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the philosophy of science at LSE and his heroic creation of the Centre for the Study of Nationalism in Prague brought significant people together in stable collaboration, many of you will remember his ability to get ten or twenty or fifty people together for a few days, not more than a week; to get them talking, and to send them home refreshed, inspired, full of ideas and hope. He did that by his generous mixture of friendship, respect, interest in people, argument and scholarship, which very few people ever exhibit in such a combination and such abundance.

You will also want to talk about his ideas and arguments, the things that he did to alter the way social scientists do their work, and the ideas that anthropologists owe directly to Ernest Gellner.

So perhaps the first aspect to which you would want to draw attention is his conception of history as a sequence of collective attempts to solve problems. A shepherd sits with his sheep—Gellner was a sheep man from the Central High Atlas, remember, and subsumed cows and camels and goats under sheep—a shepherd sits with his sheep and covets his neighbour's flock. He could double his capital by knocking him over the head and running away with his booty to the next valley. Unfortunately the very same idea is passing through his neighbour's mind, and he has to defend as well as attack. So he makes a conditional alliance, offensive and defensive, with his neighbour, and then they make a similar alliance with their neighbours against more distant ones. And so on. They create a weak and fragile pattern of deterrent alliances, which relies on occasional failures for its effectiveness. This is the essence of a segmentary system: it is the stateless answer to the question, 'How do I protect myself against neighbours as ruthless and greedy as myself?' Or consider Gellner's account of how people preserve their social rules from continual questioning and scrutiny. In the Central High Atlas they established saints as a kind of Standing Orders Committee, guardians of the rules. Gellner pointed out that a more secure solution was to have the rules themselves attributed to an eternal source. He called this Platonism Mark I, and he used it to refer to rules of divine origin. However, it had the defect that people could find new Gods, or attribute new rules to God, and this too threatened to destabilize the social order. So there is a Platonism Mark II, which is the closed revelation of Islam: God declares there will be no further revelation, no new rules. This was a further solution required by the problems arising from the first.

Gellner's problem-solving history can seem optimistic, as though the successive solutions in some way improved on what people had devised before. But his point was that each solution carried new problems; there is no stable solution. It can also seem intellectualist; but Gellner allowed that these were practical problems, Platonism II being a solution to the essentially political issue of how a caliph might protect the rules that secured his position against his rivals.

This history is important to anthropologists for two reasons. It reminds them to look for origins. Segmentary systems did not spring fully formed out of nothing; they have an origin and a history. Islam is among other things an ingenious solution to the problems of stability in a rapidly expanding empire.

And that is the second importance: we may not know the history, but it is always the product of thought and argument, or at any rate of intention—‘solutions’ are human creations rather than the emergent properties of social forces. His emphasis on intention and argument are of immense importance to humane anthropology.

Gellner came to anthropology in the 1950s from philosophy. Although this move from Mecca to Medina was in no sense a flight, he did say later that he felt he was pursued across disciplinary boundaries by the hermeneutic plague. In fact some anthropologists in the 'sixties had begun to read Wittgenstein, were enchanted, and had found some of those doctrines attractive. But Gellner was a trained philosopher, and did understand Wittgenstein, and could perceive the implications of following him. His knowledge and understanding were invaluable to anthropology: he provided an authoritative voice in support of those who resisted the claims that relativism was required by true modern philosophy.

He wrote a kind of intellectual history that placed men and women in the worlds they inhabited. It had a startling effect to read of the ways in which Wittgenstein and Malinowski, for example, worked out the ‘basic polarities’ of the Habsburg Empire, between a universalistic bourgeois sociology of knowledge and the Hegelian ‘communalistic spirit’ that justified the ethnic minorities. Instead of contrasting Malinowski with Radcliffe-Brown, as was then customary, even at LSE, he put him in Cracow (a ‘suburb of Vienna’), in imaginary conversation with Wittgenstein and Hayek and Popper and Heidegger. Of course, this ability to locate people, to place them on the banks of the Danube or the Isis, is what had infuriated English philosophers, just as his treatment of Freud threatened to reduce psychoanalysts’ incomes to reasonable levels. A third example of Gellner’s intellectual history is his account of Hannah Arendt and Heidegger and of their emblematic status as representatives of rationality and of communalism; it is a piece that encapsulated something of the dilemmas Gellner himself clearly felt and expressed in his University Sermon delivered here only four years ago.

In short, Gellner was able to place knowledge and ideas in times and places. This is important to anthropologists because it shows how to do a sociology of knowledge without lapsing into mere contingency and relativism. Marxists and hermeneuticists have argued that Malinowskian functionalism is a doctrine that was a product and support of empire. Gellner showed that, as he would put it, they were only partly right: wrong empire, wrong time, and otherwise probably banal! Anthropologists know that they are the product of a culture. What they do not always know is how to accommodate that self-awareness with their claim to want to speak true words. Gellner showed how, and immeasurably increased self-understanding by his historical sociology of anthropological knowledge.

A third aspect you may want to emphasize is that Gellner played with dilemmas, and converted them into polarities or paradoxes. So, in his re-working of Ibn Khaldun, Gellner presented civilization and nobility as exclusive alternatives: you could be noble and uncouth, or civilized and abject; that was the way the world was. Similarly, North African Muslims could be comforted by a

hierarchical, intermediary-ridden, saint-driven Islam; or they could live theologically correct austere lives, in direct and unremitting communion with God. They couldn't be both comfortable and pure: these were exclusive alternatives, and people were bound to oscillate between them. Many intellectuals struggle between the attractions of enchantment, of living in a cosy, rule-bound, truth-defining, local world, and the enlightened search for dispassionate and unlocated truth. They seek to be rational in part of their lives but cannot concede the whole field to questioning all at once, not immediately or consistently. The world presents itself to them as a series of dilemmas. That is why Gellner's account of the Enlightenment is so shocking: he captured minds and jolted them into self-aware scrutiny because he represented the alternatives as paradoxes. So, before the Great Transition, the world was enchanted; and afterwards it was enlightened. You could be enchanted and unenlightened, or enlightened and disenchanting. Those people who felt themselves to be a little bit enlightened, but who kept parts of their lives in the dark for secret binges of enchantment, found themselves caught in a paradox created by Gellner and by world history: you couldn't be both.

Another example of this play with dilemmas is his account of Soviet and Western anthropology. He deployed his philosophical training, his linguistic skill and his understanding of sociologizing Marxism, to expose mercilessly the incoherence and inconsistency in the Marxist account of human history. He did that with wit and humanity, as he did in all his analyses of closed systems. He also demonstrated the subtlety and quality of thought within Soviet anthropology and compared that with the relatively cruder French and British varieties of Marxism. Soviet anthropologists lived in the system, and some of them maintained their integrity, by stretching it, bending it, introducing new ideas to accommodate new knowledge and understanding. They contrasted sharply with the free intellectuals of the West, who often used Marxism as a touchstone, to know who was with them and who against. Gellner was unique among anthropologists in having been present in Moscow in 1989, at the time of *glasnost* and *perestroika*, and in keeping anthropological notes at a crucial moment in Russian history, indeed in the history of the twentieth century. His work there enabled him to describe reactions to events, and he was especially able to present with understanding and sympathy the dilemmas of both dissidents and conformists, and of people who had been a little bit of each.

The collapse of the USSR was a major event with consequences that will resonate for decades. It seems extraordinary that Gellner should have been there, a philosopher-anthropologist, uniquely equipped to describe and analyse: how could that coincidence of time and man have possibly happened? But then you think again: he went to Morocco in the 1950s partly because he thought that conflict between Jews and Muslims would dominate the decades after the creation of the state of Israel, and he therefore wanted to understand Islam. He went to Prague six years ago because he foresaw the tragic importance of ethnicity and nationalism in the voids left by the collapsed Soviet empire.

In each case Gellner brought his qualities as an anthropologist and philosopher: his vision of history as a process of finding solutions to successive problems; his ability to locate men and ideas in a sweep of history; his sharp presentation of dilemmas as polarities. And he did this, in all his major work, at the centre of geopolitical interest and concern. Those are perhaps among the things you will tell your children about—with gratitude and pride that you knew him and loved him.

JOHN DAVIS

**TOURISM AFLOAT:
THE HIDDEN DISCOURSE OF RELATIONS ABOARD A
CROSS-CHANNEL FERRY**

TRICIA GIBBONS

Introduction

MUCH of the literature on tourism to date can be seen as presenting a particular view of host-guest relations, one in which the guests are in positions of power *vis-à-vis* the hosts who entertain them (Shamir 1984, Sutton 1967). 'As a tourist, a person is at leisure...others must serve while the tourist plays' (Nash 1989: 45). Such literature reveals certain assumptions about the notions of hospitality and the power of money which entitles the spender to particular services (Adams 1972, Brewer 1984). The tourist, as a paying guest, is presented as somehow powerful as a result of his or her ability to control money and initiate transactions. The purchasing power of tourists, be it in terms of commodities or leisure time itself, is central to the tourism industry.

This paper is an ethnographic account of 'ferry tourism', which, despite its prominent place within the tourism industry, has been much neglected in the literature on it. This study attempts to fill this gap by concentrating on the specific environment of one ferry operating between England and France. Unlike much of the literature on tourism, the focus will include the perspectives of both passengers

My grateful thanks go to Dr Dolores Martinez for endless support and advice during the construction of this paper, and to Dr Tom Selwyn, Juliet Norwood and Claudia Amaral for their constructive criticisms.

and crew, or hosts and guests. To this extent it is as much an ethnography of the workplace as of the world of leisure. It will also examine relations between passengers and crew, in particular the relations of authority and power that operate to maintain such divisions. Despite outward appearances, and contrary to much of the tourism literature, the paying guest does not occupy the position of ultimate power. In light of work by Turner (1978), Graburn (1989), Lett (1983), Foster (1986) etc., this paper will show that within the context of the ferry, 'tourists' cannot be characterized as solely sharing some sort of 'communitas' or as existing within a vacuum of egalitarian relations. This concept, with certain provisos, is more applicable to the grouping of crew. A more accurate picture is one in which power relations are viewed as a constant process of negotiation between all parties.

Power

As Barnes says (1988: 165), 'wherever human beings are found, whatever the situation in which they are found, social order and social power are also found.' Power is a concept central to any understanding of society, and as such it has featured prominently in analyses in sociology and other disciplines for many years (Blau 1967, Lukes 1974, Clegg 1989), including literary and textual criticism. While there seems to be no agreed, fully comprehensive definition of power, Barnes suggests certain characteristics as common to most (1988: 1-4). First, power is treated as an entity or attribute which things may have. Secondly, it is a theoretical concept referring to capacity or potential. Thirdly, it is manifest in behaviour, although actions cannot be used to define power itself. Fourthly, it is evident through its effects. This last assertion may go some way towards explaining the difficulty of defining what is meant by power. If its existence becomes apparent through effects, it is easier to describe its consequences than its nature or basis. Most analyses have thus concerned themselves with the location of power in society over and above any definition of power itself.

If one follows this line, the issue becomes a dispute over the way an initial definition of power should inform subsequent empirical study. The danger of operating with a rigid framework where power is necessarily explicative, operational or simply descriptive is that a large sector of knowledge relating to power relations in a particular context may be excluded. This is particularly relevant in analysing the complex web of interrelations between different groups aboard the ferry environment. Increasingly, it seems that any successful definition of power or subsequent analysis of power relations needs to operate with a flexible notion of what power is.

This is not to say that a definition of power should embrace all positions, thus rendering it useless. One needs a starting-point from which to initiate any investigation. In this way, Clegg is able to talk of all contributions establishing

a framework of power as worthy, no matter if subsequent critiques lead to their downfall (1989: xvii). Nevertheless, this position does allow a certain advantage in recognizing the benefits of one theory over another. It is from this standpoint that I make a case for adopting Foucault's analysis of power as an initial framework for this study. Before I do so, there is another perspective worth examining briefly within the context of tourism. Parsons' (1967) approach relies on an economic model to understand political power because 'power exists in the political system like money exists in the economic system' (cited in Barnes 1988: 14). This is an interesting analogy, particularly as much of the tourism literature contains the often implicit assumption that tourists, as paying guests, are in a position of power because of their purchasing ability.

This presentation is necessarily misleading, since it ignores a multiplicity of other factors often associated with economics which may affect the balance of power in such contexts. Parsons' theory is thus as unsuitable for the ferry context as it is in others (Barnes 1988: 14), because its scope is too restricted. There is also a tendency to talk of power as existing solely within a vacuum. This criticism can be levelled at many theorists, not only Parsons (see Barnes *ibid.*) but also Lukes (1974, 1992). It is one reason why Foucault's reconceptualization of power (1972, 1977, 1980) is particularly attractive. Not only does Foucault's analytic take this disjuncture of post-modernism into account, it also presents a suitably ambiguous and decentred notion of power. Thus the concern is not with the location of power so much as how it is exercised and its consequential effects. It thus allows an escape from the web of causality that has constrained many other theorists.

Foucault's analysis of power is particularly useful in addressing the dynamic relationship between hosts and guests aboard the ferry. These relations are fluid, being subject to many varying factors such as age, expectations and travel experience. It is in this sense that the relationship of power is better regarded as a dynamic and shifting process than a static balance in favour of one group rather than another.

Methodology

This study is based on fieldwork undertaken over two consecutive summers (1993 and 1994) aboard the *Stena Londoner*. As an employee of Stena Sealink and an active crew member aboard the ferry in the Passenger Services Department, I was able to gather data while immersed in the working and social environment of the ferry. In addition, I undertook over twenty journeys solely as a passenger. This participant observation was supplemented by numerous informal interviews with over thirty crew members. Conversations with passengers were largely undertaken in the capacity of crew member, although these were supplemented with over

1,500 passenger comment cards, often submitted anonymously. On-board records and documentation relating to the *Stena Londoner* were also utilized.

Terminology

At this point some clarification is necessary. While this paper examines what is essentially a tourist environment,¹ not all passengers view themselves as tourists within this space. To follow Graburn's distinction, not all were voluntarily outside the world of work and indulging in play (1989). The obvious case is that of the freight drivers, for whom the ferry forms part of the work environment. Within this category are also business travellers, and school parties on exchange visits, who are ostensibly there for educational purposes.

The term 'passenger' is less restrictive and is used here to describe all those, whether 'tourists' or otherwise, who travel on the ferry. It also allows a distinction to be made from crew members who are not voluntary in the same sense and are not fare-payers. However, while rejecting the term 'tourist' I think it is still valid to use other terms common to tourist literature, namely hosts and guests (see Smith 1989). There is no conflict here, in the sense that all passengers are guests of the *Londoner*, the crew and *Stena Sealink*. Indeed, management crew referred to passengers in these terms. By definition, the *Londoner* and her crew can be seen as hosts to the fare-paying passengers, catering to their needs and providing the context in which they expect a service.

The MV Stena Londoner

On a full sailing, the *Londoner* has a carrying capacity of 1,800 passengers and operates with a crew of between 65 and 68. It provides a distinctly British environment. Her crew are recruited from British shores, and English is the predominant language. Announcements and directions are given in English first, followed by a French translation. While over fifteen currencies are accepted on board, change is given only in British currency. The Britishness of this environment is mirrored by the nationality of the passengers, most of whom are from Britain. The reverse is true of her sister ship, the *Parisien*, which on the whole

1. That is, one set up essentially to cater for those people travelling outside the parameters of normal structures of everyday life, or, to use Graburn's (1989) distinction, the profane world.

caters for French passengers. However, both British and French passengers are found on both vessels.

In this respect, The *Londoner* can be said to cater to the masses, with a quick turnround being the *modus operandi*. In the words of one senior manager, 'we operate a bus service'. The on-board facilities, such as the fast-food cafeteria operating throughout the voyage, reflect this. Seating is functional rather than luxurious, the exception being the Eurolounge, available to those willing to pay an additional charge. The rest is free seating. Because official seating capacity includes on-deck lounges, bad weather often means that there is not enough seating for all passengers.

There are also several areas that cater more to individual needs, such as a restaurant with individual settings and menu. Freight drivers are catered to the most in this respect. They have a separate dining area, are able to book the limited cabins available for the crossing and are provided with shower facilities. Thus, to a great extent, they are able to escape the masses. It is difficult to determine to what extent freight drivers perceive themselves as being different from those travelling for leisure. Comments seemed to indicate that a distinction was made. To a limited extent, Stena supported the exclusivity of such passengers, with discounts applicable only to freight drivers.

In marketing terms, Stena Sealink projects an image of cruise-liner luxury. Its brochures emphasize the relaxed mode of travel, the luxury goods available on board at duty-free prices, the provision of entertainment and the service of a skilled crew. Such imagery supports the notion of the paying guest as occupying a position of power.

Passengers

The grouping 'passengers' proves to be paradoxical in that it is a homogeneous concept simultaneously containing many divisions and appearing very fragmented. This contrasts with Foster's account of the equality experienced by cruise passengers as members of 'a privileged class' (1986: 228). As the antithesis to 'crew', 'passengers' can be seen as one group with an identity of its own. All members share a common experience and are subject to the same structures of an unfamiliar environment. They begin their journey by adhering to special embarkation procedures which refer to them as one group. While it is certainly true that the perspective of passengers existing as a homogeneous group is set up by the hosts, it is also true that they learn to identify themselves as such and to conform to this classification.² It is not unusual to hear passengers identify

2. See Brewer 1984 for an account of guests' conforming to hosts' stereotypes and adapting their behaviour accordingly.

themselves to crew members in this way, as demonstrated by one man who delared, 'I am a foot passenger. Where do I go?'

Embarkation is a time when passengers share a sense of commonality and identify with one another, despite being strangers. The layout of the ship can be confusing to passengers on first sight. Crew members are positioned to help with directions and queries at the main entrances, but typical comments from passengers concern the maze of corridors and which deck they left their cars on.

This pattern is repeated whenever confusion abounds and serves to unify passengers. The system of boarding cards used to regulate duty-free sales is another example. Here the reasoning behind the system is not known or understood by most passengers, while it is by crew members. This results in an identification with other passengers who are equally unsure of the system. A familiar response to crew members' requests to see boarding cards was: 'I wouldn't be on board if I didn't have one', backed up by laughter from other passengers. Occasionally, reactions are very hostile. One passenger even threatened violence and to report the crew member to the European Court. The eagerness of passengers to stick with things familiar can be seen as an attempt to overcome the confusion caused by the unknown. The availability of English newspapers on board is one example, as is the typically English food served in the cafeteria. British passengers returning after several weeks' holiday in France may refer to French money as 'funny money' and often express relief that they can speak English again.

However, these brief moments during which passengers identify with one another and exist as a homogeneous group mask underlying divisions. Passengers also exist in antithesis to each other according to nationality and mode of travel. For example, one English lady complained vociferously about another passenger who pushed into the queue, saying, 'these French people just have no manners'. Similarly, divisions exist between types of passenger. Car passengers complained of missing out on seating to foot passengers who had paid less, and many freight drivers were openly impatient and regarded new passengers who were unsure of the system with some derision. The divisions passengers made among themselves were most visible in terms of seating arrangements. Family groups sat together, often putting belongings on empty seats to separate their space from other passengers. Even in the bar, where free-standing seating allowed flexibility in seating arrangements, divisions between groups were made very clear.

Crew

Paradoxically, the crew, while maintaining outward divisions of rank, appear to have more internal unity than passengers. The rank structure of the crew follows

the uniform structure of maritime life, with the captain at the top of the pyramid. His authority is recognized by crew members, not least through practices such as standing whenever he enters. Privileged status is recognized through the provision of separate dining areas for higher ranking crew, as well as better cabin accommodation in a separate part of the ship. However, in some respects the intimate nature of the ferry environment results in very informal relations between the captain and other ranks, to the extent that such divisions are largely superficial. Indeed, it was not unusual for the captain to join off-duty crew on the sundeck.

In other respects, departmental distinctions can be seen to exist between the Passenger Services Department (PSD) and the ship maintenance crew or 'deckies'. As these names suggest, the PSD are front-line crew responsible for providing services to passengers. The 'deckies' are responsible for the maintenance and running of the vessel itself. However, these distinctions are not as obvious as vertical ones involving rank. This is due largely to the frequency of interaction between both departments as a result of regular boat drills, as well as the existence of a common mess area. The seating arrangements at meals reflect this interaction, with department members mixing easily, whereas higher ranking members of crew dine elsewhere and are excluded from the mess area. Here, there exists a unity between such crew members in opposition to the higher ranks. This was apparent with the decision to prohibit crew from drinking alcohol on any private crossing made immediately after the turn of duty. This was seen as another unreasonable measure by 'management' and prompted identification among the non-ranking crew members who had to comply with it.

Further distinctions exist within the PSD itself between working areas. The cafeteria is acknowledged to be a frenetic work area, while utility members are seen as having an 'easier ride'. However, these divisions are not hard-and-fast ones, as most crew members work in more than one department. Thus other department crew often ask, 'Are you busy?' in an empathetic way, recognizing the difficulties that arise in providing a service to passengers.

Departmental distinctions are more real for members of management who have to compete for finances and have reason to put the needs of their departments first. For example, the cafeteria was the first department to increase the hours of temporary staff after they were reduced over the summer, which prompted other department managers to complain that they were just as busy and short-staffed.

Employment status differences, which might be said to be a source of fragmentation among crew members themselves, seem to have the opposite effect. A minimal number of crew are employed as corps crew, benefiting from higher hourly rates and travel perks as well as job security and sick-pay benefits. Crew employed on temporary contracts, which in some cases have been in force for over two years, are paid less, despite working under the same conditions, and they do not enjoy any benefits. Rather than causing divisions between crew members, a unity is created in opposition to Stena, the company, which is seen as pursuing an unreasonable policy. This attitude appeared in the comment often made among crew members: 'that's Stena for you!'

Thus, the nature of the ferry environment as a work and living place for crew members serves to create a sense of unity over and above any outward divisions. Living together for seven days at a time and working in the same environment creates close bonds between crew members and a close-knit atmosphere. This is reflected in the cabin parties often held below deck, meaning that the relationship between crew members is both a social and a working one. However, it is one that is largely confined to life on the ferry, and in this sense crew members can be seen as living two lives, one on board ship and one on shore. The boundary between them can be seen in the on-board relationships that are often created between crew members who have a wife or husband on shore. There is an unspoken acceptance of this departure from the normal moral structures that exist on shore, and in this sense the ferry can be seen as a liminal environment for crew members (see Lett 1983).

In short, crew identify themselves with one another by virtue of this common experience on board the ferry and exist in opposition to passengers who spend only four hours on board at a time. While the uniform immediately distinguishes crew from passengers, it also signals a common experience between crew members, making it possible to greet other crew members even if one knows them only vaguely.

Passenger-Crew Relations

With the ferry environment existing as a living and working place for crew members, passengers can often seem superfluous. In general, crew attitudes towards passengers reflect the nature of the environment, an almost paternalistic language being adopted to deal with passengers who are confused about the environment and its structures. The same repetitive questions such as 'What time do we arrive?' from every new wave of passengers are given standard answers by crew members, who have dealt with them hundreds of times before. The cycle is broken only when circumstances allow a conversation beyond repetitive questions to start between a crew member and a passenger, at which point he or she becomes more than just another anonymous passenger passing through. This is also true for regular passengers who travel on the *Londoner*. One passenger in particular was known to all the crew as Eddie and was referred to as such, rather than as 'a passenger'.

Although they are in the position of providing a service to passengers, crew members have ways of dealing with passengers who were unnecessarily rude or abusive, such as a slower service or stricter observance of duty-free restrictions.³

3. Ong (1991) details similar strategies of resistance within the workplace, albeit outside a tourism environment.

While passengers paying for their service are ostensibly in a position of power, this is countered by the structures that operate on board. The example of seating demonstrates this. Many passengers express dissatisfaction at the inadequate seating facilities, but although they are able to make a written complaint internally to Stena customer services, immediate redress is impossible. Similarly, many passengers see the many safety rules, such as the forbidden access to car deck during the voyage, as restricting them unfairly. In a much broader sense, passengers are subjected to the 'normalizing' processes imposed upon them by the structures of the ferry environment and in turn by crew. The embarkation procedures and issuing of boarding cards and tickets all serve to eradicate the individuality of passengers.

Power in these instances thus remains with crew members, who are insiders. They know how the system works and are legitimated in enforcing it. They know more about individual passengers through ticket information. The authority of a uniform means being seen as one who knows the system and overrides any deference of age that might exist in normal relations. In this respect, passengers are subject to a more overt form of power/knowledge. Although the uniform in itself is not productive of anything, the accepted meaning of authority it conveys imbues the wearer with power over others.

Whether crew choose to take advantage of this power/knowledge seems to depend greatly on the specific situation and is tied to the whole notion of expectations. Although Nash posits money as motivating certain 'understandings about how the parties involved will treat each other' (1989: 45), many factors are involved, not least the interpretation of such understandings by individuals in specific contexts. Passengers' expectations are more powerful. Dissatisfaction is often expressed in terms of failed expectations, such as perceived standards of cleanliness or provisions for changing babies. In these circumstances, knowledge about rival ferry companies fuels such expectations and is used as a threat, the implication being that the passenger will take his or her custom elsewhere.

Expectations by passengers as to what they, as fare-paying passengers, ought to receive in services can be seen from comment cards provided by Stena Sealink for them to fill out. Any disappointment was directed at crew members as visible front-line members. In this sense, passengers often see crew members as deceiving them. One passenger, not believing the duty-free regulations as explained to him by a crew member, demanded to speak to the manager. When the manager confirmed the regulations, he demanded to speak to the captain, accusing the manager of lying.

Undoubtedly power/knowledge contributes to strengthening the relations of crew and passengers alike, but it is not always productive in terms of end-results. This applies to passengers who utilize their knowledge of consumer rights and complain through official channels. All comments are referred to the head office and solicit a response, but in many cases action is prevented by considerations of financial viability and the desire for increased profit margins by Stena as a company.

This notion of expectations can be seen to extend to crew also, for example the way passengers should express dissatisfaction. A positive response was given to 'civilized' grievances. Indeed, much of the discourse between passengers and crew can be seen to involve a whole series of expectations, whose successful meeting depends a great deal on subtle processes of exchange between the two parties, which are not always overtly acknowledged by the players involved. In the same way that the passenger is empowered by the consumer ethos, the crew are limited by the notion of hospitality and doctrines of the customer as always being right (see Sheldon 1988, Rakadijijyska 1990). There are perceived limits to which crew members can impose power/knowledge *vis-à-vis* that of the passenger, no matter how uninformed the latter might be. It is understood that the crew are not deliberately rude to passengers and that they should attempt to facilitate their needs. Deviation runs the risk of being disciplined by Stena management.

Analysis and Conclusions

The purchasing power of guests and the hold this power exerts over facilitating hosts is what Nash refers to when he talks about the imperialism of the pound (1989: 37–8).⁴ In this respect much tourism literature gives a somewhat distorted picture of host–guest relations. Within this general presentation of the 'guest as king', there is little mention of authority being brought to bear on the tourist, who is shown to be unshackled from the constraints of profane life and empowered to take advantage of freedoms within the sacred. Lett (1983) shows the liminal world of the tourist to be one where individuals are able to invert or suspend the customary regulations of everyday life. From pilgrimage to package tour, the mention of authority is noticeably absent.⁵

This study shows that while host–guest relations aboard the ferry demonstrate many parallels with this overall picture, it is only a surface reality. Undoubtedly passengers command power in many of the ways suggested, particularly from their position as paying guests. They are able to assert themselves through knowledge of their rights as consumers and through a range of expectations formed through knowledge of other contexts. The pervasive ethos of consumer society means that most passengers are aware of 'their right to complain', even if mechanisms of exclusion and censorship come into play, resulting in only a knowledgeable few

4. According to Nash, transactions between hosts and guests are marked by a disparity of power, in which metropolitan centres generate tourist needs and tourist areas satisfy them (1989: 37–8).

5. Turner's (1978) and Graburn's (1989) notion of *communitas* belies the fact that authority structures must be present for the movement of vast numbers of people to occur.

being aware of exactly what their rights are in this particular environment. This is in contrast to the crew, who are informed of the relevant legislation.

The question then arises whether tourist hospitality is necessarily about economics and making a profit. Certainly this would seem to be a large part of it, and notions of good customer relations are constantly being impressed on the crew by management. Incentives to make higher sales and achieve profit targets are much in evidence. Similarly, the notion of passengers being entitled to a level of hospitality in return for their money is again related to the idea of expectations. However, this is not the whole picture, and it ignores the context of specific situations. As already mentioned, once conversations are initiated between hosts and guests the anonymity of the relationship is broken, and hospitality becomes a personal response rather than a professional one motivated ultimately by economic forces.

Deeper analysis reveals that the hosts, in this case the crew, are in a strong position when it comes to power relations with passengers and are able to utilize this power to exert authority over them. While it is possible to suggest that hosts ultimately have power over guests, contrary to much of the present literature this is misleading. In viewing social groups aboard the ferry as internally divided, it is possible to suggest a multiplicity of relations in which, depending on context, individuals and groups exist on unequal terms. It is no longer plausible to view social categories as homogeneous and egalitarian, a disparity that exists both between groups and within them.

This paper has suggested that in many respects the crew set themselves up as legitimate holders of power and authority in relations with passengers and can ultimately be seen as more powerful. How is this achieved? If one follows Foucault's argument, the answer would be found in knowledge. While this is undoubtedly an over-simplification of his reasoning, there is no mistaking the essential relationship he makes between knowledge and power (1977: 27).

However, if, as this study suggests, knowledge alone does not account sufficiently for the authority and power exhibited between groups at this micro-level, the question must be raised to what extent Foucault's ascending analysis of power relations is itself a mechanism of exclusion.⁶ In rejecting totalitarian macro-perspectives, Foucault's analysis fails to consider the wider spheres of legitimation that influence power relations. While the crew are restricted by the notion of hospitality and a certain amount of deference towards the guest, they are ultimately legitimated in their position by wider regulations formulated by the government. Duty-free limits are fixed from above, as are many rules regarding safety. Such legislation is imposed on Stena as a company, and the crew, as final links in this chain, enact it. It could be said, therefore, that depending on the context, crew are restricted as much as empowered by such legislation.

6. Nash (1989: 37) and Adams (1972) have written of the need for reference to larger contexts in order to comprehend fully direct contact between hosts and guests.

Within the ferry context, this fails to appreciate the agency of individuals and the complexities of given contexts, which demonstrate that such discipline and power do not operate on everyone in the same way. Reactions and resistances differ, as is demonstrated by disembarkation. The structured timetable operates on all passengers, yet some resist this by returning to their cars before they are called to the car decks. Thus the context in which power is manifested is of significance, particularly when it comes to the question of individual agency. Indeed, the ability of passengers to make choices between compliance or resistance in reaction to alternative power structures is stronger in many cases when acting alone or truly as an individual. Thus crowd control is easier with large numbers than with smaller groups, where individuals feel more empowered to assert their authority and challenge that of crew members.

While not denying the significance of knowledge within this equation, this paper has shown that there are many ways in which people get a handle on power and manipulate it to their advantage. In determining where the clearest balance of power lies, it must be remembered that the crew are also subject to internal power relations, so that the matter becomes one of context rather than ultimate power. For example, dynamic and simultaneous relations of power operate between crew members, who might simultaneously be subject to the authority of higher ranking members while exercising power over passengers during crowd control and embarkation procedures.

A successful analysis of power relations within the ferry context must be a dynamic one which regards power as a constant process of negotiation between all agents, rather than a static one in which one group is seen as firmly holding the balance of power over others. Any monopoly of power should be seen as a temporary position in the on-going negotiation between and within positions, depending on context, and necessarily accounting for human agency.

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FROM THE ARCHIVES

**A GLIMPSE OF EVANS-PRITCHARD
THROUGH HIS CORRESPONDENCE
WITH LOWIE AND KROEBER**

Selected and Introduced by
PIERO MATTHEY

Introduction

WHILE scholars have always differed in the ways they handled their personal papers, the emergence of computers, fax machines and, above all, electronic mail has considerably altered the documentation of academic work. Historians and biographers will almost certainly regret the end of the era in which letters were either typed or written by hand. In the past, there were scholars who systematically filed their incoming mail, along with carbon copies of their outgoing letters. Whether this happened by plan or by chance, invaluable material became available for historical research, once these files reached a public archive. Of course, there were always those who, lacking storage space or an eye for history, or having the more deliberate aims of privacy and confidentiality, destroyed some or all of the papers in their possession. The mediaeval historian Ernst Kantorowicz, for example, who taught at Berkeley in the 1940s, sometimes went so far as to ask his colleagues to destroy his letters once they had been answered. No trace whatsoever was to remain (Professor Yakov Malkiel, personal communication).

But as a general rule, the decision to destroy records is restricted to what is in one's own hands. One cannot eliminate what has become the property of others. E. E. Evans-Pritchard, for example, decided not to leave certain kinds of information to succeeding generations, and, during the last years of his life, apparently disposed of every item of correspondence in his personal papers (Dr

Godfrey Lienhardt, personal communication). Yet in 1952 he saw fit to publish the English translation of a letter in French which had been sent to him by Lucien Lévy-Bruhl in November 1934. The letter was Lévy-Bruhl's reply to Evans-Pritchard upon receiving a copy of the latter's essay, 'Lévy-Bruhl's Theory of Primitive Mentality', published the same year, while Evans-Pritchard was Assistant Professor of Sociology at Fuad I University in Cairo. In a brief introduction, Evans-Pritchard argued that making the letter public was important because it had a bearing on the understanding of Lévy-Bruhl's thought at precisely the time the French scholar was revising views he had elaborated in earlier works, including *Les fonctions mentales dans les sociétés inférieures* (1910). Lévy-Bruhl's letter to Evans-Pritchard reflected on the criticism his work had received during the previous twenty-five years, and hinted at those reformulations of his earlier theories which would not be made explicit until the posthumous publication of the *Carnets* in 1949. Moreover, wrote Evans-Pritchard, the letter demonstrated that the French scholar had been 'tolerant, open-minded, and courteous,' showing virtues not always possessed in academia.¹

Since Evans-Pritchard destroyed the correspondence in his possession, any surviving material found elsewhere assumes great importance. It may shed light on his personality, both as a scholar and as a human being, suggest missing signposts to his own intellectual itinerary and to those of his colleagues in anthropology, and provide the context needed to avoid misinterpreting statements which would otherwise remain elusive and ambiguous. T. O. Beidelman, for example, has drawn a fascinating portrait of Evans-Pritchard, thanks to excerpts from letters he received from the British anthropologist over a period of many years (1974: 553-67).

I have accordingly brought together here the letters that Alfred L. Kroeber and Robert H. Lowie exchanged with Evans-Pritchard. Together, they provide a picture of the intermittent but continuing dialogue between the Department of Anthropology at the University of California, Berkeley, and Oxford University. Evans-Pritchard's originals have been matched up with outgoing carbon copies preserved by both Kroeber and Lowie.² Some of the letters are short and deal only with routine matters (which may nevertheless be of interest). But others contain important nuggets of information and offer an exciting view of anthropol-

1. Evans-Pritchard made the same point in Lévy-Bruhl's obituary (1940a: 24-5). The article was a grand tribute to a scholar who had consistently proved himself an outstanding thinker while continuing to embody remarkable human qualities.

2. The material comes from the Alfred L. Kroeber Papers (C-B 925, Boxes 6 & 14), the Robert H. Lowie Papers (C-B 927, Box 7) and the records of the Department of Anthropology, University Archives (CU-23, Box 17). For permission to publish, grateful acknowledgment is here made to the Bancroft Library, University of California at Berkeley; Dr Deirdre Evans-Pritchard, daughter of E. E. Evans-Pritchard; and Professor Karl Kroeber, son and literary executor of Alfred L. Kroeber. To Mrs Lorise C. Topcliffe of Exeter College, Oxford, go my profound thanks for providing essential information included here.

ogy and anthropologists on both sides of the Atlantic. I highlight some of the important points below.

Evans-Pritchard graduated in Modern History from Oxford University in 1924 with second-class honours. Later the same year, he moved to the London School of Economics to study anthropology, as it was the only institution which would allow him to conduct fieldwork. Unlike Sir James Frazer, he had always dreamt of an adventurous life in the field. As Evans-Pritchard entered the world of Seligman and Malinowski (who were on the teaching staff), Robert H. Lowie, who had left his native Vienna in 1893 at the age of ten, returned to the Old World for the first time. At the end of June 1924, he sailed to Europe, mainly to attend the International Congress of Americanists in Göteborg, Sweden, that August. But in the weeks preceding and following that event, he visited Scandinavia, Germany, Austria, France and England before sailing home from Southampton in November. While in London, he met Malinowski, with whom he felt an immediate intellectual kinship. They remained close until Malinowski's death in 1942, despite the profound differences in their understanding and practice of anthropology. Lowie also met Evans-Pritchard during his visit to the London School of Economics.

Oddly enough, in the 1920s neither of the foremost exponents of British functionalism, Malinowski in England and Radcliffe-Brown in South Africa, had a book of his own which covered the entire gamut of problems involved in kinship and social organization. The only outstanding work available was Lowie's *Primitive Society* (1920). In Cape Town, this was one of the books that Radcliffe-Brown recommended to his first-year students, as did Malinowski in London. Hortense Powdermaker, who entered the London School of Economics in the autumn of 1925, remembers that it was neither Boas nor Kroeber but Lowie whom Malinowski considered his 'favorite American anthropologist' (1966: 41).³ Along with fellow students Evans-Pritchard, Firth and Schapera, her London experience was based on *Primitive Society*, and it is reasonable to assume that it played an important role in Malinowski's seminars.

The impact of *Primitive Society* on Evans-Pritchard was a lasting one. In a paper published during the early 1970s (Evans-Pritchard 1973), he acknowledged the magnitude of the intellectual debt he owed to Lowie. When he was about to travel to Nuerland in 1930 and needed to keep personal belongings to a minimum, a discussion with Max Gluckman led Evans-Pritchard to conclude that if he could take just one book with him, it would be Lowie's *Primitive Society*. Thanks to *Notes and Queries on Anthropology*, not much could be achieved in the area of fieldwork. In retrospect, Evans-Pritchard considered that 'It was a very good choice' (1973: 12). The profoundly felt words of sympathy which Evans-Pritchard sent to Lowie's widow upon receiving the news of his death (see letter no. 18

3. Similarly, while Schapera was studying under Radcliffe-Brown in South Africa, he was advised by his mentor to study under Malinowski in London. The only other suggestion was to study in the United States under Lowie, judged the only competent American social anthropologist. No mention was made of either Boas or Kroeber (Kuper 1973: 90-1).

below) are the best testimony that could be paid to the American anthropologist by his British colleague. In that letter, Evans-Pritchard says that it was Seligman who recommended *Primitive Society* to him, and in fact Seligman and Malinowski shared the same opinion of the book.

Because of the geographical distance involved (Evans-Pritchard was in Africa before and during the Second World War, and otherwise in England), it was difficult or impossible for the two men to remain in close contact. They kept in touch in the only sensible way—by paying attention to what each other published. On 14 November 1938, in a letter to Dr Harry Alpert, Lowie mentioned ‘the unequivocally excellent field work reports of the last ten years by, say, Blackwood, Evans-Pritchard, Birket-Smith, Rasmussen, Lesser, Spier, *et al.*’ (CU-23, Univ. of California Archives). Just a few years after their encounter in London, Evans-Pritchard thought of Lowie when he was planning a Festschrift in honour of Seligman. Ultimately, it was edited by Evans-Pritchard, Firth, Malinowski and Schapera.⁴ Lowie accepted the invitation and provided a paper on ‘Religious Ideas and Practices of the Eurasiatic and North American Areas’ (1934: 183–8), a topic of great interest to Boas, who was always anxious to establish ancient Asian cultural relationships with the American continent. (A junior Boasian, Melville J. Herskovits, also appears among the contributors.)

Evans-Pritchard’s high esteem for Lowie is further demonstrated by the fact that he asked his American colleague for a letter of recommendation (see letter no. 4 below) when the Readership in Social Anthropology at Oxford University became available (Marett, said Evans-Pritchard, was leaving ‘almost at once’). Academic positions in England were rather limited at that time, and Evans-Pritchard definitely wanted to settle down and to devote his time to publishing the results of his prolonged fieldwork in various parts of the Sudan.

Once again, the situation is more complicated than it appears from Evans-Pritchard’s letter. He apparently resigned from Cairo University not because of his frustration with the situation there (see letter no. 2 below), but because he was offered a chance to conduct fieldwork among the pagan Galla in Ethiopia in 1935. Unfortunately, the Italians invaded Ethiopia that year and no such research was possible. Evans-Pritchard had no choice at that point but to return to England, where he was given a research lectureship in African sociology at Oxford through Marett’s good offices (Barnes 1987: 453). This appointment seems to have been no more than a temporary arrangement, designed to fill a gap and provide Evans-

4. Malinowski had asked Firth to join the project in order to avoid having his name close to that of Evans-Pritchard, with whom he was clearly at loggerheads. The complexities of the issue can be surmised from Firth’s recollections of the episode, which occurred in 1934, the same year the book appeared (Firth 1981: 121–2). It is interesting to note that on ‘the list of those who have promised to contribute (a copy of which is enclosed)’ (see letter no. 1 below), the wording is ‘Edited by Prof. B. Malinowski, D.Sc., Dr. I. Schapera, and E. E. Evans-Pritchard, Esq.’ The editors are not listed in alphabetical order, as they are in the published volume. As Seligman’s colleague, Malinowski is understandably listed first, followed by Schapera. Evans-Pritchard has put himself last, and further humbled himself as ‘Esq.’

Pritchard with some respite. Marett was surely sympathetic to Evans-Pritchard, whom he had known since his days as an honorary Scholar at Exeter College (Marett 1941: 267–8, 309).

It is rather strange that in November 1935 Evans-Pritchard should tell Lowie that Marett was suddenly vacating his readership, since Marett would reach seventy the following June and would only then become due to retire from the post he had held since 1910. Nowhere in his autobiography does Marett mention having left the readership suddenly. Moreover, Evans-Pritchard knew that *Custom is King* (Buxton 1936), a volume of essays in Marett's honour, would be presented to him by his friends and pupils on the very day of his seventieth birthday; Evans-Pritchard himself contributed a paper entitled 'Daily Life of the Nuer in Dry Season Camps' (1936: 291–9). What impact Lowie's testimonial of 2 December 1935 (see letter no. 5) may have had is unknown. To whom did Evans-Pritchard give it? There is no record of a committee having been appointed to find a suitable successor to Marett. Only archival research at Oxford could possibly shed light on the situation there in late 1935 and early 1936.

Further confusion arises from the fact that the Readership in Social Anthropology at Oxford was upgraded to a professorship following Marett's departure. Marett says that he came close to being appointed Professor of Social Anthropology at the very last minute, the Chair having been established in 1934 (1941: 269). Either Marett was in error or the date is a misprint, accepted uncritically by Ruel (1968: 566). Barnes dates this event to 1936 (1987: 454). Records in the University of Oxford Calendar put us on a firmer ground in regard to the sequence of events following the creation of the Chair in 1937. A board of selection decided in favour of Radcliffe-Brown, who was then at Chicago. A note from Marett to Radcliffe-Brown dated 17 June 1937 informs us about the transfer of power.

Evans-Pritchard had to wait nearly a decade to succeed Radcliffe-Brown, who retired in July 1946. The Second World War intervened, leading to Evans-Pritchard's long absence from his own country. But the war also offered him a unique opportunity to realize his dream of returning to Africa. His residence at Cairo University in the early 1930s had allowed him to acquire fluency in Arabic, to tour the Egyptian desert, visit its scattered oases, and meet some of the Sanusi exiles from Libya. During the war, he was able to travel into the interior of Cyrenaica and to gain first-hand experience of its Bedouin tribes. The defeat of combined Italian and German forces at El Alamein in November 1942 resulted in Libya coming under British control for the third (and last) time. As Tribal Affairs Officer, Evans-Pritchard spent the following two years travelling extensively by camel and horse in the desert, steppe and forest of the plateau.

Out of that experience came *The Sanusi of Cyrenaica* (1949). Because of the post-war paper shortage in England, the text was reduced by half for the published version. While the original full text has apparently been lost, the work none the less stands as a very important milestone in Evans-Pritchard's personal career, as well as in the development of British social anthropology. In this respect, the treatments that Douglas and Barnes give the book are unsatisfactory. Douglas

deals at length with Evans-Pritchard's works on the Zande and Nuer, but devotes only two pages to the *Sanusi* (1980: 44–5). Barnes mentions it briefly as the product of Evans-Pritchard's sojourn in Cyrenaica during the war. Against this, attention should be paid to Evans-Pritchard's letter to Kroeber dated 26 February 1950 (letter no. 11 below). Writing to a 'historically minded' anthropologist like himself, Evans-Pritchard tells Kroeber what that book meant to him and, consequently, how it should be approached. Evans-Pritchard's inner feelings, and the goal he set for himself in writing the book, are made explicit in a single sentence: 'It is an anthropologist's attempt to write political history.' And the emphasis is definitely on 'history'.

Why (if we are to believe Evans-Pritchard) was the book treated so lightly by his colleagues? Here we enter the treacherous terrain of personal relationships and the attendant gossip which continues long after its subjects are dead and unable to contest it. Neither Evans-Pritchard nor his supposed detractors, Fortes and Radcliffe-Brown, can tell us anything now. We have to rely on their books and essays, supplemented, where possible, by unpublished papers. To the best of my knowledge, neither Fortes nor Radcliffe-Brown ever wrote what Evans-Pritchard attributes to them (see letter no. 11). Fortes was Evans-Pritchard's closest colleague, bound by a friendship that began in Malinowski's seminars at the London School of Economics and lasted until Evans-Pritchard's death in 1973. In 1971, in fact, Evans-Pritchard rebuked a commentator who suggested that there had been a clash between him and Fortes (Barnes 1987: 477).

It is difficult to imagine that a balanced scholar like Fortes would dismiss *The Sanusi* as 'mere literature'. Whatever one's personal bent, the book impresses the reader at once as a work based on solid historical research, beginning with a careful reconstruction of the life of the Grand Sanusi from his birth in Algeria in 1787 until his death in the oasis of Jaghbub in 1859. The narrative then shifts to the fortunes of the Sanusiya Order in North Africa and its emergence among the nomads of Cyrenaica. Tracing the relationships of this religious order first with the Turks and then with the invading Italians, who waged war against the Bedouin, Evans-Pritchard demonstrates how it ultimately became a politically unifying force. Similarly, one has to take issue with Radcliffe-Brown's alleged assessment of *The Sanusi* as 'diachronic sociology'. Evans-Pritchard was by no means unique among anthropologists in his habit of distorting the viewpoints of his colleagues in order to bring his own into sharper relief. Neither Fortes nor Radcliffe-Brown had the training in history Evans-Pritchard had received at Oxford, and neither had the sense of history that ran in his blood. It is not unreasonable to suspect that in his letter to Kroeber, he highlighted what he believed he had achieved in *The Sanusi* at the expense of Fortes and Radcliffe-Brown.

If there were any doubts about the nature of his book, Evans-Pritchard forcibly dispelled them in 1961, when he delivered the 'Anthropology and History' lecture at Manchester. 'One of the few genuinely historical books written by an anthropologist *de carrière*', he told his audience, 'is my own book *The Sanusi of Cyrenaica*' (1961: 13). Its uniqueness is clearly seen in any comparison with other

books dealing with similar topics and problems. Evans-Pritchard published three works in 1940, all of them dealing with political institutions. The subtitle of *The Nuer* is *A Description of the Modes of Livelihood and Political Institutions of a Nilotic People* (1940b). His investigations among the Anuak were published in *The Political System of the Anuak of the Anglo-Egyptian Sudan* (1940c). And, together with Fortes, he edited *African Political Systems* (1940), whose introduction so profoundly influenced British anthropology for many years to come.⁵ That same year Evans-Pritchard's paper on 'The Political Structure of the Nandi-speaking Peoples of Kenya' appeared in the journal *Africa* (1940d).

Even in 1971, when his essays on the Azande were collected as *The Azande: History and Political Institutions*, Evans-Pritchard did not view this work as equal to that on the Sanusiya. The reason is clear: in writing about the Zande, Nuer, Anuak and Shilluk, he had relied on data collected during his own fieldwork, as well as those collected by others, and compared them with available European sources. He did not always put the material under the microscope of his sharp historical eye and at times accepted reports uncritically (cf. Johnson 1981: 508–27). In the Sudan, however, he had studied peoples whose language was spoken but not written, whose societies lacked archives of any kind and who possessed a limited interest in their own past. While the Dinka and Nuer were excellent examples of a segmentary system, the Ambomu, led by the Avongara ruling clan, had subjugated a variety of foreign peoples with different cultures and imposed upon them their own institutions and language. Several kingdoms had evolved out of the Zande expansion. Their oral traditions spanned a much deeper period of time, and their concern for events of the past was much more pronounced than among the Nilotes, who in fact practised a kind of built-in amnesia, remembering no more than the most recent five or six age-sets. Anything that happened earlier was systematically forgotten.

The events of the war led Evans-Pritchard from Egypt to Palestine, Syria and Iraq, and provided him with a wider and deeper sense of Arab civilization, which included a well-known history and an elaborate written literature spanning several centuries. Evans-Pritchard's love of poetry (both recited and written) was thoroughly satisfied. He enjoyed the refined and outstanding artistic achievements found in cities from Cairo to Jerusalem, Damascus to Baghdad. A historian found himself suddenly plunged into a fascinating history. *The Sanusi of Cyrenaica* is much more than the accurate reconstruction of the personal vicissitudes of its founder. In a way, the focus is on the founding of the Mother Lodge of the Sanusiya Order on the plateau of Cyrenaica by the Grand Sanusi in 1843. Evans-Pritchard shows how the Order planted its roots among people who were already Muslim, rather than infidels to be converted.

The Order's foreign origin allowed it to stand outside the tribal system and therefore to arbitrate disputes when they arose in the highly segmentary political

5. It appears that Fortes may have been the sole author of the introduction, and that Evans-Pritchard merely subscribed his name to it (Barnes 1987: 461).

structure of the Bedouin. As time went on, it became both a political movement and a national symbol. While this process had begun under the Turkish administration, it reached its height in 1911 when Italy, a foreign, Christian country, captured Libya from the Ottoman Empire. It was the intervention of an outside force that caused all the segments of the society to coalesce in the face of a common danger from across the Mediterranean. Blending the common religious faith with a profound sense of Bedouin patriotism, the Sanusiya acquired a greater and greater political character. The second Italo-Sanusi war (1923–32) was even more decisive from this viewpoint than the first (1911–17). The Bedouin were defeated by the overwhelming power of the Italians, their country was desolated, and the losses in life and livestock were staggering, but an Islamic fraternity had become a political organization and laid down the embryonic foundations of a state.

When the Second World War brought an end to the Italian presence in Libya, the British authorities understandably looked to the Sanusiya as the future source of authority in the country. Evans-Pritchard himself had hoped that the Bedouin's long struggle would result in the independence of Cyrenaica (1949: 196). The situation had still not been settled when his book was published, but in 1951 the United Kingdom of Libya was finally proclaimed, and Sayyid Idris, the Sanusi leader, became its first monarch. After studying the kingdom of the Azande and the acephalous society of the Nuer, Evans-Pritchard had the opportunity to demonstrate how a *state* could evolve out of a *stateless* society.

And he did so in a very considerate and balanced way. His indignation in response to the military operations conducted against the Bedouin is expressed with restraint, letting the facts speak for themselves. His admiration goes to those who fought for their country against overwhelming odds and who gave up their lives rather than live under a foreign yoke. Where the Italians disparaged them as *ribelli*, he calls them 'patriots' (1949: 161). I do not see how one can agree with Douglas's reading of *The Sanusi* (1980: 44–5). In her view, Evans-Pritchard's 'sympathy for guerrilla herdsmen, their courage and conviction, illumines his own academic vendettas'. While Barnes deals at length with Evans-Pritchard's relations with Radcliffe-Brown, Malinowski and Fortes, at least he does so on the basis of accurate documentation, avoiding the sort of oblique hints and ambiguous allusions which simply baffle the reader unacquainted with the details of British social anthropology. Douglas is well-informed in such matters, but she provides no evidence to support her statement.

Evans-Pritchard's writings demonstrate how greatly he differed from contemporary British social anthropologists. His approach to the peoples he studied was comprehensive, covering as many fields as possible, even when he knew there was not enough time to cover everything. In a letter of November 1934 to Fortès, he acknowledged that he had 'jettisoned language and material culture since something had to go or I should have had a fit with overwork' (Barnes 1987: 473). In any case, an anthropologist should be above all a good ethnographer, that is to say, a conscientious gatherer of data, irrespective of the use he might one day make of them or how trivial they might seem to others (1951:

80). Evans-Pritchard published papers on subjects ranging from native texts to string figures, and he did not ignore rock carvings at oases in the desert of western Egypt.

Barnes has sensibly pointed out that a good deal of caution is necessary when evaluating Evans-Pritchard's writings. It is tempting but dangerous to take certain passages at face value. He often seemed to contradict himself within a short space of time, and the location of a public lecture sometimes influenced what he was saying. 'Anthropology and History' was delivered at Manchester, after all, not Oxford. A useful comparison can be made between his letter to Kroeber of 19 September 1950 (letter no. 15 below), in which he mentions British anthropology's 'total neglect of culture', and the lectures he delivered during the winter of 1950 at the request of the BBC (published in 1951 as *Social Anthropology*). Kroeber's *The Nature of Culture* could not fail to interest him the following year (see letter no. 16).

I come now to the issue raised by Evans-Pritchard in a letter to Kroeber (no. 20) and in Kroeber's reply (no. 21): the relationship between a scholar's religious faith, if any, and the way he writes about religion. Obviously, the question also has to do with Evans-Pritchard himself and the frequent speculation on how his conversion from the Church of England to Roman Catholicism may have affected his writing on religious matters, particularly in *Nuer Religion* (1956). Leach refers to unknown commentators, 'cynics', to whom the natives appeared like 'first-class Jesuit dialecticians' (1980: 24). Fortes sees a difference between the work on Zande witchcraft, carried out by an 'agnostic observer', and the study of Nuer religion, with its emphasis on their belief in Spirit (*Kwoth*). Involved here is Evans-Pritchard's 'theistic religious commitment' (1980: vii). Firth maintains that Evans-Pritchard 'allowed his natural interest in religion to prejudice a number of his findings' (1993: 213). Apparently Evans-Pritchard's colleagues considered his conversion to Roman Catholicism a turning-point in his life, after which he interpreted religious matters quite differently. But is there any convincing proof of this?

Evans-Pritchard acknowledged two attempts to enter the Roman Catholic Church prior to 1944, when he formally adopted the faith at the cathedral of Benghazi—paradoxically not in England, but in a church built in Cyrenaica under the Italian occupation. I find it very strange that no questions have been raised in regard to his writing of *The Sanusi*, completed long before *Nuer Religion*. There is no specifically Roman Catholic bias in the work on the Sanusiya Order. The Bedouin saw their fight not only as a desperate attempt to maintain their independence, but also as a *jihad*, or holy war against Christian infidels. When Enver Pasha sent Bedouin boys to be educated in Turkey in 1912, they were greeted as the offspring of Cyrenaican *mujahidin*, fighting for their faith (1949: 111–16). Evans-Pritchard succeeded admirably in portraying this attitude without letting his religious beliefs intrude.

In 1940–42, as the fighting between Italian and British troops in Cyrenaica shifted backwards and forwards, British soldiers trapped behind the front line were

hidden and nourished by the Bedouin, who provided precious and continuous assistance. Significantly, Evans-Pritchard made the following comment: 'It must not be forgotten that we are Christians and strangers and that the Bedouin have no obligation to us' (1945: 77). With great impartiality, he saw 'the Italian colonial record to be [not] very different from the records of other Colonial Powers'. He was aware of the contradictions in the colonial policies of all European countries (1949: iv, 211). To him, the Old World looked like an octopus, and one of its tentacles had got hold of Cyrenaica and Tripolitania. It 'belonged to the same beast which held half the world in its clutches'. At stake was not so much the fate of a group of nomads, but the very future of Europe itself (ibid.: 116). The issue had to be understood in moral terms and not simply with regard to spheres of political influence or the division of spoils.

Furthermore, why did Evans-Pritchard claim to have learned more 'about the nature of God and our human predicament from the Nuer' than from a Christian country like England? In a lecture, which Fortes attended, Evans-Pritchard argued that there was basically no difference between the mystical experience of Hindus, Buddhists and adherents of the three monotheistic religions (Barnes 1987: 478–80). Jews, Christians and Muslims worship the same God, he seemed to be saying, albeit in different ways.

In the end, it is impossible truly to enter other people's lives. To understand them at all we must rely on what they say, provided that they have spoken with sincerity and are approached by us without prejudice. The letters of Evans-Pritchard, Kroeber and Lowie help us in trying to understand them and contribute to a more balanced appraisal of them. It is worthwhile mentioning an impromptu and frank evaluation of Evans-Pritchard volunteered by Edmund Leach in 1987 as we studied a sketch of Meyer Fortes hanging in a corridor at King's College, Cambridge. He praised Fortes' scholarly achievements, then added, 'But Evans-Pritchard was the brightest of us all'. His words still ring in my mind.

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THE LETTERS⁶

Letter 1

38, Mecklenburgh Square,
London W.C.1.

8 September 1931

Dear Dr. Lowie,

I have just received your letter from the field. I am very glad indeed that you will be able to see your way to write a paper for the Seligman Festschrift, if time allows. I do not think that there is any difficulty on this score as we are prepared to wait till next April or May for the MSS. I have therefore taken the liberty of adding your name to the list of those who have promised to contribute (a copy of which is enclosed) and I shall be grateful, if you think you can take part in our enterprise, if you will send me a title of your subject.

I may add that the enclosed list is a preliminary one and that there are still a number of people from whom I have not received replies.

Yours sincerely,
E. E. Evans-Pritchard

6. Of the 21 letters that are printed below, half are to be found in the University Archives in Berkeley (see footnote 2 above), viz. letters 1-6, 8-10, 12, and 13. The remainder come from the Kroeber Papers (letters 7, 11, 14-16, 19-21) and the Lowie Papers (letters 17 and 18). Most of the letters were handwritten and bear the author's signature (letters 2, 4, 10, 11, 13, 15, 17, 18, 19, and 21); some, however, were typed and bear a signature (letters 1, 7, 9, 16), and some have been transcribed from a carbon copy and were thus unsigned (letters 3, 5, 6, 8, 12, and 20). Letter 14 is a signed, handwritten postcard. Very little editorial change has been introduced into the texts of the letters, except for the correction of spelling mistakes and the standardization of layout, which might otherwise have interfered with ordinary readability.

Letter 2

*Flat 18
1 Rue Monillard
Cairo
Egypt*

24 May 1932

Dear Prof. Lowie,

I wonder whether you will be able to let me have your contribution to the Seligman Festschrift sometime in June or July.

I am sorry to press you but I get summer leave from the Egyptian University at Cairo and I want to send in the MSS to the publishers while I am in England.

My address will be 16 Cross Deep, Twickenham, Middlesex, England.

I am trying to cope with Egyptian University conditions but it is a hard swim against a tide of ignorance and incapacity.

Yours sincerely,
E. E. Evans-Pritchard

Letter 3

*[Washington, DC]
June 10, 1932*

Dr. E. E. Evans-Pritchard,
16 Cross Deep,
Twickenham, Middlesex,
England

Dear Dr. Evans-Pritchard:

I was very much interested to get your letter of May 24th, with your impressions of Egyptian University conditions.

I may say that I wrote you some time ago, but received no reply. Since the letter had obviously miscarried, I wrote to Dr. Malinowski's French address, asking whether the substitution of an article originally prepared for the Vancouver Congress would be legitimate. I have not heard from him, although there has been ample time; and since you are eager to get contributions as soon as possible, I am

enclosing the paper in question. I hope this will do in place of the one ['Theory and Practice in Ethnology'] originally contemplated.

With best wishes,

Sincerely yours,
Robert H. Lowie
*Chairman, Division of
Anthropology and Psychology*

Letter 4

Exeter College, Oxford
14 November 1935

Dear Dr. Lowie,

You may have heard that Dr. Marett vacates his readership in Social Anthropology at Oxford almost at once.

I am applying for the readership and I wonder whether you would be good enough to give me a testimonial. I am assuming, I hope not entirely erroneously, that you are acquainted with my work. We have only met for a few moments some years ago in London.

If you feel you can recommend me for the post on the grounds of my work I shall be very grateful to you as I have made 5 ethnological expeditions to Central Africa & want a few years of peace to write up my notes.

Yours sincerely,
E. E. Evans-Pritchard

Letter 5

[Berkeley, California]
December 2, 1935

Oxford University
England

Gentlemen,—

Mr. E. E. Evans-Pritchard has suggested my writing to you in connection with his candidacy for a readership at Oxford University. I am very glad to do so, but

must explain that I can do so only from the point of view of the general anthropologist, not as an Africanist, since my special investigations—apart from theory—lie in the Americanist field.

Having read several of Dr. Evans-Pritchard's articles, I should like to say that I consider them valuable and useful for my lectures on primitive supernaturalism. The field technique, involving the use of the native language as a tool, seems very good, and I am pleased to note the appreciative references to his predecessors—a feature often glaringly absent in recent publications. He is not a mere collector of raw facts, but brings them into relation with the theories of students of comparative religion. Here, again, I observe with satisfaction that he does not accept the mere dicta of 'authorities', but forms an independent judgment. I shall be greatly interested in his ultimate formulations and hope a University appointment will help to expedite them.

Very truly yours,
Robert H. Lowie
Professor of Anthropology

Letter 6

[*Berkeley, California*]
December 3, 1935

Dr. E. E. Evans-Pritchard
Exeter College
Oxford
England

Dear Dr. Evans-Pritchard,

It was news to me that Dr. Marett is retiring so soon, and I am interested to know that you are an applicant for the position. As you do not specify to whom the testimonial is to be sent, I am addressing it in the enclosed and unsealed envelope to Oxford University, and if necessary you can insert the name or office of the proper authorities. I certainly wish you the best of luck and hope that my letter may do its bit to assure you the position in question.

Sincerely yours,
Robert H. Lowie

Letter 7

*Institute of Social Anthropology
1 Jowett Walk, Oxford*

18 May 1948

Dear Professor Kroeber,

Just a line to thank you for the copy of your *Anthropology*, which I have just received. It is a book that is always in great demand among our students over here, and I am very glad indeed to have this new edition.

With best regards,

Yours sincerely,
E. E. Evans-Pritchard

Letter 8

*[Berkeley, California]
October 4, 1949*

Professor E. E. Evans-Pritchard
All Souls College
Oxford University
Oxford
England

Dear Professor Evans-Pritchard,

David Mandelbaum, writing from London, just reminds me that you are to be in Chicago for the first quarter of the year 1950 and might consider teaching in our First Summer Session, which extends from June 19th to July 28th. Needless to say, we should all be very happy if it were feasible for you to come. At the moment the budget for the Summer Sessions has not yet been fixed, but it is very likely that last year's salaries will be again available. [C. Daryll] Forde received travel expenses from the East and a fee of \$1200. Current usage is for each lecturer to give two courses on five days of the week, from Monday to Friday, inclusive. The topics are, of course, chosen by the professor; but naturally, in your case, we should be very desirous of having one course on Africa. As a possibility I should suggest 'Primitive Religion' for the other. However, you are entirely free to select other topics.

The administration of the Summer Sessions is always eager to get relevant information at the earliest possible opportunity. I have just been notified that material for the Announcement of Courses should be available by the end of the current year. Could you then indicate whether you could arrange to come in the given circumstances, with a statement as to your subjects and the hours (from 9 on) that would suit your convenience? I may indicate that Forde lectured from 9 to 10 (actually 9:10 to 10:00) and from 11:10 to 12:00. These are considered very good hours; 12 to 1 is the universal lunching period here and may be eliminated from consideration.

Hoping to hear from you affirmatively, at least in principle, I am, with cordial greetings,

Sincerely yours,
Robert H. Lowie

P.S. A brief statement—say of 40 or 50 words each—concerning the nature of your courses would be appreciated.

Letter 9

*University of Oxford
Institute of Social Anthropology
Museum House
South Parks Road
Oxford*

13 October 1949

Dear Professor Lowie,

Many thanks indeed for your invitation to lecture at California. I am afraid, however, that Mandelbaum has got his dates a bit mixed up. I start work in Chicago on 5 January, and have to be back in Oxford by the middle of April, so unless Chicago are prepared to allow me to take off my last fortnight or so to visit California I should not be able to do so. This was the suggestion made to Mandelbaum, but of course so short a visit might not in any case suit you. If it does, I should have to ask Redfield's permission—unless you would care to do this yourself?

With kind regards,

Yours sincerely,
E. E. Evans-Pritchard

Letter 10

*The University of Chicago
Department of Anthropology*

7 February 1950

Dear Prof. Lowie,

Thanks for the compliment, but I am afraid that I could not leave Oxford next academic year, especially since I have taken this term off to come to Chicago.

With all the rapid changes now taking place in England in the expansion of Anthropology I doubt whether you would find any English anthropologist available.

I am sorry not to have seen you in U.S.A., but California is a long way away from Chicago.

Yours sincerely,
E. E. Evans-Pritchard

Letter 11

*The University of Chicago
Department of Anthropology*

26 February 1950

Dear Prof. Kroeber,

I am spending a quarter at the University of Chicago and on my way back to England I shall be spending from 23rd March to 30th March in New York. I would very much like to meet you & Mrs Kroeber again and, as I shall have a good number of appointments in New York, I thought that maybe you would excuse my writing some time in advance to ask you whether you could give me a time when I might call on you.

As we are both historically minded people, I wonder whether you have seen my last book, *The Sanusi of Cyrenaica* (Clarendon Press). If not, I will ask them to send you a copy. It is an anthropologist's attempt to write political history. Fortes says it is 'mere literature'. I call it 'history'. Radcliffe-Brown, with great charity, calls it 'diachronic sociology'!

Yours sincerely,
E. E. Evans-Pritchard

Letter 12

[*Berkeley, California*]

March 6, 1950

Professor Edward Evan Evans-Pritchard
Department of Anthropology
University of Chicago
Chicago 37, Illinois

Dear Professor Evans-Pritchard:

As you may have heard, I retire on June 30, 1950. My successor has been appointed, but will not be able to come to us before September 1951, which raises the problem of a visiting professor for the academic year that begins in September 1950 and closes in the beginning of June 1951 so far as lectures are concerned. I have been asked to cast about for a visiting professor for the period indicated, and you were naturally among those the Department would regard eminently desirable. Would it, then, be possible for you to come to us in September of this year and remain until June 1951? Before reaching even a tentative decision you obviously require information on certain points, which I shall try to give you forthwith.

The minimum salary of a full professor at the University is now \$7,200; I should naturally propose a somewhat higher figure to the Administration. The normal teaching load of a professor is eight hours a week,—one 2-hour seminar for graduate students, two 3-hour lecture 'Upper Division' courses (for senior and junior undergraduates). It might be possible to offer two seminars and one lecture course. So far as subject matter goes, our policy is to leave that largely to the visitor, with the hope that he will give our students the advantages of his special knowledge. In your case a general course on Africa, with such emphasis as you desire and extending over the year would be ideal from our point of view. Then there is the course on 'Primitive Religion' which Mandelbaum and I have given in recent years, but which we cannot offer every year because of other urgent requirements. Seminar topics have differed widely. My 'History and Theory' seminar has been very elastic in this respect. It has sometimes dealt with the history of cultural anthropology, sometimes with special topics, such as Primitive Literature, Folklore, particular schools of thought, individual scholars; currently I am devoting the course to Boas, each participant contributing a report on some special phase of his work viewed in historical perspective.

If there are any further points on which you wish enlightenment, please let me know.

Hoping to hear from you in the near future, I remain

Cordially yours,
Robert H. Lowie

P.S. Quite apart from this matter, I should have sent you a line of friendly greeting before this, but I had to undergo an operation in January and, though able to resume lectures after a slight setback, am not able to do much more.

Letter 13

*The University of Chicago
Chicago 37 – Illinois
Department of Anthropology*

8 March 1950

Dear Prof. Lowie,

It has just struck me that Radcliffe-Brown is at a loose end & might very well accept an offer.

Yours sincerely,
E. E. Evans-Pritchard

Letter 14

[Chicago, n. d., March 1950?]

Prof. A. L. Kroeber
Dept. of Anthropology
Columbia University
New York, 27

Very many thanks. I will come to your house at 6.0 on Saturday, March 25th. My wife is not with me.

Yours sincerely,
E. E. Evans-Pritchard

Letter 15

*All Souls College
Oxford*

19 September 1950

Dear Prof. Kroeber,

I hope that I have not misrepresented you in this lecture ['Social Anthropology: Past and Present'].

I shall be glad of comments because I am using most of the argument again in a series of B.B.C. talks, which will be published next winter as a book [*Social Anthropology*].

I wrote this lecture, & in this vein, because, in addition to a dislike of positivism in all its forms, I felt that Social Anthropology in England had to be forced to reconsider the hypotheses on which it was working, which led to arid classifications & a never ending discussion about the methods of such things as biology & astro-physics. Also, its total neglect of culture has unfortunately reduced its problems to the kind of formal sociology which ends when it began.

My wife joins me in our regards to you both.

Yours sincerely,
E. E. Evans-Pritchard

Letter 16

*University of Oxford
Institute of Social Anthropology
11 Keble Road
Oxford*

5 November 1952

Dear Kroeber,

Many thanks for the copy of your book, 'The Nature of Culture.' I am very glad to have this, and am just sitting down to read it.

Yours sincerely,
E-P.

Letter 17

*Center for Advanced Study in the Behavioral Sciences
202 Junipero Serra Boulevard – Stanford, California*

16 October 1956

Dear Prof. Lowie,

I am at this Center and hope to be able to see you again. Perhaps when you get back to Berkeley you could let me know. Our home is 951 Hamilton, Palo Alto (Tel:– Davenport 4-4615).

I shall look forward to our meeting.

Yours sincerely,
E. E. Evans-Pritchard

Letter 18

*University of Oxford
Institute of Social Anthropology
11 Keble Road, Oxford*

10 October 1957

Dear Mrs Lowie,

I have just received a letter from Leslie Spier to tell me of your husband's death. You will, I hope, allow me to express to you my sympathy. It is also a great satisfaction for me that I was able to meet him again and to enjoy such pleasant conversations with him so recently.

I would like to add that, in my opinion, no one has done more for anthropology than Dr. Lowie. When I was a student, my teacher, Dr. Seligman, told me that whatever else I read, I must read & read again 'Primitive Society'; and when I did my research among the Nuer, where transport was non-existent & a choice had to be made, I decided to take with me as my only anthropological guide, that book. I have read everything else, I believe, since, that he wrote; and my admiration has increased for his learning, method, tolerance, geniality and good humour. I am afraid that such an appreciation is the only comfort merely a colleague, and a junior one, can offer.

Yours sincerely,
E. E. Evans-Pritchard

Letter 19

*from E. E. Evans-Pritchard
All Souls College,
Oxford*

15 November 1959

Dear Prof. Kroeber,

I have been meaning to write to you for some time but I have had a difficult last two years. Last year my mother [Dorothea Edwards] died and this year my wife [Ioma Gladys Heaton Nicholls] died also, after a long and depressing illness. I now have to cope with five children between the ages of 1½ and 17.

I do wish I could meet you again for, apart from liking you as a person, I have, as you must know, a very great admiration for your works. Is there any chance of your coming to Europe again in the near future and would you come if an opportunity arose?

I am now going to bother you. I gave a lecture recently—now to be published—to a priory of Dominican monks on 'Religion and the anthropologists'.⁷ It is a fragment of a chapter on the history of ideas, dealing with the attitude of sociologists and anthropologists towards religion, and more especially Christianity, from Comte & Saint-Simon till today. In it I have made the remarks about Americans I enclose with this letter. I shall be most grateful if you will, without going to any great trouble, confirm that what I have said is correct.

With kindest regards,

Yours sincerely,
E. E. Evans-Pritchard

'Morgan, the founder of Social Anthropology in America, refused to have anything to do with religion and he particularly abhorred ritualistic religion.... Among the last generation of distinguished American anthropologists there was not one, as far as I know, who gave assent to any creed or who regarded all religious belief as other than illusion; and I do not know of a single person among the prominent sociologists and anthropologists of America at the present time who adheres to any faith.'

