir and sociologists such as Thomas would not be able to utilize the personality concept in a fruitful manner in their proposed projects. The best route for the new committee to take would be the "development and analysis of personality tests" by a committee of six or seven specialists concerned with personality testing (SSRC, 1930c).

this time (SSRC, 1931c). Eventually, Woodworth, who had gained an appreciation of anthropology through his work on "anthropometry" with Franz Boas, and anthropologist W. Lloyd Warner, who was concerned with the study of modern American communities, were added to the committee (SSRC, 1933a, 1934b; Woodworth, 1932, p. 367).

The conference discussions, reports, and memoranda associated with the Advisory Committee on Personality and Culture and its activities provide considerable insight into the personality and culture approach as it was formulated during the 1930s by social scientists affiliated with the SSRC. Significantly, the approach stressed the relation of culture to individual personality. Thus, emphasis was placed in personality and culture on what anthropologist Clark Wissler referred to as "the problem of the individual and individual differences" (SSRC, 1931d, p. 36). That is, the issue of individual variability within various cultural contexts, both modern and "primitive," was stressed. To be sure, there was an interest in how pervasive particular personality traits were in given societies, but this interest did not result in the formulation of such comprehensive concepts as "basic personality structure" or "national character," as elaborated by later investigators in personality and culture.[28] There was also an interest in the adjustment or lack of adjustment of the individual's personality with respect to the cultural patterns prevailing in the community, but this did not seem to imply that personality variation was in itself undesirable. To be sure, an administrative focus on classifying and utilizing individual variability was often evident in the SSRC discussions, reports, and memoranda. To a considerable extent, this focus was coupled with a social engineering approach geared toward adjusting culture to the individual. Thus, the SSRC social scientists were interested in encompassing individual variability and difference within grids of intelligibility, in large part, it would seem, with the aim of managing the individual's behavior[29]—but also with the intent of reconstituting culture to foster the personality of the individual.

The dichotomy between the normal and the abnormal was challenged by the social scientists involved in the SSRC efforts in personality and culture. Notwithstanding this challenge, however, I would argue that these social scientists maintained a "normalizing" approach to personality. For example, they were very much concerned with measuring personality and its development with regard to an array of different dimensions—in terms of the development of its physical and physiological aspects, mental skills and aptitudes, psychological qualities and traits, propensity for various modes of social interaction, "attitudes" toward social institutions, and so on—and coordinating these varied measurements in order to comprehend the individuality of the person. Nevertheless, they did not see the normal and the abnormal as polar opposites. Rather, human traits and qualities were seen as spread

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28. I am not suggesting that those who elaborated concepts such as "basic personality structure" and "national character" were not interested in the individual and individual variability. Thus, Kardiner (1939), the formulator of the concept of basic personality structure, noted that "the individual . . . is simultaneously the creator, the carrier, and the creature of all institutions" (p. 9). Mead (1953) stressed that national character studies were based on the assumptions that "[t]here are wide individual differences among human beings which must be taken into account" (p. 646) and "that each member of each generation, from infancy to old age, contributes to the perpetuation and reinterpretation of the cultural forms" (p. 647). The issue is that—to use the framework elaborated by Singer (1961)—those working with concepts such as basic personality structure and national character tended to thematize as their area of inquiry "the relation of culture to typical personality," as opposed to "the relation of culture to individual personality" (p. 15).

29. As James D. A. Parker has pointed out for early twentieth-century research on personality by psychologists, the interest in identifying and quantifying individual variability and difference with regard to various attributes was given large impetus by education and business; various modes of psychological testing provided a means to classify individuals, on the basis of their variability with respect to others, for purposes of administration and placement. Individuals and their varying capacities could thus be put to use within the context of modern bureaucratic organizations. See Parker (1991).

over a continuum and possessing a certain significance insofar as they affected the adjustment of the individual to his or her environment.[30] Along such lines, though considerable emphasis was placed on the normal, everyday aspects of personality and behavior, there was also a strong interest in dealing with problems posed by various forms of deviancy, such as juvenile delinquency and mental disorder. The psychiatrist was to play an important role in the study of personality and culture, and psychoanalytic concepts and theories were to be scrutinized and tested in such study.

THE NANTUCKET CONFRENCE (1931)

A special meeting on personality and culture was held in June 1931 at the Nantucket Conference of the SSRC (SSRC, 1931d). The emphases on individual variability and on the administrative implications of such variability were amply demonstrated during the discussions that took place at the meeting. The idea of reconstructing institutions to foster individual needs and well-being was also expressed. An array of prominent social scientists and specialists were present at the meeting, including Anderson, Bott, Burgess, Edmund Day, Guy Stanton Ford, Frank, Hincks, Judd, Harold Lasswell, Lynd, Charles Merriam, Adolf Meyer, Ogburn, Sapir, Arthur Schlesinger, Clark Wissler, and Woodworth. Of those present, several gave special presentations on basic issues pertinent to the field of personality and culture; these included Bott, Burgess, Frank, Judd, Hincks, Sapir, Wissler, and Anderson.

