

BOOK REVIEWS

BRIAN MOERAN, *Lost Innocence: Folk Craft Potters of Onta, Japan*, Berkeley etc.: University of California Press 1984. xvi, 233pp., Bibliography, Index, Plates, Figures, Tables. £28.50.

BRIAN MOERAN, *Okubo Diary: Portrait of a Japanese Valley*, Stanford: Stanford University Press 1985. xii, 258pp., Sources. \$28.50.

Within a year, Brian Moeran has published two very different books about a rural valley in the south of Japan. The first is what he describes as the 'anthropological knitting' of his doctoral thesis, a fascinating account of the effects of the 'folk boom' of the wider industrialized world on people who continue to produce the crafts of their forebears. The second is an equally fascinating account of the effect of the life of the rural valley on the anthropologist from the wider industrialized world.

Lost Innocence opens with an apology to both anthropologists and potters that each will have to 'wade through' information that is likely to be of greater interest to the others, but the ethnography of the potting community concerned here is set in a well-tried and clearly stated anthropological framework relating social organisation to ecological constraints. Moeran also brings a global perspective to this small community of Japanese potters by using their case to formulate a general hypothesis about the development of folk art in any highly urbanised and rapidly industrializing society.

It should perhaps be said at once that the community was not selected at random. It had been visited in 1931 by the founder of a Japanese folk-craft movement, who had happened to find, fifty kilometres away, a teapot which accorded with his ideal of beauty and was made in the village. Twenty-three years later, the English potter Bernard Leach spent a period of twenty days in the village - by then rather well known - studying various techniques of decoration. A chance meeting, another twenty years later, between the author and Leach inspired the fieldwork on which this book is based, and Moeran has chosen the time of Leach's visit as a base line from which to examine changes in social organisation, which he relates to the folk craft movement.

The subsequent analysis is built around the paradox that the folk-craft movement has itself been responsible for breaking up the social and moral order which it saw as an essential basis for the

production of the crafts it valued. The Japanese case is presented in the context of folk art in Europe and elsewhere, and the characteristics which define it are similar. The craftsmen should be using natural materials and traditional methods to create functional objects. They should also work cooperatively, without regard for individual fame or financial gain.

Moeran's community has now been visited by hundreds of thousands of tourists, the potters have become comfortably well-off, and individuals among them have won prizes and national and international renown. They have refrained from introducing much in the way of modern technology, for they too understand the reasons why their crafts are valued, and they try to present a cooperative image to the outside world. Moeran's thesis, however, is that the environmental changes and improved economic conditions which have come with the 'boom' in folk craft, as well as other changes in Japanese society, have led to the breakdown of community solidarity and the emergence of individualism. These changes are seen by the leaders of the movement to have given rise to a deterioration in the quality of the pottery.

Moeran briefly describes family and community relations of Japanese rural villages more generally, and relates the specific case of the Onta potting community to the ecological constraints of the valley and its resources. He first presents a projected account of the community at the time it was visited by Bernard Leach, and then proceeds to describe the process of change which has taken place since that time. He notes that the earlier account is an idealised one which presents the 'good old days' for both the potters and the folk-craft movement, but he also expresses his belief that the model he presents is 'by and large, a fair reflection of community life' (p.122).

This is an important assumption, because the potters still describe themselves as cooperative, as 'doing everything together'; but Moeran is able to show, from his own experience during field-work, that they do not. Moreover, he can relate disputes which have arisen among the potters, and between the potters and the non-potters of the community, to changes which have arisen because of the demands of the outside world for their wares. In particular, for example, a cooperative kiln which ensured that everybody worked at the same pace has been supplemented by several private kilns, so that some families have been able to grow richer than others. Nevertheless, Moeran goes on to describe how there is considerable resistance and disapproval in the community at large to these signs of individual and household differences and also, for example, to the pressure from the wider world for individual potters to sign their names to their work. He suggests that residents turn nostalgically to the concept of 'tradition' in an attempt to maintain the social order which is in fact breaking down.

However, despite Moeran's stated aim of showing that community solidarity is giving way to individualism, he seems to fall short of demonstrating that this is the case. There have certainly been changes which may be compared with those experienced by potters and other craftsmen elsewhere, but there is no very clear evidence that individual interests are being allowed to prevail ultimately over

those of the community. Nor is there any evidence that there were not disputes, differences and resentments among individuals and households in the 'good old days' just as there are now. Another small weakness, in my view, is the way specific aspects of the ecology of this community are used to explain features of social organisation which are commonly found in the area. If more comparison were made with changes in other Japanese communities over the same period, I suspect that the potting community would be found to be little different, despite being singled out for so much special attention.

As it turns out, this is quite appropriate, for after a final chapter comparing the aesthetic values of the artists, buyers and folk-craft leaders, Moeran finally comes to the conclusion that the aesthetic ideals of the folk-craft movement are 'no more and no less than prescriptions for the organization of Japanese society' (p.217). Just as the Onta potters make use of the idea of tradition to protect their community from many of the outside influences upsetting their social organisation, so the Japanese as a whole have gone back to their traditional arts in order to preserve a national identity in the face of cultural innovations from the West.

In view of the initial paradox that the folk movement is destroying the very community system it sets out to preserve, the question is implicitly raised of how long and how far this and indeed any national identity will survive. Moeran is rather pessimistic, but his pessimism is perhaps based more on intuition than on the evidence presented here. In a few paragraphs, it is impossible to do justice to the whole argument, which also concerns itself with the wider question of what art is, and whether it is defined in the same way by different people associated with it. I can only suggest that the reader examine the evidence of this extraordinary Japanese case for him- or herself.

In contrast to the neat theoretical approach of *Lost Innocence*, the second of these books, *Okubo Diary*, is presented to the reader as something of a challenge to the author's perception of the subject he practises. In this, it falls neatly into the genre of self-analytical literature which is gathering on library shelves to accompany the more orthodox monographs for which social anthropology has become known. In the introduction, Moeran refers briefly to some of the other contributions to this species and the problems they raise about 'the dialogue between self and other' and the related idea of participant observation.

