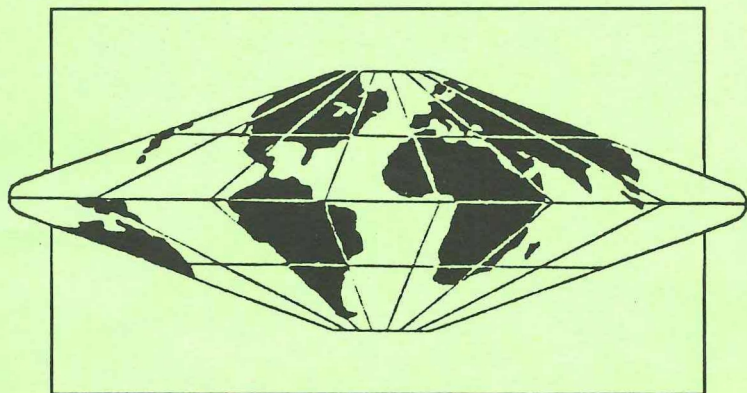


# Southern Anthropologist



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# Southern Anthropologist

**Editor:** Gifford S. Nickerson  
Department of Sociology and Anthropology  
Campus Box 8107  
North Carolina State University  
Raleigh, NC 27695-8107  
**Telephone:** (919) 515-2491

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## *Editor's Corner*/ Gifford S. Nickerson

Both of the papers in this issue contain interesting observations and implications which may—and I trust will—prompt members' comments in future issues of the *Southern Anthropologist*. Melissa Schrift's winning SAS 1991 Undergraduate Student Paper Competition paper derives from her experiences during a recent extended stay in China (indeed, she was in China during the period of the competition, including the 1991 annual meeting when her winning entry was announced at the business meeting). Although Melissa also won the SAS 1990 Undergraduate Student Paper Competition with a very innovative entry, unfortunately, it cannot be published in its original form without securing a number of copyright permissions. Should this be accomplished, we would be pleased to include it in an upcoming issue.

In Honggang Yang's paper, he relates some of his experiences and research interests at the Carter Center of Emory University, particularly with regard to encouraging the pursuit of national character studies. It would appear that his suggestions regarding various reasons for the apparent lack of interest in national character studies in contemporary anthropology, or his emphasis on the urgency of reviving such studies, would be worthy subjects for further discussion by other members.

As I have done in many past issues of the *Southern Anthropologist*, I again encourage members to send along items for publication. In addition to comments, the spectrum of possibilities is virtually without boundaries—articles, news items (personal or departmental), book reviews, obituaries, etc. If you have questions relating to given contributions, I will be glad to offer my judgment, prior to or following your submission. This is your vehicle; take advantage of the opportunities it affords!

President Collins' column in the last issue addressed budgetary and programmatic problems that most—if not all—of us have experienced to a greater or lesser degree. It would be helpful to have additional comments on these issues. That none of us is alone in these times of retrenchment and crisis, either within or outside of anthropology, is of little solace. I am sure that, among the manifold items of discussion with colleagues at St. Augustine, problems we are all experiencing will be on the front burner. While hard times are not new for anthropology, they are no less painful and serious.

# President's Column

Thomas W. Collins

The Preliminary Program for the 1992 Annual Meetings is in the mail to members. With over 100 abstracts submitted St. Augustine will be one of the largest meetings the Southern Anthropological Society has had in the past several years. In addition to the Key Symposium on Native Americans in the Southeast, we have sessions covering topics on modern Spain, the ethnohistory of St. Augustine, religion in the U.S. South, health, ethnicity, preservation, and Third World policy issues. Sessions are set from Friday morning through Sunday noon.

Holly Mathews, the local arrangements Chair, has organized a special guided tour of St. Augustine for Thursday. Moreover, she was able to schedule the arrival of the replicas of the Nina, Pinta and Santa Maria in St. Augustine harbor on Saturday, quite an extraordinary event. The Society will host a reception Friday after the regular Business Meeting to honor president-elect Alvin Wolfe. On Saturday afternoon we will hold a reception for Professor Charles Hudson, the 1992 Mooney Book Award winner. Hester Davis will present the Mooney award and Jerry Milanich will review the prize book: *The Juan Pardo Exploration of the Carolinas and Tennessee 1566-1568*.

