

Editorial Foreword

ESTABLISHING THE CULTURAL CONTEXT. To set your watch, reply to a stranger's wisecrack, or write a piece of music is to partake of some culture. An observer wishing to determine which parts of what culture have thus been enacted faces a difficult task, however. That is the challenge the essays in this section seek to meet, and they must go about it without the guidelines—of comparison, function, repetition, or formal ideas—conventionally used to show how a broad culture is reflected within a particular religion, institution, ritual, or law, or expressed through events of obvious social consequence like a marriage or a revolution. For these general categories there are appropriate theories to test, predictable questions to ask, and special vocabularies to use. Spontaneous behavior and lesser issues may also reveal the content of a culture or the hidden tensions within it, but there are fewer accepted models on which to build an interpretation.

Siamak Movahedi wants to explain the opposition to (and later acceptance of) daylight-saving time in Iran. To do so, he first uses survey techniques to connect the response of his informants to the change in time with their attitudes toward other issues, and he then employs a striking comparison between Iranian responses and those of Americans opposed to daylight-saving time. In each country he finds that there are two operative cultures, one sacred and one profane, sustaining two competing conceptions of time. (Articles by Du Toit, Lincoln, and Berg in the last issue of *CSSH* dealt with a number of profane uses of the sacred.) A culture can, of course, be in part defined by its perception of time and therefore of the past (see Rigby in 25:3; Wylie, 24:3; Cohn, 3:3; and Marcus, 3:2). Michael Roberts, interested in the relations of anthropology and history (like Hammel and like Cohn in 22:2), finds in the activation of historical memories a clue that explains the power of a reply suddenly spoken within the ritual enclosure of a Sri Lankan cricket match. Words that can sail across layered histories and competing cultures can have radical force (see Felstiner and Lincoln, both in 25:1, on revolutionary language but compare the incident in Sri Lanka with the one in India analyzed by Yang in 22:4). Even so, words are not the primary expression of a revolution in music; but Catherine M. Cameron takes the comments of composers seriously. Like Movahedi, she uncovers interlocking sets of values that form a cultural context, in this case one that favors avant-garde music by associating it with democratic change and American independence from European tradition. (For a contrasting approach, see Kasdan and Appleton, 12:1; compare also the discussions of style in Katz, 15:3; Kuper, 15:3; and Garvan, 3:1.) The review essays in this issue are also attentive to the complex difficulties of determining the cultural context that informs specific behaviors. Jane H. Hill

comments on the importance of historical and ethnic influences as well as social stratification in influencing how people speak. Joyce Wolf Shepard also stresses the role of ethnic and linguistic factors in artistic style but suspects that issues of aesthetic responses are too culture-bound to travel as easily as the objects we collect. Aram A. Yengoyan's discussion of the literature of the Dutch colonies raises interesting questions about the very locus of a colonial culture, a problem that gives poignancy to that literature's insistence on place and plants and sea. Joel T. Rosenthal wonders about the assumption that medieval culture was formed at royal courts, even while noting that that view suggests an explanation of how artistic forms moved from one cultural sphere to another. Taken together, there is in these essays proof perhaps of how rich our concepts of culture are as well as evidence of the topic's difficulty.

THE MULTIPLE DIMENSIONS OF MARKETS. The economies of Egypt and Taiwan are almost as different from each other today as they were in the eighteenth century. When, however, their development over the last two hundred years is analyzed in light of the spatial organization of their markets, important parallels stand out. Associated especially with the work of G. William Skinner (see his article in 13:3 and also Forman and Riegelhaupt's, 12:2), this approach predicts that the economic and social structures of a society will be reflected in the hierarchical organization of its markets in space and time. In Barbara K. Larson's study of Egyptian markets, one is struck by the role of the state (in market making as well as state making) and with the markets' capacity for adaptation to new opportunities (useful background for Tignor's consideration of the economic role of foreign elites in Egypt, 22:3). P. Steven Sangren, in his study of Taiwan, presents the picture of an isolated, wild country in which after more than a century of colonization (following a Chinese pattern, see Solinger on the state and merchants in China, 21:2) effective response to a modern economy is built on local values. In both places continuity survives changing regimes, imposed systems, and the impact of international trade. In both, adaptations to capitalism produce a sequence of market patterns that, with important local variations, essentially conforms to the general theory. The point should not be pushed too far; both authors insist on the significant autonomy of the indigenous society. The encounter with European trade did not always similarly transform local markets (especially in Africa, see Wesler and Dumett, both in 25:4; Perinbam, 19:2; and Uzoigwe, 14:4); in Latin America, changes in the network of markets were not necessarily the most important effects of increased trade (Smith, 26:2; Eckstein and Winson, both in 25:1). Nevertheless, the value of looking closely at the changing, vertical and horizontal system of markets is clear.