In Moeran's case, as the book eventually reveals, the problem is compounded considerably by the fact that he is more than a temporary participant observer. With a Japanese wife and two children born in Japan, he has committed himself on a long-term basis to a culture he ultimately finds impossible to accept. He also spends at least a portion of his time in the field, a country valley almost as alien to his previously urban family as to himself, determined to buy a house a few kilometres from the potting community and settle permanently in the area. This decision seems to have an interesting effect on the local inhabitants. To be sure,

the subsequent negotiations, which he describes in some detail, are most revealing of local customs and social mores, but they also bring out Moeran's own inability to conform to them completely.

Until that time, throughout the long first of three chapters, Moeran presents himself, almost in a tone of self-justification, as fitting in well with the local community. He makes clear that his use of Japanese is not a problem: indeed, the book opens with musings on the charm of the local dialect. He also uses reported speech to record long passages of discussion about local customs, political views and negotiations, where necessary providing extra information about non-verbalised cues. He furnishes the reader with considerable detail of his participation in the work of pott- ing, as well as many other local activities, more often than not accompanied by a good deal of hard drinking. This last interaction he sees as particularly important for getting through to the 'real feelings' people hide when sober.

Throughout the book, there is a wealth of ethnographic information, including detail about decision-making, gossip as a social sanction, the role of kin and neighbourly relations, the strength of women in supposedly male preserves, and specific events such as a funeral, a wedding, a fire, and the two major festivals of New Year: in the winter, and Obon, when the ancestors return in the summer. Much of the explanation is put into the mouths of (fictitiously) named informants, who also make comments on their ways in the light of wider knowledge of the world and their developing relationships with the author.

The second chapter pursues these relationships further and begins to dwell more on the author's difficulties and conflicts of interest and values, brought sharply into focus as the deal over his house and land falls through, but made particularly poignant in the third chapter when a swimming accident brings his son close to death. The reaction of the local authorities to this last event, often personalised through kin ties, tries the author's patience with local custom to its breaking point, and he eventually comes down on the side of his own principles. This decision is not taken lightly, however, and the book offers us a rare opportunity to share with one anthropologist the kinds of experience we must surely all have nightmares about.

However, the particular circumstances of Moeran's case must make it less than ideal for assessing the foundations of the subject, even if it throws into stark clarity the risks we take when we up-and-off to immerse ourselves in the lives of our chosen people. Instead, it perhaps raises questions about just how far we should become personally involved in the second world of which we become such an integral part.

In his introduction, Moeran also raises the perennial problem of how to translate from one culture to another. He reports a growing conviction that 'the only way to write sensitive interpretations of other cultures is to write in the style of the people we study'. He has thus chosen a Japanese literary style in which the 'essence of communication rests not so much in what is said as in what is left unsaid'. At the end of the introduction, he therefore

withdraws to leave his readers to create their own discourse with the people of the Oni valley, and indeed with himself. He suggests that the meaning of anthropology might be found in 'these creative interstices between the words'. Charming though the ensuing style may be, punctuated as it is with Japanese literary quotations, it would, I fear, make our subject totally redundant if we were able to understand the unsaid of Japanese literature without any further help. Still, perhaps that is the unsaid idea of the last sentence.

JOY HENDRY

JUDITH LYNNE HANNA, *The Performer-Audience Connection: Emotion to Metaphor in Dance and Society*, Austin: University of Texas Press 1983. x, 242pp., Appendix, References, Index, Photographs. \$25.00/\$9.95.

The power of dance and movement to excite and provoke the emotions, to 'intensify heated sentiments', has long been recognised. Philosophers, choreographers and dancers, especially in the late nineteenth and twentieth centuries, have discussed the emotional significance of movement and the conveyance of feeling in all forms and styles of dance.

In this century, in the West, dance as an art form has been greatly influenced by the conscious use of feeling and emotion. Emotional states provide a stimulus or starting point for choreographers and performers. From another standpoint, many people, including anthropologists, philosophers and students of dance, study non-verbal communication or body language. The way human beings use their bodies to communicate with each other is an extensive, complex area of study, especially when considered from cultural and sociological perspectives.

Durkheim acknowledged that emotion is promoted by social interaction and that individual feelings ensure the presence of social processes. The ability of human beings to symbolise and convey emotion through body language means that dance and movement are used universally to communicate and accommodate human interaction. As Judith Hanna observes, 'actions occur on the basis of people constructing meanings in their engagement with each other'.

In her first book *To Dance is Human: A Theory of Non-verbal Communication*, Judith Hanna dealt with the ways in which people communicate ideas and feelings through dance in a vast range of contexts. To have read this first does, I think, help to appreciate the reasons for writing *The Performer-Audience Connection* and also enhances the understanding of its specialist area of study. Few people have investigated how emotion is conveyed during dance,

especially between the performer and the audience in the theatre. Most scholars would agree that it is impossible to identify satisfactorily how this transmission takes place. Certainly all people involved with dance are aware of the enormous problems encountered in the analysis of dance. This is particularly so when trying to elicit a meaning which can be translated satisfactorily into words. Such problems are intensified in the study of the dance of another culture. Interpretation may be difficult for 'natives' to express in words, and impossible for the outsider. Valid or even honest comment may be impossible to obtain with any kind of lucidity. Judith Hanna recognises these problems and was obviously ready to cope with them. However, she does express her own surprise when even the performers, in the same company and in the same dance, expressed differences in what they wished to convey to the audience. This is not to suggest that this discrepancy is unusual or wrong, but it helps to highlight the problems of researching and analysing any art form. The dance may even gain momentum through diverse opinions about interpretation.

