Beyond Cultural Identity: Reflections on Multiculturalism

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INTRODUCTION

Multiculturalism [1] is an attractive and persuasive notion. It suggests a human being whose identifications and loyalties transcend the boundaries of nationalism and whose commitments are pinned to a larger vision of the global community. To be a citizen of the world, an international person, has long been an ideal toward which many strive. Unfortunately, history is also rich with examples of totalitarian societies and individuals who took it upon themselves to shape everyone else to the mold of their planetary vision. Repulsive as it was, Hitler had a vision of a world society.

Less common are examples of men and women who have striven to sustain a self-process that is inclusively international in attitude and behavior. For good reason. Nation, culture, and society exert tremendous influence on each of our lives, structuring our values, engineering our view of the world, and patterning our responses to experience. Human beings cannot hold themselves apart from some form of cultural influence. No one is culture free. Yet, the conditions of contemporary history are such that we may now be on the threshold of a new kind of person, a person who is socially and psychologically a product of the interweaving of cultures in the twentieth century.

We are reminded daily of this phenomenon. In the corner of a traditional Japanese home sits a television set tuned to a baseball game in which the visitors, an American team, are losing. A Canadian family, meanwhile, decorates their home with sculptures and paintings imported from Pakistan, India, and Ceylon. Teenagers in Singapore and Hong Kong pay unheard of prices for used American blue jeans while high school students in England and France take courses on the making of traditional Indonesian batik. A team of Malaysian physicians inoculates a remote village against typhus while their Western counterparts study Auryvedic medicine and acupuncture. Around the

planet the streams of the world's cultures merge together to form new currents of human interaction. Though superficial and only a manifestation of the shrinking of the globe, each such vignette is a symbol of the mingling and melding of human cultures. Communication and cultural exchange are the preeminent conditions of the twentieth century.

For the first time in the history of the world, a patchwork of technology and organization has made possible simultaneous interpersonal and intercultural communication. Innovations and refinements of innovations, including modems, electronic mail, facsimile machines, digital recording, cable television, satellite dishes, and desktop publishing have brought people everywhere into potential contact. Barely a city or village exists that is more than a day or two from anyplace else: almost no town or community is without a television. Bus lines, railroads, highways, and airports have created linkages within and between local, regional, national, and international levels of human organization. The impact is enormous. Human connections through communication have made possible the interchange of goods, products, and services as well as the more significant exchange of thoughts and ideas. Accompanying the growth of human communication has been the erosion of barriers that have, throughout history, geographically, linguistically, and culturally separated people. As Harold Lasswell (1972) once suggested, "The technological revolution as it affects mass media has reached a limit that is subject only to innovations that would substantially modify our basic perspectives of one another and of man's place in the cosmos." It is possible that the emergence of the multicultural person is just such an innovation.

A NEW KIND OF PERSON

A new type of person whose orientation and view of the world profoundly transcends his or her indigenous culture is developing from the complex of social, political, economic, and educational interactions of our time. The various conceptions of an "international," "transcultural," "multicultural," or "intercultural" individual have each been used with varying degrees of explanatory or descriptive utility. Essentially, they all attempt to define someone whose horizons extend significantly beyond his or her own culture. An "internationalist," for example, has been defined as a person who trusts other nations, is willing to cooperate with other countries, perceives international agencies as potential deterrents to war, and who considers international tensions reducible by mediation (Lutzker 1960). Others have studied the international orientation of groups by measuring their attitudes towards international issues, i.e., the role of the U.N., economic versus military aid, international alliances, etc. (Campbell, Gurin and Miller 1954). And at least several attempts have been made to measure the world-mindedness of individuals by exploring the degree to which persons have a broad

international frame of reference rather than specific knowledge or interest in some narrower aspect of global affairs (Sampson and Smith 1957, Garrison 1961, Paul 1966).

Whatever the terminology, the definitions and metaphors allude to a person whose essential identity is inclusive of different life patterns and who has psychologically and socially come to grips with a multiplicity of realities. We can call this new type of person multicultural because he or she embodies a core process of self-verification that is grounded in both the universality of the human condition and the diversity of cultural forms. We are speaking, then, of a social-psychological style of self-process that differs from others. The multicultural person is intellectually and emotionally committed to the basic unity of all human beings while at the same time recognizing, legitimizing, accepting, and appreciating the differences that exist between people of different cultures. This new kind of person cannot be defined by the languages he or she speaks, the number of countries he or she has visited, nor by the number of personal international contacts that have been made. Nor is he or she defined by profession, place of residence, or cognitive sophistication. Instead, the multicultural person is recognized by a configuration of outlooks and world-view, by how the universe as a dynamically moving process is incorporated, by the way the interconnectedness of life is reflected in thought and action, and by the way this woman or man remains open to the imminence of experience.

The multicultural person is, at once, both old and new. On the one hand, this involves being the timeless "universal" person described again and again by philosophers through the ages. He or she approaches, at least in the attributions we make, the classical ideal of a person whose lifestyle is one of knowledge and wisdom, integrity and direction, principle and fulfillment, balance and proportion. "To be a universal man," wrote John Walsh (1973) using "man" in the traditional sense of including men and women, "means not how much a man knows but what intellectual depth and breadth he has and how he relates it to other central and universally important problems." What is universal about the multicultural person is an abiding commitment to the essential similarities between people everywhere, while paradoxically maintaining an equally strong commitment to differences. The universal person, suggests Walsh, "does not at all eliminate culture differences." Rather, he or she "seeks to preserve whatever is most valid, significant, and valuable in each culture as a way of enriching and helping to form the whole." In his embodiment of the universal and the particular, the multicultural person is a descendant of the great philosophers of both the East and the West.

