[illegible] animals have no language or conscience, and they certainly do not know how to cook. The philosopher, obviously a casuist at heart, found himself imprisoned for irreverence.

It is perhaps fortunate for contemporary anthropologists that irreverence is the first commandment of the postmodern world, and that once again the role of the jester has become an admired one, as we have remembered at long last the importance of living ironically and by our wits. Thus there was no church injunction against lecturing, indeed it was by invitation, when in 1983 Clifford Geertz delivered the annual Distinguished Lecture, titled "Anti Anti-Relativism," to the American Anthropological Association (Geertz 1984). One point of the lecture was to rally anthropologists to the task of challenging the received and unquestioned assumptions and classifications of our own contemporary empire. (I have tried my hand at it here.) Unlike Abelard, Geertz walked off the stage unharmed, to applause. What used to be a medieval heresy is now one of several currents in a contemporary discipline called anthropology, in which, barring the reappearance of a St. Bernard, casuists can now practice their art or alchemy without stigma on the same stage as the ghost busters and psyche analysts.

2.

Cultural Psychology: What Is It?

A discipline is emerging called cultural psychology. It is not general psychology. It is not cross-cultural psychology. It is not psychological anthropology. It is not ethnopsychology. It is cultural psychology. And its time may have arrived, once again. This essay is a preliminary attempt to say, taxonomically and narratively, what the discipline of cultural psychology was, is, and ought to be about.[1] Ultimately it is a story of cyclical return.

In the short run, however, the essay is a story of one of the pitfalls of the "cognitive revolution" of the 1960s, of its failure to develop an adequate theory of the "person," because of the prevailing Platonism implicit in its scientific agenda. It is also a scouting expedition across the boundaries of some very treacherous disciplinary territories in the search to recover an important interdisciplinary identity.

Cultural psychology is the study of the way cultural traditions and social practices regulate, express, and transform the human psyche, resulting less in psychic unity for humankind than in ethnic divergences in mind, self, and emotion. Cultural psychology is the study of the ways subject and object, self and other, psyche and culture, person and context, figure and ground, practitioner and practice, live together, require each other, and dynamically, dialectically, and jointly make each other up.

Cultural psychology is premised on human existential uncertainty (the search for meaning) and on an "intentional" conception of "constituted" worlds. The principle of existential uncertainty asserts that human beings, starting at birth (and perhaps earlier), are highly motivated to seize meanings and resources out of a sociocultural environment that has been arranged to provide them with meanings and resources to seize and to use. The principle of intentional (or constituted) worlds asserts that subjects and objects, practitioners and practices, human beings and sociocultural environments, interpenetrate each other's identity and cannot be analyzed into independent and dependent variables. Their identities are interdependent; neither side of the supposed contrast can be defined without borrowing from the specifications of the other.

The basic idea of cultural psychology is that, on the one hand, no sociocultural environment exists or has identity independently of the way human beings seize meanings and resources from it, while, on the other hand, every human being's subjectivity and mental life are altered through the process of seizing meanings and resources from some sociocultural environment and using them.

A sociocultural environment is an intentional world. It is an intentional world because its existence is real, factual, and forceful, but only so long as there exists a community of persons whose beliefs, desires, emotions, purposes, and other mental representations are directed at, and thereby influenced by, it.

Intentional worlds are human artifactual worlds, populated with products of our own design. An intentional world might contain such events as "stealing" or "taking communion," such processes as "harm," or "sin," such stations as "in-law" or "exorcist," such practices as "betrothal" or "divorce," such visible entities as "weeds" and invisible entities as "natural rights," and such crafted objects as a "Jersey cow," an "abacus," a "confessional booth," a "card catalogue," an "oversize tennis racquet," a "psychoanalytic couch," or a "living room."

Such intentional (made, bred, fashioned, fabricated, invented, designated, constituted) things exist only in intentional worlds. What makes their existence intentional is that such things would not exist independently of our involvements with and reactions to them; and they exercise their influence in our lives because of our conceptions of them (Schneider 1968, 1984; D'Andrade 1981, 1984, 1986). Intentional things are causally active, but only by virtue of our mental representations of them.

Intentional things have no "natural" reality or identity separate from human understandings and activities. Intentional worlds do not exist independently of the intentional states (beliefs, desires, emotions) directed at them and by them, by the persons who live in them.

Thus, for example, a weed is an intentional thing. It is an intrusive, interfering, or improper plant that you do not want growing in your garden. Consequently, a daisy, sunflower, a foxglove, or perhaps even a thorny rose that turns up in your vegetable patch might be plucked out as a weed, while one can find intentional worlds in which crabgrass, marijuana, or dandelions are not constituted as weeds at all. Instead they are cultivated as cash crops.

Because a weed is a weed is a weed, but only in some intentional world, there is no impersonal, neutral, "objective," "scientific," independent-of-human-response, botanical, genetic, or "natural kind" definition of plants that can specify *in the abstract* or *in general* which ones count as weeds. The botanical capacity to self-seed bestows on a plant the power to be a nuisance, if the plant is unwanted. Yet the same plant, if it is wanted, has the power to produce abundant harvests. And there are other routes by which a plant might make itself troublesome or become misplaced in your garden, ultimately to be weeded out.

It would seem to follow that in some fascinating and important sense, the weeds in our gardens achieve their reality because we are implicated in their existence, and we achieve our reality, at least in part, by letting them become implicated in ours. Our identities interpenetrate and take each other into account. Without us nature knows little of the existence of weeds. Without the existence of weeds and of all the aims, activities, and practices (Wittgenstein's "forms of life") presupposed by their existence and constitutive of it, there would be less to us worth knowing.

And because a weed is a weed is a weed, but only in some intentional world, what is truly true (beautiful, good) within one intentional world (for example, "That is a 'weed'; therefore, it ought to be plucked out of the ground and discarded") is not necessarily universally true (beautiful, good) in every intentional world; and what is not necessarily true (beautiful, good) in every intentional world may be truly true (beautiful, good) in this one or in that one.

According to the principle of intentional worlds there is no logical requirement that the identity of things remain, fixed and universal, across intentional worlds; while within any particular intentional world (for example, the twentieth-century intentional world of Amer-

ican baseball, or the sixteenth-century intentional world of English witchcraft) the identity of a thing (for example, a "foul ball" or a "witch") can be real and the question of its real identity (for example, was that a "foul ball"? or is she a "witch"?) can be a subject for rational and objective dispute.[2]

Cultural psychology is the study of intentional worlds. It is the study of personal functioning in particular intentional worlds. It is the study of the interpersonal maintenance of any intentional world. It is the investigation of those psycho-somatic-socio-cultural and, inevitably, divergent realities in which subject and object cannot possibly be separated and kept apart because they are so interdependent as to need each other to be (see Kleinman 1986a; Shweder 1986; and Chapters 1 and 8 of this volume).

Finally, cultural psychology is an interdisciplinary human science. It aims to develop several companion disciplines, especially an anthropology (reunited with linguistics) suitable for the analysis of sociocultural environments (meanings and resources; "forms of life") in all their intentionality and particularity, and a psychology (reunited with philosophy) suitable for the analysis of persons in all their intentionality and historicity.

Answering a "What Is It?" Question

It is a principle of cultural psychology—the principle of intentional worlds—that nothing real "just is," that instead realities are the product of the way things get re-presented, embedded, implemented, and reacted to in various taxonomic or narrative contexts or both. The reality of cultural psychology is no exception to the principle. As a constructed intellectual discipline cultural psychology has a taxonomic and narrative identity whose reality is not independent of our sharing with each other, debating, and acting upon our conception of it.

To say what something is, taxonomically, is to say what it is not, to say what it is a kind of, and to point to instances of it. It is to subsume it as a particular example of something more general and to generalize it, so as to turn something more particular than it into its example.

To say what something is, narratively, is to describe its origination ("once upon a time") and its density (its aim, purpose, or function) and to comprehend its current status, in the here and now, as part of a longer story of strivings, achievements, obstacles, growth, adaptations, failures, dormancy, or never-ending cyclical return.

Placed in its taxonomic context an ideal cultural psychology has qualities that distinguish it from general psychology, cross-cultural psychology, psychological anthropology, and ethnopsychology.

It Is Not General Psychology

First cultural psychology must be distinguished from general psychology.

"People are the same wherever you go" is a line from the song "Ebony and Ivory," by Paul McCartney and Stevie Wonder; that line describes pretty well a basic assumption of general psychology. The assumption is sometimes referred to as the principle of psychic unity of humankind.

General psychology assumes that its subject matter is a central (abstract and transcendent = deep or interior or hidden) processing mechanism inherent (fixed and universal) in human beings, which enables them to think (classify, infer, remember, imagine), experience (emote, feel, desire, need, self-reflect), act (strive, prefer, choose, evaluate), and learn. The aim of general psychology is to describe that central inherent processing mechanism of mental life. Since the central processing mechanism is presumed to be a transcendent, abstract, fixed, and universal property of the human psyche, general psychology has the look, taste, and smell of a Platonic undertaking. For it is that presupposed central and inherent processing mechanism that is the true object of fascination in general psychology and not all the concrete, apparent, variable, and particular stuff, substance, or content that is operated upon by the processor or may interfere with its operation.