7. Evans-Pritchard delivered the Aquinas Lecture on 7 March 1959 at Hawkesyard Priory, Oxford. See Evans-Pritchard 1962: 29–45.

Letter 20

[Berkeley, California]
December 28, 1959

My dear Evans-Pritchard:

I had learned of the death of your charming and devoted wife, and felt very sorry for both of you.

I just spent two months, with J. Huxley, Sir Darwin, and others you know, at Chicago University, on the Darwin Centennial, and my present feeling is that I have done enough teaching, symposiuming and the like for this life. At any rate, I look forward to doing a stretch of writing, quietly at home. However, Paul Fejos, ever since his [Wenner-Gren] Foundation got the castle [Burg Wartenstein] in Austria, has been after me to visit there for a summer fortnight with a group of Europeans, and while I have so far not agreed, the possibility is still open if my health holds.

As to religion, I have sometimes thought my frequent study of it may have been a surrogate for not having one of my own to practice and believe; my parents were both agnostics. How completely American anthropologists in general are wholly without religion or profession of it, I do not know; but it is certainly very common. I did hear that the late Frank Speck of Philadelphia was once converted by the evangelist Billy Sunday; but this may have been just teasing by his friends. I do not personally recall any American anthropologist who is an attending member of a Protestant church. Some few may belong without going, out of respect for their still living or dead parents.

As to Morgan, I recall his anti-Catholic or perhaps anti-Latin remarks when he travelled Europe late in life—Leslie White published excerpts from his diary in *Rochester Hist. Soc. Publs.* 16: 219–389, 1937. See also, on your question, White's 'Morgan's Attitude Toward Religion and Science', *American Anthropologist* 46: 218–230, 1944.

If I run across any exceptions to your generalization I will write you.

Of course there have been American *Catholic* Clericals who have been professional anthropologists, like the late Monsignor Cooper and Father Ewing of Fordham College.

Best luck to you,
Alfred L. Kroeber

Letter 21

*All Souls College
Oxford*

14 March 1960

Dear Prof. Kroeber,

I am sorry that I shall not be with you at the Wenner-Gren conference. It comes just at the end of my children's annual holiday & coincides with their return to school, for both of which I am now solely responsible. Even if this were not so, I would be disinclined to attend, as it seems to me that such conferences are a waste of time, & also of money, which might be spent to better purpose on research.

I trust that on your way back to U.S.A. you will pay us a visit. It will be much appreciated by all at Oxford.

Yours very sincerely,
E. E. E-P

REVIEW ARTICLE

**RELATING BET ISRAEL HISTORY
IN ITS ETHIOPIAN CONTEXT:
DEFINING, CREATING, CONSTRUCTING IDENTITY**

MARILYN HERMAN

JAMES QUIRIN, *The Evolution of the Ethiopian Jews: A History of the Beta Israel (Falasha) to 1920*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press 1992. xviii, 292 pp., Glossary, Bibliography, Index, Photographs, Maps. £31.95.

STEVEN KAPLAN, *The Beta Israel (Falasha) in Ethiopia: From Earliest Times to the Twentieth Century*, New York and London: New York University Press 1992. xiv, 231 pp., Bibliography, Index, Map. £39.95.

PUBLICITY surrounding the exposure of the secret Operation Moses—a series of airlifts in the early to mid-1980s to transport Bet Israel (Ethiopian Jews)¹ to Israel from Sudan, where they had walked from Ethiopia — brought the people and their situation to worldwide attention. At this point, concern with the identity of the Bet Israel mushroomed out from Jerusalem, where the Rabbinate were determining their right to live in Israel as Jews under the Law of Return. Now their identity, with further implications for opinions on where Bet Israel could or should be, became an issue for various academics, politicians and others interested in

1. In this article I have used the spelling 'Bet Israel', an Amharic term meaning 'House of Israel', since Bet Israel have insisted to me that this is their name. Both authors of the books under review, however, use the spelling 'Beta Israel', which is the conventional usage.

Ethiopia, Israel and the Middle East. The works of ethnohistory reviewed in this article are therefore of great contemporary significance.

Beginning with their origins—a subject considered to be a major issue by virtually anyone interested in the Bet Israel (although not by the Bet Israel themselves) since it is regarded as the key to their identity—both historians relate these to the Aksumite era, although in different ways. Kaplan depicts fourth-century Aksum as characterized by religious syncretism, with evidence of a continued Jewish presence and cordial relations between Jews and people of other religions. His position is that, in the fourth century, the supposed predecessors of the Bet Israel shared with Christians a common identity as Israelites, rather than identifying themselves as Jews. By contrast, he fails to find a link between Bet Israel religion in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries and ancient Jewish practice, although bridging the distance between ancient and contemporary times and religions must surely be equally difficult in relation to other Jewish communities.

Kaplan's view of syncretism pervades his treatment of other periods of their history. This syncretism is depicted as consisting of shared Hebraic elements and ideas, and a shared identity and politico-religious discourse. One of the main examples is his recurring theme of the opposition between the 'good Israelite' and the 'bad Jew' as a prime category of Ethiopian political and religious discourse. This theme is highlighted, for example, in legendary accounts such as the *Kebra Negust* (The Honour of Kings), which supplies the source of Solomonic empirical legitimacy, in two of the indigenous accounts of Bet Israel origins in Ethiopia and in his hypothesis on the effect of the war between Ethiopian Emperor Kaleb and the Himyarite Jewish convert King Yusuf Du Nuwas on Christian–Jewish relations in Aksum.

Quirin makes the connection with Aksum by conjecturing that the original Ayhud (Amharic for 'Jewish' or 'Jew') were Jewish–Christian dissidents exiled from Christianizing Aksum and Agau, among whom the former 'proselytized a form of Judaism...'. He sees Ayhud religion as becoming further Judaized through the reinforcement of the 'Ayhud or Gedewonite content of their society' in response to intensive Christian proselytization at various periods of their history. In this way, he portrays their religion as developing indigenously rather than through any external influence and thus as having nothing to do with Judaism outside Ethiopia. Quirin therefore identifies the predecessors of the Bet Israel together with their practices as 'Jewish or Jewish–Christian', whereas Kaplan, in accordance with his syncretic approach, identifies biblical practices found in Aksum as 'Old Testament' or 'Hebraic' rather than specifically Jewish.

The position that Quirin adopts in his discussion of the origins of the Bet Israel spills over into his treatment of other historical periods. For example, it is reflected in his loose and arbitrary use of the terms 'Jewish' and 'Christian' and his easy substitution of the two terms for each other in comparing the religions of the Bet Israel and the Ethiopian Orthodox Church. In making this comparison, he draws up a list of culture traits, emphasizing what he sees as similarities, including

phenomena without religious significance, confusing ritual with non-ritual practices, such as washing with purification, and ignoring or underplaying differences as 'probably of degree rather than kind'.

In the same vein as Quirin, Kaplan sees few real, clear distinctions between the religions. Both historians share the method of comparing the two religions in terms of the quantity of elements, whether religious or non-religious in their nature and significance, which, from the outside observer's point of view, are seen to be held in common. This is presented at the expense of giving sufficient weight to indigenous perceptions of religious differences and similarities. It is this which leads both historians to treat all religious and cultural components as if they were equal in significance and meaning, and therefore to view it as a central paradox that while cultural traits were consciously shared, mutual perceptions held between the two peoples were as 'other'. However, Kaplan does also consider the fuller nature of Bet Israel religion and Ethiopian Christianity, rather than looking simply at the elements they are presumed to have in common. For example, he explains the importance of jubilees and the sabbath in Bet Israel religion, and portrays Ethiopian Christianity as essentially constituting the addition of new beliefs and rituals to Hebraic religion, rather than the abandonment of old ones.

For Quirin, the extent to which components were shared between the two societies proves that Bet Israel identity was not ethnic, religious or cultural. For Kaplan, the shared cultural and religious components substantiate his position that the relationship between the Hebraic religions of the Bet Israel and of the Christians consists of a continuum rather than an opposition and that the Jewish-Christian dichotomy is therefore inappropriate in Ethiopian history. The two historians therefore differ qualitatively in their approach, Kaplan pointing to syncretism in origins and history, Quirin insisting on a Christian emphasis.

Kaplan, in taking his syncretic approach further, demonstrates the interrelatedness of the Bet Israel and Ethiopian Christian discourse in terms of shared key symbols. One of these key symbols is termed 'magical transformations', but within this category he throws together phenomena of a different order of nature. Thus, he places the Bet Israel blacksmiths' ability to create metal objects alongside the Christians' belief in the cross's 'transformation into an object of worship', although the latter is a religious, not a magical, phenomenon. In positing blood as another shared key symbol, he again draws on phenomena of a completely different nature, such as the Amhara's superstition that Bet Israel, in respect of their reputation as *buda* (association with the evil eye), were able to draw blood from their alleged victims, together with menstruation taboos and the practice of washing blood from meat before cooking, these, unlike the first, being extensions of biblical ordainments. Just as in the case of the former 'key symbol', we are speaking of very different types of transformations with different meanings, so in the latter, the meanings bestowed on blood are of a very different kind, and it is only the appearance of language that enables such phenomena to be abstractly grouped together in this way.

To return to Quirin and his denial that the distinct identity of the Bet Israel was religious in character, he stresses instead the concept of 'caste' as 'the main explanatory variable in Beta Israel history'. Thus he presents the economic and political position of the Bet Israel as crucial in defining their identity. Quirin fails to consider in any depth the applicability of the term 'caste' to describe the kind of endogamous, occupational specialist, low-status groups found in Africa, where, in the absence of the Hindu context, it can at best only serve as a metaphor. Instead, he briefly justifies his use of the concept in relation to Ethiopian society by delineating certain features required in the definition of 'caste' and showing these features to be present in the Ethiopian case.

Quirin begins this stage of his analysis by referring to the Gondar period (1632–1755) as the time of the Bet Israel's economic and political 'incorporation' into Abyssinian society, when they became part of a 'new landless class'. Having lost their land following their final conquest and loss of autonomy, they became soldiers in the king's army, masons and builders of churches and palaces, and other artisans, and were able to rise to prominent positions in the army and receive titles and land anew. However, it was during this period of 'incorporation' that segregation was enforced by the Amhara, who prohibited intermarriage with the Bet Israel and forced them to live in separate areas. Quirin therefore distinguishes between economic and political incorporation on the one hand and social incorporation on the other, which, he states, the Bet Israel did not achieve.

During the subsequent 'Era of the Princes'—which was marked by rivalry between nobility for power following the decline of the Gondar kings, beginning in 1755, demand for their skills as builders and masons diminishing as Gondar fell into ruins—the Bet Israel reverted entirely to the occupations of blacksmith, weaver and potter, their land rights were encroached upon, and they were given the label *buda*. Quirin refers to this as the next stage in the 'evolution' of the Bet Israel from a 'low-ranking class' to an 'occupational caste', and he describes the reinforcement and strengthening of a separatist code as constituting the final stage of the 'consolidation' of this process. This separatist code refers to the purity laws of the Bet Israel, whose correct application is attributed by them to Abba Sabra during the fifteenth century, and Quirin refers to a weakening of this code during the Gondar Era. Despite this chronology, Quirin essentially reduces the religious identity of the Bet Israel, on the assumption that this has already been boiled down to these purity laws, to 'an ideological justification (expressed in moral or religious terms) of this rigid separation' as if their 'caste-like' status came first. In doing so, he confuses their attributed social status with their self-ascribed religious identity. To Quirin, therefore, the function of Bet Israel identity was to maintain their separation from Amhara society, while the function of their separation was to maintain their identity. Moreover, as a response to threats to their identity, the Bet Israel developed economic and religious practices that laid a basis for that identity. In this way, Quirin supports his theoretical point that groups construct their own identity and fulfil what he sets out as the task of the historian: to reconstruct ways in which people are 'agents of their own history' within his

theoretical framework, whereby: 'Groups manipulate forces and factors to utilize diverse aspects of their identities in various circumstances in an "instrumentalist" manner'. His central position is therefore built on two core circular functionalist explanations.

Kaplan also places significance on the Bet Israel's economic and political relationship with the Amhara, referring, like Quirin, to their incorporation into and exclusion from Ethiopian society. However, unlike Quirin, he does not define Bet Israel identity entirely in these terms. His stated aims include a wish to 'de-mythologize Bet Israel history' and to correct the tendency to depict Bet Israel religion in a 'static or ahistorical' fashion, as an archaic form of Judaism, which he sees as being connected with evolutionary views on 'primitive peoples'. One method he uses to achieve these ends is to minimize the role of any religious component as a significant factor in explaining the conflict between the Bet Israel and the Solomonic Empire or in shaping historical events in relation to the Bet Israel. He therefore emphasizes the overall context, as if this and admitting the existence of Bet Israel religion were mutually exclusive.

In locating Bet Israel history within the context of the wider stream of Ethiopian history and his concern to deny the role of any 'Jewish/Christian' dichotomy in Bet Israel history, Kaplan makes a point of showing that diversity and diffusion existed among the Ayhud and the later Bet Israel, to the extent that he considers the limits of speaking of Bet Israel as a 'community'. He asserts that it was only during the second half of the sixteenth century that a high degree of political centralization and religious articulation began to exist among the Bet Israel, though he still stresses divisions among the Bet Israel after this period. However, his emphasis on their divisions appears to be restricted to their economic base and extent of incorporation, since he does point out that the Bet Israel of Semien were linked to those of other regions by kinship and religion. He notes too that their economic and social position within the Amhara hierarchy existed alongside traditional leadership at the rural level.

In denying the significance or applicability of the Jewish-Christian dichotomy in Ethiopian or Bet Israel history, Kaplan assimilates the Bet Israel to other groups in Ethiopia by virtue of regional identity or status as subject peoples. Thus for Kaplan, the years of conflict from 1560 to 1632, during which three campaigns were waged against the Bet Israel in ten years, are depicted as the first stage in the wars against the peoples of the Lake Tana region, not as religious wars. He attributes these wars to the growing depredations of the imperial presence in the Lake Tana region, which imposed a financial burden. Kaplan notes the divisions among the Bet Israel during these years between hardliners and accommodaters, between those who were granted land and the dispossessed, and between converts and nominal Christians. In the former case, he interprets the defiance of the Bet Israel not as an assertion of independence but as an example of the typical exploitation of the weakness of authority by vassals.

Similarly, rather than accepting that the Bet Israel were a homogeneous group whose conflicts were determined by their religious identity, Kaplan shows how, at

different times in their history, sectors of the Bet Israel formed alliances with sectors of the Amhara in opposition to the Solomonic rulers, allied themselves to the Amhara and Solomonic rulers in opposition to other Bet Israel and even formed alliances with or against external forces. Thus sectors of Bet Israel are shown helping Muslim troops at the initial stages of their invasion of Ethiopia under Ahmad ibn Ibrahim 'Gragh' ('left-handed'), following the defeat of the Muslims of Adal in 1516, then switching sides to join the Portuguese-Christian alliance. When, in 1620, Susneyos tried to establish Catholicism as the state religion, they are then seen as having sided with the nobles, the *abuna* (the head of the Ethiopian Orthodox Church) and the peasants in a popular uprising against Susneyos and the Portuguese who supported him. Kaplan thus shows, as does Quirin, the significant and prominent role of the Bet Israel in the history of Amhara-dominated Ethiopia.

Kaplan is also concerned to point out that the Ayhud/Bet Israel were not singled out among the people of Ethiopia for any special treatment. Instead, he stresses, the treatment they received had more to do with the extent of their co-operation with the Solomonic rulers, or their dissidence. An illustration of their differential treatment is when Susneyos ordered the Bet Israel to be massacred in revenge for their support for 'Ya'eqob' (or Takluy), who rose up as a pretender to the throne in 1614. However, he allowed those in Dembeya, who had not been involved in the rebellion against Susneyos, to be saved so long as they converted to Christianity. According to Kaplan, the order for the extermination of the Bet Israel represented a change of policy towards them by the Solomonic rulers. The position of those Bet Israel who were considered valuable to the Solomonic kings was maintained and even improved, while that of those who were perceived as lacking marketable skills declined. Thus he considers the varied status positions among the Bet Israel to have depended on the prestige of their occupations rather than being related to their religious identity, in contrast to Quirin, who equates their occupational with their religious identity. The limits to Kaplan's position can be seen in the restrictions in social mobility that applied to the Bet Israel.

Not only rebellion but the rise of Bet Israel monasticism too is depicted as being connected with Solomonic encroachment, and Kaplan finds a similarity between this and other major monastic movements in Ethiopia, again placing it within the wider Ethiopian context and stressing his denial of Jewishness as a factor in the Bet Israel's opposition to the Solomonic Empire. He portrays monasticism as the articulation of a distinctive, regionally based religious identity against the central institution of the Christian empire, with Bet Israel monasticism distinguished from the others in not being led by a displaced nobility.

The problem with Kaplan's attempt to dismiss or deny the religious identity of the Bet Israel as a significant component in their history is the fact that at various times in that history they were subjected to forced conversion. Thus in 1560, Minas demanded the conversion of the Bet Israel, even though they 'had agreed to submit to imperial rule and were willing to continue to pay regular

tribute', while, as we have seen, the lives of the Bet Israel of Dembeya were spared by Susneyos only if they converted.

Kaplan, in common with Quirin, sees the Bet Israel as a product of historical processes taking place in the fourteenth to sixteenth centuries and as not existing as an entity before that period. Both historians portray the Bet Israel as adapting biblical-Hebraic elements from Ethiopian Christianity in order to develop their distinctive Jewish group identity. Thus, for example, Quirin asserts: 'From an obscure origin, the Falasha began to emerge as a distinct group by the 15th century.' Kaplan, like Quirin, characterizes the Ayhud as having originally consisted of 'loosely affiliated groups' who became the more 'clearly defined Falasha'.

Kaplan and Quirin describe the impact of the monks on Bet Israel society and religion in the late eighteenth to early nineteenth centuries in very similar ways. This was a time of the decline of the Bet Israel and of conversions to Christianity. Both authors attribute the survival of Bet Israel religion to the monks and to their emphasis on physical isolation and purity, which Kaplan sees as central to their religious identity. Also, they both see the monks as 'defining and articulating' a religious system which provided the 'ideological foundation' for the organization of their society, and both then make the leap from 'organization' to 'creation', and subsequently, to the 'invention of the Falasha' (Kaplan), or 'From Ayhud to Falasha: The Invention of a Tradition' (the title of one of Quirin's chapters).

Yet factors are found in Quirin's own work which contradict the presentation of the Bet Israel and their religion as becoming 'defined' only late in their history. Little, he asserts, is known about their religion before the nineteenth century, from which we may conclude that equally little can be known about the extent to which their religion was defined at this time. Despite this, he relates that when the monk Qozmos reached the people of Semien and Sallamt in the late fourteenth century, he found that they 'lived in the Jewish faith' and that the Gadl of Zena Marqos, who carried out his missionary activities among the 'Ayhud' before the arrival of Qozmos, describes them as a 'distinctive Old Testament community' who already 'knew well the "law of the Orit"' (Amharic for Old Testament or Pentateuch).

Shelemay (1984) has demonstrated that a significant proportion of Bet Israel and Christian Orthodox liturgies share a common source. This is not the same as concluding—as Quirin does, from the premise that Bet Israel religion received influence and revitalization from Christianity—that their religion was therefore created entirely from Christian elements. The work of Abba Sabra (mid-fifteenth century), whether or not he was originally a Christian, involved the 'correction', not the creation, of life based on the Orit and 'writing a collection of prayers and other religious books'. Thus, in one of many statements of its kind, Quirin surely confuses 'liturgy' with 'identity' and elsewhere with 'religion' in stating that in the fifteenth and sixteenth centuries, the 'Falasha' 'created their own identity...from Christian material...[which] allowed them to survive as a group'.

Quirin shares Kaplan's approach in situating Bet Israel history within its Ethiopian context, although for different reasons. While Kaplan is concerned with

syncretism, Quirin sets out his aim of writing 'ethnohistory' without the 'racist' need for external references for purposes of glorification. He implies that external, foreign factors became significant only late in the history of the Bet Israel, as in his 'snapshot' of Bet Israel society just before 'foreign involvement' in 1770–1840. He also writes as if it was the 'Western' Jews among these foreign factors, not the English and Scottish Protestant missionaries, who interfered with the Bet Israel's Ethiopianness.

However, by Quirin's own account, foreign involvement had a major impact throughout the histories of both the Amhara and the Bet Israel. Thus the Ethiopian Orthodox Church was led from Egypt, while monasticism was brought to Ethiopia by missionaries from Syria. Ottoman Turks assisted in the Muslim invasions of Ahmad ibn Ibrahim al-Ghazi '*Gragh*' and later tried to influence Ethiopian politics until they were defeated by Sarsa Dengel, while the Portuguese rendered military assistance to the Ethiopian armies in 1541 against Ahmad. Subsequent Portuguese Jesuit involvement had an enormous impact on the course of political events in Ethiopia. The Mahdist invasions from Sudan in the late nineteenth century also made a devastating mark on Ethiopian history. In fact, since the history of Amhara-dominated Ethiopia is characterized by the colonization and subjection of numerous territories and peoples from linguistically and ethnically different backgrounds, it is perhaps not entirely meaningful to distinguish between the 'Ethiopian' and the 'external'.

In the same vein, Quirin also refers to the 'splintering' of Bet Israel society as if it occurred only late in their history, and again, only under what he terms 'foreign' (that is, 'Western Jewish') impact, as if to assume that it was undivided up to that point. This assumption conflicts with his own account of divisions at other times—for example, junior Bet Israel siding with Yeshaq (reigned 1413–30) against their seniors, who fought on the side of their own leader Gedewon during the first of the 200-year series of conflicts which led to the Bet Israel's loss of independence. It is also directly in conflict with Kaplan's portrayal of the diffuse and divided nature of the Ayhud/Bet Israel throughout their history. It may be granted that since, according to both accounts, it is only relatively late in their history that they became a defined—as opposed to diffuse—community, it is presumably only later than this that, for Quirin, they could then 'splinter'.

In 1859, the London Society for Promoting Christianity Amongst the Jews, and in 1860, the Falasha Mission, authorized by the Church of Scotland, began targeting the Bet Israel. Quirin does not show these missions as representing something either foreign or strange to Bet Israel religion and culture, probably because Emperor Tewodros permitted them to carry out conversions only to the Ethiopian Orthodox Church, which Quirin considers anyway to have been practising the same religion as the Bet Israel. Quirin's approach to this part of their history becomes surprisingly personalized: his reasons for the success of the Protestant missions are presented in terms of the persuasiveness of the truth of their message, while he attributes the limits of their success to the tenacity of Bet Israel in holding on to 'sentiment' and tradition and to coercion by other Bet

Israel. Bet Israel leaders attempted to fight these missionaries through the Ethiopian legal system and presented their case before the Emperor Tewodros. Quirin sees this as part of an ongoing controversy in Ethiopia concerning the unity of God. His approach to this period of their history is thus consistently informed by his position on the religious identity of the Bet Israel, namely that they were essentially Christian.

At the root of Quirin's approach is his desire to depict Bet Israel history within its Ethiopian context without external references for purposes of glorification, which he does by equating the referents 'Ethiopian', 'Amhara' and 'Christian'.² Outside this equation, he defines Judaism as 'foreign' and representing 'the ways of the West world' that were taught to the Bet Israel by 'Western Jews'. He has not understood that Judaism is in fact not a Western religion, nor that aspects of Judaism introduced to the Bet Israel upon the arrival in their midst of the Polish-born, French-educated Jacques Faitlovitch in 1904 are not 'Western' in origin but were developed in the religious academies of Babylon and the Holy Land. Nor has he understood that these aspects of Judaism are not in fact specific to 'Western' Jews but are embraced equally by Jews of the 'East', as indicated by Halevy's visit from Turkey, begun in 1867, and the visit to the Bet Israel of the (non-Western) Chief Rabbi Nahum of Turkey at the beginning of the twentieth century, sponsored by the French Alliance Israelite Universelle.

Having identified Judaism with a 'foreign' or 'Western' ethnicity, Quirin's approach indicates a misconception, namely that to concede that Bet Israel religion was distinctive, authentic or, in fact, Jewish, would be incompatible with their Ethiopianness and that, conversely, his argument about how Ethiopian they are is a refutation of such distinctiveness, authenticity or Jewishness. In the service of this equation, Quirin goes against another of his stated aims, namely to incorporate the oral traditions of non-dominant peoples into a more complete writing of ethnohistory. In fact, indigenous points of view of what is important in defining a group's identity or religion and in distinguishing itself from others are not given proper consideration. Instead, Quirin himself decides which Bet Israel or Amhara indigenous perceptions are valid and which are not, while some Bet Israel historical traditions are represented only to be dismissed as 'personalized', their statement of the essence of their religious identity is ignored, while their own views of their origins are dismissed as 'obviously...greatly influenced by Western Judaizing forces'. The most extreme example of this tendency is perhaps when he cites data in which the Bet Israel clearly state their faith in response to pressure from Protestant missionaries: 'God gave us the law by Moses...More we don't want'.³ Quirin dismisses such statements of their faith—in particular, the

2. He shares this approach with Pankhurst, who stresses that the medieval Ethiopian state was a Christian state, inhabited mainly by Christian peasants, ruled by a Christian monarch, and defended by a Christian army (1992: 572).

3. Cited in Negoosie to Flad, in *Jewish Missionary Intelligence*, 14 (April 1898): 55.

fundamental premise of Judaism expressed in the first line of an important prayer known to Jewry worldwide: 'Hear O Israel, the Lord our God is One Lord',⁴ as 'anti-Trinitarian doctrine', 'sentiments' and 'traditional arguments' which 'held the day, despite the dedication of the mission'.

Kaplan's approach to the period of Protestant missionizing among the Bet Israel contrasts with Quirin's. To Kaplan, it is the Protestant London Society for promoting Christianity among the Jews that had a fragmentary influence on the Bet Israel and inaugurated their encounter with 'Western modernity'. Thus the Protestant missionaries are treated as no less Western or foreign than the 'Western Jews'. While Quirin sees the coercion of some Bet Israel by others as interfering with the Protestant missions' work, Kaplan, in direct contrast, shows the role of kin in undermining the effectiveness of sanctions imposed by the Bet Israel community against converts. For Kaplan, the main impact of the missions was on Bet Israel self-identification, when they started to consider themselves 'Jews in a universal sense' rather than 'Israelites'.

Kaplan describes the migration of the Bet Israel to the state of Israel as the logical conclusion of their encounter with Faitlovitch. However, in his treatment of earlier attempted migrations to Israel by Bet Israel—for example, those occurring in response to the missions—Kaplan also cites as a factor their 'strong tradition of Exodus as a means of redemption and a powerful attachment to the Holy Land and the city of Jerusalem'.

Another way in which Kaplan differs from Quirin is in his consistent treatment of indigenous historical data with the same degree of seriousness, attention to detail and respect as any other historical data. This can be seen, for example, in his full and detailed consideration of all the arguments for and against the Solomon and Sheba legend as the historical basis for Jewish elements in Ethiopia. Where he does not find literal accuracy in such data, Kaplan nevertheless bestows other kinds of value on it—symbolic, expressive or reflective. For example, he suggests that the rivalry and separation of the sons, Gabra Masqal and Beta Israel, of Kaleb, the early sixth-century Aksumite ruler, according to Ethiopian traditions could be viewed as an expression of growing Jewish-Christian animosity.

Quirin credits Christian monks and influences with creating Bet Israel religion and Protestant missionaries with persuading the Bet Israel of the truth of their message, if only it were not for 'tradition', 'sentiment' and internal coercion. Essentially, he blames 'foreign', 'Western Jews' for 'splintering' the community. Unlike Kaplan, however, he does not attribute major significance to the period of the Great Famine (1888–92) in undermining the religion and community of the Bet Israel. Kaplan treats the diffusion of the Bet Israel as a consequence of this devastating famine as a significant factor in the changing attitudes towards the monks and the decline of monasticism, which he describes as definitive of their distinctive religious tradition, and in the cessation of ritual sacrifice. He therefore sees those elements which distinguished the Bet Israel from world Jewry as

4. Cited by Aragawi, *ibid.*, 21 (July 1905): 98.

becoming significantly weakened before the arrival of Faitlovitch. He thus shows how the undermining and weakening of their society and religion, a process he describes as having been triggered by the Protestant missions, was accelerated by the famine.

It can be seen that even where Kaplan and Quirin draw upon the same data and superficially appear to agree with each other, their accounts of the history of the Bet Israel are essentially different. The crucial difference derives from how each relates history to the definition of Bet Israel identity. To Kaplan, people relate their history for the purpose of defining their identity and shaping their self-image, the latest stage of which he asserts to be the Bet Israel's dissociation of themselves from their Ethiopian past and surroundings, while reshaping their history to stress their similarity with other Jews. Quirin's position differs, in that for him people create their own history and construct their own identity. In fact, however, he himself then recounts and thus defines their identity on their behalf. In this way, he imposes a Christian identity on the Bet Israel, this identity being, for Quirin, definitive of Ethiopianness.

It is an essential strength of Quirin's work that it contains the conditions for the exposure of its own weaknesses. His data is sufficiently sound and comprehensive for the reader to determine where, rather than being supported by his data, his conclusions are based on preference and prejudice. Where such a basis exists, it can also be detected in his style, often permeated with a patronising and judgmental tone. Thus he describes 'the mid-nineteenth-century Beta Israel religious leaders who led a revival during this period', who 'tried to have it both ways', arguing 'on the one hand [that] their practices were based on and justified by the Old Testament—the same book was fundamental to Abyssinian Christianity—and therefore, on the other hand, they should be allowed to maintain their own practices and beliefs and remain distinct and independent from Abyssinian Christianity'. Although Quirin sometimes denies or contradicts his own conclusions, taking into consideration his work as a whole, one can easily perceive this as lip-service.

Although Quirin and Kaplan both adopt particular theoretical positions in relating the history of the Bet Israel, the complexity of the data requires both to be sufficiently flexible to be able to diverge from them and to set out data which set limits to and conflict with their own theoretical standpoints. Inevitably, such a vast and complex history as that of the Bet Israel cannot be reduced to a straightforward equation, any more than the work of any serious historian, such as Quirin or Kaplan, who undertakes the difficult and challenging task of recounting this history.

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BOOK REVIEWS

KOFI AGAWU, *African Rhythm: A Northern Ewe Perspective*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1995. xx, 217 pp., Index; with compact disc. £52.95.

A first glance at the title of this book might provoke a jaded reaction: 'yet another book on African drumming?' But the dust jacket is sufficiently attractive to prompt one to read the notes and discover that Kofi Agawu is not so much interested in drumming as in the much larger picture of how the rhythms of music relate to the rhythms of language. This is, of course, not the first time that a connection has been made between music and language in Africa, though most of this discussion has centred on drum language, i.e. 'talking drums'. Agawu's approach is different and indeed broader, looking more importantly at song and other aspects of music and situating his discussion against a backdrop of daily life in an Ewe village more generally—a 'soundscape', to use Schafer's concept, of Northern Ewe society. The book is well organized and well written, accessible to the non-specialist and well illustrated by the accompanying compact disc, which often allows Agawu to make his point much more neatly than would otherwise have been possible. It should prove interesting not only to ethnomusicologists and others interested in African music and African languages, but also to those interested in African culture generally, as well as to anthropologists, linguists and others concerned with the possible relationships between music, language and culture.

In the Prologue, the author expresses his views on musical analysis, discussing some of the similarities and differences he sees in approaching African and Western classical music. He also examines the implications of the absence of a single word for 'rhythm' in the Ewe language: the fact that many different concepts in Ewe are bound together by 'rhythm' has led him to the broad approach presented here.

The first chapter is entitled 'Rhythms of Society', by which Agawu means the ebb and flow of various aspects of daily life from the perspective of their cyclical nature and periodicity, and obviously focusing on sound—the crowing of the cock each dawn, the pounding of mortars in food preparation, the ringing of school bells dividing the day, the different greetings used at different times of the day. But he also includes the rhythmic organization of other aspects of daily life: for example, the early morning sweeping of the compound (rhythm both in sound and in the pattern left on the ground by the broom). 'Physically as well as psychologically,' we are told, 'the Northern Ewe may be said to express themselves rhythmically' (p. 23). Possibly the most important aspect of this chapter, however, is the author's effort to integrate the various rhythms of the Northern Ewe soundscape into a coherent model. The basis for this is the notion of 'gesture', 'the physical manifestation of a more fundamental communicative urge' (p. 27). Gesture is the primordial rhythmic event which underlies spoken language, vocal music, instrumental music and dance. The latter, of course, can be seen as

stylized gesture, renewing the connection with the origin. A more or less linear structure or progression is suggested here: *gesture* > *spoken word* > *vocal music* > *instrumental music* > *dance* (> *gesture*). The succeeding chapters are designed to illustrate the rhythmic (and therefore gestural) basis of the component parts of this model and the dynamic that exists between them. While there is little direct reference to this model in the intervening chapters, it comes up for evaluation in the Epilogue, where the linear structure is revealed to be inadequate.

Of these middle chapters, Chapter Two, 'Rhythms of Language', is perhaps the most important. In it we find discussion of the rhythmic structure found in individual words in Ewe, greetings, riddles, announcements and prayers—all, in a sense, ritualized or in other ways formal uses of language. While we are shown in convincing and interesting ways that these forms of language have a rhythmic structure relevant to the book's thesis, this may also be the weakest chapter. The mainstay of Agawu's attempt to demonstrate the existence of a rhythmic structure in individual words of Ewe is to attribute stressed syllables to them. He apparently rejects the common notion (and rightly so, though the linguist/phonologist may wonder if for the right reasons) that tone languages like Ewe cannot have stress. However, it does not seem that what Agawu calls stress is what the linguist would label as such, and as far as I know, no phonological description of Ewe discusses stress, at least word stress of the sort proposed by Agawu. (It is noticeable that the difference between his stressed and unstressed syllables—where stress is indicated—correlates closely with syllable shape.) This objection aside, there can be no denying that the words of a language—any language—have a rhythmic structure, both in isolation and in context, whether or not the language has word stress. This draws attention to another, more serious and more general weakness: the author's reluctance to take into account 'ordinary' or 'everyday' discourse or conversation. This comes to the fore in this chapter and is again conspicuous by its absence from the Epilogue, though the issue is broached in the chapter on song. This may be a deliberate omission, as it seems to be Agawu's opinion that this most common type of language use lacks metrical (= rhythmic) structure, at least of a type appropriate to make it relevant to his model. The shortcomings of this chapter reflect the difficulties in undertaking multi- or interdisciplinary work when one is not trained in all the relevant areas.

Chapter Three, 'Rhythms of Song', first draws attention to the fact that the most prevalent musical form among the Northern Ewe is song—group singing—and not instrumental (especially drum) music. Agawu in fact points out that this is the case throughout much of Africa, contrary to the common Western conception of African music as being essentially built on the drum. An important aspect of this chapter is the author's focus on children's music, such as rhymes, and games with song and music as a didactic tool; he also draws attention to the essential unity of child and adult music in Ewe culture. In the central portion of the chapter, Agawu turns to look at the distinction frequently drawn between free and strict rhythm in discussions of African music, by which is essentially meant the difference between the rhythms of the spoken language and the rhythms of song. Here, he recognizes that there is, for Northern Ewe, no clear distinction between the two, that 'elements of speech rhythm may be found in songs in strict rhythm' (p. 73): 'Northern Ewe songs partake of both modes of rhythmic signification' (p. 82). This is neatly illustrated through a series of examples

on the CD. The closing portion of the chapter retreats on to perhaps more familiar ground for the musicologist, attempting to provide a detailed analysis of an Ewe lament in its own right, rather than as a token of a particular type. Although it is not immediately clear how this relates to the main theme of the book, it does reach back to the first issue Agawu discusses in the Prologue, mentioned above.

Little needs to be said here about Chapter Four, 'Rhythms of Drumming and Dancing': the relation between the two is of course well known, and their relevance to and place in Agawu's gestural model easily understood. Agawu, however, uses familiar themes here to reinforce his arguments that African music is founded on drumming and that drumming is only one of a number of forms of rhythmic expression.

These different forms of rhythmic expression, rhythms of speech, song, drumming and dance, their relationships and how they interact are examined in specific detail in the chapters on musical performance and folktale performance. In these, a more integrated or global picture of Northern Ewe rhythm is presented, and it is here that Agawu's case is essentially made. Again, little needs to be said—in fact, little really can be said, for, as Agawu points out, the key to understanding is in listening to the interplay and hierarchical structure of rhythm as illustrated by the performances on the CD.

The book closes with the 'Epilogue: Representing African Rhythm'. Agawu started out with a relatively simple gestural model of Northern Ewe rhythm in Chapter One. In the subsequent chapters this model is rarely explicitly mentioned, but it does become clear that a more sophisticated version is needed, one that can account better for the complex relationships among its different components. These relationships, and hence the limitations of the model, are discussed in the Epilogue. To give but a glimpse of these, in the central component of the model, *spoken word* > *vocal music* > *instrumental music*, a relation of *spoken word* > *instrumental music* needs not only to be recognized, but to be seen as more pertinent than *vocal music* > *instrumental music*; similarly, a relation of *spoken word* < *instrumental music* needs to be incorporated. Agawu's modesty in his reluctance to claim complete success for his model is somewhat refreshing, yet this modesty perhaps underlies his stated unwillingness to push the model a little further. More important, though possibly not unrelated, is his failure to recognize the true nature of the rhythmic structure of speech which, when taken into account, seems only to strengthen his basic premise, though not resolve all the details of the model. The closing pages of the book offer a discussion of representations of African rhythm that not only relates back to the opening paragraphs analyzing African and Western classical music, but at last also relates this theme to the central theme of the book (despite, perhaps, the author's protest to the contrary), in showing how an inability to understand the hierarchical or multi-tiered structure of African rhythm on the part of some researchers has led them to misinterpret this structure and has ultimately contributed to constructing the exotic status of African music.

BRUCE CONNELL

JACKIE ASSAYAG, *Au Confluent des Deux Rivières: Musulmans et hindous dans le sud de l'Inde* (Monographies Ecole Française de l'Extrême-Orient no. 181), Paris: Presses de l'Ecole Française d'Extrême-Orient 1995. 287 pp., Illustrations, Bibliography. No price given.

Organised into seven chapters—an introduction, followed by chapters on society, demonology, devotion, mythology, cult, politics and a conclusion—this monograph deals mostly with the northern districts of the state of Karnataka. Its focus is the reciprocal acculturation of Hindu–Muslim society. This is the backdrop against which recent outbreaks of ‘communal’ violence in India as a whole are interpreted. Assayag, an anthropologist, claims that even though the perception of difference may always predominate in conscious thought, one must not separate out Muslims from Hindus in seeking to understand local society. The Islamization that has been occurring in India for more than a thousand years must be approached through socio-genesis and the dynamics of acculturation. In the Introduction (pp. 29–31) the author states that the continuous preference of Muslims for trade and commerce over proselytism obliged them to adopt the language and culture of the indigenous populations. This means that Hindu and Muslim praxis are on the same level and that their mutual antagonisms mostly arose later, under British colonial rule. What has been remarkable has been their ability to adapt to one another.

The Introduction provides a statistical view of the distribution of Muslims throughout India (in 1981), as does Chapter Six, which surveys outbreaks of ‘communal’ violence nationally. Throughout this book, wherever the possibility arises, the author provides a comparative overview of India and situates Karnataka bibliographically in the context of studies of other areas of India. This gives the monograph the value of an introduction to a more general problematic through the prism of an area study.

But the primary quality of this work is the richness and diversity of the ethnographic descriptions. In Chapter One, ‘Society: Hindu and Muslim’, the author leads us to understand to what extent the two groups have adapted to one another’s existence by demonstrating the norms of commensality between the different castes, especially on anniversaries of the deaths of Muslim saints (*'urs*).

In the second chapter, on demonology, the pragmatic finalities of popular religion as practised in the jurisdictions (*walâya*) of the friends of Allah (*wali* or *pîr*) show that when sickness or other afflictions are at stake, only the surface of peasants’ cognitive universe regarding evil, its etiology and therapeutics is changed by religious affiliation. What is more, the axis of holiness of a saint only makes sense when one studies the armies of demons that surround his tomb. As Assayag says, ‘Comme la déesse, symbole de la centralité souveraine, a besoin de sa troupe de démons, l’axe (*quthb*) de la sainteté n’a de sens que parce qu’un détachement de djinns l’assiège et menace en permanence l’ordre du monde.’ There is no *dharma* without *adharmā*.

The chapter on ‘Devotion, Sufism and Fakirism’ illustrates the network of mutual influences which in Karnataka, and indeed in India in general, have been woven around *bhakti* and Sufism. Five kinds of mausoleum (*dargâh*) and their inheritors (*pîrzade*) are examined. Self-beheading as a form of devotion (see pp. 125–6) is shown to be common to both Hinduism and Indian Islam (a reference to Françoise Héritier-Augé’s

recent work on the anthropology of the body would have been useful here). Through his descriptions, Assayag has been able to observe and articulate a whole world of lower-caste religiosity, which, as he says, classical orientalism has traditionally disdained as poorly intellectualized and culturally composite. In the chapter on mythology (pp. 153–4) he evokes the complexity of this sociological perspective as presented by a thousand years of Hindu–Muslim co-existence: ‘à ménager en somme les exigences de l’autonomie individuelle, familiale ou lignagère, de caste ou de communauté, avec des contraintes de la cohésion et la nécessité de reconfigurer les traditions dont ils se réclament pour affronter les transformation de l’environnement.’

In Chapter Five, on the cult of the goddess and the saint, Georges Devereux’s notion of integrative and dissociative acculturation facilitates Assayag’s analysis (p. 165) of the cult of Yellamma (the universal mother) and her ‘great’ younger sister Matangi, ancillary duplication of her elder sister. This duplication permits a double divinity to be worshipped by groups of different status. The layered structure of the myth responds to the logical *bricolage*, in using the authority and symbols of different local interest groups. Assayag concludes (p. 173) by suggesting that ideological and praxiological configurations are continually renegotiated by the agents: ‘Constat qui modifie en profondeur et la conception de la religion, devenant toujours plus instrumentale, et les pratiques des agents, davantage tentés par les manipulations, quitte à convoquer, en les réinterprétant, les traits les plus archaïques de la culture.’

Chapter Six deals with the political frontiers created recently by the ‘memories’ of communalism, often using recently invented biographies. Assayag states (p. 207): ‘Le travail d’anamnèse qui dotait le saint des attributs du soldat de Dieu, revêtu de l’habit sacrificiel du martyr, prenait en charge la défense de cette frontière interne—indifférente à toute délimitation physique du territoire—par laquelle la communauté symbolisait à la fois sa cohésion sociale et son identité religieuse.’ Thus enters the distinction between *dâr al-harb* (non-Muslim lands) and *dâr al-Islâm*. There are two kinds of Islamic usages of ‘memory places’ in Karnataka. Where memory is well kept, full, the present is obliged to repeat the past, but where there is an absence of memory, this forgetfulness facilitates its being filled with contemporary events reinterpreted in the light of a ‘non-existing’ past. The heavy immemorial anchor of the *lettré* is an obstacle to manipulations by recent events, while the *profile rémanent* of the warrior allows him to be redrawn according to recent events. These two styles of memory contrast the chronological and historical with the collective memory of the groups, which is more genealogical and semiological. A *topos* can become consubstantial with the representation of local history (see pp. 210–13).

In the concluding chapter, Assayag admits that the conflation of cultural dynamics and socio-genesis are descriptive, not interpretative or explanatory concepts. And that is just the point, for his claim is (pp. 215–17) that the relationship between Hinduism and Indian Islam has constituted, and in some areas still does constitute, a cultural system. Acculturation permitted each tradition, through a *bricolage* not of their founding truths but of little pieces of truth, to displace tradition and conserve their own particularity. Even before these traditions had been written down, their founders were in contact with many different forms of thought. Since it is through social relations that actors make their traditions, a contextual and pragmatic approach is necessary. Types of sociability are plural, composite and conflictual. An anthropology of present

times, with its plurality of cultures, allows for a historiography of micro-histories, without texts.

Tradition is not an inheritance, patrimony or ethnicity, but a rivalry or competition between social partners. Agents debate, at many different levels of society, what constitutes the links that unite them, i.e. their identity. The intensity of their interaction is a tribute to agents' abilities to attribute meaning to these interactions. A dialectic of reciprocal assignments exists. The symbolic apparatus produced by their social life is a relatively coherent but profoundly unstable system. The variability of interactions creates free spaces for inventiveness or at least for normal dissent. Assayag ends his book with the words (p. 220): 'chacun vit, on le sait, de compromis qu'il invente et de contradictions qu'il gère. Or ce sont ces manières de réemployer à des fins propres l'ordre imposé...ce que Lévi-Strauss appelait joliment "les fleurs fragiles de la différence".'

STEPHEN C. HEADLEY

CHRISTOPHE VIELLE, PIERRE SWIGGERS and GUY JUCQUOIS (eds.), *Comparatisme, mythologies, langages: En hommage à Claude Lévi-Strauss* (Bibliothèque des Cahiers de l'Institut de Linguistique de Louvain 73), Louvain-la-neuve: Peeters 1994. 454 pp., References. BFr. 1600.

This Festschrift for Lévi-Strauss's eighty-fifth birthday grew from a number of workshops held in Brussels which were focused on comparativism of one kind or another. It starts with a facsimile of the great man's handwriting, plus a pen-and-ink portrait and six pages of 'bio-bibliographical presentation', but thereafter few of the contributors allude to their honorand. Rather than listing all sixteen authors, I pick and choose, but try to convey the range of the volume.

Vielle, a young but impressively well-equipped comparative linguist and mythologist, writes on Sir William Jones (the bicentenary of whose death was celebrated last year at University College, Oxford, where he was once a Fellow). Jones is, of course, famous for hypothesizing what linguists would now call proto-Indo-European, but his pioneering comparative exploration of Indo-European deities has been relatively neglected. Next, Dubuisson gives a convenient epitome of his bold and stimulating polemic, *Mythologies du XXe siècle: Dumézil, Lévi-Strauss, Eliade* (Lille 1993). He sees the mental worlds of each of these scholars as built around a single core concept, respectively Society, Mind (*l'Esprit*) and The Sacred; and in comparing the three men (together with the 'ultra-nominalist' Veyne and the 'bio-functionalist' Burkert), he hopes to found a comparative epistemology which can situate their approaches to *l'imaginaire* within the long-term history of European thought.

Four papers wrestle with particular myths or bodies of myth, including Melanesian (the experienced Guiart, writing in the tradition of Leenhardt) and Indian (Gomes da Silva). One highly Lévi-Straussian paper places the story of the Trojan Horse within a 'transformation group' of four stories—a group which to me seems too arbitrarily

constituted to be instructive. Sergent, in the sixth instalment of his Dumézil-inspired 'Celts-Hibernica', argues for the common origin of the Old Irish deity Oengus (alias Mac Og) and the Greek Hermes. I abstain from a glib verdict on such complex material but admit to worries about the ratio of *glissements* and *inversions* to convincing similarities.

In Part II, on languages, I shall remember best the argument by the Israeli Rosén on the origins of the Arabic grammatical tradition. The Arabic debt to Greek grammarians has long been recognised, but it concerns syntax and parts of speech: as regards morphology and phonetics the debt is apparently to India. Other articles concern the axes of successivity and simultaneity, of the syntagmatic and the paradigmatic; the need for experimental data to build a scientific approach to semantics; the sociolinguistics of Provençal (as distinct from the artificial construct of Occitan); the Flemish-Walloon debates of the 1840s; and much else. Interesting though individual articles are, one doubts whether English-language publishers could be persuaded to put such varied material between a single pair of covers.

N. J. ALLEN

SARA DELAMONT, *Appetites and Identities: An Introduction to the Social Anthropology of Western Europe*, London and New York: Routledge 1994. xi, 254 pp., References, Illustrations, Glossary, Directory, Indexes. £40.00/£13.99.

Filled with mismanaged anecdotal accounts, colloquial language and countless quotes taken from a variety of ethnographies of well-known anthropologists of European culture, *Appetites and Identities* reads more like a student travel guide than a serious academic book. In one broad sweep, Delamont has tried to transform a whole academic subdiscipline into a series of quirky misadventures spanning the European continent. Her cultural comparison of different European countries covers a wide topical range from cities, farming, fishing, food, gender, language and migrants, to politics, religion and tourists. The diversity of subject-matter does not in itself convey her seemingly endless ability to paraphrase in a notably feckless way.

To be fair to Delamont, she does provide the wary anthropological reader with a caveat stating that 'this book over-simplifies anthropology'. However, she also identifies her target audience as 'students studying European languages and cultures, doing degrees in European studies, plus those taking courses in the sociology, politics or anthropology of Europe' (p. ix). Should this book therefore be evaluated as an introductory text? Possibly, but the worry is misperception: will non-anthropology students think the anthropology of Western Europe a simple and undiscerning enterprise after Delamont's over-generalized account? Introductory academic works should not be exonerated if they produce misleading information through over-simplification. A propensity towards the popular and condensed versions of empirical information derived from social anthropological data may unduly distort a fieldworker's experience and research intention. While simplifying aims might seem to be a well-

intentioned way of disseminating greater awareness of a field like anthropology, the outcome could be most displeasing as a misconception by those less knowledgeable in the subject (as Delamont's case attests).

Let us not forget Delamont's true intentions. She is not bashful in stating forthrightly, 'I know that the way the discipline [of social anthropology] is presented here will be resented by scholars in that tradition. I have done this deliberately, cold-bloodedly, and ruthlessly' (p.ix). In acknowledgement of this surprising prefatory statement, one may simply point out the many flaws that are apparent throughout her book. First, her use of quotations from well-known anthropologists of European culture like Jeremy Boissevain, John Campbell, Malcolm Chapman, Loring Danforth, William Douglass, Michael Herzfeld, Peter Loizos, Maryon McDonald, Julian Pitt-Rivers and Nancy Scheper-Hughes—to name only a few—are borrowed from profusely to the extent of distraction. This is a clear indication of Delamont's lack of analytical skills and imagination for original research.

Secondly, she seems to have had great problems formatting her text. Why, for instance, do Chapters Two, Six and Seven have summary conclusions and not the remaining chapters? Further, her bibliographic usage is most inappropriate, since works are cited but not analysed in a thorough way. Certainly her bibliography is exhaustive, but it is uncertain why it needs to be so lengthy, given the lack of any proper synthesis of anthropological knowledge about European cultures.

Thirdly, what should perhaps raise the most ire in her book is its lack of reflexivity to past comparative approaches in the anthropology of Europe. It is obvious to anyone familiar with European anthropology that John Davis's classic *People of the Mediterranean: An Essay in Comparative Social Anthropology* (1977) stands out as a prime example of excellent comparative research. Delamont only cursorily mentions Davis at the beginning of her book, claiming that her examples are taken 'from monographs and journal articles which are not well known, or have been published since Davis wrote' (p. 2). The reader is left supposing that her updated comparative approach should therefore suffice as being entirely different. On the contrary, her 'Directory of Research Sites' directly mimics the careful mapping made by Davis nearly twenty years ago (which she altogether fails to acknowledge) of anthropologists' field sites in Western Europe. Those already familiar with *People of the Mediterranean* will also recall Davis's extractive reasoning in analysing a multiplicity of nuanced issues, such as economics, kinship, politics and social stratification, from his Mediterranean survey of anthropological contributions. Although Delamont proclaims so adamantly that her book is not 'for' professional anthropologists but for students, her flagrant omission of a classic text like Davis's, so identical in conception to her own, is unforgivable.

Fourthly, many of Delamont's statements are erroneous and unfounded, for example: 'Herzfeld, whose many publications on Greece will be cited in this book, is so enamoured of Greece that he has lost his scholarly detachment' (p. 14); 'A unified Europe is only going to work if those who cook in oil can accept that others cook in goose grease and vice versa' (p. 18); 'If the British are attached to sausages that are 50 percent bread, then directives about changing their content are an attack not only on the sausage, but on our taken-for-granted understanding of the world' (p. 40); 'Many supernatural beings swarm over Europe' (p. 171); 'If European people are

uncomfortable when their traditional food and drink is not available, challenges to the patterns of sex roles, with their deeply embedded symbolic loadings, are equally disturbing' (p. 192); 'If there is one issue as deeply personal as food it is language and dialect' (p. 193). The last sentence of the book reads: 'Anthropology can illuminate life after the eagle has vanished'—really? (p. 209).

In the final analysis, most scholars who are familiar with social studies of Western Europe will find this book an unappetizing and unsavoury intellectual experience. Nevertheless, *Appetites and Identities* can be read as a reference guide—that is, a quick perusal of the over-abundant quotations contained in the book from the minds and mouths of respected social anthropologists will indicate what sources the reader might want to consider for actual research on European cultures.

JOHN P. LINSTROTH

PHILIPPE DESCOLA, *In The Society of Nature: A Native Ecology in Amazonia*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1994. xviii, 372 pp., Bibliography, Indexes, Figures, Tables, Illustrations. £45.00.

This book, based on fieldwork undertaken in the mid to late 1970s among the Achuar people of the Upper Amazon in Ecuador, is an important contribution to the ethnography of lowland South America. Its importance lies in the fact that it employs an ethnographic perspective to challenge the environmental determinism of cultural ecology that has dominated the economic anthropology of Amerindian tropical forest societies. The basic message is that the superstructure of any given society is not detached from social action but deeply embedded in the concrete fabric of material life. Descola shows that it is not so much material limitations that structure the Achuar economic system as their representation of nature as a sentient realm which forms a continuum with culture and their cultural values relating to work and well-being. The book is also an excellent example of a research methodology that aims to integrate quantitative and qualitative approaches to the economic anthropology of small-scale societies. In addition, secondary information on swidden societies in Amazonia and elsewhere is drawn on to provide rich comparative data on population density, productive output, land-use strategies and nutrition. As a consequence, this monograph may well become a standard text for anthropologists planning research on the economic life of hunter-horticulturists.

Rather than analysing social reproduction on a societal level, Descola focuses on the technical and symbolic relations between individual Achuar households and their tropical forest environment. In carrying out this ethnographic project, he conjoins a quantitative approach using empirical data on energy exchange, food production and time allocation with a quantitative interpretation of 'symbolic relations' with nature, as revealed in Achuar mythology, taxonomy, magic and ritual. A key objective of the book is to show how the Achuar represent nature and the ways in which this representation impinges on their production techniques. Descola describes an Achuar

cosmos peopled with anthropomorphic spirits. Nature is encapsulated in a 'great continuum of sociality'. In other words, the Western bifurcation of nature and culture does not rigidly structure Achuar knowledge or understanding about the world.

According to the Achuar theory of production, each task of material provisioning demands a particular set of 'symbolic preconditions' establishing cordial relationships with 'nature's beings'. These interpersonal relationships are realized through communication with plant and animal spirits by way of magical songs (*anent*). The Achuar value their personal *anent* as essential resources for individual and familial livelihood. These symbolic resources are believed to be necessary for harmonious relations between Achuar households and nature, which, in turn, secure adequate material conditions for the family. A joint analysis of the Achuar organization of household space and social etiquette and the content of different *anent* shows how the Achuar model relations with nature on intra-inter household sociability.

Within this conceptual scheme, the garden is a space of mothering and consanguinity. Crop husbandry is represented as the maternal nurturing of sentient plant-children and the establishing of friendly relations with the female garden spirit Nunkui. In contrast, hunting is conceived as a symbolic practice in which hunters enter into a seductive yet risky alliance with the spirits of animal affines. The consequence of the Achuar's social objectification of nature is that their livelihood priorities concentrate on maintaining convivial relations with nature's beings in order to ensure a satisfactory supply of game meat and manioc beer, two key products of the domestic economy which are central to the maintenance of domestic peace and to a household's ability to provide hospitality. However, maximizing the production of food would threaten the cosmic preconditions of production and result in metaphysical sanctions against any Achuar attempting such a goal. These ideas about production and consumption dominate Achuar mythology and Achuar socialization, both of which condemn 'overzealousness' and excess, giving primacy instead to self-restraint and bodily control.

This ethnography seriously challenges the cultural ecological paradigm as a useful theory for understanding Native Amazonian subsistence economics. First, Descola's empirical evidence demonstrates that there is no shortage of protein, food energy or labour in the Achuar subsistence economy. In fact, they enjoy an abundance of these factors, and rather than Sahlins' 'underproduction', Achuar households over-produce for their needs and under-use their available human and natural resources, only using a fraction of their potential labour force. Secondly, Descola questions the assumption that soils have a causal effect on Amerindian socio-technical systems by making one crucial observation: the Achuar utilize both relatively fertile alluvial soils and poor interfluvial soils, yet there is no significant difference in the productive effort or techniques they employ on these different sites. Specifically, although the Achuar carry out efficient maize cultivation and are well aware of the productive potential of this crop on the richer riverine soils, they choose to give it a minor role and devote the bulk of their gardening effort to manioc cultivation.

Descola asserts that it is the Achuar's cultural preference for moderate work practices, the central place of manioc beer in their concept of domestic harmony and their social objectification of nature that lead them to treat the riverine and interfluvial biotopes in a similar way. In short, it is the conceptual scheme underlying the cultural

construction of consumption and work and the 'socialization of nature' that mould Achuar land-use practices. A careful analysis of household labour and its relation to land use also demonstrates that production is the outcome of social negotiation between spouses and co-wives. Furthermore, major differences in the productive output of Achuar gardens are tied to the local prestige system, which involves household heads and women gardeners. Productive efficiency also varies according to an individual's knowledge and experience. It is, therefore, social factors rather than material or labour constraints that direct Achuar production. In sum, Descola's book reveals how economic anthropology must try to expose the cultural logic guiding indigenous livelihoods if the relationship between society and nature in Amazonia is to be understood.

Given the weight of the empirical and intellectual 'constraints' set out by Descola in this monograph, it will be interesting to see the 'adaptive response' of the American cultural ecological school to this powerful critique of material determinism.

TOM GRIFFITHS

GORDON MATHEWS, *What Makes Life Worth Living? How Japanese and Americans Make Sense of their Worlds*, Berkeley: University of California Press 1996. x, 277 pp., Bibliography, Index. £35.00/£13.95//\$45.00/\$16.95.

In addressing the central question proposed in the title of this book (*What makes life worth living?*), Gordon Mathews chooses as his focus the Japanese concept of *ikigai*, defined as 'that which most makes one's life seem worth living' (p. vii). Noting that there is no clear equivalent to this term in American English (nor presumably in English English), the author justifies its use as a legitimate category for cross-cultural comparison, claiming that '*ikigai* applies not only to Japanese lives, but to American lives as well' (ibid.). In exploring the comparative *ikigai* of his Japanese and American informants, Mathews conducted a hundred sets of interviews with a variety of individuals from both nations, presenting nine 'pairs' (one Japanese and one American) of these edited personal accounts as his ethnographic base, each pair followed by the author's commentary and analysis.

Mathews cites the three aims of the book as, first, introducing the concept of *ikigai*; secondly, showing that *ikigai* is not only a Japanese cultural concept, but a cross-cultural concept as well; and thirdly, exploring the broader question of what makes life worth living. In Chapter One, 'The Varieties of *Ikigai* in Japan', the author suggests that interest in and the significance of the concept has varied with the times, noting, for example, its association with self-sacrifice in the name of the nation in the pre-war period; its de-emphasis in the immediate post-war period, when people did not have the luxury of contemplating such questions; and the '*ikigai* boom', beginning in the 1970s and continuing to the present, which the author associates strongly with Japan's economic ascendancy, but also with changing demographics (primarily increases in life-expectancy and the rapidly growing population of aged people).

Noting a lack of consensus on the definition of *ikigai* in the discourse on the subject in the popular press, Mathews identifies two dominant conceptions of it: *jiko jitsu* (self-realization), which is *ikigai* located outside of the realm of social roles and obligations; and *ittaikan*, defined as sense of belonging to or sense of oneness with, which is *ikigai* integrated within such roles. Obviously representing a dichotomy between the individual or private realm and the realm of society, with its inherent duties and obligations—what the Japanese might refer to as *ninjo* and *giri* respectively—Mathews attempts to plot the *ikigai* of his interviewees along this continuum, observing (not surprisingly) that ‘the majority of Japanese I interviewed seemed to think of their *ikigai* neither as *ittaikan* nor as *jiko jitsugen*, but as ambiguously balanced in between’ (p. 22).

Part Two, which comprises the bulk of the text, consists of the edited interviews of informants, followed by the author’s commentary. Mathews describes his approach as phenomenological, focusing not on the cultural constructs of the societies in question, but rather on the empirical data provided by the individual accounts of interviewees who ‘are not cultural representatives, but...represent only themselves’ (p. 45). Claiming that ‘culture can only be investigated “from inside the self out”, not “from outside the self in”’ (p. 48), the author proposes that the personal accounts of individual actors as ‘culturally shaped shapers of their lives’ not only provide a focus for mediating the relationship between individual and society but also a means of addressing his broader questions. This emphasis on selves also seems to provide the justification for the pairings of informant accounts which are based largely on similarities in the age and professed *ikigai* of interviewees, emphasizing traits that the author points out may be shared to a greater degree between the paired informants from different cultures than between the individual and other members of their own society.

It is clear from the Introduction that Mathews has pursued his subject with much enthusiasm and energy, and certainly one of the most interesting and refreshing aspects of the text is its focus on the accounts of ‘real’ people. However, it is not clear exactly what the author’s handling of these accounts reveals. The text also suffers from a certain methodological looseness. Explaining that informants were chosen from one city in northern Japan and another on the west coast of the United States, the author claims that ‘these cities are similar in history and ambience’, but fails to explain exactly in what way or the significance of this somewhat surprising observation. A more fundamental problem lies in his handling of the concept of *ikigai*. Having noted that the concept has a specific resonance in Japanese society which it does not possess in the United States, Mathews is somewhat unconvincing in his attempt at a cross-cultural theory of *ikigai*.

More problematic, however, is his manipulation of the concept in his analyses of the personal accounts of his interviewees. Mathews seems excessively concerned with categorizing *ikigai* into types—family, work, religion and artistic pursuits, for example—and even assesses and evaluates these according to somewhat arbitrary criteria, almost as if his purpose is to identify the best *ikigai* and, by extension, the best locus for finding meaning in life. This process of extracting the (or a) dominant *ikigai* from his informants’ accounts and categorizing and comparing informants on this basis glosses what must be the more complex reality that there are several aspects which provide meaning for the lives of most individuals—work, family, hobbies, creative

endeavours, spiritual belief—and that these might be emphasized differently depending on the situation. Although one of the author's informants explicitly states that their *ikigai* consists of several elements in combination—'a kit', as this person put it—Mathews' tendency to play down this complexity in the classification of most of his informants seems slightly artificial and arbitrary, if not reductive. Labels such as 'minority *ikigai*' and '*ikigai* crises', which the author employs in his discussion, smack of jingoism and represent a departure from indigenous uses and understandings of the concept.

Noting the tendency of writings on Japan to 'oppose a unitary Japanese culture to a unitary American culture' (p. 10), Mathews emphasizes what Dorinne Kondo terms the 'crafting of selves', suggesting in his articulation of a cross-cultural theory of *ikigai* that 'the products of culturally and personally shaped fate, selves, strategically formulate and interpret their *ikigai* from an array of cultural conceptions, negotiate these *ikigai* within their circles of immediate others, and pursue their *ikigai* as channelled by their society's institutional structures so as to attain and maintain a sense of the personal significance of their lives' (p. 50). At times, this emphasis on 'selves' as a fundamental unit of analysis seems excessive, suggesting a disconnectedness of the individual from the wider social milieu and eclipsing relevant cultural considerations, as illustrated in this example: 'These two men can't be viewed as exemplars of Japan and the United States, but only as individual selves making enculturated choices' (p. 69).

It is perhaps this which, in the author's analyses of the paired accounts of interviewees, underlies a tendency to proffer psychological explanations which seem to assume universalist applicability without reference to more salient cultural factors. In his analysis comparing the personal accounts of a nineteen-year-old American woman expressing anxiety about her indeterminate future and a twenty-one-year-old Japanese woman who is clear on the paths open to her (Chapter 5, '*Ikigai* in Past and Future'), Mathews comments: 'The two women's accounts reveal a clear difference in self-confidence', noting that 'This difference seems largely due to their personal backgrounds. Ms Peters felt unloved as a child compared to her sister, as Nakajima-san did not; and Nakajima-san is two years older than Ms Peters and more sure of herself on the path to adulthood.... Nakajima-san seems to have a good command of the game of cultural success she is playing; Ms. Peters seems not to' (pp. 116–18). What Mathews fails to make clear, however, are the significant differences in the nature of the game itself and how this might affect the attitudes and outlooks expressed by these women.

In the same chapter, Mathews summarizes the differences in the *ikigai* of two older women whose accounts he compares, saying 'Murakami-san is a religious sceptic, while Ms Tucker is a religious believer; this is the clearest reason for their difference in *ikigai*' (p. 142). Glossing potentially significant differences in the nature and role of religion in the two societies, here again Mathews' comparative analysis rests on the dubious premise of universally valid categories of believer and non-believer, providing little explanation as to why an 'agnostic' in Japan (as Mathews labels this interviewee) can be validly compared with a Christian from Texas and, furthermore, how such a comparison is sociologically significant.

Such examples suggest a more general theoretical shortcoming in the analysis. In treating Japan and America as societies in 'similar states of late modernity' (p. 238),

Mathews makes too little of the fact that Japanese society may yet provide clearer answers to the question, 'How shall I live?' by more clearly defining the options available to individuals with regard to work, marriage and life-style than is the case in the United States, where such issues may be individually negotiated to a greater degree. Despite the rapid economic and social changes experienced in Japan in the post-war period, it is too early to assume the demise of meta-narratives in Japanese society.

All of this raises the broader question of whether the author has bitten off more than could or should be chewed in a single book. One can imagine that a study of *ikigai* limited to the context of Japanese society and perhaps further fleshing out the concept in historical perspective, as well as with respect to parameters such as age, gender and generation—all of which are touched on by the author—might have imparted a clearer understanding of *ikigai* and its significance in Japanese society (as articulated by Japanese individuals) and provide a more solid basis for cross-cultural speculation. On the whole, Mathews' attempt to achieve more ambitious aims in a single work comes up short, and it is difficult not to agree with the person, acknowledged by the author in the Preface, who 'would have preferred that this work be more theoretically rigorous' (ix).

It is clear from the Introduction that the writing of this book was something of a personal quest, and one suspects that this may have resulted in the highly subjective nature of much of it, ultimately eclipsing its value as a contribution to the understanding of Japanese society. None the less, the personal accounts which the author has so painstakingly recorded and edited are interesting for their honesty and diversity, and Mathews is forthright in acknowledging the potential shortcomings of his approach in his opening remarks, providing a translucent account which allows the reader to judge its merit.

WILLIAM KELLY

MINDIE LAZARUS-BLACK, *Legitimate Acts and Illegal Encounters: Law and Society in Antigua and Barbuda* (Smithsonian Series in Ethnographic Inquiry), London: Smithsonian Institution Press 1994. xxv, 357pp., Bibliography, Index, Tables. £38.25/\$58.75.

Throughout the English-speaking Caribbean, topics such as kinship, class and gender are in a state of 'continuing struggle between lawmakers and ordinary men and women who, in the course of their daily lives, alter in practice the purpose and the meaning of lawmakers' law' (p. xi). Such tensions are examined by Lazarus-Black on Antigua and Barbuda in an account which is historical and contemporary, based on both historical colonial archives and histories of Creole life, and contemporary court cases of bastardy and child maintenance. In doing so, Lazarus-Black exemplifies Foucault's theorizings and fills a void in Caribbean kinship studies.

Lazarus-Black's discourse revolves around Foucault's distinction between 'systems of legalities' and 'systems of illegalities'—between the ordered formal legal institutions

such as courts, codes, judges and juries on the one hand, and the morass of informal breaches of codes, explicit tolerance of illicit behaviour and defiance of the law on the other. Her account of life in the common order—of common-sense knowledge about family in the present—is ‘conditioned by collective representations from the past’ (p. 5). This means that the historical presentation of Creole society begins with an articulation of the political structures of colonialism, the underlying assumptions contained in British law and the sociology of slavery.

In the seventeenth century, when Antigua was settled and a Creole society was fashioned, England neglected legal affairs and decentralized the legal system to allow local lawyers and judges to fashion local laws. Many of the local laws expired after a period of only two years, so Antigua and other Leeward Islands were able to meld their own indigenous system of legalities and slave codes. Examples of early slave laws range from the need for a permit for a slave to leave an estate to sell sugar or cotton or rum to the permanent ban on slave assembly, theft or drinking. However, Lazarus-Black notes that in the eighteenth century, there began a slow but ‘gradual incorporation of slaves into the island’s broader system of criminal and civil justice’ (p. 35). This began with acts such as a 1723 Bill making it illegal to wilfully kill, mutilate or dismember a slave, and culminated with the Amelioration Act of 1798, which stipulated slaves’ living and working conditions (except under special circumstances or during cropping time, slaves were expected to work *only* between 5 a.m. and 7 p.m., and they had to be given rations, clothing allowances, health care and holidays).

Fitting the plantation, production-oriented society, a variety of statutes were constituted, statutes which varied in their relevance and applicability to different categories of people in Antiguan society, whether slaves, servants or free persons. In effect, three broad social ranks were legally sanctioned, controlled and consolidated in what can be described, after Foucault, as a ‘specially created architecture for production’ (quoted p. 38). One of the key components in such regulation of the behaviour of slaves and free persons was in the ordering of their family lives. By treating kinship law as a Geertzian cultural text, the author is able to extrapolate ‘the assumptions and presumptions it contains about the natures of men and women, the duties and obligations of husbands and wives, the relations between parents and children, and the crucial links between kinship and property’ (p. 55).

On Antigua (1644), incest was punishable by death, whereas in England there was no criminal law penalizing incest until 1908. On Antigua, a minister would incur legal fines if he tried to wed a free person and a slave, and the free person would have to pay the owner for the slave, or work for that owner for four years. On Antigua a slave was inheritable, slavery being transmitted to a child through its mother, despite the institutionalized convention within English common law that a person’s status was determined by his father, and property was inherited through males (pp. 62–70). Such were the legalities of Creole society. The illegalities, however, present an account of a society where obeah, concubinage and ‘visiting relationships’ were—and are—rife, and where obeah was utilized as an alternative system of ideology, power and justice outside the rule of law. Concubinage persisted as a viable mating form in the free black and coloured sectors, which were constrained by legal and Creole norms, and visiting relationships allowed free men and free women greater control over their own personal affairs and households, while assuming less responsibility for others.

From Chapter Five to the end of the book, Lazarus-Black looks at the post-emancipation period, from 1834 to 1986. She examines the slow legal integration of illegitimate children into society, from the legitimization of slave unions following emancipation in 1834 to the Status of Children Act (1982) and the Births Act (1983). The 1982 Act effectively legitimized illegitimate children, giving them the same rights, privileges and obligations of children born in legal unions. Twenty years earlier, illegitimate children such as the present Prime Minister V. C. Bird could not have received secondary education (p. 227). The Act fits into a wider discussion of 'constitutional decolonization', or what Henry defines as 'the delicate art of transferring formal power to a colonized people without radically altering the structure of the society or negating imperial economic interests' (p.240).

Within the dialectical relationship between the legal and the illegal, the changing status of illegitimate children allows the author to comment upon colonial and post-colonial rule on Antigua and Barbuda, manifested through the creolization of local law. In so doing, she incorporates other material concerning the adoption of children by the extended family in the United States in order to satisfy their immigration laws. She then presents her present-day ethnography of Antiguan family cases at court which reveal why and when the litigant presses a case and what it reveals about Antiguan notions of 'justice'—what Geertz refers to as the people's 'legal sensibility' (quoted p. 192). Her findings are that women use the courts selectively, and that their use reveals a family ideology in which 'a man owes the mother of his child "respect"' (p. 200). If a 'big man'—a man of stature and authority in the community, a man who can maintain many children and multiple visiting relationships—fails in his perceived duties (to pay child support to the mother, for instance) then the mother will seek to ridicule him in public by taking him to court with the sole intention of shaming him into payment. Thus cases are brought to court and quickly dropped once they have achieved the aim of raising the woman's standing in the community. In this way, 'respect' becomes a fetish, a commodity desired by Antiguan men and women. As such, it is possible to witness a woman taking a man to court for failing to provide for their child, and then getting him bailed rather than letting him go to jail.

