

BOOK REVIEWS

Socialization: the approach from Social Anthropology. A.S.A. conference edited by Philip Mayer. £1.50p paperback. London, Tavistock Publications.

This collection of essays presented at the A.S.A. conference in 1967 aims to clarify and elaborate the theme of 'socialization' and to reveal it 'as a fit subject for analysis in the British anthropological tradition'. Thankfully, the definition of 'socialization' given by Mayer, the convener and editor, as 'the inculcation of the skills and attitudes necessary for playing given social roles' is not systematically adhered to by the rest of the contributors. One wonders how many of those anthropologists interested in cognitive systems, categories and meaning would be attracted to 'socialization' studies if they had to be in terms of roles and role-systems, implying the narrow perspective of functional adaptation, and social conformity.

Audrey Richards, in one of the better essays, reminds us of the history of the term and its unfortunate association with the crude statements in 'culture-and-personality' studies. She attempts to clarify the related but distinct themes of 'socialization', 'cultural patterns', 'value systems' and 'basic personality'. 'Socialization' for Richards includes the study of education in, for example, political values, decision-making, economic values and practices, magico-religious beliefs and associated ethical codes, the meaning of symbols, and the use of sanctions both negative and positive. She also shows how socialization studies could perhaps make a 'major contribution' to the problem of symbolism and the study of cognitive and values systems. It is a pity that her view is not shared by more of the contributors.

Forge and Loudon, whose articles deal respectively with 'Learning to see in New Guinea' and 'Teasing and Socialization on Tristan da Cunha', make one realize the difficulties of trying to limit the boundaries of 'socialization'; surely every aspect of life has some influence in the process and each aspect may be viewed as being significant in different ways by different people? Perhaps the first job of those interested in 'socialization' is to observe more case studies and to try out different analyses before generalising about 'socialization' as a whole.

G. Jahoda advocates more co-operation between anthropology and psychology. One problem is that psychologists do not yet have a store of universally valid generalisations to which anthropologists can turn when they want to interpret their material. And when psychological generalisations are made (for example by Lloyd in her paper 'Yoruba Mothers' Reports of Child-rearing'), anthropologists remain suspicious of words like 'permissiveness' or 'aggression' and of the tests and approaches which are the psychologists' stock-in-trade. Not surprisingly, the psychological explanations used in Socialization are not very illuminating. Spencer, for example, uses a behaviourist theory to explain how Samburu elders manage to persuade young men to accept a socially marginal status. His explanation, however, is a normal functional statement in the Radcliffe-Brownian tradition, combined with interpretation in terms of 'conditioned responses'. (Honour for them could have become what the sound of trickling water was for Pavlov's dogs', Wilder's article p. 144). We are left with little information about the actual contents of the rites, their symbolic meaning, or the concerns of the people involved.

For 'socialization' studies to progress as they should, we must go beyond common-sense and the type of functionalism which Ward, for example, maintains when she links the playing down of aggression, the institutionalised treatment of temper tantrums

and the ability of the Chinese to live in crowded conditions. One hopes that Richard's and Forge's contributions will not get lost amongst the uninspiring articles which tend to reduce the attraction of the book.

Charlotte Hardman

Marxism and 'Primitive' Societies. Two Studies: Emmanuel Terray.

Translated by Mary Klopfer. Monthly Review Press. London

£1.30p. 1972

Two years have now passed since Banaji's succinct exposure of the endogenous crisis of British social anthropology and his declaration that its only salvation lies in the use of the concepts and method of historical materialism. Terray's Le Marxisme devant les sociétés 'primitives' has been a basis for many radical pronouncements of this sort, and this English translation is welcome, despite its unfortunate weaknesses - 'superdetermined' for 'overdetermined' is a prime example.