It is a necessary step in the general psychology enterprise to distinguish intrinsic psychological structures and processes from extrinsic environmental conditions, to procedurally abstract and analytically withdraw the knower from what he or she knows, and to insist on a fundamental division between the processing mechanism of the person versus his or her personal or group history, context, stimulus and task environment, institutional setting, resources, beliefs, values, and knowledge.

Of course, people are not the same wherever you go. Not even Paul McCartney and Stevie Wonder are the same. And no general psychology is so unworldly as to overlook that fact.

General psychology may be Platonic but it is certainly not thoughtless. The principle of general psychology that "people are the same

wherever you go" does not mean that people are the same in *every* respect. It means that transcendently, "deep down" or "inside," where the central processing mechanism lives, people are the same (or, alternatively, what gives people "psychic unity" is what makes them all the same "deep down" or "inside").

All the other stuff—stimuli, contexts, resources, values, meanings, knowledge, religion, rituals, language, technologies, institutions—is conceived to be external to or outside of the central processing mechanism. Observations on Rajput widows in India, motivated by special beliefs and desires, immolating themselves along with their deceased husband on his funeral pyre; or observations on Chinese abacus experts, assisted by special mental representational techniques, solving arithmetic problems "in their head" at a speed several orders of magnitude faster than the rest of humanity—all that may be rich material for humanistic inquiry, journalistic reporting, and literary representation, yet all of it must, given the Platonist impulse, be viewed, in and of itself, as incidental or secondary to the aim of general psychology.

The aim, as noted: to get behind superficial appearances, local manifestations, and external resources to isolate the intrinsic central processing mechanism of the mental life and describe the invariant laws of its operation.[3]

It is that Platonic impulse, one suspects, that was behind the memorable remark from an anthropologist who, upon hearing about Mike Cole and John Gay's research in Liberia (1972), argued to the effect that the thinking processes of West African tribesmen do not differ from our own; only their values, beliefs, and classifications differ, which is why the Kpelle perform so differently on psychological tests (see Cole and Gay 1972, p. 1066).

It is that same impulse, one suspects, that once led Melford Spiro (1955), with his interest in group differences in personality, to express the methodological concern that in demonstrating emotional and behavioral differences across different sociocultural contexts, anthropologists had not demonstrated the existence of *genuine* personality differences at all. They "have merely demonstrated that different stimuli evoke different responses" (p. 257).

The methodological "merely" in Spiro's analysis is revealing. For one might have argued, methodologically and non-Platonically, that the power of a particular stimulus to evoke a particularizing response is not independent of the way a person or people get particularly involved with it psychologically—classify it, reason about it, tell stories about it, appropriate it to their purposes—and that that is what *genuine* personality differences are about. In intentional worlds "stimuli" are not external to or independent of our understanding of them, and those understandings are a large part of what we mean by "personality" (see, for example, Mischel 1973).

In other words, one might have argued, from the point of view of intentional worlds, that the study of genuine psychological differences between ethnic groups should be conceived as the study of how different sociocultural environments become different *by virtue of* the ways they are differently constituted psychologically by different peoples so as to possess different response evocation potentials.

Platonism is an ancient and formidable school of interpretation. It is crucial to recognize that the long-lived and imaginative idea of an inherent (fixed, universal) and central (transcendent, abstract) processing mechanism, a psychic unity to humankind, will never be seriously threatened by the mere existence of performance differences between individuals or populations. Those performance differences can always be interpreted, and should be interpreted, as the consequence of incomparabilities, incommensurabilities, or just some plain differences in all the other stuff; which leaves permanently unsettled and eternally unsettlable the question whether there really is, deep down, an inherent and central processing mechanism hidden behind all the other stuff. Platonism and its alternatives will always be with us, offering different interpretations and competing visions of the nature of the human psyche.

It is equally crucial to recognize that general psychology with its Platonic imagery and premises is not the only imaginative and interpretative game in town for understanding the mental life. If one subscribes to an alternative, non-Platonic principle of intentional worlds, that nothing in particular exists independently of our involvement with it and interpretation of it, it is possible to conceive of the mental life as variable and plural and substantive and constructively stimulus bound.

And it is possible to characterize a large part of the mental life in terms of the particularizing ways peoples constitute and get involved with particulars, thereby giving to those constructed stimuli, task environments, and sociocultural contexts the powers they have to evoke the special responses they evoke.

Nevertheless the aim of general psychology is Platonic, and its Platonic aim is to seek out a presumed central processing mechanism of human beings and to isolate it from all the other stuff.

Given that aim, it is not surprising that general psychology has constructed its own special intellectual standards for knowledge representation (its preferred ontology) and knowledge seeking (its preferred epistemology). Ontologically speaking, knowledge in general psychology is the attempt to imagine and characterize the form or shape of an inherent central processing mechanism for psychological functions (discrimination, categorization, memory, learning, motivation, inference, and so on). Epistemologically speaking, knowledge seeking in general psychology is the attempt to get a look at the central processing mechanism untainted by content and context, and so on.

The main force in general psychology is the idea of that central processing device. The processor, it is imagined, stands over and above, or transcends, all the stuff upon which it operates. It engages all the stuff of culture, context, task and stimulus material as its content.

Given that image, the central processor itself must be context and content independent. That means, in effect, that the processor must be describable in terms of properties that are either free of context/content (abstract, formal, structural properties) or general to all contexts/contents (invariant, universal properties).

Still speaking ontologically, it is that image of an inherent (fixed, universal) and central (abstract, transcendent) processing mechanism—a context/content-independent and omnipresent mental unity—that is the explanation for the great esteem conferred in general psychology upon accounts of the mental life in terms of universal mathematical functions and invariant formal limits or constraints (for example, exponential decay functions mapped in an abstract psychological space for representing the probability of generalization between pairs of stimulus events in any domain for any sensory modality for any species, as in Shepard 1987; or magical numbers, seven plus or minus two, to represent the maximum capacity of the central processing mechanism for distinguishing values, whatever the values, along any single dimension, whatever the dimension, in any single instant, wherever and whenever the instant, as in G. Miller 1956).

Great esteem is also conferred within general psychology upon certain ways of seeking knowledge. Knowledge seeking in general psychology is the attempt to gain direct access to the central processing mechanism without having to become quagmired in all the other stuff.

General psychologists *qua* general psychologists are typically wary of rain forests, swamps, and the complex textures and tones of everyday life, language, and institutional settings. They take comfort in a radically simplifying (some would call it a radically "surreal") article of faith, namely, that the central processor is most likely to reveal its pristine form when lured by meaning-free or unfamiliar or novel stimulus items into a context-free environment.[4]

Nonsense syllables, white coats, and darkened bare rooms may be misguided or monstrous anachronisms for serious researchers in general psychology, yet the experimental lab is still treated as a privileged space, where, quite fantastically and against much evidence, it is conveniently assumed that we can physically enter a transcendent realm where the effects of context, content, and meaning can be eliminated, standardized, or kept under control, and the central processor observed in the raw. The image of a central processing mechanism and the search for a window or a peephole through which to view it naked and pure may explain why in general psychology there has become entrenched the intuition that real scientists do experiments in a lab.

Unfortunately, even if the presumed inherent but hidden central processing mechanism does exist, the psychological laboratory is probably not the mythical enchanted doorway through which we can step straight away into a more fundamental reality. Indeed, one suspects that the sociocultural environment of lab life is not even plausibly equivalent to the physicist's vacuum or the physiologist's X-ray for directly accessing things that are basic, deep, or hidden from view. The ideas of a context-free environment, a meaning-free stimulus event, and a fixed meaning are probably best kept where they belong, along with placeless space, eventless time, and squared circles on that famous and fabulous list of impossible notions. For when it comes to the investigation and examination of psychological functioning, there probably is no way to get rid of all the other stuff, even in the lab.

Of course, nothing I have said argues against studying "stuff" in a lab. If the stuff brought into the lab (or simulated there) is interesting enough stuff to study, and if one can bring it into the lab (or reproduce it there) without spoiling it (those are big "ifs"), then one can certainly study it there, and there may even be very good reason to (see, for example, Milgram 1974). Whether there is a royal road running through the lab to the land of the central processing mechanism of the mental life is, however, quite another issue.

Roger Shepard's recent discussion (published, appropriately, in *Science* magazine) (1987) of "a universal law of generalization for psy-

chological science" is a revealing illustration of Platonist presuppositions in general psychology and the way they guide a research enterprise and structure the interpretation of evidence by even the most brilliant practitioners.

Shepard begins and ends by holding out Newton's mathematical and universal law of gravitation as the standard by which to judge the success or failure of the discipline of psychology. Psychology, Shepard avers, should strive to be the science of the invariant mathematical forms underlying psychological functioning. Three hundred years after the publication of Newton's *Principia* Shepard thinks psychology can finally point to a success, a mathematical law of stimulus generalization which "is invariant across perceptual dimensions, modalities, individuals and species" and which shows that psychology "may not be inherently limited merely to the descriptive characterization of the behavior of particular terrestrial species" or the properties of particular stimulus domains (pp. 1317–18, 1323).