The program is well balanced. Student participation in the sessions increased again this year. It is evident that faculty members are more actively encouraging their graduates and undergraduates in research projects. We welcome their membership and their contributions to the program. Heidi Kelley will announce the winner of the student paper competition at the general business meeting on Friday.

I look forward to seeing all the SAS members and participants at the Ponce, and to welcoming aboard our new president, Alvin Wolfe.

**SAS**

Winning Entry: 1991 SAS Undergraduate Student Paper Competition

*The Telling and the Tale:  
An Undergraduate Fieldwork Experience  
and Li Ming's Story*

**Melissa Schrift**

I remember  
when I graduated from the university  
my mother told me  
you are old enough  
you should find a boyfriend to marry  
I remember  
when I met the boyfriend  
there was no word from my mouth  
because I didn't like him  
I remember  
The boyfriend always came to my home  
to talk with me  
I remember  
I was unpleasant  
but my mother was pleasant and liked him  
I remember  
I wanted to leave my parents' home  
but I couldn't  
because I hadn't a room  
I remember

---

**MELISSA SCHRIFT**, an undergraduate student at Appalachian State University when she won the SAS 1991 Undergraduate Student Paper Competition, spent most of the 1990-1991 academic year teaching English and conducting research in Northeast China.

my mother bought much furniture for our marriage  
although I hated the marriage with him  
I remember  
I tried to like him  
when I knew the marriage with him  
would be a fact in the future  
I remember  
we began to walk and talk together  
in parks, streets and by the river  
I remember  
that day when we married  
it was raining heavily  
Now  
we have a boy who is five years old  
Now  
the government distributes us a room  
and a kitchen shared with two other families  
which is small and crowded when it is time for cooking  
Now  
we often have different opinions  
about the political situation  
education for the child  
and money to spend  
Now  
of course  
sometimes we have the same view about something  
Now  
in the evening,  
I want to study  
my husband wants to watch television  
and my child wants to play with noisy things  
Now  
my salary is one hundred and thirteen yuan a month  
same as my husband  
but I do more work than him  
Now  
my parents often give us money  
to help us support the child  
because one child needs one hundred yuan a month  
Now  
I am patient in everything  
because I live in a traditional and conservative country

My first encounter with Li Ming, the author of this piece of writing, was in the classroom, where she and her classmates were completing their third and final semester of English study. They had been sent by their work units to study English at the university where I would be their third and final foreign teacher. A mixture of engineers and doctors, each student was at least five years my senior. It would be with their class that I would begin my year-long role as an English teacher.

I had come to this city in Northeast China to teach English and conduct research for almost one academic year. When I walked into the classroom for the first time, I had been in China for less than a month. I was an undergraduate, had never taught before and had only limited travel and research experience. These thoughts nudged my conscience as I faced twenty-five pairs of eager eyes on the first day of class. My black binder secured pages of notes, prepared to carry me through my opening two-hour introduction. The bell rang, and, perched on the platform, with shaky voice, I began.

My next five months with Li Ming's class yielded discussions on a wide variety of topics, including courtship, marriage, education, friendship, family, and politics. The class's advanced English speaking skills and group dynamics were striking and provided the opportunity to conduct in-depth class conversations. I was drawn toward a nucleus of the class who worked in the same unit and interacted with me and each other with particular ease. It was with this community of friends and colleagues that I collected the bulk of my research data through group discussions outside of class and private interviews. This paper is focused on a narrative by Li Ming on courtship and marriage extracted from some of these interviews.

### I. The Politics of Process

The methodological framework for my research is multifaceted and deserves careful consideration in the writing of this paper. A believer that process is as important as product, I devote a portion of this paper to my experiences as an undergraduate doing anthropological fieldwork and issues such as English as a Second Language and the politics of representation which play prominently in my research and writing.