In conclusion, Lazarus-Black presents a historical and contemporary ethnography of legitimate acts and illegal encounters, of colonial Acts and Creole counters, of governing ideology and family resistance. Theoretically, 'law' is treated as a place 'for communicating meaning and cultural significance' (p. 249), where the anthropologist can explicate conceptions of man and woman, race, labour and justice, marriage and home, colonial law and systems of governance, Creole forms of knowledge and mechanisms of resistance. The volume is a valuable contribution to kinship studies, Caribbean ethnographies and legal and historical anthropology.

JONATHAN SKINNER

KAY MILTON (ed.), *Environmentalism: The View from Anthropology* (ASA Monograph 32), London: Routledge 1993. 240 pp., x, Index, Figures, Maps, Tables. £40.00/£14.99.

This fascinating collection, based on the 1992 ASA conference 'Anthropological Perspectives on Environmentalism', achieves the goal of demonstrating the contribution of anthropology to the environmental issue. It maintains a dialogue with other disciplines, including sociology, law and geography, while retaining its anthropological grounding, managing to address the relationship between humans and their environment, objectivity and environmentalism, and indigenous views of nature.

The collection includes papers on the discourse of environmentalism, emphasizing the importance of NGOs in anticipating potential problems (Grove-White); the way environmentalists advocate the cause (Harries-Jones); the use of 'science' by environmental organizations; and the subsequent strengths and weaknesses of the employment of scientific experts (Yearley). This point is examined further by Warren, who emphasizes the need for scientific expertise in the creation of environmental legislation. On the subject of law, MaCay examines the concept of 'public trust' with a view to improving stewardship, illustrating her argument with detailed legal cases.

Other papers move into the more traditional anthropological territory of speaking and interpreting for the 'Other'. So we find Einarsson revealing the Icelandic whalers' perspective ('unsaleable fish is waste'), implicitly indicating the problem of ethnocentric environmental imperialism. Bird-David examines tribal metaphors of human-nature relatedness and treats the reader to a variety of explanations, including hunting as a sexual encounter, the transformation of persons into things and the forest as a caring parent. The symbolization of animals is a subject which Richards explores through Mende thought, broaching the problematic themes of murderous animals (leopards and chimpanzees), witchcraft and rationality. The link between elephants as bush clearers and the ancestors is particularly poignant.

Ellen introduces a sense of sanguinity, cautioning against the 'myth' of traditional people's innate environmentalism. He draws attention to the Nuauulu people who have a complex categorical construction of their environment but do not have the historical experience to anticipate the future regarding development and logging. However, we should never be complacent about local knowledge, as Sillitoe argues in his examination of the Wola people's apparently off-hand nonchalance regarding soil types. Their seeming lack of interest belies experience and becomes understandable to those with a (Western) scientific bias after rather tedious measurements of soil-type and locations.

It may seem a gigantic intellectual leap from the cultivator's perspective in New Guinea (the Wola) to the cosmological view of a sixteenth-century Venetian, but this is a small step in anthropology, and Ingold's diagram-rich analysis of the typology of environmentalism (globe and sphere) offers an excellent tool with which to negotiate the varying terrains of environmentalism. The deceptively simple difference between spheres and globes reflects the common dyad of subject-object which appears throughout other papers dealing with local viewpoints. Ingold stresses the predominance of global imagery as associated with the triumph of modern science but sees a

subversive growth in 'cosmologies of engagement' which will provide 'sources of insight'.

The treatment of the environment as an object (globe) distinct from humanity permeates political discussions and the power of technology exemplifies this, as Prato shows in a discussion of political decision-making in Brindisi, where traditional parties do not deal adequately with an ecological issue involving the development of power stations. Equally intrusive was the plan for the construction of a chemicals factory in County Cork, which provoked a protest and general local opposition. In his paper, Peace relates how scientific discourse within the public enquiry (a 'theatre of control') managed to overpower the common-sense opposition in which other environmental disasters (Piper Alpha etc.) were significant, and subsequently apparent 'objectivity' was overruled.

The politics of eating greens (i.e. organic foods) attracts a diversity of interested parties, not all of whom are motivated by environmentalism. Yet in her paper James foresees the organic food issue as a vehicle for integrating environmental principles into British culture. In this instance cultural symbolism plays a leading role, a phenomenon that Milton addresses in the introduction. And symbolism comes to dominate the discussion of contemporary neo-paganism as examined by Lührman, especially in the powerful form of the Dark Goddess, which leads Lührman to suggest that 'the truly feminine is a powerful, ugly, devouring hag'. This unnerving proposition becomes more approachable when seen as a transformation of frustration into violence as opposed to creativity, a not uncommon facet of female deities. But the real point of interest lies in the resurgence of romanticism as a return to the subject-subject relationship between humanity and nature. This symbolic interaction between the two conceptualisations underpins the intellectual reasoning of different people throughout this collection.

In summary, this book possesses the qualities of many collections of conference papers: it has considerable breadth of interest and wealth of information, while being short on theoretical analysis and ethnographic data. This work is timely in that 'environmentalism' might be seen by some to be just another fashionable topic, a view which the contributors stridently disprove. Anthropology still has a lot to say about the environment.

DON MACLEOD

MAURICE BLOCH, *Prey into Hunter: The Politics of Religious Experience*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1992. xiii, 117 pp., Bibliography, Index. £25.00/£8.95.

This short book, based on the Lewis Henry Morgan Lectures for 1987, advances a clear and challenging thesis: all religious ritual is based on a common core, a similar symbolic structure of 'rebounding violence'. This is, as the author acknowledges, an expansion of ideas he expressed in his earlier *From Blessing to Violence: History and*

Ideology in the Circumcision Ritual of the Merina of Madagascar (Cambridge University Press 1986).

As in van Gennep's and Turner's theories, rituals are seen to consist of three phases. In the initial stage, rituals are about the aggressive domination of the forces of life (or 'vitality', as Bloch calls it). During this stage, violence is directed at individuals or at animals identified with them. In the next stage, ritual separates the principal actors from the forces of life, thus bestowing a transcendental quality on them. Finally, with this transcendence incorporated, the actors gain a new and more powerful form of vitality which gives them new powers in life. Bloch concludes: 'The symbolism of rebounding violence offers at least three alternative avenues of legitimate practice and in addition any mixture of the three: (1) the assertion of reproduction; (2) the legitimation of expansionism, which itself takes one of two forms; (a) it may be internally directed, in which case it legitimates social hierarchy or (b) it may be externally directed and become an encouragement to aggression against neighbours; (3) the abandonment of earthly existence.... Which particular alternative dominates and informs action is largely, though not exclusively, determined by people's evaluation of their politico-economic circumstances' (p. 98).

Bloch pursues this theory through detailed examination of a large number of examples from across the world. Ideal type (my term) number 1 is illustrated by the Orokaiva, the Dinka and the Buid of the Philippines. Ideal type 2a, used to explain the subordination of women, is discussed using Maria Phylactou's data on Ladakhi marriage and applied to other subordinate groups using David Lan's work on the Shona. Ideal type 2b is advanced using the examples of Hindu India (following Parry, Heesterman and Biardeau) and Japan. Ideal type 3 stands for millenarianism and is illustrated by Bloch's own material from Madagascar and the history of early Christianity.

In the final chapter, Bloch looks at the Ma'Betisek aborigines of Malaysia as described by Wazir-Jahan Karim (*Ma'Betisek Concepts of Living Things*, Athlone Press 1981). One of the ways this people deal with recalcitrant disease is to enact rituals that 'conjure up a truly radical rejection of rebounding violence' (Bloch, p. 104). Bloch uses this to deny the implication that 'given the raw materials of our shared perceptions of the processes of life and with the limited tools of ritualization and metaphor at our disposal, the constructions of rebounding violence...are the only way in which the necessary image of society as a transcendental and legitimate order can be constructed.... [P]erhaps the Ma'Betisek example...may show that, when in real trouble, we are able to analyse and criticize the very basis of our ideologies, to begin to demystify ourselves and to search for fundamentally different solutions' (p. 105).

Such a brief summary cannot do justice to either the clarity or the richness of the exposition. It is bound to raise many questions which can really be answered only by reading for oneself how Bloch applies the theory to particular cases.

Perhaps inevitably, there is sometimes more than a whiff of special pleading. Bloch has to work hard to demonstrate that Japanese Shintoism exemplifies rebounding violence, since it is a religion that abhors animal sacrifice. Japanese Buddhism exemplifies the scheme, it is argued, because the 'outward journeys' that it organizes, both in pilgrimage and symbolically, can 'be considered as forms of attacks on, and renunciations of, vitality' (p. 55).

There is in Bloch's theory no suggestion that the 'central core' undergoes any historical development or that scriptural or soteriological religions might be any different from the others. Now that he has left the Merina example in *From Blessing to Violence* behind, it is evident that the theory is essentially ahistorical. Bloch's insistence that the religions even of non-literate peoples make essential claims to transcendence is certainly well taken. As presented here, however, it seems that his theory has little or nothing to say about what difference it makes that a religion is written down, universalist or pacifist. Readers of Bloch's other work will be interested to see that this book makes no reference to Marx (unless the Utopian hope quoted above, with which the book ends, can be considered a homage to him). Nor do Bloch's very interesting ideas on ritual language play any explicit part in the present theory.

Along the way, there are several highly enjoyable gems—for example, Bloch's demonstration that certain well-known opposed theories of sacrifice are really partial and can be reconciled within his own, more encompassing theory. With its short and punchy theme, *Prey into Hunter* will surely be widely read and used, both by researchers and for teaching. Whether his theory is wholly correct or not is ultimately less important than the fact that it is clear, ambitious, and to a degree testable. Bloch indeed invites readers to try it out on their own material. Whatever may be the case in other branches of science and scholarship, it is surely true that anthropology advances more by fertile and creative error than by dull and worthy truism. Bloch's book is no mere 'important contribution to a debate' but ought itself to revive a debate about general theories of religion and ritual that anthropologists have all but abandoned.

DAVID N. GELLNER

VICTORIA A. GODDARD, JOSEP R. LLOBERA and CRIS SHORE (eds.), *The Anthropology of Europe: Identities and Boundaries in Conflict*, Oxford and Providence: Berg 1994. x, 310 pp., Index. £34.95/£14.95.

The present volume is billed on the cover as the first book on the anthropology of Europe to come out since 1989, though in their introduction (p. 30) the editors mention that it originated in a 1992 conference held at Goldsmiths College, University of London, on 'The Anthropology of Europe: After 1992'. These two dates, though ostensibly significant for eastern and western Europe respectively, differ considerably in their popular resonance. For the east, the changes of 1989 were far-reaching, simultaneously opening up the region to ideas of capitalism, democracy and nationalism, not to mention personal liberty and responsibility. For the west, however, 1992 represented little more than another notch in the process of convergence between states, one which to many also represented an increase in the level of threat to national sovereignty and ways of life. While the east was shedding its international system, western Europe was trying to develop one of its own in the face of the scepticism and indifference of much of its population.

In fact, all but two articles in this book are about western Europe—hence, perhaps, the editors' own preference for the later date as its point of reference. They cite as their main concerns not simply changes in the way Europe is being structured, but also their articulation with ethnicity, nationalism and gender in particular. There is thus a contrast with Sharon MacDonald's recent and equally valuable edited volume, *Inside European Identities* (Berg 1993), in that local identities in Europe are emphasized less and the larger picture more.

The papers dealing most closely with the theme of western integration are those by Ruth Mandel, on moves to reduced the numbers of migrants coming into the European Union, with special reference to Turks in Germany; Soledad Garcia, on the notion of European citizenship, examined through the experience of Spain; Cris Shore and Annabel Black, who tackle the question of the construction of a specifically European identity by Brussels bureaucrats; Joseph Ruane, who shows how European integration is affecting the Republic of Ireland; and Gareth Stanton's paper on Gibraltar, which examines the Rock's idiosyncratic status as a disputed territory outside the EU and a smuggling conduit, showing what this means for an already 'contradictory' Gibraltar identity. One theme linking the first three papers is the question of civic rights. Migrants are faced with increasing difficulties in claiming any in Europe, the image of the EU is seriously hampered by its lack of democratic credibility, and even Spain is shown to suffer in respect of the rights it grants its citizens in comparison with other EU countries. Shore and Black also contribute to the anthropology of bureaucracies, showing them to be makers of meaning like any other identifiable group, a change from the social dynamics approach to institutions deriving from sociology. Ruane's paper shows how European integration is a strategy exploited by both conservative nationalists and liberal cosmopolitans in Ireland, the former on the basis that Europe, with its subsidies and opportunities to circumvent lingering British influence, is good for Ireland, the latter that Ireland, with its tradition of neutrality and internationalism, is good for Europe. In addition, the liberals see reference to Europe as a way of easing two key Irish problems, the border and immigration, both of which will effectively be internalized by European integration.

Jeremy Boissevain's paper is almost programmatic in suggesting which issues will become prominent in the immediate future: he identifies changes in economic activity, minority interests, regionalism, external and internal migration, tourism, and nostalgia and the heritage industry. Josep Llobera examines past anthropological approaches to nationalism in the work of Arnold van Gennep and Marcel Mauss. Although Mauss's writings on this topic appear somewhat fragmentary—and Llobera prefers to stress their relevance to events since 1989—what both authors say is of value in being much closer than we are to the great explosion of nationalism in the late nineteenth century (though building on earlier roots, of course). Llobera mentions a critique to come from his pen of Louis Dumont's study of German identity (or what Dumont prefers to call German 'ideology'), which I for one look forward to.

In the two papers specifically on eastern Europe, Glen Bowman explores the applicability of a Lacanian perspective to the ethnic violence in the former Yugoslavia, while Malcolm Chapman examines Polish attitudes to the newly intrusive western capitalism which Poland has been one of the most successful eastern states in coping with. Finally, three papers deal with different aspects of gender in the European

context. Victoria Goddard is concerned to recast the 1960s and 1970s theme of honour and shame in a more contemporary gender-based perspective, while Dolores Comas d'Argemir's also suggests revising this older dichotomy in the light of the influence of government welfare policies on local gender constructions. Oonagh O'Brien examines the ways in which gender informs ethnic identity among French Catalans, showing that women are more important here, especially as they get older.

The editors end their introduction with a plea to anthropologists to take the regional, national and global dimensions as well as the local ones into account in work on Europe. This will entail adopting a proper historical perspective and supplementing traditional fieldwork with other (largely unspecified) methods. The latter two points have always been associated in anthropology: the abandonment of secondary texts and the expedition as basic sources in favour of fieldwork led to a rejection of history in the work of Malinowski, which made anthropology permanently self-conscious about its sister discipline, even after it had begun to take it into account again (though more as construction than fact). Nor has any great progress been made on the question of how the regional, national, global etc. dimensions can properly be studied using anthropological methods, especially given the competition from other disciplines here, including political science, economics, and history itself. The editors of this book eschew any programme and confine themselves to the exploration of these issues. In doing so, however, they not only point to the problems that still have to be overcome but also begin to indicate how they might be.

ROBERT PARKIN

BURKHARD SCHNEPEL, *Twinned Beings: Kings and Effigies in Southern Sudan, East India and Renaissance France*, Göteborg: Institute for Advanced Studies in Social Anthropology 1995. viii, 137 pp., Figures, Maps, Bibliographies. No price given.

This is a book about interregna, the problems of transfer of sovereignty and succession to office, and the use of effigies in ritual symbolizing such transitional periods. The study is comparative, starting with medieval and renaissance England, then going on to discuss, in tandem, the cults of Jagannath in Orissa (India) and of Nyikang among the Shilluk of the Sudan, before returning to Europe with a closing discussion of medieval and renaissance France. The earlier work of the historian Kantorowicz forms the starting-point and provides a theoretical back-drop throughout, as well as being Schnepel's main source for the English case, while another historian, Kantorowicz's pupil R. E. Giesey, is used for France. However, the parts on Jagannath and the Shilluk are based as much on Schnepel's own fieldwork in both areas as on published sources. The chapters, or 'sections', are short and move swiftly through the arguments; the bibliography is divided thematically.

Schnepel shows convincingly first, that while there is a tendency among Western historians to view interregna as both dangerous and inconvenient, other societies may regard them rather as an opportunity to make symbolic statements about the renewal

of the whole society after the demise of the ruler; and secondly, that there is no one model of either interregna or the ways in which they are overcome. This is evident both from the direct comparison of societies and from historical changes, especially in relation to the two European examples. However, one constant theme is the notion of 'twinned beings', i.e. the circumstance that figures denoting sovereignty often have two forms of personhood, one which perishes with the corporeal form, the other enduring as spirit, legal corporation or some image of sovereignty. Thus the spirit of the god Nyikang moves between different bodily kings, who in life are assimilated to him but who inevitably decay (and may be helped to die), whereupon uncertainty reigns until it emerges which body Nyikang will henceforth occupy. Effigies are important in representing Nyikang in the rituals effecting the transition of sovereignty. In Orissa, by contrast, the effigy of the god Jagannath has almost permanent importance, and decay takes the form not of the bodily death of the king—who is but Jagannath's servant—but of the delapidation of what is a wooden structure in a hot climate. None the less, there is again an association between sovereignty and the god, who survives in spiritual form the periodic demise of his corporeal aspect.

This basic theme seems a perfect candidate for Dumont's work on hierarchical opposition as revised for ritual by Serge Tcherkézoff (see *JASO*, Vol. XXV [1994], pp. 133–67, 229–53), since the encompassment of the corporeal aspect by the spiritual ceases with the demise of the latter. In the subsequent ritual, their separation is evident, until they are reunited at the rite's supreme moment. Schnepel's emphasis, however, is on the variations in the ethnography rather than on how they may be represented theoretically. In its succinctness, this short but stimulating and detailed volume is a model of how to present a key ethnographic idea in such a way that it may be taken up by other researchers. It also contains good accounts of the rituals involved, especially in relation to the Shilluk, known since Frazer for both divine kingship and their reputation for ritual regicide. The book is therefore to be recommended as a contribution to the anthropology of kingship and ritual.

ROBERT PARKIN

ADAM KUPER (ed.), *Conceptualizing Society*, London and New York: Routledge (EASA Series) 1992. ix, 152 pp., Indexes. £10.99.

In the current age of post-modernist recursivity in ethnographic writing, this collection of essays offers a welcome and stimulating, if in some ways conventional approach to conceptualizing ourselves and others. The volume celebrates the inauguration of the European Association of Social Anthropologists (EASA) and its first conference held in Portugal in 1990. The six papers, edited and commented upon in the introduction by Adam Kuper, challenge and confront previous representations and applications of the terms 'society', 'culture', 'individuals' and 'relationships'. Kuper outlines the ways in which the jobs of fieldworker and theorist have intertwined and diverged in anthropological history, rather like the strands of a double helix leading us to the

present state of examining not how we make sense of society, but for whom society makes sense. The book is divided into three sections of two essays each focusing on individuals and networks, parts and wholes, and the individual and nature. Each author attends to the failures of outmoded theoretical models and perspectives by addressing the non-conformity of the fieldworker's experiences and conceptual frameworks with those of the actors he or she wishes to portray.

In his opening discussion of 'society', Fredrik Barth laments the tunnel vision which views society as closed and bounded. This ideology, he says, has been constructed by anthropologists to facilitate the incorporation of the piecemeal nature of fieldwork data. Instead, he argues, all societies are open and disordered: the homogeneity of individuals occurs in 'action' and 'event'. Barth deconstructs society to the level of 'behaviour' and 'meaning', which constitute 'events', with a conglomerate of them comprising a system. 'Society' for Barth is necessarily unstable and polyphonic, a cacophony of multiple voices creating the dynamics of the system. Individuals are not puppets to be placed within a pre-determined drama of interaction.

Ulf Hannerz develops this scheme into a globalistic view of networks of experience. He takes Barth's proposition a stage further by suggesting a level of abstraction at which networks may construct a 'perspective of individual's perspectives'. The motives, rationales and intentions behind a person's networking of relationships with others becomes the organizing principle of self. While the idea is commendable, one is led to wonder how the motives influencing each individual's perspectives can be coherently presented as a global ecumene.

The flaws of previous models of society form the basis of Daniel de Coppet's paper on parts and wholes. He asks whether the successions of 'isms' in anthropological theory have blurred the edges of indigenous concepts. He sees the moves through diffusionism, historicism, functionalism, structuralism and symbolism to modernism as creating opacity in the conceptualization of society. This has led to the post-modernist nihilism of dissection and dissolution of the ideology of 'otherness' and the fragmentary nature of the voice in its representation. The way forward, he urges, is that of contextually constructed truths, so that comparison functions at the level of ultimate values. However, he does not clarify whose ultimate values we are comparing. If we compare ultimate values, do we not establish an 'ultimate comparison of ultimate values' (if such a comparison can be conceived of) and thus create a separate value altogether?

In these eternal tangles of conceptualization, Marilyn Strathern's essay offers a glimmer of hope in analysing the uniqueness of the 'person' in contrast with 'personal relations' and kinship models. Strathern uses the non-conformity of Garia kin relations as her model of how a person's identity is both male and female and yet distinct. She deals specifically with the erroneous history of the individual perceived as part of external organizing principles and relations situated within a whole. Like Barth, she recognizes the fallacy of endorsing one socializing principle over another, which alters the view of the whole. In so doing, she concludes that what makes 'a person' does not depend on their personal relationships, so that the correlation between the organizing principles of kinship and society are not necessarily congruent.

The final section of the book questions anthropological precepts that approach nature as a world that is 'out there', beyond the experiences of individuals, to be used

merely as a tool for symbolic analogies. Philippe Descola uses the equivalences of natural and human phenomena to provide the 'principles of the construction of reality'. He discusses the distinctions between totemism and animism to reinforce his premise that the Tukano, Jivaro and Arawak conceive of the world as a closed system where humans, plants and animals live and die in one conceptual space. This bounded order, derived from the idea that it is no longer strategies that are the focus of conceptualization but the means by which those strategies occur, stands in stark contrast to Barth's assertion that 'society' must be disordered. While Descola is concerned with cosmological ordering, Barth's concern is societal. The two perspectives occupy the extremes of a broad spectrum of theoretical possibilities.

The collection is especially worthwhile for the contribution made by the final paper by Maurice Bloch. He gives a lucid and comprehensive account of the problems of the processes of experience, thought, value and action. His concern with the sense and sensitivity of 'the other', and the difficulty of reconciling the concepts of experience, sight and sensation with a language of representation, are inviting in their frankness. In attempting to find a solution to the problem of representation, Bloch feels that the actor's concepts should speak for themselves to the point of blatancy. He does not turn their processes into Descola's 'products of operation', although both see social relations and natural processes as interlinked. In representing this, Bloch allows the conceptualizations of society to originate from 'mental models' that are those of indigenous internalization. We are thus challenged to consider how to put more of the actor and less of the observer into our conceptualizations of how other societies think.

The differing strategies laid out by each author highlight the very immediate and real concerns of past and present theoretical trends. The issues presented are crucial to the continuing development of anthropological thought, which makes this collection one which every social anthropologist ought to read.

FIONA MAGOWAN

GEORGE E. MARCUS (ed.), *Perilous States: Conversations on Culture, Politics, and Nation* (Late Editions 1: Cultural Studies for the End of the Century), Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press 1993. viii, 381 pp., References, Index, Photographs, Figures. £15.25/\$21.75.

Assembling something coherent to say about this collection of essays is a salvage attempt in picking among the refuse of 'post-modern' anthropology. At best these essays offer the reader a series of conversations with individuals about political and cultural aspects of different modern states. The social actors chosen for these essays (along with their authors) seem to be searching for their own sense of *manqué* for meaningful identity in the modern world. At the very least one can expect a series of subjective accounts of different people from Argentina and eastern Europe to South Africa that read more like tape-recorded transcripts. This montage is representative of the current fad among some American anthropologists, the tendency towards the 'post-

modern', with all the stale feelings of uncertainty, crisis and phenomenological abuses of language. To some such a trend might still be appealing. To the rest of those who feel they are too post-modernly inept as to cope with a barrage of fetid exegeses alive with feral bombast, by all means avoid this book.

The premise of *Perilous States* is to disregard anthropological methods altogether. As Marcus states in his introduction, 'this is a first in a series of annual volumes that sends anthropologists and other kinds of scholars back to particular sites...and asks them to operate somewhat outside their usual genres of work. They are asked to trade the scholarly treatise or essay...in a manner more evocative of journalists or correspondents' (p. 1). The format for the book according to the 'Marcus Group' is 'reportage' which gives a voice to 'social actors through imaginative constructions of interviews and conversations' (p. 2). In this way, the contributors would like to make the world and the people in it more immediately accessible, like turning on the television or rather opening a newspaper page (which ethnographic film already provides in a much more vivid and meaningful way). The contributors seem to hope that their approaches will evoke new meaning for the social sciences with this annual series. They want to popularize anthropology using journalistic zeal and repackage it into something it is not with a better look and feel (pp. 3-4). Such thoughts create more of an eerie feeling of 'World Disorder' in the social sciences which likewise have provoked grandiose language more akin to cargo-cult behaviour than empirical objectivity. Their style is 'documentary impulse' and 'worlding impulse' to address the end of their century, their '*fin-de-siècle*' (pp. 4-5). Unfortunately, the reader may expect to be assailed with more of the same after the book's introductory of post-modern promises, such as anomalous interviews, confusing conversations, fragmented thoughts, pathetic jargon, and overall an hope for something better in essay after essay.

There are some overall comments to make about this loose package of essays which may be summed up in a pithy way. First, the book lacks a common theme. There is nothing in these essays which ties them together. The book reads like a Joycean stream of consciousness, moving from one personal opinion to the next without the clear contextual analysis inherent in any social-science discipline.

Secondly, it is difficult to discern what relevance this book has to an understanding of national cultures in general. The text is disordered. The reader is led on a survey of contradictory opinions about culture and politics without historical or social contexts in which to grasp implied realities in varying declarations.

Thirdly, the essays are presented in an inept manner. Throughout the book there is a predominance of chaos in the dialogues and monologues, which altogether lack accompanying objective analysis. The reader is left in a sea of scattered flotsam of cultural, national and political ideas.

Fourthly, the book is written entirely in nonsensical subjectivity. This tendency is a great peril for anthropologists who prefer this genre of writing. Anthropology is based upon objectively derived empirical data of social action and social organization.

Fifthly, most of the people interviewed in these essays have either too narrowly defined political views or are marginal people in their own societies. Specifically to point out this criticism, here is a brief overview of all the essays. Bruce Grant's essay interviews six Russian writers who have very specific political views. Kathryn Milun's paper is centred around three Hungarians—an anthropologist, a film-maker and a punk

rock star. Each of these people have peculiar views about Hungarian political culture and seem more to represent marginal aspects of the society. Fischer and Grigorian's interviews of intellectual politicians evoke narrow points of view about the Armenian nation and culture. Two urban shamans from the Sakha Republic of the former Soviet Union interviewed by Marjorie Balzer tell us little about Sakha provincial life in general. Balzer also fails to explain why both these shamanic leaders are controversial with Sakhan people. Michael Fischer's fragmented interviews with a Polish philosopher thoroughly confuse the reader. There is no sense that anything can be gained from his 'dialogic play' on the romantic notion of the Polish nation obfuscated in muddy philosophical language and abstract dialogues (p. 195). Douglas Holmes's paper 'Illicit Discourse' portrays a French politician of the extreme right in his probe of extremist conservative European politics. Papagaroufali and Georges's essay focuses on an interview with a politically leftist Greek intellectual woman. This woman's views are only representative of the minority feminist position in Greece. Julie Taylor interviews a dissident military officer whose comments provide a limited perspective on Argentina's 'Dirty Wars'. David Coplan chooses to record conversations with a radical and controversial South African musician.

Lastly, the experiment of the contributors to present ethnographic material in a journalistic manner has failed. It is uncertain how such techniques can be considered pioneering when their use is inhibiting and their presentation choppy. The effect is altogether disconcerting to those more accustomed to an intellectual portrayal of similar issues.

In general, this mosaic of essays tells us more about the contributors than the subjects interviewed for this volume. What these pieces share is a need to shock the social-science reader rather than truly contribute anything of significance to an understanding of social upheaval in the modern world. The experimentation of using journalism and correspondence techniques is cloaked by an inability to write about emerging civil societies, democratic struggles, ethnic violence and market economic systems in a lucid fashion. Those who are willing to scavenge for new ideas about culture and politics among the nebulous conversations of the interlocutors in this volume might be better served in a café.

JOHN P. LINSTROTH

M. HITCHCOCK, V. T. KING and M. J. G. PARNWELL (eds.), *Tourism in South-East Asia*, London: Routledge 1993. ix, 373 pp., Index, Figures, Tables. No price given.

There is a lot of information in this book. It has something for sociologists, geographers, economists, conservationists, students of politics, students of tourism and, yes, social anthropologists. In fact, it stands as an example of the fundamental difficulty of studying tourism: how to classify the information? Nevertheless, the problem is solved by dividing (but not explicitly) the chapters into subject areas, which this reader would define as cultural theory, local experience, economics, history and

environmental issues. This is all fruitful territory for the anthropologist, and those interested in South-East Asia will find this book—which grew out of the AGM of the ASEASUK for 1991—a worthwhile and provocative read, while those interested in the anthropology of tourism will benefit from its breadth of study and depth of detail.

More specifically, the contributors deal with issues ranging from the problem of tourism fieldwork (Wilson) and the sociology of development (Wood), to the phenomenology of prostitution (Cohen) and early Borneo travellers (Sanders). This illustration cannot do justice to the diversity of topics covered, all of which are intimately tied in with tourism and satisfy the editors' intention to present different disciplinary perspectives on the characterization and effects of tourism development in various countries.

In the opening section Wilson reviews the theoretical development of tourism within anthropology, drawing attention to the 'ethnographic time-traps' and citing the study by Greenwood on Fuentarrabia, claiming that his conclusions have been refuted by more recent fieldwork. This, of course, is wholly relevant to all anthropological fieldwork and neatly encapsulates the problem of change. Wood sees culture as the 'missing concept in the sociology of development' and asks whether tourism can be separated from a culture, highlighting development as a form of discourse, whereas Picard argues that culture has been transformed by tourism into Bali's main economic resource.

But we must not forget that culture is not homogeneous. King reminds us that the interrelations between culture and tourism are complex, and he laments the lack of studies on the 'cultural effects of tourism'. Selwyn can see cultural effects in the view from the tourist brochures, which he argues sell 'space in a world of Peter Pans', pointing to an individualistic new world order. Unfortunately his usage of post-structuralism and post-modernism seem to be interchangeable and mars this otherwise enlightening paper. Dreams are also packaged in Java in the performance rituals, but Hughes-Freeland sees tourism as 'one aspect of cultural development' and views tradition as a 'description of ideas' rather than historical continuities. She also observes that tourism can be a scapegoat for the state's problems.

Stepping beyond the dancing girls, Cohen gives an account of prostitutes who deal with Western tourists and draws attention to their view of this trade as one involving luck, risk and rewards, in which the highest prize is leaving the game with a man. He argues that the women hold simultaneously Western and traditional Thai attitudes towards their clients and subsequently draws attention to cultural divides, but in doing so he risks becoming too functionalist in his conceptualization of individual world-views.

Tourism can become a political tool as well as an economic one, and Richter sees a critical future for tourism policy in which the policy-makers should be more accountable. The micro-economic complexities of this business are made clear by Sinclair and Vokes in their examination of topics such as supply, demand and price determination. This paper is complemented by one taking a macro-view, in which Walton looks at economic development in ASEAN, drawing attention to the industry as an amalgamation of separate industries and its broad costs and benefits. Parnwell, on rural handicrafts, brings the economic jargon into the grassroots perspective, highlighting the huge amounts of money being spent on cottage-industry products. He

also analyses the relationship of tourist art to so-called 'real' art and suggests that it may be supportive of traditional craftsmen (another form of cultural involution).

Just as art may be seen as a product of historical circumstances, Stockwell, in a study of early tourism in Malaya, sees tourism as a product rather than a cause of the growth in the travel industry during the colonial period. It is refreshing to see tourism portrayed as an effect rather than a cause: Sanders, continuing the historical theme, looks at earlier travellers in Borneo and demonstrates the power of the image as created by the mass media, an image manipulated today by local people.

The natural environment has played a large but predominantly silent part in many of the papers mentioned so far, but the final four contributors focus specifically upon environmental issues. Parnwell, in his study of Thailand, believes that tourism is a form of resource exploitation and that development must be in tune with the needs of the environment. Although sympathetic to environmental issues, Hitchcock draws attention to the need to include local people in resource management, offering the example of the island of Komodo and its dragon population as a successful animal reserve which has human population problems. Cochrane points out that attitudes of Indonesians and Malaysians towards the 'forest' are different from current Western ones, drawing attention to the benefits of national parks and the need to promote and manage them. This observation on indigenous views indirectly leads to the final chapter, in which Din advocates the inclusion of local inhabitants in decision-making: 'A sustainable mode of tourism development is one which considers both the ecological and the social carrying capacity of the destination area.' This rightly draws attention to the importance of social considerations when dealing with the environment and tourism, fittingly ending a collection of papers which amply demonstrate the need to share discoveries and ideas across the various academic disciplines interested in tourism.

DON MACLEOD

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 ISSN UK 0044-8370

Typeset in Times Roman at
 Oxford University Computing Service

Printed in Great Britain by
 Antony Rowe Ltd., Chippenham, Wiltshire

FAMILY WAQF IN ZANZIBAR

PETER LIENHARDT

Edited with an Introduction by Ahmed Al-Shahi

Editor's Introduction

WHEN Peter Lienhardt died in 1986 he left a number of papers unpublished. As the executor of his literary estate I have prepared some of these for publication, a number of them for the pages of this Journal (for details, see the bibliography of his works following this article).

The present article comprises the text of a paper read by Lienhardt at a conference held at the East African Institute of Social Research (EAISR) at Makerere College, Kampala (Uganda) in June 1958. The author had been appointed to a Senior Research Fellowship at the EAISR in 1957 and from there he had carried out fieldwork among the Swahili peoples of the East African Coast. Part of this time he spent in the Sultanate of Zanzibar (comprising the islands of Zanzibar itself and Pemba). At the time, the Sultanate was a British Protectorate, which status it retained until 1964 when it united with Tanganyika (independent since 1961) to become the United Republic of Tanzania. The material on which the paper is based forms part of a more detailed study of *waqf* that remained incomplete at the time of the author's death in 1986.

Stencilled copies of the paper, along with others given at the conference, were distributed by the EAISR to subscribers. In Oxford, for example, copies may be found in the Tylor Library of the Institute of Social and Cultural Anthropology and at Rhodes House Library. The paper is thus not unknown; indeed, it has been listed in at least one bibliography (see Norman Robert Bennett, *The Arab State of*

Zanzibar: A Bibliography, Boston, MA: G. K. Hall 1984, p. 150 (no. 1809)). Even so, it is not widely available in its stencilled form and it has thus been decided to publish it here for the first time. Only minor changes have been made to the text, mostly comprising corrections of typographical errors and amendments to the punctuation. (Peter Lienhardt also read a paper, entitled 'Social Organisation and Ritual in Kilwa', at the EASIR conference at Paganu in May 1959. This paper was not among those distributed in stencilled form and no copy of it seems to have survived.)

Lienhardt uses a number of Arabic and Swahili words in his text. Given that the paper was prepared for a conference of East African specialists in East Africa, he probably did not feel it necessary to gloss them. It may, however, be useful if I briefly gloss them here. The Swahili word *waqf* comes from the Arabic *waqafa*, meaning 'to grant, create, institute; to make over, to bequeath'. Shariah is the canon law of Islam which governs the lives of Muslims. It consists of the prescriptions stated in the Koran, the traditions of the Prophet (or Hadith), the traditions of his successors and the rulings of Muslim jurists which, over the centuries, came to be incorporated into the shariah. *Raqabah* is an Arabic word meaning 'to observe, to watch, to regard attentively, to guard, to control, to supervise, to keep an eye on'. *Shamba* is the Swahili word for a farm. A *qadi* is a Muslim judge who is versed in the shariah. Shafi'i is one of the schools of law in Islam. The title 'imam' denotes a leader of the prayers, the founder of an orthodox school and, according to the Shi'ites, a descendant of Ali, the Prophet's cousin and son-in-law, who is regarded as the supreme ruler of the Muslim community.

AHMED AL-SHAHI

FAMILY WAQF IN ZANZIBAR

Waqf is well-known as an institution of the shariah law which allows for the dedication of property in support of religious and charitable objects, such as the upkeep of mosques and the payment of their officers, the provision of graveyards and the feeding of the poor. *Waqf* is a form of trust, and indeed the only kind of long-term trust which the shariah permits. It differs conceptually from trust in the English sense of the word in that it partakes by its very nature in good works. Nevertheless, *waqf* includes such trusts as would be considered in English society to be purely secular, particularly those *waqfs* which are made for the benefit of the dedicator's descendants—they might seem to correspond more to the exercise of mortmain than to the practice of charity.

Shariah lawyers hold the institution of *waqf* to be grounded in a tradition of the Prophet Muhammad in which he is reported to have said: 'Death sets a term to all the works of man but three: continuing charity, learning in which profit is

found, and a good son who prays for him.' *Waqf* is identified with the expression 'continuing charity' (*sadaqah jariyah*) in this tradition, since it is considered to be a succession of good works: it is not so much in the act of dedication as in the results of that act, the continuing distribution of the income of the *waqf*, that the act of charity is to be found. So long as the income or benefits continue to be enjoyed, religious merit continues to accrue to the dedicator, since it is these, and not the property which is made *waqf*, which are given. Here the benefits of the *waqf*, which are called *manfa'ah*, are distinguished from the corpus of the property made *waqf*, *raqabah*. The latter is not thought of as being given, but rather, as the word *waqf* itself expresses, it is 'detained'. By virtue of this detention, *waqf* property is reserved from the ordinary incidents of ownership such as sale, gift and inheritance so that it may be perpetually and inalienably tied to the good purposes named by the dedicator at the time of dedication.

Herein lies another distinguishing feature of *waqf*: the thing made *waqf*, be it a house, a *shamba* or a book, is detained as a specific object, not as an object representing a certain value in money—money, indeed, is one of the things which cannot be made *waqf*. *Waqf* property is not, therefore, interchangeable with other property of equal value. By virtue of its detention, it is removed from considerations of equivalence. Hence, for example, a house dedicated to the support of a mosque cannot be sold to purchase a more convenient or advantageous property for the mosque, any more than the mosque itself can be sold. Both are detained in the same way.¹

As the result of a series of acts of legislation beginning in 1905, the greater part of *waqf* property in the Zanzibar Protectorate is now vested in the Zanzibar *Waqf* Commissioners, though considerable properties remain in the hands of private trustees. Some idea of the proportionate value of *waqf* property in the Protectorate can be gathered from the *Waqf* Commissioners' receipts in recent years. In round figures, the income from *waqfs* administered by the Commissioners in the islands of Zanzibar and Pemba together was, in 1957, £45,000; in 1956, £29,000; and, in 1955, £36,000. These figures may be compared with the estimated value to producers of the Protectorate's clove crop, its main source of income, which has varied since 1950 between a little over £2 million and almost £6 million per annum. *Waqf* property, therefore, represents only a minor detail in the economic life of the Protectorate. Its importance is not increasing at any great speed: the approximate value of property newly dedicated as *waqf* in 1956, for example, was £24,500. Within these *waqfs*, the properties dedicated for the benefit of descendants are much more valuable than those supporting mosques, which form the other main category of dedications. Taking Zanzibar island alone, *waqfs*

1. There are certain circumstances in which *waqf* property can be sold, particularly when the property ceases to produce benefits, but only under the most stringent conditions. In Zanzibar, legislation modifying the shariah has increased the range of circumstances in which sale can be allowed.

for the benefit of descendants produced roughly £19,000 in 1957, as against less than £3,000 for the support of mosques. But though only a small part of the total economy, such incomes as *waqfs* provide cannot be dismissed as negligible, particularly when they are thought of in relation to personal incomes and the low standard of living of owners of small properties and of the poor. A tradition of the Prophet in justification of family *waqf* is to the effect that it is good for a man to make charitable provision for his descendants to prevent them falling into want. This is generally said in Zanzibar to be the motive of those who make some or all of their property *waqf* for their descendants.

From the point of view of an outside observer, there is a clear logical difference between a *waqf* made in support of a mosque and one made in support of descendants. In the former case, the mosque receives an income which it would not receive otherwise; in the latter, the descendants receive, in the first generation at least, the income of a property which they could otherwise expect to inherit absolutely. In a sense, therefore, a man who makes a *waqf* to benefit his children and their descendants is not giving his children anything so much as depriving them of the full rights of ownership as his inheritors. In normal circumstances, a man's descendants become at his death his successors. In the case of *waqf* they become for ever his pensioners.

In Zanzibar, the common explanation given as to why people make their property *waqf* for their descendants, instead of letting it be inherited in the normal way, is that it is to prevent them from living beyond their income and wasting the estate—in extravagance and often in enjoyments forbidden by religion. This motive shows clearly in many of the deeds of dedication. The following is an example:

N. hereby dedicates as *waqf* his two *shambas* at A [the position and boundaries of the property are described]. They are to be *waqf* for the benefit of his children, male and female, and of his grandson X; and the share of the male among them is to be equal to the share of two females. He makes the condition that so long as he lives the income of the *waqf* shall be divided into ten equal parts, five of which shall be paid to the dedicator himself and the remainder, that is five parts, shall be divided amongst his children and aforementioned grandson, the share of a male being equal to the share of two females. After the death of the dedicator, the portion which he has reserved to himself is to devolve upon his children and his aforementioned grandson, the share of the male being equal to the share of two females. When God decrees that any of the first rank of beneficiaries, male or female, shall die, if he has children his share in the *waqf* shall devolve upon his children, and so the division shall continue from generation to generation amongst the descendants of the dedicator, with the exception of those descended from him through women. When any of his descendants dies without issue, his share shall devolve upon the other existing descendants, for ever and in perpetuity. After all these beneficiaries become extinct, the *waqf* is to devolve upon the dedicator's siblings, namely O, P and Q and their descendants male and female, together with the dedicator's descendants through females, until they become extinct. After that,

it is to devolve upon his cognatic kin, and at their extinction the *waqf* is to devolve upon the poor and needy of the dedicator's sect, the Ibadis. This *waqf* is lasting and perpetual and effective as from this moment. Beneficiaries of the *waqf* who wish to enjoy residence on the *waqf* property are free to do so. The beneficiaries are to enjoy the income of the *waqf* after such expenses as are necessary for cultivation and the planting of trees have been covered. Any of them who wishes to live on the *waqf* property is free to build there. Creditors of the beneficiaries are to have no claim on the income or the corpus of the *waqf*, since it is made *waqf* in order to support them and provide them with a livelihood and is not to be spent except upon that object. The beneficiaries are not to sell the crops in advance before the harvest and they are not to lease out the *waqf* property for periods of years in order to get the benefit in advance and avoid having it cut off. This *waqf* is not to be exchanged or altered or transferred until God inherits the earth and those upon it....

Some of the later clauses of the foregoing dedication reflect particular circumstances of agriculture in Zanzibar which tend towards producing extravagance and debt. The economy of the Protectorate depends almost entirely upon the clove industry, and clove trees have the disadvantage of providing highly irregular crops from year to year. Total clove crops for the Protectorate in recent years have been as follows: 1950-1: 19,381 tons; 1951-2: 5,284 tons; 1952-3: 2,715 tons; 1953-4: 20,019 tons; 1954-5: 8,545 tons; 1955-6: 13,832 tons. As these figures suggest, fluctuations in the size of the crop are both extreme and unforeseeable. The crops follow no cycle of sufficient regularity to enable a *shamba* owner to calculate even roughly what his income is likely to be for two or three years ahead. The alternatives before him, therefore, are either to keep enough cash in hand to tide him over bad years, which may come one after another, or else to trust to luck and risk falling into debt. Many spend money extravagantly during the good clove years and find themselves obliged to borrow later. It is also quite common for *shamba* owners to find themselves in such need of money that they are ready to sell part or all of the year's crop at two-thirds of its normal value in order to have the money six months in advance. There now exists legislation, the object of which is to limit the extent to which agricultural property can pass out of local hands through failure to redeem mortgages.

Declines of fortune over a period of a generation or two are a common feature of local life, giving rise to a rueful proverb to the effect that ill-gotten wealth does not survive the third generation. It is remarked that often when there has been a tradition of inter-marriage between families one of which is much wealthier than the other, the roles of inferior and superior are found after a time to have been reversed. One of the main causes for spectacular changes of fortune is the simple one of business ability; even in the case of a man who is a landowner and not a merchant, much depends on his skill in judging the state of the market for selling his produce and in judging when to buy land and when to sell. There are many cases where the sons of successful fathers have been more ambitious than their abilities warranted and have ruined themselves by grandiose schemes and wild

speculations. In other cases, impoverishment can rightly be attributed to extravagant living. It is not unnatural that much should be blamed on drunkenness in a country where the drinking of alcohol is legal but religion forbids it absolutely. Many of the Arabs of Zanzibar are first- or second-generation immigrants from the interior of Oman, where religious law is said to be strictly administered and drinking and smoking are both serious punishable offences. It tends to be more readily assumed in Zanzibar than in Christian and agnostic countries that divine rewards and punishments may be expected in this life as well as in the next.

These facts tend to conceal one of the basic dynamic elements in the structure of Muslim society: the redistribution of wealth in the society through the normal functioning of the law of inheritance. One of the characteristics of a *waqf* is that it is not inherited. Ordinary property, on the other hand, must be inherited in the divisions laid down by the law, the basic principle, described in the Koran itself, being that the share of the male is to be equal to the share of two females. The details of shariah inheritance law are extremely complicated, but it suffices to say here that in normal circumstances most of a parent's estate is inherited by his children, all the sons receiving equal shares and all the daughters receiving half shares. There is no preferential system, such as that of primogeniture, whereby one son is regarded as the superior of the rest and can succeed to his father's whole estate and social position to the virtual exclusion of his brothers and sisters—those in Zanzibar who have heard that such a system applies in England regard it as almost unbelievably unjust. In accordance with the law of inheritance in Zanzibar therefore, the more sons a man has the more his estate is divided up at his death.

The social result of this system of inheritance is that the father's death tends to set in motion a process whereby the sons decline in social status, which is closely connected with wealth. The wealth which was concentrated in the hands of the father is divided, and each son, instead of deriving his status from his father, must now support his own status himself out of his share of the estate. He may well find that it costs him more than he can rightly afford, with the result that he actually accelerates the process of decline by spending his capital.

This is a process of some subtlety, since it involves a conflict of values. On the one hand, a great deal of importance is attached to wealth, the power to give, support and entertain and also to enjoy a life of comfort. The status of a family is closely related to the wealth of its richer members. On the other hand, there is a strong desire to have numerous children. They are believed both to bring religious rewards and to raise the status of the family. An Arabic proverb says, 'Everything that is scarce is highly valued except men', which is explained to mean that a man is treated with greater esteem if he is a member of a numerous family, a great tribe or a powerful nation. The relics of tribal political structure are still in evidence.

That these values are in conflict is not usually perceived. Also, the point at which a real change of status in the position of the numerous sons of a rich father logically begins is concealed by the customs relating to seniority and juniority in

the family. Sons are identified with their father, but during his lifetime they efface themselves. It is he who does the family entertaining, in which he represents the sons as well as himself. If his sons are with him in company, they take an inferior position not only relative to their father but also to his guests—they are reticent in speaking except when spoken to, they sit in the lower places and often they do such things as pouring coffee, holding water for washing the hands and other slightly servile tasks. The extremes to which the rules of status apply are illustrated by a story—told as being true—of a Zanzibari learned man who is now dead who had a son equally learned. Religious learning and holiness are associated with the ability to perform wonders. On one occasion the father and son were present together when unexpected guests arrived and there was a shortage of food for entertaining them. The son miraculously produced food in covered dishes which had been empty. Instead of being proud of his son, the father was highly displeased, regarding it as an impertinence that the son should do in his presence what he could equally well do himself if he chose. At their father's death, therefore, his sons acquire what is in a sense an increase of status, which helps to conceal a decline following from the causes which I have described.

A further way in which the law of inheritance leads to the redistribution of wealth follows from the inheritances accorded to women. The family, considered as a group which maintains continuity and coherence through a number of generations, is conceived of in agnatic terms. The children of daughters are the children of the families into which the daughters have married. In inheritance, a daughter receives only half of a son's share but, regarded from the point of view of alienation of property from an agnatic line, over a number of generations the effect of daughters' inheritance is of course cumulative. In generational terms of time, alienation is quite rapid. Taking a hypothetical case where only sons and daughters inherit and they are of equal numbers at each generation of inheritance: at the first stage of inheritance the daughters will alienate one third of the property from the agnatic line and at the second stage of inheritance the second generation of daughters will alienate an additional two-ninths of the original property. Hence, already in two stages of inheritance, five-ninths of the property have been alienated. After the original property has been divided for a third time, the agnatic line is left with only eight twenty-sevenths of the original estate. At the same time, of course, the family is receiving property through the women who marry into it, so that the function of women's inheritances can be seen to be the circulation and redistribution of wealth. In these circumstances, it is unlikely that the substantial part of any particular property should retain its connection with any particular line of agnates for more than three generations. There can be no strong traditional connection of a particular property with a particular family.

If we return now to the *waqf* dedication quoted earlier in this paper, we may observe a contrast between the implication of *waqf* and that of ordinary inheritance. In the first place, the corpus of the property has been 'detained', so that it passes out of normal ownership. There is a difference of opinion between the various schools of Islam as to who can be said to own the corpus in these circum-

stances. Since almost all the powers which normally go with ownership are removed by the 'detention' of the property as *waqfs*, these differences are largely academic. Some say that the property is owned—under restrictions—by the dedicator, some that it is owned—under restriction—by the beneficiaries, and others that it falls under the implied ownership of God. Setting aside questions of ownership, we may observe that the property is identified with an act of will on the part of the dedicator, to the exclusion of all other wills, for ever.

Providing that the law is strictly observed, therefore, the dedicator of a *waqf* enjoys a perpetual social survival. He is able to stipulate how the benefits are to be divided for ever, and even how they are to be enjoyed. This explains why the author of the foregoing dedication goes to the lengths of including a clause to enable any beneficiary who wishes to do so to live on the *waqf* property. One dedicator in Zanzibar was so lacking in foresight as to make his house *waqf* and to add to the normal and necessary conditions against alienation by sale, gift or inheritance, a prohibition against renting the house. Judging from conversation, it appears to be quite a common motive among Zanzibaris for a man to make his house *waqf* for his descendants with the wish that some of them should live in it and thus retain a tangible connection with him after his death. But the strict prohibition against renting in the case of the house in question prevented even one of the beneficiaries renting it from the rest, so that when the family grew too big for all of them to live in the house together a problem arose which was incapable of reasonable legal solution. One *qadi* suggested that there remained a legal way in which the beneficiaries could, in accordance with the terms of the dedication, derive equal benefit from the house, which was for them to occupy it by turns for a year at a time each—an arrangement which he admitted to be more ingenious than convenient.

The social survival which the dedicator of a *waqf* enjoys is sometimes used by him in order to hand on to his descendants the role he holds in society, as in the following dedication of a book:

This book passed [from the hands of its former owner] into the possession of the poor-before-God X, and he hereby makes it *waqf* for his children and his agnatic descendants through them; a *waqf* not to be sold or loaned or given or inherited; and he reserves to himself the custody of the *waqf* during his lifetime, after which its custodian is to be the most religious of his male children and of the [subsequent] beneficiaries, and God is the best witness...[signed and dated].

The author of this dedication was a Shafi'i *qadi* and he made all his religious books *waqf* in the same way. The office of *qadi* tends to run in families, and by making his library *waqf* in this way the *qadi* tries to assure that it will remain intact for the use of any of his sons and descendants who may wish to follow in his footsteps. It will be noted, however, that the dedicator does not make the book *waqf* for the benefit of the most religious of his sons to the exclusion of the others. He seeks to achieve his object in another way, by making the book *waqf* for all

his children and agnatic descendants but reserving the custody of the book to the most religious of them.

The alternative method, that of selective dedication, would not be illegal according to the Shafi'i commentators, but there is an important reason why the other method has been chosen to accomplish the same purpose. By making the dedication as he has done, the *qadi* technically avoids favouring one of his children at the expense of the others, which would be an act strongly disapproved of in religion.

Here we reach a point at which the underlying principle of charity inherent in the concept of *waqf* exercises a telling influence upon the institution as it is actually practised. This influence emanates more from the popular conception of what is right and proper than from the works of the legal commentators. The latter mention many subtleties and legal devices, but the lines of argument which they adopt are naturally more sophisticated than those which occur to the ordinary makers of *waqfs*, or often to ordinary *qadis* when a *waqf* dispute comes before them for judgement. Even the validity of the dedication quoted at length earlier in this paper was questioned on the grounds that the dedicator had included one of his grandchildren in the first rank of beneficiaries together with his children but left the other grandchildren without any share in the *waqf* until the beneficiaries of the first rank died. In another *waqf* case, a woman included her half-brother and half-sister among the beneficiaries of her *waqf* but excluded her full brother. It was eventually ruled by the High Court of Zanzibar that the terms of the dedication were valid, and there can be very little doubt that the ruling was correct. Nevertheless, before the dispute reached the High Court, *qadis* in Zanzibar had given their opinion that in spite of the explicit terms of the dedication the benefits of the *waqf* should be enjoyed by the full brother, and the half-brother and half-sister excluded on the grounds that the full brother was the closest inheritor of the dedication. They said:

It is established that this dedicatrix has committed an act which is irreligious, contrary to what God and His Prophet have commanded, and contrary to what God has required his worshippers to do: namely that they should not commit acts contrary to divine equity, opposed, that is, to the equity of the shariah. This matter is made clear by the learned 'Abdullah bin Humaid as-Salimi on page 85 of *Kitab al-Jami' as-Sahih* in his discussion of the rejection of innovations and heresy on the part of imams and others. This book has spoken clearly enough on the matter to relieve anyone of doubt and to satisfy the inquirer that in making this *waqf* the dedicatrix has performed an act unacceptable in the shariah by abandoning her full brother and failing to allot to him any part of the *waqf* whilst granting benefit to others who are more remotely related to her. This, as we have stated, shows that the transaction is contrary to the dictates of the shariah. It should, therefore, be rectified, that is, we should let the *waqf* be enjoyed by the dedicator's full brother so long as he lives and if he dies without issue the *waqf* should revert to the half-brother and half-sister in the manner stated in the *waqf* deed.

The authority referred to says only that conditions which are opposed to the shariah are void—a rule of which one of the usual examples is that of making a condition that the beneficiary should not become a Muslim and another that he should remain celibate. The argument of the *qadis* in the foregoing passage is far removed from the sophistication of some legal authorities such as the Shafi'i lawyer who argues that a man may validly, in his lifetime though not by will, make *waqf* to benefit his sons and exclude his daughters. To make such a dedication is much more acutely against general shariah principles than the terms of the dedication in question, but it is argued, firstly, that it is not proved that the desire to exclude the daughters is necessarily and invariably sinful since it is usually allowed in the making of gifts, and secondly that even if sinful the sin is not material to the *waqf*, just as the purchase of grapes for making wine is a valid act of purchase although the making of wine is illegal (Saiyid Al-Bakri 1307 AH: III, 161).

The case above-mentioned in which a full brother was excluded is the only case I have come across in some hundreds of Zanzibar *waqf* dedications in which the powers legally accorded to the dedicator have clearly been taken advantage of in order to pervert the normal law of inheritance. It seems more likely than not that in the *qadis'* courts it would have been void. The idea of driving a coach and horses through the shariah law is not common in Zanzibar, and efforts of that kind might well meet with failure when assessed by *qadis* who take no delight in legalisms. Further, the maker of a *waqf* believes himself to be performing an act which brings him religious merit: a different matter from devices which lie within the margins of secular legality.

As it happens, *waqf*, like the making of wills, is believed to have been practised by the early Muslims before the revelation of the laws of inheritance. *Waqf*-making and will-making are seen by local commentators as having been the earliest ways in Islam of giving to women the rights which the pagan Arabs of the Days of Ignorance denied them. According to traditional Muslim belief, the society of the pagan Arabs before Islam was one in which women were of no account, female infanticide was practised and agnatic descent was stressed to the exclusion of all other principles. Islam was far from helping or being helped by tribalism of this sort: the tribal leaders of Mecca were the earliest opponents of the new revelation. It is significant that when the revelation of the laws of inheritance occurred it was of the kind and with the implications which I have mentioned earlier, especially with regard to the function of female inheritors in procuring the circulation of property, at a time when the Muslim armies were beginning to spread out into the conquered agricultural territories and individuals were beginning to acquire great holdings of land as the spoils of war.

In the present practice of *waqf*, this early history still has its influence. It is believed to be more charitable to give to one's kin through female links than to one's agnates. It is no doubt with this in mind that many dedicators have chosen to have the benefits of the *waqf* divided equally among all their descendants, making no difference between women (and descendants through women) and

agnates. It will immediately be obvious that over a long period this sort of dedication is highly impractical, since unless the descendants become extinct in their early stages they will tend to increase by something approximating to a geometrical progression. Such a case is one *waqf* in Pemba, probably not more than a hundred years old, where the number of beneficiaries now approaches a thousand. Each beneficiary at present receives about ten shillings every ten years—scarcely enough, in the words of the tradition, ‘to prevent their falling into want’.

The charitable principle encourages the widening of the range of beneficiaries to its maximum, so that it includes descendants of all kinds. This is by no means obligatory, but even if the range is narrowed, as it often is, to exclude other than agnatic descendants, the results can be, for practical purposes, much the same. Purely agnatic descendants tend either to die out or to grow into large numbers to a point where the *waqf* benefits are dispersed among too many to provide a minimal livelihood, let alone a prosperous estate, for any single beneficiary. What religion discourages, or even forbids, is the selection of an arbitrary line of beneficiaries to enjoy the *waqf* singly. Arab society, in fact, provides no institution at all similar to the English noble family, the holder of entails and hereditary lands, in which a senior line can perpetuate itself in an attachment to property by the rejection of juniors at each generation. In such a family, the senior line is identified with the ancestor and with the ancestral property. In the case of the Arab family, on the other hand, the ancestor is represented by all his agnatic descendants inclusively. If he makes a *waqf*, he may formally perpetuate his own connection with a property and formally retain the property intact, but there is no social group enjoying sufficient continuity to have the property vested in it.

This often shows in a *waqf* in its early stages—even the children of the dedication often have difficulty in managing the *waqf* for themselves. Either they treat it as the property of every one, each taking what he can get, or else they make an informal division and try to treat the property as a personal possession rather than as a communal trust. In the past it seems quite frequently to have happened that *waqfs* reverted to the status of private property through quite illegal transactions.

At the later stages, it is scarcely avoidable that this should happen. In spite of the religious background, a *waqf* on descendants tends to be regarded as the concern of the descendants rather than the rest of the society. The legal commentators imply that these descendants can continue to remain a group for as long as they exist, but as the generations grow the group divides and subdivides. There is no senior line of the family to monopolise the family succession, the ancestors and the lands, rejecting its juniors in the process. Rather does the Arab family divide by a mutual exclusion of parts, implying, of course, if not the rejection at least a change in the status of the ancestor from whom the parts branched out. Either he is forgotten or he is remembered only as a link in a chain of ancestry going backwards through time—he validates certain social claims but he no longer unites social groups.

Waqf law disregards this dynamic social process. The group is counted a logical whole, since it can logically be defined relative to an ancestor and to the

property upon which he has imprinted his will. In the most common type of dedication, which says '*waqf* upon only agnatic [or cognatic] descendants, generation by generation', the succession to benefits remains exclusively for each generation until every member dies out and the benefits pass to the next, so that after some generations from the dedicator members of a later rank of beneficiaries will succeed from the last surviving member of the preceding generation with whom most of them have only a remote connection in kinship. By implication, *waqf* denies the need for any closer relationship between the beneficiaries than that to the dedicator. It is as though he were perpetually present, himself the senior line—but of course he is not. Closer interests, private or small family gain, assert themselves. The *waqf* is improperly handled and treated as private property, since the institution itself as existing in the law is not strong enough to stand against the other institutions of the society.

After a length of time in which the dedicator survives his death as a distinct social person, as an owner of property and a person in whom descendants are united, he then passes away into the anonymous dead—a generalized social presence corresponding in a way to the living poor or Muslims in general, to whose benefit, as we have seen, some *waqfs* are made and others are made to revert.

It is ironical that one of the purposes for which a *waqf* cannot be made is the maintenance of ordinary graves because, as the commentators say: 'the dead are passing into dissolution and the repairing of their tombs is not appropriate to them, though we should except the repairing of the tombs of prophets, learned men and saints.'

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**PETER LIENHARDT 1928–1986:
BIOGRAPHICAL NOTES AND BIBLIOGRAPHY**

AHMED AL-SHAHI

Introduction

NEITHER Peter Lienhardt nor his brother Godfrey kept systematic records of their publications or of their academic activities. While they did give copies of some of their publications to the Tylor Library at the Institute of Social and Cultural Anthropology, Oxford, where they both taught, they failed to provide other information for the records, so that until now the Institute has had only very brief, though useful, biographical notes. Moreover, though they kept copies of their books and offprints of some of their articles, it has required much detective work to track down the rest of their publications. For example, as executor of both their literary estates, since their deaths I have frequently found among their papers undated typescripts of papers and book reviews that give no clue as to where—or, indeed, whether—they were published.

It is widely appreciated that Peter Lienhardt was a fine and sensitive field-worker. His published writings, though modest in volume, display a profound understanding of the culture and institutions of the various Muslim and Arab communities he studied. This understanding is evident in his essays and articles, but may also be seen in his many book reviews. Like all his writings, these were meticulously drafted and redrafted until he found their form and content satisfactory. Given the intrinsic interest of these reviews, I have tried to track down all of them but recognize that there may be some I have missed. For example, it has not been possible to discover if Peter reviewed for the *Times Literary Supple-*

ment before the introduction of signed reviews in 1974. I quite expect, therefore, that additional material may come to light and will be pleased to receive (via the editors of *JASO*) corrections and additions to the information published here.¹

Biographical Notes

Peter Arnold Lienhardt was born on 12 March 1928 in Bradford, Yorkshire, to a Swiss father and a British mother. He was educated at Eastborough Council School, Dewsbury (1933–38) and Batley Grammar School, Batley, West Yorkshire (1938–46). He took part in athletics and in school plays and became a proficient cadet in the Air Training Corps. He was senior house captain and prefect and served on the library committee and as treasurer of the music society. He was also editor of the school magazine. In 1946 he gained his Higher School Certificate with distinction in Principal English and French. In 1946 he was awarded a Dewsbury Major Scholarship and Open Scholarship in English to Downing College, Cambridge. In 1948 he passed the English Tripos, Part I, Class I. In 1949 he passed the Oriental Languages Tripos, Part I in Arabic and Persian, Class II Division I. He was also awarded his MA in 1949.

From 1950 to 1952 he carried out his military service with the RAF. Most of this service was spent in a civilian department of the Foreign Office reading and translating Arabic and Persian texts. In 1952 he was awarded a Treasury Junior Studentship in Foreign Languages and Cultures and was admitted in October to Lincoln College, Oxford. In 1953 he was awarded a three-year Treasury Senior Studentship (later extended) which enabled him to carry out fieldwork in the shaikhdoms of the Trucial Coast, Kuwait, and Bahrain. In 1957 he was appointed to a Senior Research Fellowship in Anthropology at the East African Institute for

1. My original intention was to publish these combined biographical notes and bibliography together with those for Peter Lienhardt's brother Godfrey. For editorial reasons, however, it was decided to publish them separately. The biographical notes and bibliography for Godfrey Lienhardt will now appear in a later issue of *JASO*, where a revised version of this text will also appear. I should like to thank the following for their help in compiling the information presented here: Mr Jeremy Coote (Assistant Curator, Pitt Rivers Museum, University of Oxford), Mrs Isabella Birkin (Administrative Secretary, Institute of Social and Cultural Anthropology, Oxford), Mr Mike Morris (Tylor Librarian, Institute of Social and Cultural Anthropology, Oxford), Mr C. S. Parker (headmaster, Batley Grammar School, Batley, West Yorkshire), Mr Leslie Spurr (former master at Batley Grammar School, Batley, West Yorkshire), Dr Philip Howell (Archivist, Downing College, Cambridge), Anne Macdonald (College Secretary, Exeter College, Oxford), Dr Shirley Ardener (Queen Elizabeth House, Oxford) and Dr Derek Hopwood (St Antony's College, Oxford). I should also like to thank Margaret Tulip for her help in preparing the material for publication.

Social Research at Makerere, Kampala (Uganda). From here he carried out fieldwork among the Swahili of the East African coast. In 1959 he received a special award from the Nuffield Foundation. From 1960 to 1962 he was a Research Fellow at St Antony's College, Oxford, during which time he became advisor to Shaikh Shakhbut, the ruler of Abu Dhabi. In 1962 he was appointed Faculty Lecturer in Middle Eastern Sociology at the Institute of Social Anthropology. From 1962 to 1970 he held this post in conjunction with a Fellowship at St Antony's College, during which time he carried out fieldwork in the Iranian city of Isfahan (1965–66). In 1970 he was appointed to a College Lectureship, which post he held with his Faculty Lectureship until his death. Peter was an active member of the Oxford University Anthropological Society, presiding over its successful relaunch in 1979 after a low period and again during the last months of his life. He died on 17 March 1986 at the Churchill Hospital, Oxford.

Peter Lienhardt's death was marked in these pages by the publication of an Obituary Notice by Wendy James (see *JASO*, Vol. XVII, no. 1, pp. iii–iv) and in a later issue by the publication of Emrys Peters's funeral address, an appreciation by Ahmed Al-Shahi, and an account of his association with the Oxford University Anthropological Society by Jeremy Coote; details of the Peter Arnold Lienhardt Memorial Fund were also announced in that issue (see *JASO*, Vol. XVII, no. 2, pp. 181–6). The following year a memorial volume was published: Ahmed Al-Shahi (ed.), *The Diversity of the Muslim Community: Anthropological Essays in Memory of Peter Lienhardt*, London: Ithaca Press (for the British Society for Middle Eastern Studies) 1987. This contained contributions from a number of his colleagues, former students and friends, and a brief list of his major publications.

It also contained the first part of 'Disorientations', a text Lienhardt had been working on at the time of his death. The other parts of 'Disorientations' appeared in this Journal and later in book form (see bibliography below). Two other essays have been published posthumously (including the essay 'Family *Waqf* in Zanzibar', that appears above), and I hope to be able to prepare for publication in the near future his major work on the shaikhdoms of the Trucial States.

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**THE SECULAR MUSIC OF THE YEMENITE JEWS
AS AN EXPRESSION OF CULTURAL DEMARCATION
BETWEEN THE SEXES**

MARILYN HERMAN

JEWISH men and women in Yemen are portrayed in the sociological and anthropological literature as having lived in separate conceptual and spatial worlds. As a result, two very separate bodies of song existed, one pertaining to men and the other to women. In this paper, I show how the culturally defined demarcation between the sexes is reflected and epitomized in the music of the Jews who lived in Yemen.¹

The key to this separation lies in the fact that women were banned from the synagogue altogether. This exclusion is not prescribed by Jewish law, and there is no precedent for it in the Bible or other Jewish literature or communities. The reason given for women being banned from the synagogue in Yemen was the fear that they might be menstruating. The condition of menstruation is, in Jewish law,

This paper is based on my MA thesis (Herman 1985), which was written under the supervision and with the moral and academic support of Dr P. T. W. Baxter of Manchester University. My brother Geoffrey Herman willingly and painstakingly translated Hebrew articles into English for my benefit while I was writing this thesis.

1. The period mainly referred to is the fifty years or so preceding 'Operation Magic Carpet', a series of airlifts between 1949 and 1950 in which the majority of Yemenite Jews were taken to Israel.

seen as ritually impure. Any condition of ritual impurity is considered hateful to God and may not be brought into contact with the synagogue or with any kind of religious practice. In accordance with the Bible and *Halakhah*,² men as well as women can be rendered ritually impure, and thus ritually polluting, to a similar degree, through the issue of semen, particularly semen out of place. Both men and women can be rendered pure through ritual immersion, though women only when their menstrual cycle has ended. Nevertheless, in Jewish law, as in the Yemenite practice of excluding women from the synagogue, women are treated as if they are far more impure than men and a danger to the ritual integrity of men.

Men's lives revolved around the synagogue. Since education was for religious purposes and its institution connected with the synagogue, Yemenite Jewish women were barred from religious spiritual life not only by virtue of the physical boundary imposed between them and the synagogue, but also by their almost universal illiteracy. While the greatest importance was placed on the religious instruction of boys, girls were excluded from education. Since religious texts and prescribed prayers were in Hebrew and the translation of the Bible was in Aramaic, women, who knew only Arabic, would not have been able to make sense of the texts even if spoken to them. Thus they were completely unequipped to practise formal religion. Among the Yemenite Jews, as among the Yemenite Muslims, the élite of society were the religious scholars. The men must therefore have derived a considerable sense of superiority from their religiosity and education, in contrast to the women's illiteracy and exclusion from religious responsibility. Outside the synagogue, men's lives were still ideally marked by religion, for they are said to have discussed holy matters in the home and at work. By excluding women from the synagogue and religious education, these were thus kept as a masculine preserve so that religiosity—at least according to the book—was definitional of masculinity.

Since community leadership was attached to the synagogue, and it was in the synagogue that the congregation was addressed on public affairs, not only were women disqualified a priori from holding any sort of public office, they were also denied a say in community affairs and direct access to information relating to them. Women's lives were centred on the home. Not being permitted to enter the synagogue and being exempt from most holy precepts—the men assumed these responsibilities on their behalf—the education of women was seen ostensibly as superfluous, even a serious trespass. They therefore remained uneducated and illiterate, with Arabic as their only language, and preoccupied themselves mainly with secular concerns. While emphatically identifying themselves as Jews and paying substantial tribute to their religion, they did this through folk customs, the only means open to them.

Men and women were thus segregated, ideally and in effect. The enforced exclusion of women from the synagogue, with all its implications, thus removed

2. The body of laws and teachings incorporated into Judaism after the time of the Bible and considered integral to it.

women decisively from any spiritual and public responsibility, while at the same time bestowing on them an autonomy and degree of power of another kind.³ Consequently, there existed a community of women alongside that of men, the two running in parallel but never meeting, at least not conceptually. In the same way, there also existed two separate bodies of song, one sung by men, the other by women. And just as the Yemenite Jewish men's world-view was a function of their religious upbringing and the fact that their lives revolved around the synagogue, so the women's world-view was a function of their very different life-style, upbringing and domain. These factors are also reflected in the totally unrelated musical styles and verbal content of their songs. In contrasting the songs of women and men, it is as if we are contrasting elements of two distinct cultures, which, seen at a certain level, they were.

Textual Content of the Yemenite Jewish Men's Diwan

By banning women from the synagogue, an essential definition of masculinity and masculine superiority in terms of spirituality and education could be in little danger of losing its exclusive association with men and could be asserted in all completeness in opposition to women. Reflecting this, the contrast between women's and men's music can be viewed as one between a 'folk'⁴ tradition and a formal, learned, higher art form, as well as between 'sacred' and 'profane' song types.

The secular music of the men was characterized by their connection with the synagogue and thus their identification with the sacred. Their religious education, literacy and proficiency in three languages was necessary to understand and perform it. It was influenced by liturgy in subject-matter and also musical structure.

