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Transpersonal Anthropology considers the evolving (open-ended, cumulative) processes of human physical, conceptual and cooperative realms of reality. We consider species-wide, cultural and individual levels of existence including state of ordinary observed behavior, paranormal abilities and creative consciousness as they exist in fact and as a further potential of human development.

Philip Staniford, President

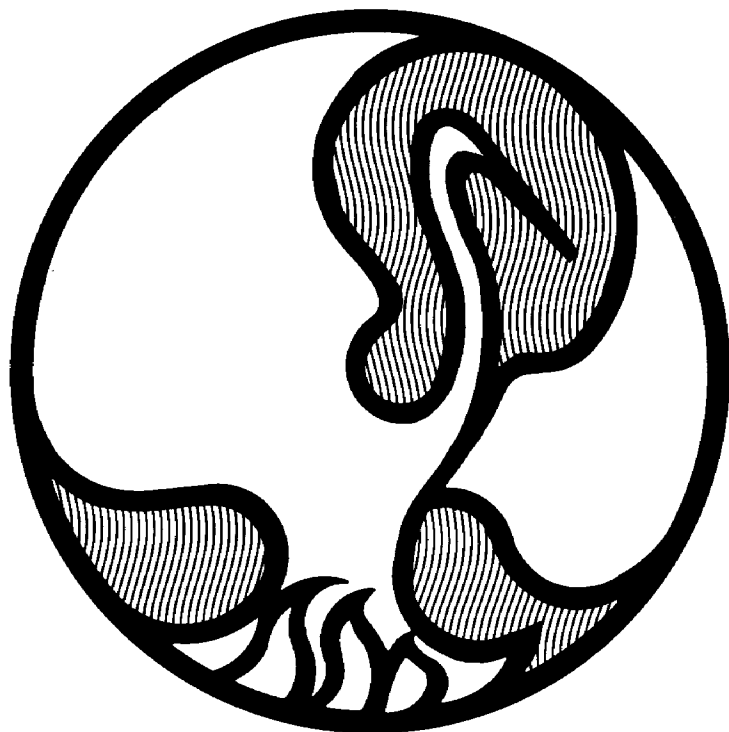
Transpersonal Anthropology is a science which investigates the relationship between consciousness and culture, altered states of mind research, and the integration of mind culture and personality. As a science it incorporates, transcends, and contributes to the traditional discipline of Anthropology, and its various sub areas.

Ron Campbell, Vice-President

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From The President

Taking Stock

1. We have witnessed our emergence this year as a California-based non-profit corporation, the Association for Transpersonal Anthropology, International. We have a membership of approximately 90 members, elected officers and yearly meetings. We sponsor, arrange and support a variety of symposia dealing with consciousness, parapsychology and transpersonal linguistics. Through these, our journal and NATA newsletter we express our findings, speculations and exchanges in an atmosphere of mutual appreciation.
2. We have seen the emergence of transpersonal anthropology as an essential adjunct to both cultural anthropology and transpersonal psychology. Through diverse avenues of exploration, we see how transpersonal findings can meaningfully develop and extend anthropological knowledge.
3. We've experienced these possibilities and have made new friends, sometimes in surprising ways. We have enjoyed exchanges in an atmosphere of excitement, high humor and great enjoyment from one another's originality, similar interests and the promise of more such dialogue. This smacks of what we anthropologists call "revitalization" movements. Imagine revitalizing anthropology as a transpersonal discipline!
4. We now enter our sixth year together*. Our circle has varied and fluctuated considerably. In one sense this is in keeping with our eclectic, developing nature, as a resonance chamber between consciousness exploration and parapsychology, for example. We continue to offer opportunity and occasion for exchanging transpersonal and anthropological information, speculation and theory.

*ATA was formed in May, 1980; the *Phoenix* in 1977; NATA (then NASPAP) in 1979.

5. The general theme for the SWAA Meeting is "The Threat of Nuclear Catastrophe". Symposia presented as ATAI symposia will largely address themselves to our sub-theme of "Nuclear Catastrophe: The Transpersonal Challenge". The meeting, to be held March 24-26 at the Bahia Hotel in San Diego, is not far off. So far, Danny Alford is soliciting papers for transpersonal linguistics; Shirley Lee plans a symposium on "The 100th Monkey: The Critical Point of Change"; and Philip Staniford is planning a symposium on "Adaptive Anthropological Strategies for Facing Challenges in the Nuclear Age".

If you are interested in presenting a paper, planning a symposium, or participating in one of the above mentioned, please contact Professor Philip S. Staniford, Department of Anthropology, San Diego State University, San Diego, CA. 92182.



