

\* Ruth Benedict.

[ By : Winnie L. & Jonathan F. ]

# [ Profile ]



- **Name:** Ruth Fulton Benedict
- **D.O.B:** June 5, 1887
- **P.O.B:** New York City
- **Date of Death:** September 17, 1948
- **Cause of Death:** Coronary Thrombosis

# [ Overview of Life ]

- During Ruth's last year of high school, she won a scholarship and attended Vassar College, a women's college from 1905 - 1909. She took a year off traveling overseas and wasn't sure of what she wanted to do with her life.
- Early 1919, she returned to school at New School for Social Research. She studied more about anthropology. During those early years, she began to study American Indian Religion following by publishing a book. She later received her Ph.D. in anthropology from Columbia University in 1922 and became a graduate to work with Franz Boas and eventually became his assistant.
- Her efforts on researching provided her an interest in studying different cultures around the world, and their patterns that related to culture and behavior.
- From 1923 - 1948, she was a teacher. Although she was deaf, students did not have any effect on her teachings.

# [ Field of Research ]

- Time in which she contributed her ideas:

Ruth did fieldwork in the Southwest with *Zuni* from 1924 to 1925, *Pima* in 1927 and *Mescalero Apache* in 1931.

- Field of Study:

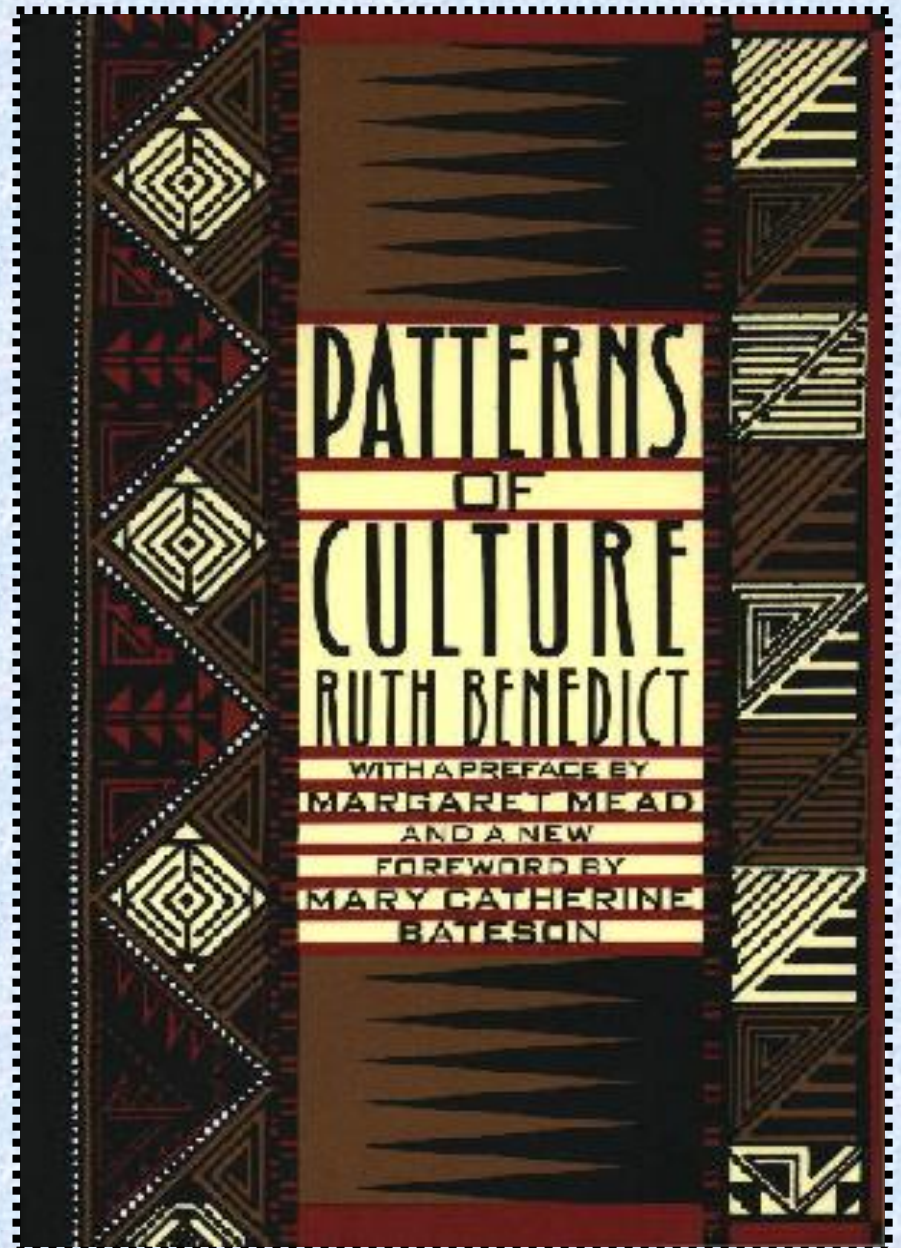
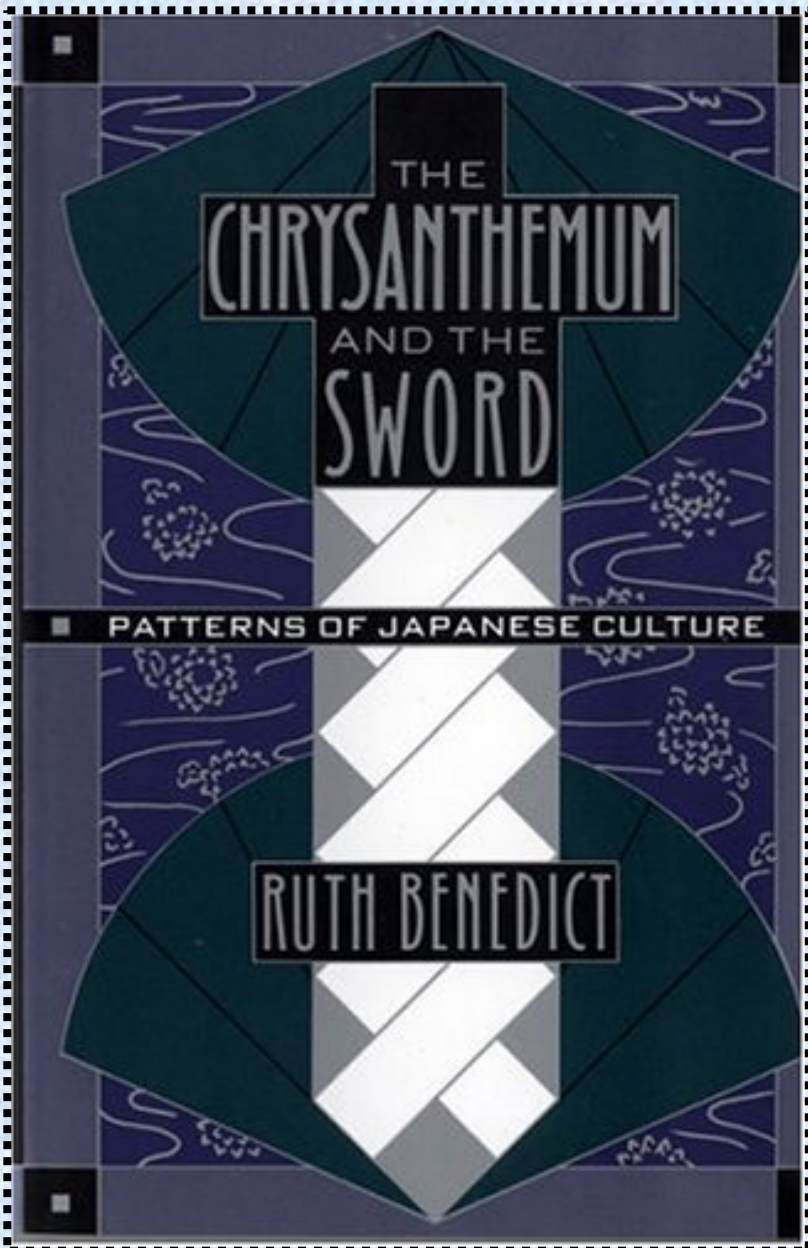
Ruth's main interest was the relationship between the individual and culture.