In fact, it is only in opposition to liturgical music that the men's *diwan*⁵ can really be described as secular, since its devotional, spiritual and philosophical content almost lifted it out of this category, especially in contrast to the music of the women, which was truly secular. The *diwan* of Yemenite Jewish men continued a tradition of Hebrew poetry which originated in the courts of Muslim Spain around 950–1150 CE, when a movement known as the Andalusian School advocated a return to Biblical Hebrew as the most precise, lucid, beautiful and divine

3. This is discussed in Herman 1985.

4. The use of the term 'folk music' is discussed in Herman 1985, *ibid*.

5. A term of Persian origin, referring to any anthology of poetry, usually intended to be sung, and also to the guest room in a Yemenite home where the *diwan* is performed. Among the Yemenite Jewish men there was no standard version of the *diwan*, since each copy was written by hand in Hebrew characters and the poems would be selected according to the copyist's individual taste.

language, in competition with Muslims, who posited the excellence of the language and style of the Koran as proof of its truth. Quantitative metre, as found in Arabic poetry, was introduced into Hebrew poetry. In accordance with Arabic formulations, the adherents of the Andalusian School considered secular poetry to be an art form requiring education and training—talent alone being insufficient—and observing specific parameters of form, rhetoric and theme. Much of the poetry from this Spanish Golden Age of Hebrew poetry—in particular that of Judah Halevy, Ibn Gabirol and Ibn Ezra—reached Yemen via Egypt during the twelfth century CE and was taken over wholesale by Yemenite Jewish men. Their local poetry, while influenced by the Andalusian School, lacked the courtly setting and did not conform to all the rigid ideals of the latter, but formed its own local temperament, particularly under the influence of *kabbala* (a school of Jewish mysticism). While the poetry of the Andalusian School was seen as a distinct genre, existing alongside the *piyyut*—devotional poetry sung as hymns to embellish the synagogue service—the distinction among Yemenite Jewish men between *piyyut* and secular poetry was, I believe, obscured. This is confirmed by N. and A. Bahat (see *Jewish Yemenite Songs from the Diwan*, record, 1982), who assert that in Yemen, the *diwan* began as an appendix to the prayer-book, to be sung as hymns in the service, and that as the Yemenite poets added more and more of their own contributions to those of the Spanish poets, the anthology became so large that it was subsequently copied and bound separately.

The following three songs have been selected as representative of the Yemenite Jewish men's local *diwan*,⁶ two of which are by Shalem Shabazi (1618–1670), their national poet. Approximately three-quarters of the *diwan* is ascribed to him, including those of unknown authorship, in accordance with accepted practice. He (and other Yemenite Jewish poets) used Arabic and Aramaic in addition to Hebrew in his poetry—not, Razhabi (1964) asserts, as affectation, but as a normal mode of expression. Although Shabazi's poetry was influenced by Judah Halevy of the Spanish School and by Israel Najara, he rendered his poetry accessible to the ordinary Yemenite Jewish man, avoiding the full-blown imagery of the Spanish poets. His style is relatively straightforward and prosaic, as in the *Song for Circumcision*, which is down-to-earth and would have been understood by anyone. He writes about the religious realities of life, asking God to cure the child from his circumcision wound and to grant him good food, referring to the rejoicing of the father's neighbours upon witnessing the circumcision and the child's upbringing in studying the Torah and its (kabbalistic) mysteries. An extract follows.

He gave his neighbours great cause for rejoicing,
 inviting them to witness the circumcision.
 My Rock, cure this child and save him;
 for You are almighty and merciful too.

6. The men's song-texts presented here are quoted from Carmi (ed.) 1981.

This circumcision is his first religious duty.
May he recover, and enjoy great peace of mind and
 pleasure in the study of the Torah's mysteries.
May his food be choice and succulent.

In *The Seal*, poetic allegory and metaphor are juxtaposed to a straightforward prosaic style, the style changing in the last verse, where he dedicates his song to his friends:

(The Daughter of Zion:) 'Who kissed me until I fell into a faint,
 then said to me: "Do not be overwhelmed!"
That night I dreamt that I was (back) in the Temple of Love,
 (under) the canopy of my Beloved's Glory, in my own dwelling.
Before the time was due, I longed to sleep in His bosom,
 to cleanse myself (with prayer) and perfume myself (with incense).'

(The Poet:) 'Oh, then, (Moses) the faithful messenger
 will lead her (out of exile),
 and the emblems (of the tribes) will be inscribed upon my banners.⁷
My Beloved will come down into the Garden of Nut Trees,⁸
 He will remember his ancient covenant with the Patriarchs.
He will assemble all my kind and righteous tribes,
 and Israel will rise to greet the dawn in Zion's gates.

'May peace be yours, my soul, and a long life of piety, singing psalms of joy.
Now, in my dream, I kiss the faces of my elect companions
 with the letters of my song.
These shall be for us like a seal (of friendship).'

More so than the history of Jews anywhere else, that of Yemenite Jewry is dotted with messianic movements and the appearance of pseudo-messiahs. The messianic preoccupation of the Yemenite Jews paralleled that of the Zaydi Muslims, who were expecting an imam-redeemer. Even Shabazi was believed by some, during his lifetime, to be the messiah, or at least his harbinger.⁹ Reflecting this preoccupation, the poetry of Yemenite Jewish men is permeated with themes of the

7. As they were when Israel marched through the desert.

8. The Land of Israel.

9. Shabazi was a figure of legend among the Yemenite Jews. An acclaimed miracle-worker, his tomb in Ta'iz was considered holy and was visited by Jews and Muslims alike, who prayed there for relief from sickness and adversity. He lived at the time of the Mawza expulsion, the worst calamity to befall Yemenite Jewry, when their numbers were reduced by two-thirds. Also at this time, the appearance of the pseudo-messiah Shabbetai Zevi from Smyrna aroused an ecstatic movement in Yemen.

degradation of exile, the advent of the messiah and the return of the Jewish people to the Land of Israel. In *The Seal*, Moses is not only himself but also symbolizes the future messiah: just as the Jews were once redeemed from exile, so God 'will remember His ancient covenant with the Patriarchs' and redemption will come again. This illustrates a further method of Shabazi, of referring to the glorious past of Israel as an indication of faith and hope in the glorious future. This theme is also commonly expressed in the form of an allegorical love poem in which the bride (Israel) and the bridegroom (God) are joined in wedlock. Sometimes, the two are represented as having quarrelled, the bride being expelled from the bridegroom's house. The bridegroom subsequently regrets her absence and calls her back, and the two are reconciled. In Sa'adiah Ben Amran's poem *The Poet, The Dove and The Beloved*, the Dove represents the people (daughter) of Israel whom God, the Beloved, permits redemption and enjoyment of 'the peace of wedlock' with Him in the palace (Land of Israel).

(The Poet:) 'Tell me, pure and perfect one,
 tell me so that we may rejoice here in Taima¹⁰
 — O wise princess, tell me where do you make
 your home?'

The dove answered: 'Sa'adiah, there is a
 high chamber reserved for me in the Palace.¹¹
 But though I could robe myself in beauty, my
 heart is full of lamentation.

'Oh, show me the way, my friend, guide me,
 for I am at a loss.
 Pray, understand, and do not lose patience:
 Where is the road that will lead me to my Beloved?'

(The Beloved:) 'O heart of hearts, open
 the gate to Me. There are beds of balsam
 in My garden and vines sweet with honey.
 'Truly, I now give you leave (to be redeemed),
 to enjoy the peace of wedlock. Do not let
 the evil spirit incite you, My daughter,
 let him not encroach on My domain.

'You may choose the choicest land, and the
 inner chamber of the Palace panelled with ivory.
 Oh, arise from the depths, My pure one,
 and heed My words.

10. A province in North Arabia.

11. The Land of Israel.

'Let us go up to Mount Abarim and lie there
together in friendship, without flesh touching flesh.
You will find contentment there,
and so will I.'

The metaphors and imagery are very stylized: God is not only 'Beloved', but also 'Rock' (Shabazi: *Song for Circumcision*). The people of Israel are the 'princess', 'Dove', 'God's Daughter' (Ben Amran), and the Land of Israel is the 'Palace' (Ben Amran), the 'Temple of love' or the 'Garden of Nut Trees' (Shabazi: *The Seal*). In their great concern to praise God and express love for Him, God is described as 'Beloved', while in their most important quality as loving God, the people of Israel are 'Heart of Hearts' (Ben Amran). Erotic imagery is often employed to express the longing for union between God and Israel. A common formula used in the Yemenite Jewish *diwan* to introduce religious allegory is that which appears at the beginning of Shabazi's *The Seal*—'Who kissed me until I fell into a faint': 'The Daughter of Zion' dreams that she was back 'in the Temple of Love' under her 'Beloved's canopy'. She longs 'to sleep in His bosom', to cleanse and perfume herself.

Thus it can be seen that the men's *diwan* was essentially religious in content, part of a wider Jewish school of poetry and of an even wider international poetic form, in the context of a parallel form existing among Muslims. The Yemenite Jewish form was a genre requiring precisely the kind of education received in the synagogue in Yemen, bestowing a knowledge and literacy in three languages, including Hebrew and Aramaic, the languages of worship. It was therefore an educated, literate and religious genre, with a very specific recognized form, and was bound by rules or regularities of language of expression, rhythm, rhyme, metre, performance and rendition.

Textual Content of Yemenite Jewish Women's Songs

The songs of the women, by contrast, belonged to an oral tradition. There were no explicitly formulated rules relating to their form, content, structure or thematic nature. Being sung in the Arabic language, they formed part of a local Yemenite tradition rather than belonging to a Jewish tradition. The subject-matter is exemplified in this paper by a selection of women's wedding songs,¹² which may be descriptive of the events and customs in progress or, as presented here, love songs. While men expressed mainly spiritual love—love of God—in their songs, women sang of earthy love and its emotions.

12. The women's wedding-song texts presented here are quoted from the commentary to the record *Shoshana Tubi Sings Yemenite Wedding Songs*.

The following extract is about sexual love, employed not as religious imagery (in contrast to Shabazi's *The Seal*) but representing only itself:

My love, my beloved said goodbye and went away.
He opened my buttons and inflamed me with fire.
(From 'Khalowni Adhaiweh' and 'Khili Khalili' (Let me be free))

The next extract expresses collaboration against the bride's parents in the form of illicit love:

'Yabent Yabaitha' (The white girl)

Oh, white girl, pull me from the window slowly,
That your parents will not notice us,
That (even) the fly in the air will not see us.

The next songs express tormented, wronged love:

'Shillu Salami' (Take my regards)

Carry my regards and put them on his door.
Tell him it is enough craziness and torment.

'Nazalt Asayelleh' (I went down to the valley)

I went down to the valley because of my heartache,
To order my ring and to water my horse.
My beloved, a lover is one who can forgive,
But one whose love is hard, my pity upon him.

The women also sing of unobtainable love:

'Yakhthar Khothari' (Green, my green)

My beloved, my parents mock me because of you.
The more they mock me, the more my love for you grows.
If I sang, they said I am in love;
I prayed—they said I repent;
I cried—they said, 'poor one, so far from his beloved'.

During the wedding ceremony, the women also sing about lost love:

'Yaman Legi Li' (Who found for me)

Who found for me a dove from the wild doves
She flew to me and went away.

I cried for two days, twice a day,
And I watered the art of love with the tears of my eyes.

and describe the searing emotions of love:

'Halaft' (I swore)

These are the keys of my heart, look what is in it.
In it, sighing, and moaning, and fire is burning inside it.

Men sang of messianic dreams and the return to Zion. Their love songs were highly refined allegories, their imagery is stylized. Women, on the other hand, sing of secular love, manifesting a solid awareness of the physical world (as well as a major concern with the metaphysical world of evil spirits, as exemplified in other songs).

Yemenite Jewish Men's and Women's Songs: Form, Melody, Rhythm and Rendition

The sacred/profane and 'art'/'folk' distinctions, presented here as paradigms through which to view the contrasting natures of Yemenite Jewish men's and women's music, can be seen to apply to the musical as well as the textual aspects of the songs.

Yemenite Jewish men had an overall form for the performance of songs as a musical suite and a prescribed manner of singing them. The performance of the *diwan* was divided into three parts, *nashid*, *shira* and *hallel*. These could be taken together as a suite, the *nashid* or *shira* may be taken singly, or the combinations *nashid/shira* or *shira/hallel* may be performed. When one occurs with the other, the *nashid* preceded the *shira* which precedes the *hallel*. To my knowledge, the *hallel* was not performed alone.

The *nashid* was a responsorial¹³ prelude designed to prepare the assembled company for the impending *shira* by warming up the atmosphere. It could also be sung as a piece on its own, drawn out at great length.¹⁴ In the *diwan* (guest room) where the *diwan* (song) was performed, in the middle of some social event a singer might spontaneously begin to sing a *nashid*, being responded to by one or a group of the men present, until eventually all the men might be participating.

13. Alternation of singing by soloist and chorus.

14. According to Razhabi (1968) the term *nashid* refers to a song sung in a group where some of the group are singers, the remainder the audience.

The character of the *nashid* is improvisatory and melismatic,¹⁵ the soloist having considerable scope to show off his art through melismata, lengthening of syllables and repetition of lines. It was traditionally sung in free rhythm and was never accompanied by percussion or dancing. The literary form of the *nashid* is that of the Arabic *qasida*, unified by a single recurring rhyme throughout. The metre also remains unchanged throughout the poem. The language of the *nashid* is almost always exclusively Hebrew.

The *shira* is the central musical event in any social or ceremonial gathering. It is generally sung in regular rhythm, accompanied with percussion, and is much livelier than either the *nashid* or the *hallel*. It is generally performed by a group, but lines may be reserved for the soloist to demonstrate his skills.

In the *shira*, Hebrew, Arabic and less commonly Aramaic are often found within a single stanza, and even in the same line. The metre and rhyme of the poem remains consistent no matter what language a verse, strophe or line may be in, indicating tremendous linguistic virtuosity on the part of the poet. The poetic form of the *shira* is the Arabic *muwashshah* or 'girdle poem', which regularly alternates sections with separate rhymes with other sections with common rhymes (e.g. aa bbbaa cccaa, etc.)¹⁶ while the metre and length of lines may vary. A stanza is usually constructed with an initial section of three to five hemistichal lines, the two halves being called *delet* (Hebrew: 'door') and *soger* (Hebrew: 'lock'), followed by three shorter lines, each being the size of one hemistich of the preceding lines, in a different faster metre called *tawsih*. The stanza then usually concludes with two or more hemistichal lines, both of which may, and the last of which must, rhyme with the first line of the poem.

Once the *shira* was finished, the singers and dancers faced and greeted the audience and sang *hallel*, a song of praise opening and concluding with the word '*hallelujah*' ('praise be to God'). The singers and dancers sang together, without percussion, frequently dividing into two choruses and singing in parallel fourths or fifths.¹⁷ The musical style of the *hallel* was different from that of the *nashid* or *shira*, recalling liturgical music and biblical cantillation. The text is in Hebrew prose, based on verses from the Bible, mainly the Psalms. Within this overall structure, there was flexibility for an individual to choose any number of verses or strophes according to the occasion or atmosphere or his own mood, rather than singing an entire poem from beginning to end.

Before proceeding with my comparison of the melodic aspect of the songs, it is necessary to give a brief explanation of my derivation of scales and tonality

15. Containing many melismata, referring, in a song, to the embellishment of a syllable with a shower of notes.

16. Although the poetic forms used by the Yemenite Jewish men were Arabic in origin, they reached their *diwan* via the Andalusian School of Hebrew poetry, not directly from the neighbouring Arabs.

17. Consecutive chords comprising two notes with a consistent interval of a fourth (fifth).

from the music of the Yemenite Jews, an approach which is completely alien to their own conception. The women, and possibly the men in their *diwan*, did not have scales independent of the melodies. I have therefore derived scales from the melodies and in this way assessed the functions of the notes in relation to one another. The men used established scales and modes invested with meaning in their liturgical music, and it is very possible that these were carried over into the music of their *diwan*. However, since this cannot be assumed, I have derived scales and tonality from their songs in the same way as with the women's songs. In presenting various scales below, I indicate the relative place of the note which I have interpreted as the 'tonic' (denoted by 't'), and of the note which I have interpreted as a secondary cadential tone (denoted by 'c') in the context of each particular song from which the scale is derived.

In discussing the scalar forms of these songs, I am not referring to specific notes but to certain arrangements of intervals. Without the fixed tuning of melody instruments,¹⁸ Yemenites do not have absolute pitch but pitch relative to that of the other notes of the melody. However, the intervals are not precise, which is inevitable where a musical motive¹⁹ is conceived of as a whole and not as the sum of individual notes.²⁰ A single note cannot therefore be assigned a specific pitch or placed an exact distance from any other precise note.

Although I present melodic examples in notation designed for the reproduction of harmonic music, I must at the same time apologize for its inappropriateness and inaccuracy in representing Yemenite music, since it carries over implicit meanings proper to harmonic music into any type of music it is used to represent. This notation is not designed to deal with microintervals or the abundance of melismata that appear in Yemenite Jewish music. Being non-harmonic and non-divisible, the rhythm of this kind of music is not sufficiently precise to fit into bar lines or to be represented by signs signifying (relative to each other) very exact time values. Thus in transcribing Yemenite Jewish music in 'Western' notation, I have, in effect, constructed Western idealizations of their music.

Reflecting the limitations of Western notation in representing non-harmonic music such as this, I will describe the limitations to which my use of this notation conveys the same meanings as in Western harmonic music and set out my adaptation of this notation to Yemenite Jewish music. First of all, just as Yemenite Jews did not have a concept of absolute pitch, similarly my transcription is not equivalent

18. In Yemen, the orthodox Shiite administration forbade the use of musical instruments, and moreover, the Jews were said not to have played musical instruments in their mourning of the Temple in Jerusalem. Since percussion instruments, being non-melodic, were not considered to be musical instruments, these were used to accompany songs by Jews and Muslims alike. Despite these restrictions, flutes and stringed instruments were played secretly, but this was not common.

19. 'The briefest intelligible and self-existent melodic or rhythmic unit' (Scholes 1970: 661).

20. Keren (1980) describes the gestalt nature of Asiatic music in this way.

ent to the pitch of the recordings. Since my intention is to depict intervals rather than notes, these too should not be taken as exact representations, since the actual intervals may be more flexible or contain microtones. Where an interval is obviously microtonally larger than shown, this is indicated by the symbol \uparrow placed before a note to show that it is sharpened by less than a semitone. Where a note is ornamented, this is represented with the symbol \sim . Time values are not intended to be exact but to indicate the approximate rhythmic character and duration of notes in relation to each other, or even, more vaguely—particularly where a song is in free rhythm—which notes are long, which are short, and which are somewhere in-between. Where a note is slightly more sustained than shown, this is represented by the symbol \smile or \frown . The grouping of notes is not carried out according to divisive time values, as in harmonic music. Instead, as far as possible it follows melodic and word groupings. In the case of the women's songs, since I do not know Arabic, phrase—rather than word—groupings are reflected. The symbol is used here to group notes without tails, and not as a tie. Where notes are accented, this is denoted by the symbol \wedge or \vee . In the percussion depicted in the song 'Tantin Binath', secondary accents are depicted by the symbol $/$. The end of a melodic and textual sentence is symbolized by a short line $|$, while the end of a verse is symbolized by two short lines \parallel . Finally, my separate treatment of texts and music contradicts the fact that the Yemenite Jews had no concept equivalent to the generic all-embracing term 'music' covering a vast selection of phenomena. They had their *shira*—'songs' (also used to refer to poetry)—*diwan* in the case of the men. Percussion was another phenomenon, accompanying, rather than being strictly synchronized with the melody and words. My analytical methodology does not, therefore, represent the music of the Yemenite Jews as they themselves perceive it but is merely a paradigm within which their music can be comprehended.

The distinction between the music of the Yemenite Jewish men and women in terms of higher art form versus 'folk', and sacred versus profane, can be seen to extend to their melodies. While neither have a formal literate tradition for melodic components of their secular songs, the melodies of the *diwan* appear to manifest a conscious concern with unification and beautification, which is interpreted here as an aesthetic concern. Women's melodies, while obviously aesthetically pleasing, seem more directly subservient to the text, and they also have a less extensive tonality than the men's melodies. The influence of liturgical cantillation and rendition on the men's melodies can be seen as connecting them with the sacred.

The characterization of Yemenite Jewish men's music as formal and as containing a more extensive tonality²¹ is supported by its frequent correspondence with established modes,²² or with the scales on which these modes are based. By

21. Principle of notes having particular functions within the context in which they appear, and in relation to the tonic.

22. A mode is an established recognized arrangement of intervals into a series, understood as having its own particular mood or meaning.

contrast, there is no external system to which the majority of women's songs correspond. An exception to this can be found in the first part of 'Love Song' (example 1 below), which uses a scale type similar to one described by Idelsohn (1944) as the standard scale for both Jewish folk and synagogal music and used as a basis for certain recognized modes, associated with specific moods. However, since it was a common practice for both Yemenite Jewish men and women to adapt existing melodies to a variety of texts, any association of mood which may have been attributed to certain types of musical structure was probably weak.

In comparing scalar structures derived from the *diwan* and women's songs, it can be seen that the melodies of the former demonstrate more complexity and tonality than the latter. The majority of scalar structures derived from the melodies of the *diwan* are essentially tetrachordal,²³ consisting of a single tetrachord, two conjunct tetrachords²⁴ such as in the *shira* 'Tsur Menati' (example 2), two disjunct tetrachords,²⁵ as in the *shira* 'Sar Ha-Memuneh' (example 3), or a tetrachord apparently constituting the melodic nucleus.²⁶ Scalar forms built on or including tetrachords are also very common in the music of Yemenite Jewish women (example 4). However, the forms of two conjunct or disjunct tetrachords seem to make only an occasional appearance.

Approximately half of the scalar forms derived from the *diwan* are conjunct. This scalar type differs from disjunct forms in its tendency not to contain a single system of tonality extending throughout the whole series of notes: one group of notes, beginning where the last group left off, may seem to duplicate the tonal functions of the other group, the finale²⁷ generally being the note of conjunction. However, the men's melodies, unlike those of the women, tend not to be nucleal in character.²⁸

A substantial proportion of women's songs are based on conjunct forms, a large number of which are made up of two conjunct thirds. An example of this is a melody whose essential structure is made up of two conjunct, nucleal thirds found in the 'Hineh' song (example 5). (The *infracix*,²⁹ an upbeat, is treated here as external to the core.) Another scalar structure derived from the women's songs

23. Pertaining to a tetrachord, being a group of four consecutive notes.

24. Two consecutive tetrachords joined by a common note.

25. Two consecutive tetrachords separated by a step.

26. That is to say, notes lying outside this tetrachord would seem peripheral to the main melodic structure.

27. Last note of a mode. Used here as the last note of a melody.

28. I use this term to denote a melody or scalar form emanating from or revolving around a central nucleus.

29. Auxiliary note below essential note structure (Sachs 1962).

is pentatonism, the octave being divided by five main steps, while additional notes of passing value may also be present (example 6).³⁰

EXAMPLE 1: 'Love Song'³¹

Scale derived from 'Love Song'

EXAMPLE 2: Part I of 'Tsur Menati' (shira)³²

30. In addition, the women sing a class of melodies which sound as if they could be Turkish-influenced, perhaps a legacy of the Ottoman occupation. 'Yaman Legi Li' is particularly of this kind (cf. the record *Shoshana Tubi Sings Yemenite Wedding Songs*).

31. *The Living Tradition: Music from Israel* (record).

32. *Jewish-Yemenite Diwan* (record).

Scale derived from 'Tsur Menati' based on two conjunct tetrachords



EXAMPLE 3: Concluding verse of 'Sar Ha-Memuneh' (shira)³³

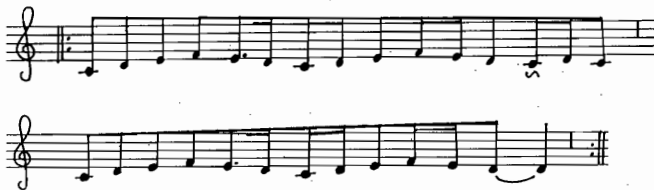


Scale derived from 'Sar Ha-Memuneh' based on two disjunct tetrachords



EXAMPLE 4: Women's Song 1 (Melody iii, *The Pa'amey Teman* (record))

Each verse sung by soloist and repeated by chorus



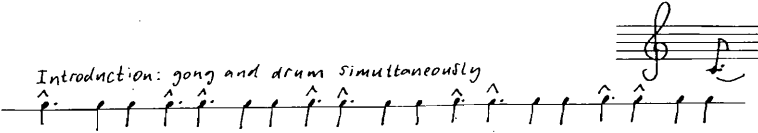
Scale derived from Women's Song 1 consisting of a single tetrachord




33. *Jewish-Yemenite Diwan* (record).

EXAMPLE 5: The 'Hineh' song (*Shoshana Tubi Sings Yemenite Wedding Songs (record)*)

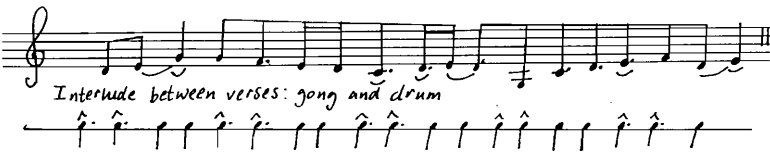
Introduction: gong and drum simultaneously



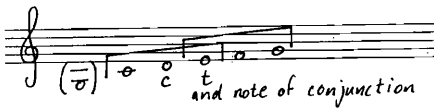
Gong and drum accompany song



Interlude between verses: gong and drum



Scale derived from the 'Hineh' song consisting of two conjunct nuclear thirds



and note of conjunction

EXAMPLE 6: 'Tantin Binath' (*Folk Dances and Festive Dances (record)*)

Drum: introduction



Drum: accompaniment



Each line sung by soloist and repeated by chorus



Drum: accompaniment



Pentatonic scale derived from 'Tantin Binath'



On the whole, the men's melodies have a more defined and extensive tonality than those of the women, since the latter are frequently pentatonic and/or nuclear, leaving room for less extensive tonality. In the songs of Yemenite Jewish women, there may sometimes be a little more extensive tonality, while at other times only the function of a tonic³⁴ can be detected, and at yet others a piece of music may change direction and the previous tonality be thwarted with an unexpected finale.

Another way in which the *diwan* contrasts with women's songs is in its manifestation of melodic coherence and unity. For example, while it is common practice for the singer to switch from melody to melody in the course of a song, there tends to be some factor unifying a whole piece or suite of pieces. This may consist of common scalar material, while there may be a subtle change in tonality or metre or in a particular melody or motive that periodically recurs.

In their combination of several different melodies within a single song, the women's songs, unlike the men's, display no concern to unify these melodies where they are not similar. Thus there may be nothing to join the two melodies except the omission of a pause, and from a slow, gentle melody, the leader may suddenly break into a vigorous one or pass from one melody to a new one containing seemingly unrelated scalar material.

Another indication of aesthetic concern manifested in the *diwan* can be found in melody/text relationship. For example, while the allocation of tones to words is usually one to three tones to a syllable, in the *diwan* a word is often elevated by substantial melismata with the intention of creating a sense of spiritual exaltation.³⁵ This device may be carried over from the synagogue, where the amount of melismata is in direct proportion to the significance of the liturgical occasion.

It appears that Yemenite Jewish men were concerned with music as an art form apart from its function of conveying the text and its meaning. More concern was manifested to perfect and beautify the melody, structuring and embellishing it, than in the women's music. Accordingly, certain sections of the *diwan* were reserved for a soloist who was given the opportunity to display his special skills in singing. Both men and women based their songs on recurring motives, which were varied while retaining their essential melodic shape. Such variations, especially using melismata, were produced mainly by the soloist who thus displayed his skills as well as adding interest to the melody. Thus the *diwan* was often sung in an improvisatory³⁶ manner, with room for individual expressiveness and for virtuosity in a particularly talented performer.

It is possible that in the women's songs, certain motives occurred in several songs of a specific type, since Gerson-Kiwi (1965) presents a transcription of a line of melody as a melody type that can be a starting-point for many similar song types. In an individual song, brief recurring motives are often varied slightly,

34. The most important note in function—the 'home' note.

35. *Jewish Yemenite Songs from the Diwan* 1982 (record): commentary.

36. I.e. based on improvisation, whereby the performer composes and performs simultaneously.

sometimes because of a change in the metre of the text, sometimes for 'spice' and sometimes, as in the men's *diwan*, as a manifestation of creativity. The women also used expressive techniques in singing—particularly in changing dynamics—and, as anywhere, a more outstanding singer with a pleasing, supple and melismatic voice would be given recognition and credit.

Apart from the melody, greater complexity can also be seen in the form of much of the *diwan*. While some of the melodies of the *diwan* share forms, and small repetitive forms with the women's melodies (A, B), many of the former have more compound forms and are constructed of three or four different parts (A, B, C or A, B, C, D). The overall musical form of a song from the *diwan* is often very compound, several different melodies being intertwined and interrelated.

Although the women's songs, like the men's, often contain several melodies, they are disparate, and it does not seem applicable to refer to an overall musical form of their songs. Their form is generally very simple, consisting of one or two short motives repeated over and over again. In contrast to the men's apparently frequent concern for melody as an art forming the men's songs, the women's do not aim at refinement of form and shape of a melody. However, in both cases, the importance of the song lies primarily in the text, with the melody subservient to the words. This becomes clear when we see that melodic lines are often expanded or condensed to accommodate variations of length in the textual line, without changing the character of the melody.

A number of aspects of the *diwan* reflect men's connection with liturgy and thus with the sacred. Some liturgical music strikes me as being melodically fairly similar to the *diwan*³⁷ (although rhythmically much freer than most *diwan*), and it is likely that where the Yemenite Jewish men use scalar³⁸ structures and motives in their *diwan* which come close to their liturgical music, the implicit meanings are carried over with them in music, the emotions, associations and moods evoked by certain types of melodic structure are ingrained in the minds of the members of a culture. However, since in their secular music a number of melodies are adapted to different texts, there may not necessarily be a correlation between melodic meaning and the content of the text.

A scalar form often found in the *hallel*³⁹ very strongly recalls biblical cantillation. The *hallel* tends to be chanted in declamatory style on one recitation tone, or perhaps two or three. However, unlike liturgical cantillation, where the melodic formula is rigidly prescribed, the singer of the *hallel* in the *diwan* shifts from one recurring tone to another apparently at will.

The 'sacred' classification of the *diwan* can be seen to apply to aspects of rhythm. In the *diwan* of the men, rhythm is either *tartil* (free) or, when rhythmi-

37. However, liturgical music—in particular, biblical cantillation—and *diwan* each need to be considered as sociologically watertight categories.

38. Pertaining to a scale, i. e. an arrangement of intervals into a tonal series.

39. I have also detected it in two *nashid*.

cal, either duple or triple,⁴⁰ the latter two often being found in the same piece. In the men's songs, regular rhythm is considered inferior to *tartil*, perhaps because the latter is associated with dancing, while *tartil* takes on a more serious complexion, being more closely associated with the meaning of the text and being the only rhythmic form used in liturgy. It is therefore not surprising that the *tartil* occurs always in the *hallel*, which is closest to liturgy.⁴¹ The songs of the Yemenite Jewish women are mainly in regular rhythm, either duple or triple. The fact that so much of the men's music is in *tartil* while this is infrequent in women's music could be connected with the idea that men's music is a higher art form nearer to the sacred, while women's music, in comparison, is a vulgar, uneducated form.

Another aspect connecting the *diwan* with liturgy can be found in rendition. Both men's and women's songs share solo and response forms of rendition, the latter comprising a soloist singing the first half of the verse while the chorus takes the second half (or the soloist singing the verse and the chorus singing the refrain). The women's songs are also antiphonal, with two half-choruses alternating the half-verses, such as in Gerson-Kiwi's (1965) description of two small groups of women sitting huddled together, singing long epic songs, alternating with each other in half-verses. I have not heard the men sing antiphonally, and it is noteworthy that while the response form occurred in the synagogue in Yemen, the antiphonal form did not. It is therefore not surprising that in the Yemenite *diwan*, response was the most general practice.

The *hallel* of the *diwan* often verges on the liturgical in terms of rendition where, as in the synagogue, organum⁴² may occur, and also content—for example, in the recitation of a blessing or a Psalm—and style, often declamatory.

The melody-text relationship of the *diwan* also reflects the impact of liturgy. Thus music and text are more significantly interrelated than in the performance of women's songs, such as where, in the former, melismata occur in amounts proportional to the significance of the text. The women's songs do not attempt to correlate text and music in this way. For the latter, a melody is no more than a vehicle for transmitting the words, with which it corresponds only as phonetic entities. For the men, music is apparently more than this, reflecting the conception of biblical cantillation as a very rigid formula constituting the correct meaning and understanding of the Bible to the extent that a mistake in cantillation could be considered tantamount to blasphemy.

40. Rhythm based on a repetitive sequence of pairs of beats (duple) or three beats (triple).

41. Nowadays in Israel, Yemenite Jewish singers do not feel compelled to render the *nashid* in free rhythm.

42. I.e. parallel fourths and fifths.

Conclusion

The men's *diwan* was therefore a learned art form. Not only was an education and literacy a prerequisite for singing and understanding it, but a specialist training, a knowledge of specific poetic forms and metre, and philological ability were necessary to write them. The poet was therefore distinct from the performer. Reflecting these distinctions, the words of the men's songs were written down and transmitted in writing and were therefore not readily available to the illiterate women, whose songs were transmitted orally. By contrast, the women had no formal method of composition, nor any conscious awareness of form or construction in songs. There was nothing to bar anyone from participating in or composing their songs, although some women would have had more ability and inclination than others.

In contrasting the music of Yemenite Jewish men and women, I am referring to tendencies rather than to a sharp clear-cut division; none the less, these tendencies are strong. There is an overlapping area: women's melodies do exist which sound more complex and compound than many of the men's being sung in free rhythm, and based on scales with tonality as extensive as any which appear in the men's songs. The men's songs do have melodies constructed of small recurring forms and have a very large proportion of conjunct forms, although these generally incorporate a tetrachord. Mostly, however, the men's melodies reveal more concern with overall cohesiveness and a greater complexity than those of the women.

Similarly, the subject-matter of the men's songs is more 'high-brow' and esoteric than that of the women's songs. Just as in their everyday lives men were ideally concerned with spiritual matters, so their songs are about these concerns, focusing particularly on the coming of the messiah, ritually cleansing oneself from the impurity of exile, and returning to the Land of Israel. Even the contexts of song performance were consistent with the sacred/secular distinctions between Yemenite men and women. Men, we are told (Goitein 1947: 74-6), sang only on festivals and special occasions. While engaged in their craft, if they worked together, they ideally discussed the Torah.

Women, by contrast, accompanied their everyday activities with song and sang about earthly subject-matters, about love between man and woman rather than love of God. Generally, they express a concern with the here-and-now rather than the dreams of the messianic afterlife which permeated the men's songs. Some of their wedding songs directly describe events in progress, while on the whole their imagery is far more realistic and concrete than the highly stylized imagery of the men.

Through their links with the synagogue, men had access to a more far-reaching world than the women, having contact with and receiving influences from Jewish communities elsewhere in the world. This is manifested musically in the fact that their *diwan* belonged to an internationally Jewish art form. Some of their poetry was imported from Spain via Egypt, while their local *diwan* also drew on influ-

ences from Palestine. In contrast, the women's songs were more indigenous, more specifically Yemenite, and most were interchangeable with those of the Muslim women. In this way too, therefore, the men's link with the synagogue and the women's exclusion from it has implications for the different domains reflected through their songs.

This ideal picture of the complete demarcation between the sexes being reflected in their musical expression may have been modified by some familiarity with each other's music. Women were exposed to hearing the men's *diwan*, although they were excluded from the sort of upbringing in which the men's song-texts would have much meaning for them. Conversely, men were also exposed to hearing the women's music. For example, in the procession of the bride on her way to the bridegroom's house the women led the way, making music, while the men followed ten or so yards behind. Also, in the bridegroom's procession to the bride's house, the men sang their processional songs or *zafat*, which were the only men's songs in which women were permitted to participate, with their trills and percussion.

There were instances in which a man, having no sons, would decide to instruct his daughter, although this could only have little if any impact on the music of the women as a whole. Since she could not participate in the community of men, their songs and the occasion to sing them were not part of her social world.

The heterogeneity of Yemenite Jews constituted another limiting factor to this ideal picture. Yemenite Jewish communities existed where the demarcation between the sexes did not conform to the same criteria. For example, Barer tells us (1952) that the Yemenite Jews of Habban were unlike all other Yemenite Jews: they behaved and looked like free people, and the women were educated. Also, in some remote parts of Yemen, there were tiny Jewish communities in which the men were illiterate and may therefore not have had a tradition of *diwan*, which is a literate and educated art form. The men in these communities may well have had a truly secular tradition of singing, akin perhaps to the style of women and the secular music of the local Arabs.

Certain elements of Boon's (1982) semiotic approach to anthropology can be applied to the picture presented here. According to this approach, a culture is comprised of systematized sets of symbols arbitrarily selected from an infinite sphere of possibilities, and it is defined in terms both of the symbols it has selected and of the possible symbols which have not been selected. Other cultures represent these negative possibilities which one specific culture is not. A culture is part of a total network in the same way as a text is just one component in a whole network of literature, to which it may refer or contrast itself, by which it is influenced or which it influences. In this sense, the boundaries of a culture, like those of a text, are blurred, so that a culture can be meaningfully described only comparatively, against other cultures. Yet it is also this discursive aspect of a culture which justifies its being seen as a culture, which sets up boundaries. This idea of the discursiveness of cultures and of the internal discursiveness within a culture can be applied to the cultural demarcation of the sexes among Yemenite Jews.

The Yemenite Jews constituted simultaneously a single culture, defining itself in terms of its own internal symbology and also against that of, and attributed to, the surrounding Muslim population. This culture converted itself into a discourse of two sets of symbols and two cultures, one masculine, the other feminine, each similarly having significance in terms not only of what it was, but equally in terms of what the other was, its own negative aspects. In this respect, it is the distinction rather than what the actual symbols are that is crucial. Symbols and sets of symbols may shift, but only in relation to the opposing symbols and sets of symbols. Moreover, symbols transcend social behaviour and need not be affected by any discrepancies occurring at a different order of reality.

While one domain was marked out as a masculine preserve and another as a feminine preserve, between the two there was a meeting-point: in the territory of the home, in the occupational sphere of subsistence work, in the women's identification with men's aims, in the men's incorporation of women's interests in their own (Herman 1985), in their mutual equation as Jews or as members of a family. These factors are not stressed in the presentation of an ideal picture of Yemenite Jewish society since they are not considered relevant. Correspondingly, if men had a 'vulgar' song type, this is apparently not considered worth mentioning. What is significant is that there were two diametrically opposed bodies of song, one belonging to men which was religious and refined, which women, by virtue of their femininity, could not possibly sing, and the other belonging to women (the men's 'lowbrow') which men, as the price of their masculinity, necessarily could not share.

If social reality should ever have fallen short of the ideal of men and women being so distinct that they had totally different bodies of song, then the formula was sealed at the level of symbology by the men's denial of any knowledge of women's songs (Brauer 1933), just as Moroccan city and *ksar* men render their masculinity unquestionable by pretending not to know anything about their womenfolk's activities (Maher 1974). The Yemenite Jewish men's *diwan* was a 'higher' art form, while the women's songs constituted a 'lower' form, and the men could not compromise their masculinity and superiority by even knowing, let alone singing, feminine and, moreover, inferior songs, any more than they could engage in household chores. Therefore, by excluding women from the synagogue, thus treating them as especially impure, a domain, with all its implications, could be preserved exclusively for men and rendered definitive of masculinity, in unchallenged opposition to femininity. The distinction between the music of Yemenite Jewish men and women was to a large extent a function of their different lifestyles and world-views, but more importantly—at least as presented by surviving (male) 'informants'—it expressed the opposing criteria of masculinity and femininity, epitomizing the culturally defined demarcation of the sexes.

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COMMENTARY

LAND REFORM AND CONCEPTS OF OWNERSHIP IN NIGERIA

CAROLINE IFEKA

Introduction

IN this paper, I address the question of land 'nationalization' in Nigeria. Recent changes in legislation have entailed the revocation of all customary rights of possession and transfer, authorizing in their place one national, modern system of land ownership and rights of use, distribution and alienation. As a consequence, all land inside national borders is to be 'held in trust and administered for the use and benefit of all Nigerians' (Francis 1984: 6). This implies important changes in socio-political identities and relations between people and groups, especially in respect of common ('public') and individual ('private') property rights in rural communities whose livelihood depends on the land.

I thank Helen Gardner and Richard Barnwell of the World Wide Fund for Nature (Godalming, Surrey) and Gill Shepherd and the librarians of the Overseas Development Institute for invaluable assistance in giving me access to in-house reports and other materials on conservation programmes. I am also obliged to the librarians of the Royal Anthropological Institute for continuing assistance in locating rare items in their unique ethnographic collection. I am grateful to friends in Nigeria and Cameroon for support while *en brousse*, and to Kirsten Alnaes, who kindly read an earlier draft and offered useful comments.

These changes have scarcely been explored. There is little published data on the impact of legislation 'nationalizing' land¹ or its contribution, through land-use conflicts, to changing representations of person and society and the power relations these encode. Equally scanty is analysis of the legislation as the instrument of a modernizing ruling class in enlarging its private properties and advancing its capacity to accumulate capital by whatever means possible, legal or illegal.

Here, I will use some of my field data to explore these intertwining processes and to evaluate the extent to which they are contributing to changing representations of and relations between person, community and the state in Nigeria. I am currently working with three forest communities inhabiting semi-deciduous and evergreen tropical high forest along the Nigeria-Cameroon border, in an area of the Cross River National Park remote from access roads and accessible only on foot. These communities exploit a series of habitats on a cline from 300 to 1750 metres on the Obudu Plateau. They speak Becheve (an outlier of Tiv, a Kwa language) and Anyang (a semi-Bantu language) and number in total over 4000 people.

Contesting Land

In Nigeria, the Land Use Decree of 1978 empowered local, state and national government administrators to regulate the occupancy, use and transfer of land in the name of greater equality and national 'economic development'.²

1. Despite early documentation of land ownership in Nigeria and Cameroons (Meek 1957), it has been difficult to uncover detailed data on the impact of recent legislation on actual rules and practices in the use, management and ownership of land in the moist forest and forest-savannah zones of Nigeria and Cameroon. However, in 1997, I intend to examine customary and magistrate-court land-dispute records, where they exist in regard to the study area, so as to obtain more in-depth data on land conflict resolution and the influence of the Land Use Decree on judgments and subsequent implementation. To my knowledge, only three researchers have published the results of systematic enquiries in the field on the observed impact of Land Use Decrees on land ownership in these zones in Nigeria and Cameroon, namely Francis (1984), Goheen (1988) and Fisisy (1992), though others (Uchendu 1979, Udo 1990) have contributed library-based assessments. This contrasts with Southeast Asia, where there are more adequate empirical data on the influence of national land-law classifications on post-reform agro-ecological and tenurial practices (cf. Poffenberger 1990: xx, 98).

2. The colonial and post-colonial state has responded to perceived shortfalls in yields by legislating for large-scale agricultural production: for example, the settlement schemes of the 1950s (Harding 1952); government inducements in the 1970s for farmers to enclose lands so as to create larger production units (Udo 1965, Floyd and Adinde 1967); and a Cross River State local government authority's recent decision to promote 'mechanized farming' on 'larger' farms so as to attract unemployed graduates in agricultural science to use their skills to improve yields per unit area.

The Nigerian government's conception of state and national estate as matching public entities of 1978 is reflected in the National Parks Decree (1990), which empowered the federal government to enclose forests and lands so as to preserve biodiversity for the national good. In law the federal government administers the forests enclosed inside the Park, while state and local governments administer the forests and communities enclosed in the Park's support zone. In principle, therefore, all levels of the state are involved in administering protected forests and communities in the 'public interest', so as to 'protect the national heritage' (World Conservation Monitoring Centre 1991: 1).

Strong market demand and rising prices for bush meat and bush mango, together with rapid population growth, are fanning conflict between, on the one hand, groups claiming common property rights, and, on the other hand, persons or families claiming individual property rights over parts of the village territory. The most aggressive seize blocks of forest and seek to exercise individual ownership over hunting ranges and wild bush mango (*irvingia gabonesis*) stations. Once they have become too old and weak to trek the ranges, these men intend to give 'their' bush mango stands and sheds to their sons, who still have the 'power' to work in the bush.

'Privatization' of common property resources is most marked in the most prosperous of the three study villages, Okwa, a tropical high forest Anyang community which is the most distant from roads (eight hours' trek). However, being in the midst of thick forest, it is able to harvest bush products for sale to itinerant Ibo traders for high prices. In this village enclave inside the Park, comfortable households reported annual average cash incomes of N80,000 (£500), two-and-a-half times average household cash income in the other study communities (Ifeka 1996a, 1996b). Some politically assertive households seek to convert a stake or share in the village territory—'general' or common land—into individually owned property. In this they are assisted by kinsmen who live 'out' in town or city, sometimes in government and professional occupations, whose 'modern' educated values encourage them to alienate common resources for the sake of what they call 'economic development' (these men also hope to benefit financially from contracts to promote 'development', e.g. building a health centre, a secondary school, roads, market sheds, etc.). Politically weaker, poorer households uphold their customary right to be allocated annually sufficient land for their subsistence from the common estate. Having fewer educated children, they resist alienation because they wish to manage village lands and forests for their descendants' common benefit. They support a number of recent community resource management initiatives. For example, forest villages with contiguous boundaries engage annually in vigorously contested 'scratches' or 'wars' over access to, and use of, the richest hunting ranges and bush mango stations. Inter-village 'wars' are impelling village authorities to impose access levies in cash on non-indigenous traders, which are deposited in a community 'bank' for community use. Levies are intended to restrict access to non-indigenes and to enable the village as a whole to benefit financially from their common property resource.

Land ownership and use disputes are polarising households into the more and less comfortable who support, respectively, individual and common rights of ownership of village territory and forest resources.³ Incipient class conflict is also encouraging the diffusion of modern concepts of private property and associated 'theories' of private gain for the public good. Land is the object of acute competition between three parties: state agencies claiming that the forests belong to the national estate and are, therefore, public property; communities claiming that they exercise common property rights by virtue of inalienable custom; and individuals insisting that they are entitled to exercise private property rights.⁴

Land is contested by people and groups mobilizing different levels of the political system (village, local government, state and federal government) in support of their 'rights'. National and state elites mobilize to gain exclusive possession of blocks. Village territories, communities and cultures have ceased to be worlds in and of themselves in either thought and practice. These conflicts articulate traditional and modern notions of the person and, in doing so, reflect multiple conflictual and dynamic structuration processes. Disputants invoke simultaneously contradictory norms (cf. Caplan 1995, Johnson 1995).

Contesting Common and Individual Rights

Customary Norms

'Customary' norms define a person as animated by multiple spiritual forces including a bush soul that manifests itself as an animal or a transform, e.g. an elephant, buffalo or leopard.⁵ Persons are partible. Authority is multiply structured between youth, elders and priests/chiefs, on the one hand, and women on the other. Authority too is partible. Rights of use are partible and are shared between all male citizens of the village; rights of possession are vested partly in family heads.

3. However, one recent observer (Forrest 1993: 182) disputes the thesis that rural inequality has increased in the post-structural adjustment years since the mid-1980s.

4. See *Daily Times*, 18 April 1985, p. 8. In the 1980s, customary tenure was being blamed for alleged falls in food crop yields per unit area. However, Forrest (1993: 184) presents data for south-eastern Nigeria in the 1980s that indicates an annual increase of about 2.7 per cent in food crop yields, which he attributes to the impact of continually rising market prices for farm products.

5. Customary representations of the person were similar elsewhere. See Lienhardt 1985, Jackson and Karp 1990 for African conceptions in general, and Ifeka 1982, 1992 for Ibo constructions of the person.

Customary notions of partibility and sharing are reflected in moral and spiritual norms that inform power, however circumscribed. Authority is distributed between, on the one hand, representatives of founding families, village and quarter chiefs who control important secret societies, and, on the other hand, youth who at times seek to impose a majority view on the elders through their role as secret society executives.⁶ Authority is thus 'shared' collaterally among elders and guardians, making their exercise of power consensual and contingent upon smooth networking and alliances between often feuding factions. Authority is also 'shared' vertically with young people, whose executive activities in support of 'custom' empower elders to uphold otherwise severely contested hierarchies based on age seniority, spiritual/mystical powers, and family standing.

The equalitarian theme of 'sharing' a forest resource defined by custom as general or common to all 'brothers' in the village and in other kin-related villages is invariably invoked when hunters fight over access to valued forests rich in small ground mammals. 'Sharing' is also invoked in dispute settlement. For example, the Becheve villages of Balegete in Nigeria and its 'sister' village Matene in Cameroon believe they are descended from the same parents; they say that, because 'our tradition is as one', each is entitled to exploit the other's hunting ranges and forest fauna. These two communities also share some ranges with Okwa, an Anyang enclave community in tropical high forest on their southern boundaries.

In 1989 there was a serious 'scratch' or war over bats involving hunters from all three villages, who were exploiting Matene's bat colonies. The other two villages (Balegete and Okwa) refused Matene's demands to pay an access tax, because as putative 'brothers' and neighbours respectively, they should be able to 'share' and hunt freely in Matene's territory. The three villages were unable in and of themselves to resolve the bat war, partly because they were similar in size, number of guns and contingents of strong-arm youth who carried out raids on each others' territories on both sides of the international border between Nigeria and Cameroon, seizing harvested basins of bush mango, capturing hostages and killing at least two men. As a consequence, the two national governments had to intervene. Officially, they settled the dispute by restoring the status quo ante, so that all three villages exercise equal rights to the disputed ranges and the bat colonies. However, hunters from the three villages are careful to sleep in different sheds. The dispute still smoulders.

The more usual situation is that elders use consensual methods backed by appeal to the village anti-witchcraft *ju-ju* to resolve outstanding inter-village disputes. But if the *ju-ju*'s mystical power to detect and punish witches is not feared sufficiently, one party often refuses to 'obey' the other. For instance, during Matene's most recent 'bush mango' war with Okwa and Balegete, non-Matene hunters and their village elders refused to 'obey' Matene's demands for the

6. Village-wide secret societies honour ancestral and/or animal spirits and are responsible for upholding current concepts of customary land ownership.

payment of a tax to be allowed access to hunting and bush mango ranges. Fighting flares up periodically. Since villages define their identities in part through feuding over access to common properties or village territories, these disputes may be essential to inter-village and village territorial socio-political relations.

Individual Norms

Individual rights of ownership over planted economic trees and naturally germinating oil-palm trees (*eleusinesis guineansis*) are recognized in custom. In forest villages, though not Obudu Plateau forest-edge settlements, women own considerable numbers of banana, plantain, African pear and fruit trees, which they may dispose of as they see fit and transmit to their daughters or brothers' daughters. They also own domestic animals and dispose of their own cash incomes, amounting, in wealthier forest households, to over thirty per cent of total household income.⁷ Men own large numbers of banana, plantain, kola and oil-palm trees, which they transmit, together with their own flocks of domestic animals to their sons and, at times, sister's sons. Today, wealthier men are behaving more aggressively, testing customary property rights to the limit, denying the general (customary) right of other village men to clear a bush fallow they formerly cultivated, and seeking to claim fallows as their own private property. They usually make such claims by maintaining some kind of a presence, for example, setting out *ju-ju* markers, doing some occasional limited clearing or planting, and reducing periods of fallow.

On the Obudu Plateau, in grassland villages several kilometres' trek from the nearest thick forest, powerful elites are mobilizing themselves to carve up more than ninety square kilometres of common land owned by villages and managed in the public interest by a bankrupt parastatal, the Obudu Cattle Ranching Company. The company's collapse has enabled local elites to stake out blocks for their patrons and clients in state and national government agencies to occupy and own outright for private gain if allowed by the state government, the principal shareholder in the bankrupt company, and the federal government, the sovereign owner of all land in Nigeria under the 1978 Land Use Decree. 'Big men' may be given land in exchange for services rendered or may pay some token sum, and local 'small boys' are given handsome 'handshakes' in exchange for making this possible.

As with a similar law in Cameroon, the 1978 Decree encourages the individualization of property, because some national lands can be converted into private property through registration or concessions (grants). Individual rights and personal gain are facilitated by the Land Use Decree and by Park support zone legislation. These practices deny the guiding principle of customary tenure, the

7. At 1995 rates of exchange between the Naira and sterling, this amounted to N24,000 or £190.00 per annum. See Ifeka 1996a, 1996b.

principle of inclusion or incorporation through social adhesion and identities based on birth into the community, age, ritual rank and esteem (cf. Werbner 1980). In excluding collateral claims, inclusive (customary) rights are being converted into exclusive and singular (private/public) rights of possession. The Land Use Decree thus discourages the continuance of customary community property rights: community titles may not be legally enforced because in federal law traditional village authorities are no longer formally recognized as the owners of the land. This withdrawal of formal recognition explains, in part, why the traditional landlords of the Obudu Plateau were unable to obtain a ruling in their favour that the Obudu Cattle Ranching Company should pay the landlords annual rents for land they claim they lease to the Company for its use. At the same time, the traditional landlords are quietly 'dashing' friends and allies with blocks of land for farming and residential building, thus converting customary into private property rights.

National Norms

'National' norms protect the sovereign right of the state and its local government functionaries to own and control the use and transfer of land in the 'imperative interest' of national 'economic development'. The concept of 'public lands' has nowhere been clearly defined, in either contemporary or colonial legislation.⁸ It may be agreed, though, that the phrase 'public' and its implied antonym 'private' invokes, albeit covertly, the Western political ideology of 'good' government by a public agency—the state—on behalf of private citizens, that is, civil society. Thus, individuals (citizens) may exercise the (private) right to occupy and transfer land at the discretion of the (public) bureaucracy.

For example, in the early to mid-1970s, senior army officers took possession of common land on the Mambilla Plateau and developed cattle ranches (perhaps this experience encouraged Major-General Obasanjo's government to pass the Land Use Decree to give such acquisitions legal standing). By the 1980s the Mambilla Plateau had been carved up by elites, the extent of common lands greatly reduced, and many villagers dispossessed of their customary titles and means of subsistence.

Elites are fond of invoking the principle of 'national' or 'public' good to authorize the acquisition of lands in their own names and for their private gain. In doing so, they help reproduce the modern notion of society as being divided into public and private spheres. Similarly, they push the modern notion of the singular person exercising exclusive rights of use and management, and deny the partibility and multiple structuration of customary authority and the person. Other avenues for the diffusion of modern concepts are the decisions made and implemented by Land Use Allocation Committees, regardless of political resistance to 'nationalization' by some sections of rural communities.

8. On the earlier period, see Meek 1957: 88.

Regimes

These ideological constructions transform tenurial relations into regimes (Foucault 1979), that is, normative regulations concerning the putative reasons for which, and mechanisms whereby, land may be allocated by different criteria between people, groups and the state.

In this connection, in what respects may the ideological construction that people put on land use and rights of possession in densely populated zones differ from those of communities which inhabit sparsely populated areas within the same broadly similar ethnic area? Do tenurial regimes in densely and sparsely populated areas, where cultivation is carried out by more and less intensive methods respectively, encode different notions and expressions of balance between people, groups and land?⁹ For example, the Becheve people of the Obudu Plateau and lower forested slopes live in small, scattered settlements in large village territories held in common. Becheve still practise land-extensive shifting cultivation, and like their forefathers at the turn of the century, they regard hunting tracts, streams, bush fallows and relatively undisturbed forest as diffuse points on a continually unfolding, spiritually differentiated landscape (cf. Mansfield 1908: 92). By comparison, the Boki people live in large compact settlements in village territories held in common on the more densely populated and generally deforested Obudu plains. Boki have responded to population pressure by practising a mix of shifting and more intensive cultivation. Nowadays they share tightly demarcated boundaries with neighbouring villages and, unlike their forefathers, they see fallows, farms and patches of disturbed forest as precise points on a bounded landscape differentiated by occasional shrines dedicated to the ancestors of founding families and anti-witchcraft protection spirits (*ju-ju*) (Ifeka, fieldwork data).

Given rapid population growth, widespread deforestation and erosion caused by annual burning for farms and tree-felling for fuelwood, more sustainable methods of cultivation and exploitation of remaining forests are imperative if some forests are to be conserved to protect remaining flora and fauna and watersheds. A strategy that has had some success elsewhere, and which should be trialled in the Park, is community stakeholding in endangered plant resources (i.e. rattan/raffia stands) used in making house roofs and mats as well as in tying sticks used in fencing; also, several men could form themselves into gorilla/elephant stakeholder groups who would seek to reduce hunting so eco-tourists could pay stakeholders to view or sight herds from hides. But there is a catch: implicitly, stakeholder groups claim exclusive rights of ownership, so stakeholding might encourage the diffusion of private property rights in the heart of the forest. Such developments

9. Depending perhaps on their study area and classificatory predilections, Lagemann (1977: 23) offers a fourfold classification of farming and residential space, which he identifies with different types of usufructory right, while Chubb (1961: 57) and Floyd (1969: 58) offer fivefold classifications.

have been described as 'creeping privatisation' on 'public' lands enclosed to protect biodiversity (Beinart 1987: 15–19).

Different land-tenure systems therefore articulate conflicts between comfortable and poor households, whose interests are in individual (exclusive) and customary (inclusive) titles of ownership and use respectively. Land claims encode power contests between sections of rural society. Tenurial regimes are conflict-ridden systems of power. In principle, each set of claims authorizes a different, and contradictory, concentration and dispersal of titles to resources between, respectively, village communities, their common properties (village territories), individuals and the state, representing the interests of the 'national' or 'public' good. These contexts suggest some changes from a past in which communities were, in and of themselves, arenas of conflict over status and ritual power offset by an ideology of balance achieved through sharing. Today, the foci of conflict and associated conceptions and practices of rights of possession over land are infinitely more wide-ranging: local-level processes of political and economic accumulation interlock with regional, national and international forces of property accumulation. However remote from roads, these communities on the Nigeria-Cameroon border have ceased to be arenas of conflict only in and of themselves (cf. Mukamuri 1988).

Conclusion

Let me now begin to draw the threads of this account together. I have suggested that legislation creating a national system of land tenure reflects the Nigerian state's interest in appropriating wealth-creating resources for 'development' activities. Arguably profitable national ventures include agricultural development projects to raise annual yields of food crops ('Feed the Nation'), the exploitation and sale of natural assets (rivers, forests, off-shore mineral reserves, etc.) to shore up the state's hard-pressed currency reserves, the conservation of biodiversity and the 'development' of wilderness tourism through the preservation of large blocks of forest. The state's advisers also know that maintenance of the biological 'core' of life enables continuing capital accumulation,¹⁰ so that enclosing forests inside Parks for their preservation can be a government priority as was the case in Nigeria under President Major-General Babangida.

10. We may agree with Anderson and Grove (1987: 5) that nostalgic visions of Africa as a natural wilderness obscure the interest of the African and Western state in retaining a fundamental core of genetic stocks as a platform for biologically engineered tropical reconstruction (cf. Grimes 1972). The role of the biological core of life in enabling capital accumulation is not a theme that most ecologists address, but see Anon. 1992, Shiva 1991.

Of course, the role of land-allocator also gives modern elites—state and local government functionaries, as well as traditional elites acting as village authorities—many opportunities to profit personally, usually by demanding a ‘commission’ in return for land grant favours. Land ‘nationalization’ thus articulates the modern African state’s class character in economic terms (cf. Leys 1976: 43) as well as expressing a dominant-class ideology. State functionaries and other modern political elites assume that land nationalization is a good thing, because in their opinion it enables ‘backward’ communities to substitute ‘unproductive’ (unprofitable) tenurial and agricultural practices for ‘productive’ techniques that will raise yields, feed a rapidly growing nation and transform cultivation into a highly profitable economic activity. Functionaries also express their class role in their belief that a national system of tenure will remove the many different rules of customary tenure that they believe obstruct economic development and modernization. They may note resistance to the reforms on the part of kin groups and communities who cling to customary rules of tenure—i.e. common ownership of all resources located inside territory boundaries—as markers of their cultural (ethnic/sub-ethnic) distinctiveness compared to neighbouring communities. But in their view, sooner or later these residues of an ‘uncivilized’ past dominated by cultural difference will enter into oblivion: communities should be absorbed into a state-directed national system of land-tenure under which a uniform national economy and culture will evolve.

I would like to suggest that these reforms may become a vehicle of the state to subvert the individual’s consciousness by turning a once alien (that is, colonial) notion of people-land relations and of exclusive rights in land into what Benjamin calls ‘covert common sense’ (Benjamin 1988: 23). The state is engaging in mystification even on the nation’s forested frontiers—that is, in the symbolic condensing of an idea so that it becomes a diffuse notion rather than a ‘thinkable or talked about, focused-upon concept’, a ‘prerequisite for turning an erstwhile covert ideology into covert common sense’ (ibid.). Is the state becoming a vast enterprise in cultural engineering, seeking to set itself up as a bureaucratically administered ‘Over-self’ into which citizens should merge their customary and local identities (ibid.: 25)?

Reviewing his regime’s progress, Major-General Babangida said that he and his advisers had worked hard to ‘change the minds of the people’. They believe that ‘Nigerian...society is now highly sanitized’ in the sense that they have compelled reluctant ‘indisciplined’ citizens to assume their ‘basic civil responsibilities’ (*West Africa*, 22 February 1993, pp. 281–5). All in all, they have bettered the condition of ‘our people’ by providing for the absorption of local communities in the Nigerian State’s ‘pragmatic ideology of development’ (Turner 1976: 67). This is a sombre note on which to end.

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EAVESDROPPING ON A CROSSED-LINE BETWEEN THE MANAMBU OF PAPUA NEW GUINEA AND THE MĒBENGOKRE OF CENTRAL BRAZIL

VANESSA LEA

In this article,¹ I would like to explore the analogies between the Manambu of Avatip, Papua New Guinea, as portrayed in Simon Harrison's book, *Stealing People's Names: History and Politics in a Sepik River Cosmology* (1990) and certain central Brazilian groups, above all the Mēbengokre, a Northern Jê-speaking group, as described in my doctoral thesis, 'Names and *Nekrets*: A Conception of Wealth' (Lea 1986).² Reading Harrison's book gave me a bizarre sensation of *déjà vu*, as if I was overhearing a telephone conversation between the Mēbengokre

1. This article is based on a paper given at a colloquium on Melanesia and Amazonia, organized by James Weiner and held at Satterthwaite, Cumbria, England, from 29th April to 1st May, 1994. Resources from the Fundação de Amparo à Pesquisa do Estado de São Paulo (FAPESP) allowed me to attend the colloquium. I thank participants for their comments, and Anthony Seeger for his suggestions, while remaining responsible for what is said here. It was on that occasion that I learnt of Harrison's second monograph (1993), which is not dealt with in this paper. It would be interesting to compare it with Verswijver's study of Mēbengokre warfare, published in 1992. Although these two monographs on warfare are written in different styles they permit interesting parallels.

2. My thesis was written in Portuguese and is not yet available in English.

and the Manambu, while at the same time listening to a soliloquy addressing my own concern with the significance of personal names.³

It is not only the parallels but the contrasts between the Mēbengokre and the Manambu which provide food for thought. The most important parallel between them is an obsession with personal names. In both societies, names are jealously guarded property which can be lent out, stolen, lost and retrieved. Harrison characterizes names as 'immaterial' property, an adjective which shows how language tends to imprison us within our own folk categories. The *Oxford English Dictionary* defines 'immaterial' as 'not material, incorporeal; *of no essential consequence, unimportant*' (my italics). I prefer the neologism 'non-material', as it is less ambiguous.⁴ It is not that Harrison is being duped by language: on the contrary, this problem of language merely reveals why he goes to such lengths to justify treating names as property. Our respective data advocate a reconsideration of the universal validity of the Western world's separation of the material and immaterial world.⁵

The first significant contrast between the two societies is that, for the Manambu, names and magical and ritual powers constitute a single category. Knowledge of the 'real' names of the totemic ancestors provides access to magical spells, allowing one to invoke the ancestor immanent in a particular name. For Manambu women, names constitute the personal identity of their children. For men, certain names have an underlying significance involving secret prerogatives in the men's cult, known only to initiated men. Names, spells and secret prerogatives belong to patrilineal subclans. For the Mēbengokre, names and prerogatives belong to matri-houses (or Houses),⁶ i.e. uterine descent groups, whereas knowledge of magic is not attached to descent groups and tends to be passed from father to son.

Among other peoples who comprise the category known as Northern Jê, the Timbira (divisible into at least six peoples) tend to attach prerogatives to names

3. Coincidentally, Harrison and I both began fieldwork in July 1977, so that we started from the standpoint of a similar intellectual climate. For example, Bourdieu was influential at the time, and his work seems to have been important to Harrison, as it was to myself. It was Mauss's essay on the gift (1985 [1923–4]), especially his account of mana (the magical, spiritual and religious power of people) and the hau (the spiritual power of things) among the Polynesian Maori, that first helped me make sense of Mēbengokre personal names.

4. I think it was Cecilia McCallum who suggested this word to me when I first presented my work in English.

5. This echoes the disavowal by other researchers of lowland South America concerning the separation of the natural and the supernatural (see, for example, Viveiros de Castro 1986 and Descola 1986) and the discovery of the frequent interchangeability of people and things, subjects and objects, in Melanesia (see Strathern 1987, 1988).

6. These Houses are moral persons in a Lévi-Straussian sense. For this author's characterization of 'house-based societies' see Lévi-Strauss 1983 and 1984. For a more specific discussion of the compatibility of Lévi-Strauss's definition of house-based societies with the Mēbengokre, see Lea 1995a.

which involve ceremonial roles, not magical powers. In Xavante society (Central Jê), patrilineages own not names but magical powers, such as the right to use a certain species of wood as a pillow to foresee the future through dreams. As with the Manambu, there is intense rivalry over the ownership of this type of property. From Maybury-Lewis's point of view (1974 [1967]), it was the fact that the same prerogative could be found in different clans, from one village to another, that made the notion of descent problematic in the Xavante case. Müller (1976) notes that the ownership of magical powers and adornments is an aspect of the political prestige of lineages and an object of rivalry and disputes within Xavante society.

For the Mëbengokre, personal names form a complementary category with *nekrets*, the heritage of their matri-houses. The category *nekrets*, sometimes explained to me as that which is hoarded, comprises a wide variety of prerogatives. It includes a large number of adornments used by men, women and children on ceremonial occasions, for instance, many different feather headdresses, each of which bears some distinguishing characteristic according to the House it belongs to. Men inherit the right to eat specific portions of meat, while women inherit the right to raise certain animals as pets. Countless songs and ceremonial prerogatives are *nekrets*. Furthermore, certain Houses have the right to store specific ceremonial items within their interiors, such as the gourd rattles which mark the rhythm in all ceremonial dances (this being the only musical instrument used by the Mëbengokre). The role of ceremonial leader (*ngre nhòn dzwoy*), which is vaguely reminiscent of the Manambu *simbuk*, is the most prestigious of the heritable roles belonging to a House. There are also non-ritual prerogatives, such as the owner of 'odds'. When somebody brings fledglings from the forest, the owner of odds takes the odd number of birds: for instance, when there are three he obtains one.

Harrison's focus on names and magical powers, as linked to the identity of persons and groups, fits in well with my analysis of Mëbengokre names as the metaphysical essence of the ancestors, a gene-like quality which individuals acquire through their names. From what I gleaned of Melanesia from Harrison, this conceptualization of names would be perfectly palatable in that part of the world. Analysing Melanesian gift economies but also reflecting native idioms, Strathern portrays persons as being multiply constituted and internally partible (1988: 197). Objects share this quality and circulate, in the form of 'gifts', as parts of persons (*ibid.*: 192). In the Melanesian gift economies, man's identity is represented as having attachable and detachable parts (*ibid.*: 200–1). Thus the Western opposition of active subjects and inert objects hinders the understanding of Melanesian representations focusing on persons and their enchainments of relations (*ibid.*: 165, 369). Kopytoff, arguing along similar lines, shows that the Western separation of people and things can produce moral dilemmas even in our own culture (1986: 84). Harrison cites both these authors to support his own perspective (1990: 198). Their insights can be profitably applied to the interpretation of the circulation of names and prerogatives in Mëbengokre society. As Harrison also shows (*ibid.*: 198), it has often been noted how Melanesian wealth

may represent body substances and substitute for them symbolically: shell wealth is equated with semen, meat with human flesh or milk, etc.

When Harrison affirms (*ibid.*) that ultimately Avatip subclans *are* the names and ritual powers they possess, nothing could express more appropriately the nature of the matrilineal clans of another central Brazilian group, the Bororo, studied by Crocker. Their clans are characterized by their *aroe*, which, according to Crocker, might be termed 'totems' (1977: 247). *Aroe* denotes the soul or sometimes a name (Crocker 1985: 33) and 'designates some immaterial essence which is the metaphysical dimension of a human being' (*ibid.*: 15).⁷ Harrison describes Manambu names and ritual powers as the essence or substance of subclans. I have used these same terms while referring to M̄bengokre names and prerogatives (Lea 1986), despite an uncomfortable feeling that somehow essence and substance were supposed to be polar opposites. Melanesian ethnographies may perhaps resolve the problem of how to make these two concepts compatible. It seems to me that the whole issue of substance, much discussed in Jê ethnographies, has been a red herring.

It has been argued that when, in Jê nuclear families, a mother, father or sibling must abstain from eating certain foods when one of the family members is ill, for fear of worsening the condition of the sick person, this implies a notion of shared physical substance or consanguinity, in complementary opposition to ceremonial ties which link individuals to the public and jural sphere.⁸ The emphasis on this 'community of substance'⁹ has been used to argue for the unsuitability of the notion of unilineal descent in such societies. Seeger (1980) coined the term 'corporeal descent group' to characterize the constituent units of such societies, affirming that descent is based on native concepts of physical relations. One of the constant features of Timbira society is the distinction between name-givers and genitors, which are held to be irreducible categories. While the parents (or, principally, the father's semen) fabricate a child's body, under no circumstances must they give their own names to the child. This role is filled ideally by the parents' cross-sex siblings, or alternatively by the child's grandparents (these genealogical positions being designated by the same terms). In other words, the parents produce their child as the raw material which the name-givers transform into a person. This indicates the problematic character of the notion of corporeal

7. The Bororo (a non-Jê-speaking people) were classed together with the Jê by the Harvard Central-Brazil project, in terms of forming a common cultural complex; cf. *Dialectical Societies: The Gê and Bororo of Central Brazil*, edited by Maybury-Lewis (1979). Viveiros de Castro, in a recent seminar at the University of São Paulo, has questioned whether the Jê are not in fact as close to other peoples of Central Brazil, such as the Karajá and the Mundurucu, as to the Bororo. While this is a point is a good one, Bororo social organization is nevertheless very reminiscent of that of the M̄bengokre, which in its turn is reminiscent of the organization of Manambu clan groups. See Crocker 1969.

8. See Da Matta 1976, 1979; Melatti 1979.

9. See Da Matta 1979.

descent group. From the perspective of the Northern Jê the physical body is perishable, while it is names and prerogatives, the metaphysical essence of the ancestors, that transcend time. There are also the secondary burials, which formerly seem to have been customary practice in many Jê societies. This is compatible with the contrast emphasized in Jê ethnographies between flesh which perishes and bone which does not. It seems probable that the flesh represented the individualistic aspect of the person, lost for ever at death, while the bones represented the person's imperishable substance, contained in names and prerogatives. Among the Manambu, bone is associated with the patrilineal aspect of society and with names, while blood is associated with matrilineation and with uterine relationships which cut across descent groups.