Bott neatly connected knowledge of individual variability with administrative aims in his presentation at the meeting. According to Bott, a central issue to be addressed by SSRC efforts in personality and culture would be "the question . . . whether human individuality itself could be singled out and made the subject of study." How could social science obtain knowledge of the individual and how could such knowledge be put to use? Bott observed that the new SSRC committee was considering various methods for studying the individual. It was felt that research "should be directed to the normal mainly, but not exclusively, so this classification [normal versus abnormal] was not very helpful." Research might utilize the longitudinal approach in order to study the individual, but Bott noted the SSRC itself was not in a position to support longitudinal studies. Research could also, Bott observed, proceed along interdisciplinary lines, fostering the integration of physiological and psychological approaches and taking into consideration the study of the group as well as the individual. Further, according to Bott, "Questions of delinquent behavior, criminology and mental disability would also need to be included" (SSRC, 1931d, p. 32). Most importantly, the committee would have to take into account approaches "of institutions, state organizations, etc., whose interest was equally in research and in the control of human behavior. . . . [R]esponsibility for control of behavior could not be avoided, and . . . research taking the human individual as its subject must also be related to these organized aspects of the work" (SSRC, 1931d, p. 33).

Themes pertinent to the individual's adjustment or maladjustment to its society—as well as the adjustment of institutions to the individual—were addressed at the meeting (SSRC, 1931d, pp. 33–35). Ernest Burgess elaborated on research on juvenile delinquency conducted

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30. For more on the normalizing approach to personality, see Lunbeck (1994). In this book, Lunbeck provides an account of how the psychiatric perspective displaced the normal/pathological dichotomy with the metric model of normality. Lunbeck characterizes the psychiatric perspective in these words: "Employing a rough metric of the normal, this perspective would constantly assess individuals' normality in any number of dimensions (behavioral, sexual, characterological), arraying them on a spectrum ranging from the abnormal to the normal" (p. 4). No doubt the strong attraction of psychiatry for many investigators of personality and culture derived from this special perspective.

in Chicago and displayed maps demonstrating the frequency of delinquency in various neighborhoods of the city. He called for a variety of studies: on individual delinquents, neighborhoods, conflicts involving family as opposed to community values, and immigrant groups. Lawrence K. Frank alluded to the discussions on personality within the SSRC's Committee on the Family. According to Frank, "The committee realized the need of more integrated approach to the study of the family, and had decided to take personality adjustment as the focus of its attack." Hincks expressed his desire that the SSRC Advisory Committee on Human Development (then the title of the committee) cooperate with the National Committee on Mental Hygiene (NCMH). Research conducted by the new SSRC committee could assist the NCMH in its effort to "to assist man to adjust himself more effectively to a complex, dynamic environment." On a different note, Judd spoke of how educational institutions should be adjusted to the individual. Judd believed "that the educational system has now reached a point where it can organize itself in terms of findings about human nature." As he explained, "Society . . . has the responsibility of doing the appropriate thing at different educational levels or being faced with the problems of juvenile delinquency."

Sapir and Wissler, representing the field of anthropology at the meeting, both focused on the importance of studying the individual (SSRC, 1931d, pp. 35–36). Sapir observed that anthropology was increasingly shifting from a concern with the group toward the study of the individual. This new emphasis on the individual could be noted in projects conducted by the Yale Institute of Human Relations, in Wissler's work on American Indians, and in Otto Klineberg's efforts at Columbia. Indeed, Sapir noted, Franz Boas had become interested in the new perspective. During the morning session the next day, Wissler explained that the Yale Institute of Human Relations, in conjunction with the Museum of Natural History, was conducting studies of primitive peoples, focusing on the individual and individual variability. A major concern was the manner in which American Indians were able to adjust themselves to new modes of living under the impact of cultural change. Wissler indicated that such research would be conducted in a cooperative manner.

John E. Anderson, director of the child welfare institute at Minnesota, gave the final presentation, which focused on the study of the child (SSRC, 1931d, pp. 36–37). A number of institutes oriented toward the development of the child had been established in the U.S. and Canada, and a Committee on Child Development had been created under the auspices of the National Research Council. With a view toward coordinating research in various university departments as well as between different institutions, such endeavors had, according to Anderson, "provided for studies of physical, mental, and social development [of children], development of illegitimate children, every aspect of [children's] social relationships." He expressed hope that the new SSRC committee—which he argued should be designated under the rubric "human development'—would play an especially important role in coordinating research on the "social aspects" of child development.

W. I. THOMAS AND THE 1933 REPORT TO THE SSRC

A major report on personality and culture that clarified the orientation of the field, summarized existing research within relevant areas, and offered suggestions for formulating a research agenda in the field was submitted to the advisory committee by William I. Thomas in 1933. In April 1932, Thomas had been commissioned by the SSRC, on the recommendation of the advisory committee, to write the report and given a year's time in which to finish it (SSRC, 1932). The resulting document, entitled "Report to the Social Science Research Council on the Organization of a Program in the Field of Personality and Culture," represented

one of the major achievements of the committee. It anticipated future developments in personality and culture—for example, the national character studies that came to flourish during the 1940s—while providing a cogent formulation of the field and the major issues pertinent to it. The report seems to have been circulated, in mimeographed form, to Council members and others after its release, and it was eventually published by the SSRC in 1951.[31]

Well before writing his 1933 report on personality and culture, Thomas had done pioneering work in this field within the discipline of sociology.[32] By the late 1910s and early 1920s, he had formulated an approach to the interrelationship of "social personality" and "social organization," as he put it in the sociological classic, *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America* (Thomas & Znaniecki, 1927/1958).[33] Thomas's formulations were congruent with the approach elaborated by the SSRC advisory committee. As with the advisory committee, Thomas focused on the formation of personality within the context of the "primary group" (especially the family) and the community, though in his 1933 report he enlarged his framework to include the examination of personality within regional, racial, and national populations. Thomas also pioneered in the use of life-history and other qualitative documents; indeed, the advisory committee followed in his footsteps in stressing the utilization of such materials. Moreover, Thomas shared the emphasis of Sapir and other members of the advisory committee on the individual and the potential of the individual to exercise a degree of agency with respect to his or her sociocultural environment. Hence, for Thomas, the individual was not simply a passive receptacle of social norms and codes of behavior, but was able to interpret experience in idiosyncratic ways and even, at times, creatively to alter social norms and codes.