- She researched the differences between the cultures around the world and talked about different patterns related to culture and behavior.



# [ Contributions to Field ]

- Ruth developed what came to be known as the Culture and Personality.
- In 1934, she published a book called "Patterns of Culture" - in the book, she developed a concept of cultural configuration. She also made a conflict between an individual's personality and the norms of her culture.
- Ruth did a study of Japanese personality and culture, which was published to a book called "The Chrysanthemum and the Sword" in 1946.
- She was also the co-author of a government pamphlet entitled "The Races of Mankind", which focused on racial differences as oppose to Nazism.



# [ Major Theories ]

- Ruth says "*The main purpose of Anthropology is to make the world safe for human differences.*"
- In the book *Patterns of Culture*, she focused between *cultural determinism and cultural relativism*.
- Her theory of the "*Integration of Culture*" where it is necessary not to study a culture by observing and generalizing the sum of its parts but in actual fact, cultures and the personalities within it can only be described as a whole concept where the influences, economics, religion and family dynamics must all be considered as the influences.

# [ Methods of Research ]

- **Field work was never an easy thing for Ruth because she was deaf from childhood.**
- **She had to limit herself to interviews with English speakers or to use interpreters, and where the eye could replace the ear.**
- **She learned lip reading but wasn't capable in learning new phonetic patterns.**

# [ People with whom Ruth worked with ]

- **Ruth returned to college at age 31, studying first at the New School for Social Research then moving to Columbia University where she studied with Franz Boas whom she called “Papa Franz”.**
- **Boas became an important instructor to Benedict and had a major influence on her life until his death.**
- **Boas arranged for Columbia to give her graduate credit for some of the work she did at the New School for Social Research. As a result, she was able to complete her studies in only 3 semesters and received her Ph.D. in Anthropology.**

# [ Why she is important to our study of Social Sciences ]

- Ruth Benedict is important to our study of Social Sciences because:

...her studies can help people understand the meaning of culture with personality.

...we can learn the differences between the cultures around the world and the different patterns related to culture and behavior.



[ The End ]