On the other hand, what is new about this type of person, and unique to our time, is a fundamental change in the structure and process of identity. The identity of the "multicultural," far from being frozen in a social character, is more fluid and mobile, more

susceptible to change, more open to variation. It is an identity based not on a "belongingness" which implies either owning or being owned by culture, but on a style of self-consciousness that is capable of negotiating ever new formations of reality. In this sense the multicultural person is a radical departure from the kinds of identities found in both traditional and mass societies. He or she is neither totally a part of nor totally apart from his or her culture; instead, he or she lives on the boundary. To live on the edge of one's thinking, one's culture, or one's ego, suggested Paul Tillich (1966), is to live with tension and movement. "It is in truth not standing still, but rather a crossing and return, a repetition of return and crossing, back-and-forth--the aim of which is to create a third area beyond the bounded territories, an area where one can stand for a time without being enclosed in something tightly bounded." Multiculturalism, then is an outgrowth of the complexities of the twentieth century. As unique as this kind of person may be, the style of identity that is embodied arises from the myriad of forms that are present in this day and age. An understanding of this new kind of person must be predicated on a clear understanding of cultural identity.

THE CONCEPT OF CULTURAL IDENTITY: A PSYCHOCULTURAL FRAMEWORK

The concept of cultural identity can by used in two different ways. First, it can be employed as a reference to the collective self-awareness that a given group embodies and reflects. This is the most prevalent use of the term. "Generally," writes Stephen Bochner (1973), "the cultural identity of a society is defined by its majority group, and this group is usually quite distinguishable from the minority sub-groups with whom they share the physical environment and the territory that they inhabit." With the emphasis upon the group, the concept is akin to the idea of a national or social character which describes a set of traits that members of a given community share with one another above and beyond their individual differences. Such traits almost always include a constellation of values and attitudes towards life, death, birth, family, children, god, and nature. Used in its collective sense, the concept of cultural identity includes typologies of cultural behavior, such behaviors being the appropriate and inappropriate ways of meeting basic needs and solving life's essential dilemmas. Used in its collective sense, the concept of cultural identity incorporates the shared premises, values, definitions, and beliefs and the day-to-day, largely unconscious, patterning of activities.

A second, more specific use of the concept revolves around the identity of the individual in relation to his or her culture. Cultural identity, in the sense that it is a functioning aspect of individual personality, is a fundamental symbol of a person's existence. It is in reference to the individual that the concept is used in this paper. In psychoanalytic literature, most notably in the writing of Erik Erikson (1959), identity is an elemental form of psychic organization which develops in successive psychosexual phases throughout

life. Erikson, who focused the greater portion of his analytic studies on identity conflicts, recognized the anchoring of the ego in a larger cultural context. Identity, he suggested, takes a variety of forms in the individual. "At one time," he wrote, "it will appear to refer to a conscious sense of individual identity: at another to an unconscious striving for a continuity of personal character: at a third, as a criterion for the silent doings of ego synthesis: and, finally, as a maintenance of an inner solidarity with a group's ideals and identity." The analytic perspective, as voiced by Erikson, is only one of a variety of definitions. Almost always, however, the concept of identity is meant to imply a coherent sense of self that depends on a stability of values and a sense of wholeness and integration.

How, then, can we conceptualize the interplay of culture and personality? Culture and personality are inextricably woven together in the gestalt of each person's identity. Culture, the mass of life patterns that human beings in a given society learn from their elders and pass on to the younger generation, is imprinted in the individual as a pattern of perceptions that is accepted and expected by others in a society (Singer 1971). Cultural identity is the symbol of one's essential experience of oneself as it incorporates the worldview, value system, attitudes, and beliefs of a group with which such elements are shared. In its most manifest form, cultural identity takes the shape of names which both locate and differentiate the person. When an individual calls himself or herself an American, a Buddhist, a Democrat, a Dane, a woman, or John Jones, that person is symbolizing parts of the complex of images that are likewise recognizable by others. The deeper structure of cultural identity is a fabric of such images and perceptions embedded in the psychological posture of the individual. At the center of this matrix of images is a psychocultural fusion of biological, social, and philosophical motivations; this fusion, a synthesis of culture and personality, is the operant person.

The center, or core, of cultural identity is an image of the self and the culture intertwined in the individual's total conception of reality. This image, a patchwork of internalized roles, rules, and norms, functions as the coordinating mechanism in personal and interpersonal situations. The "mazeway," as Anthony Wallace (1956) called it, is made up of human, non-human, material, and abstract elements of the culture. It is the "stuff" of both personality and culture. The mazeway, suggested Wallace, is the patterned image of society and culture, personality and nature all of which is ingrained in the person's symbolization of self. A system of culture, he writes, "depends relatively more on the ability of constituent units autonomously to perceive the system of which they are a part, to receive and transmit information, and to act in accordance with the necessities of the system...." The image, or mazeway, of cultural identity is the gyroscope of the functioning individual. It mediates, arbitrates, and negotiates the life of the individual. It

is within the context of this central, navigating image that the fusion of biological, social, and philosophical realities form units of integration that are important to a comparative analysis of cultural identity. The way in which these units are knit together and contoured by the culture at large determines the parameters of the individual. This boundary of cultural identity plays a large part in determining the individual's ability to relate to other cultural systems.