Unlike Sapir, but in common with other social scientists working with the advisory committee, Thomas possessed an avid concern with liberal social engineering. Thus, he believed that the accelerated pace of social change characteristic of the modern world necessitated conscious modes of social control, informed by the science of behavior (Thomas, 1917, pp. 195–197). Along such lines, Thomas argued that "social reconstruction" would be necessary when social disorganization became rampant in a society (Thomas & Znaniecki, 1927/1958, pp. 1127–1130, 1303–1304). Moreover, in his report on personality and culture for the SSRC, Thomas (1933) observed that just as the study of the personality of the individuals could be useful for elaborating measures geared toward the adjustment of individuals to their culture, the study of personality within populations could be useful in formulating measures oriented toward the "restructuralization" of culture and the "readjustment" of cultures to each other (pp. 21–22). Thomas also shared with the advisory committee the concern with interdisciplinary research, and he worked on several major interdisciplinary projects during the 1920s.[34]

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31. For a useful account of national character studies by a major contributor to these studies, see Mead (1953). For a somewhat more critical account of national character studies, see Inkeles and Levinson (1954). For the 1933 Thomas report as published by the SSRC, see Thomas (1951).

32. For useful treatments of Thomas, see Ross (1991, especially pp. 323–324, 347–357); Janowitz (1966, pp. vii–lviii); Rosenberg (1982, pp. 120–131, 221–223); Stocking (1968/1982, pp. 260–264).

33. Thomas co-authored *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America* with Florian Znaniecki. The first two volumes of this book were originally published by the University of Chicago Press in 1918; the remaining three volumes were published by the Boston firm Richard G. Badger in 1918–1920. A second edition, retaining the content of the original, was published in two volumes by Alfred A. Knopf in 1927. See Janowitz (1966, p. xv); Volkart (1951, p. 319).

34. For Thomas's participation in interdisciplinary projects during the 1920s, see Janowitz (1966, pp. xvi–xvii). For his participation in the SSRC as a representative from sociology to the Council (1928–1932) as well as by serving on several SSRC committees, see SSRC (1934a). For his participation in the two colloquia on personality, see American Psychiatric Association (1928); American Psychiatric Association & Social Science Research Council (1930). Thomas's participation in interdisciplinary projects was not altogether voluntary. He was dismissed from the University of Chicago in the aftermath of a scandal in 1918 (Janowitz, 1966, p. xiv); he spent much of the rest of his career freelancing in various social science projects.

Thomas's concern with the influence of sociocultural factors on the formation of personality—and the manner in which individuals responded in idiosyncratic and even creative ways to such influence—was developed in his theory of social personality, as formulated in *The Polish Peasant in Europe and America* (Thomas & Znaniecki, 1927/1958, pp. 1831–1914) and in his work on personality conducted during the 1920s (Thomas, 1926, 1927). Thomas acknowledged the all-pervasive impact of social conditioning on the personality. As he put it in the paper that he presented at the 1926 SSRC Hanover Conference, a fundamental set of factors determining personality consisted in "the steady, habitually impressed influence of the social environment, the family, and community, and other institutions, which influences are not acutely felt but are pressed in constantly." Nevertheless, Thomas also recognized the importance of the various factors contributing to personality variation and individuality. For one thing, it would be necessary to understand "the total experience of the individual" in order to understand specific manifestations of the individual's behavior; the subjective meanings assigned to behavior manifestations by the individual played a large role in shaping these manifestations. Moreover, "critical experiences" could lead individuals to choose behavior patterns not immediately provided by the social environment (Thomas, 1926, pp. 322–324).[35] Indeed, under certain circumstances, individuals could creatively alter the norms and schemes of behavior provided to them by their environments. According to Thomas, "the individual can indeed develop only under the influence of his environment, but on the other hand during his development he modifies this environment by defining situations and solving them according to his wishes and tendencies" (Thomas & Znaniecki, 1927/1958, p. 1858).

Thomas's report for the SSRC on personality and culture was generally congruent with his previously expressed views, as well as with the views held by the social scientists affiliated with the advisory committee. Thus, in his report, Thomas (1933) criticized those cultural anthropologists who had not yet come to take the individual into account, gently chiding them for having "given relatively little attention to the individual in his interaction with the cultural situation" (pp. 23–24). A new note seemed to enter Thomas's thinking in the report, however, as he suggested that more attention needed to be given to personality issues within large human aggregates, such as regional, racial, and national populations. Indeed, Thomas (1933) suggested that his proposed program for personality and culture should "fall into two parts, the one with emphasis on the growth and development of individuals in given cultures, and the other with emphasis on the behavior reactions of populations in given cultures (mass phenomena)" (p. 33). The first approach would take a genetic (developmental) approach to the life of the individual and would involve biology and psychology, while the second approach, oriented toward personality in the context of various populations, would involve government, economics, and law.