Shepard's "universal law" is basically an abstract spatial representation of an exponential decay function for stimulus generalization likelihoods between pairs of stimuli. The exponential decay function is detectable in several data sets from humans and pigeons, which record for selected domains (for example, consonant phonemes, triangles of different sizes and shapes) the probability that a response learned to any one stimulus within the domain will generalize to any other stimulus within the domain. Shepard believes that this exponential decay function is the central processing mechanism for stimulus generalization in its pristine form—abstract and transcendent (= deeply interior), fixed, and universal (p. 1318).

To have a glimpse at this abstract transcendent processing function Shepard is quite prepared—indeed, feels compelled—to exteriorize, treat as illusory, and withdraw his attention from several levels of reality that play a major part in human classificatory behavior.

First he must withdraw his attention from measurable similarities and differences in the stimulus materials themselves. For it has been shown—he views the relevant findings as "troublesome" and "discouraging"—that there exists no universal mathematical function for predicting the probability of a generalization response from measurable physical characteristics of pairs of stimuli; those mathematical functions seem to vary by stimulus domain (p. 1317). For example, the mathematical function for the color space may differ from the function for tonal scales, and these may differ by species or individuals; and within a particular stimulus domain, such as the color space,

a response to a particular color chip may generalize to a distant hue at the opposite end of the spectrum. So if there is to be a universal law of generalization it is not going to be a law of the stimulus environment. It must be a pure psychological function, not a psychophysical function (p. 1318). It cannot tell us which stimulus items in any domain will be generalized to, only that the likelihood of generalization across pairs of stimulus items (whichever they should turn out to be) will decay exponentially. To reach the central processing mechanism of stimulus generalization Shepard must get beyond the stimulus environment.

Then he must also get beyond learning processes. For he does not expect his universal law of generalization to describe generalization behavior under multiple learning trials, because "differential reinforcement could shape the generalization function and contours around a particular stimulus into a wide variety of forms" (p. 1322).

Finally he must get beyond reconstructive memory processes. For it is known that the universal law is *not* descriptive of generalization behavior when learning trials are delayed. This Shepard interprets as a failure of the law because of interfering " 'noise' in the internal representation of the stimuli" (p. 1322).

At this point a reader of *Science* interested in similarity and difference judgments might be tempted to ask what we have learned about human classificatory behavior. Having withdrawn his attention from the stimulus environment and from processes of learning and memory, why does Shepard think he is looking at something fundamental such as a central processing mechanism of mind?

The answer is clear and Platonic. Late in his article Shepard points out that, strictly speaking, his universal law is descriptive of stimulus generalization behavior *only* when "generalization is tested immediately after a single learning trial with a novel stimulus" (p.1322).

Here we come to the great and unbreachable divide between general psychology and cultural psychology. Moved by the Platonic impulse (and perhaps by the prestigious image of Newton's gravitational forces operating in a vacuum), Shepard seems to think that something truly fundamental about the mind—an inherent central processing mechanism—can be divined only if we can transcend the noise and clutter of the environment by bleaching it of familiar things and impoverishing it of feedback, and by isolating the mind from its own mental supports.

The alternative interpretation—that of cultural psychology—is that the mind left to its own devices is mindless. From that perspec-

tive, Shepard's proposed "universal law of generalization for psychological science" is little more than an extremely unqualified description of the special, restrictive (and, we might add, rather peculiar) effects on similarity and difference judgments of unfamiliar stuff (novel stimuli) examined in one-trial learning environments.

According to the principles of cultural psychology the effects of stuff will not go away, even in the lab, for there is no context-free environment. We are intentional beings who live in an intentional world of constituted and re-presented particulars—domain-specific, concrete, subject-dependent artifactual things. Absolute transcendence is a great and marvelous thing, but not if we want to keep the psyche in psychology.

The implication, of course, is that genuine success for psychological science will come when we stop trying to get beyond the "noise" and start trying to say interesting things about some of the more robust and patterned varieties of it.[5]

That is the challenge for cultural psychology. But I am getting ahead of my story. First we must consider cross-cultural psychology (not to be confused with cultural psychology), which can be very "noisy," perhaps too noisy.

It Is Not Cross-Cultural Psychology

One of the hazards of general psychology as a Platonic undertaking is the inherent difficulty of distinguishing statements about a presumed inherent central processing mechanism from statements about all the other stuff. It is that difficulty that has kept the discipline of cross-cultural psychology in business.

Cross-cultural psychology is a subdiscipline of general psychology that shares with it the Platonic aim of characterizing the inherent central processing mechanisms of the mental life. Practitioners of the subdiscipline carry the general psychologist's tests and research procedures abroad.

Occasionally cross-cultural psychological research replicates some regularity observed in Western-educated subjects (Ekman 1989). The main discovery of cross-cultural psychology, however, is that many descriptions of mental functioning emerging from laboratory research with Western-educated populations do not travel very well to subject populations in other cultures. Thus, although almost all adults in Geneva, Paris, London, and New York display so-called concrete operational thinking on Piaget's conservation of mass, number, and liquid quantity tasks, many adults in many Third World capitals do not (Cole and Scribner 1974; Hallpike 1979).

The definitive problematic of cross-cultural psychology is the struggle, fought in Platonic terms, over how to interpret population-based differences in performance on psychological tests and tasks. Within the framework of Platonic thinking there are only two possibilities. The first possibility is that the performance differences exist primarily because the central processing mechanism inherent in the mind has not yet become fully developed among certain peoples of the world (Hallpike 1979; see Shweder 1982d for a critique). The second possibility is that the performance differences exist primarily because the psychologist's tests and tasks baffle and bewilder certain peoples of the world and deny them a fair opportunity to put on display the extant central processing mechanisms of the mind (Cole and Scribner 1974).

Both interpretations presuppose the principle of psychic unity. According to the first interpretation, psychic unity is the anticipated result of central processor development, but the universal and uniform structures inherent in the mind will mature only under ideal environmental conditions. This leads some cross-cultural psychologists to become concerned with possible external stimulators of growth of the central processing mechanism—literacy, schooling, toys, Socratic dialogue, and so on. According to the second interpretation psychic unity is not just a potential inherent in the mind. Psychic unity has already been achieved. It is there, waiting to be revealed. This leads other cross-cultural psychologists to become concerned with "etics" and "emics" and with the incommensurateness or inappropriateness across cultures of test materials and research tasks; and it leads them to search for more "natural" or "realistic" settings, activities, and institutions in everyday life where central processor functioning goes on unimpeded by the artificial or unfamiliar conditions of psychological task environments.

Cross-cultural psychology has lived on the margins of general psychology as a frustrated gadfly, and it is not too hard to understand why. For one thing, cross-cultural psychology offers no substantial challenge to the core Platonic principle of general psychology (the principle of psychic unity). Moreover, if you are a general psychologist cum Platonist (and a principled one at that) there is no theoretical benefit in learning more and more about the quagmire of appearances—the retarding effects of environment on the development of the central processing mechanism, the "noise" introduced by trans-

lation or by differences in the understanding of the test situation or by cultural variations in the norms regulating the asking and answering of questions. Rather, if you are a general psychologist, you will want to transcend those appearances and reach for the imagined abstract forms and processes operating behind the extrinsic crutches and restraints and distortions of this or that performance environment.

Perhaps that is why, in general psychology, cross-cultural psychology has diminutive status, and why its research literature tends to be ignored. Not surprisingly, developmental psychology—the study of age-graded differences in performance on psychological tests and tasks—has suffered a similar fate, and for similar reasons.

It is doubtful that anyone is going to divest general psychology of its fascination with the imaginative idea of an inherent central processing mechanism. And certainly this disenchantment is not going to be produced by merely showing that the regularities observed in the Western lab do not travel well to other contexts, or generalize to subjects from other cultures (or age levels) or to stimulus materials from everyday life (see LeVine n.d.). The Platonist framework for interpretation is likely to remain enshrined in general psychology and definitive of its intellectual agenda. Like the scripture of some great religion of the world, it sets the terms for its own assessment, and it has enormous appeal, especially for those devoted to it to whom it appeals.

A problem with cross-cultural psychology is that it is not heretical enough, even as it raises its serious concerns. It would not be too great an exaggeration to assert that so-called method effects (major variations in research findings as a result of slight variations in research procedure, elicitation technique, wording of questions, description and representation of problems, expectation of examiners, subject population, and so on) are the main effects to emerge out of decades of laboratory research in general psychology. The method effect phenomenon (see Campbell and Fiske 1959; Cronbach 1975; Fiske 1986) is quite consistent with the discovery that generalizations from psychological research on one population do not travel very well across cultural, historical, and institutional boundaries.

Unfortunately, in the face of that evidence most cross-cultural psychologists have been unable to free themselves of the hegemony of Platonistic presuppositions in general psychology. They have continued to assume a psychic unity to humankind and to search for the presumed central processing mechanism in growth-stimulating environments (literate, Western industrialized urban centers) or through culture-fair or everyday stimulus materials.