Li Ming's narrative is based on a series of structured and open-ended interviews which focused on her courtship and marriage history. The interviews were conducted in English, my native and her second language. Li Ming had studied English intensively for three years and spoke proficiently. This situation is immediately problematic in a variety of ways; the most glaring is that it excuses the anthropologist from the task of understanding the full expression of native categories that would emerge in the informant's native language. Communicating in the anthropologist's, as opposed to the informant's native language, also raises questions about power dynamics; the native speaker, as opposed to the second-language speaker, will have more control in the

communication. This stratification is diminished somewhat by the fact that a second-language speaker/writer is entirely capable of equaling and even surpassing a native speaker/writer's abilities. Among other examples of second-language literature, Joseph Conrad's *Heart of Darkness* stands in strong support of this.

Having said this, the importance of English in urban Chinese society among intellectuals must not be understated. On a personal level, nothing in my experience in China was more striking (and, often, tiring) than the multitude of requests I received from Chinese students, whether they were friends or strangers on the street, to participate in "free talks" so that they could practice their oral English. English in China is a tool with which intellectuals can gain access to other cultures, whether it be to broaden their professional knowledge, increase their awareness of other political and social traditions, and/or to satisfy cultural curiosity.

The commitment of Chinese intellectuals to learn English also explains the enthusiasm I received from students to work with me on my research. When I made appointments, my students casually referred to them as "free talks." It was their desire to conduct the interviews in English. In this way, I could provide a service, a return for the information given to me.

As I searched to understand Chinese culture through Li Ming's life, she sought refuge for her innermost ideas and feelings in my marginal status. As an outsider to her culture, I was immune to both the gossip network and strict political ideology which work in Chinese society to silence open communication about socially unacceptable and/or politically incorrect ideas and experiences. My youth and status also played an important part in my relationship with Li Ming and others. I was a peer, and, therefore, more easily open to her trust and friendship. My desire to share Li Ming's story with American audiences was greeted by her with enthusiasm.

As positivistic writing conventions are increasingly being called into question in anthropology, I find value in the discourse on and practice of experimental ethnographic textualization. Narrative ethnography, a concept coined by Gregory Reck (1986) is a progressive humanistic movement in anthropology which dismisses the anthropologist as intellectual landlord and allows "data" to reflect the full color of human experience. My struggle to represent Li Ming without writing the life out of her story with a jargon-laden pen, found relief in the power of narrative to "live even after it is committed to the written page" (Reck 1986).

My desire to render her story to members of my own culture, including those who don't call themselves anthropologists in a way that revealed the full complexities of her life, compounded my writing process. After re-reading her interviews again and again, and after many crumpled pieces of paper, I realized that she had already told the story. I was trying to reinvent the wheel, or, more aptly, to reinvent her life. Marjorie

Shostak's *Nisa* (1981) served as evidence that indigenous discourse (in this case Chinese-English) was not only a feasible, but also a successful way to tell a story. After realizing this, I began to collect her words into a story, to "cast her discourse in the shape of a life" (Clifford 1986). I retracted by own guiding questions for obvious literary reasons, so as not to interrupt the flow of her story. The language of her narrative has been modified only slightly for grammatical readability in the areas of gender clarification and verb usage in the past tense, two recurring difficulties Chinese students have in learning English. The product is a result of our collaboration, and, therefore, our "voices" interact within the text on metaphorical levels determined only by the ears of each individual reader (Clifford 1986).

## II. Courtship, Marriage and Li Ming's Story

Li Ming is a professional Chinese woman who is about 30 years of age. Her narrative, though not necessarily a typical example of marriage patterns in her generation, delivers the passion which continues to surround the issues of courtship and marriage in a society whose heritage in arranged marriages lingers. Li Ming evokes issues such as societal pressure, familial involvement and the complications of divorce as they concern changing marital values, functions and structures. The fact that these issues are common features in the lives of urban Chinese women and men is confirmed by other interviews I conducted, as well as by recent research on marriage in Chinese society (Honig and Hershatter 1988). Li Ming's story speaks for itself.