Thomas's concern in his report for the study of personality within large human aggregates may well have been a response to the Great Depression. After more than three years of economic crisis, the need for action on a large scale, particularly by government, must have impressed itself on Thomas and his fellow social scientists. Accordingly, Thomas (1933) noted that the study of personality traits within regional, racial, and national populations would be associated with initiatives (formulated with the aid of political science, economics,

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35. For Thomas, critical experiences played a major role in differentiating the personalities of people from one another within a particular community. The term critical experience referred to an incident or encounter, including such a seemingly trivial event as attending an opera performance or reading a book, that came to have a major psychological impact on a person's life. The significance of the event lay in the person's psychological interpretation of the event, not in the meaning of the event to members of the community in general. In addition to Thomas (1926), see Volkart's Introduction in Volkart (1951, pp. 12–14).

sociology, and law) directed at "the restructuralization of given cultures and the readjustment of relations between cultures" (pp. 21–22). Thomas was vague on precisely what these initiatives would involve, but it would seem likely that he was referring to large-scale efforts aimed at cultural reconstruction within the populations in question, carried out by government agencies or perhaps by philanthropic or educational organizations. Presumably, such reconstructive efforts would be geared toward the reformulation of attitudes and codes of behavior in order to encourage adaptation on the part of the individuals of these populations to changing circumstances—involving, for example, rapid social change and/or acculturation. Moreover, it is reasonable to assume that such initiatives would have thematized the personality development of the individuals making up the population, including the adaptation and adjustment of these individuals to their culture—thus, these initiatives would have been closely related to the first prong of Thomas's program (with its stress on individual growth and development) as well as to the main focus of the efforts of the advisory committee. Hence, if Thomas, in his report, enlarged the scope of research in personality and culture compared to the overall focus of the advisory committee, he nevertheless retained the emphasis of the committee on the micro-processes of personality development—conceived by Thomas as, in large part, processes of attitude formation—within social settings.[36] But such an emphasis could pose problems, as we have noted above. By focusing on micro-processes, Thomas reduced historical change—involving the qualitative transformation of historical formations, including structures of power—to social change, conceptualized as a set of relatively uniform processes that generally operated within small-scale social situations.[37]

In the first part of his report on personality and culture, Thomas (1933) defined and clarified fundamental concepts and elaborated on basic issues pertinent to the field of personality and culture. The social sciences, according to Thomas, encompassed "relationships between either individuals and individuals, individuals and groups, or groups and other groups." These relationships were mediated by language, customs, codes, institutions, and so on. Thomas emphasized the importance of adjustment, considered as a universal life process, for the social sciences and the biosciences in general: "The central problem in the general life-process is one of adjustment, and the forms of adjustive effort are 'behavior'" (p. 1). For humans, as opposed to animals, adjustment was necessarily related to culture—to the accumulated set of values, mores, codes, and institutions passed from generation to generation largely by means of language. Like Sapir, Thomas suggested that while cultural influences exercised a profound influence on the individual's personality, certain aspects of personality could not be altogether explained in terms of these influences. As Thomas put it, "The reaction of different individuals in the same culture to identical cultural influences will depend partly on their different trains of experience and partly on their biochemical constitutions and unlearned psychological endowments" (p. 2).

Of special significance was the issue of whether "successful" adjustment or maladjustment should be the focus of research for the proposed program in personality and culture.

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36. Thomas generally defined personality in terms of attitudes; that is, he defined personality as the organization or configuration of the attitudes (tendencies to behavior reactions) of individuals. See, for example, Thomas (1927, p. 144).

37. As Janowitz has noted, Thomas's social psychological perspective—oriented toward the study of processes such as assimilation, cooperation, rebellion, revolution, and so on—resulted in "an imbalance" in Thomas's approach. According to Janowitz: "In effect, he [Thomas] handled the outcome of social change (the reciprocal relationship between social organization and social personality) mainly in terms of attitudes and attitude transformation. He never developed an adequate set of categories for institutional change, and in particular for dealing with societywide political institutions." See Janowitz (1966, p. xlii).

On this issue, Thomas (1933) observed: "It is . . . desirable that no formal separation should be made of the so-called 'normal' and 'abnormal' aspects of personality and behavior. The two phases should be taken as aspects of a process and as representing different degrees of adjustment" (p. 2). Still, for practical reasons, it would be important to take various modes of deviancy—crime, delinquency, insanity, alcoholism, and so on—as major research foci for the program (pp. 2–3).

Thomas (1933) emphasized that the interdisciplinary nature of personality and culture would involve an array of disciplines, including "biochemistry, physiology, neurology, endocrinology, genetics, psychology, geography, human ecology, anthropology, sociology, psychiatry, criminology, political science, law, economics and history" (p. 3). Among this varied set of disciplines two basic standpoints were discernible with respect to the personality and adjustment of individuals: the biological and the cultural. From the biological standpoint, behavior reactions were predetermined, and deviancy would have to be controlled by eugenic measures.[38] From the cultural standpoint, behavior reactions were largely determined by life experiences and could be altered by a "readjustment of cultural situations," which would involve learning and education. From this standpoint, deviants could be reformed and rehabilitated, though it was important to recognize that some modes of deviancy were organically determined and so not susceptible to remediation. Thomas emphasized that both the biological and the cultural standpoints would be useful for research in personality and culture. As he noted, "Definitions of what the human material is, in terms of its quality, its deviations from given norms, its capacity and disposition to be influenced by social stimuli . . . will involve the biochemical, physiological, psychological and psychiatric disciplines . . . in the different programs to be elaborated in the field of personality and culture" (p. 8).

