

BOOK REVIEWS

C.R. BADCOCK, *The Problem of Altruism: Freudian-Darwinian Solutions*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell 1986. vii, 197pp., Bibliography, Index. £14.95.

Badcock extends here his earlier criticisms of contemporary social theory for being - well, for being trivial, cosy, euphemistic, tendentious and unscientific. Rather than simply applying classical psychoanalysis to current concerns, as in his previous *Madness and Modernity*, he fuses analytical perspectives together with sociobiology and games theory to suggest that psychoanalysis can form a bridge between evolutionary biology and sociology. Psychological states can be understood as representations of evolutionary strategies. Freud is placed firmly in the ranks of Copernicus and Darwin (a suggestion Freud himself had offered).

E.O. Wilson has termed altruism the 'central problem of sociobiology'. If humans pursue biologically determined interests as the theory maintains, why do they nevertheless continue to sacrifice themselves for others? If success is all about 'fitness' (promoting the reproductive success of the individual), why do we assist others to reproduce and indeed take on ourselves the care of their offspring? Badcock starts his discussion of altruism with speculation on the nineteenth-century reinterpretation of natural selection as a group rather than an individual phenomenon - a phenomenon which he suggests is 'resistance' in the classical psychoanalytical sense.

Indeed he suggests that the 'holistic prejudices of modern sociology', the consideration of *mentalités*, collective representations or whatever, are a type of self-deception, ultimately serving the interests of the social scientist whilst clothed in various assumptions of public benefit. Trivers has suggested that simpler organisms 'deceive' others to gain advantages, a process which can be carried out more efficiently through self-deception, which he equates with the 'unconscious' of the psychoanalytical tradition. Badcock suggests that what is popularly termed as 'altruism' is an instance of this self-deception. If simpler organisms sacrifice themselves for near relatives ('kin altruism'), this is because their ultimate interests - replication of their genes - are best served in this way. 'Induced altruism', i.e. being persuaded by others to sacrifice ourselves through language, ethics and government, is a later evolutionary variant of this. Of particular interest is his development of Trivers's model to consider the socialisation of children by their parents. Rather than it being a somewhat uncertainly motivated induction of offspring into social life, it consists of strategies ultimately induced by biological self-interest: to encourage children to be altruistic to their cousins is in their parents' genetic interest more than it is in the child's.

Badcock's exposition is a little thin on the population genetics and mathematics we need to fill in the gap between our games-theory oriented evolutionary ancestor and contemporary social actors. Thus his discussion of the mother's brother in matrilineal societies (where paternity is uncertain) who concentrates his interest on his own genes (in his sister's child) remains plausible, certainly testable, but here it is ultimately unproven. Badcock's style remains confrontational and polemical, ultimately revealing quite clear political positions (side swipes at the Women's Movement, socialism and so on). His stage-one social evolution is an extension of kin altruism with pseudo-kin groups led by a 'father'; revolutionary societies employ induced altruism which cloaks the unconscious self-interest of the few, whilst it is only liberal capitalism that encourages pragmatic and 'in the open' reciprocal altruism. Ultimately we are all motivated by self-interest, or rather gene-interest.

Badcock repeats throughout the book that his 'reductionist theory' (not a devalued notion here) is a blow to our *amour propre*. And so it is. And no bad thing either. However, his eschewing of either the sociology of knowledge or any sophisticated epistemology leaves open the question of the biological *determination* of institutions as opposed to the notion of some *compatibility* between the social and the biological. The extent to which free-floating conceptual thought is possible on his model remains uncertain. However, given his psychobiological denunciations of other theorists, it might not be unfair to mention the other problem which all reductionist schema offer to the critic - the status of the theory itself. If society and sociology alike are determined by the exigencies of evolution, what is the evolutionary reason for the evolutionary theory itself? How is it privileged over other theories? Perhaps sociobiologists are able to have more children than Durkheimians ...

He does not consider the usual critiques of sociobiology (Sahlins, Gould, Kitcher), and psychoanalytic accusations of 'resistance' are rapidly mounted against straw men and straw societies. If ants milk aphids (ultimately a type of kin altruism), why do Dinka milk cattle? Apparently because the Dinka identify the cattle with themselves (and their parents) and can only bring themselves to kill them by projecting their parricidal impulses onto a punitive deity (parent) who enables them to kill the cattle (parent). Otherwise they rest content with milk. This is certainly a possible psychological mechanism, but to what extent is it an 'explanation' of transhumant or nomadic pastoralism?

The book should not, however, be neglected, be neglected. In spite of its rather simplistic conclusions and second-hand pop Darwinism, there is much to provoke sociologists. True, it is readily amenable to our usual criticisms of sociobiology (not to mention the assumption of 'adaptionism' in non-humans, the biologists' Panglossian equivalent of 'functionalism' in the social sciences): (a) taking a human institution, finding 'parallels' with it in the biological domain, and then declaring the institution is only a biological impulse, (b) the equation of past origin with present utility. But Badcock does challenge the taken-for-granted psychological

assumptions of orthodox sociology: the vague assumptions of natural impulses to avoid incest, to promote solidarity, parenthood and altruism. In its thinly elaborated dynamic the book does offer suggestions as to how these behavioural institutions may have developed. And in that it is considerably less biologically determinist than some anthropological assumptions. If Badcock's conclusions are uncongenial and his reasoning sloppy, his concerns are vital.

ROLAND LITTLEWOOD

ROM HARRÉ (ed.), *The Social Construction of Emotions*, Oxford and New York: Basil Blackwell 1986. viii, 309pp., Index. £25.00.

By and large this collection is a chronicle of the perceived promise of 'cognitive science' and ethnopsychological approaches as more creative and valid paradigms for generating knowledge claims about psychological functioning in general and the affective domain in particular. Disenchanted with Mill's Canons of Inference and tough-minded empiricism, the thrust of social constructionism is towards behavioural models generated through enhanced sensitivity to cultural, social, organizational and especially lexical factors as key elements influencing patterns of interaction among dependent and independent variables of interest. Here, editor and philosopher of science Harré taps into the broad and nebulous spectrum of lexicalized psychological activities connected with the construct of emotion(s). Spanning a thirty-year research record, Harré has carefully selected fifteen papers illustrating how diverse constructionist strategies account for and one hopes enhance our understanding about the nature and function of human emotions as activities embedded in and mediated through social and cultural processes. It should be noted that the papers selected rely exclusively on human emotions and lexical problems about usage and meaning of affective terminology. Excluded are considerations of affective activities as vital elements in the vertebrate biogram or attention to affective states, displays or other processes of communication that are not lexicalized such as touching, posturing, eye movement and pupil dilation, scent and other non-verbal physical and biosocial modes that play an important role in the perception and interpretation of affective functioning.

The volume is divided into three sections. The first set of six papers is largely confined to definitions and discussions about the domain variables of interest and how they are (should be) treated within the theoretical and methodological parameters of social constructionism. Two papers by Armon-Jones develop the central 'Thesis of Constructionism' and explicate the 'Social Function of Emotions'. Issues pertaining to lexical specification

of affective displays and/or states, specific emotion terms and discussions about affective terminology, and how meaning is inextricably embedded in language habits socially mediated within diverse cultural and social settings, are explored in other papers. Harré's introductory chapter, 'An Outline of the Social Constructionist Viewpoint', is justifiably ambitious but much too short. In it he attempts to overview traditional theories of emotion, and tries to define the construct and then demonstrate how key variables such as local language habits and moral systems are culturally relative. He goes on to propose conditions for emotion-term usage as a basis for a general theory of affective functioning, including a section on methodology for directing future research programmes. While his discussion both captures and builds on the substance of the entire collection, it is best read as an intuitive and provocative summary rather than as an introduction.