All human beings share a similar biology, universally limited by the rhythms of life. All individuals in all races and cultures must move through life's phases on a similar schedule: birth, infancy, adolescence, middle age, old age, and death. Similarly, humans everywhere embody the same physiological functions of ingestion, irritability, metabolic equilibrium, sexuality, growth, and decay. Yet the ultimate interpretation of human biology is a cultural phenomenon: that is, the meanings of human biological patterns are culturally derived. It is culture which dictates the meanings of sexuality, the ceremonials of birth, the transitions of life, and the rituals of death. The capacity for language, for example, is universally accepted as a biological given. Any child, given unimpaired apparatus for hearing, vocalizing, and thinking, can learn to speak and understand any human language. Yet the language that is learned by a child depends solely upon the place and the manner of rearing. Kluckhohn and Leighton (1970), in outlining the grammatical and phonetic systems of the Navajo, argued that patterns of language affect the expression of ideas and very possibly more fundamental processes of thinking. Benjamin Whorf (1957) further suggested that language may not be merely an inventory of linguistic items but rather "itself the shaper of ideas, the program and guide for the individual's mental activity."[2]

The interaction of culture and biology provides one cornerstone for an understanding of cultural identity. How each individual's biological situation is given meaning becomes a psychobiological unit of integration and analysis. Humanity's essential physiological needs -- food, sex, avoidance of pain, etc. -- are one part of the reality pattern of cultural identity. Another part consists of those drives that reach out to the social order. At this psychosocial level of integration, generic needs are channeled and organized by culture. The needs for affection, acceptance, recognition, affiliation, status, belonging, and interaction with other human beings are enlivened and given recognizable form by culture. We can, for example, see clearly the intersection of culture and the psychosocial level of integration in comparative status responses. In the United States economic status is demonstrated by the conspicuous consumption of products while among the Kwakiutl Indians, status is gained by giving all possessions away in the "potlatch". In many Asian societies age confers status and contempt or disrespect for old people represents a serious breach of conduct demanding face-saving measures.

It is the unwritten task of every culture to organize, integrate, and maintain the psychosocial patterns of the individual, especially in the formative years of childhood. Each culture engineers such patterns in ways that are unique, coherent, and logical to the conditions and predispositions that underlie the culture. This imprinting of the forms of interconnection that are needed by the individual for psychosocial survival, acceptance, and enrichment is a significant part of the socialization and enculturation process. Yet of equal importance in the imprinting is the structuring of higher forms of individual consciousness. Culture gives meaning and form to those drives and motivations that extend towards an understanding of the cosmological ordering of the universe. All cultures, in one manner or another, invoke the great philosophical questions of life: the origin and destiny of existence, the nature of knowledge, the meaning of reality, the significance of the human experience. As Murdock (1955) suggested in "Universals of Culture," some form of cosmology, ethics, mythology, supernatural propitiation, religious rituals, and soul concept appears in every culture known to history or ethnography. How an individual raises these questions and searches for ultimate answers is a function of the psychophilosophical patterning of cultural identity. Ultimately it is the task of every individual to relate to his or her god, to deal with the supernatural, and to incorporate for himself or herself the mystery of life. The ways in which individuals do this, the relationships and connections that are formed, are a function of the psychophilosophical component of cultural identity.

A conceptualization of cultural identity, then, must include three interrelated levels of integration and analysis. While the cultural identity of an individual is comprised of symbols and images that signify aspects of these levels, the psychobiological, psychosocial, and psychophilosophical realities of an individual are knit together by the culture which operates through sanctions and rewards, totems and taboos, prohibitions and myths. The unity and integration of society, nature, and the cosmos is reflected in the total image of the self and in the day-to-day awareness and consciousness of the individual. This synthesis is modulated by the larger dynamics of the culture itself. In the concept of cultural identity we see a synthesis of the operant culture reflected by the deepest images held by the individual. These images, in turn, are based on universal human motivations.

Implicit in any analysis of cultural identity is a configuration of motivational needs. As the late Abraham Maslow (1962) suggested, human drives form a hierarchy in which the most prepotent motivations will monopolize consciousness and will tend, of themselves, to organize the various capacities and capabilities of the organism. In the sequence of development, the needs of infancy and childhood revolve primarily around physiological and biological necessities, i.e., nourishment by food, water, and warmth.

Correspondingly, psychosocial needs are most profound in adolescence and young adulthood when the people engage in establishing themselves through mar "un-becoming" something different from before while yet mindful of the grounding in his or her primary cultural reality. Stated differently, the multicultural individual is propelled from identity to identity through a process of both cultural learning and cultural un-learning. The multicultural person, like Robert J. Lifton's concept of "protean man" (1961), is always recreating his or her identity. He or she moves through one experience of self to another, incorporating here, discarding there, responding dynamically and situationally. This style of self-process, suggests Lifton, "is characterized by an interminable series of experiments and explorations, some shallow, some profound, each of which can readily be abandoned in favor of still new, psychological quests." The multicultural person is always in flux, the configuration of loyalties and identifications changing, the overall image of self perpetually being reformulated through experience and contact with the world. Stated differently, life is an ongoing process of psychic death and rebirth.

Third, the multicultural person maintains indefinite boundaries of the self. The parameters of identity are neither fixed nor predictable, being responsive, instead, to both temporary form and openness to change. Multicultural people are capable of major shifts in their frame of reference and embody the ability to disavow a permanent character and change in socio-psychological style. The multicultural person, in the words of Peter Berger (1973) is a "homeless mind," a condition which, though allowing great flexibility, also allows for nothing permanent and unchanging to develop. This homelessness is at the heart of his motivational needs. He is, suggests Lifton, "starved for ideas and feelings that give coherence to his world", that give structure and form to the search for the universal and absolute, that give definition to the perpetual quest. The multicultural person, like great philosophers in any age, can never accept totally the demands of any one culture nor are they free from the conditioning of their culture. Their psychocultural style must always be relational and in movement, able to look at their own original culture from an outsider's perspective. This tension gives rise to a dynamic, passionate, and critical posture in the face of totalistic ideologies, systems, and movements.