The relationship between the living and the dead appears to be sharply contrasted when one compares the Mēbengokre with the Manambu. The Manambu invoke dead ancestors through spells and sacrifices. A dead couple inhabit simultaneously the village of origin of the husband's subclan and the house they inhabited in life. Although Harrison does not enter into details concerning the dead, they appear to have a benevolent relationship with the living. By contrast, indigenous peoples of lowland South America are generally eager to rid themselves of the dead, and the Mēbengokre are no exception. The dead are dangerous because they miss the living and seize any opportunity of to carry them off to the village of the dead. The dead return *en masse* to attend the climax of the great naming ceremonies held to confirm 'beautiful' names, those which entitle their bearers to be honoured in a naming ceremony and consequently to be transformed into beautiful persons. On the final night of the ceremony, the living abandon their houses to the dead and congregate in a circle in front of their respective houses, outside two inner circles of dancers. The children who are to have their names confirmed at dawn occupy the innermost circle, furthest from the dead. The close relatives of children and adolescents occupying inherited roles follow close behind, smoking pipes to ward off the dead. If a predecessor were to draw near to his living successor, the latter would automatically die. This implies that the conjunction of these two persons produces a short circuit which proves fatal to the living.¹⁰

Other lowland South American indigenous peoples, and the Jê in particular, have often been contrasted with African societies with ancestor cults and descent groups, which are also corporate groups controlling economic resources.¹¹ The genealogies of lowland indigenous peoples tend to be shallow in depth, and it is often inferred that there is therefore a complete lack of concern with ancestors. Christine Hugh-Jones (1979) noted that among the Barasana genealogical amnesia

10. This idea was suggested by analogy with Hérítier's (1989 [1979]) analysis of certain forms of incest as producing a short circuit.

11. See Carneiro da Cunha 1978 and 1993; Da Matta 1976; Overing 1977; Seeger, Da Matta and Viveiros de Castro 1979; Albert 1985.

is induced by the repetition of personal names in short cycles. This point is equally valid for the Mēbengokre. The Barasana re-establish contact with the ancestors through male ritual. In the Mēbengokre case, the essence of the ancestors is transmitted to the living along with their names and prerogatives. The dead who attend Mēbengokre ceremonies are individuals attached to the living through memory. It is held that the dead eventually re-die, being transformed into whirlwinds. In other words, the dead maintain their individuality as long as anyone remembers them, eventually subsiding into empty names and prerogatives which are taken over by their successors. People are not indifferent to the ancestors: they fully recycle them until there is nothing left over. In this connection, it is notable that traditional stone ovens (*ki*) are identical in appearance to grave mounds. Although the Mēbengokre never pointed out this analogy to me, an association between the two seems inescapable. The dead are 'cooked' in their grave to separate out what is perishable from that which can be retrieved by society.

For the Manambu, there is a dichotomy between close ascendants, from whom direct descent is public knowledge, and the totemic ancestors, known today only in their metamorphosed form, as mountains, rivers etc., the creators of the world as it exists today. The Mēbengokre do not appear to distinguish pre-social origins as a distinct category of time. In fact, they do not appear to distinguish myth and history; rather, there is a direct continuity between them, even if today's humanity is a pale shadow of what it was in the past in terms of the feats men performed.

Harrison describes how specific totemic ancestors created or became transformed into aspects of the physical environment, and even into wards, ceremonial houses and artefacts (1990: 45). The Mēbengokre say that women in general transformed themselves into fish in mythical times, and the feathers of a giant bird, slain by the Mēbengokre, were transformed into the birds that exist today. The giant bird was killed by the ancestors of a present-day House, which claims the ownership of a type of feather wig, acquired as a trophy at the bird's death. The Karaja not only have the same artefact but even call it by the same name.¹² Some of their ancestors created hills and rivers, although a more common theme is the acquisition of already existing goods from others, as when Venus brought horticultural crops down from the sky. A Manambu ancestor created daylight, whereas the Mēbengokre acquired night in a calabash from a mythical father-in-law. For the Mēbengokre, objects of material culture were either created or obtained by the ancestors rather than being considered the transfigured forms of ancestors.

The Manambu consider that names encapsulate their bearer's spirit. Consistent with this idea is the fact that the pronouncing of a victim's name is essential to

12. This wig-like artefact is called *ròri-ròri*. Its existence among the Karaja was recently brought to my notice by André de Toral, who carried out research with the Karaja for his MA thesis. Detailed comparative research on material culture has yet to be done: it could help to break down the immemorial homogeneity of the Mēbengokre material and ceremonial heritage. Further details of ceremonial acquisitions from other indigenous peoples are given in Lea 1986.

guarantee the efficacy of sorcery. This is equally valid for the M̄bengokre and the Bororo, demonstrating the metonymical character of names.

Harrison describes the pedigree of a name, transmitted regularly within the same subclan, as important evidence of ownership. Serial ownership among the M̄bengokre has equivalent significance (Lea 1992).¹³ Both the Manambu and the M̄bengokre rationalize the lack of cross-generational continuity in the use of names within a group claiming ownership, affirming that it reacquired them or that they were not publicly known because they were used as secondary names and hence unheard. Harrison (1990: 56) mentions that each Manambu subclan tries to maintain a collective homonymy between its mythological figures and its own living members. It is the fact that the members of a subclan are the namesakes of their totemic ancestors that links the phenomenal with the spirit world. For the M̄bengokre, personal names close the gap between the eponymous ancestors and the living, but they also seem to be permeated by the essence of each subsequent bearer. This is suggested by the practice of people substituting dead relatives with living ones through names, as when a mother transmits the name of a dead child to a subsequent child (Lea 1992).

The idea of an organic totality is a recurrent theme among the M̄bengokre and is also central to Harrison's analysis of the Manambu. Harrison suggests that this totality, achieved in rare moments of male cult ritual, is an ideological compensation for the relative lack of polity on a daily basis when people are absorbed with everyday concerns of subsistence (1990: 193–4). This argument applies equally well to the M̄bengokre. A totality is produced by naming ceremonies, whose enactment requires the presence of the whole of the living and dead population of a village and whose efficacy is dependent upon a mosaic of roles, offices, songs and artefacts provided by a wide network of Houses. These major ceremonies, lasting several months from beginning to end, can be suspended at any point when disharmony erupts in the village.¹⁴ In the past, when warfare was a normal activity of daily life, it may have been more difficult than nowadays to stage two naming ceremonies annually. An atmosphere of supreme harmony is experienced at the climax of rituals, with the entire village sharing food, camped in a compact circle with no walls dividing them.

Among the Manambu, personal names and magical powers transcend society. They are pre-social, in the sense that they were created by the totemic ancestors with whom the Manambu do not directly trace genealogical descent. Each subclan's patrimony of names and magical powers represent its portion of this finite and perennial order of the universe. As nothing is conceived as having been created since the beginning of time, one group's loss is another's gain. Like the

13. We appear to be referring to the same phenomenon by different names.

14. Historical narratives mention the treacherous ambush and slaughter of hunting parties while camping in the forest to amass sufficient game for the collective feast on the final night of the ceremony.

Manambu, the Mēbengokre and other Jê seem oblivious to the idea of creation. A classic example from mythology is the theft of fire from the jaguar. Nothing represents better the idea of portions of a totality than the inherited right to eat specific portions of tapir meat, the largest game animal in the area. Each House owns one or more specific portions; adding them together, one obtains a whole animal or the whole of society.

The Manambu are part of a complex network of trading relationships which is reminiscent of the Upper Xingu in central Brazil rather than the Mēbengokre. One of the Manambu's neighbours and trading partners are the Iatmul, from whom many ritual items have been obtained, through trade rather than war. Harrison recalls (1990: 1) that Bateson described personal names, debated and disputed, as providing a theoretical image of the whole of Iatmul culture. This had escaped my memory when describing Mēbengokre names as total social facts (Lea 1992). Warfare for the Mēbengokre appears to have been equivalent to trade for the Manambu. Prisoners of war were a source for the learning of names, songs etc., from other indigenous groups, and war booty was transformed into *nekrets*, augmenting the heritage of the House of the person who first acquired any particular item. Harrison describes how the Manambu attempt to fit Western goods and offices into their hereditary totemic system (1990: 78, 177): the Mēbengokre transformed numerous Western goods into hereditary *nekrets*. One example of a widely disputed prerogative is the right to wear a red hat. It is held that when the first white man died at the hands of a Mēbengokre, a red hat was taken as a trophy from the victim's head, henceforth becoming his *nekrets*. Red cloth also used to be a prerogative, but nowadays it is worn 'inauthentically' (*kaygo*) by all women.

A Mēbengokre village consists of a circle of Houses laid out in accordance with the axis of the sun's path, from east to west. In the Manambu village studied by Harrison, the oldest ceremonial houses are referred to as the prow and stern of a canoe. Among the Mēbengokre, the east is associated with the idea of base, legs, and source or beginning. The west is associated with the idea of top and represents the head. North and south are known as the sides of the belly, from which one can deduce that the navel corresponds to the zenith of the sun at midday. Each portion of the village circle corresponds to the 'standing-place' (*dzam dzà*) of a specific House, though not every House is represented in every Mēbengokre village, and some populous Houses, comprised of numerous abodes, end up invading the 'standing-place' of a neighbouring House.

Manambu villages have no central square but consist of a succession of wards, one for every subclan. The domestic houses¹⁵ are at the rear, the club-houses of non-initiated men in the centre, and the ceremonial houses, which are simultaneously club-houses for initiated men, at the front. Domestic houses are a miniature of village space, with the women and children occupying the outer walls and

15. In Lévi-Straussian terms (1981 [1947]), both the Manambu and the Mēbengokre have harmonious regimes, the first being patrilineal and patrilocal, the second matrilineal and uxori-local. There is not space to discuss this point here.

the men the central area. They sound reminiscent of the Barasana houses described by the Hugh-Joneses (1979). Conversely, there is no pre-eminently male space in M̄bengokre houses. The correct place for men is in the men's house, at the centre of the village. The M̄bengokre have no secret men's cult from which the women are excluded. In a sense, Melanesian ethnographies seem to have contaminated Jê ethnographies (at least those concerning the M̄bengokre), inducing them to exaggerate the exclusion of women from ritual activities.¹⁶

Dualism has been taken as one of the marked characteristics of Jê societies. Harrison also mentions it for the Manambu. One of the three Manambu clan groups is demographically so insignificant that there is virtually a moiety system with respect to exogamy (1990: 43); there are also ritual moieties which cross-cut the division into descent groups. However, dualism seems so prevalent the world over that I have never been entirely convinced of it having special significance for the Jê.

The similarities between the Manambu and the M̄bengokre inevitably invite one to try and reconcile the equally striking contrasts between them. The most obvious one is the question of descent. In lowland South American social anthropology, New Guinea is held up as a paradigm for questioning the validity of descent theory. It is therefore somewhat surprising to find Harrison employing a model of descent so unhesitatingly. He argues that patrilineal descent is rigidly adhered to and is thus unproblematic. Flexibility occurs instead at the level of the patrimony of the totemic ancestors. While this is conceived of as perennial, its distribution is in a state of flux. This patrimony is the object of rivalry, conflict and competition. Although its constituent categories are fixed, the social groups which own any particular item of wealth are subject to historical change. A subclan's patrimony is a measure of its relative prestige value in the community. Personal names, ritual and magical powers are scarce because they are conceived of as a finite pool (1990: 55, 200).

In describing the case of the M̄bengokre, I considered using the terms 'lineage' and 'clan'. The Jê literature presents a dizzying array of terms, domestic clusters, segments, clans, matrilineages, matriline. Maybury-Lewis dismissed all these terms, as far as the Northern Jê are concerned, as adding up to nothing more than the 'cumulative effects of uxorilocality' (1979: 304). The M̄bengokre distinguish clearly between houses as abodes (*kikre*) and as matri-houses (*kikre dzam dzà*), each with its own distinctive heritage of personal names and prerogatives. The emphasis is thus on a House as a property-owning group existing from time immemorial. The same Houses occur from one village to another, but people are not singled out as the founders of lineages. Houses are designated with reference to one of their major items of wealth (such as the owner of the yellow feather headdress) or their mythological exploits (e.g. 'the House that killed the [giant] bird'). This emphasis on property led me to engage with Lévi-Strauss's

16. Harrison does not examine the question of gender in any detail, and this issue will not be dealt with in this paper.

concept of house-based societies, despite the fact that he attributes this type of social formation to cognatic societies (Lea 1995a).

Among the Manambu, thoroughgoing differentiation is achieved through personal names: coevals should not be namesakes. According to Harrison, there may be no perceptible differences in an item of material culture from one subclan to another besides its name. Myths may also be identical from one subclan to another in all but the names of the protagonists (1990: 56).¹⁷ The linguistic exogamy of Tukanoan peoples offers an interesting parallel to the Manambu. Hugh-Jones notes (1995) that they also have material objects or plant species which may be distinguishable in nothing more than name.

For the Mēbengokre, names alone are not a sufficient factor of differentiation. If two Houses have the right to use a red macaw tail-feather, they will each use a different species or will add petal-like down from different species of birds to form tassels on the tail-feather. One Manambu clan-group has red totems, another black ones, these two colours being the minimum differentiating feature of many heritable Mēbengokre adornments. When the Manambu dispute a name, as a temporary solution one side may agree to use the male form and the other the female form (the difference being in the suffix). The Mēbengokre divide ownership of disputed pets in the same fashion. One House raises males of the species, the other females. Among both Manambu and Mēbengokre, certain wealth items are exclusive to a subclan or House, while others can be found in a number of them. Sense can be made of this apparent untidiness by having recourse to the notion of polythetic categories, advocated in another context by Needham (1975). The same element may be found in different groups and is not therefore a sufficient defining feature. It is the sum of elements which differentiates one group from another.

Despite considering patrilineal descent unproblematic in the Manambu case, Harrison lays great emphasis on the importance of matrimonial alliance and links created through uterine kinship. A subclan's most important allies are its sisters' sons. Harrison goes so far as to say that a subclan is held together in relation to its unmarriageable sisters' sons and not through patrilineal descent (1990: 36) and that agnatic descent lines are generated by uterine alliance relations (*ibid.*: 37). If subclan members were to marry their sisters' sons, they would be donor and recipient in respect of their bridewealth and mortuary payments (neither of which have any equivalent among the Mēbengokre). Patrification is an important aspect of Mēbengokre social organization because formal friends are inherited through one's father. An ideal marriage is one in which a woman marries her mother's formal friend and a male ego marries a formal friend's daughter.¹⁸ Harrison talks of 'onomastic exogamy' when referring to the uttering of spells. To be effective,

17. Harrison mentions versions of myths disparaged as lies. A similar situation was encountered with the Mēbengokre, but I have not yet been able to sort this matter out.

18. There is not space for more details here. The question is treated at length in Lea 1995b.

one must know the names of two people of the subclan that owns them and the names of two of its allies (1990: 57). Melatti (1979) coined the term 'onomastic incest' to describe Eastern Timbira practices. This expression is equally valid for the Mēbengokre. A woman loses her brother, who goes off to live uxorilocally, fabricating children in another House, but this same brother returns his names and prerogatives to transform his sister's son into a person. Women lend out their names and prerogatives to their brothers' daughters but later retrieve them to transmit to their daughters' daughters. Harrison describes how Manambu children receive not more than five names from their subclan. Once a person is bereaved, he or she acquires the usufruct of a name from the maternal subclan. A person acquires a different name from this same source at each bereavement. This would seem to imply that for the greater part of their lives, most Manambu are known effectively by names acquired from their maternal subclan rather than from their own subclan. Among the Mēbengokre, it is the fact that grandparents may give the usufruct of their names to their grandchildren, just as women lend names to their brothers' daughters, that often leads to confusion concerning the true owners of names. This distinction between true and inauthentic name-bearers is shared by the Manambu.

Harrison uses the expression 'complementary filiation' to emphasize that individuals are linked as closely to their mother's subclan as to their own (1990: 37). Despite the scorn that has been poured on this expression, it seems a good depiction of Mēbengokre society. One's closest relatives, after those of one's own House, are those of one's father's House, and there is a close relationship between grandparents and grandchildren. When grandparents give the usufruct of names and prerogatives to grandchildren other than those in the direct uterine line, it seems simpler to attribute this to the link with one's grandchildren than to the products of alliances.

Harrison argues that ritual is not merely a distortion of reality, nor does it serve to maintain the status quo. In so far as a ritual manifests a temporary crystallization of power relations, it serves to forge differences in status (1990: 4). This could throw light on the significance of ritual for the Mēbengokre. Major naming ceremonies are not only becoming more common with the demise of warfare, they also provide new channels of social differentiation. To become a beautiful person, a child requires not only the right sort of names but also a sizeable network of kin to meet the expenses of the ceremony. Moreover, contact with national society is facilitating the creation of self-made leaders. As such, they can summon up the economic resources for expensive ceremonies better than anyone else. The late Coronel Pombo, who initiated relations with gold prospectors, is a perfect example of a Big Man. The case best known to me, however, is that of Raoni. As a leader whose power stemmed from his role as a go-between, as an intermediary between the whites and the Mēbengokre, he was able to honour each of his children with naming ceremonies. Among the ceremonies he patronized was *bemp*, the most elaborate of all, which allowed several boys (besides his own sons) to benefit from his generosity. At the village of Gorotire, in 1983, this

same ceremony was staged with the respective chiefs flying in plane-loads of biscuits and soft drinks (Lea 1984). Rank was already in evidence in the village at that time. The chiefs and their close relatives lived in a central street, with brick houses and electric light. The poorest villagers, denigrated as immigrants,¹⁹ resided in a traditional circle of houses off the main street.

Manambu ritual status gives a person prestige but little authority in the context of secular life. This applies equally to the Mēbengokre. The image that springs to mind to depict them is the contrast between a decadent aristocracy and the industrial bourgeoisie. In the village where research was carried out, the most prestigious House in mythological terms—where, among other things, the pupils of the eyes originated—was occupied by a tiny ramshackle abode. Whites were generally oblivious to the existence of the traditional monolingual chief. An up-and-coming elite was being formed of those who had learned Portuguese, were semi-literate and above all could earn a wage from the national Indian Agency (FUNAI). As with the Manambu, there is some attempt to maintain the two spheres as distinct, but increasingly the knowledge of the young competes with the age-graded hierarchy of adult men. Emphasis is laid on demographic strength in Harrison's portrayal of the contemporary Manambu. His argument sounds somewhat Darwinian but may correctly characterize what is happening. The stronger a subclan's demographic power, the greater its chances of laying claim to the names of other groups and defraying the expenses of debates over name ownership. There is a decidedly ceremonial aspect to debates, approximating them to Mēbengokre naming ceremonies. Procedures are highly stereotyped and formalized, sometimes lasting more than twenty-four hours, during which time the participants must be fed by the debaters and their allies. Debaters may enact extracts from myths, claiming to be the legitimate So-and-So, and women dance in the latter parts of the proceedings (1990: 156, 161–62).

Harrison argues that at least one subclan is gradually trying to achieve ritual dominance over the rest of the community, thus transforming the system into one of hereditary rank (1990: 6–7). The starting-point of my research on the Mēbengokre was to understand the etymology of the word *nekrets*, which is nowadays used to designate Western industrial goods. There is also a move towards the institutionalization of rank in Mēbengokre society and the emergence of Big Men. If names are as important as ever, traditional *nekrets* is tending to be submerged by the new *nekrets* or manufactured goods. It has long been recognized by anthropologists that matrilineal societies tend to undergo greater disruption than patrilineal ones with the onslaught of Western civilization. This may at least partially explain the difference in the impact of Western society between the Mēbengokre and the Manambu, but this question is too complex to be discussed within the limits of this article.

19. The precise meaning of this designation was not entirely clear; it seemed to bear some relation to past fissions and fusions.

Harrison focuses on questions of history, politics and cosmology. He notes that within the anthropological literature on Melanesia, there has been a discussion of the extent to which religion has been developed in some societies whereas others are predominantly secular (1990: 199). Harrison disavows the separation of religion from culture (*ibid.*: 85). This again raises the problem of the categories one uses in analysing a body of data. My work has focused on social organization, cosmology and gender, without ever having recourse to the notion of religion. This is related to Harrison's observation that a false dichotomy is created when economics is considered to be relevant to the gift-exchange and prestige economies of Melanesia but not to the Manambu, with their lack of food surpluses and their immaterial property (1990: 171). The Jê were once considered marginal to the tropical forest cultural area of lowland South America, due partly to their low level of technology, their lack of ceramics, weaving and canoes; in other words, they were deemed to have no significant property. If Harrison labours the point that names are thing-like, this allows him to highlight the limitations of our language, showing that anthropology tends to oppose material goods to symbolic ones, when in reality material goods also have a symbolic aspect. Harrison emphasizes that he is not propounding an idealist interpretation; rather, he is trying to show that the Manambu have a semiotic prestige economy involving culturally constituted values and meaning. Names and ritual powers are instrumental to individuals and groups in pitting their relative value against one another. This discussion could perhaps be furthered by considering the issue of honour.²⁰

Harrison's work has provided me a clearer understanding of the Mëbengokre. The consubstantiality between the Manambu and their totems (1990: 48) could equally well characterize the relation between the Mëbengokre and their personal names and heritable prerogatives. In both societies, people fight over names, verbally and even physically. In both, what are at stake are unique, imperishable values. This helps to make sense of conflicts over non-material property which are intrinsic to both societies. Both the Manambu and the Mëbengokre recognize that some groups (subclans or Houses) become extinct while others flourish and may fission. Both distinguish rightful from actual possession and are aware that names and rights may be gradually appropriated or usurped from their true owners. And in both societies, allies may temporarily deputize for the owners of rights, or assume the safekeeping of rights during periods when the proper owners lack the appropriate people to exercise them. In sum, names seem to have an identical flavour for the Manambu and the Mëbengokre. Strathern (e.g. 1987, 1988) describes the composite character and partibility of persons as a widespread image conjured up by Melanesian idioms. This offers an additional perspective on the

20. A Korean student of mine wrote in an essay that in her country widows used to be encouraged to commit suicide, because if they were to commit adultery this would bring dishonour on their family, whose members would thus be prevented from participating in public examinations. Nothing could illustrate better the materiality of honour.

meaning of names and *nekrets*, providing one possible bridge between Amazonia and Melanesia.

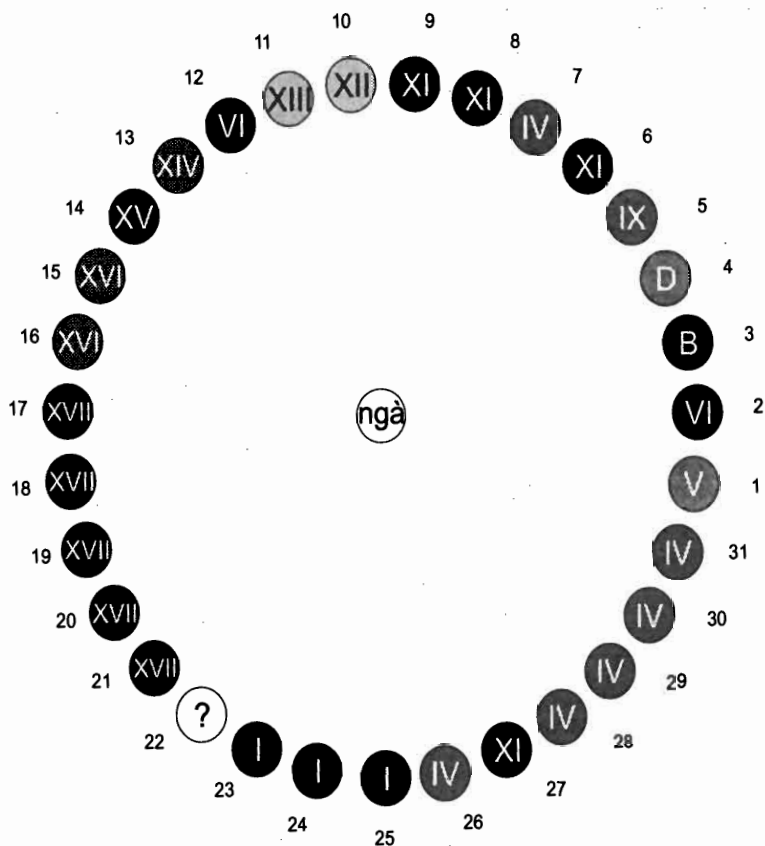


FIG. 1: Kapòto/Mètùkire 1987

Roman numerals and letters of the alphabet indicate matri-houses. Arabic numerals mark the number of abodes. Letters differentiate Houses that were not among the original group (comprised of 18 Houses) that crossed the Xingu river from east to west at the start of the twentieth century. In the context of this article, letters are the equivalent Roman numerals, the distinction being irrelevant. Ngà is the Mēbengokre word for the men's house, standing in the centre of the village.

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OXFORD RESEARCH IN SOCIAL AND CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY

**ABSTRACTS OF THESES
IN SOCIAL AND CULTURAL ANTHROPOLOGY
FOR WHICH HIGHER DEGREES WERE AWARDED
BY THE UNIVERSITY OF OXFORD IN 1995**

SELINA CHING CHAN, *Tradition Inherited, Tradition Reinterpreted: A Chinese Lineage in the 1990s*. D.Phil. (BLLD 45-12419)

The thesis examines the Chinese lineage, one of the prominent social organizations in the south-eastern part of China, through a study of the Pang of the New Territories of Hong Kong. The research draws mainly on information collected from villagers during four months of anthropological fieldwork in 1991 and 1993.

Despite the tremendous changes undergone in Hong Kong, the villagers still strongly perceive their lineage as a 'traditional' village. The thesis argues that the 'traditional' lineage in the 1990s is a process of interpretation, negotiation and reinterpretation by the villagers and the colonial government.

I examine the way in which the two distinctive features of the lineage—the patrilineal descent group and lineage landholdings—have been interpreted and reinterpreted to constitute the 'traditional' lineage in the 1990s. On the one hand, the way in which the lineage has adapted itself in urbanized and industrialized Hong Kong is examined with a discussion of the decrease of lineage landholdings and an increase in community facilities. On the other hand, the paradoxical effects

Editors' note: The research theses in social and cultural anthropology listed here are those for which higher degrees were awarded by the University of Oxford in 1995. The text of each abstract is as supplied by the author in the copy of the thesis held in the Bodleian Library of the University. Those wishing to consult a particular thesis should apply to the Bodleian or to the British Library Lending Division (BLLD), which should be able to supply microfilm copies or reprints on request. BLLD references numbers have been provided where available. 'Restricted' theses are not available for consultation until the date specified.

of the colonial government's respect for the 'Chinese customs' of the New Territories with regard to the issue of land is discussed.

I investigate how the patrilineal ideology and gender relationships are caught between 'tradition' and 'modernity' under the influence of the legal order. I argue that the objectified tradition as the patrilineal ideology in relation to the ownership of land by the villagers is partially a result of reinforcement of the colonial policy. At the same time, the custom and tradition interpreted and reformulated in colonial policies are interpreted by villagers in the process of the construction of the ethnicity of 'indigenous inhabitants'.

A. COLEMAN, *Community as Catalyst: A Study of Personhood and Identity in the Culture of Survival, São Paulo, Brazil*. D.Phil. Thesis restricted until 2000.

FIONA C. MAGOWAN, *Melodies of Mourning: A Study of Form and Meaning in Yolngu Women's Music and Dance in Traditional Ritual and Christian Contexts*. D.Phil. (BLLD 45-3577)

This thesis is primarily an ethnography of the role of music and dance of the Yolngu people living in north-east Arnhem Land in the Northern Territory of Australia, in traditional ritual and Christian contexts. It is a study of the processes of structuration of gender relations through the meaning of sound, music, movement and dance in Yolngu performance. It explores the dynamics of interpretation, the control of knowledge and the affirmation of identities in creating a sense of cohesion amidst the constant changes in Yolngu life.

Part one examines the history of research into Aboriginal music, identifying those genres recognized by the Yolngu. The funeral context provides the setting for conceptualizing the multi-determinancy of Yolngu ritual through principles of variation, transformation and retrospective evaluation. Part two develops the hypothesis that Yolngu speech is integrally related to song. It examines a range of vocal techniques employed in different speech genres, their adaptation to music and the inscription of identities through polysemy, ambiguity and multiple referencing. Part three brings together normative statements about ritual practice with experiential perspectives on movement and dance. I show how the total sphere of signing and bodily gestures are integrally related to stylized dance actions. These are discussed in relation to spiritual and political power through which Yolngu differentially express ancestral beliefs as well as professing their faith in Christianity.

I focus largely upon Christian Yolngu in an examination of their notions of the self and the world constituted through moments of becoming in performance, an ethnographic enquiry which I hope will provide a foundation for future research into changes in performance ideology and practice.

S. M. MYERS CARRESE, Poetry, Sesotho, and the Making of the Basotho People. D.Phil. (BLLD 45-3573)

This thesis, based upon fifteen months of fieldwork and archival research undertaken in Lesotho, explores the Basotho understanding of the nature, function and form of poetry and related ideas of community and *Sesotho*.

The poetic references in Part I are to three Sesotho gestures: *Lithoko* and its sub-genres, *Lifela tsa litsamaea-naha* and *Lithothokiso*. Through an analysis of the context, form, and performance and historical context of each, the relationships between these genres become clear, as does a general, apparently stable principle through which Basotho frame poetic discourse: the dual and integrated purpose of providing instruction and pleasure.

In Part II, I trace the unfolding nexus of history and poetry, a process whereby the inhabitants of Lesotho, the *Basotho ba ha Moshoeshoe*, have articulated, consolidated, reassessed and asserted *Sesotho* during four historical periods. With examples chosen from each period, I make the case that from Moshoeshoe I's founding of the nation in the nineteenth century through to the present struggle to establish legitimate political authority in an independent state, Basotho responses to external pressures have been manifested in two broad ways: first, in the living tradition of Sesotho that has enabled survival as a people and a nation; and second, as a static traditionalism comprising retreat into a dead past. Throughout Part II, but particularly in the final section of each chapter, I refer to various genres of poetry that provide evidence through which to examine both the dynamism of things or practices labelled *Sesotho* and the stable idea of passing on these concepts and perpetuating the community.

In Part III, I offer an account of the life of a contemporary chief in Lesotho. I examine the details of Maama Masupha's biography; the chieftaincy and its present status in Sefikeng; Maama's insistence upon the importance of *Sesotho* in Lesotho today; and finally Maama's position as a poet, his approach to Sesotho poetry and its role in the making of history.

AYAMI NAKATANI, *Contested Time: Women's Work and Marriage in Bali*. D.Phil.

This study aims to portray women's day-to-day experiences in a Balinese village, which has undergone, and is still undergoing, substantial socio-economic transformation. The multiplicity of women's work is the central theme of the thesis; at the same time, the thesis analyses the impact of marital status upon the ways in which individual women organize their work, including both economic and non-economic activities. The research on which this thesis is based was carried out in Singarsa, Bali, where traditional textile production has grown into a major cottage industry during the past two decades.

The major research concerns lie in the following three broad areas. The first is the examination of the exact content of the work performed by women. The range of activities considered includes ritual undertakings, income-generation and household-related activities. The second point is differentiation among women in terms of their allocation of time and labour between the diverse activities mentioned above. The aspects of age, gender and position in the Balinese system of hierarchy are all important elements in determining who performs what kind of task under what conditions. While each of these variables is taken into account in the discussion of different spheres of activity, the central focus of my analysis is placed on differentiation based on women's life-cycle positions, for it is the least-studied issue and yet it poses important questions for our understanding of women's work in general, and the village of study in particular. The third area of analysis is the wider context within which such activities are necessitated and evaluated: socio-economic change of the regional and village economies, social relations within and between households, and the relationship between existing cultural ideas about gender-linked roles on the one hand and the actual practice of gender divisions of labour on the other.

The thesis begins with a review of the existing literature on women's work in Indonesia and explanations of field research and methodology. Then the general background of the research setting is presented at the levels of region, village and hamlet/ward. The subsequent chapters deal with different spheres of activity, that is, ritual undertakings, textile production and reproductive tasks. The issues involved in marriage are also discussed extensively, due to its importance in determining women's life-style in general, and their work patterns in particular.

My findings reveal a distinct pattern of work between married women and unmarried women in these spheres of activities mentioned above. Married women are required to perform all three types of work, which constrain one another. Young, single women, by contrast, bear relatively limited responsibilities in the spheres of reproductive and ritual activities, while they devote a considerable amount of time and energy to income-generating activities, foremost *songket* weaving. Acknowledging their own privileged position compared with their mothers and married sisters, these weaving daughters commonly express their unwillingness to venture into married life, which is, in their eyes, overloaded with multitudes of obligations.

Compared with other parts of the world as well as elsewhere in Indonesia, where the female work-force is increasingly displaced within traditional home-based industries, women in Singarsa still play leading roles as weavers and traders in the thriving textile sector, whose rapid development has been part and parcel of the modernization process of the region as a whole. In this particular case, women's work *per se* is not characteristically under-valued. On the contrary, Singarsa women's productive activities are fully acknowledged as 'work', despite the fact that most women engage in such undertakings within the compound, combining them with other tasks. However, the multiplicity of their culturally prescribed duties force women—married women in particular—into a constant juggling of their working hours to fulfil a number of different obligations. I argue that the tendency for a chosen single status among young women reflects the very ambiguity of the interaction between gender ideologies and actual gender relations, including performance of gender-specific roles, within a society undergoing rapid change.

PHILIP TEBBS, *Studying the Blues as Ethnomusicology*. D.Phil. Abstract not available.

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BOOK REVIEWS

FIONA BOWIE, DEBORAH KIRKWOOD and SHIRLEY ARDENER (eds.), *Women and Missions, Past and Present: Anthropological and Historical Perceptions*, Oxford and Providence: Berg Publishers 1993. xx, 279 pp., Indexes, Plates, Maps. £34.95/£14.95.

This book admirably achieves what it sets out to do, namely bring to light and analyse certain social aspects of 'women's work' in overseas Christian missions from the early nineteenth century onwards. The subject has not been explored before, at least in Britain. Its dozen or so contributions are divided between two complementary and equal sections, on the attitudes and achievements of women to and within the host culture, and on the effects of their labours on women in the host culture itself. Inevitably the contributions have to be historical and anthropological, though the former tend to be more numerous. There is also a bias towards Protestant churches and missions, and only three chapters are specifically concerned with the Roman Catholic Church. Such a bias is hard to correct in the light of the wealth of material readily available to researchers in Britain.

Not surprisingly, the role of women in the missionary field was and still is very different in the Protestant and Roman Catholic churches. The most obvious difference lies in the fact that Protestant churches allow their ministers to marry. In the beginning, this caused severe problems in respect of the illnesses and often early deaths of husbands and wives and the education of their children. Further, there was the problem of whether or not the wife should help in the task of mission work and be as dedicated to it as her husband. Most missionary societies began to see the importance of converting and educating women as part of their overall work of Christianization. The Protestants were caught in a difficult trap. For the missionary society, there was the problem of finding greater amounts of money to support the missionary and his family, and the difficulty of ensuring that the wife would live up to certain requirements. On the other hand, there was the fear that if the male Protestant missionary was to go abroad unmarried, he might resort to illicit ways of satisfying his sexual desires—a fear not generally aired in Catholic circles. Strangely enough, this sort of issue was not seen to apply to single women going abroad in the name of a Protestant church. Thanks to the pioneering work of Hudson Taylor of the China Inland Mission, it soon became apparent, despite early opposition, that the single woman could make a great contribution to mission work in various ways, not only in preaching the Gospel, but also in education, both domestic and intellectual. The upsurge in unmarried women missionaries began in the late nineteenth century, and in more recent times, as many women, if not more, have undertaken missionary work than men. This has also occurred in the Roman Catholic Church, where missionary orders for women mushroomed in the nineteenth century, and where today, with the shortage of entrants into

the celibate priesthood, lay women and women in religious orders undertake parochial duties formerly performed only by priests.

Women in Protestant churches were faced with policies which did not face them in the Roman Catholic Church. Protestants were much more concerned with implanting their own social and 'civilizing' practices in the host culture, with the abolition of female nudity, polygamy, bridewealth, the kraal, native dress and so on. Great conflicts and miseries followed in the wake of such policies. In some places, by contrast, Roman Catholics showed a greater concern to try and wed their own theological doctrine and liturgical practice to the host religion and its cultural practices. Of course, other issues have to be faced. In cultures where marriage for women is *de rigueur*, the Church has attempted to show how the sexual status of religious sisters can be seen as acceptable. However, the common meeting-point with Protestants was and remains the problem of polygamy.

Although missionary societies met with a great deal of opposition from local men in the early days, when pressing for the education of women in the host culture, the policy has received general support, and despite some failures, schools and colleges for girls and women have continued to multiply. In India today, the role of women in the general affairs of society is now prominent, and for some it is seen as the hope of the future. The tap-root of this is acknowledged to be the early endeavours of women missionaries in the field of education.

It is to be regretted that nowhere in this book is the reader given any personal details of the contributors, two of whom are men and ten women—at least one assumes so, from the sometimes obscure first names. Perhaps this is a ploy on the part of the editors to maintain the anonymity of the authors, the best known of whom is probably Adrian Hastings.

Eight of the contributions which are specific to a country relate to Africa and one each to Peru, India and China. It is hoped that in the light of this limited sample, other volumes, as well produced as this one, will appear, covering more denominations, countries and types of activity. Should not medical work in its various forms be given more space?

All the chapters are of a high standard, and the editors must be congratulated on ensuring that, as the eye moves from one chapter to the next, the transition is smooth, which is remarkable for a set of essays such as this.

W. S. F. PICKERING

RUTH M. SOLIE (ed.), *Musicology and Difference: Gender and Sexuality in Music Scholarship*, Berkeley etc.: University of California Press 1993. 348 pp., Illustrations, Index.

'Is castration, after all, so bad?', wonders Carolyn Abbate (p. 233), in her essay on Strauss's *Salome*. The memoirs of the eighteenth- and nineteenth-century Italian *castrati* (men doctored in youth to preserve their high voices) suggest lives full of wit,

energy and lasting sexual relationships, the operation itself being 'just a nick'. As a metaphor of multi-gendered creativity imbued with an energetic though ambiguous sexuality, the search for the *castrato* is a key figure in Abbate's essay, and indeed in every essay in this stimulating collection. For all their diversity and internal argumentation, the basic critical stance implied or explicated in all of these essays follows what will be, to most readers, a familiar post-structuralist tack. Musical practices are structured by, and in turn structure, gender relations and connected forms of sexuality—the basic currency of difference and power. But for the post-structuralist there is a problem, or rather two related problems. The first is that like all the stories which, for many reasons, we tell ourselves to obscure an unpleasantly coercive reality, the stories told about gender and sexuality are not particularly persuasive or coherent—in fact, a slight shift in angle can show the critical historian or ethnographer just how incoherent they are. The second problem relates to the specificity of music as a form of performance: John Shepherd's chapter puts the point in a characteristically systematic way. As forms of industrial capitalism peculiar to the modern Western world increasingly valorize vision as the privileged mode of knowledge (and manipulation of that knowledge), forms of knowledge mediated through that vague and inherently relational medium, sound, move, by contrast, into an oppositional space, easily conflated with femininity. The publicly sanctioned expression of sound thus becomes a battleground, organizationally and intellectually co-opted by those who invest in patriarchy, but subverted (sometimes flamboyantly, like Kramer's Schumann in this volume, sometimes surreptitiously, like Brett's Britten) by those who do not.

The key axis in this volume runs between those who feel that the task is essentially ethnographic (identifying marginalized groups or individuals and hearing what they have to say) and those who feel that it is essentially semiotic (worrying away at texts to identify the cracks and inconsistencies, the points at which texts are no longer able to bear the meanings that their creators wish to invest in them). Although the two necessarily connect in various ways, the chapters by Morris, Brett, Wood, Reich and Cusick on, respectively, opera queens, Britten, Smyth, Clara Schumann and Caccini fall into the former category, while Tick's study of Ives, McClarey's analysis of Brahms's Third Symphony and Abbate's discussion of Strauss's *Salome* fall into the latter. From any point of view, the working notion of ethnography explicitly evoked in Morris's article (p. 186 n. 6) is weak, his ethnography drawing almost entirely on newspaper articles, novels and cartoons. The irony revealed here is that post-structuralists find themselves ever more dependent on texts and their meanings the more they try to escape them. If we are to understand the social and cultural mechanisms which invest the messy art of music with its power and consequence, an ethnographic approach which connects meaning and practice, ideas and actions, with social and cultural form through the observation of people, places and technologies seems vital. The contributions of the two ethnomusicologists, Robertson on Argentina and Hawaii and Koskoff on Hasidic Jews in New York, are exemplary in this regard, and it is a pity that less attention is paid to them by the other contributors, who otherwise copiously cite and argue with each other.

This volume constitutes a kind of *Writing Culture* for a new and self-aware generation of musicologists. The impact of cultural studies, psychoanalysis, gender and gay studies and Geertzian anthropology is evident throughout in an intellectual field

which has historically denied its social connectedness. The book as a whole conveys a tone of buoyancy and excitement, communicating (to this reviewer, at least) a strong sense of purpose and direction, tempered by careful consideration of the limitations that these new techniques themselves impose. One must agree with the editor that musicologists can actually 'profit from their customary methodological behindhandedness' (p. 3).

Anthropologists interested in music should definitely read this book. It reminds us that we can no longer afford to ignore those we still often refer to as 'traditional musicologists'—they have long since abandoned the kind of textual positivism we used to associate with them. For anyone who still believes that performance (musical or otherwise) simply reproduces the common-sense categories of dominant cultural experience, this book provides fifteen eloquent counter-examples. And for those whose anthropological interest in other musics began with disenchantment with 'our own', it reminds us that the anthropology of music excludes the Western art-music tradition at its peril.

MARTIN STOKES

JOY HENDRY, *Wrapping Culture: Politeness, Presentation, and Power in Japan in other Societies*, Oxford: Clarendon Press (Oxford Studies in the Anthropology of Cultural Forms) 1993. xv, 180 pp., Bibliography, Index, Figures, Plates. £30.00.

The 1990 book *Unwrapping Japan* (which took its title from Joy Hendry's contribution to it) raised the issue of the place of Japan in the discipline of anthropology: why did the work of ethnographers specializing in Japan never seem to make it into mainstream theory? Was part of the problem that these regional specialists had somehow become too parochial? Should they not incorporate more current theory into their work? In looking back at that volume, and in considering Hendry's career as an anthropologist of Japan, I now wonder whether the wrong questions were being asked. Perhaps Japanese anthropology was marginalized for so long simply because it was somewhat ahead of its time. In this postmodern world, when ethnographers have to grapple with issues of accountability, orientalism and holism, specialists on Japan can actually say, 'Welcome to the club!'

Since the first Western study of Japan was carried out in the 1930s by John Embree, anthropologists of this modernizing (and finally modern, if not postmodern) society have had to take note of the fact that, as well as doing anthropology themselves, Japanese scholars read, criticize and review Westerners' work. As a result, writers such as Smith, Plath, Cornell and Befu (to name the North Americans) and Ronald Dore (to name a British forerunner) have relied on empirical description and a clear style of presentation. This lack of theorizing jargon may have led outsiders to disdain Japanese ethnographers at the very time they should have been looking to them for clues on how to cope with the almost paralysing issues raised by postmodernism in anthropology.

The work of Joy Hendry is a case in point. With her first book, *Marriage in Changing Japan* (1981), Hendry became an important voice in European studies of Japan. Her following books, *Becoming Japanese* (1986) and *Understanding Japanese Society* (1987), continued her contribution to the discipline. Hendry's style is deceptively simple: her theory is never overbearing, nor just tacked on, but instead is to be found in her very manner of presentation. Thus although all of Hendry's books have been shaped by her Oxford structural-functionalist background, this theoretical bent does not mean that the non-specialist reader has been excluded. Her books have long had a strong following among non-anthropologists as well as her fellow specialists: there is always something to be learned from them, and different readers will profit accordingly.

Wrapping Culture illustrates this point very well indeed. The theme of the book is that various forms of presentation or wrapping cannot be ignored, and, I would add, Hendry's style of presentation should not be taken for granted either. From the outset, the book invites readers in: its tone is warm, and the subject-matter is made clear. And in the following chapters, we are led through a maze of information that many other ethnographers would have made it impossible to follow. Thus gift-wrapping, polite language, clothing, the structuring of space, the relationships of people and the ordering of time are all laid out for us in an extremely accessible manner. The comparisons with various societies make it impossible for the reader to think that Japan is in any way unusual. Then, in her last three pages, Hendry makes a few simple points whose implications range far and wide outside the scope of this book. In one key paragraph (p. 172), she points us to the heart of the labyrinth: 'Wrapping in Japan is a veritable "cultural template", or perhaps we could add another metaphor and call it a "cultural design". It makes possible the marking of the whole range of life stages and statuses, thus representing, and recreating, the hierarchical order which, in turn, gives rise to the locus of power relationships. Different manifestations of this organizing principle reflect and reinforce one another...and they thus also offer almost unlimited possibilities of communication, verbal and non-verbal, and for the exercise of power.' There are links here with other theorists, such as Bourdieu and his concept of 'habitus'; and it is obvious that Hendry's strength lies in her grasp of wider anthropological theory, her deep knowledge of Japan, and her ability to communicate both in comprehensible language.

Thus in one monograph, Hendry provides various signposts along the path from Japanese ethnography to general anthropological theory. If there is a complaint to be made about the book, it is that she errs on the side of caution. But perhaps Hendry is right to be restrained, stopping before the leap is made into grandiose speculation: it is enough that a start has been made.

D. P. MARTINEZ

GEOFFREY SAMUEL, *Civilized Shamans: Buddhism in Tibetan Societies*, Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press 1993. x, 725 pp., Tables, Appendix, References, Indexes. £51.50/\$79.25.

Tibetan Buddhism is a highly complex, technical and esoteric subject, and many anthropologists of Tibetan societies have understandably shied away from tackling it head-on. For the outsider, the task of making sense of it is even more forbidding. As a guide to its history, personalities, institutions and doctrines, Geoffrey Samuel's massive survey is therefore extremely welcome. For once, the blurb the publisher has placed on the dust-jacket is entirely justified: 'The greatest strength of this book is its encyclopedic character. This is an authoritative book that should prove useful to specialists and non-specialists alike' (R. A. Paul). Samuel has indeed synthesized a vast amount of material, some of it published in very obscure places, some of it previously unpublished.

More than this, however, *Civilized Shamans* puts historical developments within Tibetan Buddhism into a comprehensible geographical, political and sociological framework. Anyone who has struggled with the dense technicalities and rationalist biases of Snellgrove's *Indo-Tibetan Buddhism* (Serindia 1987) will be especially glad of Samuel's even-handed historical and anthropological approach. Although occasionally, and perhaps inevitably, repetitious, both the text and the overall structure are always admirably clear. No short review can do justice to all the ideas and interpretations Samuel advances.

Samuel's main explanatory tool is a distinction between clerical and shamanic Buddhism. Clerical Buddhism emphasizes control, rationality, book-learning, hierarchy, morality and the gradual path to enlightenment. Shamanic Buddhism rejects all of these and makes use of altered states of consciousness which are available to the many without the mediation of a clerical hierarchy and without long monastic training, in the name of instant, or at least more immediate, enlightenment. In the Theravada Buddhist countries of Southeast Asia and Sri Lanka, strong states succeeded in establishing a highly clerical form of Buddhism as orthodoxy. This made any shamanic tendencies within Theravada Buddhism distinctly peripheral, mostly pushing shamanism into low-status, non-Buddhist contexts. In Tibet, by contrast, the state was always relatively weak, so that although the centres of power in Lhasa and Shigatse attempted to establish more clerical forms of Buddhism, they were never powerful enough to impose them throughout the country.

Thus a major theme of Samuel's book is the tension between state-backed clerical Buddhism, of which the Gelukpa order founded by Tsongk'apa and led by the Dalai Lama is the prime example, and other, less centralized orders and freelance lamas. Tantric forms of Buddhism are identified with the shamanic pole. Samuel argues: 'An effectively centralized state in Tibet would never have tolerated the kind of free-ranging and autonomous power that Tantric lamas and *gompa* exercised over the centuries' (p. 142).

Samuel is at his most convincing when showing how these different emphases within Tibetan Buddhism correlate with different degrees of centralization. (It is interesting that it is precisely on this point, and nowhere else, that he allows himself a sustained and powerful critique of other Tibetologies for their propagation of a

'Lhasa-centric' view.) The Gelukpas insist on a long and strict monastic training before starting on Tantra, a stage to which only an elite minority gains access. The Gelukpas were not just backed by the state in central Tibet: they *were* the state. In reaction to the strength of the Gelukpas, there arose a countermovement called Rimed, the 'eclectic' or 'unlimited' movement which in recent times has provided, according to Samuel, the intellectual background for most non-Gelukpa lamas. Rimed was more ecumenical, favoured the study of the original Indian texts over the scholastic manuals of the Gelukpas, and gave a prominent position to non-celibate practitioners and to elements of folk religion. Samuel repeatedly emphasizes that the rise and growth of the Rimed movement having occurred in eastern Tibet, a long way from the control of the Gelukpa movement in Lhasa, was no coincidence.

At the same time, the clerical and shamanic wings of Tibetan Buddhism shared a great deal. The non-Gelukpa orders most associated with the 'shamanic' polarity, the Nying-ma and the quasi-Buddhist Bön, have celibate monastic institutions and leaders. Conversely, the Gelukpa itself gives a place to the 'shamanic' practice of abandoning academic study in order to live as a hermit and practise Tantric meditation.

When Samuel moves beyond Tibet and uses the same framework to make sense of Indian religious history, and beyond that of all religious history, readers may begin to have doubts about whether the clerical–shamanic dichotomy is adequate to the task. He sees Buddhism and yoga as shamanic in origin. While in his theory some parts of Tibetan Buddhism are more shamanic than others, it is clear that he thinks that, in so far as the clerical tendency is anti-shamanic, it is a deviation from the Buddha's original insight. This part of Samuel's framework, stressing origins and continuities and essentializing shamanism, or so it seems, has a somewhat old-fashioned feel to it (for all that he cites Deleuze and Gattari on 'nomadic science' in his conclusion). But where evolutionist writers of the past might have denigrated shamanism, Samuel celebrates it as egalitarianism and individualist.

One consequence of the close connection Samuel sees between shamanism and Buddhism is that all shamanism is viewed through Buddhist spectacles. At one point he writes, 'dying to ordinary life is perhaps a prerequisite of shamanic power in any society' (p. 557). This would, I think, be news to many lowland Amazonian shamans. Nor, at least in this book, does Samuel face the problem that much shamanism is intimately involved with blood sacrifice, and that in so far as it supports a morality at all, it is very different from the Buddhist one. Thus, although his framework is very useful in elucidating contrasts *within* Tibetan Buddhism, it would seem to muddy the waters when comparing Tibetan Buddhist specialists with those non-Buddhist mediums and ritual specialists more conventionally known as shamans. *Stan Mumford's Himalayan Dialogue: Tibetan Lamas and Gurung Shamans in Nepal* (University of Wisconsin Press 1987) and David Holmberg's *Order in Paradox: Myth, Ritual, and Exchange among Nepal's Tamang* (Cornell University Press 1989) are better at giving ethnographically grounded pictures of the competitive contrasts between lamas and shamans.

Part of the problem here is that it looks as if the present book was once even longer, and that it was shortened by separating the theoretical argument and publishing it as *Mind, Body, and Culture: Anthropology and the Biological Interface* (Cambridge University Press 1990). It is there, as we are frequently told in *Civilized Shamans*, that

the full case is made for seeing the shamanic as a universal mode of apprehending reality. Traces of the original manuscript are still to be seen in sentences such as the following: 'Within the shamanic framework, the establishment of proper practices of behaviour, as prescribed by Buddhism, would lead to the prosperity of society through the attainment of balance between the modal states making up the overall cultural pattern' (p. 451).

It would be wrong to leave the impression that the rest of the book is as obscure. I would guess that the majority of those interested in the subject-matter of *Civilized Shamans* will be relatively indifferent to the global argument concerning shamanism and modal states and will discard the references to them (though some, myself included, will want to pursue the argument set out in *Mind, Body, and Culture*). What they will be left with is still a superb, richly illustrated overview of a fascinating but forbiddingly complex region. Because of the rationalist and anti-shamanic (in Samuel's terms) biases of all previous attempts, it has had until now no adequate guide. All future anthropological work on Tibetan Buddhism will have to take *Civilized Shamans* as a major point of reference.

DAVID N. GELLNER

SIMERAN M. S. GELL, *The Ghotul in Muria Society*, Chur, Switzerland: Harwood Academic Publishers 1992. x, 259 pp., Bibliography, Index, Plates, Figures, Maps. £28.00.

The Muria are a Gondi-speaking tribal group of Bastar District, Madhya Pradesh, an area usually considered one of India's tribal heartlands, though Hindu castes are also present. Gell's book offers rich ethnography, to which theoretical concerns are generally subordinated, although a comparative perspective is adopted where appropriate. One of her main tasks is to revise some of Verrier Elwin's previous work on the Muria, namely his lengthy *The Muria and their Ghotul* (Bombay: Oxford University Press 1947), widely regarded as his *magnum opus*.

The *ghotul* is a village dormitory for young people, often found in tribal India, though under different names, and with differing social and ritual implications. It is clearly central to Muria life, though Gell regards Elwin's picture of it as an idyllic, care-free 'kingdom of the young' (to cite the French translation of his book) as romanticized, inaccurate, and divorced from its social context in most respects, producing anxieties and tensions quite as much as life outside it. Although an essential part of any village, she regards it as structurally opposed to the village as a community, and she draws an analogy between the village giving its young to the *ghotul* and its women to other villages (through a system of symmetric spouse exchange through father's sister's daughter's marriage). However, at another level inter-gender relations within the *ghotul* are opposed to those of marriage in being between children, being initiated by the girl, not leading to betrothal or being between the betrothed, and excluding sex. The idiom of 'sleeping together', used in the *ghotul*, has an ideally platonic reference,

and although pregnancies do occur, they lead to the girl's permanent exclusion from the *ghotul* and early marriage. Elwin's association of the *ghotul* with unambiguous sexual liberation is therefore also found to be wrong. Moreover, there seems to be a preference for *ghotul* relationships or *jor* to be between persons not regarded as marriageable, although Gell's statements are not entirely clear on this point. However, there is obviously a degree of interference between *ghotul* ideals and the alliance structure. *Jor* relationships quite often lead to elopement, and although such liaisons are often broken up by the *siyan* or elders, some may be allowed to endure. This is because it is felt that they may prove to be more stable than the typical marriage, which is generally characterized early on by the wife's frequent returns home (these can be seen as a consequence of the sudden disruption of *ghotul* relationships, which are shaped by sentiment, for the sake of a marriage to an often unfamiliar person). Gell ends her book by assimilating *ghotul* relationships to the practice of pre-puberty marriages which is common for girls in India, though it often takes place to an object or token husband rather than to one's lifelong partner. For Gell, it is Hindu influence that explains why the Muria should send their girls to the *ghotul*, while the remoter Hill Maria should not. Another detail on the *ghotul* worth recording is that boys' successes in respect of their relationships with girls are expressed not in terms of the number of relationships they manage to have, but of the number of refusals they have returned to girls' attempted initiatives.

In the earlier part of the book, Gell discusses other aspects of Muria society, including the categorization of space in the village and its surrounding territory, with which Muria, like certain other tribes (Juang, Bonda), identify closely. This is important for her thesis that the difference between tribe and caste in India is that tribes are territorial and non-hierarchical, and therefore unlike castes in both respects. The affinal alliance system is also described in some detail. The main problem here is Gell's attempt to see the opposed terms *dadabhai* (agnatic) and *saga* (marriageable) as denoting sociocentric moieties after the Australian fashion. Actually, they appear to be not groups, but categories applied differentially by different descent groups in such a way that third-party relationships cannot be read off the nature of the relationship between any two groups (as would be the case in a true moiety system). What is a little confusing is that each clan is linked with a prototypical affinal clan in another village, though it tends not to have a monopoly of alliances with it in practice. The preference for FZD marriage is reinforced by a ban on direct sister exchange, failing which this system might be one of straightforward bilateral cross-cousin marriage.

Like many ethnographers, Gell attempts at times to see her group as unique, though in fact they have a lot in common with other Indian tribes. However, there are some untypical features, such as the absence of *ghar-jawai* marriages (son-in-law adoption) and of even a token brideprice (feasting is the only important prestation connected with marriage, which is also where *ghotul* boys perform a service for the village in doing the cooking). Other interesting details are the assimilation of children to gods (a child is the main priest), the absence of verbal promises (food-sharing cements agreements), and the difference in life-cycles for men and women, which lead progressively to marked female dominance in old age. In general, the book concentrates on social structure and the politics of the *ghotul* and affinal alliance systems, and less on ritual etc., though there are accounts of birth and naming rites, and of Muria

views of conception. According to the latter, children are inherently *in* the womb rather than being placed there through intercourse or in some other way. Pregnancy goes along with the married state and is opposed to the menstruation of unmarried girls, another reason for the confusion of categories that *ghotul* pregnancy entails.

The quality of writing and analysis in the book is consistently high, with careful attention to detail and sensitive handling of its implications. It is an important addition to the literature on this area.

ROBERT PARKIN

BIKRAM NARAYAN NANDA, *Contours of Continuity and Change: The Story of the Bonda Highlanders*, New Delhi: Sage Publications 1994. 228 pp., Bibliography, Index, Tables. £30.00.

This title is ostensibly a book about the Bonda, a Munda-speaking group of southern Orissa, India, and their engagement with modernity in the shape of Indian government development institutions. However, the author eschews the monographic format, preferring to regard his work as a collection of essays. As a result, the Bonda appear largely as a peg on which to hang a series of critical disquisitions of a theoretical nature on such diverse subjects as subsistence and capitalism, education, corruption and time, drawing inspiration variously not only from the Bonda, but also from Bourdieu, Meillassoux and Foucault.

Nanda wishes to get away from old tribal categories and the anyway problematic distinction between caste and tribe in India, but he sees this shift less in terms of the inherent ambiguity of boundaries than of a historical process of cultural convergence, in which both castes and tribes are becoming similar under modern conditions. These changes are often encouraged by local officials and may be distrusted by Bonda. They include a shift from subsistence to irrigated agriculture, the disappearance of hunting as an economic activity, the introduction of education and health services, and the extension of state authority to the highlands through local police and other officials. Many of the formerly collective aspects of life have thus been 'privatized', in Nanda's phrase, and the introduction of money has not only led to agricultural wage labour but also to a view of time as something which can be both saved and wasted. Change, Nanda points out, has thus taken the form of a reconfiguration of relationships rather than physical intrusion in the form of new roads and buildings.

Nanda is good on the limited reception these changes have been accorded by Bonda. On the one hand, plough cultivation has increased male dominance, after a period in which the decline of hunting had deprived men of activity, which resulted in the myth of the laziness of the tribal male in the British period. On the other hand, although money may have allowed certain Bonda to avoid having to sell their land to stay out of debt, the wage and welfare economy is not developed enough for subsistence agriculture to be given up entirely. Further, local moneylenders—normally a byword for rapacity—are actually preferred by Bonda to officials as a source of help

because of their greater flexibility as regards repayment (is the old view of time at work here?). Finally, education is held in suspicion by the older generation, since it deprives them of the help of their children at times when agricultural work is heavy, and to them it seems to have more to do with giving the teachers a wage than with tribal 'uplift'.

There are some doubtful moments in the account. Nanda's depiction of how things were before—the greater adventurousness of the children, the greater willingness to help others, etc.—is impregnated with romanticism. His assumption of the continuity of a related group, the Gadaba, back to the eleventh century seems ill-founded, as does his account of the communal Sumegelirak ritual purely in terms of history: surely both must be at least partly mythologized. In fact, Nanda's obvious historicism pervades the book, even though, for example, it is clearly only the purely ritualized hunting of today that gives the Bonda identity in terms of their past. More concrete may prove to be Nanda's discussion of the entry of aspects of tribal religion into the Hindu tradition. He also gives an account of the Tamman Dora millenarian movement against the British around the turn of the century, one account in which he *is* able to incorporate 'real' history.

Unusual in its approach to tribal India, there is much to be derived from this book, provided one can stomach the sometimes self-indulgent theoretical discussion. Its main strengths are perhaps its analysis of corruption—still a rarely treated topic in anthropology—and its demonstration of the piecemeal success and acceptance of development by those who are its object.

ROBERT PARKIN

PAT CAPLAN (ed.), *Understanding Disputes: The Politics of Argument*, Oxford: Berg 1995. 248 pp., Bibliography, Index. £29.95/£12.95.

This volume is a collection of papers in honour of P. H. Gulliver, written by his students and colleagues. The theme has been chosen to reflect one of his major concerns, but the contributors also seek 'to bring the study of dispute back to the centre of anthropology' (p. 1). The editor sees this as leading 'straight to the key issues in anthropology—norms and ideology, power, rhetoric and oratory, personhood and agency, morality, meaning and interpretation' (p. 1)—and she laments the relegation of such work to a marginalized position as a subdiscipline known as the anthropology of law.

Most of the papers set out to follow Gulliver's emphasis on ethnography, gathered through the minute study of personal relations, and several bring the reader into the most intimate situations. The range of disputes discussed is quite large, however, and the papers move from national disputes over access to water sources, through 'gentlemanly values' in two sets of political circles and an emerging middle class in another, to family wrangles over failed marriages, intra-family strife over death and funerals, and concepts of passion and compassion. The contexts considered are also extremely

various, and the reader is introduced to discrepant values in locations as far apart as nineteenth- and twentieth-century Ireland, rural Nepal, London, Lagos, and more specific African locations in Kenya, Tanzania and Uganda.

The first two papers, however, adopt a theoretical approach. One compares the ideology of Habermas with Gulliver's empiricism, the latter in the context of the work of Gluckman and Bohannen (Falk Moore). The other considers the move from judicial institutions to negotiation as a more 'civilized' means of dispute resolution (Nadel). Nadel demonstrates, by examining a series of water disputes, that both systems favour the more powerful nations, despite their ostensible efforts to incorporate an approach that was previously more characteristic of the weaker peoples. Nadel thus illustrates Caplan's appeal in the introduction to the book not to neglect the power relations involved in a dispute.

This is an issue which recurs in many of the papers, of course, but there are also examples of resistance. In her chapter on an Irish town in the nineteenth century, Silverman discerns the emergence of a middle class out of a dispute between a landowner and the town's inhabitants, whose determination to resist the overbearing exercise of the former's superior position allows her to follow Gulliver's lead and describe 'how individual actions give rise to a collectivity' (p. 133). In the other Irish context, of differences between the leaders and members of a youth club, Gaetz's excellent paper cites examples of resistance working and failing, but his most powerful point is about the different sets of experience and values which each group draws upon through their differing class backgrounds.

That disputes between these two groups will certainly continue Gaetz is in no doubt, but he has identified important aspects of the disputing process, and this is the conclusion of another paper, by Elisabeth Colson, about the Gwembe Valley in Zambia. She criticizes some anthropologists for treating dispute resolution as a kind of ritual aimed at the maintenance of harmony, and seeks rather to suggest that the disputing process may be more significant than any resolution. Here too, there has been a shift between negotiation and adjudication, this time from the former to the latter, unlike the American move in the opposite direction. Lionel Caplan's paper, about the minority Limbu people of East Nepal, illustrates all these points about process, negotiation and the inequality of power, and explicitly follows Gulliver's emphasis on understanding the political and historical context of any dispute and the 'categories of meaning by which the participants themselves comprehend their experience' (p. 156).

Sometimes the parties to a dispute do not share these categories of meaning, and each seeks to manipulate the situation to suit their own understanding. Johnson's study of gentlemanly values in London and Lagos demonstrates how the same categories may be interpreted differently for different claims on the same code of public morality. She investigates why in London, bankers accused of using inside knowledge for their own private benefit were deemed to have conducted themselves with honesty and propriety, while in Lagos, when the President was accused of putting public funds in a bank in which his family had interests, he was found guilty of improper conduct.

Pat Caplan's paper about marital disputes on Mafia Island, Tanzania, brings out clearly the way different sets of norms may be invoked by the same people under different circumstances. Here, the three bodies of Islamic law, Tanzanian law and local custom are available to make possible a continual negotiation of rules and behaviour,

allowing a situation of contested norms to be counterposed to relations of unequal power. In her detailed discussion of a specific long-term dispute, she clearly illustrates her original claim that the study of dispute opens up an understanding of key areas of anthropology, and she also brings the whole subject into a mainstream discussion of contested metaphors.

This is a book worth reading, and quite appropriate for undergraduate courses. It gives the flavour of recent ethnography in bite-sized, digestible chunks and illustrates theoretical ideas not only about disputes, but also, as Caplan points out, about more fundamental aspects of social life. Gulliver, like his namesake, has left a good legacy, it seems.

JOY HENDRY

VICTORIA HEYER YOUNG, *Becoming West Indian: Culture, Self and Nation in St Vincent*, Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press 1993. 229 pp., Maps, Tables, References, Index. £38.25.

Much has been made in recent West Indian ethnographies of a creole dualism of values, involving those associated with higher status and lighter skins (the legacy of the British colonial administration) and the flexible and informal popular responses to them, intolerant of pretension or claims to moral superiority. Following Peter Wilson's (Providencian) terminology, these values are generally called *respectability* and *reputation* (elsewhere *no behaviour* and *worthlessness*). Wilson and others (notably Abrahams, Austin, Besson and Reisman) have shown how this opposition is engendered less in abstract moral values than in the individual's negotiation and strategic play in dyadic relationships, through which family ties, formal marriage, education and employment allow variable and uncertain access to material resources. In this book, Young shows how, in the Windward Island of St Vincent, first self-government and later independence have reasserted creole values in order to provide the 'national culture'. Ever since plantation slaves sided with the planters against Black Carib (Maroon/Amerindian) revolts in the eighteenth century, Vincentian identity has been ironically double-voiced, enthusiastically acknowledging the British cultural tradition, its language, sensibility and political institutions, but also countering these in the oppositional stance of a highly individualistic yeomanry jealous of local autonomy and tolerant of idiosyncrasy and popular justice. Young favours a complementary rather than a simply antagonistic opposition of *respectability* and *reputation*, arguing that the acquisition of education and wealth by the poor has not necessarily led to a reaction against demotic local values. Since independence, a buoyant local affirmation of carnival, calypso, satire and *rudeness* has achieved a national identity without nationalism: even the St Vincent police force now has its official steel band.

ROLAND LITTLEWOOD

STEPHANIE C. KANE, *The Phantom Gringo Boat: Shamanic Discourse and Development in Panama*, Washington and London: Smithsonian Institution Press 1994. xxv, 241 pp., Drawings, Photographs, Map, Endnotes, Glossary, Bibliography, Index. \$59.00 (cloth), \$19.95 (paper).

The title of this book, *The Phantom Gringo Boat*, is, according to the author, an Emberá shaman's interpretation of the demise of his people through outside intrusion. It is an enchanting metaphor and a reminder of so many other encroachments from the outside world upon countless indigenous groups in South America and elsewhere. The promise of some Conradian journey taken by an anthropologist to discover the devastating effects of a transformed people is a very enticing theme indeed. It is unfortunate Kane's book cannot embody what the title seems to offer. The author does not appear to be much interested in how the social institutions of the Emberá Indians (a Chocó group) of Panama have changed. Nor does Kane bother to relate how the Emberá form shared cultural ideas with other related groups, such as the Noanamá, Catio, and Chami, who are all considered to be part of the Chocó Indian complex. It is clear from other Chocó studies like Donald Tayler's excellent ethnography of the Noanamá (*Embarkations: Ethnography and Shamanism of the Chocó Indians of Colombia*, Oxford: Pitt Rivers Museum 1996, Monograph No. 6) that such indigenous groups had a very different social past.

Perhaps the most perplexing aspect of Kane's work is its total lack of analysis of Emberá social organization. The only semblance of kinship connections among the Emberá mentioned by the author are stilted passages quoted from fieldwork notes of so-and-so being the mother's brother, the wife, or the father of so-and-so. This is simply aimless meandering. There are no figures clarifying for the reader such consanguineous relationships among the Emberá groups that Kane studied. Similarly, it is curious that Kane should choose to enrich her text with strings of postmodernist phrases. Such superficial jargon is so prevalent throughout the book that one can only guess at the author's intentions. She fills pages in a florid and ribald manner by writing of 'the magical real into the politics of the everyday', with 'contours of social space...focused frantically, romantically on the Indian', while 'enhancing the kindred's ring of mutual transformation through synchronous eating', though 'through desire and deceit, action can be taken on the real' (pp. 18, 20, 31, 51). After reading several similar bedazzling passages throughout the book, one might expect a more in-depth examination of *Finnegan's Wake* to become possible from the profits of such an endeavour.

It is a shame for the Emberá Indians that their cosmological world and their social ideas are not presented with more care. As anthropologists well know, some of their own writings can become the last records of disappearing languages, peoples and worlds. Kane's translations of her field recordings do provide the reader with some interesting insight into Emberá mythology. Yet she does not contextualize these recordings with a more profound insight as to what they might signify for Emberá cosmology. Nor does she explain the history of Christian influences upon the Emberá through missionary teachings. It might be important to know how the Emberá have adapted to such shifts and what they thought about them. Kane's analytic descriptions do not do the Emberá justice either, since they are awkward and threadbare. One

typical passage from her transcribed notes of shamanic chants is the following: 'Whisked out of reality without so much as a splash, a man taking his sick uncle to another river for a cure disappears. Only his hat remained: a sign of impossible denotation, dangling, nagging for placement' (p. 95). Is it challenging to picture this hat without its owner's head, beckoning in a provocative 'dangling' manner and providing yet another possibility for 'nagging' the reader? It is obvious that the author has been 'whisked out of reality'. It takes demanding effort to find a page with one or two solid explanatory statements about the essence of Emberá mythology, ritual or social thought.

Some of the most interesting transcriptions are those which convey the impression that Emberá shamans unify Christian mythology with their own cosmological views. Emberá concepts of evil are intriguing. It is difficult to grasp why the author does not interpret such syncretic beliefs or put forth some original ideas concerning syncretism. The anthropological literature is replete with sources of social groups like the Emberá who combine Christian ideas with their own cosmological concepts. It is ironic that Kane chooses to ignore the vast literature on South American syncretic practices. By neglecting the analysis of the disparate elements inherent in the Emberá belief system, the author has left out vital information which might have been the most fascinating aspect of Kane's book. There would have been no need to filter the text through a superficial lens by constructing all sorts of postmodern jargon.

If the reader is supposed to gather from the title that Emberá shamanism and change will be explained in a coherent fashion, they are sadly mistaken. Kane's book does not develop any thoughtful understanding of Emberá religious practices nor of how this Indian group has been affected by the outside Panamanian world. What she hopes to accomplish leaves much to the imagination. The reason for making such speculations is that Kane simply refuses objectivity. She moves constantly toward reflexive and subjective opinions about her Emberá subjects and about herself. The dilemma for the reader is to discern how to get at the social facts in her material. Her role as interpreter of Emberá shamanic practices is lost in remarks like, 'I became positioned as a discursive subject within a web of shamanic allegation' (p. 102). Kane continues in a revealing stream-of-consciousness style which is supposed to express some absurd existential crisis during her fieldwork among the Emberá. She mentions pulling out a mirror afterwards to bring herself into a sense of 'rationality' (whatever that means) and fixing her senses on the 'real' to avoid the shaman's curse. She describes her crisis experience (fears of shamanic practices?) as being caught in 'paranoid strands of shamanic retribution' (p. 102). Such passages are examples of what Kane apparently thinks is good ethnography. In fact, she has managed to create for herself a tower of Babel of the first order with such choice words and semantic constructions. Unable to make a purposeful ethnography, she defies all comparison with other works on South American Indians.

It is equally curious why the author has chosen to use terms like 'sentient beings' or to describe the Emberá as the 'most fully human of sentient beings' (p. 105). It would be more useful if Kane had asked the Emberá if they felt themselves to be 'sentient'. The problematic issue throughout this work is why the author has chosen terms that have no or little value for good research and scholarship. It is unclear whether Kane's intentions are to lambast South American ethnography or to have her

work taken seriously. The confusion lies with her flippant use of the English language and her reliance on vernacular phrases. Hence there is much to suggest that the book will not be remembered as a significant contribution to the social anthropology of South America. What may be remembered are some translated passages from Emberá shamans and storytellers. Perhaps future generations of Emberá will read Kane's work and wonder what motivated her to depict them in such a way.