Cultural psychology is far more heterodox vis-à-vis the canon of psychic unity. For cultural psychology is built out of a fundamental skepticism concerning all those fateful and presupposed distinctions: intrinsic properties of mind versus extrinsic properties of environments, form versus content, the "deep" versus the "superficial," the inherent central processing mechanism (psychic unity) versus all the other stuff.

Cultural psychology offers an alternative discipline of interpretation of the fundamentals of the mind. The mind, according to cultural psychology, is content driven, domain specific, and constructively stimulus bound; and it cannot be extricated from the historically variable and cross-culturally diverse intentional worlds in which it plays a coconstituting part. Consequently, cultural psychology interprets statements about regularities observed in a lab or observed anywhere else, on the street or in a classroom, in Chicago or in Khartoum, not as propositions about inherent properties of a central processing mechanism for human psychological functioning but rather as descriptions of local response patterns contingent on context, resources, instructional sets, authority relations, framing devices, and modes of construal.[6]

It is the aim of cultural psychology to understand the organization and evocative power of all that stuff, to study the major varieties of it, and to seek the mind where it is mindful, indissociably embedded in the meanings and resources that are both its product and its components.

It Is Not Psychological Anthropology

Whereas cross-cultural psychology is a subdiscipline of psychology, psychological anthropology is a province of anthropology; which means that psychological anthropology is less concerned with behavior in laboratories or on standardized tests or with novel stimulus materials and more concerned with other kinds of stuff. The stuff of anthropology includes rituals and folk tales, games and art forms, family life practices and religious doctrines, kinship categories and inherited systems of knowledge. Anthropologists in general like to muck around in the stuff of everyday life and language, and psychological anthropologists are no exception.

It should come as no surprise that psychological anthropology is psychological. Its proper and excellent aim is to understand the way ritual, language, belief, and other systems of meaning function or are put together in the lives and experiences and mental representations of persons.

In recent years many psychological anthropologists have turned to the study of cultural psychology and have revised some of the classic assumptions of the discipline. What I write here applies to psychological anthropology before its more recent reincarnation as cultural psychology. (See Chapter 7 of this volume.)

Classically, psychological anthropology has tended to conceive of the psychological in the general psychology sense, which means that when psychological anthropologists have mucked around in classic form in their favorite anthropological stuff (for example, initiation ceremonies, kinship classifications, origin stories, conceptions of the gods) they have done so with the idea of psychic unity in mind.

Psychological anthropologists of the classic form have gone searching for the transcendental in the world of appearances. They have tried to explain the stuff of culture by reference to the workings of a central processing mechanism underlying psychological functioning. They have tried to use the stuff of culture to characterize or discover a central processing device. Whereas general psychologists search for the central processor by trying to eliminate the "interfering" effects, the "noise" and "distortion" produced by any meaningful stimulus environment, psychological anthropologists have looked for the central processor in the stimulus environment, on the assumption that there is something about long-surviving sociocultural environments that makes them relatively noiseless and distortion free.

The hallmarks of classical psychological anthropology are the sanguine premises that there exists an inherent central processing mechanism for individual psychological functioning and that its powers and influences extend into the sociocultural environment. Therefore, to remain viable any sociocultural environment must be adapted to or expressive of the central processing mechanism's abstract form and invariant constraints.

Psychological anthropology can be taxonomized along received fault lines (body versus mind; affect and motivation versus thought) into two subfields: "culture and personality" and "cognitive anthropology."

Before the recent reemergence of a cultural psychology the subfields of classical psychological anthropology were united with each other,

as well as with general psychology and cross-cultural psychology, by the now familiar assumption of the psychic unity of humankind.

The central problematic for general psychology, as we have seen, is to characterize the central processing mechanism inherent in mental functioning by isolating it from the environment and from all the other extrinsic stuff upon which it operates. The central processor is abstract, transcendent (interior, deep, hidden, beyond, somewhere else), fixed, and universal. The central problematic for cross-cultural psychology is to explain the noteworthy performance differences on psychological tests between human populations without renouncing the idea of an inherent psychic unity. Performance differences exist, it is argued in cross-cultural psychology, either because the cultural environment has slowed the full maturation of the central processor in some populations, or because the performance environment of psychological testing has inhibited the central processing mechanism from going on display.

The central problematic of classical psychological anthropology, however, is more imperial—to find expanded into the territory of sociocultural environments the central authority of the psychological processing machine. The imperial premises: that the stuff of sociocultural environments gets shaped or molded by the dictates and constraints of the central processing mechanism into a limited number of possible designs for living; that the central processing mechanism gives structure to a sociocultural environment, either by mediating the relationships between its stuff or by impressing its abstract form upon it.

Thus, in classical psychological anthropology sibling terminological systems might be interpreted as revelatory of a universal and inherent disinclination of the central processing mechanism to engage in disjunctive reasoning (Nerlove and Romney 1967). Cultural origin stories might be interpreted as revelatory of an inherent preference of the human mind for dichotomous categories (Lévi-Strauss 1963). And almost everything from myths to patterns of kinship avoidance and joking to adolescent circumcision ceremonies might be interpreted as revelatory of that famous presumptive psychic universal known as the Oedipus complex (Stephens 1962; Spiro 1983).

Psychological anthropology, classically practiced, is a reductionist enterprise. Unlike Shepard (1987), who searches for the abstract central processing mechanism for stimulus generalization behavior by trying to reach beyond the "noisy," autonomous, and resistant physical constraints of any concrete stimulus domain, principled psycho-

logical anthropologists assume that the substantive domains of a sociocultural environment are a relatively pliant content operated upon by, or expressive of, deep and invariant psychological laws or processes of motivation, affect, and intellect.

Cultural psychology is not psychological anthropology.

Psychological anthropology assumes that there is an inherent central processing mechanism.

Psychological anthropology assumes that the central processing mechanism not only stands outside the sociocultural environment as an independent, fixed, and universal given of the human psyche; the central processor also reaches in to the sociocultural environment, leaving its indelible stamp.

Psychological anthropology assumes that the structure and functioning of the central processing mechanism is not fundamentally altered by the content, stuff, material, or sociocultural environment on which it operates.

Psychological anthropology assumes that whatever the differences are between populations in all the other stuff (in religious beliefs, in ceremonial life, in mythology, and so on), those differences can and should be interpreted as just so many products of the deep operations of a psychically unifying central processing device.

Cultural psychology is dubious of all those assumptions; indeed, cultural psychology is psychological anthropology without those assumptions. Many psychological anthropologists today are in fact doing cultural psychology.

It Is Not Ethnopsychology

If cultural psychology is psychological anthropology without the premise of psychic unity, then ethnopsychology is cultural psychology without a psyche at all.

Ethnopsychology is the study of ethnic variations in theories of the mental life. It is the investigation of indigenous representations of mind, self, body, and emotion. Such representations might include biochemical theories linking black bile or tired blood or sluggish neurotransmitters to depression. They might include interpersonal theories of guilt and possessive states conceiving of the mind as populated with the unplacated spirits or shadows of one's ancestors. They might include lay classifications of subjective states (thinking, feeling, willing). They might even include Platonistic theories positing a psychic unity to humankind.

There are many points of similarity between cultural psychology and ethnopsychology, especially a common concern for the psychological categories of indigenous folk. The major point of difference is that ethnopsychology is a subdiscipline of ethnosemantics or ethnoscience. It is primarily concerned with the investigation of mind, self, body, and emotion as topics (along with, for example, botany or kinship) in the ethnographic study of folk beliefs.

Ethnopsychology is thus less concerned with the actual psychological functioning and subjective life of individuals in the cultures whose doctrines about mind, representations of emotions, formal texts about the self, and gender ceremonies are under examination. Ethnopsychology is cultural psychology without the functioning psyche.

For some general anthropologists, especially those who are psychophobic, the focus in ethnopsychology on folk beliefs and doctrines sanitizes its subject matter (mind, self, emotion) and makes it more acceptable for investigation. The person is allowed in to general ethnography safely contained in the form of an idea or an ideology.

Cultural psychology is more person centered and a bit less cerebral; for it is the ethnopsychology of a functioning psyche, as it actually functions, malfunctions, and functions differently, in different parts of the world. Many ethnopsychologists today are in fact doing cultural psychology.

An Origin Story for Cultural Psychology

Taxonomically, as presented so far, cultural psychology is the plural, variable, domain-specific, and constructively "stimulus-bound" psychology of intentional worlds. It is psychological anthropology without the premise of psychic unity. It is the ethnopsychology of the functioning psyche as it actually functions, malfunctions, and functions differently in the different parts of the world.

Cultural psychology tries to synthesize, or at least combine, some of the virtues of general psychology, cross-cultural psychology, psychological anthropology, and ethnopsychology while seeking to disencumber itself of their vices. It should come as no surprise that a vice in the intentional world of cultural psychology turns out to be a Platonist's virtue, and vice versa.

Viewed from the intentional world of cultural psychology, the virtue in general psychology is its concern with the organized nature of the mental life. Its vice is its conception of the mental as a central

processing mechanism—abstract, interior (transcendent), universal, fixed, and content free.

The virtue in cross-cultural psychology is its concern with performance differences between ethnic groups. Its vice is its orthodox adherence to the premise of psychic unity.