Parts II and III are essentially analyses of case material focusing on familiar affective constructs such as anger, envy and loneliness and how they are constructed and used through discourses in familiar or contrived social settings. The importance of temporality, *Zeitgeist* and cultural relativity is nicely illustrated in the joint contribution of Harré and Finlay-Jones on the use, decay and likely re-emergence of historical terms such as 'accidie' and 'melancholy' in contemporary characterizations of individual levels of psychological performance. Where Part II focuses on Western milieux, the last section is primarily a cross-cultural elaboration of the earlier papers. Here the reader is led through a sample of culture-specific emotion terms and activities with associated problems of semantic equivalence across cultures and socially constituted settings within the same ecocultural and linguistic systems. Of particular note is Heelas's Herculean survey of emotion terms and settings in the ethnographic record and a comprehensive analysis of patterns, process and meaning involved in 'Emotion Talk Across Cultures'. For the novice interested in ethnotheories of emotion, this survey is a major source and leads in the right direction. Unquestionably, the most substantive paper in the volume is based on ethnopsychological research on emotion in Micronesia. In her piece on 'The Domain of Emotion Words on Ifaluk', Lutz carefully illustrates how the professional anthropologist uses ethnographic skills *and* linguistic tools to explore folk taxonomies pertaining to concepts of self, emotion terminology and meaning as dynamic correlates of social structure and organization in the diverse contexts of everyday psychological functioning.

In his preface to this volume Harré submits the book as a coherent approach to the problem of understanding and accounting for human emotions. However, by excluding and/or failing to come to grips with the literature linking perceptual as well as cognitive activities to overall patterns of psychological functioning we must conclude that this effort remains a bit coarse and incomplete. Nonetheless, it is a solid contribution and a valuable tool for those interested in ethnopsychological understanding and the interpretation of emotions as both cultural and social phenomenon. My major concern with the volume as a whole is its place in the market and pedagogical contexts. Since nearly half the papers have

been published elsewhere, professionals and advanced students will receive little new information for their investment. On the other hand, the novice to social constructionism and problems related to cross-cultural, especially ethnopsychological and more interpretative approaches may be intimidated as well as bewildered without a solid substantive orientation to the philosophical and methodological issues involved.

JOSEPH C. BERLAND

LUCIEN LÉVY-BRUHL, *How Natives Think* (transl. Lilian A. Clare, with an Introduction by C. Scott Littleton), Princeton and Guildford: Princeton University Press 1985 [1926]. lviii, 386pp., Index. £32.30 / £7.15.

Ever since its first appearance as *Les Fonctions mentales dans les sociétés inférieures* in 1910 (and, in its authorized translation, as *How Natives Think* in 1926) Lévy-Bruhl's first and main work of a series of works on the topic of primitive mentality has occupied the minds of Westerners. The reception of the book was mainly negative at first and, in retrospect, it appears that the readership was not ready to appreciate the true value of Lévy-Bruhl's work until the early 1930s: among British anthropologists Evans-Pritchard was one of the first, publishing, in 1934, a critical though appreciative evaluation of Lévy-Bruhl's ideas (reprinted in *JASO*, Vol. I, no. 2, pp. 39-60). In view of the long-lasting and profound impact Lévy-Bruhl's theory of primitive mentality has had on anthropological thought, the intention of this review can hardly be to present and critically assess the main ideas of *How Natives Think* yet again. The fact that it is now available in an affordable paperback version is probably sufficient to provide the final stimulus for those who always wanted (but never found the time) to study Lévy-Bruhl, and for those who feel it would be useful to read him again, to put their resolutions into practice.

Added to the new edition is an introduction by the American professor of anthropology, C. Scott Littleton, entitled 'Lucien Lévy-Bruhl and the Concept of Cognitive Relativity'. Littleton succeeds, I think, in persuading the reader that Lévy-Bruhl 'thoroughly deserves to be recalled from the intellectual limbo to which he has generally been consigned' (p. v). He first considers Lévy-Bruhl's work in the context of the milieu and thought of his time and then discusses the main ideas and concepts of *How Natives Think*, thereby helping to eliminate many of the basic misunderstandings which still linger about it. In further sections of the introduction he investigates the more or less direct influence of Lévy-Bruhl's ideas on three sub-divisions of anthropological thought: cognitive, structural, and symbolic anthropology. Finally,

he assesses the value of Lévy-Bruhl's ideas for future studies. That the primary intention of Littleton's essay is to introduce *How Natives Think* to an American readership and that it focusses on discussing the impact of Lévy-Bruhl's ideas on American rather than on British or French anthropology ought not to put off the British reader; it may even provide an interesting new perspective. Those who want to pursue the matter in other directions will find abundant and valuable references in the introduction's bibliography.

One main point of criticism, not to be found in Littleton's introduction, may be made here. *How Natives Think*, paradoxically, reveals a lot, not about how primitives think, but about how Western intellectuals have been inclined to think about other cultures. Lévy-Bruhl, one gets the impression, is ultimately most interested, not in other cultures as objects of study in their own right, but in his own society and in how men of his style think. In this context, *How Natives Think* has to be read as one example of a great number of studies, especially of the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries, in which other cultures (that is, cultures apparently lying outside the realm of the interpreter's common sense) serve as stimulating contrasts for interpreters to reflect upon their own societies. As with Lévy-Bruhl's primitive and civilized mentalities, many of these studies are characterized by the construction of opposed pairs: Morgan's *societas* and *civitas*, Maine's 'status' and 'contract', Tönnies' *Gemeinschaft* and *Gesellschaft*, and Durkheim's mechanical and organic solidarity, are only a few examples. Usually, one side of these pairs represents the author's own society (or one aspect of it), whereas the other side is presented as the trademark of the other culture, though in most cases it appears to be no more than the author's mental construction of the opposite of the first side. Other cultures in these studies are, therefore, characterized and defined, not according to their own intrinsic characteristics, but, negatively, in relation to the interpreter's own culture (or what he thinks to be characteristic of it).

It is to the great credit of Lévy-Bruhl that, until his death in 1939, he never ceased to attempt to clarify his concepts and theories and to reformulate or abandon them if he considered it necessary on account of the criticisms made. In the context of the criticism made above it is good to find that in his later publications Lévy-Bruhl himself pointed out that through the study of the mentality of other cultures he hoped to achieve greater knowledge of the scientific Western style of thought. And in his *Notebooks*, written in 1938-9, he finally reaches the following alteration of the main thesis of *How Natives Think* (here cited from Littleton's 'Introduction', p. xxi):

... let us expressly rectify what I believed in 1910: there is not a primitive mentality distinguishable from the other by two characteristics which are peculiar to it (mystical and pre-logical). There is a mystical mentality which is more marked and more easily observable among primitive peoples than in our societies, but is present in every human mind.

If only all anthropologists could show such an open and flexible

mind in addition to their other qualities as Lévy-Bruhl showed in his profound and sometimes ingenious scholarship.

BURKHARD SCHNEPEL

J. FEKETE (ed.), *The Structural Allegory: Reconstructive Encounters with the New French Thought* [Theory and History of Literature 11, gen. eds. Wlad Godzich and Jochen Schulte-Sasse], Manchester: Manchester University Press 1984. xxiv, 257pp., Index. £9.95.