The 1982 ATA Meeting

I take this opportunity to share some aspects of the 1982 meetings in Sacramento this last April. This year there were some twenty transpersonal papers in three symposia: Shamanistic and Mediumistic Realities chaired by Stanley Krippner; Linguistics of Consciousness chaired by Danny Alford; and States of Consciousness chaired by myself. Our sessions were packed with ideas and exchanges. We witness the broad spectrum of this cutting edge of anthropological inquiry into the human potential as exhibited in a variety of cultural settings. As Shirley Lee notes in the last Phoenix editorial, transpersonal anthropology is developing roots and blooms. This stock is developing into a bumper crop. The coming together of ATA members from across the country both in formal meetings and leisure hours in Sacramento amply illustrated the "coming together of the knowings" as Jean Houston calls this age.

I would like to mention some papers which were particularly striking to me. Among many other first-rate contributors too numerous to mention at length, ATA Vice President David

Jones shared the strategies and necessary mindbody set of the living Aikido master, Saotome Sensei*. Using a transpersonal framework, David was able to make the essence of the warriors' code available to contemporary consciousness explorers. His material was effectively complemented by Patricia Hunt-Perry's excellent presentation and slides of women leaders in mystic and esoteric traditions — providing a much needed feminine perspective concerning quests of consciousness and religious movements. Another outstanding offering was Ruth Inge-Heinz's paper on spirit mediums in Southeast Asia**. She provided conclusive ethnographic material on the essence of visioning and healing which are in accord with worldwide accounts of shamans and mediums as gathered by individuals such as Michael Harner and Douglas Sharon. She pointed out that mediums freely exchange information in an open manner and bring expansive states of consciousness to bear on the immediacies of communal life. Moreover, despite considerable ethnic variation, there are underlying similarities worthy of anthropological comment and analysis.

"The Mythic Imagination" by Stephen and Robin Larsen was an unexpected bonus. The Larsens managed to dig their way out of a blizzard on their New York farm to attend. Reporting on their mask workshops and using timely slides to illustrate archetypes, they showed how healing access to personal mythic structure can be enhanced by making masks, dream work and sharing in group rituals. Their demonstration provided us with a means of establishing dialogue between various aspects of the self to achieve personal integration and awareness. Finally, there was Tom Condon's insistently compelling paper on Language and Hypnosis in Everyday Life*** which demonstrated both the power and beauty of hypnotic images. With gentle humor, Tom left no doubt in the minds of most of his audience that he is skilled in using his voice to make his points. His paper has been instrumental in providing impetus to current research that I am undertaking on the pervasiveness of hypnotic trance in daily social exchange. I feel fortunate to be participating in this quality of transpersonal anthropology at this time.

*Presented in this issue of the Journal.

**See this issue.

***See this issue.

Closing Remarks

One pragmatic challenge is: What does one *do* with such transpersonal perspectives? The issue at hand is increasing planetary crisis on a number of immediate fronts such as armament, energy, pollution and economic inflation. What can/should transpersonal anthropologists undertake in response to such immediacies? Our anthropological material is a rich source. We can examine conditions under which social groups maximize mutual support. In some important ways, the crises are related to alienation of the individual and neglect of others in industrial urban settings. We can consider successful cooperative arrangements and see how they benefit both participants and society-at-large. Danny Alford's "Not Just Words" Newsletter is one demonstration of how people interested in a subject can be brought together in stimulating and humorous exchange. We need more such experiments and proving grounds for evolutionary seeding operations in keeping with both the spirit and promise of transpersonal anthropology. Meanwhile, let's consider, reflect, and share experiences in dealing with the next step of our evolving present. Anyone desiring to correspond regarding the ATAI meeting in March please contact me.

Philip Staniford
President, ATAI



A note from the Editor . . .

All our struggles to write a meaningful editorial have foundered on the rocks of pressuring events. So for this issue at least the best that could be mustered is a brief message.

You will notice that the *Phoenix* has once again changed its appearance. It is slightly smaller, more economy oriented, and has been produced under quite different conditions than during its youthful years in California. However, this format is easy to read, and handy to put on a shelf or in one's pocket.

We call your attention particularly to our lead article, the fruit of many interviews and wide reading, by Patricia Hunt-Perry. There is material here that has not been available before, and we are grateful to all those who have made it possible. The chief message that comes across is Mead's insistence on balance, on scientific objectivity tempered with the openness to experience and explore. We suggest that the message could hardly be more timely.