The virtue in psychological anthropology is its focus on psychological functioning in sociocultural context. Its vice is its subordination of the sociocultural environment to the postulated directives of a central processing device.

The virtue in ethnopsychology is its attention to indigenous or local conceptions of mind, self, body, and person. Its vice is its psychophobia.

There is, of course, much more that needs to be said and worked out about each of those points. Yet there is also another way to "thicken" (Geertz 1973) our appreciation of cultural psychology, which is to treat it not only in a taxonomic context of definition but also in a narrative one.

There are many stories that can be told, at varying orders of magnitude of historical time depth, about ups and downs in the life of cultural psychology. The following tale is a short and very contemporary one, selected from the many that could be told. It is the story of a pitfall of the "cognitive revolution" of the 1960s.

It is probably no accident that the current renewal of interest in cultural psychology is occurring after thirty years of intellectual fragmentation in both general anthropology and general psychology. That fragmentation can be interpreted as a salutary reaction against the Platonism hidden in the agenda of the so-called cognitive revolution of the 1960s (see Shweder 1984b, pp. 7–8).

The cognitive revolution got off to a promising start. Many (and I am one of them) welcomed it as the obvious and necessary corrective to the radical behaviorism that preceded it. The revolution seemed to address a rather serious shortcoming in psychology and anthropology, namely, the lack of a notion of mental representations and intentional states (mind, self, and emotion) in theories of the person and the lack of a notion of mental representations and intentional worlds (subject-dependent objects embedded in constituted "forms of life") in theories of the sociocultural environment.

Unfortunately, the cognitive revolution turned out to be far less than the rediscovery of intentionality and mental representations, and far more than just the displacement of behaviorism. Along with the cognitive revolution came an uninvited *Geist*—the spirit of Platonism—which aroused in psychology, and even in some corners of anthropology, that ancient fascination with formal, mathematical, structural models and an inherent central processing mechanism.

As the cognitive revolution spread through the disciplines, so did Platonism. Although some cognitivists (for example, Roy D'Andrade, George Lakoff, Catherine Lutz) sought to develop the idea of intentionality and mental representations by investigating the specifics of indigenous conceptions of physical, biological, social, and psychological things as those conceptions have a bearing on people's lives (Schank and Abelson 1977; Holland and Quinn 1986), for the most part content got set aside in favor of process, the particular in favor of the general, the substantive in favor of the abstract and the formal. The person and his or her intentional worlds, meanings, and sociocultural resources, like all concrete particulars, somehow got lost in the search for the inherent central processing mechanism of the mind.

Today, thirty years into the cognitive revolution, psychology and anthropology are more fragmented than before. In 1959 it was possible to point to experimental work on animal learning or psychophysics as "real" psychology or to ethnographic field work on social organization, ritual, and kinship as "real" anthropology, and to have some agreement about it. But no longer. When, in 1987, Shepard reported the discovery of a universal law of generalization and compared it favorably with Newton's laws of gravitation, relatively few hearts skipped a beat, and many heads shook in dismay.

To everyone's surprise—some scholars react with delight, others with despair—in 1989 it has become increasingly difficult for leading scholars to reach consensus about the specifications for an excellent psychological research project, or an excellent anthropological one. The criteria for identifying the intellectual core of each discipline have become freely contestable. With the breakup of general psychology and general anthropology, the usual definitional exercises have become strenuous and fruitless. Now when one asks scholars within the respective disciplines to name the prototypical psychologist or the prototypical anthropologist, opinions scatter, with every school of thought fancying a claim to a nonexistent center stage.

Even the recent Platonist nostalgia in some areas of psychology for something abstract and bleached and really real, and the diffuse distraction of attention to the latest intellectual fashion in reductionism and formalism, known as artificial intelligence, has proved to be short-lived. Already other reductive and nonreductive varieties of cognitive science (for example, neural nets and parallel distributed

process models) are screaming like demons for their equal time (see the special winter 1988 issue of *Daedalus* on artificial intelligence).

For the sake of developing and liberating a cultural psychology all the commotion and fragmentation has probably been for the good. Too often in the past the wrong hegemonic general psychology has conspired with the wrong hegemonic general anthropology to divide and conquer the realm. General psychology played its part by reducing and diminishing our conception of the person or of psyche to a transcendent and abstract and fixed and universal central processing mechanism. General anthropology, fascinated by all the historical and ethnographic variations and diffusional clusterings of concrete sociocultural institutions, practices, and beliefs, played its part by taking no interest in the person or psyche at all. The two hegemonic intellectual regimes preserved and deserved each other's disciplinary parochialism. Both research traditions made it difficult even to conceive of a meaningful collaboration between anthropologists and psychologists. Culture and psyche were made to keep their distance by defining what they had in common, the person and his or her intentionality, out of both.

Under a Platonist influence most high-status research in the psychological sciences during the 1960s came to be guided by five maxims or research heuristics. Modest exposure to those heuristics produced an instant indifference to the kinds of phenomena (meaning systems, institutional settings, rituals, artifacts, modes of representation, interpersonal power orders, conflicts of motives, goal-setting) of interest to cultural psychology. Those five prescriptions/proscriptions for research went something like this (see Shweder 1984b, pp. 3–4):

Heuristic 1. Search for a central processing system and represent it as an abstract structure or as a pure mathematical form; mere content can be ignored.

Heuristic 2. Language use is epiphenomenal to the true causes of behavior; what people actually say to each other can be ignored. (Note: Grammar and phonology remained legitimate topics for investigation, for they were abstract and structural and perhaps even deep; see heuristic 1).

Heuristic 3. What is really real (the central processing mechanism) is hidden and interior, and exists solely inside the skin of individuals; exterior and extrinsic macrounits such as the sociocultural environment can be ignored.

Heuristic 4. Search for universal (timeless and spaceless) laws of nature; the organization of knowledge in Newtonian physics is the ideal form for all true understanding.

Heuristic 5. Do not think about anything that cannot be controlled and measured in a lab, for the lab is the royal road to the central processing mechanism.

Those were, of course, not the only heuristics widely and wildly promoted by Platonism in psychology during the cognitive revolution. And I would not want to deny that there exists at least one research topic, and perhaps even two or three, for which those heuristics were, and continue to be, quite useful.

During the cognitive revolution, however, those heuristics became reigning ones. Their overextension and prevalence lent credence to epithets defining psychology as the "nonsocial social science." Ironically, right in the thick of the cognitive revolution, the psyche and the person were nowhere to be found in psychology; the discipline designed to study the soul, the subjectivity, the person, the rational strivings of human beings for dignity and self-esteem had turned away from those themes and returned to the mechanistic investigation of automatic processes and deep abstract mathematical forms.

Quite predictably, during the cognitive revolution the person did not succeed at gaining a foothold in anthropology. The local representatives of the revolution, the structural anthropologists (Claude Lévi-Strauss, Sir Edmund Leach), searched for the abstract universal principles of organization (for example, class inclusion, binary opposition) of the central processing mechanism. The ethnosemanticists and ethnoscientists studied classifications of flora and fauna; later they became ethnopsychologists and studied classifications of ideas about emotional states, without studying functioning (or malfunctioning) emotions at all. The culture and personality theorists—the ones who were really supposed to care about the lived experiences of persons in society—either felt disgruntled by the lack of concern for motivation and emotion or played possum; yet they could offer no compelling alternative to the Platonism of the times, since they fully endorsed Platonism's central theme—deep psychic unity. Most anthropologists, however, simply carried on as usual, just more so, documenting ethnographically and historically the diversity of exotic human institutions, practices, and beliefs and taking no interest in the person at all.

Indeed, as if to return (with a vengeance) the compliment of psychology's indifference to the "extrinsic" stuff of culture, society, meaning and context, the hegemonic prototype for research in general anthropology induced among (too) many a motivated state of psychophobia. The more psychology conceived of the person or the

psyche as fixed, interior, abstract, universal, and lawful, the more anthropology chose to interpret sociocultural environments as exterior, historically variable, culture specific, and arbitrary and to renounce any interest in psyches or persons, or in the general causes of anything.

The person disappeared from ethnography. The question of why people believe the things they believe or practice what they practice was either begged, tabooed, or trivialized. The question was reduced to questions of conformity or indoctrination or some other variation on the metaphorical theme of robotics or social pressure (see Obeyesekere 1981 and Chapter 9 of this volume).

For three decades a person-free psychology of an abstract invariant human nature conspired with a person-free anthropology of local systems of arbitrary, socially sanctioned coercive practices and meanings to keep a cultural psychology of intentional states and intentional worlds off the center stage.

Fortunately for cultural psychology there were many sideshows, and those sideshows drew an exciting and excited countercultural crowd. If you knew where to look or had the right friends, you could find cultural psychology there all along, doing its unorthodox things outside the main pavilions and the center rings.

Some of the sideshows were dazzling.[7] There was the tent of Lucien Lévy-Bruhl (1910), where exotic ethnic mentalities were put on display in defiance of psychic unity. There was the tent of Ludwig Wittgenstein (1968 [1953]), where Platonism was turned sour and transmuted into a "form of life." There was the tent of Aaron Cicourel (1974) and the "ethnomethodologists," where realities were dissolved, contextualized, infinitely regressed yet still apparently able to reconstruct themselves out of themselves. There was the tent of Roy D'Andrade (1981) and other psyche-sensitive ethnographers of mental representations, where anthropology resisted the Platonism implicit in the cognitivist agenda, on a platform of local or domain-specific territories of meaning.