The present collection of twelve papers includes ten which are commentary and two which are fragments taken from the work of Baudrillard and Castoriadis. The value of the anthology lies in its presentation of a succinct introduction to the work of these two thinkers with special reference to two important but not yet translated works (Castoriadis's *L'Institution imaginaire de la société* and Baudrillard's *L'Echange symbolique et la mort*); and secondly in the 'reconstructive explorations' which it charts. Only those concerns which relate to the positions expressed by Castoriadis and Baudrillard will be mentioned in the limited space available for the present review.

Fekete's introduction and the papers by Márkus and Wernick examine the emergence of a post-structuralist paradigm which is located in relation to other schools and movements which preceded it. Márkus identifies the two principal schools of mid-twentieth-century philosophy - the anti-subjectivist and linguistic philosophy - as together having undermined many of the preoccupations and social concerns of those which went before them. The critique of the Enlightenment and Metaphysical schools and the reorientation of the object of philosophical enquiry away from its centring on individual consciousness to the tissues of intersubjectivist discourse, have austere political implications. Classical structuralism under the aegis of Lévi-Strauss has long been criticised for its conservative stance, a charge which has been extended to Althusser, on the grounds of his consigning the subject to an iron-like historical determinacy, and his constructing a picture of the futility of action and the indeterminacy of meaning within its onslaught.

The implications of post-structuralist thought, a movement which Fekete rightly sees as the second moment of structuralism, compounds the agonies of humanism and history while offering no alternative programme on which to base an ethic of freedom and moral assertion. In the work of Castoriadis and Baudrillard the moral revolution loses the authority by which it guarantees its programme to be replaced by the machinations of the cybernetic model. In the same way that the Lévi-Straussian programme was motivated at its instigation in *Tristes Tropiques* by a concern with human

dignity and the possibilities of liberty but finished in their nullification in later works, so Castoriadis and Baudrillard began their work as members of the group *Socialism ou Barbarie* aiming at a critical recantation of Marxism, but finished by resigning themselves to their disenchantment with the constructions of the discourse.

The papers by these two authors translated here give a good indication of their critical work on Marx highlighting their implications for political action. For example, Baudrillard questions the classical exposition of the relation between use value and exchange value in Marxist theory. Marx uncritically assumed the overdetermination of exchange value by use value and thus arrived at a 'natural theory' where value is expressed as a direct function of the utility of an object, and determined by market forces. In this view desire is a natural quality which subsists between the human subject and the utility of the object: value is implicit in it, and its utilisation is achieved through an individual consciousness reaching out to expropriate the object, once this value has been recognised. The act of recognition is itself given the status of an action based on a quality of human consciousness which is articulated by the same laws which prescribe the exterior world. Marxism thus rests on an empirical epistemology which, while naturalising the world and constituting it as essentially unproblematical, reproduces with an increased virulence the tyranny of the signified over the signifier orchestrated along the lines of the domination of use value over exchange value, while the latter is itself reduced to an effect of the former. Baudrillard sees this as another example of the fetishisation of utility presenting a new theology which imparts meaning and legitimation to orders and institutions. Within the terms of a Marxism constituted by these effects, historical materialism can only provide the reverse of a functional description of political economy, which beginning with the terms of classical economy inverts orthodoxy for a radical programme, constituted as its mirror image.

For Baudrillard and Castoriadis the order which is taken for granted is itself the effect of a particular discourse. Use value is only constituted once certain objects have been ascribed their utility and this process of fixing meaning is a function of classification. It is thus the signifier that determines in each case the signified while use value in the final instance becomes determined by exchange value. Once value has become relativised, the objectivity claimed by Marxism falls away, leaving it as one discourse among others whose illusory legitimacy is based on a similar bad faith programme. Value is ascribed by a process which relates one signifier to another, but to merely describe the resulting codes and equations precludes the essential questions raised by the results of this method. Castoriadis is equally sceptical of the profound silence of symbolic methods in the face of such questions as to the choice of one symbolic system over others, the relation between a signifying system and a system of objects, and the reason and process underlying the autonomisation of symbols. Castoriadis answers such questions by posting an oblique order or orders which he calls an 'imaginary' which forms the centre and point of

departure for the codes which manifest themselves to 'experience'. Castoriadis identifies the pre-industrial simulacrum as Christian theology, while Baudrillard examines the claims of utility as the simulacrum that succeeded it.

The final point to mention here is the resulting picture of institutions which Castoriadis offers in the wake of the collapse of their empirical constitutions. They are seen as formalisations of 'socially sanctioned symbolic networks in which the functional and imaginary dimensions are combined in a variable relation, and in varying proportion' (pp. 14-15). This is a similar conception to that held by Lyotard, who sees them as the repositories of formalised language games, and the rules which govern them. In this Castoriadis claims an eminently postmodernist stance which not only marks his work as governed by the language paradigm but which suggests Baudrillardian cyberneticism as the dominant model on which society is predicated. While post-structuralism elects silence as the appropriate attitude to that which is not communicated, it teaches the cultivation of incredulity towards all communicative genres and doubt to the 'narratives' which they tell. The present collection is a good testament to the originality of this attitude, an exploratory evaluation of it, and, at times, a frightening vision of modern society, although a vision whose transparency commends hope for a non-sentimental and as yet unclear humanism.

ANTHONY SHELTON

JUDITH DEVLIN, *The Superstitious Mind: French Peasants and the Supernatural in the Nineteenth Century*, New Haven and London: Yale University Press 1987. xii, 316pp., Select Bibliography, Index, Plates. £20.00.

This book should be required reading for anthropologists who are all too often ignorant of history and do not perceive the need to study the peasant societies of Europe. The book is clearly a product of long research; it contains much information and is very erudite. At the same time it remains an unsatisfactory one, especially for the anthropologist.

Ample warning of this is provided by the title in which the word 'superstitious' might be taken to suggest the irrationality of the French peasant mind. In fact, Judith Devlin argues against this suggestion and concludes (correctly) that 'superstitious beliefs and practices were often less strange and unreasonable than they seem at first sight' (p. 215), but does so for the wrong reason. She looks for explanations in the realm of psychology and comes up with some very unconvincing answers. Nowhere in the book does she show any understanding that these 'superstitious beliefs' form a part of the belief system of the peasants, which is governed

by logical principles. Popular religiosity, demonology, magic etc. are parts of the French peasant cosmology, a system which cannot be explained by psychology alone, or even mainly by psychology. The importance of this publication for anthropologists lies in the fact that it shows how much immensely interesting material can still be found and analysed. It is to be regretted that the author does not have more understanding of our discipline, although she lists some of its books in her bibliography. It is a pity that she did not pay much attention to the works of medievalists either, since the works of Le Goff and Gurievich (*The Categories of Medieval Culture*) would have helped her to avoid many conceptual mistakes. It is unlikely, for instance, that she would have described French popular religiosity as 'a peculiar cosmology' not really religious, because 'based on many vague and unorthodox ideas' (p. 7). One can find a better understanding of the 'peculiar cosmology' of peasants (in this case Polish) in Ludwik Stomma's *Les Campagnes insolites* (Paris: Verdier 1985).