Like the culture-bound person, the multicultural person bears within him or herself a simultaneous image of societies, nature, personality, and culture. Yet in contrast to the structure of cultural identity, the multicultural individual is perpetually redefining his or her mazeway. No culture is capable of imprinting or ingraining the identity of a multicultural person indelibly: yet, the multicultural person must rely heavily on culture to maintain his or her own relativity. Like human beings in any period of time, he or she is

driven by psychobiological, psychosocial, and psychophilosophical motivations; yet the configuration of these drives is perpetually in flux and situational. The maturational hierarchy, implicit in the central image of cultural identity, is less structured and cohesive in the multicultural identity. For that reason, needs, drives, motivations, and expectations are constantly being aligned and realigned to fit the context he or she is in.

The flexibility of the multicultural personality allows great variation in adaptability and adjustment. Adjustment and adaptation, however, must always be dependent on some constant, on something stable and unchanging in the fabric of life. We can attribute to the multicultural person three fundamental postulates that are incorporated and reflected in thinking and behavior. Such postulates are fundamental to success in cross-cultural adaptation.

1. Every culture or system has its own internal coherence, integrity, and logic. Every culture is an intertwined system of values and attitudes, beliefs and norms that give meaning and significance to both individual and collective identity.

2. No one culture is inherently better or worse than another. All cultural systems are equally valid as variations on the human experience.

3. All persons are, to some extent, culturally bound. Every culture provides the individual with some sense of identity, some regulation of behavior, and some sense of personal place in the scheme of things.

The multicultural person embodies these propositions and lives them on a daily basis and not just in cross-cultural situations. They are fundamentally a part of his or her interior image of the world and self.

What is uniquely new about this emerging human being is a psychocultural style of self-process that transcends the structured image a given culture may impress upon the individual in his or her youth. The navigating image at the core of the multicultural personality is premised on an assumption of many cultural realities. The multicultural person, therefore, is not simply the one who is sensitive to many different cultures. Rather, this person is always in the process of becoming a part of and apart from a given cultural context. He or she is a formative being, resilient, changing, and evolutionary. There is no permanent cultural "character" but neither is he or she free from the influences of culture. In the shifts and movements of his or her identity process, the multicultural person is continually recreating the symbol of self. The concept of a multicultural identity is illustrated and differentiated from the schema of cultural identity in figure 2.

The indefinite boundaries and the constantly realigning relationships that are generated by the psychobiological, psychosocial, and psychophilosophical motivations make possible sophisticated and complex responses on the part of the individual to cultural and subcultural systems. Moreover, this psychocultural flexibility necessitates sequential changes in identity. Intentionally or accidentally, multicultural persons undergo shifts in their total psychocultural posture; their religion, personality, behavior, occupation, nationality, outlook, political persuasion, and values may, in part or completely, reformulate in the face of new experience. "It is becoming increasingly possible," wrote Michael Novak (1970), "for men to live through several profound conversions, calling forth in themselves significantly different personalities...." The relationship of multicultural persons to cultural systems is fragile and tenuous. " A man's cultural and social milieu," says Novak, "conditions his personality, values, and actions; yet the same man is able, within limits, to choose the milieus whose conditioning will affect him."

Who, then, is the multicultural person? Four different variations of the multicultural identity process can be seen in the following case studies. While two of these individuals have been interviewed extensively by the author,[3] the other two were prominent literary and intellectual figures in the 1970s. Each of these persons, in their own unique way, represents some of the essential characteristics of the multicultural person in a vivid and dramatic manner.

1. C.K. is a talented musician, an excellent student, a deeply spiritual disciple of an Indian mystic, and at once, a teacher and a friend to a number of other students. Though outgoing, humorous, and articulate he is likewise a private, almost quiet person who appears to exert a high degree of control over his life. Coming from a large family in which his father, an engineer, spent a good deal of time aboard, C.K. had an early opportunity to live and study in a foreign culture. Following high school C.K. spent his college years in the Middle East where he purposely stayed away from other Americans in order to facilitate both contacts with the local people and language learning. His first years in the Middle East were significant: "It was at this point that I began to see where I grew up and not just know that I had been raised in America." In high school, C.K. had been intensely interested in mathematics and physics, his college career, however, brought about a shift. Increasingly, he found himself interested in music, an interest that would later carry him East both academically and spiritually. It was during his college years that C.K. also became aware of American policy abroad; though never entirely a political activist, C.K. was outspoken and critical of American foreign policy and critical of the Vietnam war. After completing his B.A., C.K. enrolled in graduate studies in ethno- musicology, concentrating his work on the Indian flute. With his wife he spent a

year and a half in India studying under an Indian teacher. His Indian experiences were important. Living and studying in a traditional setting, C.K. became progressively more involved with the philosophic traditions of the country and eventually met a well-known Indian mystic. His encounters with the meditations of this teacher influenced him profoundly. After months of study, meditation, and living with this religious leader and his other disciples, C.K. himself became a disciple. The dissolution of his marriage which he calls "an amicable and agreeable parting" came at roughly the same time. After returning to the United States to continue his graduate studies in music, C.K., still very much a disciple of his teacher, has continued to both practice and teach meditation. C.K. is warm and articulate in discussion. He describes life as a series of peaks and valleys, what he calls the "mountain climbing" model of existence. "Life is a series of mountains in which you must go down one mountain in order to go up yet another. Each ascent and descent is difficult but one must be able to experience both the top and the bottom if one is to grow." C.K. is an exceptional person. His friends to whom he teaches meditation come from a variety of disciplines and countries, including some from India and Japan. In his day-to-day experiences, C.K. seems to react situationally. In his own words, he makes every attempt to "be in the here and now," to relate to people individually, and to live as simple and uncomplicated an existence as possible. Though he rejects much talk about mysticism, C.K. lives an ascetic and "feeling" style of life in which he aspires to bring himself into contact with the larger rhythms of nature and of the universe.