### Song Yuexia

When I entered the room, I was very surprised. What happened? Whose room was changed? My mother was there, beside a young man. The young man's head was bowed, but I knew who he was.

My mother said to me, "Everything is ready for you. You must marry this man." He kept his head bowed. He looked skinny next to my mother. He did not look like a man I would marry.

I looked around my parent's room, the room where my future husband and I would live. Everything was ready. A new wooden bed stood in the corner. A wooden bench was connected to the narrow bed. "What is this?" I asked, touching it.

"The bed is for two people now," she said. The man kept his head bowed. I felt numb.

I had been away on business for fifteen days, only fifteen days. When I returned, everything was ready for my marriage. A new quilt was spread on the bed. My mother had made two while I was away. All of the furniture was new—desk, sofa, bookcase, dresser. My books were in the new bookcase; my clothes were in the new clothes case.

My mother spoke, "Your marriage date is two weeks from now. Everything is ready, so you don't need to talk to each other again."

I turned to my mother and shouted, "Why? Who is ready? Who bought this furniture?"

The man stood near me, but did not say anything. Only my mother spoke, "He passed the examination for graduate study. He is a graduate student now. He has higher level of education than you, so you can marry him." So this is my mother's standard. I could not say anything. I had to obey my parents.

Although, I wanted to marry, I did not want to marry this man. At that time we had known each other one year. We were both twenty five years old, and it was time for me to get married. My neighbor introduced him to me. He would come to my parent's room two times a week to talk. I only listened. He always talked, talked, talked. I only listened.

My mother knew I did not like him. The first day I met him, I told my mother I did not agree with him.

"I hate him," I often told her after that day.

"Why do you hate him? He is good," she would say. She knew I would not agree with the marriage; yes, she knew.

The day my mother told me I would marry him, I could not feel anything. I had no way to deal with it. I spent that night in the new room. I was so unhappy, but I could not say no, because the room belonged to my parents. If I refused, my parents would have been angry and told me to leave. If I left, I would have had to live in the road.

My marriage was not the first one my parents tried to arrange. One year before my eldest brother graduated from the university, my father introduced a girl to him. My brother did not agree with the marriage, because the girl had a bad temperament.

My parents told my brother, "You must; you must agree with this. We know her mother. Her mother is a very good woman, and her father is a very good man." My brother refused. My parents went separately to visit him to change his mind. When my brother graduated from the university, he came home and still refused to marry this woman. My father slapped him and ordered him to go away.

"I will never come back home, never! I will go," my brother told them. He went to another city to work and married his classmate. He had a room assigned from his work unit. He is very happy now.

My father thought this was a wrong to him, because he had promised the girl's parents that his eldest son would marry their daughter. When it did not happen, my father told the girl's parents, "I have another son who can marry with another one of

your daughters." My other brother also refused at first.

"If you cannot agree with this marriage to their other daughter," my father threatened him, "then you will not be my son, and you can never come back home." My brother had no place to live, so he had no choice. He had to obey my parents.

My grandfather arranged my parents' marriage when they were very very young. When my parents were ten years old, my grandfather set a date for them to marry in the future. My parents knew each other, because they went to the same middle school. Their parents did not tell them they would be married until they had started to work, but my parents knew anyway. When their parents talked together, my mother and father would hide and listen. Although their parents did not tell them they would be married until they were twenty five, they knew when they were children.

It was raining heavily the day my mother told me I would marry. I had no wedding day. My wedding day was a bed and some furniture ready for me.

Song Yuexia

We have been married eight years now. Sometimes I feel happy. Sometimes I think it is good; sometimes I do not think that. I feel the same way about him as I did when I first met him. Before, he loved me; I do not know now. At first, I thought I did not like him because of his appearance, but, when I married him and lived with him for a long time, I realized that it is not because of his appearance. It is his personality. If you say, "This is good," he will say, "No, this is not good." He is always against everybody. He can never flatter anyone.