In this reviewer's opinion the main problem remains Devlin's unfamiliarity with the principles of mythical thinking. She does not seem to realise that the wanderings of Christ and St Peter on earth (discussed in the chapter on 'Popular Religion') are in fact parts of an initiation myth repeating its ritual schema. Beliefs about werewolves did not persist because of 'people's appreciation of the dangers of their environment and their ignorance of nature' (p. 73), but rather because of the complex set of relationships between temporal and spatial beliefs present in any cosmogonic (and, in more developed mythologies, cosmic) myth. Monstrous animals and half-men half-beasts simply had a well-defined place in the peasant cosmology in which the space was clearly divided into the familiar, organised and safe earthly world and its exact opposite which was a part of 'the other world'. Such errors are plentiful since the author conducted thorough historical research without, unfortunately, having more than a very rudimentary anthropological knowledge. It is, therefore, a curious book which shows the great need for co-operation between anthropologists and historians - still largely anathema for both professions in Britain.

W.T. BARTOSZEWSKI

ROGER COLLINS, *The Basques* [The Peoples of Europe, gen. eds. James Campbell and Barry Cunliffe], Oxford: Basil Blackwell 1986. xiii, 261pp., Index, Maps, Genealogies, Plates. No price given.

No one questions that the Basques are a distinctive people with their own distinctive history. What is questioned is the nature of that distinctiveness and the content of that history. This seemingly recondite area of study has great contemporary relevance

because politicians in the Basqueland justify their opposed positions by direct reference to aspects of the Basque past. Basque nationalists stress their linguistic and anthropological difference from their European neighbours and emphasize their historical independence, while Basques who regard Spain as their *patria* argue that the Basques were never united and that their internal differences were as great as those between them and surrounding peoples. In this context of argument and counter-argument, where every academic text takes on political tinges, the learned contribution of an (apparently) neutral foreign academic is all the more welcome.

Collins, sensitive to this political manipulation of otherwise arcane matters, proceeds very cautiously. The period he covers - from prehistory to the end of the Middle Ages - is notorious for its dearth of data and primary material, a lack exploited by some to make highly speculative interpretations. Collins picks his way carefully. But his account is not always easy to read, since he must frequently attend to specialized but contested historical points. At times *The Basques* reads like a test-case in how to assess historical evidence. His own interpretations are logically constructed and their assumptions openly stated. Wisely refraining from hasty generalization, he gives us a considered tale of the present state of Basque studies for this time-span: what can, and what cannot, be said, and what remains irreducibly ambiguous. The physical anthropological, archaeological, and linguistic evidence so far presented is insufficient to answer questions about the origins of the Basques, though they seem to have descended from the indigenous neolithic/Bronze age inhabitants of the Western Pyrenees. The Basques were not (as has so often been made out) isolated mountain-dwellers who resisted the approaches of others, but in fact co-operated closely with the Romans. It is not until the sixth century that the Basques, possibly because of population pressure and the end of trade with the Romans, began to raid villages to their south and to expand northwards into the area now known as Gascony. Nothing can be said about the Basque pagan religion, and the date of their conversion to Christianity is still unknown. As Collins rightly stresses, we are completely ignorant of how the tiny Pampilonan kingdom and its Navarran successor were ideologically supported - a necessary conceptual prop for the establishment of monarchy in an area where egalitarianism had been the rule.

Unusual for books on the Basques, this history pays equal attention to events both north and south of the Pyrenean watershed. Collins iterates that a sense of common Basque identity appears never to have existed. He takes pains to ascertain to whom contemporary chroniclers were referring when they mentioned the 'Vascones' or 'Vasconium', and his minimal definition of the Basques as those who spoke the Basque language seems a justifiable compromise within this tortuous, confused field of study.

Despite his liking for meteorological metaphors (our understanding is 'clouded', 'obscured by mists of time', leaving us in 'evidential darkness'), Collins writes clearly, without pretension, and without jargon. The first chapters especially are a model of how to interpret sparse, dubious historical data anthropologically.

It would be very interesting to see how politicians in Basqueland react to a Spanish translation of this exemplary text.

JEREMY MACCLANCY

ANTHONY D. SMITH, *The Ethnic Origin of Nations*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell 1986. xviii, 226pp., Notes, Bibliography, Index, Maps. £25.00.

At first glance, Anthony Smith's book will not look like a promising prospect to the modern ethnographic fieldworker engaged in work concerning the everyday importance of ethnicity. If the price tag isn't uninviting enough, the antiquarian photograph on the jacket is identified as 'tribute bearers of the Sogdian and Cappadocian delegations, on the Apanda at Persepolis, symbol of ancient Persian glory'. To cap it all, the pithy sentence from Durkheim on the epigram page is sandwiched between two somewhat oblique chunks from Yeats and the Book of Amos.

Such a prejudiced approach to the wrapping, however, should not prevent the prospective reader from looking inside. For here is a work on the nature and history of ethnicity and ethnic group formation that will fascinate and provoke all anthropologists working in the field. Between the opening question 'Are Nations Modern?' and the closing comments on 'Ethnic Mobilisation and Global Security', Smith manages to cover vast expanses of time, space and bibliography. As if the range of the book were not impressive enough, the author also manages to maintain a consistently high standard of readability.

Drawing most of his examples from the so-called 'Ancient World' and pre-modern Central Europe (i.e. Eurasia after the dinosaurs but before Napoleon), Smith expounds an entirely convincing case concerning '*ethnie*'. These peoples, defined as 'ethnic communities' or 'named human populations with shared ancestry myths, histories and cultures, having an association with a specific territory and a sense of solidarity', are shown to have been widespread throughout history. This admirably concise and erudite excursion into the past, however, is only half the story, and Smith completes the book with a second half that shows the reader how '*ethnie*' have shaped and been shaped by the modern world.

Perhaps the best aspect of this book is the way in which the cultural aspects of the cohesion of ethnic groups are apparently effortlessly linked to the technological, ecological and political changes which time has wrought on humanity. As with all the best history, the reader is left with a feeling that 'it couldn't have been otherwise ...'.

The chapter on 'Ethnic Survival and Dissolution' is where the analysis really begins to come into its own. Here we find not only the demise of the Phoenicians discussed in two pages of

matter-of-fact sociology, but also a marvellously potted history of the English in half a page. A quotation from the latter will give a taste of the style:

By the time of Chaucer, state administration required greater linguistic and legal standardisation, and this meant filtering elite culture downwards through an amalgamation of tongues. It also meant the creation of British mythologies and the re-writing of history, starting with Geoffrey of Monmouth in the late twelfth century. Even then localism and regional tradition together with the lack of a powerful state priesthood, with its own literary heritage and mission, impeded the growth of an English nation. This, of course, was supplied later, with Henry VIII's reversal of the subordinate and provincial religious position of England as a Papal 'fief', and by the subsequent tide of Puritan ethnic nationalism. Interestingly, the period of confirmation of an English 'nation' is also the moment when a dynastic *mythomoteur* cedes place to a more popular, island symbolism, in which England is endowed with a cultural mission and a sense of community.

The 'Survival and Dissolution' chapter is followed by two others ('The Formation of Nations' and 'From *Ethnie* to Nation') which form the core of the book. It is in these central chapters that Smith's exposition comes closest to being a thesis or theory in its own right. Here the mixture of 'the invention of tradition' school with some hard-headed sociology and a large slice of painstaking historical research almost becomes more than the sum of its parts. That it never quite does so in no way detracts from the importance of the book, however. In charting a course between the crude rocks of primordialism and modernism, Smith delivers us into the calmer, richer waters of proper case-study. Thanks to his skilful piloting, readers involved in ethnographic studies of ethnicity will put down this book with a much clearer understanding of the history of the phenomenon than they had when they picked it up.