Hanna's extensive experience in both anthropology and dance has influenced her methodology, conclusions and comments. It is difficult to think of anyone without such a background attempting a study of this kind. From a comparison of a number of dance forms, she highlights cultural variation in the way emotion is both transmitted to and perceived by an audience. The fieldwork revolved around eight dance programmes which were part of the Smithsonian Institute Division of Performing Arts Dance series. The performances included an American Tap trio, Indian classical dance, Tamiris spiritual, Japanese Kabuki, Kathakali Dance Drama, dances from the Philippines, and an 'avant garde' dance event. In each case, both choreographers and dancers were interviewed in an attempt to gain insight into the performers' intentions and how the dance accomplished the transmission of emotion. Members of the audience were asked to complete questionnaires. An appendix sets out clearly the details of how the survey was conducted and also deals with the many problems of such an undertaking. Hanna recognises that there are problems of reliability when asking people what they feel or perceive, when asking people to talk about the meaning of emotion. Many factors, such as the variation and diversity of the audiences, affect the findings of such a survey. Nature, culture and previous experience influence responses, and there are many dance languages. How the sexes are perceived and how the roles of different groups operate within a society may be issues familiar to the anthropologists, but they are unconscious factors affecting the audience response to dance. There are many conceptual and methodological problems which appear to be insurmountable.

It may seem that a survey in which the results depend on so many variables and uncertainties is of little value. However, by careful planning and by using a system which identifies six most frequently perceived emotions (previously determined) and six most frequently perceived clues to identify each emotion, the resultant questionnaires and responses do maintain a certain consistency and validity. As long as the limitations are recognised, they do not

invalidate the study, and with this view I support Hanna's stand. The strength of the book lies in her comments, discussion and conclusions, developed against the background of her anthropological and dance experience. The introductory chapter and historical survey of the topic provide an interesting and extremely formative background and theoretical base for the practical survey. The introduction, history and discussion of each form of dance, its performers and context is fascinating and informative, even apart from the survey dealing with the transmission of emotion. The summaries in each chapter and of the whole study add to the understanding of the cultural differences in human behaviour, psychological and functional as well as emotional. The final summary does include a number of points which may readily be recognised and seem rather obvious. However, such perceptions and realisations are rarely put into words or contemplated in any depth. Some issues are clarified, while the theoretical analysis provides information and points for discussion in areas of study both inside and outside dance. Although the main issue is the interaction of dancer and audience at the emotional level in the context of dance as an art form, it is possible to see the relevance to other events where dance and movement are involved.

The Performer-Audience Connection should therefore appeal to many people other than students of dance, since the book gives useful insights into an aspect of human communication which might help anthropologists in their analysis and interpretation of human behaviour in a much wider context than dance performance.

SALLY MURPHY.

MARSHALL SAHLINS, *Islands of History*, Chicago and London: University of Chicago Press 1985. xix, 156pp., Figures, Bibliography, Index. £21.50.

These 'islands of history' are five occasional papers - inter-related, though each is sufficient unto itself - fronted by a theoretical Introduction. Their common ground is Polynesian; their most common theme is the connexion between anthropology and history; the whole is typical Sahlins: erudite, polemical, witty, and with too many ideas to be surveyed adequately in a brief review.

He starts with a 'Supplement to the Voyage of Cook', where he claims that the 'loosely structured' societies of Papua New Guinea and those of the modern West and traditional Hawaii have defied anthropological explication. For they have what he calls 'performative' not 'prescriptive' structures. Instead of having clearly delimited groups and compelling rules which prescribe much behaviour, they make relationships out of practice. And in Hawaii they

fabricate them out of sexual practice, a literal "'state of affairs" created by the very acts which signified it'. Dominant value, the persistent pursuit of sex, provides both personal pleasure and practical benefits - economic, political, spiritual. The collective result of these lustful individuals' actions is not a randomly constructed culture. The particular configurations based on the customary relations of men and women, chiefs and people, gods and mortals may alter, but the relations themselves tend not to change. They are the home of structure. Bolstered by the cultural constitution of erotic desire and by Hawaiian *habitus*, 'social system is...constructed out of passion, structure out of sentiment.'

In 'The Stranger-King', Sahlins explores Dumézil's suggestion that Indo-European and Polynesian philosophies of political sovereignty are structurally similar. By comparing Roman, Fijian and Hawaiian material, he shows that an unknown foreigner, one to be feared, both usurps power and is safely culturally absorbed - symbolically he dies and is reborn as a local god. The paper's main methodological point is an attack on the use of tables of binary oppositions and on the idea that core cultural categories are 'ambiguous', 'contradictory', or 'logically unstable'. He argues that these interested formulations reveal only a fraction of a culture's logic; they can too easily be falsified by alternate propositions taken from a different point of view - whether that of player or spectator. The richness and totality of such logics can only be displayed by a diachronic model of structure, one which manifests how categories are generated over time.

In the last chapter, 'Structure and History', Sahlins draws out the consequences of the fact that people act in a world which may resist their world view. Without assurance that empirical reality will behave as predicted, humans gamble their cultural schemes against the world. Life becomes permanent poker. The stakes are raised because people are interested performers, weighting categories differently according to their pragmatically conceived benefit. In this sense cultures become personal inventions, each individually inflected. In trying to solve disjunctions, grounded in historical situations, between world view and the world, cultural categories may be revalued, their interrelationships changed, and so structure transformed. Thus past and present are related to culture, and all three are tied to a specific moment in time and place. 'Real' and 'ideological', 'individual' and 'collective', 'infrastructure' and 'superstructure' collapse as bogus dichotomies. System and event, structure and history are inextricably interlinked. Neither half of each pairing can be ignored.

The chapter on Cook's fatal apotheosis, 'The Dying God', ethnographically illustrates several of Sahlins' contentions, while in the remaining paper, 'Other Times, Other Customs', he claims that different societies have different historicities. In those ordered by 'heroic history', the King has massive historical effect because the system of society inflates the importance of royal action.

Sahlins continues to entertain and provoke. Application of

his ideas to other contexts will test both anthropologists and the ideas themselves. For instance, it will be interesting to see whether the generative development of categories can be traced in other cultures or whether the diachronic model he proposes is but another interested contextualization. Even if (as I suspect) this model proves to be an intellectual *tour de force* which cannot be replicated elsewhere by lesser minds, it is consoling that Sahlins refuses to be boring. His work remains exemplary.