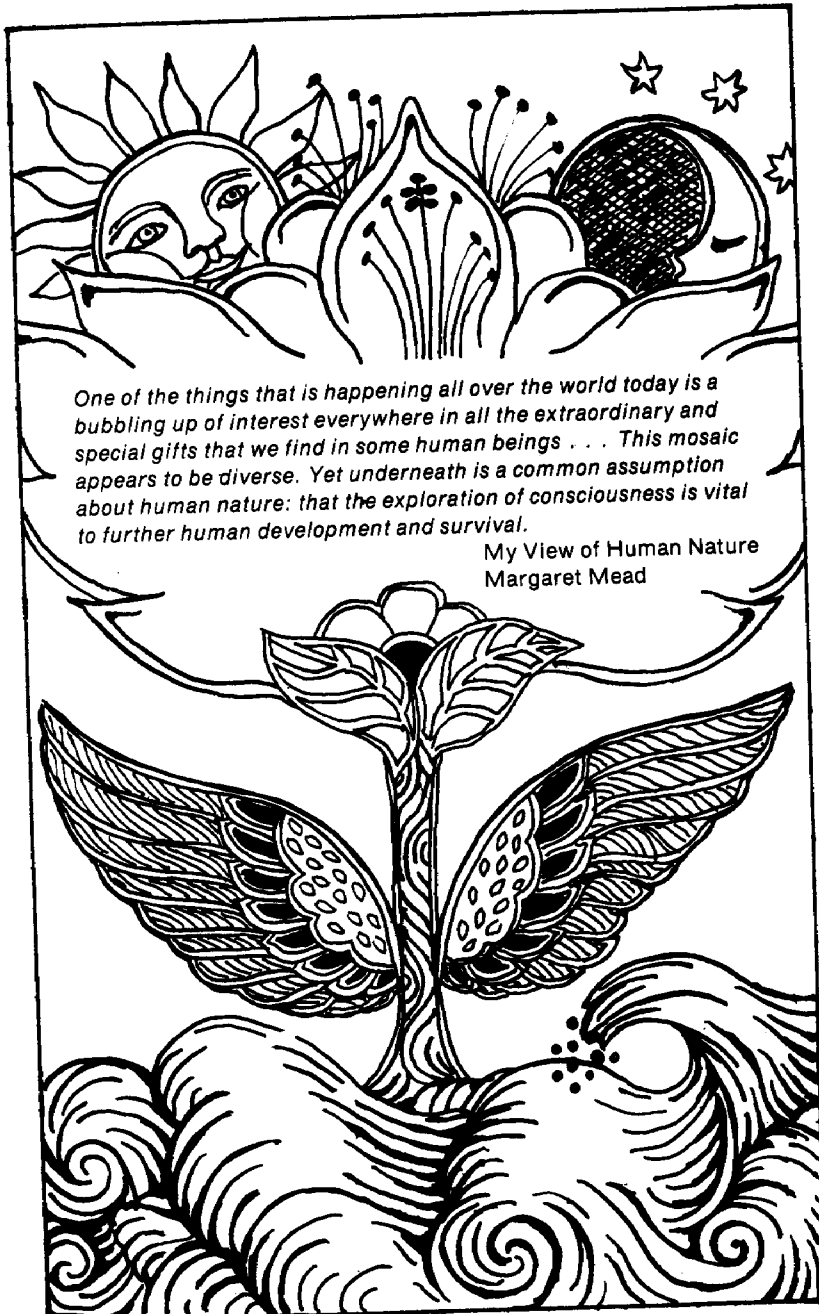
We have not yet reached a balance between our obsession in the West with the HOW of things and the concern in the East with the WHY, and some of our authors address themselves to that question, in one way or another. There is also the need to take a new look at the separate concepts of shamanism (anthropology) and mediumship (parapsychology). Ruth Heinze makes a real contribution towards bringing the two into balance.

For the rest, explore . . . and enjoy.

Shirley W. Lee

Editor

Becoming Balanced



One of the things that is happening all over the world today is a bubbling up of interest everywhere in all the extraordinary and special gifts that we find in some human beings . . . This mosaic appears to be diverse. Yet underneath is a common assumption about human nature: that the exploration of consciousness is vital to further human development and survival.

My View of Human Nature
Margaret Mead

Patricia Hunt-Perry

Margaret Mead, Voyager on a Journey of Discovery

Her skipping rope got caught in trees
And shook their blossoms down,
But her step was so lighthearted
That the dryads could not frown.

And when at last she tore a star
Out of the studded sky,
God only smiled at one whose glee
Could fling a rope so high.*

So wrote Margaret Mead in 1925 after she convinced Franz Boas and her father to "let me have my way." Her way was to become a voyager and embark upon a field trip alone in an undeveloped area of the world, something Boas had staunchly opposed.

Throughout her life, Mead flung her rope high, gathering in its wide arc a network of people and ideas. She skipped where women had not ventured before. She and her collaborators developed new techniques of field research and she played a major role in making anthropology and its concepts known to the general public. In that sense she was a teacher for the world and her influence, therefore, was not limited to a narrow field of scholarship that would encompass only the intellectuals and academics of her time.