CHARLIE DAVISON

P.W. PRESTON, *Making Sense of Development: An Introduction to Classical and Contemporary Theories of Development and their Application to Southeast Asia*, London and New York: Routledge & Kegan Paul 1986. xxi, 270pp., Notes, Bibliography, Index. £25.00.

The pedagogical need for textbooks about the various topics which are often, divisively, discriminated by social anthropologists and sociologists is far from being one of which this reviewer is convinced; while the grounds upon which they might be justified as a

scholarly necessity are even less compelling. Yet there is clearly a demand, in some quarters, that such supposed aids to learning and teaching be produced. Notoriously, many of the resulting texts are far from good enough to fulfil their aim. *Making Sense of Development*, by contrast with those textbooks which one can only presume to have been written and published solely with an eye to the financial main chance (as there is often little else which recommends them), is a very good book of its kind.

The author's stress throughout the book is on the 'active creative and difficult business of theorizing; that is, on making sense'. He is also concerned to show that contemporary theories of development are constructed with reference to the work of some of the major social theorists of the nineteenth century, namely Durkheim, Marx and Weber; that 'theorizing development' is not a narrowly technical exercise, but one which is 'creative, complex and problematical...'; and that 'current interpretations of the Southeast Asian scene both draw on classical and contemporary theories and are themselves creative, complex and problematical' (p. ix). The text is divided into four parts, and it is authoritatively, informatively, in places provocatively and suggestively, and generally extremely clearly written. The bibliography ranges widely yet appositely; the index is useful. Preston's general conclusions about development - which is, according to the author, simply a cant term for pervasive social change, how to make sense of it, and how people can control and direct it in ways which are perceived to be best by the various groups involved in it - are encouraging. He asserts that neither the 'orthodox' view of development as 'a rather obvious goal and one to be secured via technical-manipulative social science' nor the 'radical' (Marxist) emphasis on schemes of 'revolutionary disengagement followed by the building of socialism' took account of the complexity of the business of development, nor of the diversity of the interests of the various groups involved, nor of the difficulty of specifying and securing changes, nor of the 'historical scale of the processes involved in the whole business' (p. 269, original emphasis). Most cogently, Preston suggests (p. 270) that 'the familiar search for a general theory or strategy of development must [therefore] be abandoned as the task is incoherent'. Rather, theories of 'development' must be 'situation-sensitive and problem-specific efforts...'; above all, perhaps, it should be recognised that the whole endeavour is pervaded by values: both those of the groups of people whose form of life is under consideration, and those of the analyst and of the context of which he or she is an aspect.

The author of *Making Sense of Development* is laudably frank about where he stands in relation to his material - the nature of social theorizing; classical social theory and social change; contemporary theories of development; and 'Lessons for the Future?' - and he makes many points which will, one hopes, be taken to the heart by the students, presumably undergraduates in the main, to whom the book is addressed. Preston could perhaps have made clearer to his readers that making sense of development, as of any other aspect of social life, is generally best guided by social facts. It is true that the author's concern is mostly upon not what his

sources say, but upon the way in which they say what they do, and this is perhaps one reason why Gellner's *Thought and Change* (London: Weidenfeld & Nicolson 1964) serves him well as a 'specimen text' (e.g. pp. 8-13). Yet in the present reviewer's experience, students are somewhat reluctant to get to grips with social facts; every opportunity, it might be thought, should be taken to encourage them to do so.

Of the important points which *Making Sense of Development* throws light on, only two can be recited here. The first is that the brand of economics called Monetarism is the ideology of social conservatism, as is made clear by the originator of such economics, Milton Friedman, who, in *Capitalism and Freedom* (Chicago: Chicago University Press 1962), suggests that *laissez-faire* capitalism is a *necessary* condition of political freedom. This crude reworking of nineteenth-century liberalism, which Preston well adjudges 'rather depressingly stupid' (p. 118), is not only anti-welfare state, but also rabidly anti-socialist: as capitalism is a condition of political freedom, socialism is therefore incompatible with political freedom (cf. p. 119). These attitudes are, of course, familiar from the policies of Monetarist administrations currently in power in the United States, in Europe, including Britain, and in Japan; and from those Third World countries where it has been official policy, whose governments have reduced much-needed social programmes with calamitous results and have suppressed political movements of the left.

The second point is related to the first. It is that in its original form Keynesianism was at once an economics and a politics, a Political Economy. It showed, among much else, that academics and others who have a more or less direct influence upon what Mauss called the 'conscious direction' of forms of life necessarily have choices and make judgements of value. Not only does this run counter to the (false) claim of Monetarists, as it often is, that their decisions simply articulate the exigencies of reality; it also suggests that if giants like Keynes, and Mauss, thought that the political, broadly understood, was a legitimate field of academic concern, we would do well to think again about the trend among many present-day academics to eschew the political in their work. This matter is particularly germane when, like *Making Sense of Development*, we are concerned with states in Southeast Asia such as Indonesia, which is run by soldier-politicians mainly, it seems, in the interests of themselves, their families, and their cronies in all parts of the national administration throughout the country. Naturally, since such work is to be 'situation-sensitive and problem-specific', analysts must first have a close familiarity with the form of life to be considered. But once this much acquaintance has been acquired, it can (some say should) be used to address political questions. Such questions, of course, need not replace the important and fascinating questions that social anthropologists, say, and some others, have for some time asked of social facts (ethnography). Rather, political questions add another facet, so to say, to the questions about social organization, symbolism, classification and so on that social anthropologists and others are more usually and traditionally concerned with. In principle, of course, such

writing has no more authority than anyone else's about such matters: the social anthropologist is not in any way privileged in this direction. But other matters being equal, it has as much authority as others', in the light especially of Preston's most cogent argument that thinking about 'development' is *not* a narrowly technical exercise, but one which is akin to serious thought about anything; while the change of aspect which an anthropologist can bring to bear on 'development' can perhaps operate as an incitement to the analytical imaginations of others.

These two points will not perhaps be taken by many *JASO* readers, nor by many others either. But they are matters which cannot properly be evaded by the practitioners of a humane discipline, even if, in the end, they decide against the positions adopted here. That these positions can be aired even summarily in this way, though, shows that the book under review admirably confronts its readers with questions which are at least as important as the others which students of social anthropology and sociology are generally asked to reflect upon. Yet *Making Sense of Development* remains a textbook. As such it would not figure prominently among the books which this reviewer would have his pupils spend their limited time reading and thinking about, nor their limited resources on acquiring.

ANDREW DUFF-COOPER

JOHN H. HAMER, *Humane Development: Participation and Change among the Sadama of Ethiopia*, Tuscaloosa: The University of Alabama Press 1987. xi, 242pp., Notes, Bibliography, Index, Tables, Figures, Maps, Plates. \$29.95.

This is a well-written book on the ethnography and social development of the Sadama, a Cushitic people of Sidamo in the south-western part of Ethiopia. As a social anthropologist, Hamer had lived in Sidamo in the late 1960s. He studied the history, culture, social, economic and political organization of the Sadama extensively. He also learned Sidaminya, the language of the Sadama, although his knowledge of it was not adequate for the purposes of his fieldwork, which was carried out with the help of an interpreter/assistant.