Before we had a child, we did not say anything to each other. He was busy, and I was also busy. My mother cooked for us. We only talked about our work. We never talked about housework or worried about raising a child, so we could not find each other's faults. When we had a child, though, the government assigned my husband a room, and we lived separately from my parents. Then, all of the contradictions happened.

He always thinks about himself, never about others, never about me or the child. I must do a lot of work. When I finished my work in the unit, I must come back to the room and cook, wash clothes and care for the child and family. If I give him advice, he gets very angry. He never does anything. He says, "No, no, I'm very busy, very busy." He is always busy. I think his temper is very strange. When my child was one year old, his parents came to look at their grandchild. His mother and sister told me when my husband was young, he had a strange temper. They said, "He quarrels a lot. You must be patient. You must be patient."

After we married, my mother did not like him anymore. I do not know why. Maybe when he married me, he thought, "Everything is all right. I do not need to hide

my true temper anymore," so he quarrelled with my mother. "He is always quarrelling with somebody," my mother tells me. My mother hates him very, very much. She hates him more than me. She always avoids talking about choosing him as my husband. If I talk about this, "You said I must marry him and now you say he is not good; why?" she will say, "I never said he was a good man." She does not want to take responsibility for this. Most people in this university who know my husband tell my mother, "Oh, he is very bad, always quarrelling with his colleagues."

Sometimes my husband and I have very bad arguments. When I argue with him, I go to my mother's room to live, and leave him alone. I am afraid, because if we divorced, I would not have a place to live. The government assigns rooms to men, not women. Now, I just do some things for myself and do not ask him. If I am very busy, and I am tired, I will go to my parent's room to rest and not quarrel with him. If the government would give me a room, I could divorce him. Now, I cannot. I do not know why the government always assigns rooms to men and not women.

In the future, if I have a room by myself, I will work and support my son. I will let my son find a girlfriend by myself. If my husband and I divorced, if I found another man, I would be very, very careful. Marriage is a lot of trouble, but if the husband is kind and gentle, the woman might feel happy. If the husband and wife help each other, it is good. If the wife is busy, the husband can do it; if the husband is busy, the wife can do it. The couple can discuss and plan everything.

I think women and men's natures are different. Women think money is important and housework is important. Men think if women do everything for them, it is good. A lot of Chinese husbands want their wives to obey them. I earn the same amount of money as my husband, so why do I do more housework than him? I do not know. I am very busy with my work, and, sometimes, he is not busy, so why is he lazy, never helping me? Why must I help him, and he never helps me? I say to him, "Maybe you want another woman who is silly or dumb, who will obey you." Any woman who has a brain or thought in her head cannot be with you." I think I have to do everything very, very patiently. Chinese women must be patient in everything.

Ting Lan

In China, sometimes a couple who does not love each other will have to get married. Even if there is no love, their neighbors will never advise them to divorce. If they live together a long time without love, one of them may find another person. In my hometown, I know a couple like this. The man has a lover. He likes his wife, though, so he did not divorce her; he keeps his lover and wife. He did not want his wife to lose her family, because people would talk about her. He also does not want people to think he is a bad man, so he keeps his lover secret. I think this kind of secret is okay. You do not want to lose your position; you do not want people to talk about

you. This man has had the same lover for twenty years. When he was younger he fell in love with the other woman, he asked his wife for a divorce.

"I do not want a divorce," his wife told him, "I only want to keep my family. I will not mention that you have another woman."

The man respected his wife's wishes. His lover never married, even though he does not see her very often. His wife is not very beautiful. She is fat. If she divorced with her husband, she would not find another man to marry, so she just wants to keep her family.

I know this secret, because I often see the man with his lover. He does not know I know, because I do not let them see me. They love each other deeply. They have a child. His lover is waiting for his wife to die, so she can marry him. His wife's health is not good. In recent years, no one talks about this family. It is old news. It is not a good situation, but I think the man and his lover love each other very much. I hope they get married.