Much has been written and said about Mead's contributions, her additions to the discipline of anthropology, her zest for research, the intensity of her work, and the implications of her writing for other fields and interdisciplinary explorations. What has been only infrequently mentioned, however, is Mead's interest in the esoteric tradition.

*Copyright ©1972 by Margaret Mead.

The above stanzas are from the poem "Of So Great Glee," and appear on p. 132 of *Blackberry Winter* (Mead 1972). We are grateful to the publishers, William Morrow & Co. Inc., for their gracious permission to publish them.

Throughout our recorded past the esoteric tradition has been a rich one which has interested many of the people who have most influenced the history of our world.¹

Philosophers such as Plato, Leibnitz and Spinoza, in literature giants such as Shakespeare and Kabir, scientists such as Newton and Thomas Edison, psychiatrists and psychologists such as Carl Jung and William James, and political leaders such as Henry Wallace, Vice President of the United States under Franklin D. Roosevelt, have all been influenced by and/or interested in the esoteric tradition. What these and other thinkers across the centuries have in common is that their esoteric interests are generally ignored in "serious" studies of their works.² When the esoteric interests of such men and women are mentioned it is too often in a sensational way which lacks careful study and balance. Thus, unfortunately, sensationalism or neglect has been the fate of many of the esoteric interests of some of the world's most creative thinkers.

Mead's esoteric interests also have been neglected although she herself mentioned an interest in the esoteric in various writings, talks and conversations with associates; she was even primarily responsible for getting the parapsychologists admitted to the American Association for the Advancement of Science. Still, there has been a lack of concern about this aspect of her work since her death.

I do not intend here to overstate the case. Clearly esotericism was not Mead's main interest but rather an on-going subsidiary concern. Wilton Dillon of the Smithsonian Institute, her former student and longtime close friend and associate, stated it well when he said, "I think it would be incorrect to have those (esoteric) aspects of her interests singled out as having overriding interest" (Dillon int.).

That the esoteric tradition was of importance to her, however, is evidenced by the fact that Mead courageously wrote and spoke about her interests. This is quite unlike many of the other world leaders who have been interested in esotericism. Newton, for example, did not publish any of his extensive esoteric research (Mishlove 1975:53). Carl Jung was extremely cautious about his personal experiences with the esoteric and in large part we have Aniela Jaffe to thank for preserving and presenting these experiences to the world — experiences he was reluctant to relate publicly until the end of his life (in June 1961).

Mead, on the other hand, approached esotericism as she approached life in general, with an openness modified by a quest for careful verification. While in no way a doctrinaire "believer" she was nevertheless receptive to novel ideas about the untapped and unknown possibilities of the human potential.

This is not to say that her own research focused on the esoteric. Clearly it did not, but she did collect a good deal of material, some still unpublished, on the esoteric practices of other cultures. Her mind and spirit were excited by the possibilities concerning unknown aspects of the human mind and she firmly believed that this was an area which should be further opened to unbiased research.

Mead's interest in the esoteric was both professional and personal. Her professional acquaintance with the esoteric came from her work in nontechnical cultures. She gained much knowledge about the esoteric traditions early in her career from Reo Fortune, her second husband, who was doing an anthropological study of sorcery. While she did not engage in that research nor collaborate with Fortune on it, she was involved in lively and on-going discussions about it. As she said, "My influence on *Sorcerers of Dobu* (Fortune 1932) was only that of an enthusiastic, attentive, and highly knowledgeable listener" (Mead 1972:184). In these discussions Mead was involved in a broad spectrum of esoteric subjects which included topics such as disease infliction, the relationship of the esoteric teacher and student, witchcraft and sorcery, methods of divination, the practices of diviners and sorcerers, and magic (Fortune 1932).

Mead's acquaintance with the esoteric was not primarily secondhand however. She observed trance and other esoteric practices during her own fieldwork (Metraux int. a). In *Peri*, for example, she observed and later wrote about "the oracles — male diviners and female mediums who interpreted the will of the ghosts" (1956:58), and she collected some materials on seances (1956:117, 234, 319-320). In *Sex and Temperament* she writes extensively of several aspects of the esoteric tradition among the Arapesh (1952), and in a book she edited in 1937 there is material on the esoteric practices of the Bathonga of South Africa (1937:372,380).

Moreover, Mead had an interest, especially through the work of Ruth Benedict and Reo Fortune, in vision (Mead 1972:189-92,113). In her own research and through her work

with Gregory Bateson and Jane Belo she became quite knowledgeable about trance (1972:231,235). About the trance work she would later write:

... when we visited Jane Belo and Colin McPhee we worked ... on the trance behavior Jane Belo was studying. It did not seem to be very hard work. The material was so rich and the sense we had of making progress in method and theory was so exhilarating (1972:236).