Hamer's methodology involved interviewing and participant observation. The ability to establish effective relations in fieldwork situations, most important to social anthropology (as it is indeed to many other disciplines), is exemplified to the full in this work. For instance, Hamer found that ownership of a Land Rover did not create a gap between him and the people or endanger his acceptance by them in any way. On the contrary it brought him closer to them as 'an important factor in reciprocity' as it enabled

him to assist farmers, participate in rituals involving distant kin, and in taking the sick to the clinic (p. 8).

The book covers several aspects of Sadama society. The central aspect is the conflict between the individual's self-interest and community obligation. Hamer's analysis of Sadama society illustrates the view that it is wrong to assume that communalism is the way of life in the African continent in general. The conflict between self-interest and community obligation is seen primarily in economic terms. The sequence of chapters begins with a discussion of the people, their location, and the characteristics of their physical environment. Then, by examining mythology and descent group pedigrees, Hamer gives an outline of the origins and history of the Sadama in broad terms. Kinship ties constitute the form for distributing and protecting resources, as well as for allocating the labour to make them productive.

There are aspects of linkages by marriage that constitute alliances between families in different descent groups. These include the mutuality between mothers and sons, the mediatory role of the mother's brother, and the ritual support from maternal cross cousins. Hamer found that the economic transaction of bridewealth during marriage changed form in accordance with the political and socio-economic changes in Sadama society. As the Sadama experienced the introduction of a cash economy along with political integration into the Ethiopian state they modified their social organization to suit these changes. The degree to which hierarchical relations existed and affected the relations of production is expounded as Hamer examines the structure of descent community, access to property, relations within and between generations, and social inequality. Social inequality, formalized by hierarchy, highly pronounced in Ethiopian society in general, actually serves to minimise conflict:

Thus there is ample opportunity for conflict between self-interest and affiliative obligation, which leads to the question of what prevents interpersonal rivalry and conflict from being extended to clan and lineage relations? One possibility would be a structure of inequality between clans, giving some clans control over others (p. 55).

There are two major social groupings, cultivators and artisans. The artisans are of three categories: ironworkers, leatherworkers and potters. There is no differentiation of status among the cultivators of the Sadama (unlike other groups, such as the Dime of Southern Ethiopia, who distinguish between chiefs and priests with divinely attributed tasks, as 'pure', and the commoners defined as 'nonpure', and then artisans who are all 'impure'). All cultivators are equal in status - i.e. they are 'pure'. The artisans on the other hand are 'impure' - smiths and tanners (all male) are considered more impure than potters (all female). The artisan clans were endogamous and thus separate from the superior cultivators' clans.

Hamer's analysis does not go beyond the period when a cash economy was introduced and the Sadama became incorporated into the Imperial State, and the introduction of new beliefs resulting from Christian proselytism. The 1974 Revolution and its consequences

in Sadama are not included. What Hamer's work does provide is a lucid background to the Sadama, who by historical accident (in terms of the sequence of events and structural changes linking the peasantry to the state and 'international capitalism') have developed their own means of coping with the changes and making them beneficial to themselves. Hamer argues that such changes have been favourable to the Sadama (who were not colonized in the strict sense) in contrast to the peasantries subjected to colonialism in other African nations. The Sadama had adapted themselves to changes incurred by outside forces by setting up their own self-help associations. Hamer has been successful in demonstrating that

It is unrealistic and ethnocentric to assume that Third World peoples equate development with becoming like western industrial peoples ... Sadama ... through their self-help societies have in the past and continue in the present to make many of their own choices among alternatives for change To establish an ideal balance between herding and horticulture, the people have been prepared to undergo and adapt to drastic changes, such as learning a new language, switching from grain to ensete production, incorporating people from other ethnic groups, and fighting to the death those who would prevent them from obtaining these optimum conditions (p. 238).

One thing to be regretted about Hamer's work is that it took as long as twenty years to produce.

ASTIER MESGHENNA

AHMED AL-SHAHI, *Themes from Northern Sudan* [BRISMES Series 1], London: Ithaca Press (for the British Society for Middle Eastern Studies) 1986. 145pp., Bibliography, Index, Map, Tables. £15.00.

This book consists in a collection of ten papers which al-Shahi published in a variety of journals between 1969 and 1985, brought together for the first time. As the title of the collection suggests, it is not an attempt at an ethnographic monograph or a sustained analysis of one theme in Northern Sudanese society. Rather it is a congerie of essays on various topics, some overlapping, some only tenuously connected with each other. Some of the papers are carefully empirical, detailed and local, such as the first one, 'Politics and the Role of Women in a Shaygiyya Constitutency: A Case Study from the General Election of 1968'. This is a study of voting patterns with a self-explanatory title. Others, such as 'Educational Cross-Currents', consist in the author contemplating Arab values in general and sharing his own personal experiences.

Al-Shahi's most discussed theme is the centrality of the

Khatmiyya Sufi order to political and community life among the inhabitants of the Northern Region in general and the Shaygiyya in particular. Sudan was unusual among Islamic countries in the way in which Islam was introduced to it, largely through peaceful propagation by *fakis*, Islamic holy men, and their followings, known as *tarikas*. This legacy continues, with Sufi *tarikas* remaining important up to today. Party political affiliation in Northern and Eastern Sudan still follows the dominant local *tarikas*. However, by concentrating on the Khatmiyya order in its heartland on the Nile, al-Shahi fails to elucidate much of the real significance of the Sufi orders. These can only be understood by making a comparison with some of the other *tarikas* in Northern and Western Sudan, such as the Sammaniyya and Tijaniyya. The Sammaniyya is a small order with little political significance and with much of its following among the Kababish of Kordofan, and the Tijaniyya is a huge but non-political order that stretches from the Nile to as far away as Morocco. The Ansar, the main political force rivalling the Khatmiyya in Sudan, is not a Sufi order at all but the institutionalised following of the Mahdi and his successors. Riverain Sudanese society stands in tremendous contrast to the other Sudanese communities that live in the savanna and the desert, and the extent to which these differences are reflected in the ideology and the organization of the *tarikas* is a fascinating theme that al-Shahi does not touch upon.

Nevertheless, the importance of the Khatmiyya for Shaygiyya life is well brought out. Its conservatism, its ability to survive years of siege by former President Nimeiri and the strength of its following among women are discussed in several essays. Since the publication of this collection, the Khatmiyya (in its party-political form as the Democratic Unionist Party) has regained a share in government, following the April 1986 elections, when the DUP carried almost every constituency in Northern and Eastern Sudan. Al-Shahi's papers were all written before the fall of the Nimeiri regime, and they stress how the traditional political institutions were surviving his one-party rule. Subsequent events have completely vindicated al-Shahi's account.

Other themes addressed include hospitality, tolerance, economic change, educational narrow-mindedness, and spirit possession (the *zar*). Only the latter paper, concentrating as it does on women and ex-slaves, begins to erode the picture that has been built up of a thoroughly comfortable and conservative society on the banks of the Nile.

The papers in this collection are narrow geographically, thematically or both. This is not a problem in itself, but the themes dealt with all deserve a wider treatment than al-Shahi brings to them here. The themes are played to one setting only. The collection leaves the reader wanting - and hoping - to hear more on these subjects.

G.T. NURSE, J.S. WEINER and TREVOR JENKINS, *The Peoples of Southern Africa and their Affinities* [Research Monographs on Human Population Biology, no. 3], Oxford: Clarendon Press 1985. xvi, 297pp., Tables, Bibliography, Glossary, Index, Plates, Maps. £45.00.