2. Y.N. is Japanese, an expatriate residing in Hawaii, and a quiet intelligent individual. Though he initially is shy with strangers, Y.N. likes very much to play host for his friends. In conversation he will demonstrate techniques of jujitsu, in which he holds a high-ranking belt, and talk about the incidents that he experienced in his travels throughout Asia and America. Brought up in a middle-class, though relatively traditional home, Y.N. finished high school and taught ikebana, the art of flower arrangement. In high school, Y.N. became a member of a splinter faction of the Zengakuren, the militant student movement in Japan, and participated actively in numerous demonstrations and student revolts. He describes this time in his life as "both a high and low for myself." Though his commitment to the radical movement was deep, he felt strongly the urge to live contemplatively and reflectively as his various masteries had taught him to do. In the tension that surrounded the late 1960s in Japan, and amidst conflicts with his father who was opposed to his radical leanings, he "escaped" to America where he taught ikebana and other aesthetic and martial arts and where he has every intention of remaining until he "finds another place to live." Having detached himself from both the aesthetic arts and radical political causes, Y.N. is today employed in a hotel as a means of supporting himself through school. Since coming to the United States, Y.N. has

undergone, in his words, a "transformation." He is completely different and realizes that he is no longer able to return to Japan to become reconciled with his family and culture. Nor is he totally at home in the U.S. Instead, he sees the U.S. as a temporary place for himself and considers the world to be his home. At one point, several years after being in the U.S., Y.N. returned to Japan, but his anxieties rapidly cascaded into a nervous breakdown. Returning to America, he underwent intensive psychotherapy and again resumed his studies, and with an undergraduate degree in history, is considering moving to Australia. Though unsure of his future, he hopes to utilize his studies of history in teaching and writing and seems confident that his inner struggles have prepared him for further changes which he sees as inevitable.

3. Carlos Castaneda (1956, 1971, 1972),[4] familiar through his writings about don Juan, the Yaqui Indian sorcerer, is an anthropologist by training, a Brazilian by birth, and an elusive, intensely private individual. He is known solely through his books and the articles about him that have appeared in popular literature. Castaneda spent most of his life in Argentina and came to the United States to do graduate work in anthropology. Interested in the cultural uses of psychotropic drugs, he began field work with don Juan Mateus, a Yaqui Indian reputed to be a medicine man of great power. After a year of studying with don Juan, Castaneda entered an apprenticeship under the sorcerer and spent the next twelve years working, living, and studying under the old man. His first books documented his experiences with mescaline, peyote, and jimson weed and his progressively deeper involvement with the cultural context in which such drugs are used. In attempting to understand their use, Castaneda had to struggle with a "non-ordinary reality." His writings, taken in series, document his struggles to understand another way of life, his resistances, his failures, and his occasional successes. A trained Western scientist, Castaneda's apprenticeship led him deeper and deeper into the world of the "brujo," a reality which is as much comprised of phantoms and spirits as it is rattlesnakes and cactus. Progressively more jolted by the extraordinary things he encountered in the world of don Juan, Castaneda documented his experiences, which read like the dream logs of Jungian psychologists. Throughout his twelve years of apprenticeship, don Juan has progressively brought Castaneda deeper into the "becoming of a man of power and knowledge." At least one of the ongoing lessons of don Juan is that of responsibility, to personally be accountable for every movement and thought, every behavior and action. To pick the leaves of a plant, to disturb pebbles in the desert, or to shiver in the cold are all ultimate acts of the person who has control of him or herself. Nothing is chance; yet nothing can be explained logically or rationally. Studying, writing, and existing on the far fringe of

academic respectability, Castaneda seems comfortable in his relationships to several different cultures.

4. Norman O. Brown, born in Mexico of American parents, educated in both England and the U.S., at one time a researcher for the Office of Strategic Services (forerunner of the CIA), was a professor of comparative literature and a prominent left-wing thinker. Before his death, Brown was a fiercely intentional, highly provocative writer whose major contributions have been in fields where he had limited academic training. At one time an obscure teacher of literature, Brown became immersed in a penetrating study of Freud in the late 1950s. Out of his encounters with the psychoanalytic school of psychology, Brown wrote his first book, Life against Death (1959), which sought nothing less than a total overhaul of psychological, social, economic, and political thinking. Using his thoughts on the Freudian concept of repression as a departure point, Brown attempted to formulate a social theory that removed all barriers to human liberation. Having jumped freely into the domain of psychologists, sociologists, and political scientists, Brown saw hope in madness and in the Dionysian model. His apocalyptic vision encompassed, in his own words, "a shaking of the foundations" which bind humans to repetitious, self-destructive behavior. Brown was a visionary in the school of Nietzsche and, like Nietzsche, found liberation in the ultimate destruction of all boundaries. Brown and his writings cannot be encapsulated in a discipline. He overlapped, expanded, and burst areas of study and purposely sought to shock his intellectual peers with thinking that was often bizarre, usually outrageous, and always rigorous. He drew from the sources of metaphor: myths, dreams, religion, symbols, and the undercurrents of the unconscious; in drawing together sources from philosophy, theology, psychology, and history, he wove together a theoretical perspective that was both analytic and polemic. Brown was a spokesman for liberation, his enemy, the "politics of sin, cynicism, and despair"; his goal was the ultimate unification of humans and nature. Far from being a gadfly, Brown was accepted as a deep and penetrating thinker whose writings thrust him into the role of both counterculture hero and enemy of the academic establishment. More than anything else, however, Brown jumped across disciplines, theories, and traditions in an effort to free the human mind from its blinders. His ultimate vision came to rest in poetry and in the sublime, if unchallengeable, processes of dialectical confrontation with the barriers of his time.