Emberá may also wonder why such effervescent language was used in writing this book. To know the extent of this truth, it is far better for the reader to judge Kane's words for themselves as a parting comment on the work as a whole. 'Communion with people whose features you transcode as strange, acknowledged unfamiliarity sparks ambiguity and taboo. Telltale signs of the inscrutable, potentially horror-provoking seduction rise in the clear, cool current of the river, diffracting and distracting the air on blazing rockstone beaches (or submerged), edging dark green purple brown hush of bush. Once you are face to face, the devil's subtle weirdness must be broached head on, but they are damn hard to discern. (They are always in another, never in you except as illness introjected.) Dizzying murk, chains of signifiers like cobwebs in a vampire's abandoned lair, sparks firing off so nervously they take on a spin, jumping impulses form strong-featured monsters lustrously guarding culture's boundaries. Would you be so bold as to risk becoming myth-making fodder just for temptation's sake?' (p. 138).

JOHN P. LINSTROTH

MARSHALL SAHLINS, *How 'Natives' Think: About Captain Cook, For Example*, Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press 1995. 328 pp. Index, Bibliography, Figures, Maps. £19.95/\$18.75.

After two years in print, Marshall Sahlins' response to Obeyesekere's critique of the apotheosis of Captain Cook by the Hawaiian islanders in the eighteenth century remains a centre of heated debate among anthropologists. The issues raised by Obeyesekere and Sahlins' response involve much more than the specific events leading up to and following the death of Cook on 14 February 1779. They hinge upon the validity of post-modern critiques of ethnography and ethnohistory, and the reliability of evidence filtered through agents of colonialism.

Sahlins begins his work with an introduction to Obeyesekere's critique of his interpretation of the events surrounding the death of Captain Cook. Since the 1970s, Sahlins has supported the view that Cook was taken to be the Hawaiian god Lono, in an effort to establish his ideas about structural transformation in a historical context. Obeyesekere takes issue with this interpretation, accusing Sahlins of participating in the imperial myth of 'native' thought, which portrayed the islanders as incapable of distinguishing between a British sea captain and one of their own gods. Sahlins proceeds to argue convincingly against Obeyesekere's critique, demonstrating where Obeyesekere misused material, misquoted sources, and pieced together a generally

unconvincing defence of his position. Sahlins' handling of the historical evidence is impeccable in its thoroughness, and his critique of Obeyesekere's methods leaves his argument in tatters. Sahlins' scholarship leaves the reader thoroughly convinced that the Hawaiians did indeed perceive Cook as the god Lono, before and after his death, and that Cook/Lono's unexpected return outside the ritual schedule prompted a structural crisis which motivated his murder.

After establishing the evidential basis for his position, Sahlins explores some of Obeyesekere's motives for his initial critique. Sahlins offers some insightful ideas about the construction of knowledge which undermine what Obeyesekere views as a participation in colonial hegemony. Sahlins argues against Obeyesekere's use of practical rationality as a universal claim to rational thought which would preclude Hawaiians from interpreting the arrival of Cook as anything other than the arrival of a British sea captain. Sahlins also criticizes Obeyesekere's claim that as a Sri Lankan he somehow has greater access to Hawaiian thought.

What Sahlins fails to dwell upon enough is Obeyesekere's political motivations. The intensity of Sahlins' refutation of Obeyesekere's critique, buoyed up by extensive appendixes which answer specific issues in minute detail, belies Sahlins' preoccupation with a true and accurate portrayal of events. It seems apparent that Obeyesekere is more concerned with the ambiguity of events and the lack of any one 'true' portrayal. It is in this aspect that Sahlins and Obeyesekere seem to be speaking past each other. Sahlins points out that Obeyesekere's argument as to whether Cook was considered Lono before or after his death is largely a matter of semantics, and that Obeyesekere often disproves his own position in his mishandling of the evidence. It seems that what is more at stake here is the politics of authorship and the place of evidence in anthropological thought. Sahlins may have done better to focus as much attention on this aspect of Obeyesekere's critique as he does on defending his own interpretation of historical events.

Another aspect of Sahlins' work which requires criticism is the obviously personal nature of his unavoidably one-sided argument against Obeyesekere. The language used throughout the book smacks of personal attack, which at times distracts the reader from Sahlins' reliance on the evidence to speak for itself. Though he would no doubt rationalize this tactic as a response to the personal tone used by Obeyesekere, perpetuating the name-calling does not serve his argument.

Although Obeyesekere sought only to use the historical case of Captain Cook and the Hawaiians as a post-modern critique of textual authority and the validity of ethno-history, his handling of the evidence undermines what could have been an insightful and valid argument. Sahlins' work stands as a testament to the authority of evidence in the construction of social theory. He makes it clear that if the facts do not bear the argument, however noble and empowering, the argument cannot be maintained. This position seems to have become as unpopular as it is crucial to the work of anthropology, and it is to Sahlins' credit that he has produced so thoroughly convincing a defence of this position in *How 'Natives' Think*.

RUSSELL LEIGH SHARMAN

LAWRENCE J. TAYLOR, *Occasions of Faith: An Anthropology of Irish Catholics*, Dublin: The Lilliput Press, 1995. xv, 248 pp. Plates, Maps, Bibliography, Index. £15.00.

Lauded as the first book-length study of Irish Catholicism, Taylor offers up an intriguing journey through the intricacies of Ireland's particular brand of Catholic faith. Set mainly in the south-west of County Donegal, *Occasions of Faith* weaves twenty-five years of ethnographic research into a broad fabric of oral and recorded history to document not only the development of Irish Catholicism, but also the spiritual development of Irish Catholics themselves.

The book begins with a bus ride to a Charismatic Catholic Healing Mass near Derry in Donegal, a rather incongruous event, in light of the traditional, orthodox Catholicism so often associated with rural Ireland. Taylor intends this initial incongruity to prepare the reader for an examination of Irish Catholicism as a 'personal and social construction of experience', that often seems at odds with the stereotype of empty religiosity. Taylor then establishes his own journey as a researcher into the realm of religious experience among the Irish of Donegal. He insists that his work will not follow the time-honoured description of 'life-cycles' in the ethnography of religion but rather focus on the contingent, processual aspects of what he views as the construction of religious experience among Irish Catholics.

The first stop on Taylor's journey through Catholicism is the holy wells which dot the landscape. In many ways this proves to be the starting-point for a chronological tour of Irish Catholicism. The wells, though situated in the landscape through the organizational power of legends and stories, are themselves timeless. Often their origins lie in tears shed by saints or at least the long-ago presence of saints. Here the reader is introduced to the construction of religious experience among Irish Catholics, especially as it intersects with the cultural appropriation of the landscape through ritual and story-telling.

Taylor then takes us further into this notion of the appropriation of the landscape in the context of religious experience with an analysis of a nineteenth-century Donegal travelogue written by a local author named McGinley. Taylor develops the idea of an Irish national identity forged through an attachment to the land that was marked by Catholic religious experience. Nationalism and Catholicism intersect on the landscape throughout Irish history from the violent oppression of the faith in the early years of the English occupation through to the aftermath of the famine when McGinley wrote his piece on Donegal.

The next two chapters deal with the role of priests as we move from the late nineteenth century into the twentieth. The first examines a public power struggle between a local priest and a Belfast landlord. The case is used to demonstrate the power of priests in the region and, by implication, in the country. Taylor emphasizes the priest's use of nationalist and pastoral rhetoric in the public debate with the landlord and demonstrates the process of myth creation through an intriguing comparison between historically documented and folk versions of the event. The next chapter deals with the tradition of the drunken, or otherwise discredited, priest as a possessor of miraculous power. It is believed that those priests who have been removed from the pulpit must have some power the Church wants silenced. This proves a twist on the perception of power held by priests and hints at a construction of religious experience

outside the confines of the Church and therefore on a more personal level. Taylor examines some of the origins of the tradition as well as some contemporary examples.

Building on this examination of priests as both representatives of the Church and independent power brokers, Taylor examines the rise in 'missions' among Catholic dioceses in Ireland. The missions are in many ways festivals, with all the trappings of large inter-village social gatherings, but they also contain a serious and potent religious aspect. Started mainly by the Redemptorists and still led by that group today, the missions serve as a revival meeting where the parish priest hands over the congregation to an itinerant priest. Long viewed as a useful yet potentially schismatic practice, the missions offer an opportunity for a powerful conversion experience at the hands of the stranger/wanderer priest.

The context of missions provides an entrée into the topic of religious pilgrimages, which, like the missions, offer a religious experience under the auspices of the Church, but in a more emotionally charged atmosphere than that experienced in the weekly Mass. Taylor follows pilgrims to an island shrine in Ireland, to Lourdes in France, and finally to Medjugorje in present-day Bosnia. The first sight, Lough Derg, exemplifies the most orthodox and traditional of the pilgrimages. Lourdes represents what Taylor describes as an institutionalized charismatic event where Marian worship truly began in its fervency, though still contained by the Church. Medjugorje, the sight of an ongoing visitation by Mary to some local youth, represents the charismatic event in its early development. Not yet recognized or sanctioned by the Church, Medjugorje is for many the place where religious experience is at its most dynamic and personal.

Taylor leads from the charismatic experience of Medjugorje into the charismatic prayer meetings that sprang up in Donegal after a recent pilgrimage to the site. In his final chapter—and before making any conclusions—Taylor, in his treatment of charismatic prayer meetings, leaves the reader at once completely removed from the opening context of the holy wells in all of their orthodox timelessness and at the same time confronted with a similarity in the construction of religious experience that is so integral to Irish Catholicism.

Taylor has produced an admirable work on the complexity of religious experience among Irish Catholics and, by implication, the devout of any faith. Along with this insightful treatment of religious experience, Taylor manages to include so much of Irish aesthetics, which are intimately bound up in the landscape and story-telling, as well as an in-depth historical analysis and literary criticism, that his work easily spills out of the category of religious ethnography and into the arena of general academic interest.

RUSSELL LEIGH SHARMAN

PETER VAN DER VEER (ed.), *Nation and Migration: The Politics of Space in the South Asian Diaspora*, London and Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press 1995. vii, 257 pp., Plates, References, Index. £31.50/£14.95.

What is the relationship between the South Asian diaspora—that is, the fact that some eight million people of South Asian descent are dispersed across the world—and South

Asian nationalism? Peter van der Veer links the nine chapters in this volume to produce evidence that migration strengthens and even produces South Asian nationalism. His introduction gives some historical background to the idea of a territorially bounded national community in South Asia, an idea fuelled in the late nineteenth century at least in part by the colonial migration process, which promoted the migration of workers for railway construction, army service, the bureaucracy and education. Moving away from one's geographical, linguistic and ethnic origin, says van der Veer (quoting from Benedict Anderson's *Imagined Communities* on the emergence of the Bengali bureaucracy), was part of 'that subtle, half-concealed transformation...of the colonial state into the national state'. He also suggests that South Asian migrants' experiences abroad—for example, as indentured labourers in Africa—were important 'in the formulation of a nationalist discourse' in India. The treatment of female labourers under the indenture system, 'constructed by the nationalists as an insult to the nations' honour' provided 'symbolic capital' for the nationalist cause.

The nine contributions to this book supposedly illustrate the far from straightforward connections between South Asian migration and nationalism in various historical and contemporary settings, though it is often not the idea of nation that is illustrated so much as ethnic or religious identity. The term 'space' is used in an attempt to unite the contributions, though I do not understand the sub-title. Mostly, 'space' is a synonym for 'territory'. Van der Veer writes: 'nationalism is a discourse that depends on notions of space, of territory'. However, 'space' sometimes refers to social categories and stereotypes and sometimes to a place within national politics. But if a term needs constant translation, why bother with it? I would have thought the editor's job would be to clarify the writing, without dressing up the discourse with jargon.

In the first chapter, Verné Dusenbery explores the links between Sikh identity in Vancouver and in India, where the demand for a separate state of Khalistan contradicts 'the boundaryless world of Sikh sacred space'. Unhappy at being classified as South Asians, Canadian Sikhs are interested in the idea of Khalistan as a spiritual homeland not because they wish to return to India but because it gains them respect in Canada, where 'multiculturalism' recognizes national cultures connected to an independent state.

Four chapters deal with aspects of the South Asian presence in the Caribbean, Fiji, Trinidad and Guyana. Steven Vertovec's chapter contrasts the development and construction of 'Hinduism' in Trinidad and Britain. 'Hinduism' in Trinidad spans nearly 150 years, beginning with the importation of Indians of diverse cultural and religious traditions as indentured labourers for the colonial plantation economy. By the 1950s, the organization of Hinduism (primarily in reaction to the proselytizing of the Arya Samaj) had united the entire Trinidad Hindu population. During decolonization and independence, Hindu religious organization came to have an overtly public political function. In the 1970s, Trinidad was transformed by an oil boom, the effects of which filtered through to the Hindu working classes, who poured their new wealth into elaborate forms of religious ritual. 'A self-proclaimed Hindu renaissance was underway in Trinidad, bankrolled by the oil boom', says Vertovec, and by the 1980s communal Hindu ideology was a force to be reckoned with in 'public space', that is, in national politics. In contrast, South Asian migration to Britain spans just fifty years. The picture of Hinduism in Britain is 'rather fragmented', with no single umbrella organization effectively co-ordinating Hindu activities. Vertovec argues that the dominant British public policy of multiculturalism of the 1970s and 1980s, which replaced the

assimilationist policies of the 1960s, served to maintain the diversity of regional, linguistic, cultural and sectarian origins which characterizes British Hindus. 'Large-scale mobilization as Hindus has not been given cause or opportunity to take place in a society-wide public space'. Whether Hinduism in Britain will ever have the unifying political significance it has in Trinidad will depend on the political environment.

In Fiji, John Kelly shows, the violent conflict over territory between the 'indigenous' and 'immigrant' communities is played out in terms of religious opposition. Christian missions play a major role in constructing native Fijians' national identity, just as Hindu missions to Fiji have played a similar role in constructing an 'Indian nation' among former indentured labourers.

Madhavi Kale argues that nineteenth-century debates about the introduction of Indian indentured labourers to Trinidad and British Guiana are central to understanding the present-day continuities of Indian culture in the Caribbean. Aisha Khan shows that in Trinidad, competition between the Muslim descendants of Indian indentured labourers and the Muslim descendants of African slaves over the authenticity of their religious practice and belief is central to defining their identity and is rooted in the competitive relationship between the two groups that was fostered by colonial policy.

Two chapters deal with South Asians in New York. Madhilika Khandewal discusses patterns of Indian migration and settlement in the city, as well as competing perceptions and uses of urban 'ethnic' space. Susan Slymovics combines a vivid description of the Muslim World Day parade of 1991 with an analysis of the ritual's functions and meanings. New York City is notable for its parades: in 1991 there were about 760, displaying the city's ethnic diversity. Slymovics argues that the Muslim World Day Parade is a ritual replication of an American institution which as such displays an acceptance of American pluralism. It is also a vehicle through which some New York Muslims claim a respectable niche in American society. The participants are ethnically diverse, but the event organizers are South Asian, and Afro-American Muslims are excluded. The parade thus symbolizes South Asian Muslims' efforts to enter mainstream politics as white, ethnic New Americans, 'reconfiguring religion into ethnicity in order to gain political and economic power'. Slymovics also suggests that through some of its specifically Muslim elements—the communal prayer and the communal feast, the Sufi ecstatic dances and the 'takbir' cry, which must be controlled to avoid threatening the respectable image—the ritual constitutes a potential challenge to the status quo.

Finally, two chapters consider some British South Asians. Sallie Westwood explores South Asian and Afro-Caribbean masculine identities in a discussion of the politics surrounding a predominantly South Asian youth project in Leicester and of life on inner-city streets and soccer fields. Parminder Bhachu discusses how middle-class British-born and -educated Sikh women participate in the British economy and act as 'cultural entrepreneurs' within their own communities.

Thus if you are a Muslim, Hindu or Sikh in, say, New York, your life will turn out differently from your counterparts in, say, Trinidad or Britain, because of the historical and contemporary differences in social and political environments.

ALISON SHAW

WILLIAM R. CHRISTIAN, *Visionaries: The Spanish Republic and the Reign of Christ*, Berkeley: University of California Press 1996. xxii, 544 pp., Illustrations, Maps, Bibliography. £32.00.

Bill Christian is the leading anthropologist of Spanish Catholicism. This marvellous, massive ethnography confirms and deepens his reputation. It is one of the most impressive and humane ethnographies to have been written within the modern anthropology of Europe.

Christian's central topic is the series of visions of the Virgin Mary experienced by Basques during the Second Republic (1930–36). Some of these visions turned into mass events attracting the largest crowds ever known in the Basqueland. Yet they are very, very rarely spoken of today, and their history has been totally neglected. Christian unearths these forgotten events and sets them carefully in their various contexts in a painstaking and thorough manner.

The first half of the book details meticulously the sequence of events: who saw what when, who promoted the seers, how Church and State reacted. In the second, more analytical half, Christian examines various themes: the number and type of religious professionals in the area at the time; the kinds of seer; the visions as a rare opportunity for inter-class interaction; the vision states themselves, their reported nature, how others saw them; the models that guided seers, and the ways their experience evolved; what parts of the landscape were considered sites for visions; relations between the living and the dead in Basqueland; apocalyptic traditions at the time of the visions; and what sorts of Basques took these prophecies seriously.

What emerges from this book is an understanding of what being a member of a devout community entails. Individuals are meeting directly with the supernatural on a near-quotidian basis. Visions of the divine occur in an almost everyday fashion. But people will only tell others of their wondrous experiences if they feel their listeners will be receptive and sympathetic. Those they do tell—especially if they are important figures (priests, doctors, etc.)—will mould the visionary account into what they consider a satisfactory form before transmitting news of it more widely. Finally, whether or not the visions are acceptable to the higher echelons of the ecclesiastical hierarchy will depend on a different set of criteria, for priests and their superiors are often suspicious and wary when dealing with visions, which they tend to regard as a form of direct communion with God bypassing the usual hieratic channels. To this extent, the famous miracles most of us know about (Lourdes, Fatima, etc.) must be regarded as products of politics as much as of piety.

Christian's book is beautifully written, unpretentious in style, and splendid in scope and scholarship. Finely balancing interest in the individuals involved with concern for the wider issues entailed, *Visionaries* is one of the very few ethnographies I have actually enjoyed reading, and it sets a standard which most anthropologists of religion in Europe today will find very difficult to equal.

JEREMY MACCLANCY

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ISSN UK 0044-8370

Typeset in Times Roman at
Oxford University Computing Service

Printed in Great Britain by
Antony Rowe Ltd., Chippenham, Wiltshire

THE ANTHROPOLOGIST AS THE 'PRIMITIVE': FRANZ STEINER'S *TABOO*

MICHAEL MACK

FRANZ Baermann Steiner (1909–1952) was one of the many Jewish immigrants from the continent who greatly enriched English intellectual life around the time of the last war. Unfortunately he is now quite forgotten. Most of his work is still unpublished: his thesis on slavery, his lectures on the definition of labour, and many volumes of aphoristic essays on the sociology of religion have been awaiting publication for forty-five years.¹ Steiner's life was short, tragic, and intense. He was a poet as well as an anthropologist, and developed his anthropological thought also in his literary writings. His health suffered from the psychological and financial strains he had to endure as a refugee. His parents were murdered by the Nazis, and following the German occupation of Czechoslovakia in 1939, he received no financial support from home.

Steiner was a student at the Hebrew University of Jerusalem (1930), the German University at Prague where he took his first Ph.D. in Semitic languages, and at the ethnological department of the University of Vienna before he went to London to do research at the British Museum. In London, Malinowski invited him to attend his seminars at the London School of Economics. In 1937, he undertook field studies in the Carpathians. As a refugee he continued with his research at Oxford, where he was supervised first by Radcliffe-Brown and then by Evans-

1. An edited version of the lectures on labour was in fact published as an article by Paul Bohannan (Steiner 1957), and republished in Bryant (ed.) 1972, but they deserve unabridged publication in book form.

Pritchard. In 1949, he completed his D.Phil. on a comparative study of types of slavery, and in 1950 he was appointed a university lecturer. During the last two years of his life he lectured in Oxford on the definition of labour as well as on taboo, and planned a lecture course on Marx.

I

In the first part of this article, I shall analyse Steiner's style and methodology in his book *Taboo* (1956), focusing on his deconstructive particularism and his sociological preference for generalization. In the second part, I discuss Steiner's theory of taboo as the avoidance of danger and power. Rather than being a superstition or an emotional expression of values, Steiner argues, taboo behaviour is a carefully thought-out structure of social behaviour.

As in his thesis on slavery (1949), Steiner's lectures on taboo deconstruct categories that are supposed to embrace a whole range of social practices within non-European societies. Steiner's first lecture opens with a discussion of the inadequacies of the comparative method as advocated by Radcliffe-Brown and of the general defects of using a European terminology in translating non-European concepts. Steiner's critique of Radcliffe-Brown's comparative method and his attack on an unreflective usage of European words in the definition of non-European ways of behaviour are closely connected. Radcliffe-Brown examines one particular society in detail and then, from it, establishes categories which have general validity. For Steiner, the structures of 'primitive' societies are so complex that they differ to a great extent among themselves, and he criticizes Radcliffe-Brown's inductive approach towards the comparative method from this angle. The terminology Radcliffe-Brown used for societies he had studied in the field is often not valid for any other one, even though he claims this to be the case in his search for scientific, universal laws. Broad sociological categories like taboo and totemism change meaning when an anthropologist talks about a range of particular societies: indeed, 'the meaning of words appearing in the terminologies of comparative and of analytic sociology have drifted apart without our noticing it' (1956: 20).

Two characteristics of Steiner's anthropological approach can be gathered from his criticism of Radcliffe-Brown: one is a sociological desire for generalization, the other a strong tendency towards deconstructive particularism. Steiner's critique of Radcliffe-Brown's use of categories also shows evidence of Max Weber's influence on his deconstructive particularism. After all, it was Weber who argued that the establishment of scientific laws with generally valid applications distorts the singularity of a variety of cultural contexts. Like Weber, Steiner questions the transfer of a positivist methodology into the field of cultural studies. For Steiner, as for Weber, recognition of social phenomena exclusively unfolds itself within a

referential system and therefore has to reflect critically upon the medium of reflection (Weber speaks of 'the discursiveness of our epistemology' (*die diskursive Natur unseres Erkennens*) (1956: 239));² Radcliffe-Brown's positivism, by contrast, places anthropology within the natural sciences.

Throughout his lectures, Steiner criticizes the unreflective usage of general signifiers for a whole range of divergent particular social phenomena. He analyses a passage from R. J. B. Moore's article 'Bwanga among the Bemba' (Moore 1940) with the aim of illustrating how a European taxonomy is insufficient for the understanding of 'primitive thinking'. Steiner comes to the following conclusions:

...what the native thinks cannot be satisfactorily summarized under the categories. [...] The writer thinks of the *observable* attitudes of individuals and of particular situations against the background of sociological categories. (1956: 19, original emphasis)

Here we encounter Steiner's critique of the use of a European terminology as a means of describing 'primitive' ways of life: the anthropologist introduces European categories, taken from the discipline of sociology ('sociological categories'), into the analysis of a 'primitive' society. Steiner, however, argues that this imposition of the European onto the non-European results in a distorted image of a singular 'primitive' community ('what the native thinks cannot be satisfactorily summarized under the categories'). According to Steiner, 'primitive' thinking is too complex to fit into the broad categories of a European taxonomy.

Steiner attacks the confusion of categories resulting from Radcliffe-Brown's comparative method—which, as we have seen from Steiner's analysis of Moore, is premised on induction—but he also examines the problem of translatability from a European into a non-European language.³ This is a matter of concern in both *Taboo* and the comparative study of slavery: in both works, Steiner analyses European mistranslations of non-European concepts, often perceiving these mistranslations as motivated by the will to generate fictions about 'primitive' societies. This recalls Nietzsche's view of the will to power as the ability to impose fictions upon other people. For Nietzsche, all exertions of power work through deception (*Schein*); they are fictions that pose as truth (*Schein ist für mich das Wirkende und Lebende selber* ('for me deception equals the influential and the active itself'), (Nietzsche 1980: 417)). Nietzsche, like Weber,⁴ radically questions the supposed convergence between signifier and signified. Instead of having an intrinsic effect,

2. For an example of Weber's criticism of the transfer of positivist methodology into *Kulturwissenschaften*, see Weber 1956.

3. For a discussion of the importance of the concept of translation in the Oxford school of anthropology after the war, see Pocock 1971: 74–5; Beidelman (ed.) 1971.

4. For a discussion of the influence of Nietzsche's deconstructive approach to Weber, see LaCapra, 1972: 178.

an object has impact by virtue of the meaning that man invests in it. The discourse analysis that Steiner engages in brings to light the fictions that specific political interests attach to the things that language denotes. His examination of European (mis)translations of non-European social practices shows that the inaccurate description of native ways of life establishes the conviction of the West's superiority over the East: 'savage' forms of the integration of foreigners are fictitiously labelled 'slavery', while the taboo behaviour of 'primitives' is entered under the heading of 'superstition' in order to prove the supremacy of European rationality.

Steiner's methodology consists in subjecting the work of a number of prominent Western intellectuals to close critical scrutiny. Examining Tregear's translation of the Maori word *tapu* (Tregear 1904: 472), Steiner points out that European interpreters 'artificially' introduced the 'distinction between prohibition and sacredness' (1956: 34). The reduction in the meaning of the word 'taboo' to the 'sacred', while excluding any connotation of the 'prohibited', is explained with reference to the Christian agenda of 'missionaries' (ibid.). Similarly, Steiner examines a passage from *A Voyage to the Pacific Ocean*, in which the traveller and missionary James Cook describes taboo behaviour (Cook 1784, vol. 3: 10–11). Steiner detects in this passage 'that superior and slightly irritated indulgence—which some people have for others who cannot think clearly' (1956: 25).

Steiner rejects the idea that 'primitive' cultures are uniform, that differences in particular communities are only accidental, and he quotes Margaret Mead's article on 'Tapu' in the 1937 edition of the *Encyclopaedia of Social Sciences* in order to show that 'modern' anthropologists still tend to reduce the complexities of 'primitive' worlds. Mead demands that 'comparative discussions' of 'taboo' be 'stripped of all accidents of interpretations' (1937: 502). Steiner opposes this quotation in a polemical spirit as follows:

These are severe restrictions indeed. And one cannot expect much success from such an attempt; the world accepts an extension of meaning much more readily than it allows for a loss of connotation. (1956: 22)

Irony pervades this quotation. The polite and donnish tone of this extract shows Steiner mimicking the style of the typical Oxford Senior Common Room.⁵ It also shows the extent to which Steiner uses masks in his anthropological writing. Foucault has argued (1989: 93–4) that it is not only writers of fiction who adopt different voices:

...it is in the nature of literature that the author should appear to be absent... delegate his authority, or divide himself up [...]. Yet this gap is not confined to literature alone. It is absolutely general in so far as the subject of the statement is a particular function, but is not necessarily the same from one statement to

5. This point has been made by Adler 1994.

another; in so far as it is an empty function, that can be filled by virtually any individual when he formulates a statement; and in so far as one and the same individual may occupy in turn, in the same series of statements, different positions, and assume the role of different subjects. (1989: 93–4)

In his anthropological work, Steiner adopts different voices, different ways of writing, which he uses to undermine authoritative texts of sociological thought. Steiner's comments on Margaret Mead's article show how he attacks anthropological writings head-on. Steiner quotes Mead to show the simplistic nature of what is being put forward in the quotation and criticizes her as a representative of the 'modern' social sciences for not being willing to engage with a complex concept.

For Steiner, the quotation from Mead's article serves as an illustration of the undifferentiated way in which 'modern' anthropologists still write about 'primitive' culture. Steiner also gives us the history of the translation of the word 'taboo' from Polynesian into European languages, illustrating that Mead's simplification stands in a long tradition of Western writing about non-Western peoples. After quoting various glosses of 'taboo' which make an artificial distinction between the sacred and prohibited, Steiner employs an ironic style of writing:

Up to this point my report is straightforward, and I only wish I could continue, as so many have done, with the following words: 'A brief glance at any compilation of the forms and meanings of this word in the various Polynesian languages shows that in all of them the word has two main meanings from which the others derive, and these meanings are: prohibited and the sacred.' The comparison of the data, however, suggests something rather different to me; namely, (1) that the same kind of people have compiled these dictionaries, assessing the meaning of words in European terms, and (2) that, with few exceptions, there are no Polynesian words meaning approximately what the word 'holy' means in contemporary usage without concomitantly meaning 'forbidden'. The distinction between prohibition and sacredness cannot be expressed in Polynesian terms. Modern European languages on the other hand lack a word with the Polynesian range of meaning; hence Europeans discovered that taboo means both prohibition *and* sacredness. Once this distinction has been discovered, it can be conveyed within the Polynesian cultural idiom by the citation of examples in which only one of the two European translations would be appropriate. (1956: 33–4, original emphasis)

I have quoted this long passage because it says a lot about Steiner's style and his criticism of Western attitudes towards the non-Western. Here too, Steiner draws attention to the simplistic way of thinking of the 'modern' social sciences. It is important to catch Steiner's jocular seriousness in expressions like, 'I only wish I could continue, as so many have done...'. More recently, Payne has drawn attention to Malinowski's irony *vis-à-vis* 'savages': 'on frequent occasions, he could not resist his apparently innocent assertion of the superiority of science over native lore. Such irony allowed him a bit of playful detachment...' (Payne 1981: 424). Similarly, in the extract above, Steiner shows with joking aloofness how

Western scholarship does not reach up to its own standards, having failed to verify theories with empirical evidence ('comparison of the data'). He argues that Western beliefs in the intellectual simplicity of 'primitives' have blinded anthropologists to the complexity of a 'savage' concept. Instead of engaging with this complexity, the anthropologist imposes a European taxonomy on a Polynesian word which is too complex for a one-way translation. The word 'holy' does not embrace all the connotations of the Polynesian 'taboo', which almost always means prohibited and dirty as well as sacred. Here Steiner argues that it is modern 'Europeans' rather than 'primitives' who are being simplistic. Instead of trying to understand an alien concept, the anthropologist 'Europeanizes' a Polynesian word. At the Institute of Anthropology in Oxford, Steiner would certainly have found ample support for the idea that concepts are not isomorphic between cultures. Evans-Pritchard may have been lecturing on the complexity of Nuer religious ideas around this time. Fortes would have been lecturing on Tallensi ancestors.⁶

Steiner critically examines the writings of late nineteenth-century scholars. At all points, his discussion of Western interpretations of 'taboo' involves a critique of European thought about the 'primitive'. Steiner gives pride of place to Robertson Smith, whom he represents as an outstanding Victorian scholar. Evans-Pritchard's influence can clearly be discerned in this appraisal of the Scottish philosopher of religion.⁷ As Gellner points out (1981: xxx), Frazer provokes Evans-Pritchard 'into sustained and effective criticism', whereas he enthuses about Robertson Smith. Steiner criticizes Frazer as a 'debunker' of religion, but pays respect to Robertson Smith⁸ as an anthropologist of religion:

...while Robertson Smith was a Semitic scholar, James Frazer was a classical one, and while the latter became one of the chief debunkers of religion in his period, religion, in the fullest meaning of the word, was the most dutiful concern of Robertson Smith throughout his life. (1956: 53)

Robertson Smith's interest in Semitic cultures was closer to Steiner's heart than the classical and deeply secular studies of Frazer. Nevertheless Steiner does not accept Robertson Smith's evolutionist agenda. Robertson Smith marks the 'holy'

6. I owe this information to Professor Richard Fardon.

7. The extent of the admiration for Robertson Smith in post-war Oxford anthropology can be gathered from Beidelman's book on him: 'It can be claimed confidently that Smith is the founder of the modern sociology of religion. Smith's work contains many flaws, some due to the prejudices of his time, some due to his own personal involvement in scholarship and religion. Yet no other Victorian seems to have touched upon so many different issues still vital to our anthropological interest, or seems so enduring in the quality and freshness of his insights. Of all great Victorian anthropologists, he seems nearest to being our contemporary.' (1974: 68). Beidelman has long been an admirer of Evans-Pritchard.

8. For Evans-Pritchard's high praise of Robertson Smith, see Evans-Pritchard 1981: 80.

off from the 'primitive' form of 'taboo'.⁹ It would run counter to Robertson Smith's understanding of Christianity if he were to argue that what belongs to God can be tabooed. How can the Christian God who loves man be considered 'taboo'? This caused deep revulsion in the Victorian theologian, who firmly held that 'modern' crises of faith can only be overcome by a strong belief in the personal relationship between man and Christ. According to Beidelman, Christianity was the yardstick for Robertson Smith's assessment of all religions: 'For Smith Christianity was the true measure by which all other religions were defined; it was a religion of love, fellowship, joy, and communion with God, with little emphasis on sin, suffering, and guilt' (1974: 61). In 'Christianity and the Supernatural', Robertson Smith stresses the direct character of such relationships between the human and the divine:

A true consciousness must embrace a right conception of God's moral and personal character, and must therefore be based on an historical manifestation of God. We must learn that God is ready to enter deeper relations with man than those with nature. [...] God must enter as an actor into human history so that even the eye dimmed by sin cannot fail to recognize his presence. (1912: 126)

The divine revelation must be primarily an immediate manifestation of God; a manifestation of God in events that are at once seen to form no part of the chain of nature but to be directly personal and explicable *only* as acts of God. (ibid.: 127, original emphasis)

Robertson Smith stresses that God is closer to man than to nature, and further, that any divine manifestation goes through human history rather than through an agency grounded in nature. For the Protestant theologian Robertson Smith, God speaks directly to man, and any connection between the divine and the tabooed must, therefore, be termed 'heathenish':

The irrationality of laws of uncleanness, from the standpoint of spiritual religion or even of higher heathenism, is so manifest, that they must necessarily be looked on as having survived from an earlier form of faith and of society. (1894: 449)

Robertson Smith's evolutionism is prominent in this quotation. He follows the evolutionist ranking of societies, constructing a hierarchy which moves from heathenism to 'higher heathenism' and which finds its peak in 'spiritual religion'. The history of religion progresses from 'paganism', which lives in superstitious dread of the supernatural, to Judaism, which has a more personal relationship with the 'holy', with perfection in Christianity, where God and man engage in a close, intimate dialogue. Steiner does not share Robertson Smith's evolutionist views.

9. For an example of Robertson Smith's discrimination between the 'tabooed' and the 'holy', see 1894: 446.

Like Beidelman, Steiner, while admiring the Victorian sociologist of religion, sees that Robertson Smith's Christianity blinds his critical perception as far as certain elements in Judaism are concerned. Steiner highlights Robertson Smith's search for Christian meaning. He criticizes the theologian for making his material fit his own interpretative framework while neglecting the social context of Hebrew society. The criticism of 'Europeanizing' non-European ways of behaviour, of constructing fictions about the 'alien' by neglecting the complexity of the available data, runs through Steiner's major anthropological writing like a leitmotif. Here it is the Christian theologian who is fantasizing about the 'primitive':

It is always the meaning that is explained and always the recorded behaviour that is used as explanation. This procedure derives from Robertson Smith's leading interest, which is theological. However much watered down, it is always the doctrine that demands explanation and not the ways of man. (1956: 56)

'Meaning' here denotes theological explanations in which the Old Testament is seen as prefiguring the New (as an example, Steiner refers to the 'relation' made 'between the ancient sacrificial feast and the Eucharist' (ibid.: 55)). Discussing Robertson Smith's theological search for meaning, Steiner ironically establishes a relationship between the nineteenth-century scholar and a seventeenth-century poet: 'the ways of man' refer to Milton's famous justification—or rather lack of justification—of 'God's ways to man'. In making this polemical allusion, Steiner is implying that Robertson Smith, instead of engaging in sociological discourse, is embarking on a theodicy or defence of Christian 'doctrine'. However, the jocular seriousness that goes with this polemical allusion to Milton does not imply any of the resentment which can clearly be perceived in Steiner's writing on Frazer. Rather, Steiner is trying to understand why Robertson Smith wrote as he did. This is corroborated by the fact that Steiner acknowledges that his critical remarks are easily made in the present context: 'I have also made a few critical remarks—easily made after sixty years of research have gone by' (ibid.: 68).

Steiner sets out to undermine Robertson Smith's understanding of Judaism through a linguistic analysis of the Hebrew word *hitborah*. Linguistic analysis, as we have already seen, is one of Steiner's most common deconstructive methods. Steiner argues that there is a problem of translatability between Hebrew and English, and that there is no European equivalent which could embrace the full range of meanings of the Hebrew word. Thus, the word *hitborah* has never had the same signification as the English term 'blessing', by which it is frequently translated. Unlike *hitborah*, 'blessing' does not have the connotations of 'contagion'. Steiner embarks on this detailed linguistic analysis in order to question Robertson Smith's conception of 'contagion' as the 'lowest form of superstition'. The examination of *hitborah* shows that 'blessing' involves contagion:

But however we look at it, contagion is the principle of the transfer of blessing no less than in Robertson Smith's 'primitive' pollution taboos. How then are we to say that the priest spreading his hands over the congregation, or the father touching

the head of the child, is not engaging in one of the 'lowest forms of superstition'? (1956: 64)

Steiner undermines Robertson Smith's evolutionist belief in the progress of religion from paganism to Christianity by claiming to detect 'paganism' as an element in the 'advanced form' of Christianity. Robertson Smith's binary opposition between 'primitive' superstition and 'modern' Christianity dissolves under Steiner's critical inquiry. The question mark at the end of the last sentence of the passage quoted above illustrates Steiner's dialogical way of writing in what was originally a series of lectures. He asks his audience directly, making his listeners think critically about the assumed superiority of developed forms of faith.

Another way in which Steiner subverts such feelings of superiority over the 'primitive' consists in his stylistic sleights of hand. He often adopts a patronizing tone while writing about such 'grand old men' as Frazer and Robertson Smith. He declines, for example, to discuss Robertson Smith's characterization of the 'primitive' as irrational by assuming that such evolutionist assumptions have themselves become anachronistic: 'Instancing irrationality as proof of primitiveness is such a strange procedure to the twentieth-century mind that I do not think it necessary to refute it' (1956: 67). By saying that 'the twentieth century mind' does not call the 'primitive' irrational, Steiner establishes a direct identification with his audience, who all belong to the twentieth-century and would not like to be out of touch with the progress being made in their age. Steiner makes clear the ethical agenda of his scholarship when he identifies himself, as an anthropologist, with the 'primitive'.¹⁰ Rather than using the 'I' formula, Steiner employs 'we', thus implicating the reader, drawing him or her into his 'primitive' point of view. This identification of the 'we' of the author and the audience with 'primitiveness' is established at the end of a discussion about *qodesh* ('holy'):

God himself—this comes as a shock to most superficial Bible readers—is never called holy, *qodesh*, unless and in so far as He is related to something else. He is holy in his capacity as Lord of Hosts, though He is not here related to man. Very often the Bible says, The Holy One, blessed be He, or blessed be His name. The name is, in the framework of the doctrinal logic of the Pentateuch, always *qodesh* because it establishes a relationship; it has, so we primitives think, to be pronounced in order to exist. (1956: 85–6)

Steiner ironically conflates Judaism (or the 'Oriental') with 'primitiveness'. Apart from implicating his audience, the 'we' also refers to Steiner's Jewish/'Oriental' identity. This quotation needs greater contextualization. Steiner refutes Robertson Smith's claim of a personal relationship between the divine and the human by arguing that nowhere in the Pentateuch can authority be found for *qodesh* meaning

10. For a discussion of an ethical agenda in the ethnology of James Clifford and Clifford Geertz, see Barnett and Chen 1989: 119–32.

a 'relation with humanity' (1956: 85). The Christian and 'modern' European Robertson Smith holds that God reveals himself directly in human history. The Jew and self-declared 'Oriental' Franz Steiner, on the other hand, argues that the attributes of God are known relationally. According to Steiner, the manifestations of such relationships constitute danger spots that are to be avoided, thus making a connection between power and danger. As we shall see, this also occurs in Steiner's discussion of mana as a form of 'taboo', though at this point human power is meant. Here, though, Steiner focuses on divine power and equates it with danger. This paves the way for his own theory of 'taboo' as developed in the last chapter of *Taboo* and as elaborated theoretically in his 'Über den Prozes der Zivilisierung' (1944).

What is important to note in this context, however, is Steiner's identification of himself as a Jew with the 'primitive'. Not only does a strong binary opposition emerge between the Jew as the 'primitive' and the Christian as the 'modern' European, but the conflation between Jew and 'primitive' is employed in serious scholarly discourse so as to mark off the Christian, scientific West, from the non-Christian, non-modern rest of the world. Indeed, in the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, from Herder onwards, the Oriental 'Semites' were contrasted with the Christian 'Aryans'. Herder and Renan believed that the resistance of the Jews to attempts to convert them to the new religion of Christianity symbolized the conservatism of 'Orientals' as such.¹¹ As Starobinski has pointed out, in the twentieth century a reversal took place: the Jews were now blamed for all the disagreeable features of 'modernity'. Steiner implicitly alludes to the discussion of Jews as 'modern' in antisemitic discourse. Hobsbawm, among others, has shown that antisemites saw 'the Jews' as symbols of 'modernity':¹² 'They [the Jews] could serve as symbols of the hated capitalist/financier; of the revolutionary agitator; of the corroding influence of "rootless intellectuals" and the new mass media' (1994: 119). The capitalist, the revolutionary and the mass media all represent modernity. Opposing antisemitic discourse, Steiner argues that Jews have nothing in common with 'modern' Europe. Like a 'primitive', Steiner as a Jew believes in the physical reality of names: man can establish some form of relationship with God by pronouncing the word *qodesh*. However, this relationship is never a direct one, as Robertson Smith argues; rather, the pronunciation of the Hebrew word for God is itself tabooed in Judaism. By writing that 'we primitives' believe in the power of words to bring something into existence, Steiner also alludes to the tabooed Hebrew name of God. In this way he again stresses the difference between Robertson Smith's Christianity and the 'primitive' context of the Hebrew Bible.

11. For a discussion of Herder's ranking of cultures and his belief in the supremacy of Christian revelation as opposed to the spiritual and scientific 'under-development' of non-Western, non-Christian civilisation, see Olender 1995: 52–7.

12. For a discussion of this reversal, see Starobinski, 'Nachwort', in Olender 1995: 144–50.

Steiner also attacks Frazer's evolutionism. Whereas Robertson Smith's evolutionism is based on a belief in the progress of religion from pagan superstition to Christianity, Frazer argues for evolution in terms of scientific achievements. It is this utter absence of any religious background that irritates Steiner most, as can be seen in the following criticism of Frazer's bourgeois 'anti-clericalism':

An ill-disguised anti-clerical bias which attacks, *faut de mieux*, the priests of bygone Polynesia; an exhibition of evolutionism at its slickest and least appetising; a justification, to a point, of what he regards as the most horrible superstitions, because they produced, according to his belief, a law of property and sexual propriety. All that fear and self-inflicted torture, all that pondering about life and death, all those proud and humble and desperate patterns of obedience in order to produce the *summum bonum* of the late nineteenth-century bourgeoisie. (1956: 93)

These are well-calculated and at the same time passionate and highly modulated formulations by which Steiner constructs a complex scholarly persona. Foucault has defined 'discursive practice' as 'a body of anonymous, historical rules, always determined in the time and space that have defined a given period' (1989: 117). Steiner's voice is determined by the ironic and at the same time polite way of writing of an anthropologist like Evans-Pritchard: '*faut de mieux*' is an expression adapted to the francophilia of British intellectuals like Radcliffe-Brown or indeed Evans-Pritchard. Steiner also uses a comic way of speaking by exploiting the vocabulary of disgust ('at its slickest', 'least appetising'). The 'all that' anaphora are built up, only to lead to the polemical bathos of the nineteenth-century bourgeoisie.

II

Steiner exposes Robertson Smith's scholarship as an attempt to justify Christian doctrine, and he unmasks Frazer's 'scientific' approach as a defence of pathetic bourgeois values: he associates Frazer's anthropology with the lifelessness of sexual hypocrisy, a bourgeois conviction to the right of property, and of self-sacrifice the cause of capitalism. Frazer emerges from Steiner's critique as a pathetic petty bourgeois. Having stigmatized Frazer thus, he criticizes his scholarly method and, as with Robertson Smith, finds fault with the wilful interpretation of meaning while neglecting social contexts. Robertson Smith isolates social phenomena so as to construct fictions about the superstitions of 'primitives'. Frazer disconnects social phenomena in order to fit some empirical facts into his theory of the evolution of the human psyche: 'analysis is reserved for the meaning, in psychological terms, of the isolated items but no degree of analysis is necessary for distinguishing or evaluating social contexts' (1956: 98).

Steiner also repudiates his teacher Radcliffe-Brown. He closes his discussion of Radcliffe-Brown's *Structure and Function in Primitive Society* with the following terse words:

What have we learned from Radcliffe-Brown's *Taboo* essay? At least two things: (1) that it is impossible to describe danger behaviour in terms of value, and (2) that one cannot describe supposedly non-human sanctions without some reference to social pressure. This result is wholly negative, but it is, I believe, rather salutary. (1956: 125)

Most of the time, Steiner's discussion of Western anthropology yields negative results. His deconstruction of a Europeanizing discussion of a non-European concept serves as a backdrop for his own theory of 'taboo', which is presented at the end of the book. What Steiner resents most is Radcliffe-Brown's attempt at 'explaining danger behaviour in terms of negative values' (ibid.: 124). Radcliffe-Brown holds that 'primitives', though being unable to work out an abstract moral system, give voice to values in the form of emotive rites. Rites, including ritual taboos, express the moral *sentiments* of the natives. We thus encounter a patronizing approach to the 'primitive'. Steiner tackles this patronizing approach by patronizing Radcliffe-Brown himself, as the school-masterly 'what-have-we-learned' formulation makes clear. Steiner shows that the natives are self-reflexive when they follow taboos, which, rather than being the emotional expression of values, are values themselves. Consequently he proposes that one should 'explain value behaviour in terms of positive danger' (ibid.: 124). Whereas Radcliffe-Brown belittles the effectiveness of taboo-commands by arguing that they are enforced by an irrational belief in a supernatural power, Steiner argues that there are well-calculated social pressures that motivate taboo behaviour. These social pressures are organized so as to keep disruptions through violence at bay. In Steiner's discussion, taboo emerges as a complex form of behaviour and a social value whose importance all the natives agree on. Steiner also discerns a patronizing attitude towards taboo behaviour in Freud's *Totem und Tabu*. Like Robertson Smith and Frazer, Freud separates the prohibited from the sacred.¹³ Steiner therefore places Freud within the nineteenth-century evolutionist tradition: 'Freud has given us a very lucid resume of the views of Robertson Smith and Frazer' (1956: 130). Ironically, although Freud is called an important psychologist, he is placed in a nineteenth-century context:

In his entire discussion of the ethnographic material Freud has really stressed two, and only two, points: the difference between, and distinctiveness of, sacredness and horror, and the automatic nature of the taboo sanction. There is a certain arbitrariness in this narrowing down of the rather complex problems and institu-

13. For Freud's distinction between the prohibited and the sacred, see 1986: 357.

tions involved. Nevertheless, in so doing, Freud remains in the best tradition of the Victorian intellectualists. (1956: 133)

By saying that Freud 'remains in the best tradition of the Victorian intellectualists', Steiner ironically undermines the psychologist's claim to be progressive. Indeed, Freud follows Frazer's tripartite evolutionist framework when he writes about the three stages through which mankind passes on its way to intellectual improvement: 'Die Menschheit hat...drei grosse Weltanschauungen im Laufe der Zeiten hervorgebracht: die animistische (mythologische), die religiöse und die wissenschaftliche ('through the centuries mankind has produced three great world-views: the animistic (mythological), the religious and the scientific'), (1986: 366). Psychoanalysis is the science that rationalizes man's irrational elements and, in so doing, liberates him or her from a neurotic fear of danger. Steiner, however, argues that fear of danger is not 'irrational', but that, on the contrary, it gives rise to rational and practical actions that help prevent the outbreak of violence.

As well as deconstructing Western attempts at understanding 'primitive' concepts, Steiner tentatively suggests a theoretical discourse on 'taboo': 'As I suggest tentatively later, taboo is an element of all those situations in which attitudes to values are expressed in terms of danger' (1956: 21). Steiner makes it clear that instead of being an irrational superstition, taboo behaviour has a rationale in that it constitutes 'values' regarding the avoidance of 'danger'. Here Steiner develops a highly significant theory of 'taboo'. It seems slight on account of its fluent, modest formulation, for which reason Evans-Pritchard may have overlooked its significance. Yet every word counts. As the words 'all those situations' in the above passage illustrate, Steiner generalizes on an abstract level, but, as the 'tentatively' demonstrates, he is also aware of the danger of such generalizations. His use of the word 'element' is both cautiously modest and scientifically exact. It defines 'taboo's' specific role. Steiner uses a cautious terminology while talking about 'taboo' on an abstract level, again underlining the fact that the forms of taboo behaviour differ from society to society. This outline of 'taboo' is part of Steiner's methodology: it serves to give a positive backdrop to the negative discussions of Western philosophers, theologians and anthropologists. Steiner shows that the concept of 'taboo' is more complex than some anthropologists like to think.

Steiner draws the reader's attention to the confusion of this non-European form of behaviour in European discussions:

A warning is necessary at the very outset that several quite different things have been and still are being discussed under the heading 'Taboo'. Taboo is concerned (1) with all the social mechanisms of obedience which have ritual significance; (2) with specific and restrictive behaviour in dangerous situations. (1956: 20)

Steiner establishes what, for him, are the most significant parts of a theory of 'taboo' which have hitherto been made, and the words 'a warning is necessary' as well as the 'different things' formulation makes the reader aware of a highly

complex rather than 'primitive'—in the sense of 'simple'—topic. The 'social mechanism' of the first point refers to Durkheim's notion of laws that are accepted as valid by the whole of a community. As LaCapra has pointed out in his detailed discussion of Durkheim's concept of repressive sanctions or social mechanisms, these are enforced, but, rather than being individualistic, unethical and arbitrary, the force behind them originates in the values shared by the whole community. LaCapra points out both the element of enforcement and the communal and ethical aspect of such force (1972: 90–159). Social mechanisms also have a religious dimension: they 'have ritual significance'.

Steiner's second point defines the value of such rituals as brought forth by the action they entail, making all members aware of limits whose transgression leads to an encounter with danger and giving a precise description ('specific') of behaviour that confines itself ('restrictive') to limits 'in dangerous situations'. Thus using a Durkheimian understanding which Steiner seems to subscribe to here, 'taboo' partakes of religion and, at the same time, lays down rules for ethical behaviour—behaviour that avoids violence—in dangerous situations of everyday life. According to LaCapra, for Durkheim the question of value and meaning goes hand in hand with the notion of boundaries, limits and taboos. Indeed, Durkheim contrasts the anomie found in modern societies with the awareness of limits in 'primitive' cultures, characterizing anomie 'as the absence of legitimate limits' (LaCapra 1972.: 159). Steiner goes on to add a third and fourth element inherent in the concept of 'taboo':

One might say that taboo deals with the sociology of danger itself, for it is also concerned (3) with the protection of individuals who are in danger, and (4) with the protection of society from those endangered—and therefore dangerous—persons. (1956: 20–1)

Here Steiner explains how behaviour in terms of danger has as its aim protecting individuals who, having become endangered, pose a danger to their environment. The comparative study of slavery (1949) gives a detailed analysis of the latter point. What Europeans called 'slavery' consists of a type of taboo behaviour: it differentiates and then reintegrates 'endangered—and therefore dangerous—persons'. Like other forms of taboo behaviour, this form of differentiation and integration has to be seen as a way of avoiding violence: the individual who is endangered is also dangerous, and, according to Steiner, to face danger is to face another power. This encounter with danger or power is circumvented through the social differentiation of the one who is dangerous. In this way 'taboo'—by laying down rules of avoidance rather than control and, therefore, contact with power/danger—protects 'individuals who are in danger' (3) and also offers protection to those who are connected with the endangered by integrating these same individuals into new societal units (4). Steiner sensitizes us to possible understandings of 'primitive' culture in terms of danger behaviour. As a corollary of such understandings, it follows that the 'primitive' differentiates himself or herself from the 'civilized' through an awareness of danger and the willingness to avoid all its

specific manifestations in everyday life. But although Steiner analyses behaviour in response to danger in a highly detached anthropological manner in *Taboo* and in his comparative study of forms of slavery (his thesis of 1949), in 'Über den Prozes der Zivilisierung' (1944) he contrasts the 'primitive' eagerness to avoid every type of danger with the readiness of modern European civilization to establish contact with the dangerous.

By describing 'taboo' as danger behaviour, Steiner attempts an abstract interpretation of all 'primitive' cultures. As we have seen, Steiner makes it clear that the 'primitive' also encompasses the 'Oriental' by identifying himself as an 'Oriental' Jew with the 'primitive'. Furthermore, as Robertson Smith's writing on Hebrew superstition demonstrates, the notion of 'taboo' and the Hebrew concept of law are closely related. Steiner, however, qualifies this abstraction by saying that 'taboo' finds different forms of expression in different societies:

Now we cannot see all this in terms of a single problem, whether we solve it or leave it unsolved. There is no sociological-situational unity in the attitudes and customs under discussion; a psychological unity is equally absent. [...] We are thus in the position of having to deal, under 'Taboo', with a number of diverse social mechanisms expressed in forms which, from the psychological standpoint, stretch beyond this one category. (1956: 21)

Although 'taboo' always has to do with danger, forms of avoiding danger differ from one society to another: each culture has its own distinctive way of life and its own situational context.

In only one single culture does taboo have complex convergences with other concepts. Steiner elaborates on the complexity of the Polynesian notion of 'taboo'. He writes that 'mana and taboo were often independent aspects of one thing' (ibid.: 41). 'Mana' is the power that marks certain individuals off from others. These individuals have 'mana' on account of their ability to impose 'taboos': 'mana' is the power to call something a 'taboo'. By interrelating the notion of 'taboo' with that of 'mana', Steiner claims that Polynesians organize their society according to taboo behaviour. Hence 'taboo', while being a ritual, is at the same time a socio-political way of life. Rather than being a superstition, as nineteenth-century evolutionists like Frazer and Robertson Smith held, or an unreflective form of practice voicing emotions about values, as Radcliffe-Brown claimed, Steiner argues that 'taboo' is a carefully thought-out structure of social behaviour. 'Taboo' limits contacts with danger/power and violence in the context of socio-political interactions:

The power to restrict was the yardstick by which power was measured; here was the social manifestation of power. Second, the exercise of this veto was in terms of taboo, that is, the actual sphere of any person's or office's power was delimited by the kind of taboos he could impose. Taboo thus provided the means of relating a person to his superiors and inferiors. (ibid.: 39)

Taboo gives notice of anything that, if touched without permission, disrupts peace and thus leads to dangerous situations. Far from being an expression of superstition or a form of emotional assertion about values, 'taboos' are carefully thought-out rituals that help prevent social tensions and violent divisions within societies. The objects which are tabooed must not be touched on pain of their inflicting danger—here a manifestation of social power—on the violator. In Polynesia, social disruptions are avoided as a result of the communal acceptance of such prohibitions. The tabooed is always the powerful and must therefore be avoided. Polynesian society as a whole is conscious of power and the dangers it engenders. The highly complex notion of 'taboo' developed out of this consciousness of the danger of power.

In the first two chapters of *Taboo*, Steiner lays the ground from which to attack Western thinkers' simplistic interpretations of this complex term. At the end of the book, Steiner returns to his interpretation of 'taboo' as a way of avoiding encountering risks, taking up the most important elements he has developed in his discussion of 'taboo'. He equates danger with power, and, proceeding with his critique of Radcliffe-Brown, calls 'taboo' a value:

To face danger is to face another power. Indeed, the older meaning of the English word danger is 'power', 'jurisdiction', 'dominion', 'the power to dispose of or to harm'. (ibid.: 146)

...it is a major fact of human existence that we are not able, and never were able, to express our relation to values in other terms than those of danger behaviour. (ibid.: 147)

Here Steiner develops his theory about power and danger. 'Taboo' emerges as the key to solving the problems that power and danger pose to any society. Communities in which the social pressure to follow 'taboos' embraces the whole of the society are free from violent encounters with danger and power, which Steiner explicitly pairs. He alludes to the *condicio humana*, saying that humanity has always been surrounded by danger. 'Primitive' societies circumscribe power and therefore limit danger to certain places that are to be avoided. Those areas that belong to the chief or king are not to be entered. Similarly, danger spots in nature, in which the power of the divine is believed to dwell, are not to be touched. 'Taboo' is a value in that it prescribes the avoidance of any form of power and gives instructions concerning such avoidance by indicating exactly where the danger lies:

Danger is narrowed down by taboo. A situation is regarded as dangerous: very well, but the danger may be a socially unformulated threat. Taboo gives notice that danger lies not in the whole situation, but only in certain specified actions concerning it. These actions, these danger spots, are more challenging and deadly than the danger of the situations as a whole, for the whole situation can be ren-

dered free from danger by dealing with or, rather, avoiding the specified danger spots completely. (ibid.: 146–7)

Steiner argues for a form of 'dealing with' danger by 'avoiding' it. The ethical connotation of 'taboo' consists precisely in this avoidance of violence. At the end of his book, 'primitive' culture emerges as a well-thought-out form of establishing human relations and relations with the natural world by keeping a distance from both power and danger. Steiner theorizes the concept of 'taboo' as a constitutive way of putting power into a setting. In depicting 'taboo' as a *rational* way of avoiding danger, Steiner also opposes Robertson Smith's view of religion as being an expression of a loving and personal relationship between God and man. Religious behaviour, like the following of taboos, has a practical rationale for Steiner in that it helps create a society in which distance from power and danger is established. Robertson Smith, however, argues that taboo is a remnant of an inferior primitive society:

It is not with a vague fear of unknown powers, but with a loving reverence for known gods who are knit together by their worshippers by strong bonds of kinship that religion in the true sense of the word begins. (1894: 54–5)

Whereas Robertson Smith tries to convince us of the irrationality of 'taboo', calling the powers that are to be avoided 'unknown', Steiner draws attention to the precise localization of danger in 'primitive' society.

In contemporary anthropology, René Girard has confirmed that 'primitive' prohibitions are indeed rational acts. According to Girard, menstrual blood is tabooed, as 'it seems to confirm an affinity between sexuality and those diverse forms of violence that invariably lead to bloodshed' (1977). In *Violence and the Sacred*, he writes that

...the prohibitions of primitive peoples display a knowledge of violence and its ways that surpasses our modern comprehension [...] the prohibitions were dictated by violence itself [...] and they are fixed in place as a bulwark against similar outbursts. (ibid.: 219)

Instead of calling 'taboos' irrational, Girard attributes a depth of knowledge to them which is not found in 'modern' societies. Like Steiner, Girard credits 'primitive' prohibitions with a sophisticated localizing procedure ('they are fixed in place'), rather than ascribing them to vague, irrational fears or neuroses. This is one example of modern scholarship confirming Steiner's theory of taboo behaviour. Indeed, in echoing Mary Douglas's title *Purity and Danger* (1966) Girard's work may ultimately be traceable to Steiner's *Taboo*.

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TOWARDS A SITUATIONAL THEORY OF BELIEF

MARTIN D. STRINGER

Introduction

BETWEEN January 1984 and January 1986, and again between May 1987 and September 1992, I conducted fieldwork with a number of different Christian congregations in south and east Manchester. During this time I had many opportunities to listen to people talking about their beliefs, discussing questions of belief in small groups, debating matters of belief with those who did not agree with them and dropping statements of belief into everyday conversation. At the end of all this fieldwork, however, I was still left asking what it was we mean by the term 'belief'.

One situation in particular sticks in my mind as typifying the difficulties I had. I was part of a discussion group in a traditionalist Anglican church. We had got on to the subject of death. A number of those present began to talk about the importance of holding a requiem mass for those who had died, particularly for close relatives. The clear assumption being made was that holding a requiem mass would help those who had died to reach heaven. At some point in the discussion, however, one of the group raised the question of reincarnation, and immediately the tone and content of the conversation changed. Practically all of those present (six women and one man, mainly middle aged, all but one of whom had been members of the church for the majority of their lives) began to assert the importance of the belief in reincarnation for their own understanding of what would happen to them after death. Clearly two very different, not to say contradictory

statements of belief were being made in this discussion, and, equally clearly, those who were involved were not aware of the contradiction for themselves.¹

This is simply one example of many I could give where apparently contradictory statements of belief were being made by individuals, or by groups in discussion, within a very short space of time and without any obvious sign that a contradiction was involved. This particular discussion took place within an Anglican congregation, but this was not a specifically 'Anglican' approach to belief: it was common to many other congregations, although the framework within which statements of belief were made clearly changed from church to church. With Roman Catholics there was a sense of the tradition and the 'teaching of the Church', which formed a backdrop to all such statements of belief. In evangelical and fundamentalist congregations, there was the Bible and a fairly consistent interpretation of the Bible that everybody accepted. In a few radical and liberal congregations, members would say quite openly that they did not 'believe', and the question of belief was wide open to debate. On the whole, however, some notion of belief was present in all the churches, and where that belief was expressed by ordinary members of the congregations, it often appeared to be inconsistent, arbitrary, and at times contradictory.

One phenomenon I noticed with all churches was that particular beliefs were stated as facts and introduced into specific conversations for specific purposes. Even in the example I have just quoted, it was clear that the members of the group had one set of beliefs for those who were close to them (that they would go to heaven and required a requiem mass to be said for their souls) and another for themselves (the desire for reincarnation). Very rarely, however, was the content of the beliefs discussed in depth. This led me to look much more closely at the way 'belief' itself was understood by members of the congregations, and the way in which specific belief statements were being used in everyday conversation.

Belief in Anthropology

Belief is an essentially 'Christian' concept. Other religions are based primarily on 'doing': on following the Law, on performing ritual, and so on. This does not mean that other religions have no concept of belief (although this is debatable). It means that belief, if it does exist, is secondary to other elements. For Christianity, on the other hand, belief is central to almost all definitions of what it is to be Christian. Early Christians were distinguished by the fact that they 'believed' Jesus to be the Son of God. This notion was later clarified and codified in relation to Greek philosophy and led both to the great heresy debates of the third and

1. Neither I nor the priest who was running the group ever interfered in the discussion, nor did we point out the contradictions to those concerned.

fourth centuries, and the construction of the 'creeds', which became so central to much of Christian ritual. This emphasis on belief was reinforced during the Reformation, with its emphasis on 'justification by faith', and from this time on, even in the wider intellectual tradition, religion in the West has always been associated with belief. The Enlightenment led to the 'privatization' of religion, which was thought to be based on the beliefs of the individual, and rationalism led to the rejection of religion on the basis of a rejection of 'belief': belief was defined as 'irrational'. During the nineteenth century, this emphasis on belief was also applied to other religious traditions through the work of Max Müller and others. Tylor, for example, defined 'religion' as the '*belief* in Spiritual Beings' (1871: 383, my emphasis). While many people questioned whether religion should be defined in relation to 'spiritual beings', nobody seemed to question whether the application of the concept of 'belief' to other religions was relevant or even possible.

Belief, therefore, is an issue that anthropologists have, on the whole, been very reluctant to tackle.² Robertson Smith (1894) argued that what people say about their rituals should be secondary to what is actually done. Beliefs, he claimed, change over time and are often created 'post-hoc', whereas the ritual generally remains static. This has led anthropologists to give most of their attention to what is 'done' during ritual rather than to what people say about it.³ There has, it is true, always been a strong interest in 'myth' within anthropology, but this is not really 'belief', even if, for many commentators myth appears to imply some kind of belief. The debate that has been generated about the relationship between myth and ritual has tended, on the whole, to ignore the possible position of belief between these separate forms.⁴

Another, more recent tendency within anthropology has been to try and construct a system of beliefs—not unlike systematic Christian theology—that is both coherent and all-embracing. The views of the Dogon of West Africa have perhaps been subjected most thoroughly to this technique (Griaule 1965), and Evans-Pritchard, when he came to study the religion of the Nuer, fell into much the same trap (Evans-Pritchard 1956). Evans-Pritchard always had the skill, which is seen in all his work on the Nuer, of creating 'systems'. His system of segmentary

2. The two principal books on the subject by recognized anthropologists, Needham's *Belief, Language and Experience* (1972) and Gellner's *Legitimation of Belief* (1974), are both essentially philosophical rather than anthropological in their approach.

3. Turner and others who discuss symbolism (e.g. 1967) have tried to focus on the local 'meaning' of symbols. This, however, only leads to the questions of the relationship between symbols and belief and whether it is possible to talk about the 'meanings' of symbols at all. I develop both these questions in relation to my discussion of Sperber below.

4. I will not be referring to myth at all in this paper, as I would generally wish to argue that myth is of little real interest to any study of Christian practice. 'Myth' is too vague a word to use in any critical comparative analysis. How far, for example, can the Gospels, creation stories from Melanesia and the grand 'mythic' cycles discussed by Lévi-Strauss all be encompassed by a single term?

lineages and the political consequences of this are well known, as are the many critiques of this system, most of which attack the central idea of there being a 'system' of any kind within Nuer political arrangements (Evans-Pritchard 1945; cf. Kuper 1983: 88–97). His system of belief for the Nuer, however, which also has clear political consequences, has largely been free from such criticism. *Nuer Religion* is an important work in the way that it takes what the people 'believe' seriously for about the first time in anthropology (Evans-Pritchard 1956). However, this book, as with much other work on the Nuer, is probably more of a reflection of Evans-Pritchard's own systematic imagination, strongly influenced by his recent conversion to Roman Catholicism, than a reflection of the actual 'beliefs' of the Nuer themselves.

More recently, the concept of 'belief' and other related terms have come in for more detailed criticism, and the whole debate about the meaning of specific words has become a field opened up for study. Foremost in this debate, certainly within this country, is Southwold's book, *Buddhism in Life* (1983). I would like to begin my own review of this recent literature, however, with a short French essay that sums up the issues much more succinctly and which therefore provides us with a good starting-point for looking both at Southwold's own work and at the way in which belief might be 'used' within Christian congregations.

Remarks on the Verb 'To Believe'

Unfortunately Pouillon's essay, 'Remarks on the Verb "To Believe"' (1982), relies very heavily on the specifically French aspects of the verb '*croire*' and has therefore proved very difficult to translate into English. However, as 'translation' is, in one form or another, the main theme of the essay, this only serves to illustrate the argument. Pouillon tackles the issue of belief in other societies by asking whether those who do not share our language do in fact 'believe' in the way that is implied when we use this term. This leads Pouillon to look at the term and to divide its meanings, in French, in such a way that he can look more closely at what it is that the French, and people of other language groups, might be saying. Pouillon is keen to point out that, on the whole, it is European anthropologists who claim that other peoples believe, not the people themselves. This, he argues, is a direct product of the nature of the verb 'to believe'.

Pouillon distinguishes three uses for the French verb '*croire*' (1982: 2). These three uses are best translated into English as 'to trust in', 'to believe that' and 'to believe in'. To illustrate the differences, I will offer two quotations:

If I have confidence in a friend, if I believe in (*croire en*, 'have faith in') him, will I say that I believe in (*croire à*) his existence? Certainly not: that existence is simply undeniable. (ibid.)

Or rather they [the Dangaleat] do not believe in (*croire à*) it [the *margaii*, a kind of spirit]; this existence is simply a matter of experience: there is no more need to believe in (*croire à*) the *margaii* than to believe that if I throw a stone it will fall. (ibid.)

At the root of this distinction is the assumption, made explicit by Pouillon, that if we say that we 'believe' a particular statement, then there must be a certain amount of doubt concerning the truth of that statement. If we say, for example, that we only 'believe' in God, then the statement, the concept of 'God', must be open to question. This sense of doubt, Pouillon argues, is central to the European understanding of the verb 'to believe'. Without that doubt, we simply 'believe that...', or we could say that we 'know that...': we know that our friend exists, we know that stones fall, or whatever. Other languages, Pouillon argues, do not necessarily have this distinction, or rather, they make it explicit by the use of distinct terms. I often heard members of an Independent Christian Fellowship I studied making the same distinction: they did not claim to 'believe' in God's existence, they 'knew' that God existed.⁵ When they did use the verb 'to believe', they used it in the first of Pouillon's senses, as a statement of trust, of commitment, of faith. Pouillon claims that it is the very ambiguity of the term 'to believe' that gives it its usefulness and power in European languages. This ambiguity, however, does not necessarily translate into other language groups around the world.

Southwold picks up a very similar point in his own discussion of belief among the village Buddhists he has been studying (1983: 150ff.). For Southwold, it is the distinction between 'belief that' and 'belief in' that is the vital one, and he expresses this in relation to Christian theology and especially arguments about the existence of God. To say we 'believe that God exists' is to make a statement similar to the one we would make were we to say that we know that a table or a friend exists. Such a statement would, therefore, be open to a discussion of truth. However, for Southwold, this is only half the story. He argues that the understanding of the word 'exists' in both these statements is acknowledged to be different, because 'God' is a different kind of term from 'table' or 'friend'.⁶ More importantly, however, Southwold claims that we very rarely hear people make a statement to the effect that they 'believe that' God exists; rather they are more likely to say, as the Christian creeds do, that they 'believe in' God. To 'believe in' God is, as with Pouillon, to put one's trust in God, to have faith in God, not to make any special reference to God's existence or to the nature of that existence.

5. Evans-Pritchard makes exactly the same distinction in the first chapter of *Nuer Religion* and uses this as the basis for avoiding the verb 'to believe' throughout the rest of the book (1956: 9). The Nuer, Evans-Pritchard argues, *know* that Kwoth, the spirits, etc. exist, they do not *believe* that they exist.

6. At this point Southwold enters a philosophical discourse and moves away from the purely practical use of the terms in everyday conversation.

To believe in God is to take God as an assumption, a starting-point, and to begin to work from that point.

Belief Statements

Throughout his work, Southwold chooses to use the more specific term 'belief statements' rather than the vaguer 'beliefs'. In doing so, he makes comments about the village Buddhists among whom he is working which are similar to those I made about members of Christian congregations in Manchester. The village Buddhists, it appears, use specific statements of belief in everyday conversations, sometimes at cross purposes, but with only an implied sense of a wider system behind them.⁷ In talking about belief statements, however, Southwold makes a distinction between 'belief statements' and 'symbolic statements' (Southwold 1983: 50). The basis for this distinction rests in the kind of truth which is being assumed (whether empirical or metaphorical). It is this distinction I would like to question.

Here I turn to the work of Dan Sperber (1975, 1982). Sperber does not deal with 'belief' as such, but rather with symbols, or what he prefers to call 'symbolic statements' (1975: 3). Sperber claims that 'symbols do not mean' (ibid.: 85ff.). This statement, however, seems to go against the whole of anthropological thought on the subject of symbolism, the main aim of which has always been to discover meanings. Sperber begins his argument by criticizing Turner and other anthropologists for taking too much notice of what the people themselves say about the meanings of their symbols. Sperber suggests that any such 'native exegesis' of the symbol should itself be treated as an extension of that symbol and therefore should demand an explanation in its own right. In other words, when the Ndembu tell us that the *mudji* tree stands for mothers' milk or the matrilineal clan during female initiation rites, or when a Roman Catholic talks about 'transubstantiation' and claims that the bread at the eucharist becomes the body of Christ, this cannot in any way help us explain what the rite in question 'means'. Such statements can only take the problem one stage further, in the sense that the statement itself, the relationship between a symbol and its meaning, demands an explanation.

Sperber goes on to draw a distinction between different kinds of 'truth' within his analysis. He claims that certain statements—the example he uses from his own fieldwork is 'all leopards are Christians'—do not need to be empirically 'true', although they are treated as such by the people concerned. For these people, therefore, when they affirm the 'truth' of the statement, what is 'true' is the related

7. The starting-point for Southwold's whole study is the belief statement made by village Buddhists in reply to his question, 'What is Buddhism?'. 'Buddhism', the villagers told him, 'is not killing animals'. It was Southwold's confusion in the face of this statement which led him to explore the whole question of belief in the first place (1983: 66ff.).

statement that "all leopards are Christians" is true'. This may sound a rather pedantic distinction, but once we grasp what Sperber is saying, I think it will prove useful. The point at issue is not the empirical truth of the statement itself but the fact that people are willing to accept such a statement as 'true' without questioning its empirical status. This is what Sperber calls putting the statement in parenthesis, setting it apart from ordinary discourse. It is only 'true' because it is said to be 'true', although the exact nature of that 'truth' should not be, and on the whole is not, questioned (1975: 91ff.). What is more, this construction of truth in parenthesis allows for a multiplicity of statements to be held at any one time even if logically speaking they are mutually contradictory (*ibid.*: 94-5).