In his first essay Terray examines Morgan's Ancient Society, distinguishing the various supposed misinterpretations and criticisms of this work which led to the increasing confusion of the anthropological tradition. Terray concludes: "it is not so much Morgan's results that are of interest as his intentions, not so much the theses he put forward but the concepts and methods he used to establish them." In his second essay Terray evaluates and, more significantly, elaborates upon Meillassoux's L'Anthropologie Economique des Gouro de Côte d'Ivoire (1964). Terray regards this as the first rigorous application of historical materialism to a concrete 'primitive' society. Meillassoux examines the effect of colonial domination on a 'self-subsistence' economy - the transition from a traditional mode of production to a new mode. It is with the analysis of the particular traditional mode of the Gouro that Terray is concerned. Whilst praising Meillassoux's initial contribution, Terray points out that a fundamental error in this analysis is the confusion - noted by Marx in Capital - of the general description of an economy with the analysis of the mode of production. Meillassoux's study is limited to the former, whereas Terray sets out the three aspects of a socioeconomic formation; the economic infrastructure, the juridical and political superstructure, and the ideological superstructure. In this his analysis is not constricted by crude Marxist 'economic determinism', but rather 'the relations of production are represented in the ideological and political relations which result from the articulation of the elements of its superstructure on the economic base of the mode of production concerned.

Levi-Strauss recently proposed that kinship and marriage in 'primitive' societies have an operational value equal to that of economic phenomena in our society (implying that the role of the economic infrastructure should be disregarded in favour of concern with kinship relations). Terray suggests, on the contrary, that the so-called theoretical entity of kinship is no better than the notion of 'totemism' which Lévi-Strauss rightly condemns. The point being that societies where kinship relations dominate (in Althusserian terms kinship relations are 'overdetermined') are merely to be associated with the presence of particular modes of production. Terray takes kinship relations to manifest essentially the same characteristics as class relations. Both are overdetermined 'because their nature can only be understood by invoking the structural causality of the three levels in society, economic, political, and ideological. This structural causality takes the form of a conjunction of the three structural determinants in a single object and in the variation of the dominant element within this conjunction.'

Examining Terray's publication it is evident that the French Marxist school of anthropology has developed a more viable theory and methodology than their supposed British Marxist counterparts who have based their claim to Marxism on their use of concepts like conflict, exploitation, domination, and a greater awareness of the realities of colonialism. Terray is concerned to demonstrate the applicability of the categories of historical materialism to the analysis of 'primitive' societies. Categories which apply equally to pre-capitalist socioeconomic formations - including segmentary lineage-based societies which some anthropologists have regarded as their special preserve - as to contemporary Western Capitalist society. Nevertheless, Terray admits, the concepts and method of historical materialism are not yet fully worked out: 'I do not yet have the tools to achieve this (complete) analysis'. Theory and praxis go hand in hand, and it is only by further analyses along these lines that a greater appreciation of the validity of historical materialism will become more general among British anthropologists.

Bob Heath
Judy Brett

Belief, Language, and Experience. Rodney Needham

Basil Blackwell. Oxford 1972. £3.75p.

Recent 'rethinkings' in anthropology will have exhausted the patience of the more pragmatic. During a recent ASA conference, indeed, one prominent figure felt compelled to invent a new ontological proof to refute the analytical dissolution of kinship: it must exist because he himself had taught it. Colleagues with such an outlook are not going to be over-pleased by Dr. Needham's latest book.

Belief, Language, and Experience suggests that anthropologists, including the author himself, have displayed insufficient self-scrutiny on matters of fundamental importance. Though aware of the difficulties of using culture-bound concepts such as 'marriage', 'priest' and so on, they have employed concepts such as 'belief' quite unreflectingly: they have uncritically adhered to that Western philosophy of mind embedded in the language they use. But this, Needham argues, is simply to assume that the faculties common to all men have already been adequately established by comparative research. Philosophers, however, after centuries of inquiry do not agree on their analyses of belief, and a detailed investigation does not provide any criteria with which to recognise any experience or discriminable mode of consciousness to correspond to the verbal concept. All we have, it seems, is the word itself, subject to the most diverse employment. A search into the empirical grounds of this cultural concept does not give us any reasons for including 'belief' in a universal psychological vocabulary.