Only recently in China is it easy to divorce. Many years ago, it was not so easy. If one person in a marriage did not agree, you could not divorce. It is important to have a good reason if you divorce. If there is no good reason, people will think the divorced person has a disease or is not a good person.

A good reason for divorce is if the man or woman has another lover. Another reason is if the man and woman cannot have a child, or if they cannot get along with each other. I think if families divorce, though, there is only one reason: the man or woman loves someone else.

A man who has never married will not marry a divorced woman, because she is not pure. I think in your country it is different. One of the foreign teachers at this school married a Chinese woman who is divorced. Why would he do that? She is only a woman, not a girl. It is different for a divorced man. As long as he does not have children, he can remarry. If a divorced person has children, then it is very difficult to marry again.

In China, if a person is divorced, we wonder why.

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# *The Practical Importance of National Character Studies*

**Honggang Yang**

## **Abstract**

Over a decade after Hsu's recognition of the urgency of national character studies, the pressing need is still there, especially in light of the demand for the anthropological application to the author's career. In this essay, the significance of the approach is exemplified, and impediments to its furtherance are revealed

As early as 1978, Francis L.K. Hsu pointed out that there is a new urgency to national character studies (1983: 434-435). Again, over a decade later through engaging in the activities of the International Negotiation Network (INN) at the Carter Center of Emory University (CCEU), I find that Hsu's keen recognition is still valid, in spite of relatively little attention given by anthropologists. There is indeed an increasing demand for continuing and furthering national character studies without which it is hard to really understand what motivates the leaders and civil servants of modern nations. Although national character studies enjoy a certain popularity among some of us nowadays, generally speaking, there are more critics than explorers. However, my intention in writing this essay is not to start an ivory-tower controversy or armchair debate, but to state a practical need that deserves more consideration.

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**HONGGANG YANG**, a Chinese anthropologist who received his Ph.D. from University of South Florida in 1991, is presently a Research Associate of Conflict Resolution Programs at the Carter Center of Emory University, Atlanta, Georgia.

The Carter Center is a nonprofit, nonpartisan, public policy institute founded in 1982. It is home to a group of organizations that unite interdisciplinary research and outreach programs in an effort to improve quality of life around the world. CCEU programs focus on resolving conflicts, promoting democracies, preserving human rights, improving health, protecting children, and fighting hunger across various continents. The Center's strength lies in a unique combination of resources. For example, Jimmy Carter's stature as an international leader provides the programs with a valuable access and vision for studying human issues and implementing solutions to global problems.

As we know, there are now over 100 ongoing armed conflicts within national boundaries. Under the current charters of the UN and many other regional organizations, international involvement is prohibited in handling "internal affairs" of member nations, including resolving their enduring conflicts. There is the reluctance of governments even to acknowledge the existence of revolutionary groups within the sovereign countries recognized diplomatically. These constraints result in the vast majority of intra-national conflicts being beyond the reach of existing dispute-resolution systems. For the millions of disputing parties caught up in these conflicts, there is virtually nowhere for them to turn when they need assistance in finding peaceful means of resolution. It is in this very social context that Jimmy Carter with other international leaders initiated INN, aiming at closing this gap in conflict resolution (Spencer and Spencer 1992).

My working role as an applied anthropologist entails delivery of a third-party mediation assistance based on cross-cultural knowledge of armed conflicts (e.g., those involving multi-ethnic groups and common property resources) as well as their political dimensions. CCEU simultaneously monitors and deals with the intra-national conflicts in different countries and regions. Between January 15-17, 1992, INN held its inaugural consultation at CCEU to set the action agenda of this year. Apart from the other general sessions, the intra-national conflicts in eight countries/areas were spotlighted in the organized working sessions, which included Afghanistan, Angola, Burma, Cambodia, Cyprus, the Korean Peninsula, Liberia, and Sudan.