However, Mead's interest was not limited to the esoteric as it appeared in other cultures in the forms of trance or sorcery. Evidence of her personal acquaintance with, and interest in, the esoteric in her own culture spans her entire lifetime from younger days, through middle age, until the last month and weeks of her life.

During her childhood she had two cousins (now deceased) who are said to have been psychics (Houston int.) so Mead was introduced very early to the paranormal.

By mid-life Mead was familiar with the esoteric in non-developed cultures. But she was also sufficiently interested during her mid-thirties to go to a medium in her own culture. Very little is known of this incident except that the medium gave dietary information to Mead concerning her third husband, Gregory Bateson (Mead 1972:229). There is no evidence to indicate how seriously Mead took this visit but it does rate a brief mention in her autobiography. It also suggests two other things. First, Mead was interested enough in mediums to go see for herself. We may be quite confident that it was Mead's own interest that convinced her to go since she was not one to be coerced or manipulated into doing things that she did not want to do. Secondly, that she mentions the incident in her autobiography illustrates again the openness of Mead and, like her defense of the parapsychologists, shows that she was willing to publicly state her interest in the esoteric, a stand that has frightened off others.

Interest and discussion did not terminate in beliefs and dogmas for Mead, however. She did not conclude that the evidence of psi, or other aspects of the esoteric, was as yet sufficient to indicate whether it was "real" or "unreal" (Mead 1977:48-50). Without establishing conclusions Mead was open to possibilities. As her longtime friend and closest collaborator, Rhoda Metraux, said of Mead's approach, "Open-

ness, yes, but openness as seen by a scientist ... (Mead was) interested in having wider knowledge of the capacities of the human being" (Metraux int.).

Jean Houston, who began studying the mind of Margaret Mead towards the end of Mead's life, agrees that Mead was interested in psychic possibilities but that she had not come to any conclusions: "It is not so much that she believed in healers or psychics but ... she did not close her account on the nature of reality" (Houston int.). Houston goes on to say that Mead knew psychics in her own culture but she was often bored with them because of personality traits: "their narcissism and self absorption and inability to laugh at themselves." Houston states that when Mead became interested in anyone who claimed to have psychic ability it was "always because they were more than a psychic" (Houston int.).

In her introduction to the Targ and Puthoff book on distant seeing, Mead demonstrates her openness to the psychic while insisting that research in that area must measure up to the highest scientific standards:

As all the work following the canons of science must be, the experiments (in this book) are presented in a form that can be inspected and replicated under the same conditions ... (1977b:XV).

Much of Mead's interest in the occult emerged from larger questions that she was considering about American society. She was very much concerned with the problem of alienation in the United States and she felt that one thing older people did not understand about younger people was their great attraction to the esoteric (Dillon int.). Her March 1977 article on the occult, coauthored with Metraux, focused largely on the societal reasons for "the current fascination with the occult." At the same time, the article urged careful experimentation:

... the most open-minded scientists and the most open-minded believers in occultism can meet to plan and carry out experiments in an atmosphere of expectant, skeptical but also meticulously careful exploration. We are living on the edge of the unknown not only in terms of possible communication with other intelligences somewhere in the universe but also with renewed and greatly expanded knowledge of our own human sensibilities and capacities (Mead and Metraux 1977).

Likewise in an article written about UFO's three years earlier, Mead and Metraux had urged "an open mind" in which "people can take a hard look at all the evidence."

Just because fake mediums sitting in darkened rooms can induce gullible dupes to shake hands with cold, sand-filled rubber gloves, there is no reason to deny the reality of psychic phenomena we cannot yet explain . . . And so in exactly those fields in which human beings are exploring possibilities that boggle the mind it is most likely that some people will perpetuate hoaxes and that others, as one way of protecting themselves from anxiety, will suspect that they are being hoodwinked. *But this does not mean that the whole thing is a hoax* (Mead and Metraux 1974).

It is a special testament to her own openness that Mead defended the field of esoteric study though she said only a few years before her death that she had never found a single incident which she could verify as a psi phenomenon:

Yet I have to report that in my two years of intensive work I did not encounter a single phenomenon which I could classify as psi in the sense that telepathy, clairvoyance, precognition, or psi kinesis was involved. My collaborator, Jane Belo, reported one instance of divination — by a drop of oil on a fingernail — which might fall into this category.

Nor in a detailed study of medium and trance seances among the Manus people of New Guinea did I find a single instance of "psi phenomena" (1977a:48).

She refused to let this lack of proven incidents in her own research lead her to make conclusions about the entire field of esoteric and psi research, however. Others might — and indeed have — allowed their prejudices for or against the existence of psi to dominate premature conclusions. Mead, however, arrived at no conclusions on the subject but kept an open mind:

It is quite possible that the apparent breaks which are interpreted as clairvoyance or telepathy are parts of a continuum of unusual memory span or unusual cue reception, which stand out simply because the intervening types of communication are missing. It is also possible that there are genuine discontinuities between what certain individuals can do and what the rest of a given

population or of all populations can do. Both are plausible hypotheses. But rigid canons of belief or disbelief will not help us to solve such problems (1977a:50).