A large portion of the ensuing sections of the report focused on describing and assessing various methods for studying personality. These methods fell into three broad categories: (1) approaches to documenting personality; (2) the study of personality with regard to specific aspects of culture; and (3) the study of personality within culture areas (in the context of regional, racial, and national populations) (Thomas, 1933, pp. 8–9). Thomas provided an extensive list of methods for documenting personality. These included: autobiographical life histories, perhaps supplemented by lists of issues to be dealt with or by psychoanalytic techniques; the case record of the individual personality, assembled with the assistance of psychometricians, psychiatrists, social workers, teachers, employers, family members, and so on; the direct observation of behavior and social interaction, especially of young children; psychological testing of mental and personality traits; and the "genetic studies" of individuals, beginning at infancy and following them through time, "making records of physical and mental maturation and behavior patterning at various age levels, and at the same time correlating the behavior with the physical and mental maturation on the one hand and the cultural situation in its various aspects on the other" (Thomas, 1933, pp. 9–15). (With regard to the last method, Thomas noted that such longitudinal studies were being conducted at the various centers for studying child development.)

Personality could also be studied with regard to specific aspects of culture, such as the family, the gang, educational institutions, the mass media, and occupations (Thomas, 1933, pp. 15–20). Thomas saw such cultural factors as providing definition for the individual of the latter's social and cultural environment. The family would be especially important to study as a defining agency, particularly the role that the family played in the formation of personality.

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38. Thomas did not offer any explanation as to what specific "eugenic measures" he was referring to in the report.

Along such lines, the family situation could be studied as a means of testing psychoanalytic concepts or theories concerning the origins of delinquency. Commercialized defining agencies—newspapers, movies, the radio—also had a major impact on people; here was another important field of investigation. A further significant issue warranting study was the influence of a person's occupation on the person's personality, particularly the situation of the modern industrial worker and his or her morale. In addition to these three defining agencies, Thomas noted the importance of "the school, religion, art, government and law" as defining agencies. They possessed special social significance "in view of their function in providing and stabilizing the symbols and values whose common possession is the basis of an orderly society, and of developing a leadership capable of adjusting populations in an orderly way to the rapid cultural transformations" (Thomas, 1951, p. 307).[39]

The study of personality development within the populations of culture areas would be an important avenue of research in personality and culture; such research could be useful for restructuring cultures and adjusting them to each other. It would be based on the recognition that just as it was important to study personality in the context of the temporal dimension— with the study of life histories and with longitudinal studies—so it was also important to study personality within "a spatial grouping of interacting human beings" (as cited in Thomas, 1933, p. 20).[40] Culture area studies could be focused on the populations of local communities, on the one hand, or on national or racial populations, on the other hand (Thomas, 1933, pp. 22–24). An example of the former type of study was the research on delinquency that sociologists had conducted on Chicago neighborhoods. Perhaps such studies could be extended to other urban centers, Thomas suggested. It would also be important to investigate personality within various national or racial areas; Sweden, Rumania, Turkey, Russia, Mexico, and other modern nations could provide the venues for these research initiatives. These studies could be conducted by interdisciplinary teams of researchers. By suggesting that personality be studied within national and racial areas, Thomas was anticipating the national character studies that proliferated during the following decade.[41]

THE LAKE GEORGE REPORT (1934)

The Advisory Committee on Personality and Culture issued its final comprehensive report for consideration at the annual conference of the SSRC at Lake George in September 1934.[42] The committee seems to have been criticized within the SSRC for failing to produce a comprehensive statement of its proposed research program in a timely manner (SSRC, 1933b, p. 82), and it had set the Lake George Conference as its deadline for completing

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39. This passage does not appear in the archival copy of the report in my possession, but Volkart included it in the version of the report reprinted in his anthology of Thomas's work. Apparently, it was not ready for the original version of the report.

40. Thomas quoted this phrase from R. D. McKenzie, a Chicago sociologist especially concerned with human ecology.

41. Thomas also anticipated the utilization of learning theory in the study of personality and culture by social scientists such as John W. M. Whiting and Geoffrey Gorer during the 1940s and subsequent decades. See Thomas (1933, pp. 32–33).

42. A good guess would be that Bott wrote the Lake George Report. In his capacity as advisory committee chair, he wrote a number of reports and memoranda for the committee, and he made the case for adopting the program proposed by the Lake George Report to the SSRC Problems and Policy Committee in September 1934. To be sure, Sapir's formulations on personality and culture seem quite evident in the report, but it does not seem likely that he would have been assigned the task of writing the final report. In any case, there is no indication of precisely who wrote the report in the SSRC archival materials.

the report.[43] The Lake George Report (SSRC, 1934e, pp. 88–102), as it was dubbed, defined and delimited the field of personality and culture, examined various problems and questions pertinent to the field, outlined the organizational and research strategies of the proposed program, and offered suggestions on the implications of the personality and culture approach for social engineering. The program was to focus on the study of personality within specific communities. A major goal was to gain understanding of how social change affected both the community and the individual. Would social change result in community disintegration and individual maladjustment? Or would community equilibrium and individual adjustment be maintained? Such issues would be extremely important to deal with since, as the report suggested, community and individual differences might threaten the sense of national solidarity needed to deal with the social and economic crisis of the Great Depression (SSRC, 1934e, pp. 89–91). The interconnection between the effect of social change on the community and its effect on the personality of the individual is suggested in the following passage from the report: "A series of co-ordinated studies of communities . . . will result in a clearer understanding than now exists in the minds of students of society of the character and interplay of the forces which contribute to community solidarity or community disintegration and to individual adaptation or lack of adaptation in smaller and larger units of social organization" (SSRC, 1934e, p. 93).