JEREMY MacCLANCY

RICHARD WHITE, *The Roots of Dependency: Subsistence, Environment and Social Change Among the Choctaws, Pawnees and Navahos*, Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press 1983. xix, 404pp., Bibliography, Index. £21.20.

This work is an historical investigation of the impact European and later American market economies and politics have made over the last four hundred years on the economy and society of three Indian groups, the Choctaws, Pawnees and Navahos, whose homelands stretch from the south-west to the south-east of the United States. The productive activities of these groups over this period are seen as increasingly moving away from a subsistence ethos and towards the requirements of a thriving world market. Most of the facts presented by the author purport to support the observation that this historical adjustment has not, on the side of the Indians, been anything short of catastrophic. Exactly what he tries to substantiate in his usage of the term 'dependency' is the dramatic transformation of the Indians' more familiar, manageable, secure and spatially limited social environment to an 'appendage' of the world economy.

Demographic losses, effected either by the epidemic diseases brought by Europeans or by slavery, undermined the viability of Indian society. To avoid these dangers, the Indians had to move to a safer but at the same time more marginal natural environment. Such displacement deprived them of the natural resources they had hitherto exploited, hence the shift in Indian productive activities. The Indians' declining control over the old resources was accompanied by their increasing dependence on European goods, technology and markets. The use of European innovations and technology such as guns, horse-, pig- and cattle-raising and deer- and fur-hunting, combined with organisation and adherence to the exchange rationale, subjugated these basically subsistence economies to the dictates of the European markets. The injection of readily consumable European goods such as alcohol, clothes and food into Indian social reproduction ushered in new social relationships, and not merely because of the new tastes and demands they gave

rise to. These goods were exchanged for Indian political and military services or for products such as deer skins, buffalo hides and beaver pelts. Since Europeans made their technologically superior and socially desirable goods accessible to the Indians through their chiefs, who acted as the agents of exchange, these exchanges led to a tremendous increase in the political power and economic privilege of the latter. Therefore, European expansion strongly stimulated the development of class formation among the Indians.

Under the new conditions brought about by European expansion, the Indians had to seek efficient ways of countering the prevailing threats this expansion posed. It was therefore quite natural that in their efforts to recover their previous security, they turned to the same source that had removed it. 'Only guns could turn back the slavers.' In order to secure the supply of these items, the Indians had to respond positively to the demands made upon them to produce beaver pelts.

The uneven distribution of European goods both within and between Indian groups bestowed upon Indian society a new conflictual dimension. The increased productivity and efficiency of production, as well as the warfare they brought to the Indians, laid the basis for even deeper divisions between them. Among the Pawnees, families without horses 'had to either remain at home or else play a peripheral and less rewarding role in the hunt'. The newly developed conflict was similarly noticeable in relationships between the Pawnees and other Indian groups. They, 'strengthened by the acquisition of horses and guns, preyed upon more isolated peoples'. The unequal availability of these effective means of executing power, and of increased production, and its concomitant and equally distributed privileges among different sections of Indian society were deliberately pursued by the Europeans.

This work should be welcomed, mostly because the author attempts to link the Indians with the worldwide historical processes to which they, as well as non-Indians, belong. As he recognises, this is a promising alternative to the often practised but nonetheless restricted approach to human interactions, with its ecological niches or certain durable, if not permanent features of human cultures and societies. However, there are certain shortcomings in this historical study which distort its otherwise revealing character.

The author seems too preoccupied with abstract totalities to check their assumed uniformity with the concrete differentiation the historical facts display. One particularly important instance is the author's usage of the term 'nation' to describe the Indians throughout the period concerned. Another is his notion of dependency, his usage of this term often being *ad hoc* and tantalizing. He uses the world market as a master key in his study of the increasing domination of the Europeans over the Indians. This may explain why the analytical definition of 'economy', which would have required a much greater scrutiny of this historical process, remains unrecognised in this study.

MANUCHEHR SANADJIAN

VALERIO VALERI, *Kingship and Sacrifice: Ritual and Society in Ancient Hawaii* (transl. Paula Wissing), Chicago and London: The University of Chicago Press 1985. xxviii, 348pp., Notes, Plates, Glossary, References, Tables, Index. £51.25.

Valeri's study can be recommended both to those interested in the ethnography of the Polynesian area and to those who are more interested in theoretical questions concerning the interpretation of ritual in general and of sacrifice in particular. Valeri himself describes his twofold aim as follows:

...the book has two complementary purposes: giving a coherent interpretation of Hawaiian religious ideas (the first one, to my knowledge) and working out a number of theoretical principles for the interpretation of ritual, especially in its interrelation with social practice. (p. x)

As far as the ethnography is concerned, the ritual practices and beliefs he investigates relate to the period before 1820; the main material of the book is therefore taken from literary sources of uneven quality and difficult to assess as to their reliability. Valeri's Introduction discusses the sources on Hawaiian religion: reports from travellers and missionaries, as well as accounts by educated Hawaiians of the nineteenth century who no longer practised the rites in question but who were able to enquire about them among their elders. The structure of the book is determined by the ethnographical problems discussed, while theoretical considerations, for example a most stimulating evaluation of various theories of sacrifice (pp. 62-9), are taken up at various points.

Kingship and Sacrifice is divided into three main parts. Part 1, 'Sacrifice and the Gods', offers a summarizing and systematizing analysis of Hawaiian religious notions and ideas and of the elements of sacrifice and, finally, it explicates fundamental Hawaiian notions governing the relations between human beings and divine powers. Part 2, 'Sacrifice and Hierarchy', investigates the hierarchy of Hawaiian deities and the resulting hierarchical implications of sacrifice, which stands at the centre of Hawaiian religion. The third and most ambitious part of the book is concerned with the 'highest' sacrifice, the one under the direction of the king. In this part especially, the reader will find stimulating ideas concerning both the relationship between political power and ritual functions and a phenomenon which anthropologists have been trying to interpret ever since Frazer first brought it to their attention in 1890: the sacrifice, symbolic or real, of the divine king.

