Preface

THIS VOLUME contains a majority of the papers originally prepared for presentation at a conference on Culture and Mental Health Research in Asia and the Pacific held at the East-West Center, University of Hawaii, during the week of March 15-19, 1971. That conference was the third in a series of four held in conjunction with the Culture and Mental Health in Asia and the Pacific Program, which has been sustained by the National Institute of Mental Health (Grant #MH09243), the East-West Center, and the Social Science Research Institute of the University of Hawaii.¹ The week-long conferences, originally scheduled in alternate years, have been held in 1966, 1969, 1971, and 1972. Those taking part have included past and present Program participants and specially selected guests.

The introduction to the first volume of the series provides an outline of the principal objectives and the international consensus that gave rise to the Program. In brief, the Program focuses on research relevant to mental health in the Asia-Pacific area, with particular emphasis on the linkage between culture

1. The first two conferences were respectively reported in William Caudill and Tsung-Yi Lin, eds., *Mental Health Research in Asia and the Pacific* (Honolulu: East-West Center Press, 1969) and William P. Lebra, ed., *Transcultural Research in Mental Health* (Honolulu: The University Press of Hawaii, 1972).

and mental health. From its inception the Program has fostered international or transcultural interchange. More than sixty visiting researchers, Asian and American, have been invited to Honolulu as residents for periods extending from several months to one year. The Asian and American visiting scholars, together with selected University of Hawaii faculty, hold weekly seminars, conduct joint research, and carry out the writing of research results. Predominantly these participants have represented the fields of anthropology, psychiatry, and psychology. Since 1968 a semiannual *Newsletter* (Lebra, editor) has been published to provide a communication network among the Program participants and interested colleagues.

The third conference, reported on here, represented some significant departures from the previous ones, which gave priority to broad regional coverage, primarily stocktaking, for, in truth, much of this vast region has been *terra incognita* in terms of mental health research. As a consequence, the presentations varied considerably in subject matter, content, and detail. At this conference, however, we gave priority to the specific theme of youth and mental health. Whereas each of the preceding conferences contained a goodly representation of generalists, at this conference we restricted their numbers in favor of those with fresh field experience; nearly all taking part had recent first-hand experience in the Asian or Pacific areas. We also attempted to exclude epidemiological studies and abstract methodological exercises. As Caudill noted in the first volume, in Asia psychiatrists have overwhelmingly predominated in mental health research, whereas in the United States social scientists have also been active in the field; therefore, on this occasion we attempted to balance the representation of Asian social scientists and psychiatrists. Also, for the first time we invited a larger number of Asian than Western participants.

Nearly all of the papers were received in advance of the conference, allowing for the distribution of printed copies to the participants. Presentations were limited to twenty minutes, followed by another twenty minutes for discussion. Informality was the rule for both presentations and discussions. After the conference each participant revised her or his paper, often in accordance with queries and suggestions made in the discussion sessions. Not all of the papers could be included here, primarily because of space limitations or a lack of relevance to the theme of this book. In keeping with the procedure followed in the two previous volumes, I have resisted the temptation to interject personal comments or interpretation into the material presented by the contributors. As in the 1969 conference, the discussions following each presentation were recorded and subsequently transcribed; however, since as much time was devoted to discussion as to presentation, their very length would preclude inclusion here. Moreover, I am convinced that reducing spontaneous group discussion to print often obfuscates meaning, and at an international meeting such as this, it does an injustice to the non-native speakers of whatever happens to be the conference language. Conversely, severe editing and polishing of the transcription would introduce an artificial tone.

I am indebted to many people who contributed to the success of the conference. My colleague and coprincipal investigator, Dr. Thomas W. Maretzki,

offered useful advice on selection and organization. Drs. Robert I. Levy (University of California, San Diego), Fuad Hassan (University of Indonesia), Anthony Marsella (University of Hawaii), Douglass Price-Williams (University of California, Los Angeles), Richard Williams (National Institute of Mental Health), and Mikail Bharja (University of Indonesia) were particularly valued commentators in the lively group discussions that followed each presentation. Also, special thanks are due Miss Ethel Okamura, who handled all the logistics of the conference, and Mrs. Laura Felix and Mrs. Freda Hellinger, who ably retyped all of the conference papers. Their help, and that of the National Institute of Mental Health in funding the conference, are gratefully acknowledged.

I commented in volume II on the seeming disparity in the range of presentations. To some extent that has been offset here by the narrower focus on the subject of youth. However, I am all too aware of the shortcomings and discrepancies that inevitably arise in an international and interdisciplinary conference of this nature. I would, however, stress that a forum for communication in a critical health field has been established; we are confident that there will be continued occasions for such exchanges in the future.

William P. Lebra

Honolulu, Hawaii
July, 1972