The report suggested that the study of personality and culture would have significant practical consequences for the American polity and society. Reflecting the sense that social and cultural disintegration was pervasive during the Depression years, concern was expressed that the United States was a "composite culture" replete with community differences and personality differences. More specifically, the United States was made up of a number of contrasting communities—the Black Belt in the south, Pennsylvania mining communities, agricultural regions, manufacturing areas, and so on. The nation also consisted of groups with very different sets of attitudes, such as the inhabitants of small towns in contrast to those of large urban centers, or the laboring class in contrast to the industrial managers. Such differences could give rise to "grave political and social problems"—but perhaps research in personality and culture might be useful in alleviating such problems and promoting national solidarity. According to the report: "There must be unified governmental action while there are diverse individual and group attitudes. If the social sciences are to contribute to the solution of national and local problems, there must be detailed study of contrasting community and individual types and a synthesis of findings" (SSRC, 1934e, p. 91).

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43. A series of conferences had been held in the spring of 1934 in order to assist the advisory committee in the formulation of its program in personality and culture (see SSRC, 1934d, p. 83). In what was undoubtedly one of the more interesting of these conferences, Edward Sapir chaired a group that included anthropologists Melville J. Herskovits and Robert Redfield, psychiatrist Harry Stack Sullivan, and psychologist Otto Klineberg. The group met at Yale on April 7–8, 1934, to discuss and assess methods for studying personality in primitive societies. The group's participants thus deliberated upon such topics as child-rearing practices, educational techniques, emotional expression, dreams, and the production of autobiographical materials among primitive peoples. The participants also discussed the role of the psychiatrist in studying personality among such peoples. They agreed that psychiatrists should accompany teams of ethnographers conducting fieldwork and train the ethnographers to study personality. Indeed, perhaps the psychiatrists should even subject the ethnographers to "preliminary analysis." Significantly, attached to the conference notes was a tentative questionnaire on personality and its formation by Redfield and Herskovits (see SSRC, 1934c, pp. 204a–204m). The April 1934 meeting anticipated many of the issues later taken up by the Committee on the Relationship of Personality to Culture of the National Research Council (1935–1941). This committee, again chaired by Sapir, concerned itself with training anthropologists to study personality. One of its key concerns was the procurement of funding for providing training analyses to anthropologists by skilled psychoanalysts. Another important project was the writing of a handbook on psychological approaches useful for anthropologists; this task was carried out by A. I. Hallowell (see Darnell, 1986, pp. 173–178; 1990, pp. 319–326).

The report addressed a number of problems that a program in personality and culture could tackle (SSRC, 1934e, pp. 93–96). The first of these was the "Negro problem"—which for the committee was not so much a matter of African Americans being subjected to racial prejudice and economic deprivation but of changing attitudes on the part of blacks. It seemed that while blacks had formerly displayed "a blind faith in the white man and religion," they were now becoming more disillusioned and independent. This change seemed to be connected to migration of blacks to the north, to economic changes associated with this migration, and to increased education. The committee noted, perhaps with some degree of apprehension, that some blacks were involved in the movement to establish "a separate negro culture." Other problems that researchers in personality and culture could shed light on included the problem of government relocation of families; the degree to which collectivism or individualism characterized modern industrial society; mental pathology; delinquency; the "Indian problem"; the acculturation of various peoples; educational issues; and "social experimentation."

The report recommended that a Board of Strategy, consisting of approximately six representatives from the social sciences, be established; among the major responsibilities of this board would be to select the communities in which research in personality and culture would be conducted. Potential communities included: a "comparatively primitive community, such as a Navajo community"; a community undergoing rapid social change; an agricultural community; various kinds of industrial communities; a community in economic decline; and a black community (SSRC, 1934e, pp. 96–97). According to the report, the community study projects should not be seen as separate projects but should be undertaken in conjunction with each other, preferably at the same time. This would be useful "both through increasing the comparability of data and through permitting the closer co-ordination of staffs proficient in different specialties and techniques . . . thus enabling social scientists actually to work together on a task that has unity of purpose" (SSRC, 1934e, p. 98). Instructively, the report noted that studying personality among "primitive groups" such as the Navajo might offer special advantages. Such communities would perhaps "permit more ready approach to first principles concerning the relation of the individual to the collective life than do more highly developed communities." The report described a potential community study involving the Navajo in these words: "The effort would be to study personality types, life histories, adjustment difficulties of adults, and the behavior training of the young in that culture in such a manner that the findings might be compared with analogous data from other primitive and non-primitive groups. This project calls for a field expedition extending over two to three years, staffed by an ethnologist and a psychiatrist" (SSRC, 1934e, p. 97).[44]

The report stressed the need for the development of techniques for studying individual differences. It acknowledged that such differences were as common among primitive peoples as among "highly civilized groups." As the report indicated, "the formerly reported uniformity of individuals in primitive groups is not borne out by more recent anthropological study." Given this finding, it would be important to develop special techniques for measuring individual difference in primitive groups—and/or in groups such as the Tennessee hill folk. According to the report: "Measuring instruments or indicators suited for any given group can be devised only on the basis of a knowledge of the culture of that group. . . . The first step

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44. The report also described the efforts of W. Lloyd Warner to utilize anthropological methods for studying modern communities. Warner and his associates had been conducting studies of two communities, one in New England and the other in Mississippi. Warner believed that anthropological methods useful in studying primitive societies could be productively applied to present-day communities in order to study issues such as social status, community leadership, and social conflict. See SSRC (1934e, p. 93).

towards comparing individuals from different groups is to find means of comparing the individuals within each group taken by itself" (SSRC, 1934e, p. 98).