As far as the theoretical approach, or rather approaches, employed by Valeri are concerned one welcomes a 'French' thinker (Valeri, presently teaching at Chicago University, is Italian, but he clearly represents the intellectual tradition of Lévi-Strauss and Dumont, both of whom were his teachers) taking up a subject

which had already attracted the attention of Hubert and Mauss. Valeri attempts to make use of and combine various theories which hitherto have often been regarded as incompatible. With regard to sacrifice alone, Valeri attempts to combine, in his own interpretation of Hawaiian sacrificial ritual, Tylor's theory of sacrifice as a gift with Robertson Smith's theory of sacrifice as a communion, while including aspects of Hubert and Mauss's seminal study on sacrifice and making use of Loisy's and Hocart's views of sacrifice as an efficacious representation. The latter's views, which apparently were developed independently from each other and almost at the same time, find the particular approval of Valeri. In his more general concern with the interpretation of ritual, Valeri claims to be predominantly influenced by Hegel's *Phenomenology*, as well as by the writings of Feuerbach and Marx, and the influence of Nietzschean ideas is also evident. Valeri further acknowledges the influences of Durkheim and of Lévi-Strauss and Dumont. The author skilfully manages to make use of and reconcile these various schools of thought and to apply them to the Hawaiian data. Although an attempt to merge German and French styles of thought is welcome, Valeri sometimes appears to be over-ambitious, and one feels that less might have proved more fruitful. However, those readers who delight in encountering daring but stimulating intellectual ventures, even though these may occasionally transcend the boundaries of what the analysed material itself would allow, will undoubtedly find the book exciting. British readers, who normally (and justifiably) will put great emphasis on the sober presentation of facts rather than on *grand* ideas, may at first be very sceptical about the intellectual enterprise laid out by Valeri in the Preface, but they will be compensated by the rich ethnographic material offered and by its scholarly handling. Moreover, it is good to see that British social anthropological thought appears to represent the intellectual basis of Valeri's study. This is obvious throughout the book, as well as in Valeri dedicating his Conclusion to a critical and long overdue evaluation of Godfrey Lienhardt's interpretation of sacrificial ritual in *Divinity and Experience*.

There are several reasons which make Valeri's study of Hawaiian religion of the utmost interest, and it should find an approving readership among anthropologists working on all kinds of problems and in different ethnographical areas. The book has a comprehensive index, and an extensive bibliography which is worth consulting in its own right.

BURKHARD SCHNEPEL

LOUIS GOLOMB, *An Anthropology of Curing in Multiethnic Thailand*, Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press 1985 [Illinois Studies in Anthropology, no. 15]. xiv, 280pp., Plates, Bibliography, Index. \$23.95.

The broad sweep implied by the title of this book is not reflected in its contents. Golomb's aims are specific and confined to a thorough and interesting investigation of social interaction between two minority groups, Malay Muslims and Thai Buddhists, within the domain of traditional healing. He states that Thai-Buddhist and Malay Muslim curing magic should not be seen as elements of separate sociocultural traditions with exclusive bounded cosmologies but rather as representations of 'a regionwide system of multiethnic strategies for harnessing supernatural power to solve interpersonal and health problems' (p.1).

Golomb sees Western medicine as an important variable for choosing strategies, one which complements traditional practices but does not transform them. Indeed, it may be a source of ethnic pride to reject modern methods. In chapter 1, Golomb shows how the Malays of Pattani resist the introduction of Thai public health services into their area as part of a broader sociocultural reaction to the Thai government's programme for assimilating the Malay minority. Modern medicine is identified with the Thai elite, while supernaturalistic curing ceremonies dramatise ethnic differences and so maintain group solidarity. Additionally, they may be successful where Western medicine is not, because the therapy is patient-centred and offers a pluralistic approach.

According to Golomb, rituals are also the media whereby outside cultural knowledge is introduced. Chapter 7 outlines several reasons why geographically or socially distant practitioners are preferred. Generally, distance is seen to enhance omnipotence. Likewise, ethnic minorities may come to specialise as magical, medical practitioners in traditional plural societies. In parts of central Thailand, the small Muslim majority is considered by the Buddhist-Thai majority to possess more powerful sorcery techniques. The aura of mystery which accompanies the use of a foreign language and techniques, Golomb suggests, is often sufficient to build reputations, particularly in the area of the more magical arts such as love potions and the like.

It comes as no surprise to anthropologists that patients may derive special hope from techniques that are out of the ordinary. Evans-Pritchard noted that all Zande magic tended to be ascribed to outside influences. Golomb takes us to this point with good descriptions of the process of interaction, but why the situation is perpetuated remains unclear. Are these the only terms within which a minority will allow association, or do social or political constraints dictate curing practice as the only viable economic outlet?

Likewise, Golomb writes at considerable length about the perseverance of traditional healing practices in terms of the satisfying functions they perform for cultural transmission and group solidarity, leading to the under-use of scientific medicine, with

its emphasis on treatment rather than explanations. Yet here and there we gain a hint that other factors are at work also. Golomb tells us that in more distant rural areas, where government health stations are poorly equipped, villagers continue to rely on local healers: 'As one travels further away from urban centres, one finds villagers increasingly dependent on supernaturalistic rather than naturalistic therapy' (p.163).

Similarly, Golomb carefully analyses the relationship between the Malay minority's beliefs and their reluctance to use local missionary hospital facilities. But he also mentions that local doctors ascribe the cause of the latter to poverty. While not wishing to under-emphasise the importance of religious beliefs as a critical factor, it might also be necessary to give other more practical considerations commensurate weight if we are to discover why modern facilities continue to be avoided.

Golomb's study appears to have been influenced mainly by the Parsonian tradition and in particular by the work of Clifford Geertz, to whom he makes frequent reference. Consequently there is a tendency to separate culture from social system and to show how people work out their explanations for society by a process of dramatisation of ritualistic incidents, which have the special function of re-orientating patients back to normal behaviour. Seeing culture as dramatized performance is a useful way in which its meaning and specialness may be emphasised, but it is more difficult to say how the framing-off of an event may help us understand the significance of the social whole.