Each of these individuals, C.K., Y.N., Castaneda, and the late Norman O. Brown illustrate some of the key elements of the multicultural identity. Each of these individuals underwent shifts in identity -- and in some cases quite radical breaks with their previous "selves." C.K. and Castaneda, for example, followed courses that involved a search for heightened personal consciousness. Y.N. and Brown, on the other hand, pursued a

series of identity changes that carried them into and through a radical political posture. But in all four of these individuals it is possible to see the fracture points in which the constellation of values, attitudes, worldview, and outlook that we call identity changed. Each of these individuals embraced, only to let go, one cultural frame of reference in favor of another.

Neither C.K., Y.N., Castaneda, or Brown should be viewed as "usual" persons. All of them perched themselves precariously close to the boundaries of the system. In the case of Y.N., this involved self-exile from his native country; for Brown, it meant a departure from the perimeters of his training and expertise; for C.K., the experience of self meant embracing a religious order that is antipodal to the Western tradition; and for Castaneda, it involved an agonizing indoctrination into an order of experience that carried him far from the careful, methodical schooling of anthropology. Each of these persons also demonstrates some of the attributes of an outsider, persons who are intentionally or accidentally dislocated from one frame of reference to another, from one environment of experience to a different one. As different as their personalities, orientations, political values, and personal objectives were, they shared a similar and fluid process of identity. Y.N. became severely disturbed by the demands placed on him through conflicts in loyalty. Brown glorified the infantile ego and took refuge in an intellectual process that necessitated the smashing of all boundaries without regard for the functions such boundaries may perform. Castaneda removed himself totally from the public view, while C.K. submitted himself to dogmatic totalism.

STRESSES AND TENSIONS

The unprecedented dynamism of the multicultural person makes it possible to live many different lives, in sequence or simultaneously. But such psychocultural pliability gives rise to tensions and stresses unique to the conditions which allow such dynamism in the first place. The multicultural individual, by virtue of indefinite boundaries, experiences life intensely and in telescoped forms. He or she is thus subject to stresses and strains that are equally unique. At least five of these stresses bear mentioning.

First, the multicultural person is vulnerable. In maintaining no clear boundary and form, he or she is susceptible to confusing the profound and the insignificant, the important and the unimportant, the visionary and the reactionary. "Boundaries can be viewed," suggests Lifton (1967), "as neither permanent nor by definition false, but rather as essential.... We require images of limit and restraint, if only to help us grasp what we are transcending. We need distinctions between our biology and our history, all the more so as we seek to bring these together in a sense of ourselves...." Without some form of boundary, experience itself has no shape or contour, no meaning and importance;

where the individual maintains no critical edge to his existence everything can become confusion. Experience, in order to be a particular experience, must take place amidst some essential polarity in which there is tension between two opposing forces. Where there is no sense of evil, there can be no sense of good; where nothing is profane, nothing can be sacred. Boundaries, however indefinite, give shape and meaning to the experience of experience; they allow us to differentiate, define, and determine who we are in relation to someone or something else.

Second, the multicultural person can easily become multiphrenic, that is, to use Erikson's terminology, a "diffused identity." Where the configuration of loyalties and identifications is constantly in flux and where boundaries are never secure, the multicultural person is open to any and all kinds of stimuli. In the face of messages which are confusing, contradictory, or overwhelming , the individual is thrown back on his or her own subjectivity with to integrate and sort out what is indiscriminately taken in. Where incapable of doing this, the multicultural person is pulled and pushed by the winds of communication, a victim of what everyone else claims he or she is or should be. It is the task of every social and cultural group to define messages, images, and symbols into constructs that the individual can translate into his or her own existence. But where the messages and stimuli of all groups are given equal importance and validity, the individual can easily be overwhelmed by the demands of everyone else.

Third, the multicultural person can easily suffer from a loss of the sense of authenticity, that is, by virtue of being psychoculturally adaptive, the person can potentially be reduced to a variety of roles that bear little or no relationship to one another. The person can lose the sense of congruence and integrity that is implicit in the definition of identity itself. Roles, suggest psychologists, are constellations of behaviors that are expected of an individual because of one's place in particular social or cultural arrangements. Behind roles are the deeper threads of continuity, the processes of affect, perception, cognition, and value that make a whole of the parts. The multicultural personality can easily disintegrate into fragmented personalities that are unable to experience life along any dimension other than that which is institutionalized and routinized by family, friends, and society.