There was the tent of Clifford Geertz (1973), where there was magic in words and reality in rhetoric, and where manner matters were discussed with such sophistication that the same became the different, the formal became contentful, and the fixed began to move.

There was the tent of Arthur Kleinman (1986a) and the "medical anthropologists," where soma revealed psyche and the body exposed its intentionality, and where all could see that there was more to a "splitting head" or a "broken heart" or "frayed nerves" than the

matter of disease. There was the tent of Edward Sapir and the "linguistic relativity" hypothesis, where the barker spoke the ultimate mystery (of cultural psychology): "the worlds in which different societies live are distinct worlds, not merely the same world with different labels attached" (Sapir 1929, p. 209).[8]

So What Is It?

It still remains to be seen what this new age in anthropology and psychology of seeking to conflate ancient antimonies (form/content, process/content, person/environment, interior/exterior, subjective/objective, psyche/culture) will bring.

Cultural psychology, properly understood and practiced, is heretical. Its central theme is that you cannot take the stuff out of the psyche and you cannot take the psyche out of the stuff. Cultural psychology does not presume that the fundamentals of the mental life are by nature fixed, universal, abstract, and interior. It presumes instead intentionality—that the life of the psyche is the life of intentional persons, responding to, and directing their action at, their own mental objects or representations and undergoing transformation through participation in an evolving intentional world that is the product of the mental representations that make it up. Cultural psychology assumes that intentional persons change and are changed by the concrete particulars of their own mentally constituted forms of life.

Those who labor for a cultural psychology must address many difficult analytic, methodological, and substantive issues and overcome many old habits of thinking. Betwixt and between anthropology and psychology in the reoccupied zone of cultural psychology the main agenda item these days is how to minimize, fill in, or bridge the gap created by the Platonist separation of an inherent central processing mechanism from all the other extrinsic stuff. There have been many types of attempts.

First, among those who study formal norms for reasoning (for example, philosophers of science), the Platonist search has largely been abandoned for a universally binding inductive "logic" or "formal scientific method" that might operate on its own or mechanically to draw sound inferences, free of entrenched local systems for encoding and representing and "abducting" events (Putnam 1981; see note 4).

There is also the emergence among psychologists of an interest in "expertise." Among those who study problem solving, the cognition of virtuosos has become a central topic of investigation, and exem-

plary cognition is increasingly talked about in non-Platonic ways, as knowledge based, constructively stimulus bound, and domain specific or modular. The current turn toward "content" is significant and widespread. Indeed what seems to differentiate an expert from a novice (chess player, abacus user, medical diagnostician, and so on) is not some greater amount of content-free pure logical or psychological power. What experts possess that neophytes lack is a greater quantity and quality of domain-specific knowledge of stimulus properties, as well as dedicated mastery of the specialized or parochial tools of a trade (see Stigler 1984; Stigler, Chalip, and Miller 1986; Stigler and Baranes 1988). It is thus no coincidence that those who study expertise do not equate the mental with the abstract. Instead they interpret the mind as it is embodied in concrete representations, in "mediating schemata," "scripts," and well-practiced "tools for thought."

The idea of tools for thought is an apposite (and self-referring) metaphor for thinking about thinking. It says that thinking is fundamentally interdependent with the traditional intellectual artifacts, representational schemes, and accumulated knowledge of some cultural or subcultural community. It says that as thinking becomes, as it must, metaphorically displaced from the operations of any fixed and central processing mechanism, the life of the mind becomes an extension or an analogue of, or an appendage to, cultural artifacts and their built-in design features.

Jerome Bruner (1966, p. 56), speaking in resistance to the Piagetian notion of a deeply interior and abstract central processing mechanism undergoing progressive development, used to talk of cultural "amplifiers" of thought. His idea was that what we think with (and about) can be decisive for how we think; and that those amplifiers or collective modes of representation, and the role they play in formal and informal education, are proper topics for the psychology of thought.

Of course it is hardly news to point out that one cannot be indifferent to content and still make sense of everyday cognitive, emotional, and conative functioning. From a Platonist point of view everyday cognitive, emotional, and conative functioning is "noise" laden and stimulus bound, which is, of course, precisely why the Platonists believe that the stimulus and task environment must be transcended if pure "psychological" laws are to be discovered (see the discussion of Shepard, above).

What is new (and renewing) in anthropology and psychology is a return of a this-worldly interest in the study of actual functioning and the reemergence of a genuine respect for all that psychocultural, psychophysical, psychosomatic "noise."

Indeed, in the land of cultural psychology all of the action is in the "noise." And the so-called noise is not really noise at all; it is the message.

Notably, in the language of cultural psychology there are no pure psychological laws, just as there are no unreconstructed or unmediated stimulus events. There are intentional persons reacting to, and directing their behavior with respect to, their own descriptions and mental representations of things; and there are intentional worlds, which are the realities we constitute, embody, materialize out of our descriptions and representations of things. Indeed, according to the premises of cultural psychology, even the transcendent realities portrayed by scientists are part of intentional worlds and cannot really take us beyond our mental representations of things.[9] In the world of cultural psychology transcendence and self-transformation are possible but only through a dialectical process of moving from one intentional world into the next, or by changing one intentional world into another.

Every person is stimulus bound, and every stimulus is person bound. That is what it means for culture and psyche to make each other up. That is why a cultural psychology signals an end for the purely psychological in psychology, an end to the quest for the inherent central processing mechanism of mental life, and an end to the Platonist legacy of the cognitive revolution. Cultural psychology is a return to the study of mental representations (emotions, desires, and beliefs and their intentional objects) without the presumption of fixity, necessity, universality, and abstract formalism. And while it may well be true that the constitutive and meaning-laden act of scientific comparison may require the postulation of a standard or universal Archimedean point of view from which to spot differences and talk sensibly about them (difference does presuppose likeness), it should be remembered that such posits of a universal grid for comparison are constructed and deconstructed by us, so as to make our intentional world intelligible. One of the hazards of comparison may be the ease with which the universals that we posit as part of our own intentional activities, in maintaining and enriching our own intentional world, get projected onto some imagined deep and essential structure of the mind.

As interpretative frameworks change, so do perceptions. Thus it is

also a sign of the times that the "fundamental" Platonist distinction between "higher"-order and "lower"-order systems (between "deep" structure and "surface" structure) no longer seems quite so easy to sustain.

It is not just that there exist content-rich mediating schemata that bridge the gap between supposed abstract structures and the real-life instances to which they apply. (Platonists have no trouble with that. They view the application of abstract principles to concrete cases as either beside the point or as rulelike and mechanical.) The more difficult problem for Platonism is that once the gap between abstraction and case has been filled in, a general and rulelike distinction between a central processor and its content is not so readily defined.

A deep suspicion has arisen in cultural psychology that so-called strict or intrinsic dispositions for behavior (Putnam 1987) and neat linear relationships between things are the exceptions in a world of local nonlinear dynamic processes with circular or dialectical feedback loops between so-called (and once Platonically conceived) levels of analysis, and between subject and object, text and context, manner and matter, content and form, fact and value, belief and directive force. There seems to be far less distinction in those famous old distinctions than there used to be.

At forums in anthropology and psychology these days someone is bound to say "not so fast" if you blithely presuppose a central processing mechanism consisting of abstract universal underlying structures or laws that impose form on any substance that happens to come along; or if you casually presume a self-evident division between an interior psyche and an exterior sociocultural environment.

Indeed, with the reemergence of a cultural psychology a new aim has been defined for anthropologists and psychologists: to find ways to talk about culture and psyche so that neither is by nature intrinsic or extrinsic to the other.

That aim for cultural psychology is to conceive imaginatively of subject-dependent objects (intentional worlds) and object-dependent subjects (intentional persons) interpenetrating each other's identities or setting the conditions for each other's existence and development, while jointly undergoing change through social interaction. That aim is to develop an interpretative framework in which nothing really real is by fundamental nature fixed, universal, transcendent (deep, interior), and abstract; and in which local things can be deeply embedded, but only for a while; and then, having developed the framework, the aim is to see how far it will go. (It may not go everywhere, but that remains to be seen.) That aim is to bridge the gap between psyche and culture by talking about them in new (or is it in very old?) ways. Here is one new (and very old) way of talking about psyche and culture.

Psyche refers to the intentional person. Culture refers to the intentional world. Intentional persons and intentional worlds are interdependent things that get dialectically constituted and reconstituted through the intentional activities and practices that are their products, yet make them up (see the discussion of weeds, above). Psyche animates her vessels and turns them into persons, leaving them mindful, soulful, willful, and full of goals and judgments.