The same can be said for much of the religious discourse of any Christian church. All the doctrines of such a church are 'true' only in this Sperberian sense. Where I differ from Sperber, however, is over the empirical truth of such statements. Sperber takes it for granted that these statements—"all leopards are Christians", 'the host is the body of Christ', or whatever—are quite obviously untrue. That, according to Sperber, is how we can distinguish a symbolic statement in the first place (*ibid.*: 2-3).⁸ It is not clear to me how he can be so sure of this. It is only within a certain Western 'scientific' discourse, one that defines the word 'empirical' as Sperber is using it, that such statements have no truth. There is, however, by all known methods of proof, no way of knowing whether leopards are Christians or whether the host is the body of Christ. What Sperber should be saying is that the empirical truth of such statements does not matter, that this is not an issue that anybody would normally dream of raising, that the question is irrelevant. For the ordinary member of the society which Sperber studied, and for the ordinary Catholic, the truth of such statements is simply taken for granted.

The Question of Proof

During a seminar that I presented on my material about a Roman Catholic congregation, I was once asked how far the mass 'proved' the existence of God. This struck me at the time as a very strange question. The implication behind it was that normal, rational people cannot accept such nonsensical notions as the existence of God. What is more, it is only those who go to mass who hold such strange, irrational beliefs. Somehow, therefore, what goes on during mass must 'prove' that God exists if it is to persuade otherwise rational people to accept such irrational

8. What is important for Sperber is that these statements perform the same function as empirical truths, i.e. they are encyclopaedic, not metaphoric (which is something very different). If this is the case, then like all encyclopaedic statements they can be proved wrong (or unknowable) in relation to the world as it is (Sperber 1975: 98ff.).

ideas. That, however, presents completely the wrong picture and, I would suggest, is to begin from the wrong end of the argument.

This is best illustrated by a short passage from Southwold's book (1983: 76) in which he talks about the creation story in Genesis. Southwold comments that this story, whether taken literally or not, is usually seen as saying something about God, about God's creativity, God's love, or—at the extreme, and following one line of argument—about God's very existence. Southwold suggests that this is not the point of the story at all. If we expect such stories to tell us about God, then we are looking at them from the wrong angle. 'God' in such stories, Southwold argues, should be taken as a basic assumption, an unquestioned 'truth', as should God's goodness, God's love and so on. What the story is saying, according to Southwold, is that if God is 'good', and if we accept that without question, and if God created the world, as the story tells us, then the world itself must be good. It is the assumptions that we make about God that give significance to the world, not the other way round. Southwold goes on to say much the same about the doctrine of the incarnation, namely that it is not an erudite philosophical argument about the nature of God, but rather that if God, whom we know to be good, takes on human form, then humanity must in consequence be 'blessed', be special, even be divine. The discourse is not one about the nature of God but one about the world, about humanity, about ourselves and our everyday lives, one which takes the existence and nature of God as a given.

Much the same, therefore, can be said about the mass, but in a rather more complex fashion. The mass can no more prove the existence of God than can the first four chapters of Genesis. The mass is played out within a framework of what Southwold would call belief statements, the truth of which is not to be questioned. It is these statements, therefore, fervently held and known to be 'true', that give significance to the mass. The mass cannot prove that the host becomes the body of Christ, but the knowledge of that 'truth'—the statement held in parenthesis, as Sperber would have it—gives the mass its significance; by implication, it also gives anything else that is brought into that mass, from an individual's personal life or elsewhere, the same kind of significance. The question still remains, however, of where the source of these basic true statements is to be found, and why people are so willing, in fact eager, to hold them as 'true' despite an environment beyond, and sometimes within, the church that claims, like Sperber, that they must be false. As Sperber says in a different context, the acceptance of the explanation must itself be explained.

In an article titled 'Is Symbolic Thought Prerational?' (1982), Sperber develops some of his ideas on symbolism one step further. He re-emphasizes the point that symbols do not 'mean' and claims that these symbols can help us manipulate ideas that the rational part of our mind cannot cope with. The question that Sperber asks is that if symbols do not 'mean', in the normal sense of the word, then what is it that they do? For Sperber, what symbols do is to 'evoke', but he is never entirely clear what it is that is being evoked. At one level what is being evoked is purely an emotional response that has no rational basis. At another level it is some kind of interconnection between ideas such that the idea of bread, for example, will

always be related to the concept of the body of Christ. Sperber, however, rejects both these suggestions as being too simplistic and claims that what is evoked is neither an emotion nor a connection of ideas, but rather a system of thought in which the associations that are presented do in fact make sense. In other words, bread does not in itself evoke the idea of Jesus' body or anything else; rather, the equation 'bread equals body' evokes the system of thought in which this equation makes sense, that is, the whole tradition of the Roman Catholic Church.

If we acknowledge this kind of argument and substitute the idea of a 'belief statement' for what Sperber defines as a 'symbolic statement', then we could say that a belief statement is a statement that is set apart from ordinary discourse, one whose truth is not questioned at an empirical level and which evokes a system of thought within which that statement makes sense. This would match nicely with Pouillon's understanding of belief as implying at least some kind of doubt. The belief statement is of a different order from ordinary discourse. It is a symbolic statement whose empirical truth is irrelevant, a statement which evokes a system of thought, a total system of belief, very like the one which Evans-Pritchard constructed for the Nuer, in which such statements do, in fact, make sense. Here, however, I would claim that the argument begins to fall apart. Sperber's argument may well be correct for Roman Catholics, who have a clear and obvious system of theology, though this assumption might also be questioned. For the Anglicans of my original example, however, I would want to question Sperber's assumptions very carefully and look much more closely at the disjointed nature of the belief statements used, their total lack of reference to belief systems and the seeming inconsistency of these belief statements in relation to death. Such an investigation could prove very instructive. To proceed with it, however, I will have to turn from anthropology to sociology.

Sociology and Superstition

Sociologists have, on the whole, been much more willing than anthropologists to acknowledge the place of belief within their studies. This is probably because they are working within their own society, where beliefs do tend to have an importance that is not so obvious or so easily available in other societies, for the reasons I have outlined earlier. During the 1960s, for example, sociologists of religion produced a series of so-called 'Parish Studies'. These studies measured how many people came to church, what social background they came from, what other aspects of church life they participated in, and so on.⁹ Occasionally they asked questions

9. A good example of this kind of work is C. K. Ward's *Priests and People* (1961). In the introduction (pp. 1-29) Ward gives some of the background to this kind of study and gives references to a number of similar works.

about belief. The emphasis in all these studies, however, was entirely statistical. A much more recent and more sophisticated version of this type of study is the Notre Dame Study of Catholic Parish Life produced at the University of Notre Dame in the United States (Leege and Gremillon 1984–1987). This looked at the nature of congregational life, the relationship between beliefs and politics, the experience of worship and so on, all through an essentially statistical methodology. Whatever the questions are, however, and however sophisticated a survey of this kind is, it can only have a limited value.

The use of statistics has also been developed through national and international surveys (Abrams *et al.* 1985). Such surveys have traditionally measured the attendance at, or membership of, religious institutions, but they have also asked questions about belief, which have produced statements such as ‘76% of British people believe in God’ (Thompson 1988: 225). Such surveys, however, very rarely ask what the respondents might mean by the word ‘God’, and never appear to question what they might mean by ‘belief’.¹⁰ Statistics alone, therefore, cannot begin to help us answer the questions about the nature of belief raised in the earlier part of this article. To answer these questions another method is required.

During the 1970s sociologists of religion came to a similar conclusion, and another method was tried, which was much closer to those of anthropology. A number of researchers went out and spent some time living in different parts of the country, usually in isolated communities, and began to ask questions about the role of religion within these communities (e.g. Moore 1974; Clark 1982). The emphasis in these studies was primarily on social factors associated with religious belonging rather than belief as such, but they did provide some ideas and data that can be compared with my own research. One typical example was David Clark’s study of a North Yorkshire fishing village, *Between Pulpit and Pew* (1982). The community in question is almost entirely Methodist or Congregational in its church attendance, with a small Roman Catholic presence and a very marginal Anglican church. As the study progresses we learn a great deal about the community, the views of its members, the organization of the chapels and the rivalry that exists between them. Belief, however, is never really explored beyond saying that, like everything else, it is ‘old fashioned’.

The premise that Clark is working on is that there is a fundamental conflict between ‘official’ belief and what is variously termed ‘folk’ belief, ‘popular’ belief or ‘superstition’ (*ibid.*: 7ff.). It is clear to Clark that there must be a distinction between these two types of belief, as it is said to be clear to the leaders of the various churches and chapels. How clear this distinction is to the average member of the congregations, however, or even to ordinary villagers, is more debatable. Clark gives an excellent analysis of the history of the area, showing how the old

10. Grace Davie, for example, uses such surveys to develop her own thesis that religion in contemporary Britain is more a matter of ‘believing’ than ‘belonging’. Even Davie, however, fails to ask any serious questions about what might be meant by ‘believing’, or what ‘believing’ might actually consist of (1994: 74ff.).

superstitious beliefs of the fishermen on the coast had hardly been touched by Christianity until the Methodist preachers arrived in the late eighteenth century. From that time on, however, while there was a constant tension between superstition and official belief in the eyes of the religious establishment, the people themselves seem to have kept the two very much apart: the official beliefs are for the chapel, the superstitions are for the coast. This all seems to make a great deal of sense. However, I would like to question the real nature of the distinction that Clark draws between official and popular beliefs. Clark is seeing the village mainly from the point of view of the official religion—he even acknowledges this at times—not as one of the villagers. How far, therefore, do the people themselves see these two forms of ‘belief’ as being in conflict? There is, I would suggest, enough evidence even in Clark’s own study to raise the question and, I think, to offer an alternative answer.

A similar question could be raised for the members of the congregations of the churches I studied. As I sat listening to conversations at various times when some matter of belief was being discussed, I felt the usefulness of Clark’s distinction between official and popular belief. There were a number of women at one church, for example, who firmly believed in the power of astrology and in the healing powers of spiritualist healers, even though it was not the official line of the ‘Church’. They were, in most people’s view, ‘superstitious’. Obviously the superstitions were not as clear-cut and complex as those relating to the fishing industry, although outside the church such superstitions may well be far more prevalent, particularly in relation to astrology and spiritualist healing. I still felt the need, however, to make the distinction. I was aware of the ‘official’ doctrine and I knew that what was being talked about here was not in line with that teaching. But does this mean that for the people themselves there were clearly two distinct sets of belief? I would argue not.

Superstition and Popular Religion

The article that follows Pouillon’s discussion of belief in the same book is Belmont’s ‘Superstition and Popular Religion in Western Societies’ (1982). In this paper, Belmont argues for a distinction between superstition, or popular beliefs, and official beliefs, similar to that which Clark is developing. She goes on to suggest that this must always be true where the Christian religion is dominant, because the logical cohesion of the Christian doctrinal system is unable to take account of all the aspects of an individual’s life. Christianity’s very systematic approach to belief makes this impossible. Belmont argues, therefore, that there were large areas of life that Christianity failed to touch (including those dealing with sickness, danger or uncertainty), leaving the potential for the continuation of pagan practices as ‘superstitions’. This is almost exactly what Clark was trying

to say in relation to his fishing village. So long as Christianity failed to take the real dangers of the fishing industry seriously, superstitions relating to these dangers would continue.

This argument is very persuasive as a historical overview, and as such I would probably want to agree with it.¹¹ Where I would wish to question it, however, is in the way that such issues are viewed from the point of view of ordinary people. All the views that draw a distinction between official and popular belief—Clark's, that of the clergy in the mainline churches, Belmont's, even my own preconceived ideas—are looking at the situation from the top down. What would the same situation look like if viewed from the bottom up? Would it be any different?

In exploring this kind of question, we should perhaps look beyond the specific context of the Christian churches towards the kind of 'religion' supposedly held by those who do not belong to any kind of religious organization. Scholars talk of 'popular religion', 'invisible religion', 'traditional religion', 'conventional religion', 'common religion', 'implicit religion', 'superstition', or 'civil religion' (Davie 1994: 74).¹² But what do these forms of religion actually look like?

Geoffrey Ahern's contribution to the book *Inner City God*, "I Do Believe in Christmas": White Working-class People and Anglican Clergy in Inner-city London' (1987), offers one particular insight into what might be called popular religion. This work is based on a 'qualitative survey', that is, on long interviews with specific individuals in the East End of London. The people interviewed had no specific links with the churches, and therefore Ahern was able to investigate how ordinary non-churchgoers understood their beliefs. The survey draws out a number of points, including the 'them and us' attitude to the Church, the fact that people's beliefs were clearly dependent on their past, and finally, how difficult people appeared to find it to talk about specific beliefs at all. None of these conclusions in themselves should surprise us. If we take these three points in reverse order, however, we can see something very similar to the kind of argument I have been developing in this paper.

First, we are told that ordinary people cannot fully articulate their beliefs. This is very common and, following Southwold's argument, should not surprise us.

11. I found exactly the same experience during a visit to Tanzania. In the area where I was working, traditional healers and exorcists functioned openly alongside the Christian churches and were visited by many Christians, including ministers and priests. It was acknowledged that these traditional healers dealt with areas of human life that missionary Christianity simply could not engage with.

12. Scholars can never fully define or distinguish these different terms. The problem, I would argue, is actually with the word 'religion'. Our primary image of religion is Christianity, that is, of 'a' religion with underlying assumptions of coherence and consistency, etc. The central point of all the terms listed, however, is incoherence. How, then, are we to understand 'popular religion'? We probably have to drop the idea of 'religion' completely and go back to the idea of 'belief'.

Beliefs are simply there. They are accepted as true and never questioned. What this survey does show, however, is that beliefs can exist in many different forms, as stories or images as well as in specific statements. Secondly, therefore, Ahern argues that beliefs or belief statements are related to past experiences. Again this appears to be obvious once we begin to think about it. Ahern talks of elderly men who had been in the trenches during the First World War and of the way in which the most fundamental things they asserted related directly to this experience and were expressed in relation to stories about this experience. Any body of ideas about the world that an individual has, any series of 'belief statements', will grow over time. They will relate to significant times in that person's life. It is this very process of growing, however, which will mean that, for most people, these statements will exist largely in isolation of each other, each one related to a particular event in the past, but never seen as a whole or as in any way related to each other. Here again, we see that it is impossible to articulate beliefs, not simply because respondents have not formulated them, but also because they have never previously been asked to relate them together within a single discourse.

This brings us to the 'them and us' attitude to the Church. As we have seen, the existence of a system of beliefs is itself a central belief within most Christian contexts. This is seen far more clearly by those outside the Church than by those inside. What is more, those outside also appear to see the contradictions and confusions in the way individuals relate to particular belief statements from within the system and often end up dismissing Church people as 'hypocrites'. Those outside the churches, however, still need belief statements for themselves. They will draw on any that are to hand or on any that have helped in the past, without worrying too much about their source and without making any distinction between 'official beliefs' and 'superstitions'. They will also reject those which are irrelevant or have been harmful in the past. Above all they will not put these belief statements into any kind of 'framework' but will simply draw on those that are relevant to the situation in hand. This leads me to propose what I would want to call a 'situational theory of belief', i.e. that belief statements are used only in relation to specific situations, as and when they are needed, and are otherwise forgotten or dismissed. Before doing this, however, we need to return to those people who are members of Christian congregations, to those who supposedly do have systems of belief to deal with, and ask how far they can be said to follow the same, or a similar, kind of procedure.

The Economy of Logic

Bourdieu, I would suggest, raises a very similar issue when discussing a very different field of anthropology in his book *Outline of a Theory of Practice* (1977). The basis of this book is the distinction between 'rules' and 'practices'. From

Bourdieu's point of view, rules and practices must be analyzed as two separate aspects of society whose relationship with each other must be explored as carefully as the relationship of any other two aspects of society. Bourdieu takes this argument a few steps further as the book progresses by looking at other aspects of what the people he is studying say about themselves and about their society. If we have to distinguish between 'rules' and 'practices', between what people say they should do and what they actually do in practice, can we take what is said about any topic within their society for granted, even religion? Bourdieu does not phrase the question in quite this way, but by showing how the rules that govern marriage can be generated through an understanding of the basic thought process of society, he goes on to show how this process can then be applied to other areas of social life, suggesting that what is being said at any one time about any one issue is governed more by the basic oppositions that underlie the thinking of the members of the society than by what is actually done on the ground (1977: 72–94).

Bourdieu eventually comes to look at the 'calendar' and the way in which the people he is studying think about time and relations between different aspects of time. He shows that this, like everything else in the society, is determined by certain basic underlying oppositions in the thought process of the people (*ibid.*: 96ff.). However, he goes further than this by showing that for each moment in time, the kind of opposition that is relevant in understanding the place of that moment within the calendrical system changes. From one point on the calendar, the distinction between work and leisure in terms of agriculture might be important, while at another, the distinction might be between hoeing and harvesting, that is, between two different kinds of work. At each point some kind of opposition is vital, but exactly what that opposition is will be determined, not by underlying rules as such, but by the situation in which the speakers find themselves. This is what Bourdieu calls the 'economy of logic', the fact that a person will use no more of the overriding system of oppositions than is absolutely necessary for their specific purposes. What is important, therefore, in thinking about space, time, human relationships, etc., is the perception of oppositions. Exactly which oppositions are chosen, however, is a function of the issue that needs to be stressed.

At first sight this may not seem to have very much to do with the understanding of belief in the Christian church. I am not going to argue, for example, that Christian thinking has a deeply rooted oppositional basis, although that could perhaps be done. It is not the underlying thought process that interests me at this stage. What interests me is the concept of the 'economy of logic' and the implications this has for the understanding of belief. Is it not possible for individuals to use only as much 'belief' as is necessary for their particular purpose at any particular moment in time? A complex and coherent 'system' of beliefs may well exist in academic theology, but there is no reason why this whole system should be invoked every time that any one person makes a particular statement of belief. The statement of belief itself will, as I have suggested, have been made for a specific purpose. Could not the person making the statement use only that aspect of the total system that suits their present needs? This is certainly what Ahern

appeared to find in the East End of London, and it also explains, very clearly, what the members of the discussion group I was involved with were doing in relation to death.

A Situational Theory of Belief

If what I have just suggested is the case, and I think that this can be easily shown, then what implications does this have for the way in which 'belief' itself is understood? Let me try and draw together a few of the ideas that I have already presented in this paper and attempt to give my view of the way beliefs are held and used by the ordinary member of a Christian congregation and, by implication, by those beyond the churches. The whole point of this argument, I would suggest, is not that it makes sense of isolated examples, of particular statements of belief, which all the other possible interpretations do just as well; rather it begins to build up into an overall picture that might be able to explain long-term behaviour in which an individual may state one belief one day and another the next without realizing that the two are, by academic reckoning, mutually incompatible. This is not, I would argue, entirely a matter of ignorance; there is clearly a deeper reason for it.

Earlier in the paper I referred to Sperber's notion that belief statements are a different kind of statement from the ordinary, everyday views of any member of a congregation. To say 'I believe' implies that what is 'believed' cannot be proved empirically and that its empirical truth is largely irrelevant; to say 'I believe' is to make a 'symbolic' assertion. However, I suggested that Sperber's own assumption that what is asserted—or, as he would put it, what is 'evoked'—by such a statement is a 'system' of beliefs to be slightly distracting. If we take Bourdieu seriously, we will see that the statement itself will only express as much of any system as is needed to be expressed at any one point. This may well imply the need for a wider system or, following Ahern, it may not. What is important, however, is not the system as a whole but rather the individual statement. If this is the case, then the distinction that has been made between superstition and official belief becomes irrelevant. A person, we are assuming, will state any belief, official or popular, that is of value at any particular moment and in any particular situation. From this I would argue—and my own experience of talking to the members of the various congregations would back this up—that ordinary Christians do not think in terms of systematic beliefs or systems of theology at all; rather, they tend to think almost entirely in terms of specific belief statements as and when these statements are needed. This is impossible to prove, as I have said, not least because one of the belief statements they find most helpful to express is, 'we believe that there is a logical system to our beliefs'. They regard this statement as an unquestioned truth, just as they would any other belief statement, and

it is this which gives each one of the individual statements its particular authority. This is a belief which is often stated, but that is not how particular individuals actually work.

The need for authority reinforces the assertion that there is a coherent system of beliefs, whether this is based upon tradition or the Bible. In the everyday thinking of individuals, however, and especially in the way belief statements are used, we see the isolation of specific statements, each being used within a particular situation. This creates 'situational belief'. What still needs to be asked, of course, is why we need such statements at all and perhaps more importantly why we need the statement that all the statements form a coherent whole. Here I think we must return to Sperber. Sperber argues (1982) that we use a statement of belief when our minds cannot cope with the irrationality of the situation, when an empirical statement no longer makes sense. Belief statements are used to deal with illness, misfortune or grief. Belief statements are used to express the sense of something beyond ourselves, over which we have no control. Belief statements are used to provide security and to justify actions that are largely unjustifiable. In all these cases the assertion of a 'belief' transfers the argument away from the everyday to the 'sacred', to the special, to the other. It gives the argument a special power and relevance. This is, of course, as true for superstition as it is for official beliefs. It is also at this point that we move from Pouillon's 'belief that' to 'belief in'. It is the very fact that belief statements are empirically unverifiable that means that we have to commit ourselves to them, to assert them as truth, to trust them implicitly. It is this that gives them their emotional significance and power.

In conclusion to this paper, therefore, I will sum up my theory of situational belief with the following points:

- (a) Belief consists in a series of specific statements which are not necessarily connected.
- (b) The empirical truth of such statements has to be unverifiable, that is, they are beyond ordinary discourse.
- (c) This means that individuals have to assert the truth of the statements by reference to the past, to faith, to the wider community or to some other external authority.
- (d) This demands a certain level of commitment rather than a simple matter of assent.
- (e) Such statements therefore become significant to the individuals who assert them and are committed to them (this is also true of superstitions for those who take them seriously at the point at which they are asserted).
- (f) By using such statements, individuals can bring significance to situations of danger, sickness or uncertainty in their lives.

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THE FATE OF ANTHROPOSOCIOLOGY IN *L'ANNÉE SOCIOLOGIQUE*

JOSEP R. LLOBERA

Introduction

AMONG the many sociological schools that flourished at the turn of the century, anthroposociology was one that briefly caught the attention of philosophical and social-scientific circles in France and other countries. For a short time, there was a kind of fascination with the bizarre and all-explaining doctrines of anthroposociology. Durkheim was not immune to such an appeal, and when, in 1897, he was planning the first issue of *L'Année Sociologique* (hereafter *AS*), he asked Henri Muffang, a sympathizer of anthroposociology, to edit a sub-section on the school.

What was the rationale behind this decision? First and foremost, Durkheim thought that his journal should present a comprehensive picture of all the different sociological tendencies. Secondly, although any sociologist would regard with suspicion a discipline like racial anthropology—which to a great extent made sociology redundant in so far as it treated social facts as derivative—one should always keep in mind the fact that it is not always possible to foresee the results of a particular scientific trend.

Durkheim's 'honeymoon' with anthroposociology lasted three years. During this period Muffang edited a subsection of *AS* entitled 'Anthroposociologie' in which he reviewed (or rather summarized) articles and books on the topic. It published an average of thirteen pages a year, which was quite substantial, all things considered. From Volume IV (1899-1900) Muffang's contribution disappeared as did the sub-section on anthroposociology as such. Subsequently, two of

Durkheim's closest collaborators, Mauss and Hubert, reviewed writings related to race, national origins and prehistory under the label 'Anthropologie et Sociologie'. However, after 1901, references to anthroposociology and allied topics were few and far between. A page had been closed in the Durkheimian sociological enterprise, that which dealt with the pretensions of racial science.

The aim of this paper is threefold: first, to provide an accurate description of the position of anthroposociology; secondly, to consider in some detail its reception in AS; and, finally, to compare Durkheim's attitude towards anthroposociology with that of his contemporaries, as well as to look at the fate of anthroposociology in the histories of sociology.

The aim and scope of anthroposociology

Not only was the term 'anthroposociology' coined by Vacher de Lapouge, the very origins of the discipline can be traced back to lectures he delivered at the University of Montpellier from 1886 to 1892. In 1899 he could write:

Si les tentatives faites pour arrêter mes premiers débuts avaient réussi, et si je n'avais pas écrit une ligne, l'anthroposociologie aurait été fondée à Karlsruhe en 1890 par Ammon, au lieu de l'être en 1886 à Montpellier, mais cette science n'en serait pas moins exactement au moment où s'impriment ces lignes. (Vacher de Lapouge 1899: 449)

Lapouge recognized, however, that the true founder of the discipline was Gobineau, who was the first to have emphasized the importance of race in the evolution of peoples (*ibid.*: 545–6). Darwin's struggle for existence and Broca's craniology were also seen as important stepping-stones in the development of anthroposociology.

Anthroposociology was established around the following premises: that human races are differently endowed in terms of intelligence and character; that the cephalic index is the concept with which to determine the capacity of the brain; that human behaviour is the result of the interaction between race and the social milieu; and that, among human beings, social selections predominate over natural selections.

As a discipline, anthroposociology flourished in France (under Vacher de Lapouge) and Germany (under Ammon) at the turn of the century. There were also more or less faithful representatives in Italy (Livi), Spain (Oloriz), the United Kingdom (Beddoe) and the USA (Closson).

Georges Vacher de Lapouge (1854–1936) was undoubtedly the most conspicuous representative of anthroposociology. He originally studied medicine and jurisprudence before following a career as a librarian, first at the University of Montpellier and later in Rennes and Poitiers. Having come into contact with social

Darwinism and craniology, he became an enthusiastic propagandist of these doctrines. By the mid-1880s he saw his task as the 'application of the conclusions of biology to the social sciences' (1886: 519). His wish to accede to an official position as an anthropologist was frustrated, although he taught unofficially ('*courses libres*') for a number of years at the University of Montpellier. In addition to a good number of articles published in different professional journals, Lapouge published two major books based on his lectures, *Les Sélections sociales* (1896) and *L'Aryen: son rôle social* (1899), as well as a collection of articles under the title *Race et milieu sociale* (1909). Perhaps the best known and most influential of his articles was 'Les Lois fondamentales de l'Anthroposociologie' of 1897, which was also published in Italian and English the same year. As a measure of his impact, Lapouge stated that there existed more than 3000 references (mostly positive) to his work (1909: xix).

Otto Ammon's impact was perhaps more restricted to the German-speaking world, though some of his writings were translated into French and Italian, and his work was also commented upon world-wide. The monograph that established his anthropometric credentials was *Die natürliche Auslese beim Menschen: Auf Grund der anthropologische Untersuchungen der Wehrpflichtigen in Baden* (1893), but it was in his *Gesellschaftsordnung und ihre natürlichen Grundlagen* (1895) (French translation 1900) that anthroposociology was presented as a new discipline. Internationally, the most cited of his writings was 'Histoire d'une idée: L'anthroposociologie' (1898). He also published *Zur Anthropologie der Badener* (1899).

As we shall see, there are some differences between Lapouge and Ammon; for one thing, Lapouge was much more radical and pessimistic. An important dimension that can only be mentioned in passing is that Lapouge was a socialist who was trying to create a synthesis between Marx and Darwin. A severe critic of liberal democracy, he would maintain that 'Aux fictions de Justice, d'Égalité, de Fraternité, la politique scientifique préfère la réalité des Forces, des Lois, des Races, de l'Évolution' (1896: 489).

In the context of this short *aperçu* on anthroposociology I shall refer only to two major thematic areas: social selections and the laws of anthroposociology.

As Béjin has remarked, Lapouge was obsessed with the idea that the natural order of society had been dramatically changed due to the influence of social selections. Among the selections which had dysgenic effects, he listed the following levels:

militaire: les guerres modernes éliminent surtout les meilleures, les dysgéniques échappant au service.

politique: c'est le règne des coteries et des partis politiques favorable aux médiocres.

religieuse: le célibat sacerdotal a interdit à de très nombreux eugéniques de se reproduire; les persecutions religieuses ont entraîné la disparition de nombreux êtres d'élite.

morale: la charité profite aux dysgéniques.

légale: l'interdiction de la polygamie, par exemple, nuit aux eugéniques.

économique: la plutocratie favorise l'élimination de l'aristocratie intellectuelle, conduit à multiplier les mariages dictées par des raisons financières aux dépens des considérations d'eugénisme.

professionnelle: les individus les plus qualifiés ont généralement une fécondité moindre.

urbaine: les villes drainent les eugéniques puis les stérilisent. (Béjin 1982: 529–30)

Before enunciating the fundamental laws of anthroposociology, it is important to introduce some basic concepts. Lapouge states that 'on appelle *indice céphalique* le nombre obtenu en multipliant la largeur maxima du crâne par 100 et divisant par la longueur maxima' (1897: 546). This allows for the distinction of two basic types: dolichocephalic or long-headed and brachycephalic or round-headed. On the basis of this it is possible to classify the European races into two major types: *Homo Europeus* and *Homo Alpinus*. 'Le premier est la grande race aux cheveux blonds et aux yeux bleus, au crâne long (dolichocéphale) Le second est la race plus petite, brune, à crâne et à face arrondis (brachycéphale)' (ibid.: 516–17). A third European race, typical of southern Spain and Italy, is *Homo Mediterraneus*, a mixed type. According to Lapouge: 'H. Alpinus se hiérarchise au dessous de H. Europeus; les races méditerranéennes se placent au niveau à peu près de l'Alpinus' (ibid.: 517).

The laws are as follows (ibid.: 547–51):

(1) *Loi de répartition des richesses*. Dans les pays à mélange Europaeus-Alpinus, la richesse croît en raison inverse de l'indice céphalique.

(2) *Loi des altitudes*. Dans les régions où existent H. Europeus et H. Alpinus, le premier se localise dans les plus basses altitudes.

(3) *Loi de répartition des villes*. Les villes importantes sont presque exclusivement localisées dans les régions dolichocéphales, et dans les parties les moins brachycéphales des régions brachycéphales.

(4) *Lois des indices urbains*. L'indice céphalique des populations urbaines est inférieure à celui des populations rurales qui les englobent immédiatement.

(5) *Loi d'émigration*. Dans une population en voie de dissociation par déplacement, c'est l'élément le moins brachycéphale qui émigre.

- (6) *Loi des formariages*. L'indice céphalique des individus issues de parents de pays différents est inférieure à la moyenne des pays d'origine.
- (7) *Loi de concentration des dolichoïdes*. Les éléments mobilisés par la dissociation se concentrent par attraction dans les centres dolichoïdes.
- (8) *Loi d'élimination urbaine*. La vie urbaine opère une sélection qui détruit les éléments les plus brachycéphales.
- (9) *Loi de stratification*. L'indice céphalique va en diminuant et la proportion des dolichocéphales en augmentant des classes inférieures aux classes supérieures dans chaque localité.
- (10) *Loi des intellectuels*. Dans les catégories de travailleurs intellectuels, les dimensions absolues du crâne et particulièrement la largeur sont plus élevées.
- (11) *Loi des époques*. Depuis les temps préhistoriques, indice céphalique tend à augmenter constamment et partout.

The reception of anthroposociology in l'Année Sociologique

The least that one can say about the rubric 'anthroposociology' in *AS* is its miscellaneous, marginal, and unstable character. As I have hinted in the introduction, the journal's honeymoon with anthroposociology was of short duration. It was only in the first three volumes that anthroposociology was accorded ample space and the sympathetic voice of Muffang. By Volumes IV and V, it was being subjected to a sustained frontal assault by Henry Hubert and Marcel Mauss, who, as is well known, were both faithful Durkheimians. After that, and if we except the odd short review or reference, a curtain of heavy silence fell over anthroposociology.

It is interesting to note that Durkheim felt it necessary to write an introductory note to the first rubric on anthroposociology. The full text reads as follows:

Il a pu sembler parfois que l'anthropologie tendait à rendre inutile la sociologie. En essayant d'expliquer les phénomènes historiques par la seule vertu des races, elle paraissait traiter les faits sociaux comme des épiphénomènes sans vie propre et sans action spécifique. De telles tendances étaient bien faites pour éveiller la défiance des sociologues.

Mais *l'Année sociologique* a, avant tout, pour devoir de présenter à ses lecteurs un tableau complet de tous les courants qui se font jour dans les différents domaines de la sociologie. D'ailleurs on ne sait jamais par avance quels résultats peuvent se dégager d'un mouvement scientifique. Très souvent, alors qu'il manque ce qui était primitivement son but principal et sa raison d'être apparante, il produit sur des

points secondaires des conséquences importantes et qui durent. Pour tous ces raisons, nous devons faire une place aux recherches de l'anthroposociologie, et, pour que notre exposé fût aussi fidèle que possible, nous nous sommes adressés à un partisan de l'école qui a bien voulu nous accorder sa collaboration. (*AS*, 1896–7, I: 519)

The correspondence between Durkheim and Bouglé illuminates some aspects of the place of anthroposociology in *AS*. In a letter from Durkheim to Bouglé of 15 July 1897, the future editor of the rubric on anthroposociology is mentioned as 'votre collègue Muffang' (Durkheim 1975, Vol. 2: 403). Durkheim referred also, and in favourable way, to an article that Bouglé had published recently (most probably Bouglé 1897). This paper, a critical review of the works of the leading representatives of anthroposociology (Ammon, Lapouge, Closson, etc.), was read by Durkheim with 'grand intérêt' (*ibid.*), and he added that 'je n'ai besoin de vous dire que toutes ces spéculations anthropologiques nous laissent plus que sceptique, tout comme vous' (*ibid.*).

Although both Durkheim and Bouglé were critical of the pretensions and reductionism of anthroposociology, Durkheim, unlike Bouglé, was in favour of allowing Muffang to present the school in a descriptive way and in a favourable light. In another of his letters (dated 27 September 1897), Durkheim referred to Bouglé's intention of prefacing the rubric on anthroposociology with rather critical remarks and suggested a different approach:

Le préambule que vous avez rédigé me paraît un peu trop combatif; il me semble inutile d'entrer dans la discussion des problèmes dogmatiques que soulève la méthode anthropologique. Nous avons qu'à indiquer que notre publication est un acte d'impartialité et à faire sous réserves. (1975, Vol. 2: 411)

In addition to this paragraph, Durkheim made some concrete suggestions for the improvement of Muffang's paper with the view of making it less repetitive, concluding: 'Je suis d'ailleurs très content de sa collaboration et son exposé est clair et intéressant' (*ibid.*: 412).

By 1900, however, *AS* was being run by a rather homogeneous team, much more so than Durkheim could have imagined when he started the journal. This meant the end of the rubric on anthroposociology, with which Durkheim and his team had lost sympathy. The reasons are obvious: it was reductionist, materialist, speculative, and politically dangerous. The demise of anthroposociology came in a letter to Bouglé (13 June 1900):

Pour l'anthroposociologie, j'ai écrit à Muffang que je supprimais la rubrique. Je ne demanderai plus de livres sur la matière; mais il est venu quelques livres d'anthropologie que je ne peux refuser.

On fera à la fin une courte rubrique *Anthropologie* dont je partage les éléments. Le Lapouge est entre les mains de Hubert qui s'en est déjà occupé. (Durkheim 1976)

The first issue of *AS* introduced anthroposociology in some detail, covering fifteen pages. After Durkheim's short cautionary note, reproduced above, there followed two substantial review articles dealing with the works of Lapouge and Ammon respectively. Lapouge's *Sélections sociales* (1896) was his first monograph, the transcript of a course that he taught at the University of Montpellier in 1888–89. Muffang celebrated the emergence of a new science, although he acknowledged that 'l'avenir seul dira quel parti l'humanité pourra tirer des lois acquises de l'anthroposociologie' (*AS*, 1896–7, I: 525).

Before reviewing *Les Sélections sociales*, Muffang offered a brief *aperçu* of the development of the anthroposociological school, emphasizing Lapouge's early ideas about the superiority of the blonde, dolichocephalic race, that is, *Homo Europeus*.

The main focus of the book under review is to show that human societies have instituted principles of social selection which go against the grain of natural selection. This issue had first been mentioned by Francis Galton, Darwin's nephew. As Muffang put it, while 'la sélection naturelle assure généralement le triomphe du plus fort et du mieux doué, la sélection sociale assure trop souvent le triomphe des médiocres et des faibles, et produit l'élimination des éléments supérieures des eugéniques' (*ibid.*: 522). Muffang seemed to take the statistics provided by Vacher de Lapouge at face value, suggesting that 'les mensurations fournissent ici des données' (*ibid.*). He also seemed to be concerned with how one could contribute to the maximum possible diffusion of anthroposociological discoveries. He said that 'il faudrait familiariser les masses avec les idées et les phénomènes d'hérédité, d'évolution et de sélection, et déterminer un mouvement d'opinion contraire au mariage des individus tarés et conforme aux véritables devoirs de chacun vers l'espèce' (*ibid.*: 524–5).

The second major item that received Muffang's attention was the work of Otto Ammon. Under review was an article, 'Die Geschichte einer Idee' (1896), and a book, *Die Gesellschaftsordnung und ihre natürlichen Grundlagen* (1895). As in Lapouge's case, Muffang emphasized the importance of the anthropometric data that had been collected, which seemed to establish, without a shadow of a doubt, what is called Ammon's Law: 'la plus grande dolichocephalie des urbains' (*AS*, 1896–7: 526). If this happened it was because 'les dolichocephales seraient donc attirés vers les villes en vertu de leurs aptitudes et de leur tendances psychiques' (*ibid.*).

Interestingly, Muffang indicated that very different political conclusions can follow from the anthropometric data referred to: while 'pour M. de Lapouge les sélections *sociales* agissent à l'encontre de la sélection *naturelle* dans un sens péjoratif..., pour Ammon sélections sociales et sélections naturelles se confondent' (*ibid.*: 527, original emphasis). Ammon insisted that a flexible class system was the best mechanism for ensuring a progressive selection and social order.

The reviews of Lapouge (five pages) and Ammon (four pages) constituted the main bulk of the section on 'Anthroposociologie'. The rest was dedicated to much shorter reviews and references. Studies by Livi (on Italy), Oloriz (on Spain) and Beddoe (on the United Kingdom) gave Muffang an opportunity to defend anthroposociology against criticisms that they invalidated the theses defended by Lapouge and Ammon. The crucial point here is that the fundamental laws of anthroposociology are only applicable where *Homo Europeus* and *Homo Alpinus* live side by side (Germany, France, northern Italy). This is not the case in the United Kingdom, which is occupied only by *Homo Europeus*, or southern Italy and Spain, which are occupied by *Homo Mediterraneus*. The latter, insists Muffang, 'est d'ailleurs, elle aussi, dolichocéphale, mais la dolichocéphalie à elle seule ne signifie pas nécessairement supériorité et certains races excessivement dolichocéphales, telles que les Nègres, ne semblent pas aptes à s'élever beaucoup au-dessus de la barbarie' (ibid.: 529–30).

As to the other items cited, there was a short review of two of Collignon's anthropometric studies of France, which seemed to confirm some of the theses of anthroposociology, namely the law of the urban concentration of the dolichoids. Articles by Closson (an American follower of Lapouge) were also favourably mentioned. On the other hand, Bouglé's article 'Anthropologie et démocratie', which was very critical of anthroposociology, was simply referred to without comment.

The final item examined was J. Novicow's *L'Avenir de la race blanche* (1897). Muffang defended anthroposociology against Novicow's attacks, insisting that the book contained 'plus d'affirmations pures et simples que de chiffres et de faits' (ibid.: 532).

The space dedicated to anthroposociology was slightly less (twelve pages) in the second volume of *AS* (1897–8, II: 565–76). Lapouge's 'Les Lois fondamentales de l'Anthroposociologie' (1897) occupied centre stage. After acknowledging the role played by Gobineau in the development of anthroposociology, the review reproduced the substance of the laws more or less verbatim. Muffang also referred to certain other studies which seemed to confirm Lapouge's Laws. Of particular importance among these was a joint empirical study by Durand de Gros and Lapouge on the Aveyron area of France.

Livi's 'Saggio di geografia del militarismo in Italia' (1897) seemed to confirm rather nicely the anthroposociological hypothesis that economic and military aptitude is higher in those areas where *Homo Europeus* predominates. Although not quite favourable to the anthroposociological standpoint, Sergi's 'I dati antropologici in sociologia' (1898) received a lengthy discussion of nearly three pages. Sergi put forward a racial classification different from that of Lapouge, based not on the cephalic index but on the shape of the skull. In any case, what Muffang welcomed was Sergi's conviction that what was required to make sense of the origins and stratification of the population was a joint anthropometric, archaeological and philological approach.

One issue which seemed to baffle many of the practitioners of anthroposociology was that the cephalic index proved insufficient in characterizing racial groupings. The fact that *Homo Mediterraneus* was dolichocephalic, but neither tall nor blonde was quite a puzzle. This issue, taken up by Sergi, was also mentioned in another item discussed by Muffang: Ripley's 'The Racial Geography of Europe' (1897). The works of Fouillée and Winiarski, who were quite critical of Lapouge, were also mentioned, but not properly reviewed. On the other hand, Closson's 'The Hierarchy of European Races' (1897) attempted to confirm statistically that *Homo Europeus* was more economically active than *Homo Alpinus*. Muffang also mentioned other studies which suggested that Aryans were less criminally inclined than the other two European races.

In Volume III, (1898-9, 583-95), thirteen pages were dedicated to 'Anthroposociologie'. Muffang's main emphasis (five pages) was on Ammon's long study, *Zur Anthropologie der Badener*, 1899. This book had been in the making for more than ten years and was meant to be a powerful empirical demonstration of the major tenets of anthroposociology. Two major conclusions seemed to emerge from Ammon's study: a worrying historical tendency towards an increase in the cephalic index (in other words, a progressive increase of brachycephalic populations), and a strong correlation between race and class (the predominance of the dolichocephalic element in the upper classes).

Pullè's *Profilo antropologico dell'Italia* (1898), which purported to illustrate the hierarchy which existed between the different European races, received careful attention. Using material from Italy, the author designed a number of civilizational indices to establish the superiority of *Homo Europeus* over *Homo Alpinus* (northern Italy) and of *Homo Alpinus* over *Homo Mediterraneus* (southern Italy).

As for Livi's 'La distribuzione geografica dei caratteri antropologici in Italia' (1898), an article that challenged certain anthroposociological hypotheses, Muffang insisted on Pullè's point that dolichocephalia and brachycephalia were not in themselves sufficient to explain the social structure of modern European societies, for the simple reason that both *Homo Europeus* and *Homo Mediterraneus* were dolichocephalic. In addition to the cephalic index, there was also the issue of a European racial hierarchy. This point, Muffang reminded us, had been made by Closson in his various articles on popularisation.

When the rubric 'Anthroposociologie' and its editor Muffang disappeared from *AS* from Volume IV (1899-1900) onwards, with Hubert and Mauss taking over the section under a different label, the tone of the commentaries became very different. For example, while Muffang's review of Vacher de Lapouge's *Les Sélections sociales* (1896) was extremely favourable, if bland, Hubert's review of Lapouge's next book, *L'Aryen: son rôle social* (1899), was rather negative (*AS*, 1899-1900, IV: 145-6). Anthroposociology was depicted as false science, while Lapouge was presented as a rabid prophet of Aryanism. Most damaging was Hubert's dismantling of Lapouge's basic principles and his emphasis on the unreliability of his statistics. Finally, there was the political sub-text: for Hubert the whole anthropo-

sociological exercise had no other outcome than creating a dangerous Aryan mythology.

It is intriguing that the subsection 'Anthroposociologie' should have disappeared, to be substituted by a more neutral term—'Anthropologie et Sociologie'—which in practice covered the same ground in a mere nine pages (*ibid.*: 139–47). In terms of space, J. Deniker's *Les Races et les peuples de la terre* (1900) was the main item of interest (four pages). Marcel Mauss, who reviewed this longish book, considered it 'un excellent manuel d'ethnographie et d'anthropologie' (*ibid.*: 139). One thing was clear in Mauss's mind: the difficulty of establishing clear racial categories. Deniker proposed a new concept, that of a people, which was defined by its 'caractères ethniques'. Mauss, however, found this concept rather unsatisfactory because of its vagueness (it referred to physical, social and linguistic features alike). In the final resort, the only things that existed for Mauss were societies, that is, 'groupes définis par leur répartition dans un habitat déterminé' (*ibid.*: 141). None the less, Mauss recognized the usefulness of the data on races and peoples. Deniker's book was, he concluded, a work that 'constitue une très riche repertoire des faits' (*ibid.*: 143).

I have already indicated that in his review of Lapouge's *L'Aryen: son rôle social* (1899), Hubert was rather dismissive and caustic, embracing many of the criticisms that had been put forward by L. Manouvrier in his 'L'indice céphalique et la pseudosociologie' (1899). This two-part article was also reviewed by Hubert, who heralded it as a defence of 'la sociologie contre les prétendus sociologues' (*ibid.*: 143) as Lapouge. Manouvrier accused the anthroposociological school of being essentially pseudoscientific and of being fixated on a concept—that of the cephalic index—which explained nothing.

Hubert's conclusion to his review emphasizes an essential Durkheimian standpoint: sociology does not depend on anthropology. As he put it:

M. de Lapouge supprime la sociologie en l'absorbant. Peut-être a-t-il raison. Que les races aient des aptitudes intellectuelles spéciales, et que ces aptitudes correspondent à certains de leurs caractères physiques, nous n'en savons rien; sinon que ces propositions devraient faire l'objet d'une étude infiniment minutieuse et compliquée. En tout cas ce n'est pas notre affaire. Nous continuerons à chercher les causes sociales des faits sociaux. Nous enregistrerons avec soin tout ce que l'on dira de leurs effets anthropologiques. Mais l'étude des facteurs anthropologiques de l'évolution des sociétés échappe complètement à notre critique. (*ibid.*: 146)

In this long quotation, it is worth noting that Hubert's rejection of anthroposociology is essentially methodological. In other words, sociology must stand on its own. Another important point is that the possibility of racial explanations is not rejected: what is condemned is the superficiality and shoddiness of anthroposociology. In a nutshell, what Hubert is reasserting is a different conception of sociological practice. While Lapouge gives explanatory primacy to the biological concept of inheritance, the Durkheimian vision consists in assuming that social facts can be explained by reference to social causes. So-called 'anthropological

factors' fall outside the remit of sociology, even though they may be relevant in the course of social evolution. This position is not without contradiction. Although the autonomy of the social domain is one of the key defining features of the Durkheimian endeavour, the possibility of anthroposociology is not altogether denied. But is it not the case that if biological facts can account for social ones, then sociology is to a great extent irrelevant? Part of the problem arises from the concept of race used in the literature of the time. Race is both a biological and a cultural concept, hence the confusion between race and peoples or nations.

As I mentioned in the 'Introduction', Vol. IV decided the destiny of anthroposociology in *AS* for good. In Vol. V (1900–01: 185–8, the space dedicated to anthroposociology is minimal: four pages. The reviews appear under a new sub-heading, 'Le Milieu social et la race', and it was left to Hubert to edit them, as well as being the sole reviewer. Only two books were considered: Ripley's *The Races of Europe* (1900) and Sergi's *The Mediterranean Race* (1901). A couple of articles were also briefly referred to: Bouglé's 'Castes et Race' (1901) and Roberty's 'Les Préjugés de la sociologie contemporaine' (1900). These papers challenged, in different ways, the explanatory primacy given by anthroposociology to the concept of race.

Ripley's book had already been referred to in Vol. IV as an 'important ouvrage' (*AS*, 1899–1900, IV: 147). For Hubert, the main lesson of the book is that it is too simple to want to 'expliquer les phénomènes sociaux par les aptitudes natives des races' (*AS* 1900–01, V: 185). Interestingly enough, Ripley was concerned with the opposite: 'constater la réaction des phénomènes sociaux sur les caractères physiques' (*ibid.*). In the final instance, a proper sociology must be well aware that social phenomena, be it suicide, artistic success, marriage patterns or religious solidarity, cannot be accounted for in terms of the number of dolichocephalics or brachycephalics, but 'dépendent de causes purement sociales' (*ibid.*: 187). Sergi's book was highlighted because it emphasized, with some exceptions, the existence of a single European race and rejected the pretensions of craniometry.

After Volume V, anthroposociology all but disappeared from *AS*. There were only to be three very brief references in 1904–5, 1905–6, and 1909–12, two-and-a-half pages altogether.

In *AS* 1904–5: 167–8, under the sub-section 'Races et sociétés', Hubert reviewed Colajanni's *Latins et Anglo-Saxons* (1905) and Finot's *Le Préjugé des races* (1905) together. The first three lines of the review give a flavour of Hubert's judgement: 'Ces deux livres traitent du même problème. Ce problème n'est pas un problème scientifique. Les réponses diverses qui lui sont données ne le sont pas davantage' (*ibid.*: 168). Both books are critical of anthroposociology, and insist on something which is clear to Hubert and to the Durkheimian school as a whole, namely that social phenomena can be accounted for only in terms of other social phenomena. As Hubert put it, 'la sociologie ne peut étudier que des sociétés, jamais des races' (*ibid.*). Finot's book, however, is found wanting because

the author 'ne connaît pas l'art des citations exactes... [et] il est trop loin des études auxquelles il touche' (ibid.).

By Volume X (1905–6: 202–3) Hubert was no longer in charge of the topic. Houzé's *L'Aryen et l'Anthroposociologie* (1906) was referred to in a subsection entitled 'La Question de la Race', edited by M. Chaillié (who was also presumably the reviewer). Houzé's book was a well-organized and devastating attack on anthroposociology. Divided into three parts ('Language', 'Anthropology' and 'Anthroposociology'), the author showed that 'l'anthroposociologie n'est qu'une pseudo-science, bâtie sur des erreurs fondamentales et des déductions puériles' (ibid.: 203).

The last volume in the original series of AS (Volume XII, 1909–12), contained a short review of Lapouge's *Race et milieu social* (1909) by Bouglé, only half a page long and purely descriptive. What we can learn from the review is that it was a collection of papers in which Lapouge tried to answer his critics and to restate anthroposociology as a discipline which dealt with 'l'étude des réactions réciproques de la race et du milieu' (ibid.: 20).

The fate of anthroposociology

It is not my intention to produce an exhaustive survey of all the reactions to anthroposociology. I have only chosen a few representative items. Generally speaking, the range of opinions oscillate from cautious reservation to all-out condemnation. If we except a few recognized followers like Muffang and Closson, most sociologists, anthropologists and social philosophers were weary of the craniological and racial determinism of the new school, though also baffled by the pretended scientificity of the mountain of statistics thrown at them. Until the contradictions arising from the data were uncovered, anthroposociology enjoyed a certain appeal.

One of the first long book reviews of Lapouge's *Les Sélections sociales* was published in the prestigious *Revue Scientifique*. The author, the philosopher F. Paulhan, found the text 'un livre intéressant et de réelle valeur. [...] Les théories de l'auteur sont hardies et fortement exposées, leur conséquences sont d'une grande portée et l'ouvrage, malgré les réserves et les restrictions qu'il appelle, s'impose à l'étude de quiconque s'intéresse à la sociologie scientifique' (1896: 13).

After this introduction, Paulhan provides the reader with a long summary of Lapouge's main ideas. Special emphasis is placed on the concept of social selection and its deleterious effects on modern European society. Paulhan was also interested in the applied side of Lapouge's ideas, in particular their eugenic possibilities, which were rather limited. Undoubtedly a book of such a revolutionary scope was bound to elicit numerous objections, particularly among the sentimental *bien-pensants*. In any case, Lapouge's theses were not proven, but rather speculat-

ive. None the less, we are in the presence of a precious book, 'fertile en idées hardies, en constatations, intéressants, en suggestions fécondes, en vues libres et de longue portée' (ibid.: 18).

Among Durkheim's best-known contemporaries, it was perhaps the philosopher and social scientist Alfred Fouillée who devoted the greatest attention to anthroposociology. The introduction to his *Psychologie du peuple français* (1898a) is largely a presentation and discussion of the anthroposociological theses. This led Otto Ammon to consider Fouillée 'parmi les partisans de la théorie anthroposociologique qui fait de la race le facteur dominant de l'histoire, attribue le grand rôle aux dolichoïdes et se lamente sur l'universelle montée des bracycéphales' (Ammon 1898: 168–9). This conclusion was rather far-fetched; what happened, insisted Fouillée, was that 'Ammon a pris pour des adhésions formelles plusieurs passages où j'expose simplement cette théorie' (1898b: 369).

Fouillée was, in fact, dubious about both the principles and the conclusions of anthroposociology, while admitting that the data were interesting, though inconclusive. Any attempt at creating a philosophy of history on the basis of the statistics collected by anthroposociology was bound to fail. In conclusion, Fouillée insisted that 'sans méconnaître de certains caractères physiques du point de vue de l'anthropologie et de la distinction entre les variétés humaines, il est impossible de leur accorder l'importance psychique, morale, et sociale que leur attribuent les anthroposociologistes' (ibid.: 371).

The same *Revue Internationale de Sociologie* which published Ammon and Fouillée had the previous year (1897) published a short review of Lapouge's *Les Sélections sociales*. The editor, Renée Worms, after a brief summary of the book asked himself: 'Que vaut cette théorie?' His answer was rather positive, while acknowledging that many specialists rejected its anthropological basis—in short, a book 'pleine d'intérêt. Les suggestions fécondes y abondent. Presque à chaque page, un fait curieux, une idée originale' (1897: 330).

A very different, much more politically inspired article was that by Bouglé (1897). Reviewing works by Ammon, Lapouge and Closson, the crucial question which Bouglé believed lay at the core of the anthroposociological quest was 'l'idée de l'inégalité de la race humaine' (ibid.: 448). This doctrine tried to provide an 'explication biologique de l'expansion des idées égalitaires' (ibid.), that is, of the triumph of democracy.

What was at stake for Bouglé was not so much the accuracy of the theories, which he nevertheless disputed, but rather ethical issues. Hence his conclusion:

S'il est vrai que, en déclarant les hommes égaux, nous portons un jugement non sur la façon dont les a fait la nature, mais sur la façon dont la société doit les traiter, les crâniométries les plus précises ne sauraient nous donner ni tort ni raison. En croyant qu'il appartient à des observations scientifiques de juger, en dernier resort, de la valeur de cette idée pratique, l'anthropologie oublie que les questions sociales ne sont pas seulement 'questions de faits' mais encore et surtout 'questions de principes'. (ibid.: 461)

A more favourable, though not uncritical review article was Mazel's (1899). Vacher de Lapouge was saluted as a 'savant rigoureux... bardé de statistiques, de chiffres, d'indices céphaliques et de mesures anthropométriques' (ibid.: 666). For Mazel, Lapouge's description of the ways in which social selections operate in society to thwart natural selection were perfectly reasonable. The book should be compulsory reading for social scientists, 'car d'une part ils feront leur profit d'une foule d'excellentes suggestions, et d'autre part, s'ils méritent les noms de sociologues, ils seront d'avance à l'abri de l'idée fixe d'anthroposociologie' (ibid.: 672). In conclusion, anthroposociology cannot stand up to the sociological ideal. The existence of inequalities in society cannot be justified on biological grounds. None the less, Mazel believed that the ideas of Ammon and Lapouge were useful to 'mettre en garde contre les exagérations non moins indéniables, de l'esprit égalitaire' (ibid.: 675).

The extremely negative tone of Manouvrier's long review of anthroposociology (1899) made quite an impact on the scientific opinion of the time. He insisted that Ammon's and Lapouge's obsession for the cephalic index was surprising in the extreme. By fetishizing it, they left unconsidered other, perhaps more relevant anthropological data. Had they taken them into account, they would not find themselves in the odd position of having to explain why the city attracted dark-eyed, dark-complexioned individuals and why they survived better than the blonds. In addition, the putative correlation between head form and psychological features was not demonstrated.

Except for his *Race et milieu social* (1909), which is a collection of his papers, Lapouge's contributions to anthroposociology in the 1900s were published in German in the *Politisch-anthropologisch Revue*, edited by Ludwig Woltmann. The French journals, Lapouge often complained, had lost interest in the new discipline. Perhaps the final, most devastating review of anthroposociology came from Belgium (Houzé 1906). For this author, anthroposociology should be rejected because, as Manouvrier had noted, it is a pseudo-science which cannot account for the complex phenomena of society. The Aryan hypothesis, for example, fails to distinguish between linguistic and ethnic facts: there may be an Indo-European language, but there is no Indo-European ethnic group.

In his detailed study, Houzé showed that intelligence did not depend on the brain alone but also on other organs. Furthermore, at birth the brain was a virgin organ, which only developed with education. Only basic 'aptitudes' were transmitted. Houzé also rejected the idea of social selection defended by Lapouge (following Broca and Galton), that is, the conviction that natural selection ceased the moment the human brain developed.

Houzé was, on the whole, very critical of the scientific pretensions of anthroposociology, and he went to great lengths to dismantle its intellectual pretensions. He insisted on the spurious character of the distinction between dolichocephalics and brachycephalics; in fact, the population was so mixed that the classification made no sense at all, even without bringing *Homo Mediterraneus* to complicate things. As to Lapouge's Laws, the least that could be said was that

they were contradicted by facts everywhere. Houzé concluded that Lapouge suffered from delusions of grandeur when he asserted that his school was appreciated world-wide.

It would be wrong, however, to conclude that the social scientific establishment rejected anthroposociology *tout court*, or, to be more specific, that race had ceased to be an explanatory variable. If we take, for example, the attitude of the leading American anthropologist of the period, Franz Boas, it is clear that he was critical but circumspect concerning the explanatory power of race. The main point to be emphasized here is that his thought on racial matters evolved slowly over a long period of time from a position in the 1890s, in which he believed that mental differences between races were not negligible, to a total rejection of racial formalism in the 1930s. By 1911, when the first edition of *The Mind of Primitive Man* was published, Boas was still struggling to accommodate the role of the racial variable in the anthropological scheme of things (cf. Stocking 1968, 1974).

How does anthroposociology fare in the histories of sociology of the first quarter of the twentieth century? It is interesting that as late as 1915, in the context of writing a short but panoramic article on French sociology, Durkheim referred very briefly to anthroposociology, although this school did not have an 'influence déterminable' (Durkheim 1975, Vol. 1: 116). Vacher de Lapouge's theses are depicted as 'très aventureuses' and in need of being 'plus solidement établies'. Of course, Durkheim did not fail to mention that anthroposociology had the pretension of 'résorber la sociologie dans l'anthropologie' (ibid.).

It is perhaps appropriate to conclude this brief survey of the impact of anthroposociology on the social sciences by considering Pitirim Sorokin's *Contemporary Sociological Theories*, which was published in 1928. He certainly gave a prominent place to anthroposociology in his text. In a book of nearly 800 pages, he dedicated 100 pages to the different authors who fell under the label 'Anthropo-racial, Selectionist and Hereditarist School'. His general opinion of the school is that 'it has been one of the most important and valuable schools in sociology, in spite of its one-sidedness, fallacies and exaggerations' (1928: 308). As to the work of Lapouge, he believed it to be 'stamped with originality, independence and erudition' (ibid.: 234). After providing a detailed exposition of the work of Gobineau, Chamberlain, Lapouge, Ammon, Galton, Pearson and others, Sorokin proceeded to a careful but balanced criticism of the school. He rejected a number of hypotheses as not proven, such as the polygenetic origins of mankind and the superiority of the Aryan race. Many of the so-called Lapouge-Ammon Laws also came under heavy criticism, mostly on the basis that the historical and anthropometric data were rather contradictory. Sorokin insisted, however, that the school had proved a number of principles, particularly the existence of 'innate differences between races, social classes and individuals' (ibid.: 279), the idea that the differences are due to environmental and hereditary factors, and the theory of social selection (in a modified form, with positive effects).

In 1948, when H. E. Barnes edited a 1000-page volume entitled *An Introduction to the History of Sociology*, there were four chapters devoted to French

sociology, focusing on Fouillée, Tarde, Le Bon and Durkheim. Neither anthropo-sociology nor Lapouge were mentioned. Ammon was briefly referred to as a Darwinist who 'made an honest effort to work out a theory of social evolution in terms of the principles of heredity, selection, variation, the struggle for existence and the survival of the fittest' (Barnes 1948: 211). More recent general histories have at best totally ignored anthroposociology or at worst produced one-liners which make Lapouge the object of an infantile but politically correct derision.

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**TEMPLES FOR LIFE AND TEMPLES FOR DEATH:
OBSERVATIONS ON SOME SHINGON BUDDHIST TEMPLES
IN TOKYO**

DAVID N. GELLNER

Introduction

WHAT sort of comparisons, if any, are appropriate between cultures is a perennial issue in anthropology. More specifically, within regional traditions of scholarship, who has the right to speak authoritatively and which questions it is permissible to ask have also been longstanding problems, if less frequently addressed (Fardon 1985). Among specialists of Japan, both foreign and Japanese, there has been, it seems to me, a tendency to downplay links with Asia and, implicitly or explicitly, to pursue instead comparisons with, and explanations in terms derived from, 'the West'. I am certainly not the first anthropologist whose primary expertise lies outside Japan to suggest that aspects of Japanese culture and society might be helpfully viewed in the light of models derived from elsewhere (Duff-Cooper 1991, Bloch 1992).¹ In the present case I aim to examine similarities in the practice of

1. Three months of fieldwork in Japan in 1991 was supported by a grant from the Japan Foundation Endowment Committee, for which I am very grateful. I would also like to thank the Tokyo University of Foreign Studies for making me a visiting scholar at their Institute for the Study of the Languages and Cultures of Asia and Africa. For comments, help and guidance, I am more than usually indebted to my wife, D. P. Martinez. I would also like to thank Roger Goodman and Joy Hendry for useful comments. So many people were helpful in Japan that it

two traditions of Tantric Buddhism, the Nepalese and the Shingon in Japan, which are distantly related historically.² A second aim is to compare the different ways in which these forms of Buddhism relate to their non-Buddhist contexts. The Japanese material is given centre stage here since the Nepalese material has been presented in detail elsewhere.³

Shintoism and Buddhism

Are Buddhism and Shintoism separate religions, or two aspects of one Japanese religion?⁴ There are arguments on both sides. It depends whether one is talking about priestly families or lay people, and the relationship between Buddhism and Shintoism has changed dramatically since the Meiji Restoration of 1868. It also depends, of course, on what one means by 'religion'.

Opinion polls appear to show that the Japanese are one of the most secular peoples of the world, with 65% regularly claiming to be without religious belief, whereas anything between 60% and 90% claim to have religious belief in such countries as Britain, France and the USA (Reader 1991: 5). This simply shows how unreliable opinion polls are. If one asks about observance, 75% of Japanese pray to the *kami* (Shinto gods) at New Year, although only 21% affirm that they believe in their existence (ibid.); in other words, 54% of Japanese worship entities whose existence they are at best doubtful about. It would be a mistake to conclude that there is something particularly Japanese about worshipping an entity one does not believe in: according to research in the USA reported in the *Guardian* (11 February 1992, p. 5), 10% of those who do not believe in God pray to Him (or should that be It?) daily. If we look at what Japanese *do*, instead of ethnocentrically confronting them with questions about *belief*, we see that most of

would be impossible to thank them all, but I must mention in particular Ishii Hiroshi, Tanaka Kimiaki, Togawa Masahiko and Hiramatsu Reiko; the last two acted as exemplary assistants and interpreters. The priests of the temples I discuss may prefer not to be named, but I would like to record their unfailing politeness and their spontaneous and warm hospitality. It will be evident how much I owe to established specialists on Japan, and I hope, though do not expect, that they will excuse an outsider trespassing on their territory.

2. The ritual of fire sacrifice, *homa* in Sanskrit, *goma* in Japanese, is central to both. Many of the same deities are worshipped in both.

3. See especially Gellner 1992, 1995. In a separate paper (Gellner 1997), I have pursued the comparison of Nepal to Japan with reference to the question of syncretism.

4. The same question has often been asked about the relation between Theravada Buddhism and the other religious systems with which it coexists (Gellner 1990).

them most certainly do participate in Shinto or Buddhist festivals and rituals, and many participate, whether over the long term or for shorter periods, in the many Japanese new religions which amalgamate aspects of both.

The conventional view, found in textbooks (Hendry 1995: 146; Reader 1991: chs. 3 and 4), is that there is a division of labour between Buddhism and Shintoism in Japan such that Shintoism is for life and Buddhism for death. Thus, Japanese perform rituals of birth and the life stages (at the ages of 3, 5 and 7), and later get married, in a Shinto idiom and/or at Shinto shrines. All matters connected with death are carried out by Buddhist priests, and memorials to the dead are to be found in graveyards attached to Buddhist temples.⁵ Japanese homes usually have separate offering places within the home, namely the *butsudan*, where offerings in a Buddhist idiom are given to the ancestors, and the *kamidana*, where they are made in Shinto idiom to the Shinto gods.

It is the conflation of Buddhas and ancestors which is the most startling to anyone familiar with Buddhism elsewhere in Asia, since it is combined with a great de-emphasis on the doctrine of karma (rebirth according to one's moral deserts). Robert J. Smith, in his standard work on Japanese ancestor worship, declares it to be a misunderstanding, a Japanese confusion resulting from using the euphemism 'to attain nirvana' (which effectively means to become a Buddha) for 'to die' (Smith 1974: 50). The normal term for ancestor, *hotoke*, is written with the same Chinese characters as *butsu*, meaning Buddha, suggesting that they are the same. Some priests asserted to me that ancestors and Buddhas are indeed the same; others said that they were not. Certainly the widespread and highly expensive ritual of giving a 'death name' to the deceased person can be understood as the Tantric rite of revealing the true 'Buddha nature' of the person. Monks and priests do not need such a new name after death, since they have already received a 'Buddha name' on being initiated.

The separation of responsibilities and the complementary associations between Buddhism and Shintoism in Japan have frequently been represented as a series of oppositions, thus:

| BUDDHISM | SHINTOISM |
|-------------------------|--------------------|
| death rituals | life-cycle rituals |
| afterlife | worldly aims |
| temples | shrines |
| inauspicious/polluted | auspicious/pure |
| O-bon festival (summer) | New Year (winter) |

Buddhist ritual specialists have had to find ways to cope with this association with the inauspicious. Many of the most polluting tasks at death are actually performed by the women of the household. The position of the *burakumin*, Japan's 'out-

5. The English 'shrine' is reserved for Shinto edifices (*miya*, *omiya*, or *jinjaljingu* in Japanese), the English 'temple' for Buddhist ones (*dera/otera* or *ji* in Japanese).

castes', is connected, among other things, to their performance of death-related tasks (Ohnuki-Tierney 1987: 80, 98).

Several anthropologists have developed this theme of the opposition between Buddhism and Shintoism. Ooms (1976), in a classic structuralist paper, argued that the series of Shinto rituals by which a child was turned into an adult paralleled almost exactly the series of Buddhist rituals by which a dead person is turned into an ancestor. Joy Hendry (1981: 229–39) explores and endorses this basic opposition in her detailed ethnography of a Kyushu village, but she ends by suggesting that weddings are such pivotal and protean affairs, with links to divination, funerals and Buddhist altars, that marriage 'temporarily [overrides] the universal opposition between life and death, just as it brings together male and female' (ibid.: 239). Jane Cobbi (1995) pursues the difference into food preferences: alcohol, salt, and strong-tasting things are associated with men, life and Shintoism, whereas tea, sweets, and mild-tasting things are associated with women, weakness and Buddhism. The associations with gender are, as one might expect, rather more complex than such a scheme would at first sight suggest: Martinez's villagers told her that 'Buddhism is for men, and Shintoism for women' (Martinez 1995: 190).

Leaving these symbolic elaborations aside, one might object that a simple opposition between life and death does not capture the full complexity of Japanese religious practice. Even so, the idea that Shintoism and Buddhism are complementary can still be defended. If one lays aside the Judaeo-Christian assumption that all aspects of religion must be provided by the same tradition, it is possible to distinguish at least seven distinct spheres:

- (1) legitimation and expression of the household or family group;
- (2) legitimation and expression of the locality;
- (3) legitimation and expression of the nation or ethnic group;
- (4) sanctification of the stages of the life cycle;
- (5) socialization of the young and provision of a moral code;
- (6) the provision of psychological and practical help in misfortune, especially illness;
- (7) salvation, i.e. a path out of all ills as such.

The Japanese may perhaps have pushed the religious division of labour further than anyone else: (1) and (7) are pre-eminently provided by Buddhism; (2), (3) and (4) by Shintoism except that Buddhism deals in death; and (5) by Confucianism. In terms of the simple picture elaborated so far, (6) is mainly a Shinto concern (but incorporating many concepts from Taoism). As we shall see, certain types of Buddhist temple also provide considerable competition in this sphere.

Kinds of Buddhist Temple

The research on which this paper is based was carried out in the locality of Fukagawa, Tokyo. Fukagawa was part of the 'low town' outside the city walls in the Edo period before 1868 (Waley 1984: 225f.). It is one of the few Tokyo localities to have several Shingon temples, including that of the famous Fukagawa Fudo. Fudo, known in Sanskrit as Achala, is a fierce Tantric deity, very popular with the Japanese; his temple here is controlled by the Narita branch of Shingon Buddhism. One of the priests described Fudo to me as 'a rough character with a good heart'. I also visited three other Shingon temples, which I shall call A, B, and C.

The four Buddhist temples considered here present quite a range of types which between them call into question the neat picture of Shintoism for life and Buddhism for death. The neat model can perhaps be accepted as a rough approximation. There are, however, two big problems with it. The first is historical: the separation of the two religions is the outcome of government action in the years following 1868. Viewing the two as distinct and separate traditions does justice neither to the situation before 1868 (which I consider further below), nor to the attitudes of most Japanese lay people at the present day (Grapard 1984).

The second problem is more ethnographic and has to do with the aspirations of the specialists who run many of the larger Buddhist temples. The neat picture assumes that all Buddhist temples are of the type known as *dankadera*, that is, temples supported by donors or parishioners (*danka*). Indeed, the vast majority of Japanese Buddhist temples are of this sort. But the large and famous ones are not. They are known as *shinjadera*, temples supported by 'believers' (*shinja*).⁶ The typical *dankadera* can be illustrated by Temple C. It is never open to the public. Overshadowed by neighbouring apartment blocks, its recently rebuilt compound encloses a single building which incorporates both the temple and the priest's house. In order to reach the main temple it is necessary to go upstairs. Behind it is the graveyard containing the tombs of households attached to the temple. Except when there is a funeral going on, or during annual festivals for the dead, the place is quiet. Immigration to Tokyo has been so great in recent generations that probably the majority of households there today have no connection to a *dankadera* in the city. Many have also lost contact with the ones in their village of origin.

The famous Fukagawa Fudo temple, on the other hand, is a *shinjadera* and is in complete contrast to the typical *dankadera*. It is open to the public all day long and there is a steady stream of worshippers, though they tend to be more numerous during the five fire sacrifices held at two-hour intervals throughout day, starting at 9 a.m. The fire sacrifices are impressive rituals involving six or more robed priests and the use of loudspeakers to amplify the prayers. On sale at the shop by

6. Alternative names for the *dankadera* are *ekôderalekôin* ('transfer of merit' temple), the term *ekô* referring both to funerals in general and to an essential part of all liturgies; the *shinjadera* are also sometimes called *kitôderalekigandera*, meaning 'prayer temple'.

the main steps to the temple is a large array of amulets for various purposes as well as *gomaki*, fire sacrifice sticks, and large inscribed boards called *ofuda*. The fire sacrifice sticks may be bought, again for various purposes, e.g. to avoid discord at home, at ¥300 for the smaller ones and ¥500 for the larger ones. They then have the worshipper's name inscribed on them and will be saved by the priests and used in an upcoming sacrifice, so that the petition will ascend directly to Lord Fudo. The *ofuda* are much more expensive: the cheapest costs ¥3000. Rather than being placed in the fire, they are waved over it and then taken home by the worshipper to be placed in their *butsudan*. The deity stands at the back of the main hall: he holds a sword and a noose and has a fierce countenance. Most worshippers advance no further than the front of the hall.