Fourth, and related to this, is the risk of being a gadfly and a dilettante. The multicultural person can very easily move from identity experience to identity experience without committing values to real-life situations. The energy and enthusiasm brought to bear on new situations can easily disintegrate into superficial fads and fancies in which the multicultural person simple avoids deeper responsibilities and involvements. The person becomes plastic. Flexibility disguises a self process in which real human problems are avoided or given only superficial importance. Especially in societies, where youth is

vulnerable to the fabricated fads of contemporary world culture, the multicultural identity can give way to a dilettantism in which the individual flows, unimpaired, uncommitted, and unaffected, through social, political, and economic manipulations of elites.

Fifth, and finally, the multicultural person may take ultimate psychological and philosophical refuge in an attitude of existential absurdity, mocking the patterns and lifestyles of others who are different, reacting, at best in a detached and aloof way, and at worst as a nihilist who sees negation as a salvation. Where the breakdown of boundaries creates a gulf that separates the individual from meaningful relationships with others, the individual may hide behind cynicisms that harbor apathy and insecurity. In such a condition nothing within and nothing outside of the individual is of serious consequence; the individual, in such a position, must ultimately scorn that which cannot be understood and incorporated into his or her own existence.

These stresses and strains should not be confused with the tensions and anxieties that are encountered in the process of cross-cultural adjustment. Culture shock is a more superficial constellation of problems that result from the misreading of commonly perceived and understood signs of social interaction. Nor is the delineation of these tensions meant to suggest that the multicultural person must necessarily harbor these various difficulties. The multicultural style of identity is premised on a fluid, dynamic movement of the self, an ability to move in and out of contexts, and an ability to maintain some inner coherence through varieties of situations. As for psychocultural style, the multicultural individual may just as easily be a great artist or a neurotic, each of whom are equally as susceptible to the fundamental forces of our time. Any list of multicultural individuals must automatically include individuals who have achieved a high degree of accomplishment, i.e., writers, musicians, diplomats, etc., as well as those women and men whose lives have, for one reason or another, been fractured by the circumstances they failed to negotiate. The artist and the neurotic lie close together in each of us suggests Rollo May (1969). "The neurotic," he writes, "and the artist--since both live out the unconscious of the race--reveal to us what is going to emerge endemically in the society later on...the neurotic is the 'artiste Manque,' the artist who cannot transmute his conflicts into art."

The identity process of the multicultural individual represents a new kind of person unfettered by the constricting limitations of culture as a total entity. Yet, like women and men in any age, the multicultural person must negotiate the difficulties of cross-cultural contact. The literature of cross-cultural psychology is rich with examples of the kinds of problems encountered when people are intensely exposed to other cultures. Integration and assimilation, for example, represent two different responses to a dominant culture, integration suggesting the retention of subcultural differences, and assimilation implying

absorption into a larger cultural system. The relationship between assimilation, integration, and identification, according to Sommerlad and Berry (1973), suggests that if people identify with their own group, they will hold favorable attitudes towards integration. On the other hand, if they identify with the host society, they should favor assimilation. Related to this are the various negative attitudes, psychosomatic stresses, and deviant behaviors that are expressed by individuals in psychologically risky situations. "Contrary to predictions stemming from the theory of Marginal Man," writes J.W.Berry (1970), "it tends to be those persons more traditionally oriented who suffer the most psychological marginality, rather than those who wish to move on and cannot." The multicultural man or woman is, in many ways, a stranger. The degree to which he or she can continually modify the frame of reference and become aware of the structures and functions of a group, while at the same time maintaining a clear understanding of personal, ethnic, and cultural identifications, may very well be the degree to which the multicultural person can truly function successfully between cultures.

Although it is difficult to pinpoint the conditions under which cultural identities will evolve into multicultural identities, such changes in psychocultural style are most likely to occur where the foundations of collective cultural identity have been shaken. "Communities that have been exposed too long to exceptional stresses from ecological or economic hardships," writes J.W.Cawte (1973), "or from natural or man-made disasters, are apt to have a high proportion of their members subject to mental disorders." Cawte's studies of the Aboriginal societies of Australia and Turnbull's studies of the Ik in Africa (1972) document how major threats to collective cultural identity produce social and psychological breakdown in individuals. Yet, potentially, multicultural attitudes and values may develop where cultural interchange takes place between cultures that are not totally disparate or where the rate of change is evolutionary rather than immediate. The reorganization of a culture, suggests J.L.M. Dawson (1969), "results in the formation of in-between attitudes" which Dawson considers "to be more appropriate for the satisfactory adjustment of individuals in transitional situations." The multicultural style, then, may be born and initially expressed in any society or culture that is faced with new exposures to other ways of life.

Conceptualization of a multicultural identity style in terms of personality types, behavior patterns, traits, and cultural background is at best impressionistic and anecdotal. Yet, the investigations of cross-cultural psychologists and anthropologists give increasing credence to the idea of a multicultural personality who is shaped and contoured by the stresses and strains which result from cultural interweaving at both the macro-and microcultural levels. Seemingly, a multicultural style is able to evolve when the

individual is capable of negotiating the conflicts and tensions inherent in cross-cultural contacts. The multicultural person, then, may very well represent an affirmation of individual identity at a higher level of social, psychological, and cultural integration.

Just as the cultures of the world, if they are to merit survival amidst the onslaught of Western technologies, must be responsive to both tradition and change, so too must the individual identity be psychoculturally adaptive to the encounters of an imploding world. There is every reason to think that such human beings are emerging. The multicultural person, embodying sequential identities, is open to the continuous cycle of birth and death as it takes place within the framework of his or her psyche. The lifestyle of the multicultural person is a continual process of dissolution and reformation of identity; yet implicit in such a process is growth. Psychological movements into new dimensions of perception and experience tend very often to produce forms of personality disintegration, and disintegration, suggests Kazimierez Dabrowski (1964), "is the basis for developmental thrusts upward, the creation of new evolutionary dynamics, and the movement of personality to a higher level...." The seeds of each new identity of the multicultural person lie within the disintegration of previous identities. "When the human being," writes Erikson (1964), "because of accidental or developmental shifts, loses an essential wholeness, he restructures himself and the world by taking recourse to what we may call 'totalism'." Such totalism, above and beyond being a mechanism of coping and adjustment, is a part of the growth of a new kind of wholeness at a higher level of integration.