Joseph Long says that in this same article Mead made a substantial contribution to the literature of anthropology and psi research. Long argues that Mead's point has

. . . never been made so clearly before: if psi becomes sufficiently institutionalized or ritualized in a particular cultural system, then it may disappear as far as the investigating anthropologist is concerned. So if psi occurs during trance, it may be invisible by comparison with televised psychokinesis in our own "culture of disbelief" (Long 1977:49).

Mead was willing to voice publicly her position that the esoteric and the paranormal deserved careful investigation despite the concern of some of her friends and associates that being so identified might damage her own reputation. She was a member of the Board of Trustees of the American Society for Psychical Research as early as 1943, and she strongly advocated the admission of that organization to the august American Association for the Advancement of Science (Long 1977:45). Indeed, the AAAS did admit the ASPR in 1969 after a strong address by Mead that became known among some as Mead's "Galileo speech." As Long points out, however, this support by Mead did not indicate a belief on her part:

To my knowledge, she has never said that parapsychology is 'good' or that anthropologists (or others) should make a point to study psi, but only that psi appears to be as legitimate a subject of scientific investigation as any other . . . (Long 1977:45).

Mead herself did not make such investigations in her own culture but at the end of her life, especially during the last year, there is evidence of Mead's personal interest and involvement. Once again it is important to stress that this was primarily an interest, not a firm belief. Mead was still a voyager — a voyager on a trip of discovery not knowing where the exploration would lead; she was not a pilgrim who thought she had found land. It was in this spirit that Mead went to a healer and developed an association several years before her death with Drs. Jean Houston and Robert Masters, co-

directors of The Foundation For Mind Research. As Mead's daughter, Mary Catherine Bateson, said in an article about her mother:

. . . the growing concern in anthropology about epistemological questions . . . raises for all of us the issue of self knowledge. Any scientist needs to know the properties of the instruments used for observation . . . Margaret Mead became increasingly interested in the nature of her own mental processes . . . She encouraged the psychologist Jean Houston to "study her mind," recording extensive introspective material on her associations and imagery (1980:272).

And this Houston did. "You could ask her to do visionary things and she would do it." Relates Houston: "I could have her dream for me" and she was "certainly capable of lucid dreaming." Houston reports that Mead had been interested in the dream state for many years and that her second husband, Reo Fortune, had her observe her dreams so that she could relate them later. Once a Jungian analyst asked Mead to have a certain kind of Jungian dream, Houston reports:

. . . and she did, she had a wonderful dream having to do . . . with layers and layers and layers of things which were almost a totality of experience . . . you could peel off these layers and get the totality of experience (Houston int.).

Because Mead had such a rich life with so many varied interests, Houston became concerned towards the end of Mead's life when she became bedridden. Visiting Mead in the hospital she inquired: "Margaret, are you bored?" To which Mead replied that she was not: "It's as if my whole life is there in a strange kaleidoscope with no particular sequence or order but all these interesting patterns of images going into other images" (Houston int.).

Metraux, because of the close association between herself and Margaret Mead for more than thirty years, was in a good position to know Mead's views. She points out that while Mead did not do research in parapsychology she was interested in the paranormal "as a normal phenomenon, not as an abnormal phenomenon" (Metraux, int. a). In some societies, after all, trance was a normal state.

Similarly, Robert Masters believes that Mead's interest in the paranormal was really an interest in the misunderstood

laws of nature. If Mead had witnessed some so-called paranormal event, Masters says, she would have just been interested in how it was done, by "which misunderstood natural laws it had occurred." To her, it would have been a part of nature, a natural phenomenon no matter how poorly understood. "It was all just a part of nature so far as she was concerned." Masters also relates that he and Mead had discussed the probability that in many cases paranormal events were examples of how the nervous system was developed or educated. If one undergoes the prolonged training of a yogi or a shaman "Naturally you end up with a brain and nervous system that will be able to do things that one educated in a different way" will not be able to do. Thus, Mead and Masters discussed the possibility that

a brain that is uniquely enough developed may appear to violate many kinds of natural laws, but it doesn't. It's just a different system (Masters int.).

Or, as Mead put it:

In terms of the ordinary type of painstaking procedures of the scientific method, we should now be well launched into a new era of exploring aspects of the human mind, with which scientists previously have had difficulty dealing. (1977b:XVI).