The last two paragraphs of the report encapsulated its main point and indicated the social significance of research in personality and culture. It was noted that "vast changes in the material conditions of life" had resulted from the increase in scientific knowledge. Nevertheless, what was really important to comprehend was not necessarily these "vast changes" in themselves, but rather the changes in cultural patterns associated with the large-scale changes. Thus, while the importance of techno-economic factors as causes of social change was acknowledged, the report stressed the need to focus on small-scale cultural patterns—and their affect on individuals within communities—as the key terrain on which new modes of knowledge and techniques for enhancing human welfare could be elaborated. Accordingly:

> The main thesis of the present report is that there is a possibility of greatly increasing knowledge with regard to the changes which are taking place in cultural patterns and in individuals affected by these patterns. Not only is it urged that there is a possibility of increasing knowledge about cultural patterns and individuals, but it is further urged that only through detailed studies of typical minor patterns will it be possible to arrive at an adequate understanding and ultimate control of the larger patterns of collective life. (SSRC, 1934e, p. 102)

What these words suggest is that the goals of liberal social engineering could be achieved by focusing on "the typical minor patterns" of cultural life, such as child-rearing, education, family life, neighborhood interaction, and so on. Thus, large-scale change and the "ultimate control" of "collective life" could be effected by coming to understand and to alter micro-social cultural processes in order to gear them toward the formation of healthy personalities. In other words, the personality and culture research agenda could be highly effective not only in formulating knowledge on the micro-social processes relevant to the relation of culture to individual personality, but in the elaboration of techniques for intervening in these processes. The path to social betterment and control would thus transverse the domain of the micro-social.

Conclusion

Bott attempted to convince the SSRC Problems and Policy Committee to support the program in personality and culture proposed in the Lake George Report at a meeting held on September 7, 1934. Members of the Problems and Policy Committee were skeptical, however. The proposal did not seem feasible with respect to either practical or financial considerations, and doubt was expressed regarding the value of conducting research in personality and culture within the context of community studies. The proposal was thus rejected by the Problems and Policy Committee; the Advisory Committee on Personality and Culture was thanked for its efforts and dismissed. Nevertheless, the Problems and Policy Committee decided not to abandon the field of personality and culture entirely. A Research Committee on Personality and Culture was constituted to follow up the efforts of the advisory committee. With a core of three members—psychologists Mark A. May (chair), Gordon Allport, and Gardner Murphy—it set about recruiting a new group of social scientists; this group would eventually include anthropologists Margaret Mead, Melville J. Herskovits, Robert Redfield, and Ralph Linton; sociologists John Dollard, Thorsten Sellin, and E. H. Sutherland; and psychologists Barbara Burks and Leonard Doob. Moreover, a new plan of action was formulated for the research committee. Instead of attempting to further research within the entire field of

personality and culture, it would focus on specific segments of the field and attempt to fill in the gaps in existing knowledge and move forward to the formulation of new knowledge on the "frontiers" of the field. Work in the field of personality and culture was thus to be continued under the auspices of the SSRC, but not within the context of a coordinated series of community studies (SSRC, 1934f, 1934g, 1934h; May 1934, 1936).[45]

During the period 1930 to 1934, the Advisory Committee on Personality and Culture elaborated a distinctive approach to personality and culture—an approach that focused on the individual personality and its relation to culture and society. Thus, the advisory committee's formulation of personality and culture involved an intense focus on the individual and its growth and development, considered within its sociocultural settings, from an array of disciplinary perspectives, including the biomedical, psychiatric, psychological, sociological, and anthropological. This formulation was especially concerned with cultural practices oriented toward child rearing and education; hence, research in child development and educational psychology were also quite pertinent to the personality and culture approach. SSRC social scientists involved with this approach believed that while the adjustment of the individual to society should be an important concern, it would also be necessary to scrutinize critically cultural practices and social institutions and to subject them to reconstruction in order to foster the healthy development of the individual's personality. Armed with scientific understandings derived from a number of disciplines, the idea that cultural reconstruction was not an "objective" or "value-neutral" enterprise, but would involve choices to be made with respect to various cultural practices and the values implicit in them did not seem to bother the SSRC social scientists. After all, they could rely on those arbiters of mental health, the psychiatrists, to provide guidance in transforming cultural practices.

The work of the advisory committee anticipated future developments in the field of culture and personality (as it came to be called)—including the surge of interest in this field and in related fields during the 1940s and 1950s. For example, the program proposed in the Lake George Report presaged important aspects of the Harvard Values Study of the late 1940s and early 1950s. Moreover, in the aftermath of the outpouring of "national character" studies during the 1940s, an emphasis on the individual personality and its relationship to culture reemerged in research conducted in the 1950s (Singer, 1961, pp. 15–16, 61–62). Finally, culture and personality, as it emerged after World War II, continued to be involved in liberal social engineering—as was demonstrated, for example, by the interest of Margaret Mead and others in mental health projects during this period.

Although the program of coordinated community studies proposed by the Lake George Report did not receive SSRC endorsement, nevertheless a project remarkably similar to this program was initiated nearly fifteen years later. The "Comparative Study of Values in Five Cultures," directed by anthropologist Clyde Kluckhohn under the auspices of Harvard's Laboratory of Social Relations, focused on five different cultural groups in the vicinity of Rimrock, New Mexico—including communities of Navajo and Zuni Indians, as well as Spanish-Americans, Mormons, and homesteaders from Texas. Researchers from the disciplines of "anthropology, sociology, social psychology, personality psychology, political science, philosophy, history, and geography" were involved in the project, which was launched in 1949 and terminated in 1955 (see Preface to Vogt & Albert, 1966, pp. vii–x). Research on the five