Unfortunately, Golomb offers us little detail concerning methodology which might assist our understanding of the potential range of social variables. He states that he wished to focus first on social life in Muslim communities and then gradually extend his investigations outwards, pursuing interethnic activities into the surrounding Buddhist society. Accordingly, the first part of the book is organised into geographic areas where a description of the history and traditions of the people provides important background to the research. The main body of the material was gathered between March and December 1978 by means of 'hundreds of unstructured interviews'. Meetings with 97 traditional practitioners were established through the recommendations of numerous casual contacts. At each field site, several of the most knowledgeable and cooperative Muslim and Buddhist specialists were chosen for in-depth sessions. As an additional perspective, doctors and nurses at private clinics and hospitals were also interviewed. However, we are not told how any of these interviews was constructed nor how the relatively short field experience of ten months was divided between regions and groups. Such information, perhaps provided as an appendix, would have been a valuable addition to the book; without it, it is hard to see how future cross-cultural analysis may make accurate use of the research.

Golomb adopts a relativist stance when he states 'that Thai and Malay acceptance of magical-animistic explanations is probably as rational as the typical Western layman's acceptance of biochemistry or psychoanalytical theory' (p.110). Nevertheless, the following descriptions of how healers attract clients tend to offer

explanations which relate not so much to an intrinsic rationale but rather to how the gullibility of the clients may be manipulated if the 'curer-magician' fails in his task. Patients may be too embarrassed to admit that the cure has not worked, or blame their own inadequacies, or resign themselves to the futility of all human aid. Coupled with the fact that, according to Golomb, the healers employ many devices to make their products more saleable, the overall impression is of a rather discreditable enterprise. However, the fact cannot be ignored that such services do answer real and particular requirements and continue to flourish for those reasons. As Golomb points out elsewhere, regard for the patient as an individual is frequently lacking in Western medicine, with often damaging results. There is a need for the inclusion of carefully recorded case studies which might help to swing the emphasis from the point of view of the observer to that which is being observed.

Overall, Louis Golomb's study is probably more concerned with multiethnic relations than it is with the anthropology of curing. As such, it provides a useful introduction to a little explored but vital field of research. It is to be hoped that, in the interests of improving ethnic relations, this book will stimulate further study to focus attention on the interface of contact between groups.

LINDA HITCHCOX

CAROL LADERMAN, *Wives and Midwives: Childbirth and Nutrition in Rural Malaysia*, Berkeley etc.: University of California Press 1983. xiv, 246pp., Bibliography, Index. £25.00.

In this detailed ethnographic study of childbirth practices and nutrition among rural Malay women, Carol Laderman demonstrates with admirable clarity how an investigation of food ideology and behaviour can provide the material from which an understanding of symbolic systems may be derived, her account being further enhanced by her description of the empirical realities of the economic and ecological environment in which this particular symbolic system is embedded.

The village and parish of Merchang, in which the study was conducted between 1974 and 1977, is located on the west coast of the Malay peninsula, in the most geographically and politically isolated state of Trengganu. Access was available to both Western medicine and Western-trained midwives as well as indigenous medical practitioners and traditional midwives. Laderman's observations of the differential use of these resources graphically depicts the flexibility of behaviour and the ability to manipulate ideology which the people of Merchang use in order to achieve

their valued ends. While such manipulation has been recognised and described by other anthropologists interested in ethnomedical matters, the concept of behavioural flexibility in the face of apparently strong ideology is not current in the discussion of food behaviour. It is in this area in particular that Laderman's observations and analyses constitute a unique contribution to a subject long neglected in the anthropological literature.

The failure to appreciate the extent to which people can and do manipulate their beliefs in relation to their eating practices can have practical consequences for health, agricultural and development projects and policies. The use and misuse of anthropological data to justify these policies places a particular responsibility on anthropologists to clarify the issues involved. In concentrating on the detailed study of women's nutritional practices in relation to childbirth, Laderman has collected a wealth of ethnographic evidence with which to challenge many of the misconceptions regarding indigenous Malay eating behaviour which are widely held by local health authorities and medical personnel, as well as by international agencies.

Although the focus of the study may appear to be narrow Laderman's achievement lies in her success in integrating two quite different and apparently conflicting approaches: the ethnomedical, which as Laderman points out has been characterised by impressionistic data regarding health, and the biomedical which, while providing hard data, lacks the cultural base in which the data must be embedded to make it truly meaningful. In achieving this integration, Laderman has in fact investigated a much wider field than her topic might suggest.

In her account of childbirth and nutrition, she examines not only the post-partum diet, but also the normal diet in all its seasonal variations, the differences between the pregnant and the non-pregnant diet, and diet in relation to the ecological, economic and symbolic framework of the people of Merchang. Her discussion of the post-partum period is placed in the context of a description and analysis of the traditional medical system, the social, ritual and biological functions of pregnancy and childbirth within its particular cultural context, and the role and statuses of patients and practitioners.

The variety of methods which Laderman used to obtain her data presents a formidable achievement: traditional field-work observation, with meticulous attention to the systematic recording of data, as well as the detailed description and quantification of diets involving the taking of blood samples and analysis of foods in order to determine their nutritional value. Her technique for arriving at an understanding of the indigenous classification of foods is particularly impressive. *Wives and Midwives* is a milestone in the anthropological literature, a rare example of a successful attempt to bridge the divide between physical or biological anthropology and social anthropology, and a skilful demonstration of the integration of a variety of approaches to the understanding of human behaviour.

ROBERT L. WINZELER, *Ethnic Relations in Kelantan: A Study of the Chinese and Thai as Ethnic Minorities in a Malay State*, Singapore: Oxford University Press 1985. xviii, 124pp., Tables, Maps, Plates, Appendix, Bibliography. £26.00.