The topical categories of each session ranged from conflict causes, resolution barriers, practical strategies, and supportive resources to action steps. There were over 200 participants from almost 40 countries, who represented more than 150 organizations, such as foundations, corporations, governmental agencies, research institutes, and universities. Among them, there were experts and practitioners in international relations, foreign policies, dispute negotiations, political science, and psychology (one anthropologist, who did fieldwork in Central Asia, participated). The mass media, like CNN, gave to the public a wide coverage of this consultation.

As a research staff member of the CCEU Conflict Resolution Program and INN,

I was mainly in charge of editing the action memorandums/papers, summarizing the findings and preparing the report for the consultation. My anthropological training helped me a lot with varieties of work. In order to take feasible actions, I was trying my best to attend and observe as many sessions as possible during the consultation. I perceived a demand for more studies of national cultures and related personality traits, since mediation and negotiations can hardly be accomplished without such ethnographic knowledge. The need for examining ethnic and ideological conflicts was another remarkable expression.

For example, following Hsu's mode of questioning (1983:435): In resolving these conflicts, "are we going to close our eyes to the diverse ways in which" peoples in Afghanistan strive toward their objectives? Are we going to disregard the roles of religious beliefs in the conflict resolution in Sudan? Are we going to ignore the influence of colonial history of the Korean Peninsula to the psychology of the peace process? Are we going to implement any cease-fire plan in Angola or Burma without reference to the indigenous motivations and feelings toward the lasting civil wars? Are we able to promote "Cypriot consciousness" and facilitate bi-communalism in Cyprus with little knowledge of the two ethnic personality traits? I was asked quite a few times in the informal discussions how our anthropologists view the above nations as a whole; and the names of Ruth Benedict and Margaret Mead as well as their studies in Africa, Asia, and Latin America were referred to and mentioned several times.

I also ask myself why culture and personality studies in general and national character studies in particular are closely relevant to intra-national conflict resolution in international contexts. I think that there are inherent factors contributing to the practical usefulness of studies of national character, as revealed in this INN consultation. As a unique approach, these studies are characterized by a vivid description, penetrating analysis, and powerful communication between the anthropologist and the public. The presentation of such ethnographic research successfully fosters popular appreciation of ethnic diversities, cultural differences and variations.

Another factor is related to the audience or recipients. In the practice of international politics (e.g., making a power balance), promoting a non-violent settlement of conflicts, is conceived from time to time at the national level, though ripening at the grassroots. Cultural considerations are usually given in broad terms. In seeking cross-cultural references for a political settlement or peace plan, the various parties often come with appreciation of those that can offer heuristic insights of the national cultures. One of the distinctive contributions of anthropological science is our attempt to apply our holistic perspectives to solve human problems. In already extensively differentiated fields of anthropology, national character studies represent a synthetic effort in accounting for behavioral patterns and shared meanings across cultures.

In my opinion, the lack of interest in national character studies at this time is related to at least four considerations from our colleagues. First it is difficult to carry out such field research (e.g., due to the variance of personality, unit of observation and level of analysis). Second, the shortcomings of the past studies aroused so many criticisms that few anthropologists "dare" to pursue them, afraid of being accused of making a traveler's account of foreign lands and native peoples. Third, the misuse of the findings derived from studies of national character worsened the situations, even creating a stereotype against any national character studies. Fourth, as Hsu indicates (1983: 435), some anthropologists get a "market personality," sometimes taking serious explorations as a fashion based on seeming popularity.

We must objectively acknowledge the influence of this approach, which has made significant contributions to both practical research and application in different fields. The provocative line of thinking and analysis associated with the studies has encouraged generations of social researchers and administrators to combine their own fields of exploration and service—such as international relations, foreign policies, and comparative politics—with anthropological ideas.

