Cross-Cultural Psychological Research

In this book, **Thai Peasant Personality: The Patterning of Interpersonal Behavior in the Village of Bang Chan** (University of California Press, Berkeley, 1965, 245 pp., $6), Herbert H. Phillips successfully presents a "description and analysis of selected aspects of the psychological life of Central Plain Thai peasants . . . an approach for dealing with some of the problems involved in designing and carrying out cross-cultural personality research . . . [and an example] of the recent anthropological trend toward team research." Moreover, the author's awareness of the complexity of interpersonal behavior and of the problematic nature of our attempts to describe and analyze it recommend his book to more readers than share the three immediate concerns announced in its preface. Like most satsifying but stimulating studies, this book settles some long-standing questions, asks some that it does not answer, and raises some of which it does not take consistent account.

This study consists of the first two stages of its author's ideal "five-stage cumulative research program." Stage 1, "naturalistic observation," he regards as "descriptively the most interesting, but methodologically the most vulnerable." I find Phillips's treatment of this stage (pp. 14 to 109 and 200 to 208) accurate and remarkably insightful in substance, eloquent in style, and far more exciting and less "vulnerable" methodologically than the Sentence Completion Technique (SCT) which is the core of the second stage. His careful delineation of what is, and is not, meant by such concepts as "loose social structure" and "social cosmetic" convert otherwise misleading slogans into penetrating descriptive devices. His discussions of conformity and of psychological isolation will probably prove quite important for comparative studies. His insistence that "human behavior is typically polyphasic" and variable in "commitment" makes his account of the psychological dimensions of interaction far more sophisticated than most.

The author, however, by sometimes identifying native justifications of conduct with analytic explanations of behavior, occasionally fails to maintain his level of sophistication. Another occasional lapse which, like the first, is more instructive than destructive, is also, like the first, typically anthropological. Phillips, probably along with most modern ethnographers, feels that his "major intellectual task . . . is to make explicit that which is implicitly held by his informants." However, he frequently uses the traditional, plausible, but nonetheless misleading device of locating and explaining Thai phenomena by means of contrasting items of behavior observed in a Thai village with items of behavior imagined of "Westerners" (for example, pp. 65, 66, 69, 80, 87, 145, 155, and 195).

The author's treatment of the theory, administration, and interpretation of the SCT is careful, considered, and candid. Although his discussions of translation, cross-cultural concept equivalence, psychological access, and situational determinants of response are among the book's major contributions, it is often unclear how the SCT-generated materials are intended to relate to the observationally based materials.

This book is essential reading for Thai specialists and is highly recommended to all interested in cross-cultural psychological research. My criticisms of it are intended to emphasize its further importance to those concerned with the psychology of interpersonal behavior.

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The Cell: Its Structure, Function

One of the primary goals of morphology is the adequate description of the cell as a three-dimensional complex of molecules, particularly macromolecules, and of the changes this complex undergoes with time. This book, **Ultrastructural Plant Cytology** (Elsevier, New York, 1965. 387 pp., $24), by A. Frey-Wyssling and K. Muhlethaler, presents a thorough and penetrating analysis of the progress that has been made toward achieving this goal.

The authors emphasize that any structure ranging from simple molecules to macromolecules and cell organelles has to be analyzed and understood in its three-dimensional configuration and in its spatial relationship to its neighbors. Consequently the physical and stereochemical aspects of macromolecules, such as polysaccharides, proteins, and nucleic acids, are carefully treated in part 1, including atomic distances, bond angles, interatomic and intermolecular forces, volumes of unit cells, and relative space-filling of various types of molecular packing. This part, about one-third of the book, also contains an outline of virus ultrastructure. Part 2, approximately two-thirds of the book, is devoted to the discussion of individual cell organelles ranging from the cytoplasmic matrix through cell membranes, Golgi apparatus, spherosomes, and lysosomes to mitochondria, plastids, nucleus, and cell wall. The content is restricted to the molecular and ultrastructural morphology of a generalized cell, a plant cell in particular. Descriptions of specialized cell types, such as those from phloem and xylem, are provided only tangentially.

The book is very impressive owing to its systematic approach and the wealth of detailed and precise information presented with each subject. In most instances controversial topics are discussed as such, and the various viewpoints are considered carefully. The authors deviate from this pattern when presenting their own provocative theories on the origin of mitochondria and plastids from initial bodies budding off the nuclear envelope, and on the irreversible or monotropic development of cell organelles. In those instances, a more balanced discussion of the vast amount of data and their various interpretations would have been preferable. I noted several minor defects—the subject index is rather brief, a few of the electron micrographs do not quite approach present-day technical standards, and the construction of the English has a Germanic flavor.

The book is highly recommended for any student in biology who is interested in molecular morphology.

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Microbiology

Chemical Microbiology (Butterworth, Washington, D.C., 1965. 255 pp., $7.50), by Anthony H. Rose, reminds me of Stephenson's *Bacterial Metabolism*, published in the 1930's, but Stephenson's book was closer to the developing frontier of the science.

Rose begins with a chapter on bacterial anatomy—the nature and chemistry of flagellae, fimbriae, capsules, cell wall, cell membrane, and cytoplasmic