It was, however, during the last year of her life that three events occurred that most strongly show Mead's personal interest in the esoteric. One should not overstate this, however, nor interpret this material as evidence of a strong commitment on Mead's part to the esoteric or paranormal. It should be remembered that during the last year of her life she was in a great deal of pain and was thus more willing to try things which might bring relief. As Houston said, it was not so much a matter of belief in healers or psychics on Mead's part as it was an unwillingness to discount the possibilities. "Margaret was supremely a pragmatist. If it works, use it — regardless of what one's mind set might be" (Houston int.).

Or as Wilton Dillon said, Mead wanted to learn more about how psychics and healers operated. She did not prejudge the phenomenon as true or false, but merely felt that "there are people who are gifted" and she wondered, "Why are they gifted?" It interested her that societies view esoteric talents differently. For example, epileptics in some societies are

thought to have shamanistic talents. She was interested also in esoteric events occurring in her own society and in the lives of her friends. She remembered and referred years later to a story Dillon related to her about a personal esoteric incident in this country (Dillon int.).

Mead was still the voyager and it was in this spirit of exploration that Mead began seeing a healer during the last year of her life. Esoteric healing had been a subject which had long interested her and in an introduction to Targ and Puthoff's book, *Mind Reach: Scientists Look at Psychic Ability*, she had written:

Psychic powers have historically been closely associated with powers of healing, an area where faith and hope and response to placebos means that many diagnoses and many cures remain problematical. Faith in the healer is essential to the ability of the healer to heal, so that both healer and patient are held in a tight circular system which is beneficial to both, and dangerous to break. (1977b:xviii-xix).

Mead had experience with healing before, not only as she observed the practices of other cultures and the evidence within her own society, but in her personal life as well. She had a long and close friendship with Milton Erickson (Metraux, Dillon and Houston interviews), who was considered by many to be one of the finest hypnotists and hypotherapists. Like Mead, Erickson was interested in the full range of human potential. Hypnotism was for him a technique for bypassing an individual's "erroneously limited belief system" and in circumventing "the all too narrow limits of ordinary everyday consciousness" (Erickson, Rossi and Rossi 1976:309). He is described by André Weitzenhoffer as having a high degree of sensitivity, "a keen observing power," a good memory for facts and events, and a fine ability for "organizing what he experiences" (Weitzenhoffer 1976:XVII). Mead has been described by some of her associates in much the same way and it may have been these kinds of qualities that strengthened their friendship. Experience of physical pain was also a common experience shared by the two friends. Erickson had been twice stricken with polio (Erickson 1976:XVI) and Mead had faced physical pain throughout her life. Robert Masters reports that she had achieved some relief by techniques taught to her by Erickson. These did not include hypnosis, Masters states,

since Erickson had told Mead that she could not be hypnotized. However, techniques for the lessening and transference of pain given to Mead by Erickson did give her some relief (Masters int.). As Mead said:

... pain stayed with me all through college, and I have always been subject to muscle pains of various sorts — in my neck and in my arms and legs. In later years I learned to play with the pain by concentrating on some other part of my body (1972:104).

As Mead developed severe pain from cancer, at the end of her life, she rejected the orthodox and traditional treatments, such as radiation and chemotherapy offered by Western medicine, and turned instead to a healer in New York City (Dillon int.). Nor was this even the second time that Mead had used other than conventional methods of healing and pain relief. Earlier in Mead's life Janet Travell had treated her pain by inserting a needle "at the trigger point — so reminiscent of the Chinese method of acupuncture" and Mead had reported that this had eased "the periodic strains" (1975:104-5). Thus, through Erickson and Travell, there was already an established pattern in Mead's life of trying non-traditional avenues of pain relief by the time that she turned to a healer to help relieve the pain of terminal cancer. Mead was introduced to the healer (who prefers not to be named) by Robert Schwartz of Tarrytown and healing sessions became a regular and frequent event in Mead's life (Dillon int.). It was Mead who sought out the healing sessions; it was also Mead's intention that a joint book would come out of their work together (Dillon int.).

This association with the healer at the end of her life continued to cause deep concern among some of Mead's friends and associates who feared that such activity, if publicized, could tarnish Mead's academic reputation and discredit a lifetime of important work. This fear was heightened by the publication of a *National Enquirer* article reporting Mead's illness and her visitations to the healer (Dillon int.). Mead may not have anticipated a complete cure from the healing but as Dillon says, she felt that she still had work to do and she had an overriding desire to live. She was willing to try what was available to prolong life and ease pain — within limits — and she did not, after all, undergo many of the traditional medical procedures. The healer seems to have given Mead quite tangible relief. A number of Mead's friends and associates point out

that Mead felt the sessions were very helpful and that she did experience relief from pain. Two other events occurred at the end of her life that link Mead with the esoteric tradition — she was able to go into a light trance and she had the deathbed visions so frequently reported by those who are terminally ill.