Empirical generalizations are always defined by their corresponding limitations in concrete contexts. Our research tradition values variations and diversities in conceptualization. However, there exists the disciplinary reluctance to express sociocultural themes beyond particular local and topical boundaries, with some exceptions, such as Peacock's studies in Indonesia (1973). Hsu is right that the anthropologist often has to comment on national societies as wholes, either for scientific or practical reasons, because the human issues cannot be understood by descriptions of the marriage customs or age-grading practices in single villages or tribes (Hsu 1983). Like any other exploratory approaches in anthropology, national character studies make us see things that we might not see otherwise; at the same time, it has a potential to close our minds to other important aspects of culture and personality.

Anthropologists are in a better position to offer holistic expertise to the decision-makers as well as to the public. To remedy the ill, support the disadvantaged, and foster the sublime in human societies, it would be preferable if more anthropologists were called on, not just one or two; and more work will be done in this field, not just those that have been long well-known. Of course, the anthropologist needs to be well aware of both strengths and weaknesses of national character studies under development, and not overlook the practical importance of the approach because of its imperfectness. Studying the core values of a nation's culture as Hsu conceptualizes (1961; Wolfe, Xu, and Yang 1990), for example, is one of the promising basic applications to the field of international research. In short, we will make a real difference by responding to the demand for furthering national character studies.

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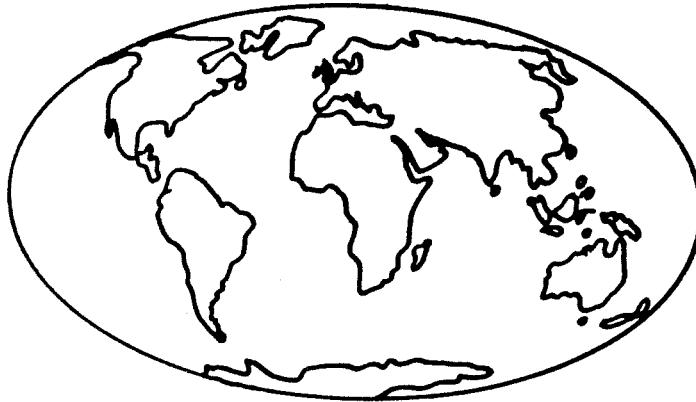
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## American Society for Ethnohistory 1992 Annual Meeting

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University Park Hotel  
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Papers, Organized Sessions, Special Events, and Speakers that treat any world area are encouraged. Abstracts of 200-300 words, affiliation, and pre-registration fees of \$40 (Non-Members), \$30 (Members), \$15 (Students/Retired) are due by **15 June 1992**. Send to ASE 1992 Program Chair, Dr. William R. Fowler, P.O. Box 6307-B, Vanderbilt University, Nashville, TN 37235. Local Arrangements contact Dr. Mauricio Mixco, Linguistics Program, 213 Stewart, University of Utah, Salt Lake City, UT 84112.

### The 1991 Awards Committees of the American Society for Ethnohistory Are Pleased to Announce the Recipients of the Society's Erminie Wheeler-Voegelin and Robert F. Heizer Awards

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For the best book-length work in ethnohistory, the Erminie Wheeler-Voegelin Prize was awarded to Frans J. Schryer, Department of Anthropology, University of Guelph, for *Ethnicity and Class Conflict in Rural Mexico*, published by Princeton University Press, Princeton in 1990. Members of the 1991 Selection Committee were John E. Kicza, Chair, Washington State University; James Merrill, Vassar College; and Patricia MacCormack, Provincial Museum of Alberta.

For the best article in the field of ethnohistory, the Robert F. Heizer Prize was awarded to Harold W. Van Lonkhuyzen, Department of History, University of Pennsylvania, for "A Reappraisal of the Praying Indians: Acculturation, Conversion, and Identity at Natick, Massachusetts, 1646-1730," published in the *New England Quarterly* 63(1): 396-428, in 1990. Members of the 1991 Selection Committee were Sergei Kan, Chair, Dartmouth College; Gertrude C. Nicks, Royal Ontario Museum; and Barbara Angel, Winnipeg, Manitoba.



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# Southern Anthropologist

Gifford S. Nickerson, Editor  
Department of Sociology and Anthropology  
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