The breath of psyche is the stuff of intentional states, of beliefs and desires, of fears and fancies, of values and visions about this or that. Psyche refers to patterns of motivated involvement, subjective states responsive to and directed at our mental representations of things. The breath of psyche is the stuff of intentional processes: goal setting, means-ends calculation, reality testing, embodied emotional reactiveness, self-monitoring and self-regulation in the pursuit of personal dignity, and so on. Psyche refers to "already-there" intentional states and processes distributed and organized within a person or across a people, and undergoing change, reorganization, and transformation across the life cycle.

In thinking about culture in new (or very old) ways it is crucial to remind ourselves again and again that a sociocultural environment is a world constituted, occupied, and used by intentional beings (see Sahlins 1976a on the symbolic or intentional uses of food and clothing). For psyche imparts to her vessels that charmed and spiritual quality of intentionality (and the teleology and pursuit after mental objects and final causes that accompanies it): psyche's vessels strive always to keep up appearances, to remain visibly dignified and exemplary of their imagined kind, and to express through their social actions a conception of themselves and of their place in the constituted scheme of things.

Culture is the constituted scheme of things for intending persons, or at least that part of the scheme that is inherited or received from the past. Culture refers to persons, society, and nature as lit up and made possible by some already there intentional world, an intentional world composed of conceptions, evaluations, judgments, goals, and other mental representations already embodied in socially inherited institutions, practices, artifacts, technologies, art forms, texts, and modes of discourse.

It is those inherited conceptions, evaluations, judgments, and goals embodied in cultural things (institutions, artifacts, discourse) about which the intending think, out of which the intending build their lives, and with respect to which the intending give substance to their minds, souls, wills, and directed actions.

Psyche and culture are thus seamlessly interconnected. A person's psychic organization is largely made possible by, and is largely expressive of, a conception of itself, society, and nature; while one of the very best ways to understand cultural conceptions of self, society, and nature is to examine the way those conceptions organize and function in the subjective life of intending individuals (see D'Andrade 1984).[10]

It cannot be repeated enough that a cultural psychology aims to develop a principle of intentionality—action responsive to and directed at mental objects or representations—by which culturally constituted realities (intentional worlds) and reality-constituting psyches (intentional persons) continually and continuously make each other up, perturbing and disturbing each other, interpenetrating each other's identity, reciprocally conditioning each other's existence.

The aim of cultural psychology is to examine the different kinds of things that continually happen in social interaction and in social practice as the intentionality of a person meets the intentionality of a world and as they jointly facilitate, express, repress, stabilize, transform, and defend each other through and throughout the life of a person or the life of a world. There are histories (narratives) that can be written about each, or both—the history of lives and the history of practices and institutions.

Most of the work of cultural psychology is still ahead of us. To achieve its aims cultural psychology must develop an analytic framework for characterizing the relationships between reality-constituting psyches (intentional persons) and culturally constituted realities (intentional worlds) that is at least as rich as the framework developed by behavioral geneticists for characterizing so-called genotype-environment correlations (Scarr and McCartney 1983; Plomin 1986, chapter 6).

As ethnographers, economists, and experimental social psychologists have known for a long time, intentional worlds can be strongly disposing and powerfully promoting of certain intentional states and not of others. They prompt and dispose in a variety of ways—by the way objects and events are represented and described by local guardians of the intentional world (parents, teachers, leaders, experimenters), by the way resources and opportunities are arranged and managed, by the way rituals and routines are performed, by the way sanctions are allocated (see B. Whiting and J. Whiting 1975; Ochs and Schieffelin 1984; Miller and Sperry 1987; Whiting and Edwards 1988); and Chapter 5 of this volume.)

Here is a simple yet vivid example of a strongly disposing (micro) intentional world: an alarm clock ringing loudly from where it was deliberately placed the night before, on the other side of the room, tends to stimulate an intense desire to turn it off, which gets us out of bed (see Schelling 1984, chapters 2 and 3).

For a moment let us borrow from the behavioral geneticists (Scarr and McCartney 1983; Plomin 1986) their analytic framework for talking about genotype-environment interactions, and let us transmute it a bit. Since genotype is irrelevant to the logic of the analytic framework, let us drop it and talk instead about person-environment interactions. Using the Scarr and McCartney framework one can imagine at least six types of relationships between reality-constituting psyches (intentional persons) and culturally constituted realities (intentional worlds). The relationship can be either *positive* (when the intentionality of the world amplifies or supports the intentionality of the person) or *negative* (when the intentionality of the world diminishes or contravenes the intentionality of the person). And the relationship can be either *active* (when the target person himself creates or selects his intentional world), *reactive* (when other persons create or select an intentional world for the target person in the light of that person's intentionality or the intentionality that others anticipate in the target person), or *passive* (when a target person ends up living in an intentional world created or selected by others for others or for themselves). That gives us six types: positive (active, reactive, passive) and negative (active, reactive, passive).[11]

The alarm clock arranged to go off just out of reach is a negative active relationship. The reality-constituting person constructs an intentional world using collective resources to contravene his or her own anticipated preference to stay in bed and go back to sleep. Whistling a happy or confident tune in the dark to alleviate one's fear is a second example of a negative active relationship. Hiding one's face from, or not looking at, or avoiding seductive or attractive things that might tempt you to transgression is a third example. Rituals of transcendence or detachment, such as Buddhist meditative exercises

through which a reality-constituting person strives to make his or her own body ego alien by conceiving of it as a bag of feces (Obeyeskere 1985), provide a fourth example.

It is characteristic of the negative *active* relationship that the psyche creates or selects an intentional world to protect itself against itself, often by means of so-called culturally constituted defenses (the alarm clock, the happy tune, and so on).

The negative *reactive* relationship is one in which others intervene to protect you against your own intentionality. The institution of purdah for adolescent females is an example of a negative reactive relationship. Thus, in some intentional worlds girls are not permitted to do at age thirteen what they were permitted to do at age five; whatever desire they may have for autonomy in decision making becomes dangerous with the onset of puberty. Menstruating daughters are kept off the street in that intentional world, for the sake of what is good and true and beautiful in that intentional world. Purdah, too, is a culturally constituted defense, but a reactive one, choreographed by others for the self rather than written by the self for itself.[12]

In contrast, in the negative *passive* relationship the reality-constituting person experiences the meanings and resources of an intentional world created or selected by others for others or for themselves. For example, during the ten to twelve days of death pollution in orthodox Hindu communities in India, family members assist the soul of the deceased in detaching from its corpse and in proceeding on its eternal transmigratory journey. The pollution in the corpse is believed to burden the soul of the deceased and keep it bound to its material vessel. So to assist the deceased his or her living relatives absorb the pollution in the corpse into their own bodies. To facilitate the absorption of death pollution, family members are careful to avoid other kinds of pollutants ("hot" foods, "hot" activities such as sex, and "hot" emotions). They fast. They are abstinent. They stay at home. The mourning period is over when the soul of the deceased has successfully detached itself from its dead body. Family members then cleanse their own bodies of the death pollution they have absorbed. They do so by shaving their hair, cutting their nails, and taking a special bath. They put on new clothes and return to life in the outside world.

It seems likely that for some members of the family, at some point in the life cycle, the experience of the mourning ritual is a negative passive one. Children or other family members may want to go out, play, or eat "hot" foods. Adults may want to have sex. There probably does occur some transgression of the requirements of the intentional world of the funeral practice. Yet because children participate passively and vicariously in the practice and experience its meanings, resources, and sanctions, the intentional world of mourning customs (including the end at which it is aimed—salvation of an eternal transmigrating soul through the help of loyal, devout, and self-sacrificing relatives) comes to be upheld and pursued by precisely those reality-constituting persons whose intentions came to be formed through participation in those very practices.

I will not illustrate or examine all the positive types of relationships between reality-constituting psyches and culturally constituted realities, although instances are not difficult to bring to mind—for example, to mention a positive active type, the gregarious youth who creates dance parties at school.

The main reason for reviewing here a logical scheme for types of person-environment interactions is to suggest that it might be fruitful in cultural psychology to conceive of socialization processes in terms of *at least* those six forms of relationship between intentional persons and intentional worlds. There is a reciprocal and dynamic relationship between intentional persons and intentional worlds, each setting conditions for the other's existence and development. All the relationships are self-transforming and dialectical. At stake in these relationships are both the cultivation of a human psyche suited to the historical context of some intentional world, and the cultivation of an intentional world, capable of cultivating and supporting the human psyche in one of the various forms of its nobility.

The three negative relationships describe "defensive" engagements. Making use of the resources from an already-there intentional world, an already-there personal intention becomes attenuated, modified, or hidden, either through direct self-regulation (active) or through direct or vicarious interpersonal regulation (reactive, passive). The three positive relationships describe "expressive" engagements. Making use of the resources from an already-there intentional world, an already-there personal intention is amplified, reproduced, and displayed, either through direct self-promotion (active) or through direct or vicarious interpersonal subsidization (reactive, passive).