This is the third book in the series *Research Monographs on Human Population Biology*, of which the general editor is G.A. Harrison. It immediately strikes one as a beautifully produced book, cloth-bound in Oxford University's dark blue, with high-quality paper, a typeface that is easy and pleasant to read, and a pleasant balance between text and illustrations.

The content of the book is nothing short of astounding. From the first page to the last the reader is treated to a non-stop feast of facts about the peoples of South Africa and their relationships to the environments in which they live. The book starts with a description of the environments themselves - the coastal plains, the high veldt, the mountains - and the patterns of rainfall and insolation so relevant to an understanding of human adaptations. The arrival of human beings marks the start of the book's real content, with a description of the available evidence and theories of the manner of settlement of this vast area and the different subsistence strategies of the settlers - hunter-gatherers, pastoralists and agriculturalists.

This was how South Africa was when the colonists arrived. The latter, mainly from the Low Countries, saw coastal South Africa as a wonderful land on which to continue their traditional agricultural practices. Gradually, as their population grew, they abutted on the Khoi, and the now widespread Baster peoples arose through mixing. Other hybrid communities arose in quite other ways and places - the Griqua, Cape Coloured and Mesticos, for example. In these ways South Africa came to be the racially diverse place it is today. The morphological and genetic characteristics of the various populations are described, and an effort is made to assess the extent of mixing through genetic markers and to demonstrate cultural and technological adaptations.

The authors clearly wrote this book with considerable enthusiasm, and one detects throughout an unusually genuine attempt to synthesise relevant data and offer explanations. Besides this, the book is a compendium, and the tables of genetic polymorphisms and the extensive bibliography will make it a useful work of reference for the population biologist. But its main home should be on the shelves of anthropologists, social and physical, who have an interest in the diverse peoples of Southern Africa.

V. REYNOLDS

OTHER NOTES AND NOTICES

AUSTRALIA IN OXFORD

The Australian Bicentenary is being marked in Oxford by three exhibitions, supported by a book. The publication, entitled *Australia in Oxford**, is not strictly a catalogue, but rather a collection of eight essays, six of which concern themselves with the Australiana materials gathered from throughout the University and presented in the exhibitions at the Ashmolean, University, and Pitt Rivers Museums. The first exhibition (*Australia in Oxford: The Visual Image*) is concerned with historical visual materials on paper; the second (*The Natural History of Australia*) with geology, flora and fauna; and the third (*The First Australians*) primarily with Aboriginal art and artefacts, supported by other documents of anthropological interest.

While the exhibitions might at first appear to be modest - particularly that at the Ashmolean - one is struck by the exceptionally important Australiana documents held by the University. The Sherardian Herbarium, for example, possesses a unique collection of dried plants collected on the coast of Western Australia by William Dampier in the last year of the seventeenth century (71 years before Cook), making it the earliest documented collection of Australian flora. The Rhodes House Library has contributed items from its remarkable collection of the papers of Captain Charles Sturt who, from 1828, led a series of expeditions into the interior of Australia, the first in search of the mythical inland sea in which so many of the first settlers believed.

What is important, of course, is the fact that the settlement and exploration of Australia was essentially a nineteenth-century phenomenon - in some ways Australia was for the nineteenth century what North America was for the eighteenth - and that British attitudes to its Antipodean colonies reflected all the ideas of the age of empire. In a useful essay on Oxonians and the Australian universities Richard Symons has taken up again some of the issues discussed in his *Oxford and Empire* (1986), documenting the close and continuing ties between this University and those in Australia, and reminding the reader that the exchange is by no means one way.

It was inevitable that in the mid- to late-nineteenth century Oxford's new scientific and anthropological institutions should

* HOWARD MORPHY and ELIZABETH EDWARDS, *Australia in Oxford* [Pitt Rivers Museum Monograph 4], Oxford: Pitt Rivers Museum 1988. vii, 96pp., 114 Plates. £5.95.

take an interest in Australia's natural history and Aboriginal culture, the latter assuming an important place in the development of Darwinian evolutionary theory on account of its perceived primitiveness; Balfour and Tylor, for example, saw the Tasmanian Aborigines as representing the final remnants of Paleolithic man.

The provenance details of many of the items of Aboriginal material culture reflect a varied pattern of collecting and donation. Many of the most interesting came with the original Pitt Rivers gift in 1884; the Hardy collection was acquired by purchase in 1900; and other items were collected and presented by Baldwin Spencer himself. Particularly intriguing is the Tasmanian model raft of reeds collected in 1843 by Sir John and Lady Franklin and donated to the University by the Eton College Museum in 1893; Lady Franklin's museum of natural history, housed in a diminutive Greek temple, still stands today on the outskirts of Hobart.

From an anthropological point of view the two most engaging essays are those by Elizabeth Edwards on the visual representation of the Australian Aborigines, and Howard Morphy's on the Aborigines and the development of anthropology, which inevitably concentrates on the work of Baldwin Spencer. The Pitt Rivers exhibition includes a small selection of his working notes and papers, presided over by W.B. McInnes's particularly good portrait loaned by Exeter College.

This concentration on Aboriginal culture in the exhibition is doubly appropriate as the Aboriginal question - expressed particularly in terms of land rights - has become a key issue in both the national and international attention focussed on the Bicentennial celebrations, as the result of well-justified Aboriginal agitation.

Edwards' essay begins with some reflections on eighteenth-century representations of the Australian Aboriginal, but as this material is well-documented - notably in Bernard Smith's brilliant *European Vision and the South Pacific* (not ... *South Seas*, as stated in the bibliography) - the author quickly passes on to the far more interesting (and for the general reader unknown) issue of the Pitt Rivers's holdings of nineteenth-century photographs of Aboriginal people. The essay documents the rise of the ethnographic mode of photography, treating the subjects dispassionately as further specimens of physical anthropology. The most evocative are the photographs of the Tasmanian Aborigines, with their expressions of vacant resignation, perceived as members of a dying race notable as the most 'primitive' on earth.

Howard Morphy's equally important essay seeks above all to impose a perspective upon the study of Aboriginal culture. Despite the immense influence of Baldwin Spencer's and Gillen's books in setting a new standard in anthropological method, Morphy analyses the rather limited post-Darwinian linear-evolutionary approaches of Pitt Rivers himself, and of Frazer, Tylor and Spencer, which inevitably saw Aboriginal culture in all its aspects as representing early stages of human evolution, thus drawing inevitable conclusions.

The Bicentennial, of course, celebrates the first European settlement of the Australian continent, which almost by definition marks the beginning of the end for the indigenous inhabitants and their culture. The essays reviewed here are concerned with

European perceptions of the Aborigines and it is to be regretted perhaps that more attention could not have been given to Aboriginal perceptions of the Europeans, and the effect these have had on their material culture. There are a few items in the Pitt Rivers exhibition which might have stimulated some such discussion. One of the most visually surprising of the twenty-five spears exhibited is that employing a head of green bottle glass (Daly River, acquired 1900), but most thought-provoking of all are the two large pictures on canvas which flank the entrance to the exhibition space. Both were acquired in 1987 from the Warlukurlangu Artists Association, and the captions attached seek to explain in conventional terms the stylised imagery of myth and ritual.