The relationships among the diverse ethnic groups of Malaysia are an obvious and pressing subject for scholarship, and Winzeler has provided a usefully detailed picture of Malay, Chinese and Thai relationships and attitudes in the Pasir Mas area near the Thai border of the northwestern state of Kelantan. The author's scholarly puzzle is why there is relatively little hostility between ethnic groups here when compared to the West Coast. His varied analysis may be summed up in his comment that some of the 'common points of hostility between Malays and non-Malays are present but blunted, while others do not seem to be present to a significant extent'. He concedes, however, that it would be rash to conclude that this placid state of affairs will necessarily continue. This study is an offshoot from an earlier period of research directed at traditional Malay religion. Political events helped shift his interests as did a developing conviction that one ethnic section of the country cannot be understood apart from the others.

The book is built up from material collected over a series of six trips, some of them brief. Whereas Winzeler claims participant-observation familiarity with rural and urban Malay society and to a degree with urban Chinese communities, his information on the rural Chinese and on the Thai derives largely from survey methods. He discusses the methodological problems resulting from this blend. He obviously intends the book to find its slot on a shelf of works dealing with more general features of Malaysian culture and politics, for he has left out information 'which is readily available', accounting for the pared-down appearance of the result. It includes chapters on two rural Chinese villages, rural and town-dwelling Chinese and Kelantan Thai communities, as well as a good deal of data about the relations and attitudes of these to the Malays and vice versa. It has few theoretical ambitions and says little about the debates concerning ethnicity. It is, however, a worthy empirical monograph and does add, somewhat reassuringly, to our knowledge of an issue which has caused violence in Malaysia in the past and has the potential to do so again.

R.H. BARNES

Banking on Disaster: Indonesia's Transmigration Programme. Special Issue of *The Ecologist, Journal of the Post-Industrial Age*, Vol. XVI, nos. 2/3, 1986. Photographs, Maps. £4.00.

Two organisations - Survival International and Tapol: British Campaign for the Defence of Political Prisoners and Human Rights in Indonesia - have joined forces in producing this special issue on the transmigration policies and practices of the Indonesian government. It includes an open letter to the current president and president-elect of the World Bank setting out charges against the programme and demanding that the World Bank cease funding it. In addition, there are three articles by Marcus Colchester concerning the World Bank's role, Indonesian policy towards tribal peoples, and the effects of transmigration on them, as well as articles by Mariel Otten, Charles Secrett and Carmel Budiardjo outlining failures of the programme, its impact on rain forests, and the way it is being used by the army in completing Indonesia's military conquest of East Timor and Irian Jaya, the latter also known as West Irian, West Papua and West New Guinea.

Transmigration continues a Dutch policy of attempting to alleviate the pressures of Java's population explosion by moving Javanese to sparsely inhabited areas in the 'outer islands', an unfortunate phrase of Dutch coinage which stands for Indonesia outside Java and Madura. The Dutch called this approach 'colonization', and its continuation by the Javanese, who control the army and the government as well as making up over sixty per cent of the nation's population, unfortunately makes apt the expression 'Javanese colonization', with its implication that the Javanese are the new colonial force in Indonesia. Indonesian scholars have acknowledged that *transmigrasi* has no effect on solving Java's population problem and that the numbers that leave Java in this way amount to no more than a drop in the bucket compared with Java's astounding growth. Indonesian scholars have also documented its many failures, so that the reader can be confident that the criticisms advanced in this collection are not simply the inventions of alarmist outsiders.

Among the charges the authors make are that transmigration leads to large-scale destruction of tropical forests and other environmental damage and causes the alienation and dispossession of the indigenous populations, amounting even to ethnocide. In Irian Jaya, where there are plans to move in 685,000 Javanese within the next five years, equivalent to over half the present indigenous population, the programme has become mixed up with attempts to suppress the local independence movement. It is being used in similar ways in East Timor also, an area where by no stretch of legal reasoning other than that based on brute conquest does Indonesia have any right to be or to settle its citizens. Since the Suharto administration has systematically suppressed grass-roots political life outside the cities, it cannot legitimately claim to protect the rights or respond to the desires of local populations. Reports that compensation payments for land taken for use by migrants never reach the owners of the land are more than believable. In fact, one question the authors do not broach is to what extent the

World Bank's development assistance can correctly be described as a massive system of political pay-offs. That transmigration is a failure in terms of its own objectives and damaging in its consequences is in no real doubt. By continuing with it (as well as with its two wars in Irian Jaya and East Timor), the government risks doing harm to the legitimacy of the Indonesian nation as it is presently conceived, a result that would be direr than considerations pertaining to the future of this or any other government. Given these circumstances, the request that the World Bank withdraw its support is entirely reasonable.

Since this issue of the Journal was published, it has enjoyed some attention in the international press. The Indonesian government quickly rejected its criticisms, and a spokesman gave assurances that Indonesia had imposed limits on cutting down rain forests and that the settlers and local inhabitants were living in harmony. Meanwhile, talks continue between the military chiefs of Papua New Guinea and Indonesia aimed at a peace treaty and the return of 10,000 refugees from Irian Jaya, while Libya has moved to establish links with the Free Papua Movement.

R.H. BARNES

OTHER NOTES AND NOTICES

STRANGERS ABROAD: A CORRECTION

Owing to unforeseen complications in the scheduling of the television documentary series *Strangers Abroad* (see Steven Seidenberg, 'In Our Fathers' Footsteps', *JASO*, Vol. XVI, no. 3, pp. 225-32), transmission has been delayed until Autumn 1986. The first episode of this series about the history of anthropology will now be transmitted on Channel 4 (UK) on Saturday, 18 October 1986. Readers in the New York area of the United States will be able to see two programmes from the series at the upcoming Margaret Mead Film Festival. Programme five, 'Coming of Age' (which is about Margaret Mead herself), has been selected to open the Festival, and Programme two, 'Shackles of Tradition' (which is about her teacher Franz Boas) will also be shown there.

S.S.

E.P. DURRENBERGER (ed.), *Chayanov, Peasants, and Economic Anthropology*, London etc.: Academic Press 1984. xi, 201pp., Figures, Tables, Index. £23.00.