Robert Masters reports that he was able to induce a trance in Mead by non-verbal methods. She was, according to Masters, finally able to experience what she had been studying for so many years: "She was delighted because she had been studying trance all her life and had wanted to have that experience." While not a prolonged or repeated incident: "She was sure that she had been in trance and that made her very happy" (Masters int.).

Masters also reports that Mead had visions of relatives coming to meet her to "escort her to the other side." When such visions occurred, Masters relates, Mead would

preemptively order them from the room and tell them she wasn't ready, she had work to do and they should just go mind their own business. If she needed their help, she'd call! (Masters int.).

Thus in the last year of her life, Mead had three points of contact with the esoteric tradition: participation in trance, deathbed visions, and frequent visits to a healer.

What can we conclude about Mead's interest in the esoteric? It could be argued that, to some extent, it may be linked to her sense of the sacred. Wilton Dillon relates that Mead felt a sense of the sacred in other cultures:

With other people's religions (she) felt strongly and empathetically a sense of the sacred.

If she would be in Java or Bali or Japan and see . . . people bowing towards an invisible deity or a representation of a deity in a holy place . . . she would always feel a tingling at the base of her spine which reminded her that she, too, should bow in these circumstances. She would be the first to know this is imitative behavior but nonetheless she was very sensitive to the differences between the secular and the sacred — the sacred and the profane (Dillon int.).

Mead believed that all people need to feel some sense of awe, some awareness of or curiosity about the unknown. She believed that "almost everything that was mysterious" could

"ultimately be understood" and so she did not want to rule out the possibility that there might be new data, new refinements, new awareness that would open up other vistas of the human potential. As Dillon states it, Mead wanted to keep open the possibility that

some new potentials . . . might be evolving even right now that might make the human being a better instrument for observation and behavior (Dillon int.).

Some have suggested that Mead's interest in the esoteric was linked to her own religious interest, that she viewed the esoteric as another people's religious life for which she had profound respect.

"She believed in people being true to their own religions," she was accepting of the beliefs of others and felt that tradition is something one needs, her associate Ted Schwartz has said. He also states that he had not seen any evidence of religiosity in Mead. His opinion is that she herself attended church as a matter of form (Schwartz int. b). However, Robert Masters is of the opinion that Mead "would have sharply differentiated religious and mystical experiences from what's called paranormal (Masters int.).

Whatever the precise relationship of Mead's religious interests to her esoteric interests, it is clear that she had a sense of the sacred and it is this awareness that links the esoteric and religious traditions.

One must conclude, looking at the whole spectrum of Mead's life, that her esoteric interests went deeper than a professional examination of other peoples' cultures and deeper also than her concern about the experiences of people in her own culture. Her interest was firmly rooted in her whole life. Her support of and interest in the esoteric was stronger and more outspoken than some of her traditionally oriented friends and associates would have liked. There were a number of people who were very close to her but were uninterested in that dimension of her life and work; they were uncomfortable with the topic of the esoteric and rarely if ever spoke with Mead about it (Roll int.).⁶ She loved them nonetheless and worked closely with them on common interests, leaving her esoteric concerns aside. Indeed, it was these individuals such as Drs. Barbara Honeyman Roll and Ted Schwartz who were deeply involved in her research and her life.

On the other hand, Mead's life and interest in the esoteric

would not give support to those who might wish to claim her as an esotericist. Interested, yes. Willing to examine, yes. Fearless in her outspoken support in promoting research, yes. Willing even to participate in esoteric healing herself. But always the voyager not knowing whether or not land would be found.

Yet in her own life she did make discoveries. Her own earlier work with the transference of pain and her later work with a healer who helped relieve the pain of cancer indicate that Mead did find, if not land, at least an island or two worth exploring in her voyage.

Footnotes

1. It is expected that readers of this journal will be familiar with this use of the word esoteric, meaning ancient metaphysical traditions which have been kept secret or hidden from those not initiated. For a fine historical explanation of the philosophical development of esotericism see Weber 1975:99-106.

2. One might question, however, how serious such studies have been when they leave out this major component because of contemporary predilections which denigrate the sacred, the mystical, the esoteric. As Carl Jung said, "Rationalism and doctrinairism are the disease of our times" (1961:300).

3. See also Mead 1956:94, 317-322 and 1972:171, 174.

4. See Mead 1925:12, 18, 54, 100-101, 113, 121, 128, 219.

5. Jean Houston is currently working on a book, *The Mind of Margaret Mead*. See also Houston 1977:23-28.

6. Dr. Roll has just authored a detailed genealogy based on Mead's work and her own research in Manus. She will soon take copies to the people there in an anthropological "give back," an important event in the ethics of anthropological research and one which deserves attention from the profession. The lack of discussion of esoteric topics with many associates was also confirmed by Ted Schwartz, 1982.

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*Although not specifically referred to in the text, Dr. Davidson did provide the author with further understanding of the topic.

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