CONCLUSIONS AND SUMMARY

This paper does not suggest that the multicultural person is now the predominant character style of our time. Nor is it meant to suggest that multicultural persons, by virtue of their uninhibited way of relating to other cultures, are in any way "better" than those who are mono-or bicultural. Rather, this paper argues that multicultural persons are not simply individuals who are sensitive to other cultures or knowledgeable about international affairs, but instead can be defined by a psychocultural pattern of identity that differs radically from the relatively stable forms of self-process found in the usual cultural identity pattern. This paper argues that both cultural and multicultural identity processes can be conceptualized by the constellation of biological, social, and philosophical motivations involved and by the relative degrees of rigidity maintained in personal boundaries and that such conceptualization lays the basis for comparative research.

Two final points might be noted about the multicultural personality. First, the multicultural person embodies attributes and characteristics that prepare him or her to

serve as a facilitator and catalyst for contacts between cultures. The variations and flexibility of this identity style allows that person to relate to a variety of contexts and environments without being totally encapsulated by or totally alienated from any given culture. As Stephen Bochner (1973) suggests, a major problem in attempting to avert the loss of cultures in Asia and the Pacific "is the lack of sufficient people who can act as links between diverse cultural systems." These "mediating" individuals incorporate the essential characteristics of the multicultural person. "Genuine multicultural individuals are very rare," he writes, "which is unfortunate because it is these people who are uniquely equipped to mediate the cultures of the world." The multicultural person, then, embodies a pattern of self-process that potentially allows him or her to help others negotiate the cultural realities of a different system. With a self-process that is adaptational, the multicultural individual is in a unique position to understand, facilitate, and research the psychocultural dynamics of other systems.

Second, multiculturalism is an increasingly significant psychological and cultural phenomenon, enough so as to merit further conceptualization and research. It is neither easy nor necessarily useful to reconcile the approaches of psychology and anthropology; nor is there any guarantee that interdisciplinary approaches bring us closer to an intelligent understanding of human beings as exist in relation to their culture.Yet, the multicultural person may prove to be a significant enough problem in understanding the process of culture learning (and culture unlearning) to force an integrated approach to studies of the individual and the group. "Psychologists," write Brislin, Lonner, and Thorndike (1973), "have the goal of incorporating the behavior of many cultures into one theory (etic approach), but they must also understand the behavior within each culture (emic approach)." Empirical research based on strategies that can accurately observe, measure, and test behavior and that incorporate the "emic versus etic" distinction will be a natural next step. Such studies may very well be a springboard into the more fundamental dynamics of cross-cultural relationships.

We live in a transitional period of history, a time that of necessity demands parallel forms of psychocultural self-process. That a true international community of nations is coming into existence is still a debatable issue, but that individuals with a self-consciousness that is larger than the mental territory of their culture are emerging is no longer arguable. The psychocultural pattern of identity that is called for to allow such self-consciousness, adaptability, and variation opens such individuals to both benefits and pathologies. The interlinking of cultures and persons in the twentieth century is not always a pleasant process; modernization and economic development have taken heavy psychological tolls in both developed and Third-World countries. The changes brought on in our time have invoked revitalized needs for the preservation of collective,

cultural identities. Yet, along with the disorientation and alienation which have characterized much of this century comes a new possibility in the way humans conceive of their individual identities and the identity of the human species. No one has better stated this possibility than Harold Taylor (1969), himself an excellent example of the multicultural person:

"There is a new kind of man in the world, and there are more of that kind than is commonly recognized. He is a national citizen with international intuitions, conscious of the age that is past and aware of the one now in being, aware of the radical difference between the two, willing to accept the lack of precedents, willing to work on the problems of the future as a labor of love, unrewarded by governments, academies, prizes, and position. He forms part of an invisible world community of poets, writes, dancers, scientists, teachers, lawyers, scholars, philosophers, students, citizens who see the world whole and feel at one with all its parts."

NOTES

1. This article originally appeared in 1977 in Culture Learning: Concepts, Applications, and Research, edited by Richard W. Brislin and published by the East-West Center, The University Press of Hawaii. It has subsequently been reprinted in various other texts on intercultural communication but revised and updated specifically for this publication.

2. A technical reference to the controversial literature examining the Sapir-Whorf Hypothesis can be found in "Psycholinguistics" by G. Miller and D. McNeill in Volume 3 of the Handbook of Social Psychology, edited by G. Lindzey and E. Aronson (Reading, MA: Addison-Wesley, 1968).

3. The examples of both C.K. and Y.N. are condensed from longer case studies done by the author as part of his research on identity changes that result from cross-cultural experiences. The full case studies are included in his Ph.D. thesis entitled "The Boundary Experience." (Union for Experimenting Colleges and Universities, 1974.

4. Since the publication of his immensely popular books, Carlos Castaneda has been accused of working a hoax on the public. This article makes no judgements about the veracity of don Juan's existence or the experiences reported by Castaneda. True or untrue, Castaneda's experiences offer useful insights into the dynamics of the multicultural personality.

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