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45. A number of publications emerged from the work of the research committee, including John Dollard's *Criteria for the Life History* (1935); a volume edited by Margaret Mead, *Cooperation and Competition among Primitive Peoples* (1937/1961); and Melville J. Herskovits' *Acculturation: The Study of Culture Contact* (1938).

groups was loosely coordinated by means of regular discussions and debates among participants in the project as well as by means of standardized fieldnote processing procedures (Powers, 2000, pp. 23–24). While especially concerned with the value-orientations of the five groups, the researchers also looked into the child-rearing practices, economic endeavors, political activities, religious practices, "expressive activities," and intercultural relations of the groups (see Chapter 1 in Vogt & Albert, 1966, pp. 1–33). Although it is unclear if the Lake George Report had any direct influence on the Values Study, there were intriguing connections between the 1934 report and the study.[46]

A shift in interest among students of culture and personality toward the individual personality during the early 1950s also seemed to mark the reemergence of the perspective of the Advisory Committee on Personality and Culture (Singer, 1961, pp. 36–41; Piker, 1994, p. 13). A number of American social scientists came to address the relation of culture to individual personality during this period. In doing so, they moved away from approaches—such as studies of "national character," "basic personality structure," and "modal personality"—that stressed the relation of culture to typical personality, that is, the relation of culture to personality attributes shared by all or most members of the group.[47] Perhaps this shift was the consequence of the increased use of psychological tests, such as the Rorschach and the Thematic Apperception Test (TAT), in studies of culture and personality. Such tests tended to highlight the variability of personality factors among the groups studied. Thus, Bert Kaplan, working with the Harvard Values Study, found that among the groups that he studied (Navajos, Zunis, Spanish Americans, and Mormons), there was more personality variation within the groups than between the groups. He believed that modal personalities did exist in each group, but concluded that most members of each group did not conform to the modal personality associated with that group. In words that echoed the approach of the Advisory Committee on Personality and Culture, Kaplan observed: "All individuals interact with their cultures. However human beings are not passive recipients of their culture. They accept, reject, or rebel against the cultural forces to which they are oriented" (as cited in Singer, 1961, p. 40).

Although the study of culture and personality tended to become ensconced within the academic departments of anthropology and sociology during the postwar era, it nevertheless retained its connection with social engineering, especially in the guise of mental hygiene. Thus, during the late 1940s, Lawrence K. Frank, Margaret Mead, Harry Stack Sullivan, and

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46. For one thing, both the report and the study received Rockefeller funding. Moreover, Sapir—who, of course, was well acquainted with the work of the advisory committee, including, presumably, the Lake George Report—seems to have exerted a major influence on Kluckhohn. As S. O. Murray has observed, Kluckhohn was "a participant in Sapir's psychology of culture seminar at Yale in the middle 30s . . . , shared an interest in Navajo language and culture with Sapir," was interested in "individual variation from cultural patterns," as was Sapir, and expressed admiration for Sapir (though Kluckhohn did not utilize Sapir's linguistic approach). See Murray (1986, p. 259). I would like to express my gratitude to Rebecca Lemov for providing an introduction to the Harvard Values Study in her presentation at the 2007 Cheiron conference in Dublin, Ireland.

47. To be sure, it is important to recognize, as Singer (1961) has observed, that there were important theoretical differences among the social scientists concerned with "typical personality." One example of such a theoretical difference was the contrast between Mead's conceptualization of national character as "cultural character," with its stress on the structure and patterning of character, and sociologist A. Inkeles' and psychologist D. J. Levinson's conceptualization of national character as modal personality, with its orientation toward a descriptive, statistical approach (Mead, 1953; Inkeles & Levinson, 1954; Singer, 1961, pp. 45–49, 54–-57). Social scientists emphasizing typical personality came under increasing fire during and after the 1950s for their tendency to overstate the degree of correspondence between aspects of the typical personality of members of a specific group, on the one hand, and the pertinent aspects of the culture of the group, on the other—as well as for other reasons. See, for example, Piker (1994, pp. 12–13); Singer (1961, pp. 40–41); Shweder (1991, pp. 269–312).

Otto Klineberg—all involved in SSRC initiatives in personality and culture during the 1930s—became members of the preparatory commission for the upcoming Conference of the World Federation for Mental Health (Heims, 1993, pp. 172–174). The report of the preparatory commission, written by Frank and Mead in 1948, although oriented toward the fostering of mental health, nevertheless aptly expressed the personality and culture approach as it had been formulated by the advisory committee in the 1930s. According to the report, the study of personality formation would proceed by examining the impact of "interpersonal relationships" on the child. Most importantly, it would play a key role in the assessment of the major institutions of society. Moreover, "research must be conducted in such a way that the psychiatrist and social scientist are brought into the closest possible contact with the administrator and political leader. . . . The goal of mental health has been enlarged from the concern for the development of healthy personalities to the larger task of creating a healthy society" (as cited in Heims, 1993, p. 173).

MANUSCRIPT SOURCES

The archival materials—which include Social Science Research Council (SSRC) and foundation reports, memorandum, letters, minutes, and conference transcripts—used in this paper are held at the Rockefeller Archive Center in Sleepy Hollow, New York. Much of this material is included in a bound volume entitled "Committee on Personality and Culture, 1930–1940," the official SSRC records of the activities of the Committee on Personality and Culture, in the SSRC Archive, accession 1, series 1.22, box 249, folder 1479, Rockefeller Archive Center. I have abbreviated this source as SSRC-CPC and have used the pagination of the bound volume. For other archival holdings utilized, I have cited in full the location in the Rockefeller Archive Center—or the reel and other appropriate information for LSRM or SSRC microfilmed materials.

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