But these are not traditional paintings on bark (which in their traditional context had a built-in obsolescence and no value as art objects) but rather modern works rendered permanently on canvas to be marketed commercially. They are in themselves very fine and attractive pictures and in Australia such works are seriously collected (consider, for example, the Holmes-à-Court collection of contemporary Aboriginal art in Perth). Nevertheless, they represent a significant shift in attitude and define a new status quo which deserves more discussion. Morphy concludes his essay simply with the observation that 'the difference in this case is that the Aborigines have learnt to broadcast their culture themselves'; but the question as to what that culture has really become could well be taken further.

GERARD VAUGHAN

The Pitt Rivers exhibition, *The First Australians*, together with the exhibition in the University Museum, *The Natural History of Australia*, are continuing into 1989.

LIVING ARCTIC: HUNTERS OF THE CANADIAN NORTH

A remarkable exhibition is currently on show at the Museum of Man-kind. *Living Arctic: Hunters of the Canadian North* is the first comprehensive display in Europe of life in the northern territories of the American continent. It confronts the visitors with, and tries to draw them into, the environmental conditions which the indigenous peoples have faced and adapted to for several millennia. As we enter the exhibit, we are immediately surrounded by the sound of howling, rushing wind, and in front of us is the panoramic view of a northern settlement, its blue darkness only briefly changing to a pale twilight. The first impression is of a hostile environment which seems to push man to the limits of his possible existence.

We can easily comprehend that the indigenous inhabitants must have acquired an unusual affinity and closeness to their surroundings to be able to survive. But who would choose to live here? It goes entirely to the credit of the exhibition that once we have gone through it, we are in sympathy with and even understand the emotional attachment felt by the people for their land, its animals and its climate.

The peoples represented are the Indian groups of the Subarctic, the Cree, Naskapi, Dene, and Métis, and the Arctic Inuit. While the subarctic and arctic environmental zones differ from each other, they both share the almost continuous presence of the cold, the long, dark winter, and a short, but light summer. The people who inhabit the two regions have in common that they live primarily by hunting and trapping, and have learned to use the extreme conditions to their advantage. Traditionally, the land alone nourished them and provided most of their possessions. Even nowadays, the migrations required by the hunt, in order to follow different animals in winter and summer, are considered an essential part of life, although it is usually combined with some time spent in a settlement.

The resources available traditionally seem limited to us who are used to an environment that can naturally provide a wide variety of food and material to build and embellish our domestic surroundings. Animal products once were dominant. Meat and fat were the main source of food, for the Inuit even the only one. Skins provided material for clothing and tents, bones and antlers could be used as building material and for tool-making. This natural limitation imposed by the environment has brought about material cultures which impress us with their talent to capture the essential and express it in elegant form: this is particularly evident in Inuit ivory carvings, but also in Cree quill work, and even in the plainly functional shape of the drums used throughout the area.

The exhibition focuses on a presentation of the contemporary life of the people of the north. Their integration into present-day Canadian society is continuously referred to, with both the problems and successful solutions this has brought about. Yet the present is constantly seen in light of the past. The history of the various groups, their traditional values, and in particular their contact with Europeans - fur traders, early explorers, missionaries, finally the expanding Canadian state - it is all told in words which often are those of the Indians or Inuit themselves. The discovery and eventual exploitation of the northern territories by Europeans is a dominant theme of the exhibit. It makes clear that from the earliest encounters to the present there has been a fundamental lack of understanding. That works both ways, but has been particularly harmful to the indigenous people. Mobility is the essence of the hunters' lives; they have to move to follow the game and fish they depend on. A settled existence, however, is the Europeans' desired form of life, even if they abandon it for short periods. Whether seen with sympathy or denigrated, the inhabitants of the arctic and subarctic are inevitably considered as people of the past, following a life style which is outmoded and irrelevant. Indian and Inuit quotations used throughout the display try to make

a different point. To them, their traditional way of life has been and still is a successful adaptation to the world they know.

The objects shown are both historical and contemporary. The museum's own collection includes material acquired 250 years ago by Sir Hans Sloane, the British Museum's main founder. It is fully complemented by artefacts made as recently as two years ago, showing a continuity of craftsmanship and design, while changes are nevertheless assimilated. This aspect, of successfully adopting change, runs through the entire exhibit. Far from being an anachronism, these people seem to take up the challenges of the present with increased vigour and confidence. Political moves towards self-determination are documented throughout. In recent years these have been successful to some degree; the Canadian government has, on the whole, realized the particular needs of a culture that depends on the migrations of land and sea animals, thus on the accessibility of vast areas of land.

Before leaving the exhibit, time should be taken to try out one of the video games near the exit; the museum's news release says they are 'the first interactive videos ever developed for use in anthropology'. The excited comments coming from the throngs of school-children playing with them indicate that they are a success.

Hugh Brody's book complements the exhibition.* It is not a catalogue, but rather elaborates on the conceptual themes of the display. There also is a children's book and a set of four wall-charts available from the Museum bookshop.

RUTH BARNES

So far no closing date has been set for *Living Arctic*.

ANTHROPOLOGY AND NURSING

The second annual 'Nursing and Anthropology' conference took place in London on 29 April 1988. It was a day filled with an exciting mixture of nursing and anthropology across a wide range of topics and domains. It seemed to a nursing instructor from another culture, where nursing and anthropology share a relatively close disciplinary relationship, a particularly appropriate conference to present at this time. Nursing in Great Britain is entering a new

* HUGH BRODY, *Living Arctic: Hunters of the Canadian North*, London and Boston: Faber and Faber (in collaboration with the British Museum and Indigenous Survival International) 1987. xvi, 248pp., Bibliography, Index, Plates, Maps. £4.95.

phase in its pursuit of professionalism. Nursing education, motivated by Project 2000, is being transferred, in some areas, from hospital-based schools to Polytechnic Institutes. This focus on didactic as well as clinical practice education will help identify the contributions which anthropology can make to nursing research in methodology and conceptual approaches to problems and topics.

The conference was divided into three sessions. In the first session, folk medicine in Ireland was clearly portrayed as a unique blend of old and new - a solidarity within against outside forces; and child care in a Zimbabwean village was explored as a thoroughly family affair complete with an elaboration of the complex links between kinship and health and illness.

In the second session the practical, caring aspects of nursing in such settings as hospices were discussed, as well as the self concepts with which nurses regard themselves. The papers for the final session outlined the interface between anthropology and nursing in the realm of ethnography, both as a research method and as a means of studying social policy issues, and nursing education.

All of the topics and approaches clearly pointed to the natural alliance between nursing and anthropology. Both are focused upon the holistic study of human beings from universal norms, through social institutions, to individual behaviours. Nursing and anthropology have a relatively long history of interaction, but often individuals from one field have no idea what can be learned from the other. Both of these disciplines are concerned with many of the same questions and closer collaboration between the two could result in a wealth of data not conceived of in either field.

A slightly disappointing note may have been sounded by Rosemary Firth in her closing remarks wherein she seemed to be suggesting that nurses were busy enough without getting involved in other pursuits. One wonders how prevalent this attitude is in Great Britain. In an editorial in *The Spectator* of 28 May 1988 entitled 'Carry on Nurse', the anonymous author stated, 'Nursing is predominantly a practical craft, and only in its farthest and most specialised reaches does it require anything approaching a highly trained intellect'. While the editorial made some arguably accurate points in defence of practical training being as valid as academic training, I would suggest that with rapid advantages in medical science and technology, nurses require both academic and practical knowledge, and a highly trained intellect is absolutely vital when dealing with the life-threatening problems of human beings.

In general, then, the conference was a great success and the writer looks forward with anticipation to next year's offerings.

MARGOT T. STOCK

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