This collection of ten essays represents an important contribution to the anthropological study of peasant societies. Equally important, it represents a significant advance in the sometimes rocky but continuing marriage between anthropology and economics. Especially useful is the overview of Chayanovian theory and its relevance to anthropology, which forms the first four chapters of the book (two by the editor himself, plus important contributions by Nicola Tannenbaum, 'Chayanov and Economic Anthropology', and Michael Calavan, 'Prospects for a Probabilistic Reinterpretation of Chayanovian Theory'). The remaining six chapters (by Paul Jorion on a French fishing community, Michael Dove on the Iban of Kalimantan, Ronald Herring on the Sri Lankan peasants, Jeffrey Jones on Bolivia, and two articles, by Shu-min Huang and James McGough, on China) use intensive case studies to test, tease and re-shape Chayanov's own theory. A useful and thought-provoking volume, invaluable for any anthropologist (of moderate numeracy) interested in the anthropology of peasant societies.

While the text of the volume is not to be faulted, the same cannot, unfortunately, be said about its production. Academic Press, like so many publishers of late, is now relying on 'instant book' publishing techniques, including the direct reproduction of typescripts. By by-passing expensive typesetting, publishers speed production and keep down the cost of the final product. When standards are simultaneously kept high and these savings passed to the consumer they are appreciated all round. However, when publishers fail to exercise proper supervision, results can be less than satisfactory. In this case I found the different type-faces used in different chapters detracted from the overall presentation of the book. More serious was its index, which does not represent the contents of the book adequately. These minor omissions detract from an otherwise excellent volume.

S.S.

CHRISTIAN JACQ, *Egyptian Magic* (transl. Janet M. Baker), Warminster: Aris & Phillips 1985. xiv, 155pp., Bibliography, Index, Plates. £5.95.

The author sets out to show how important 'magic' was in ancient Egypt and claims that it has survived unchanged till the present

in Upper Egypt. 'Magic' is part of that Frazerian triad and is compared with religion and science. Thus it is both 'the essential energy which circulates in the world of the gods as well as that of men' and 'considered to be an exact science'. This ambiguity means that it is not clear whether there is an elite of magicians with professional secrets or whether it is an attitude shared by all. The first receives more emphasis, since the examples are all from papyri or inscriptions. It is not clear how this body was organised or what its connection with the state was. The problems of rationality and the social limits of belief are ignored.

The lack of any sense of history means that changes in ideology are overlooked. The religious reforms of Akhnaten, for instance, go unmentioned. A chance meeting with a 'snake-charmer' one night in Luxor led the author to the conclusion that the same magic was being practised even now. It is difficult to take such an uncritical attitude seriously.

There is a place for anthropological studies of ancient Egypt, just as for similar studies of Greece and Rome. This book makes no attempt to fill this gap, merely presenting some new material to support outdated ideas.

N.F.

JOHN OBERT VOLL and SARAH POTTS VOLL, *The Sudan: Unity and Diversity in a Multicultural State* (Profiles: Nations of the Contemporary Middle East). Boulder: Westview Press/London and Sydney: Croom Helm 1985. xi, 159pp., Map, Plates, Notes, Suggestions for Further Reading, Index. £18.95.

This book, by an economist and historian wife-and-husband, is 'intended to be of help to the nonspecialist who wants to know something about the Sudan' (p. 167). It achieves that aim and will certainly be of help to any reader who knows little about the Democratic Republic of the Sudan, the largest country in Africa. The stress is on internal political history, especially in terms of political groupings, but there are also chapters on the economy and international relations, as well as short sections on geography, language, religion, and so on. The history of the Sudan is told from early 'prehistory' to the present day, with a Postscript to the Preface dealing briefly with the armed forces coup of 6th April 1985. The Volls' analyses of the Sudan's history and its present condition, while not particularly advancing our knowledge or understanding, are careful and sensible and will not mislead the non-specialist reader.

A central theme of the book, with which the authors try to understand the Sudan, is that of the sub-title: 'Unity and Diversity'. There is no denying that the Sudan exhibits great diversity - geographically, linguistically, culturally and in every

other way - nor that there have been, and still are, some elements of, and movements towards, unity. Among others, Mohamed Omer Beshir and Francis Mading Deng have, in various works, discussed the potential for Unity - in Diversity. This is a very complex matter and may confuse the non-specialist reader, but a discussion of it as a central theme in an attempt to specify what is special about the Sudan is welcome.

The reproduction of the map of the country is so poor as to make it virtually useless. This is surprising in an otherwise well-produced book.

J.C.

FAARAX M.J. CAWL, *Ignorance is the Enemy of Love* [Literature from the Third World]. Translated from the Somali, with an Introduction and Notes, by B.W. Andrzejewski. London: Zed Press 1982 [1974]. xx, 88pp., Notes, Appendixes, Bibliography, Map, Drawings. £5.50.

This novel was the third, and the first of full length, to be published in Somali. It originally appeared in 1974, two years after Somali became the official language of the state of Somalia, and the Latin script was chosen in preference to Arabic and 'Somali' script. It was published under the title *Aqoondarro waa u naaab jacayl* by the Somali Ministry of Culture and Higher Education and won widespread popularity.

The story is one of ill-starred love between the hero Cali Maxamed Xasan and the heroine Cawrala Barre, told against the background of the early twentieth-century Somali struggle against colonial rule. The characters are real historical figures and the story is based on, and includes, oral historical materials. In particular, great use is made of poetry, and the aesthetic appeal to the non-Somali reader says much for the work of the translator. The beauty of the novel is not even spoiled by the author's putting into his characters' mouths expressions of concern regarding the promotion of literacy, female emancipation and the eating of fish - three concerns of the author and other educated Somali, the last being very important in a country with a large fish supply but a prejudice among its population against eating them.

Andrzejewski's introduction, notes and appendixes provide information on the historical events and characters, on the geographical and cultural background to the story, and on alliteration, scansion and style in Somali poetry, and a bibliography is provided. The translation was commissioned by UNESCO and is one of the UNESCO Collection of Representative Works, Africa Series.

J.C.