At the main entrance to the temple grounds there is a small roof over a water tank; worshippers may purify their hands using small metal cups with long bamboo handles if they wish. Behind this is a series of racks for tying *ema*, small wooden boards on which devotees write what they hope for from Lord Fudo (these too may be bought at the shop). Some record more than one wish: 81 *ema* were inspected with a total of 90 wishes. These broke down as follows: 40 had to do with success in study (either in exams, or for entrance to high school or a specific named university, or in particular subjects), 15 wished for health, 9 requested recovery from illness, 6 were for family happiness, 5 for commercial success, 4 for family safety, 3 for traffic safety, 3 for happiness, 2 for romantic love, 2 to grow tall, and 1 for the return of a missing daughter. The preponderance of *ema* directed at educational ends is apparently standard (Reader 1991: 180). To the right of the main entrance to the temple is an altar used for special blessing rituals performed on motor vehicles. The temple has a considerable reputation for this, and the ritual is supposed to ensure that accidents are avoided.

Around the back of the main hall of Fudo are three subsidiary chapels, where many worshippers rarely go. Two of them are dedicated to Dainichi Nyorai (Sanskrit: Mahavairocana), the principal Buddha of the Shingon sect, and one to Amida (Sanskrit: Amitabha). There are various wall-hangings and statues of other Buddhist figures in these chapels, including Kobo Daishi (Kukai), the founder of the Shingon sect. His birthday and death day are observed as major festivals of the temple. Most of the figures have the appropriate mantra (*goshingon*) written out in phonetic script beneath them: that for Dainichi, for example, is *on bajara datoban* (equivalent to the Sanskrit *om vajradhātu vam*). In the chapel of Amida, there are a few funeral tablets (*ihai*) of selected donors to the temple, the only place anywhere in the temple for the paraphernalia of death rituals.

Also part of the temple complex behind the main hall are a tea house for performing the tea ceremony, a room for performing *hatsumairi*, the first visit by a child to a Buddhist temple (an equivalent of the more usual first visit to a Shinto shrine), and a room used for calligraphy classes. These are all built around a traditional Japanese garden.

The impression given by this temple is that the priests have made a conscious effort to avoid any connections with death. The two main festivals for the dead,

O-bon and Segakie, are not observed. There are not even any statues to Jizo, the popular *bodhisattva* who is believed to save one from bad rebirths or a bad fate after death. Jizo statues are often found in other well-known *shinjadera* (cf. Ohnuki-Tierney 1984: 138ff.) and often in the form of *mizuko*, the childlike version of Jizo frequently erected for aborted fetuses and decorated with bibs and other childlike paraphernalia.⁷

This impression was confirmed by the head priest, who said that he always refused to perform death rituals for devotees. In five years at the temple he had only acceded to one man, who had requested him so many times that he had finally declared, 'If you ask such a thing you will fall into hell, but OK!' (he laughed as he related this). He added, quite spontaneously, that because it rejects anything to do with death, 'this temple is similar to Shinto'.

It can be seen, then, that the life-death opposition repeats itself *within Buddhism*. Here the *shinjadera* take on the characteristics of the Shinto temple, offering all kinds of help in life, offering Buddhist equivalents to Shinto life-cycle ceremonies and shunning inauspicious associations with death. Thus, a clear symbolic opposition within Japanese culture reappears within a sub-culture, in this case Buddhism. This can be represented as follows:

| | |
|--|--|
| <i>dankadera</i> (e.g. Temple C) | <i>shinjadera</i> (e.g. Fukagawa Fudo) |
| members only | open to all comers |
| specializes in tombstones and death rituals | no tombstones or death rituals |
| inauspicious, so avoided for worldly needs | offers help in worldly needs including life-cycle rituals |

There are, however, two other Shingon temples in the same Tokyo locality—Temple A and Temple B—which fit neither model neatly. Temple B is, in fact, as its priest openly admitted, 'mixed'. One part of it is open to the public on a daily basis: this is the temple to Emma Dai-o (Sanskrit: Yamaraj, lord of the dead). This temple has become quite well known because of its incorporation of modern technology. Nineteen offering boxes trigger different tape-recorded messages when coins are dropped into them. When you drop an offering into that labelled 'study', you are told to work hard with a pure mind and that that will ensure success. The other part of the temple is dedicated to Dainichi and has funeral tablets in glass cases down either side. It is open only when the *danka* come to perform death ceremonies. The priest of Temple B was, as his rebuilding of the Emma Dai-o temple would suggest, a dynamic innovator. He was particularly concerned, he said, with the large number of Tokyo residents who nowadays have no effective link with a *dankadera* and are easily exploited by new cremation companies.

7. See Lafleur (1992) and Hardacre (1997). I speculate that the refusal of many Buddhist priests to perform such worship of Jizo, reported by Hardacre (1997: 16-17), may in some cases be connected to a general reluctance to have anything to do with death rituals.

The last temple to be considered, Temple A, is also 'mixed', but in a different way: it is not a regular *dankadera* with tombs of donors. It has a few tombs, but only of the priests who have served there. It is open to the public every day but it does not reject all connections with death as the Fudo temple priests do. The differences between these four Shingon temples are summarized in Table 1. It will be seen that, in practice, the opposition between the two types of temple produces a spectrum, with some temples conforming to the ideal types of *shinjadera* and *dankadera* but others combining elements of both.

The special position of Temple A can partly be explained by the history of the area. In the pre-Meiji period there was a large Buddhist temple in Fukagawa with grounds far more extensive than any temple or shrine today. At that time the Fudo temple did not exist, though a statue of Fudo was brought on a palanquin from Narita from time to time when invited by *kabuki* actors or other local people. The Buddhist temple of that time incorporated in its grounds the nearby famous Tomioka Hachiman shrine, today a completely separate institution. Hachiman is the god of war and is nowadays seen as an unambiguously Shinto god. In the pre-Meiji period Hachiman was seen as a protector of Buddhism (Herbert 1967: 437) and was therefore identified as a *bodhisattva*.⁸ As his shrine was at that time part of the grounds of a Buddhist temple, his cult was controlled by the Buddhist priests. According to its priest, Temple A, small and inconspicuous though it is, is the successor of the large temple of pre-Meiji times. As all over Japan, large tracts of land were confiscated from Buddhist temples, and the priests of many temples in traditions which combined Shinto and Buddhist practices had to decide overnight to become 'pure Shinto' (Grapard 1984; Ketelaar 1990). In short, in the name of purity and nation-building, the state made a determined attempt to separate the two traditions in an unprecedented way.

Nepal

For a comparison with the Fukagawa Fudo temple, we can consider the large temple-monastery compound called Kwa Bahal (known as 'the Golden Temple' to tourists) in Lalitpur, Nepal.⁹ Like Fukagawa Fudo, it receives a regular trickle of devotees throughout the day; locals come en masse in the early morning for the high point of the daily liturgy, the washing of the god's face in a ritual mirror and the distribution of the holy water. Like Fukagawa Fudo, Kwa Bahal is located on various pilgrimage routes and so is visited as part of a set of holy sites. It has not

8. According to Waley (1984: 238), Hachiman was considered 'an avatar of the Buddha Amida'.

9. For further details, see Gellner 1991, 1992.

| | FUKAGAWA FUDO | TEMPLE A | TEMPLE B | TEMPLE C |
|--|----------------------|----------------------|----------------------|----------|
| <i>Ema</i> offered | X | | | |
| Facilities for life-cycle rituals and for tea ceremony | X | | | |
| Calligraphy classes | X | | | |
| Rituals for safety of new cars | X | | | |
| Open daily for worship | X | X | Emma Dai-o hall only | |
| Observance of Kobo Daishi's birthday | X | X | | |
| Observance of Kobo Daishi's death day | | X | | |
| Sale of amulets | X | X | X | |
| Daily <i>goma</i> | X | | | |
| Monthly <i>goma</i> | | X | | |
| Sale of <i>goma</i> sticks | X | X | X | |
| No <i>goma</i> | | | X | X |
| Tombs | | of priests only | X | X |
| <i>Ihai</i> (funeral tablets) | selected donors only | selected donors only | X | X |
| Jizo statue(s) | | X | | |
| O-bon, Segakie observed | | X | X | X |
| Higan observed | | | X | X |

TABLE 1. Contrasted characteristics of four Shingon temples in a Tokyo locality
 Note: 'X' indicates the presence of the characteristic in question

developed a large range of items for sale as has Fukagawa Fudo, nor does it have a range of instrumental rites it can offer laity or pilgrims as Fukagawa or some Hindu temples in India have. Yet, unlike other local Buddhist temples, it does have a single powerful ritual for instrumental purposes that is sponsored by a wide variety of local people, namely the ritual reading of the text, the 'Perfection of Wisdom in Eight Thousand Lines' (Astasahasrika Prajnaparamita). The text is read by ten Vajracharya priests simultaneously, each taking one tenth of the text. It is believed that, uniquely, the goddess, the Perfection of Wisdom, is present in this text and that she answers devotees' prayers.¹⁰

A big difference from Japan is that Buddhist priests among the Newars of Nepal are part of a caste, with two intermarrying sections, the Vajracharyas and the Sakyas. All Vajracharya and Sakya men are members of a monastery-temple such as Kwa Bahal (though many are much smaller than Kwa Bahal). Only Vajracharyas may be domestic priests for other Newars, but in the context of the monastery Vajracharyas and Sakyas are for almost all purposes of equal status. Kwa Bahal has a very large number of members (over 3,000), a majority or near majority of whom live in the vicinity of the temple. The sons of members become members by passing through the ritual of monastic initiation in Kwa Bahal (only the sons of members by Sakya or Vajracharya mothers may be so initiated). They are then added to the membership roll, so that, eventually, in their late forties or early fifties, their turn will come to be responsible for the daily ritual for a month. Thus Kwa Bahal is, in effect, the collective property of a patrilineally defined segment of the Vajracharya-Sakya caste ('the *sā'*—i.e. *sangha* or Monastic Community—'of Kwa Bahal'). Japanese Buddhist priests of a large temple such as Fukagawa Fudo are functionaries, in effect employees, of the Narita sect, and do not own, even in an extended sense, the temple where they work. On the other hand, priests of *dankadera* in Japan do own their temples in a way very analogous to the Nepalese situation, though as far as I know the Nepalese pattern of group ownership and rotating duties is not found.

Unlike in Japan, there is in Kwa Bahal no taboo on death rituals or death offerings in the temple, though it is true that there is rarely occasion to perform them there. In Nepal *all* life-cycle rituals are performed in the family's home, and the relationship of family to domestic priest, modelled on the Hindu *jajman*-Brahman priest relation, has no necessary relationship to any temple. Unlike in Japan, Nepalese Buddhism expanded to provide a full range of sacraments, so that Buddhist laypeople as well as Sakyas and Vajracharyas (the Buddhist clergy) go through essentially the same set of life-cycle rituals overseen by their Vajracharya domestic priests.¹¹

10. For details of the ritual and the categories of people sponsoring it, see Gellner 1996.

11. The only exception here is that boys from lay castes are not entitled to monastic initiation.

Conclusion

In Japan, as in Nepal, Tantric Buddhism is a ritual system operated by priests for both interested devotees and hereditary parishioners. What is unusual from the Nepalese point of view is the dual separation that has occurred in Japan. In the first place, many Japanese tend to approach Shinto shrines for birth, childhood and wedding ceremonies, as well as for assistance in worldly matters, reserving Buddhism for death rituals. In the second place, even when Japanese Buddhist institutions offer 'Shinto-type' services, there is a division of labour. The hereditary relationship with a Buddhist temple and its incumbent pertains only to death rituals. For any other service, the devotee is free to approach whatever temple, specialist or cult they prefer.

When Buddhism co-existed with Hinduism in South Asia (as it still does in the Kathmandu Valley) Buddhist monks and priests were willing to accept gifts, particularly those associated with death, that other religious specialists considered to be tainted with inauspiciousness. But from the monks' point of view, they themselves were beyond such worldly considerations. In very strongly Buddhist societies, such as Burma, Thailand and Tibet, this monastic view came to be largely accepted by the laity as well: that Theravada monks and nuns accept offerings made on behalf of dead people in no way demeans them in the eyes of those who make them. In Nepal, by contrast, high-caste Hindu Newars are willing to use Buddhist priests as death specialists, but they do not regard them as of equal rank to Brahmans. The Nepalese Buddhist priests themselves, for their part, do not accept that their own involvement is particularly problematic. What appears to have happened in Japan, by contrast, is that Buddhist personnel *have* accepted the view of the wider society that the connections with death are inauspicious and have organized themselves accordingly. Both the strategy of the Fukagawa Fudo temple (avoiding connections with death) and the strategies of Temples A and B (combining features of both types of temple) may be seen as creative adaptations to the religiously plural context of modern Tokyo, where mass migration from the villages has meant that many, if not most, of Tokyo's inhabitants no longer have an effective link with a *dankadera*.

Buddhism began as a soteriology (religious aspect 7, of the spheres distinguished above). In spite of the various ways it was adapted to lay life, it has nearly always remained fundamentally a soteriology and has co-existed with other religious systems which have provided for at least some of the other needs of lay people. In Gombrich's classic formulation, 'Buddhism in real life is *accretive*' (Gombrich 1971: 41, original emphasis; cf. Tambiah 1970, Gombrich 1988). Thus, there is and was nothing particularly strange about the traditional co-existence of Buddhism and Shintoism in Japan. There is no reason, on this account, to claim that Buddhism was 'Japanized' out of all recognition. Indeed, in specializing overwhelmingly in death rituals, Japanese Buddhist priests remained closer to Theravada Buddhism than the Buddhism of Nepal, whose priests have expanded their ritual repertoire to cover, at least potentially, all seven aspects. The biggest

theoretical obstacle to a proper sociological and anthropological understanding of Buddhism, whether in Japan or elsewhere, has been the Eurocentric assumption that there is something illegitimate about such religious specialization and, above all, about its consequence—the co-existence of different religious traditions within a single symbolic field.

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BOOK REVIEWS

CAROLYN NORDSTROM and ANTONIUS C. G. M. ROBBEN (eds.), *Fieldwork under Fire: Contemporary Studies of Violence and Survival*, Berkeley: University of California Press 1995. vi, 300 pp., Index.

In researching and writing about her own experience of a rape attack, Cathy Winkler describes the difficulty of finding words to verbalize terror, violence and pain: 'In my writings my first drafts overuse certain words: it was horror, a real horror, truly horrific, horribly horrible...'. These adverbs and adjectives heaped on nouns hide and distance the reader from the experiential reality of violence. It is this experiential reality, examined from the point of view of both the fieldworker and the perpetrators and victims of violence, that is captured by the contributors to this volume. Violence itself, as the editors argue in their introduction, is not some fundamental biological principle of human behaviour; rather, it is socially constructed in diverse ways in settings as different as open warfare and Foucauldian ameliorative institutions. But apart from Winkler, the other contributors all discuss more 'traditional' violent settings—war zones, civil wars, state repression and violent liberation movements. The individual contributions are not simply overlapping tales, each from another 'front', but illustrate different aspects respectively of the experience of violence and terror. This is reflected textually in the unusual feature of a different subheading being given to each chapter, such as 'rumour', 'seduction and persuasion' and 'creativity and chaos'. The collection as a whole succeeds in illuminating different aspects of the experience of violence. It works too because many of these aspects are not specific to fieldwork in situations of violence.

Rumour, the sociology of knowledge of an event, is an issue all ethnographers are faced with in the field. Anna Simons heightens our appreciation of the way in which provisional understandings are constructed and reconstructed on the basis of multiple sources and prior theories, as people try to make sense of the killing of a bishop which marked 'the beginning of the end' of civil society in Somalia. Meditating on the relationship of 'history' to the rumours that surrounded that single day, she notes that the 'significance [of rumours] as mood enhancers or mood dampeners and vectors for action gets swallowed up in concern over the flurry of their results: 'events'. In turn, as these events become ordered for narrative, the tendency is to reduce, collapse, and edit out the very terror of not-knowing, which is at the heart and soul of every rumour.' Antonius Robben looks at issues of impression management and 'seduction' in the fieldwork encounter, as he shows the different rhetorical strategies—logic and reason, emotional and empathetic appeal, the revelation of 'secrets'—by which Argentinean generals and their victims attempted to convince him to write the 'truth' about Argentina's 'dirty war'. And Joseba Zulaika focuses on the differing modes of

employment and their associated tropes which compete to dominate understanding of political violence in the small Basque village he calls 'home'.

How does the terror of violence actually work? Each author asks this question in different forms on the basis of both observation and direct experience of its machinations. Linda Green describes the atmosphere of perpetual fear in conducting research in Guatemala, which led her to begin to doubt her very perceptions of reality. Carolyn Nordstrom points to the way Renamo's war on Mozambique disrupted people's basic sense of self and tradition. As one Mozambiquan told her: 'No more laughter, no more stories, no more children.... We cannot even perform the ceremonies that make us human.' Winkler gives us a micropolitics of such destructive deformations of self, will and causality in her analysis of the verbal and physical exchanges of rapist and victim. Throughout, the focus is on the 'thinkability' of terror and violence, how it is perpetrated on the mind as much as the body. This allows the authors to turn their attention also to the creativity of local responses in reconstructing lives and unthinking terror. Ted Swedenburg, through a creative interpolation of his own ethnography with Jean Genet's account, *Prisoners in Love*, gives a sense of the fun and collective effervescence that alternate with the more painful realities of Palestinian resistance, a view also captured by Frank Pieke in his 'accidental anthropology' of the 1989 people's movement in China. A number of other authors trace out the everyday symbolic and expressive acts that help people survive and that call to mind Nordstrom's optimism that local-level practices will always subvert the hold of violence: the Palestinians' use of headscarves (*kufiyas*), which has spread to south-central Los Angeles; the Mozambiquan healers (*curandeiros*), who help 'take the violence out of people'; and the poetry readings amid the bombing in Croatia, described by Maria Olujic. I must demur, however, over Olujic's depictions of 'eastern' Serbs having been brainwashed to hate their victims and 'western Croats' as sensitive humanists who have been forced to fight. Such subtle and dangerous cultural stereotyping seems out of step with the rest of the contributions.

A number of shorter pieces are appended at the end of the book, including a useful discussion of some of the practicalities of planning fieldwork 'under fire' by Jeffrey Sluka, and an interview with the Guatemalan anthropologist, activist and Jesuit priest Ricardo Falla on some of the moral issues involved in doing such work. This piece picks up on tensions within the volume overall: Robben's cautious desire not to be 'seduced' by either side, Zulaika's coming to terms with the presence of agents of violence in his own village, and Green's embracing of her ethnography as an 'act of solidarity' with victims of state terror and as a potential agent of social change. Falla gives a sense of the different kind of commitment involved in long-term research on issues on which 'you have to choose a side'.

Most of the contributions have been written in dialogue with Taussig's recent work, which provides another unifying thread without ever dominating the discourse. With a few exceptions, the authors have managed to write theoretically—to capture a bit of the 'local and the global'—while avoiding post-modern jargon. *Fieldwork under Fire* contributes to answering these calls. It makes for critical reading both for the beginning student and the seasoned anthropologist.

DAVID SUTTON

TOM GRIFFITHS, *Hunters and Collectors: The Antiquarian Imagination in Australia*, Cambridge: Cambridge University Press 1996. xiv, 416 pp., Bibliography, Illustrations, Index. No price given.

Europeans often think of Australia as a young country with little history. This ethnocentric view of the continent has been shared by white Australians in the past and was confirmed by the declaration of Australia as *Terra nullius* in defiance of the Aboriginal inhabitants' rights. Over the last hundred years or so, however, there has been a growth in popular interest in Aboriginal history before 1770 as much as the history of Australia since (the date that Captain Cook became the first European to reach the east coast of Australia, though there had been non-European contact before, on the northern coasts).

Tom Griffiths's recent work, one of a series on Australian history being published by Cambridge University Press, deals with this phenomenon, concentrating principally on the state of Victoria since the mid-nineteenth century. The book is based on research he carried out at the Museum of Victoria in Melbourne. The historical tension between Aboriginal and non-Aboriginal people is mirrored in the book by that between professional and amateur historians. For a white Australian historian like Griffiths, striking a balance between these different parties might have proved difficult to achieve, but his even-handed approach and clarity of presentation rise to the challenge. He positions the historical interests of non-Aboriginal Australians within their overall reactions to the country and its geology, flora, fauna and Aboriginal people.

In Part 1 of the book, Griffiths addresses the history of antiquarianism, archaeology and anthropology, focusing particularly on collecting and the role of museums. Part 2, entitled 'Possession', is concerned with the aesthetics of the environment, the relationship of the Australian landscape to the 'Australian psyche', and the ways in which white Australians sought to come to terms with it. Part 3 focuses on how the past is institutionalized, and the post-war enthusiasms for local and family history and for the conservation of buildings and landscapes.

Many of the people whose work is discussed in the book were 'amateur experts' who are unlikely to be very well known today, either in Australia or abroad. This in itself is a bonus, as the study of the work and interests of such collectors does much to illustrate Australian attitudes to the history of their country. One such man was Reynell Eveleigh Johns, a public servant, amateur historian and ethnographer in Victoria in the mid-nineteenth century. In many ways, he was a most reprehensible character: the author introduces him to us by describing one of his grave-robbing expeditions. However, Griffiths does attempt to provide a social and intellectual contextualization to his activities. Johns was an inveterate collector of curiosities, including birds, insects, snakes, rocks, plants and Aboriginal artifacts and remains. He was also a committed diarist, thus allowing Griffiths to reconstruct his collecting career and place it within the broader Australian intellectual picture.

Although the entire book is interesting, for me the most absorbing parts were the first two, dealing with topics in which I myself have a interest—collecting, museums and Spencer and Gillen. These are also the most historical sections of the book, and for this reason they tell a more uniquely Australian story. Other readers might also enjoy the way in which Griffiths explores the antiquarian imagination of Australia and

how this has interacted with the Australian landscape, the two together forming a view of Australian history.

The entire structure of the book, which follows historical interests from collecting through possession to preservation, is a marker of the passage of time and changing opinions among European Australians, which was mirrored in Europe. The main difference between Europe and Australia in this regard is that in the former there has never been the same sense of an alien landscape, and the need for emotional possession of the land has never been so great as that demonstrated in Part 2 of *Hunters and Collectors*. However, the perceived need to preserve one's environment and history is now encountered world-wide. In that respect, the story Griffiths tells about Australia is applicable everywhere.

ALISON PETCH

COLLEEN BALLERINO COHEN, RICHARD WILK, and BEVERLY STOELTJE (eds.), *Beauty Queens on the Global Stage: Gender, Contests, and Power*, New York and London: Routledge 1995. vii, 256 pp., Plates, References, Index. £40.00/£12.99.

On 6 July 1996, the *Guardian* reported that the National Volleyball Association of Thailand had barred all transvestites from its national team. 'If we travel abroad,' an official said, 'foreigners might think that Thailand doesn't have enough real men for its team. It would harm the country's reputation.' In reply, one member of the team—most of whom are transvestite and wear make-up on court—stated: 'I think I am second to none and I am qualified to be part of the national team. There aren't any rules against people like me.'

This incident highlights the way a seemingly innocent game dedicated to the public display of lithe flesh becomes a key site for disputes about gender, aesthetics and power. Officials of the Association think of image and regard its team as national ambassadors. Painted players think of beauty and regard their team as the fairly sought target of talented achievers.

This is not merely some parochial bickering between narrow-minded bureaucrats and flashy athletes but a dramatic exemplar of the contemporary intermeshing of the local and the global. Thanks to the power of television and new electronic media, the sight of made-up volleyballers is not restricted to Thai audiences. At first sight this particular polemic might appear local, but the officials are forced to 'think global'.

It is precisely this sort of event that the contributors to *Beauty Queens* are concerned with. They take what initially seems like anthropologically trivial material—beauty pageants—and skilfully draw out the means by which these ceremonial forms can act as stages on which judges, sponsors, viewers, finance ministers and would-be queens contest the meaning of nation, market and democracy via the medium of feminine beauty (both heterosexual and male transvestite). It would be invidious to single out particular chapters, but together they range from Minnesota to Moscow, from Tonga to Tibet, from the Muslim Philippines to Monimbo, Nicaragua. Contri-

butors analyse the ways in which beauty pageants can represent and reinforce gender ideologies, and how judges' decisions (especially disputed ones) may highlight culturally particular notions of beauty and femininity. But at the same time, these contests may become arenas not just for discussions of corporeal aesthetics but also for debates about social identity, as different groups of involved participants come to question the aim of these performative events. Who are we, and what are we doing this for? Who do we wish to be? How do we wish to be seen, and by whom? In such circumstances, anthropologists are forced to abandon bounded notions of 'culture', no matter how long cherished, and to seek more open-ended ways of representing present realities, whether on the ball-court or the catwalk.

The style of the contributors is almost as varied as the range of examples. Some are determinedly theoretical, another adopts a more autobiographical approach. But all contributions are well researched and thought through. This diversity is only a benefit, as it reminds students that there is no longer any one single hegemonic mode of representing cultures.

In sum, *Beauty Queens* is an informative, at times entertaining collection which could usefully be included in a range of undergraduate courses, whether on gender, identity, transnational phenomena or aesthetics. What a pity there weren't more photographs.

JEREMY MACCLANCY

THOMAS N. HEADLAND and DARRELL L. WHITEMAN (eds.), *Missiology: An International Review*, Vol. XXIV, no. 2 (Special number on 'Missionaries, Anthropologists, and Human Rights'), Scottdale, Pennsylvania: American Society of Missiology 1996. 157 pp. \$6.00.

The American-based ecumenical journal *Missiology* has published this special issue on the relationship between anthropologists and missionaries. Within this growing debate, the journal has focused on human rights. Not surprisingly, some of the articles point to the fact that human rights have in the past been supported by a number of missionaries.

Eight articles are presented, some quite short, but in all cases well documented. Most are written by people trained in anthropology. Among the ethnographic evidence is some drawn from the Yuqui of Bolivia and Melanesians. One might note in particular the article by R. Benedito on indigenous Filipinos. Although the level of analysis may not be very penetrating at times, the issue is certainly worth examining by anyone interested in the subject, especially the several bibliographies.

W. S. F. PICKERING

DON KULICK and MARGARET WILLSON (eds.), *Taboo, Sex, Identity and Erotic Subjectivity in Anthropological Fieldwork*, London and New York: Routledge 1995. xvi, 283 pp., References, Index. £40.00/£13.99.

ELISA J. SOBO, *Choosing Unsafe Sex: AIDS-Risk Denial among Disadvantaged Women*, Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press 1995. ix, 232 pp., Bibliography, Index. £32.95/£13.95.

RICHARD PARKER and JOHN GAGNON (eds.), *Conceiving Sexuality: Approaches to Sex Research in a Postmodern World*, London and New York: Routledge 1995. ix, 307 pp., Bibliography, Tables, Figures. £13.99.

'Sexuality' seems to have replaced gender in popularity within social anthropology. The term refers to a person's sexual desires and powers, and its manifestation depends on that person's social circumstances and psychological state. So what social circumstances (and, possibly, psychological states) explain the recent anthropological preoccupation with sexuality? The interest is partly a consequence of the publication of Malinowski's diaries in 1967. However, more significantly it is a symptom of the 'reflexive' turn of the discipline in the 1980s. It is also partly fuelled by the need to understand the relationship between sexual behaviour and the spread of HIV/AIDS.

Anthropological writings on sexuality fall roughly into two, non-mutually exclusive categories. First, there are 'reflexive' accounts by anthropologists who discuss the sexual lives of other anthropologists and their own erotic experiences 'in the field'. Most of the chapters in Don Kulick and Margaret Willson's edited volume, *Taboo, Sex, Identity and Erotic Subjectivity in Anthropological Fieldwork*, refer to earlier accounts of 'erotic subjectivity' such as Malinowski's diaries, Paul Rabinow's *Reflections on Fieldwork in Morocco* (1977) and Manda Cesara's *Reflections of a Woman Anthropologist* (1982). The contributors, mostly American and mostly women, show how the production of anthropological knowledge is shaped in various inevitable ways by ideas not only about gender but also about sexuality.

Kulick suggests that through erotic encounters with members of the community being studied, the anthropologist is 'using the self in an epistemologically productive way'. Perhaps. Equally, the process may not further anthropological understanding at all. *Taboo* contains a harrowing account of a female anthropologist's experience of rape by an Ethiopian research assistant. If this yields anthropological insights, it is by a most circuitous and destructive route. The cautionary tale effectively highlights the lack of preparation or bureaucratic protection which accompanies most anthropologists, usually young and relatively naive, on their first field trips.

The second category of accounts is more sociological, for it explores the social circumstances and cultural contexts which are associated with particular expressions of sexuality. A number of chapters in Richard Parker and John Gagnon's edited volume *Conceiving Sexuality* consider, for example, the social and cultural aspects of male homosexuality and bisexuality in various different contexts, including Amsterdam 'as a Gay Capital', the Philippines and Nicaragua. And most of the book's accounts have implications for understanding the epidemiology of sexually transmitted diseases in general and for programmes aimed at preventing the spread of HIV/AIDS in particular.

Elisa Sobo's *Choosing Unsafe Sex* is an accessible, clearly written study of the cultural barriers to condom use, despite rising rates of HIV infections and AIDS among poor, mostly Black women clients of maternal and infant health clinics in Cleveland, Ohio. Sobo's study is important not only for its considerable relevance to HIV/AIDS educators but also for its insights into the workings of heterosexual relationships. Sobo shows that it is women's own expectations of heterosexual unions which require them to practise unsafe sex. Most women make considerable social and emotional investments in monogamy and see no need for condoms, because to question their husbands' fidelity would amount to questioning the assumptions and expectations according to which women have shaped their lives.

For some readers, Sobo's conclusion, as well as the patterns of social behaviour that can be deduced from the pages of *Conceiving Sexuality*, will raise questions that are beyond the scope of all three books. Are women more inclined to be monogamous than men, and if so, why? What is the relative importance of cultural meaning and biological predispositions in influencing sexual behaviour? Since biological determinism haunts much of modern genetics, just as cultural determinism underpins most cultural studies, it is difficult to explore this question without prejudicing the answers. Although *Conceiving Sexuality* promises 'an important overview of the most pressing topical and theoretical issues currently shaping debate in international and cross-cultural research on sexuality', the book avoids the issue. Explanations from evolutionary biology are in effect dismissed as too easy, too deterministic and too ignorant of the influence of culture, though in fact these conclusions do not necessarily follow but tell us more about how biological knowledge is generally perceived by social scientists.

So perhaps the take-home message is, next time a man won't take 'No' for an answer, try asking 'What was the locus of our radical miscommunication that made it impossible for him to hear my disinterest and impossible for me to get out of his interpretive framework?' (*Taboo*, p. 7).

ALISON SHAW

PETER BELLWOOD, J. J. FOX, and DARREL TRYON (eds.), *The Austronesians: Historical and Comparative Perspectives*. Canberra: Australian National University 1995.

This is the second in a series of volumes produced by the Conference of Comparative Austronesian Project in the Department of Anthropology of the ANU. Some of the other volumes are *Inside Austronesian Houses* (ed. J. J. Fox, 1993); *Transformations of Hierarchy: Structure, History and Horizon in the Austronesian World* (Special Issue, History and Anthropology), (eds. M. Jolly and Mark S. Mosko, 1994); and *Origins, Ancestry and Alliance* (eds. J. J. Fox and C. Sather, 1996).

Preceded by an introduction, the book is divided into two major sections. The first, 'Origins and Dispersals' (seven chapters), and the second, 'Transformations and Interactions' (nine chapters), focus 'on shared ancestry on the one hand, and culture-

and region-specific transformations on the other' (p. 3) in a historical and comparative framework, in both linguistics and anthropology. A fundamental statement is that culture is embedded in the language: linguistics is the pivot for the statement of facts about the common origins and the subsequent dispersals of the Austronesians. They are more than 270 million people speaking some 1200 languages in regions from Madagascar in the west to the easternmost islands of the Pacific.

The geographical area covered by the linguistic survey points to the directions of the 'dispersals': Tryon (Chapter 1) offers an overview of the whole Austronesian family, Pawley and Ross (Chapter 2) survey the Oceanic languages in the Pacific, and Adelaar (Chapter 3) deals with four major groupings of Borneo languages and their links with Madagascar. The linguistic findings are further enhanced by archaeological records presented by Bellwood (Chapter 5), who points to the relationship between agriculture and language families.

The pivot for the debate in Austronesian archaeology has been the Lapita culture, which is believed to have existed between 1600 BC and the period 500 BC to the beginning of the Christian era: it represents the archaeological record of the first substantial Austronesian colonization into Melanesia and Polynesia (p. 112). The Lapita culture has been defined initially on the basis of its highly decorated pottery. Two very different views have been championed in recent years: some researchers espouse an almost entirely indigenous development of Lapita in the Bismarcks, while others view it as largely but not exclusively an intrusive culture with its major links further west to Island SEA. Spriggs (Chapter 6) argues for the latter position.

The second part of the book surveys 'transformations and interactions': the genetic make-up of the local populations (Chapters 9 and 10) point to an ultimate East Asian origin for Polynesians but also indicate some degree of past gene flow from island Melanesian populations. In linguistics it is thought that NAn languages are older and that An languages are intrusive. Effects of language contact, such as bilingualism and general cultural borrowing, must have been a direct effect of total interactions or exchanges (marriages), which reached a transformative climax in the western cultural and later political colonization of the whole Austronesian region.

Supomo (Chapter 15) gives an account of the earliest Indian contacts with Indonesia. Significant changes did occur as the result of the penetration of Sanskritic culture into the western parts of the Austronesian world (p. 298). It is not only Hindu and Buddhist influences that are taken into consideration: two chapters deal with Islam, Catholic and Protestant involvement in the area. Islam required many changes in traditional Austronesian social and religious practices, as did Christianity, but Austronesian resilience, reinforced greatly by the continuing use of the Austronesian languages as vernaculars, imposed a two-way dialogue in the process (Reid, Chapter 16).

The Austronesians also played a major role in commercial and diplomatic endeavours of their times within and beyond Southeast Asia which predated and underlay the advance of Islam among Austronesians. By travelling frequently as far as Timor and Maluku, they kept these peripheries on the known map of world commerce.

Reid argues that change came from numerous conversions and almost as many reversions towards bedrock Austronesian habits: with its own theology and sexual morality, Islam challenged and in some instances changed the cultural landscape of the Austronesians. Christianity in its many forms came into insular Southeast Asia and the

Pacific with the colonial expansion of European states in which Christianity and colonialism worked within a common and unified framework, while in others church and state diverged in separate directions. The Dutch domination of Indonesia was primarily economic. But in the Philippines and other parts of the Austronesian world the Church played a much stronger and more lasting role, despite the fact that even nowadays it is 'not a native church, but a church staffed by natives' (de la Costa, cited on p. 337). The Western incursions overall made the local peoples vulnerable to quick and partial conversion to Christianity which in most cases was rampant and had a lasting impact, particularly in the Pacific.

A note of great importance: Fox (Chapter 12) calls for an inculturated sociological apparatus. 'Austronesian ideas about persons, about the unions of persons, about social derivation and identity, about sociability itself, such ideas, are not—or, were not—those of nineteenth-century Europe from which our sociological traditions derive' (p. 215). He points out the need to reexamine Western premises and to focus on the basic features of a general nature, while attending 'closely to the concepts of the Austronesians themselves expressed in idioms and metaphors of a common linguistic and cultural heritage...' (p. 216). Among these is the idea of origins, conceptualized as 'source', 'root', 'base' or 'trunk'.

The book is indeed a very welcome contribution to the Austronesian library. The contributors to this interdisciplinary survey are well known worldwide as experts in their own field, and this book should lead one further to their many other contributions elsewhere (listed in the bibliographies). The Comparative Austronesian Project is to be thanked for its immense contribution to the understanding of the historical *raison d'être* of Austronesia.

FILOMENO ABEL

KEVIN HANNAN, *Borders of Language and Identity in Teschen Silesia* (Berkeley Insights in Linguistics and Semiotics 28), New York etc.: Peter Lang 1996. xxii, 221 pp., Maps, Bibliographies, Index. £33.00.

The Duchy of Teschen emerged as an identifiable political unit out of eastern Silesia in 1290 and was ruled by a branch of the Piasts for over three hundred years. It remained unified despite the collapse of this dynasty, incorporation into the Czech kingdom, the takeover of the Czech lands by the Habsburg Empire and the loss of all but eastern Silesia to Prussia in 1742. The collapse of the Austro-Hungarian Empire in 1918 finally led to its division between emergent Poland and Czechoslovakia, a situation which caused tension and armed conflict in the inter-war period but which remains substantially unchanged at the present day. Although a meeting point of Czech, Polish, Slovak and at some periods German, Silesian, Wallach and Moravian speech, ethnicities and cultures, Teschen developed its own Slavonic dialect, related to Silesian and predominant in its territory until well into the nineteenth century. Since then, Czech and Polish nationalist agitation and political division have led to competi-

tion from the Czech and Polish national languages and ethnicities, the former having replaced German administratively in 1919. As a consequence, there are now no monolingual speakers of the dialect, and even the Polish minority in Czech Teschen have tended to become assimilated, aided by a mini-iron curtain along the international border in the communist period.

Hannan, a linguist, threads his way, judiciously for the most part, through the historical ramifications of dialectal and ethnic identity, seeing changes in both as being rooted in social and historical factors, as well as in each other. Although sections of the book are devoted to a linguistic analysis of the distinctive features of the dialect in comparison with Czech, Polish and Slovak, there is much to please the anthropologist interested in questions of identity in this corner of Europe, with insights into a range of regional questions going well beyond Teschen itself: particularly interesting are the accounts of the so-called *Wasserpölnisch* dialect of Silesia and of the mutual and self-stereotyping of Czechs and Poles. There is a tendency to treat some ethnographic details as unproblematic facts rather than material for competing ethnic discourses, as they frequently are in this region: this is especially the case when they are drawn from an ill-documented history. For example, how sure can we be that there was no Slav settlement in Silesia between the Celts of the third century BC and the Germanic Vandals of the early Christian period (*pace* pp. 17–18)? Elsewhere, however, Hannan shows himself to be fully alive to the extent to which ethnicities change in history, may be manipulated for economic or other advantage, and may be viewed differently across an ethnic divide (thus Poles from Czech Teschen find themselves being regarded as Czechs across the border in Poland).

On the linguistic side, Hannan presents a convincing argument that in a situation such as this, the genetic model is less useful than a model of convergence; he repeatedly refers to André Meillet's notion of mixed languages. I was only left puzzling over Hannan's phrase 'synchronic development', which seems like a contradiction in terms. The book has a number of examples of the Teschen dialect, though not all are translated. Similarly arbitrary is the positioning in the text of many of the numerous maps, valuable though they are in themselves.

Despite these quibbles, the book is to be welcomed as the first full-length modern study of Teschen in English, as well as being on the whole a perceptive and nuanced account of the interrelationships of ethnicity and language in a region where the barriers between either are not always as hard and fast as they appear.

ROBERT PARKIN

WILLIAM KAVANAGH, *Villagers of the Sierra de Gredos: Transhumant Cattle-raisers in Central Spain*, Oxford and Providence: Berg 1994. xxiv, 140 pp., Figures, Plates, Bibliography, Index. £34.95.

A well-written ethnography of a Castilian cattle-raising community, this slim volume evokes the life-style of transhumance in the 1970s and early 1980s. The author's

anthropological background at Oxford, together with a 'Presentation' by Julian Pitt-Rivers, locates the work within the genre of 'traditional village study', with an undercurrent of structural-functionalism and structuralism. This becomes manifest with 'complementary opposites' represented by an ideational system juxtaposing the 'cold' mountain village with the 'hot' (and fertile) plains of Extremadura.

An abundance of illustrations, diagrams and photographs maintain the reader's interest and enhance the tight ethnographic detail. We learn of the *torno* and its importance in ordering village cooperation, notions of right and left, the sexual division of village space and the fundamental dichotomy of male/outside versus female/inside. Other subjects dealt with include inheritance, social life (the bar), anti-clericalism and attitudes towards the outside world. The bulk of the book, however, is given over to a detailed and occasionally laborious description of the agricultural activity of the community: herding livestock, pasturing animals, walking with cattle and irrigating vegetable gardens. These aspects are made interesting through the analysis of social institutions which foster cooperation, turn-taking, neighbourly support and exchange: the services of a stud bull are reciprocated by helping with the hay-making. Mutual assistance oils the machine and smooths the progress of these otherwise individualistic actors.

In keeping with its structural-functionalist approach, the book ends with an epilogue, written in the 1990s, looking back at the main part of the fieldwork period (the 'ethnographic present' being located in 1985), seeing it as a fixed period now disappearing, a sort of melting snowflake; indeed, a documentary on the village was made for the *Disappearing World* series in 1989. Thus we have salvage ethnography in Europe and lament the passing of an era. The epilogue hammers this message home with talk of new cars, fridges and television and of the arrival of tourists, upsetting local behaviour with their fighting and endangering animals with their rubbish. A snap-shot, synchronic ethnography, regarded by many as an out-moded form, is boldly presented here. This portrait, with its grainy detail, should be enjoyed, savoured and placed in an album to show students how ethnographies influenced by the intellectual climate of the 1970s still have relevance to contemporary ethnography.

Kavanagh becomes even more reflective in his last pages (written in the 1990s), allowing the voice of an ex-villager, now a resident of Madrid, to squeeze through the print and to admit—to the distaste of the ethnographer—that the villagers would rather sell their land to property speculators and retire rich than let it be turned into a national park. Sometimes the authentic indigenous voice can be disturbing.

DON MACLEOD

MAURICE GODELIER, *L'Enigme du don*, Paris: Fayard 1996. 315 pp.

This book is made up of four separate discussions. The first, which occupies fully half the volume, is consecrated to a careful re-evaluation of Marcel Mauss's essay on the gift. Given the premise that humans must produce society to live, everything that can

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be shared will make sense. Godelier's basic question, why do things that are shared move around, is answered by saying that by doing so they create social relations between groups. All the objective social relations which form the basis of a society can be expressed and materialized in gifts and counter-gifts. The gift as praxis, Godelier says, is both the form and the content of these relations, representing, signifying and totalizing the entire social relationship of which they are an instrument and the symbol. Thus Mauss's analysis of such a 'total social fact' as the gift interests Godelier both for where his predecessor's essay succeeded and equally for where it failed, as when Mauss suggested that a hidden inner spiritual power (*hau* or *mana*) was capable of moving things given. In either case, says Godelier, we are indebted to Mauss for having shown that a society only exists if it forms a totality, representing itself as such and submitting itself to the reproduction of the whole as a whole.

So what is it in objects that are given that makes them move? Godelier's main criticism of and advance on Mauss's legacy consists in his answer to this question. Gifts substitute for the person or his or her society's *sacralia*. What they contain is thus the personhood of the owner and the entire imagination of his or her society. Only these gifts are capable of capturing what is in the persons who give them. Subjects thus become objects, and objects given become subjects.

This first part of the book ends with a certain sense of satisfaction on the part of the author, who claims that he has managed to restore to 'sciences sociales leur fonction critique des croyances spontanées et des illusions que les sociétés et les individus se font sur eux-mêmes, critique aussi des théories savantes qui ne prennent pas au sérieux ces croyances ou n'en rendent pas compte' (p. 152).

The second section is an analysis of how objects become substitutes for men and gods, using the example of the Baruya of New Guinea, with whom the author carried out fieldwork. The last third of this section tries to situate societies with potlatch in their historical context. The addition of a judicious selection of all the recent Pacific ethnology relevant to the question makes this section especially interesting reading.

The essay on the sacred which forms the third section tries to show, in opposition to Durkheim, that the holy, the sacred, is defined by a type of relationship between men and the origin of things in which the men disappear to be replaced by their doubles, imaginary men who re-endow them with their own customs, laws, etc., which have been sacralized. In the final chapter, Godelier illustrates by way of comparison what these origins might be and how necessary they are to fix the identity of individuals and societies in time. This provides him with an opportunity for a brief *aperçu* on the displacement of religion by politics in contemporary France.

The impressive number of new publications that have appeared since Malinowski's early work on the *kula* rings of the Trobriand Islands gives the author abundant new data to work with. Godelier's background in philosophy keeps the exposition both clear and sufficiently abstract to enable those not especially versed in Melanesian ethnography to follow without any difficulty. An English translation would have the merit of putting this book in the hands of undergraduates, who would find that it covered a great deal of ground very coherently. The author's interests in gifts one cannot reciprocate, in debts one cannot begin to repay, will probably not end with this volume, and it will be interesting to see what he uncovers next: as he has shown here, downstream from unrepayable gifts lies the origin of money, another precious object

which has ceased to be both alienable and inalienable. This is a rich vein for comparative historical anthropology.

STEPHEN C. HEADLEY

ERIC HIRSCH and MICHAEL O'HANLON, *The Anthropology of Landscape*, Oxford: Clarendon Press 1995. xi, 268 pp., References, Index. £35.00/£14.99.

This edited volume deals directly with the concept of landscape, exploring ways in which it can elucidate various aspects of anthropology. Hirsch's introduction describes the shift from the art-historical use of the term to the much denser and more productive concept of landscape which is now proving so useful in anthropological discourse concerned with human-environment relations. Many of the essays in the book deal with an idealized representational landscape as a 'background' to the 'foreground' of a more immediate lived existence and the interaction between them. In this way, landscape is framed as a cultural process, offering a more dynamic vision of human adaptation and permitting useful cross-cultural comparisons to be made.

The introduction also deals briefly with the complex issue of how concepts of 'nature' mesh with those of 'landscape'. Hirsch outlines the historical progression of both strands of ideas and the factors underlying the particularly Western objectification of the land through various forms of representation. Nicholas Green's chapter provides an example of this progression and of the part that painting played in encouraging a more 'aesthetic' vision of the rural landscape in nineteenth-century France. Green finds some useful common ground between art historians' definitions of spatial/perceptual relations and theoretical perspectives on these issues in anthropology and geography. However, he suggests that a major obstacle to greater congruence is the continued acceptance of a separation between a definable physical reality and representational forms, an assumption which not only permeates historical analyses but is of course integral to the development of landscape painting. As Green notes, this rather static form of objectification has led to the dominance of inherently ethnocentric and value-laden aesthetic criteria and does not encompass a more dynamic view of environmental interaction as renegotiated and re-evaluated through representation. Focusing on the progression towards pictorial techniques which have encouraged a more objectifying vision of landscape and the reification of particular ways of experiencing nature, Green is able to repudiate the more conventional view of art as text and connect his analysis with a more anthropological acknowledgement of a dialectic between experience and representation.

The vision of a dynamic human-environmental interaction is central to Peter Gow's chapter on Amazonia, in which he examines an engagement between people and land which is so densely mediated that it makes more 'distanced' forms of representation redundant. In describing the various dimensions of this engagement, Gow highlights the spatial and temporal complexity of relations with land and notes how continuity is

provided by particular cultural forms, such as the conflation of ideas of kinship and land and the location of spiritual beings in the landscape.

Maurice Bloch, in his chapter, similarly focuses on the temporal continuity provided by the location of human identity in the land. Observing his informants' desire to 'make a mark', Bloch explores Zafiminy aesthetics and their influence on the various symbolic and physical transformations of the landscape in the spatial ordering of houses and megaliths.

Identity is also a key theme in Christopher Pinney's analysis of popular Indian representations of landscape. These, he suggests, provide a medium in which the conflicting values of traditional folk models of the past and aspirations towards a modern national identity are negotiated. The issue of national identity is developed in a somewhat different way by Tom Selwyn, who presents landscape as a 'potent metaphor' in the creation of modern Israel and its concepts of what is internal and external to that identity. Relations with (and representations of) the land encompass several key themes: modern political nationalism, with its themes of liberation and redemption; and visions of the 'nature' which, in the late twentieth century, resanctify the land and underline the more traditional aspects of Jewish identity. Despite this 'sanctification' of the landscape, however, human agency remains paramount.

This is not the case in Caroline Humphrey's description of relations with land in Mongolia, where 'chiefly' and 'shamanistic' landscapes offer a range of political and religious potentialities. The landscape and its representations permit an articulation between two complementary interactions with the land: the chiefly patrilineal that are conventional in Mongol political organization, and the more lateral and diverse shamanistic agency supported by the myriad spiritual energies of nature. Implicit in the analysis is the issue of gender and the 'masculine' and 'feminine' ideals associated with these interactions with the land.

A dialectic between concepts of 'inside' and 'outside' recurs in Christine Toren's analysis of Fijian landscapes, in which narrative forms enable a cohesion between the ancestral *mana* held within the land and the wider spatio-temporal frame imposed by colonial Christianity. Toren notes that Fijian identity is intensely rooted in the land, to the extent that 'people are the land's very substance' (p. 164), but the dynamic nature of this relationship nevertheless permits the encompassment of 'outside' practices and beliefs.

Few relationships with the land are as intimate as that of the Yolngu of Australia, whose use of land is described by Howard Morphy. In contrast to the more 'objectified' European landscapes, the Yolngu 'totemic landscape' provides a central medium for all socio-cultural forms: social and spatial organization, cosmological beliefs and practices, moral order, and the economic management of a people and resources. As Morphy points out (p. 186), the ancestral past is 'part of the core structure of Aboriginal society' and, being held within the land, ensures that the landscape is integral to the intergenerational transmission of social forms. Morphy presents a triadic relationship between individual, ancestral past and present world, in doing so focusing on the wider question of structure and action, and the interaction between 'dreaming' and the reproduction of Aboriginal society.

In his chapter about the Western Desert of Australia, Robert Layton notes considerable differences in relations with land. Flexibility and fluidity are key adaptive mech-

anisms in this ecologically much harsher region. Nevertheless, the landscape is still the major repository of meaning, and people inhabit both land and myth to the extent that neither can readily be internalized as objective categories. In stressing this internal dynamic and the particular discourse through which it is represented, Layton underlines the land as cultural process.

In the final chapter of the book, Alfred Gell explores language and landscape, arguing that there is a definable relationship between the cultural factors shaping certain languages and the particular languages in which they are spoken. Gell illustrates this argument through an examination of Umeda oral representations of landscape in the forests of New Guinea, where, he suggests, a poetic form of language has been maintained because 'the primary forest environment imposes a reorganization of sensibility...which gives pride of place to the auditory sense' (p. 235). Gell's unapologetically environmentally deterministic view of ethno-poetics allows the book to conclude on an important point, namely that cultural theories, rather than being centred on 'absolutes and essences', need to be anchored in the specifics of location, technology and life-style.

The many different 'landscapes' described in this thoughtfully organized, complex and well-written collection of essays illustrate the critical part landscape plays in considering even the most abstract theoretical debates. The book is therefore also a useful journey to some of the important issues in the cultural landscape of anthropology itself.

VERONICA STRANG

PETER RIGBY, *African Images: Racism and the End of Anthropology*, Oxford: Berg 1996. x, 118 pp. Appendix, Bibliography, Index. £24.95/£12.95.

Rigby, a professor of anthropology at Moi University, Kenya, offers a short examination of race and racism which serves as a much-needed critique of a contemporary Western rationalization of racism as an insidious ideology of oppression that, at least according to Rigby, has only been around as long as global capitalist expansion. The subtitle is a subtle play on words which ominously invokes the demise of a discipline charged with aiding the propagation of racist ideas, especially about Africa and Africans, as well as calls for a redirection in the express purpose or chief 'end' of anthropology to address the hegemonic use of race through an overtly Marxist marriage of theory and practice.

The first of three parts of Rigby's book deals with the historical construction of race and some theorizing about its ideological roots. Rigby begins with a thorough critique of James Q. Wilson, a contemporary intellectual who has written much on the issue of poverty and race in the United States. Wilson uses the Victorian era as his base line of social normality, crediting contemporary social ills to the decline of moral habituation which is most noticeable among the Black urban poor in the USA. Rigby criticizes Wilson's view as ignorant not only of the affects of contemporary racist politics, but also of the large-scale oppression of colonized people during the Victorian

era. This critique leads to an analysis of that era, and the rapid growth of capitalism which preceded and sustained it, as the seed-bed of racism as an ideology of oppression. Positioning Haiti as the quintessential case-study in the global rationalization of racism, Rigby convincingly argues that racism was not only invented by capitalism, it was desperately needed in order to rationalize the large-scale subjugation of populations to satisfy the demand for labour. Haiti, the first independent 'Black Republic' in the western hemisphere, became the whipping-boy of colonial powers in what Rigby views as a desperate attempt to maintain the hierarchical division of races.

In the first part, Rigby goes on to detail the emergence of race as a concept and racism as the implementation of that concept in a hegemonic agenda linked to capitalist expansion. Citing the early expositors of 'race' and the division of sub-species of humans, Rigby highlights the correspondences between the explicitly offensive language of early socio-biological writing and the more subtle claims of contemporary research. Focusing on the theory of r/K selection, Rigby demonstrates the propensity of modern research to apply the inter-species continuum of evolutionary advancement to an intra-species comparison of Oriental, White and Black humans (usually in that descending order). He concludes that the maintenance of racist ideology in social science, political theory and social policy is due in part to a contemporary insecurity within the 'capitalist class' which inspires a need to rationalize oppression in a way similar to that found in the nineteenth century. In his own words, 'it is *only* in social formations in which knowledge is trapped by assumptions of the autonomous individual subject so characteristic of bourgeois capitalism that such a scientific racism and devaluation...of the "Black Other" can come about' (p. 39).

The second part of Rigby's work focuses more specifically on the role of anthropology in this critique of racism and, by implication, capitalism. Rigby claims the question is not merely: 'What was anthropology's role in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries' phase of racist and imperialist ideology', but also: 'What is anthropology's role *now* in either promoting or combating racist thinking and practices?' (p. 54). Rigby's answers to these questions are clear and indicting. For Rigby, anthropology as an early science participated in the construction of racial myths which contributed to the hegemonic agenda of colonial and capitalist powers: it therefore, must be held '*politically responsible*' (p. 70). His treatment of anthropology's role today concludes that it has not gone far enough in its critique of the persistence of imperialism, especially as it affects its own presuppositions. Citing recent ethnographic work among the Maasai by Western anthropologists, Rigby decries the lack of a critical, reflexive theorization of indigenous epistemologies.

The final part of Rigby's book, the 'theoretical coda', addresses what he views as anthropology's political responsibility to combat racism. Rigby argues for a Marxist anthropology as the only viable means to this end, citing three levels on which its praxis must be manifest: (1) an 'objective' contextualization of societies or communities under study; (2) a critical theory of the production of knowledge; and (3) 'the political praxis which combines the first two with heightened awareness and political mobilization' (p. 97).

If nothing else, Rigby's compact analysis of Western intellectualism and its construction of race and racism serves as a shining example of the ethnographic 'Other' turning the pen on the imperialist in a well-researched and insightfully reasoned

critique of Western thought. Rigby perhaps overstates his case that non-capitalist societies, which exemplify 'fully dialectical forms of knowledge', simply cannot produce racism or the devaluation of the 'Black Other' (p. 39-40). The devaluation of certain socially defined groups is not the sole provenance of bourgeois capitalism, whether the justification be regarded as racial, religious or any other socially constructed distinction. In fairness, Rigby is dealing specifically with social division based on race, and his analysis of its historical development remains convincing and thought-provoking. However, his rallying cry for anthropologists to embrace a Marxist *political* agenda in the struggle against racism undervalues other approaches to the issue which could prove equally, if not more, effective. Although he criticizes such 'bourgeois problematics' (p. 97) as post-modernist discourse and interpretative anthropology, these modes of thought have done much to move anthropology and other disciplines into a position to criticize racism. Moreover, Rigby's claim that 'class analysis remains the work of a few dedicated but increasingly isolated anthropologists' seems also to overstate the case. Class analysis dominates the anthropological literature of Latin America and the Caribbean on which much of Rigby's research focuses as exemplified in the work of Peter Wilson, Philippe Bourgois and Eric Wolf, the latter of whom was recently elected to the Academy of Sciences in the United States. These overstatements are perhaps forgivable if one recognizes the undeniable need for a concerted effort in social science to redress its participation in the construction of racial categories through a sustained critique of its use as a justification for ideological oppression. This is Rigby's point, and it is a point well taken.

RUSSELL LEIGH SHARMAN

FISCHER, MICHAEL D., *Applications in Computing for Social Anthropologists* (ASA Research Methods in Social Anthropology), London: Routledge 1994. 233 pp. Bibliography, Index. £37.50/£13.99.

This is a challenging attempt to write an impossible book. I have found it instructive to read and to work out why I find so much of it so misguided. To explain why this is so leads to some broad reflections about the relation of computers and other technology to anthropology. I hasten to add that the problems I shall outline are broad ones, and no fault lies at the feet of Fischer himself. The book is written with endearing touches of humour, although a reader without much computing knowledge would be daunted by the terminology used in some sections. This betrays an uncertainty about the intended reader, a point to which I return below. Fischer's stated principles (pp. 64-5) are such that we can only agree:

Our most important goal in using computers as a tool of research must be to do better anthropology and not simply more. If you are satisfied with the state of ethnographic research, there is little purpose for introducing the additional cost and time for learning. The best way to introduce computing into our research is to first

replicate what we have done before, but greater benefits will come when computers are used to do things we could not do before, not only for the amount of time these would have involved but because these could not easily have been conceptualized prior to the opportunities the computer as a tool can facilitate.

It is likely that the earlier chapters will be of the greatest interest to most readers. After giving some background, Fischer outlines basic ideas about the sorts of ways that computers can be used by social anthropologists: to manage and help analyse field data in all its manifold forms. Hence he covers processing fieldnotes and the use of graphics and video before continuing to tackle the issue of kinship data, which is taken as an example of the way that building a model that a computer can understand both obliges one to be clear and rigorous (qualities increasingly rare in anthropology) as well as providing a means of checking the analysis by comparing the model with the 'reality observed'. I should note that the inverted commas of the last phrase hold good no matter what stance one takes to the social construction of reality (which itself is a subject suitable for computer-assisted research). The final chapter looks at the way that 'expert-systems' can provide models of social processes and systems such as the way that marriage choices are made (to take Fischer's example).

Michael Fischer was a professional programmer before becoming an anthropologist. Such changes are not uncommon in a discipline that celebrates heterodoxy. Leach trained as an engineer, Fortes was a psychologist. Unlike these exalted predecessors, Fischer—in this book, if not in his other publications—risks the charge of evangelism. Are computers the answer to many (any?) anthropological problems? The problems that they certainly can answer are those problems that are common to all academics and researchers. It is reasonable to charge anyone attempting to write seriously entirely in longhand of being foolhardy, if not downright unprofessional, to neglect word-processors. Similarly, to manage bibliographies on file cards is foolhardy when bibliographic management programmes both do it better and allow both searching among the items of a bibliography and the (relatively) painless generation of consistently formatted bibliographies. Unfortunately, Fischer, for all the best reasons, attempts to consider only specifically anthropological computer applications. He therefore scarcely mentions bibliographic management, for all the constant niggle it poses (in the absence of computers) for routine anthropological work.

Still more curious is the omission of any mention of dealing with phonetic characters and 'non-standard' alphabets. I suspect that this may be because the problems have been solved. But although there are now standard and easily accessible solutions, people still need to be told that for users of MS Windows and Macintoshes at least it is easy to use IPA, Arabic or other character sets. Once installed in the system, the fonts are available in any application—be it word-processor, database or drawing programme. For anthropologists this is a small revolution, but one that should be celebrated rather than ignored. It is probably more of interest to 'mainstream' anthropologists (however that is understood) than some of the topics discussed by Fischer.

A final omission is a discussion of the Data Protection Act and other similar legislation elsewhere, although it is alluded to once (on p. 62). The application of the Data Protection Act to anthropological data is one of the great undiscussed minefields

that may beset British social anthropology. A research methods primer such as this should have been the place to enter into such issues.

My greatest concern lies in Fischer's belief that it would be a good thing for anthropologists personally to know how to do computing programming—indeed, that in order to use computers efficiently we should be, in part, programmers. For example, on page 57 he quotes with approval the view that 'Writing software and not just being a consumer of software is feasible and necessary if the full potential of the microcomputer for anthropological research is to be realized'. The same sentiment is endorsed later in the book, at p. 147. However, when discussing the details of handling genealogical data and the problems of making computers draw genealogical diagrams, he often talks of anthropologists and their 'programming partners'. Even this position, in which anthropologists are seen to collaborate closely with programmers, will be off-putting to many technophobic anthropologists. Sadly, I fear that as long as attitudes such as Fischer's prevail, computing will remain marginal to most anthropologists—at least in the UK, where professional innumeracy and technophobia appears to be the norm. Be that as it may, Fischer in these passages reveals an attitude to computer use that I disagree with. 'Programmers program, anthropologists anthropologize' sums up my own position. The use of computers, just like the use of cameras, requires us to use a technology and to gain a certain competence in it. The anthropological use of photography does not require that we must develop and print our photographs, although some background knowledge about the processes could be very helpful if not essential (on the other hand I would agree that knowledge of the ideological background to photographs and computers *is* essential).

Returning to computers, I would encourage anthropologists to use them to their limits: customise remorselessly, turn the instructions on their head, learn the use of scripting and macro programs by all means—but draw the line at programming (in its (increasingly old-fashioned) meaning of the use of specialised and highly formalised languages to create applications from scratch). Quite simply, it is time wasted. If you really cannot find an existing application to do what you want it is better to do more searching: send electronic mail to discussion lists, ask a wide variety of people, or even as a last resort find a tame computer programmer—rather than try and learn to programme oneself. Fischer is misled by his background. Since he trained first in computer science it is easy for him to solve a problem by recourse to programming. For the rest of us, the time is better spent doing anthropology. Lest this be taken as endorsing a technophobic position, let me reiterate my enthusiasm for portable word processors with auto-delete facilities (such as pencils) and other innovative technologies that can help us do more research better, and types of research that we could barely conceive but scarcely realise. The micro-analysis of conversation is the clearest example of the latter. Without a form of voice recording, conversational analysis is simply impossible. Malinowski had to record texts by having them dictated to him slowly for immediate transcription. This considerably affected the material he was able to record and to analyse. Once upon a time, people sketched ideas in wax before transferring them to a more permanent medium (recall the view that Herodotus is among the first anthropologists). Technologies, as they become available, can open new possibilities in research—photography, sound, and now video recording are clear examples. Computers, oddly, are not so easily accommodated in this sort of techno-

logical determinism. The results of research can be better presented—the standard of presentation of recent doctorates has improved whatever one may think about their intellectual merit. Examiners reflect this by being less tolerant of mistakes in spelling and bibliography. But has research itself—the questions asked and the sorts of answers admitted—have these been changed by the use of computers? Personally, I would venture a hesitant yes, but it is far from clear-cut. The case is best put in the context of simulations, which are discussed in Fischer's final chapter. Computer simulations allow us to consider the complex interactions between (for example) demography and marriage preferences and the kinship structures that result. For all that the ethnographic record presents us with a 'natural laboratory', simulation permits the systematic alteration of variables and helps understand some of the patterns seen on the ground. Sociological and historical questions may then be attempted to explain the rest of the pattern. Other than that, we enter too vague an area between quality and quantity. Computers can enable us to deal consistently and systematically with a wider scope than before. Quite simply, we can analyse more cases. Most of the analysis that Fischer discusses can, as he admits, be performed by hand. But performing the calculations and sorting on paper (using what Fischer calls CBIT—Cellulose Based Information Technology (p. 71)) imposes practical limits of size and complexity of data. The use of computers changes those limits and allows new scales of analysis that permit quite new questions—one can be demonstrably systematic in consideration of a wider range of material. That is, I believe, an unquestionably good thing. Furthermore, as Fischer himself points out (p. 137), 'A clear conceptual model of the material is necessary for any analysis traditionally or computer based. The first step in computer-assisted analysis is a clear development of the structural scheme we apply to a body of data.'

This book covers some of the same ground as the collection edited by Margaret Boone and John Wood (*Computer Applications for Social Anthropologists*, Belmont, CA: Wadsworth 1992). The latter book contains essays that touch on computers in a variety of ways, ranging from the social anthropological study of the introduction of computers in an office, to kinship and the use of expert systems. Now although there is a strong case to be made for anthropological studies of offices and other such institutions, there is nothing intrinsically different about the introduction of computers. Any social historian can cite plenty of cases of social change (at the small scale at the very least) following the introduction of new technology. Unlike Fischer, the contributors go into detail about the use of existing applications, some of which already seem 'old hat'. To avoid just that problem Fischer restricts himself to discussions of anthropological types of problem and the types of solution that are possible. Hardware and the software for it change too fast for a printed book to remain current. As a solution one can connect via networks to electronic discussion lists and bulletin boards such as are maintained at the University of Kent, Canterbury. At the end of the book (p. 212) there is mention of this, and Fischer says that reviews of current technology can be found there. Instructions for connection are given. In mid-April 1994, shortly after the book was published, I followed these instructions and successfully connected (using FTP) to the Kent anthropology server. Unfortunately, the directory 'reviews' mentioned in Fischer's book was not there. Connecting to the same server using a different protocol (Gopher) revealed the directory in question, but it contained no reviews. By September 1995 the main server had changed to using the WWW protocol, and there was a lot more content, including listings of programmes that could be obtained from

Kent. There was no listing, however, of the reviews such as Boone and Wood, or the more recent work by M. B. Miles and E. A. Weitzman (*Computer Programs for Qualitative Data Analysis*, London: Sage 1995). The danger is that by writing something that will not go out of date in the way that these latter references surely will, Fischer has failed to give enough guidance to interested readers. Readers who are happy using newsgroups and WWW will be able to locate the information, but already only the converted will hear the message. The challenge for a computer enthusiast lies in setting up a service or making something work (more or less). Maintaining a service once it has been established, and ensuring that there is content within the structure, is a more routine challenge of a different type to those that Michael Fischer finds attractive. As this example shows, *both* must be addressed for a satisfactory result to be achieved.

DAVID ZEITLYN

BORN, G. *Rationalizing Culture: IRCAM, Boulez, and the Institutionalization of the Musical Avant-Garde*, London: University of California Press 1995. xv, 390 pp. £45.00/ £14.95.

Born's preface rehearses her own musicological autobiography—which leads me to a not completely irrelevant autobiographical introduction: on Tuesday evenings in the late 1970s at the Fisher Hall in Cambridge, a variety of small bands used to play. One of my enduring memories from that time is of a concert by Henry Cow, during which Fred Frith, his trousers rolled above his knees, inflated a plastic duck and threw it at the audience. This legacy re-emerges at points of this book, and is a fragile link between this reviewer and Dr Born, for she is a practising member of the avant-garde contemporary music scene with links to Henry Cow as well as being an anthropologist. At times her 'other' identity as a bass guitarist became critical during her field research beneath the Pompidou centre at IRCAM—the centre for computer music research created by Pierre Boulez. Indeed, his charisma and the search for successors is an enduring theme of the ethnography. The parallels with the routinisation of millenarian movements showing the enduring relevance of Weber's analysis are lovingly explored. Boulez hates commercial music so those at IRCAM who, heretically, may have international reputations as, for example, free-form jazz players, funk record producers, or even rock bass guitar players, actively strive to hide, deny or play down these identities while 'in the office' or at least during working hours. The slow discovery that the ethnographer too had other musical identities was one of the steps to her acceptance by some of the IRCAM staff.

Working in such a small but internationally prominent community makes it hard to disguise informants. Boulez himself cannot be disguised and I suspect that anyone knowledgeable in computer music would quickly be able to identify the actors who Born refers to by initials only. But Born explores the individuals in order to transcend them—this is a resolutely anthropological analysis seeking to explore ways in which

larger socio-cultural themes constrain, influence and are constituted by the organization of a high-profile Cultural (with a capital C) institution based in the centre of a European capital city which prides itself on its artistic prowess.

Bourdieu and Foucault, together with ideas culled from Kleinian psychoanalysis, form the theoretical lynchpins of her analysis. She shows how notions of 'splitting' taken from Klein can help understand patterns of structured contrasts: the 'anti-discourse' of commercial music at IRCAM—it was the unspeakable, contrasting with the acknowledged enemy of postmodernism in contemporary 'serious' music, which was perceived as a rejection of the 'serialism' with which Boulez is firmly identified. In structuralist terms she contrasts A: -A with A: B, i.e. contraries vs. absolute difference.

With the theoretical position delimited we are introduced to the complexities of the ethnography of IRCAM. One of the delights of this book is the examination of the way that computer programmers revel in the particularities of their creations which are never finished and hence never documented. Only verbal introductions enable a neophyte to begin to use the software—so social mediation becomes a critical element in the use of these supposedly asocial machines. And with this goes social structure. Innovative hardware could only be used by 'God' (as Boulez was referred to by IRCAM staff) or his chosen ones. Those not in favour were messing around with small personal computers and synthesizers which were just becoming widely distributed in 1984, the year of the main fieldwork.

Born gives accounts of how the patterns of social relationship at IRCAM relates to patterns of computer use and development, which in turn relates to and is affected by wider issues. The role of a commercial firm in developing some IRCAM hardware is a good example—some IRCAM staff including those centrally involved in the project were opposed to the military involvement of the commercial partners so did not co-operate. The hardware has now been overtaken by other developments in music synthesis, and the project languishes.

The theoretical framework allows us to transcend the individuals involved to appreciate the patterns and interconnections between the cultural creation of High Art and social structure as well as between social relationships and the use of complex machines such as computers.

DAVID ZEITLYN

JEREMY MACCLANCY and CHRIS MACDONAUGH (eds.), *Popularizing Anthropology*, London and New York: Routledge 1996. xi, 244 pp., Index. £45.00/£14.99.

There has long been disquiet in academic anthropology at the idea of popularizing the subject, that is to say, at any manifestation of a desire to simplify in order to reach a wider audience, whether a general public desirous of cheap titillation or what might be called the interested, and generally quite positivist, layman. As Jeremy MacClancy points out in his substantial introduction to the present volume, this tendency was less marked in the nineteenth century than it has been in the post-Malinowskian period (this

despite the somewhat lurid titles Malinowski felt obliged to give his own monographs). The result has been to marginalize those anthropologists, like Margaret Mead in mid-century and Nigel Barley more recently, who have tailored the ways they write in order to reach a broader audience. The latter in particular is frequently accused of generating precisely the kinds of stereotype that mainstream anthropology regards it as its principal task to deconstruct and in many cases eradicate (these figures are dealt with respectively by William Mitchell and MacClancy). But there is still often no hard-and-fast line between the popular and the arcane. In her chapter, Wendy James discusses the pitfalls of negotiating this divide and the way shaky positions can be perpetuated by not doing so successfully. As Alan Campbell makes clear, this is aggravated by the fact that there is actually a certain market for the arcane itself, to which he traces much of the popularity of ostensible intellectual heavyweights like Pierre Bourdieu and Claude Lévi-Strauss. Although to Campbell they appear more as bantam-weights, their experience reminds us that evading popularity can be as difficult as seeking it. There are also plenty of figures who fall between the two extremes, such as Napoleon Chagnon and Marvin Harris, as well as others who have practically disappeared off the end, like Colin Turnbull and Carlos Casteneda.

One author of a more popular book, Philip Descola, is represented directly describing his reasons for and experience of writing *Les lances du crépuscule* (Paris: Plon 1994). Dominique Casajus, writing about the popular reception of Lévi-Strauss and Louis Dumont in France, reminds us that the situation is somewhat different there than in Britain or America, with even relatively recondite anthropological works being reviewed in French dailies (both chapters appear in McDonough's skilful translation). In other chapters, Joy Hendry traces the reception of Ruth Benedict's *The Chrysanthemum and the Sword* (originally published in 1946), Jonathan Benthall writes about the genesis of *Anthropology Today* as a topical newsletter of the Royal Anthropological Institute (of which he is director), and Howard Morphy compares the work and reception of Bill Harney and Bruce Chatwin as popular writers on Australian Aborigines. Judith Okely addresses the gender issue, drawing attention not only to the conventional imbalance between female-dominated student bodies and male-dominated staff in anthropology but also the way in which the unguided anthropological work of a lay female can actually end up supporting a patriarchal model of the way Western society works. Finally, in his own essay, MacClancy compares the work of Laura Bohannan, Nigel Barley and Katy Gardner as writers concentrating on their own experiences of and reactions to fieldwork and to their informants, though they have little enough else in common. In sum, the book draws timely attention to the issue of popularization, which in the postmodern era is beginning to lose a lot of its taboos.

ROBERT PARKIN

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