In some orthodox Brahman communities in Orissa, India, for example, there is a positive reactive ritual that takes place in the context of joint family living arrangements the day after a marriage is consummated. Everyone in the extended household knows that the bride has lost her virginity the night before. (Indeed, some of them may

have been listening and giggling at her door). She knows that everyone knows it. Everyone knows that she knows that everyone knows it. She feels embarrassed to show her face the next morning; she wants to hide. So she is made to hide. They feel embarrassed to face her. So they are not allowed to face her. The day-after-the-fateful-night-before is explicitly labeled the "day of embarrassment." That day the bride is expected to stay secluded in her room all day or to go away to visit a friend. By means of a positive reactive relationship between a reality-constituting person (yesterday's virgin) and a culturally-constituted world (the "day of embarrassment") the young Hindu bride is protected from humiliation and permitted safely to dramatize her state of mind and realize her intention to hide.

It is tempting but not feasible in this preliminary scouting expedition to view or review the key analytic and empirical contributions of the various intellectual communities that have so much to contribute to a cultural psychology. The territory is too vast.[13] The many insights and refigurations that emerge from those various intellectual communities are stimulating (perhaps even breathtaking) in their own terms. Yet they are also suggestive of a possible unification of intellectual agendas under the banner of a cultural psychology. Even a very brief consideration of the several varieties (positive versus negative; active, reactive, passive) of continual engagement between intentional persons and intentional worlds should make it apparent that neither psyche nor culture can long be denied by anyone genuinely curious about the functioning and development of either.

The challenge before us is to define more precisely this promising new discipline. How far can we go with an interpretative framework within which, and in whose terms, nothing is by fundamental or intrinsic nature fixed, universal, transcendent, and abstract? What kind of knowledge can we expect from a cultural psychology?

Those are questions for other occasions. They call for deep rethinking and broad discussion across intellectual communities sympathetic to the general framework and aims of a cultural psychology.

It does seem likely, however, that our received images of "real" or honorific science will have to be revised.

A cultural psychology studies precisely those causal processes that go on because of our understanding of and involvement with them. It would seem to follow that the truths to be formulated in cultural psychology are typically going to be restricted in scope, because the causal processes they describe are likely to be embedded or localized in particular intentional worlds. What we are likely to discover are

patches of institutionalized regularities, stabilized within culture areas during certain historical epochs, perhaps even for centuries, yet subject to change (see Gergen 1973).

It would also seem to follow that if realities are not independent of our representations of them and involvement with them, then the raising of questions, even "scientific" questions, is no innocent act. Asking people what they want to do is a way of promoting autonomous decision making. Asking about the potential uses of something is a way of constituting it as instrumental. The world of cultural psychology is a world of dialectical feedback loops and dynamic nonlinear relationships between things undergoing transformation. Given such a world, many of our received expectations for, and models of, successful research are going to make less sense. For example, we may not be able to fix or standardize the definitions of concepts. We can do that in a unitary, homogeneous, linear world where things stay put, permitting their presumed essences to be interdefined, but not in the world of cultural psychology.

And we should not expect that the same truths will reappear in every intentional world, or that something more wonderful and fundamental and revelatory has been discovered when and if they do, as sometimes they will (see note 2).

Most important, we should not expect reality to be independent of our participation in it. The likelihood that an event will occur in an intentional world is not independent of the confidence we have that it will occur.

Most normative models for decision making have not yet taken account of that simple truth. There are good metaphors and bad metaphors for the actions of intentional persons in intentional worlds. Most normative models for rational choice are metaphorical variations on the properties of roulette wheels, random-number tables, dice games, and coin flips. Those rather special, peculiar (and ethically controversial) cultural artifacts and technologies have been deliberately designed by us so that their behavior is independent of our attitudes toward them; as a result, they are among the most inappropriate metaphors for intentional action in general. The intentional world is not typically the world of a coin flip. It is more often a world in which our confidence in an event influences the likelihood of its occurrence and in which we not only monitor but also regulate and control deviations from expectation. It is a world in which if we did not have the confidence we have in things occurring, then they might not occur, just because of us! Patterns of decision making that are

irrational in Las Vegas may well be rational and constructive in most other intentional worlds.

Thinking Through Others: Cultural Psychology as an Interpretative Discipline

Among the most celebrated collections of anthropological essays on intentional worlds is Clifford Geertz's *Interpretation of Cultures* (1973). Cultural psychology is an interpretative enterprise in Geertz's senses. Yet just what is it one actually does in the interpretation of (intentional) worlds and (intentional) lives?

The answer to that question has much to do with the process of "thinking through others" (thinking through other cultures, thinking through other lives, thinking through India, thinking through Plato) in at least the four senses discussed in the Introduction: (1) thinking by means of the other; (2) getting the other straight; (3) deconstructing and going beyond the other; and (4) witnessing in the context of engagement with the other.

First, there is "thinking through others" in the sense of using the intentionality and self-consciousness of another culture or person—his or her or its articulated conception of things—as a means to heighten awareness of our less conscious selves.

Orthodox Hindus in India, to select a not so random example, have, as intentional beings, for thousands of years reflected on the relationship between moral action and outcome, on hierarchy, on patronage and paternalism, on sanctity and pollution. The more we try to conceive of an intentional world in their intentional terms, the more their doctrines and rituals and art forms and other modes of representation come to seem like sophisticated expressions of repressed, dormant, and potentially creative and transformative aspects of our own psyche pushed off by our intentional world to some mental fringe. We do not know how to talk about karma or how to comprehend an occasional dread that if we do something bad something bad may happen to us; yet we experience it. We do not know how to justify status obligations and hierarchical relationships, but we live them. We do not quite know how to acknowledge the presence of personal sanctity, yet we feel it.

"Thinking through others" in the first sense is to recognize the other as a specialist or expert on some aspect of human experience, whose reflective consciousness and system of representations and discourse can be used to reveal hidden dimensions of our selves. Some

cultures of the world are virtuosos of grief and mourning, others of gender identity, and still others, of intimacy, eroticism, ego striving, and so on.

Ruth Benedict, an ancestral spirit of cultural psychology, with her conception of cultures as selections from the arc of human possibilities, understood well the first sense of "thinking through others."

Then there is "thinking through others" in the sense of getting the other straight, of providing a systematic account of the internal logic of the intentional world constructed by the other. The aim is a rational reconstruction of indigenous belief, desire, and practice. The assumption is that the organization of the psyche is based on a reality principle, whereby culturally constituted realities and reality-constituting psyches are mutually adjusted to one another until some attractive equilibrium is reached—a graceful or proportionate fit between the world as the other has made it out/up and the other's reactions to the world made out and up.

Freud is one of the great champions of the reality principle and the second sense of "thinking through others." In his inspiring defense of nonbiomedical healing practices, "The Question of Lay Analysis" (1962 [1929]), he notes that "if a patient of ours is suffering from a sense of guilt, as though he had committed a serious crime, we do not recommend him to disregard his qualms of conscience and do not emphasize his undoubted innocence; he himself has often tried to do so without success. What we do is to remind him that such a strong and persistent feeling must after all be based on something real, which it may perhaps be possible to discover" (p. 190).

The process of "thinking through others" in its second sense is a process of representing (and defending) the other's evaluations of and involvements with the world—such as a taboo against eating meat or a prohibition against remarriage—by tracing those evaluations and modes of involvement to some plausible alternative intentional world and conception of reality, which, in the ideal case, no rational person, not even Freud, can defeat.

Then there is "thinking through others" in the sense favored by Jacques Derrida and other postmodern deconstructionists. It is the sense of thinking one's way out of or beyond the other. It is the sense of passing through the other or intellectually transforming him or her or it into something else—perhaps its negation—by revealing what the life and intentional world of the other has dogmatically hidden away, namely, its own incompleteness.

It is a third sense, for it properly comes later, after we have already

appreciated what the intentional world of the other powerfully reveals and illuminates, from its special point of view. "Thinking through others" is, in its totality, an act of criticism and liberation, as well as of discovery.

And then there is "thinking through others" in the sense of a situated perspectival observer, thinking *while there* in an alien land or with an alien other, trying to make sense of context-specific experiences. It is the sense of Geertz's "I-witnessing" author trying to turn a personal field experience into a "they-picturing" account of the other (Geertz 1988).

In this fourth sense of "thinking through others," the process of representing the other goes hand in hand with a process of portraying one's own self as part of the process of representing the other, thereby encouraging an open-ended self-reflexive dialogic turn of mind.

It seems to me that a genuine cultural psychology, the one we can feel proud of, is the cultural psychology that strives to think through others in all four senses, and more.

Finally, we come to the ultimate question: How far can we go with a cultural psychology? Can it take us all the way?

It is always a good idea to leave ultimate questions for some other occasion. Still, I will express my doubts. I think cultural psychology will take us very far, but not all the way.

I do not think it will take us as far as Nirvana, if there is such a place or state of mindlessness. I think there is such a place. And I think that if we get there we won't have the slightest need for a content- and context-dependent this-worldly cultural psychology. I certainly hope we won't.

Yet who knows; perhaps even Nirvana is really a special state of mind in a special intentional world, which it is the proper business of a cultural psychology to understand.

Part II

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To those who doubt that there are such things as concepts, propositions, and gods subsisting outside of time and beyond our world, and to those who doubt not, I dedicate these essays.

I offer them to my fathers, Louis Miller, Nilamani Senapati, Jerome Shweder, Evon Z. Vogt, William L. Walter, and John W. M. Whiting, who in their ways taught me about science and romance in anthropology, and in life.