This is an impressive and stimulating piece of work. Drawing heavily upon the writings of Wittgenstein, Hampshire, Lévy-Bruhl and others, indeed, it has an importance going far beyond the particular subject matter of belief, for it offers us a conception of anthropology as an activity contributing to an empirical philosophy. The book

does not leave one with the impression of Boethius waiting for his end and deriving consolation from the visits of Philosophia, but rather of a discipline invigorated by its relationships with other branches of scholarship. Images of the disintegration of anthropology do not make sense. Belief, Language, and Experience suggests that far from dying, anthropology is only now being conceived.

Malcolm Crick

Anthropologists and Anthropology. The British School 1922-1972
Adam Kuper, London. Allen Lane/Penguin. £3.50.

This is a puzzling book. On the one hand, we have an author of evident confidence and ability. On the other, a point of view of remarkable limitations. It is tempting to explain the resulting gap by the same biographical methods that Dr. Kuper uses on his own anthropological subjects. This is, for example, a very 'African' view of social anthropology. Even the 'oral traditions' used express this. The gossip is rather dusty - anecdotes that might have been told by Professor Isaac Schapera or the like on trips to South Africa in the 'fifties. The news about the Oxford of Evans-Pritchard is nudgingly a matter of conversions to Roman Catholicism. (Those damned R.C.'s' - as a London lady called them - were barely a majority even fifteen years ago; the present score is two out of eight). By 1964 Kuper's informants also favoured other stereotypes, as he wrote in a review:

'The "Oxford group" features in the gossip of other cliques of anthropologists, and has kept itself a trifle removed from other British schools, perhaps because so many of the Oxford men are upper-upper.' (African Studies 1964, p. 34).

In the present volume only Leach now gets this gloss of class (merely 'upper-middle').

Otherwise the chief connotation of 'Oxford' for this book is the evanescent Oxford of the late 'thirties and the 'forties: the world of African Political Systems, and of Fortes and Gluckman before they moved elsewhere. A ghost category of 'Oxford structuralism' is set up for that period, from which the most incompatible people are later traced, like the descent of nations from the sons of Noah. It will sometimes help to read Kuper's 'structuralism' as 'late functionalism' (the 'structural-functionalism' of some). What most people know as 'structuralism' Dr. Kuper calls 'neo-structuralism'. But the basic problem is that the whole Oxford development is fore-shortened into the early unstable period of the false start under Radcliffe-Brown.

The Oxford sections of the book would not be of particular moment, save for the light they throw on its general peculiar bias. As a history it reads entertainingly and often informatively for the period up to the end of the second World War. There are chapters on colonialism and the post-War professionalization of the discipline. About there the scene freezes. In some earlier recension of the text, what looks like an originally final chapter was then added, in which Leach and Gluckman emerged as the coming men, their self-evident differences from each other being obscured by the distant perspective, and by a chapter sub-title: 'Beyond Orthodoxy' (the orthodoxy being the mythic 'Oxford Structuralism'). Then, as if added in another

scriptorium (possibly in London rather than Johannesburg, but in the same monkish hand), comes an extra rather uneven chapter on Lévi-Strauss and British 'neo-structuralism', in which a different character also called Leach appears. One more addendum to the text then follows called '1972'. In this the author remarks: 'I do not know what the future of social anthropology will be. If I did I would be there already'. But he does reveal: 'If there are signs of a new departure, M. G. Smith is probably the man to watch'. Even in '1972', the ill-assorted Goody, Lloyd, and Smith are still referred to as a 'development from Oxford' - although two at least of those mentioned may well be tempted to initiate actions for libel!

Enough has been said to suggest that this is a book of curious idiosyncracies. This is a pity, because there is plenty to commend in individual chapters. The relationship of anthropologists to the colonial governments is sensibly discussed, and the author sketches in the story of the Malinowski generation with sympathy and insight. But these were not just avuncular figures. No consideration is given to why the pattern of chair-allocation fell out precisely as it did in the 'forties. By what consensus did Firth emerge as the successor of Malinowski? Why should Schapera rather than (say) Audrey Richards have taken the second (African) chair at LSE? Each of the post-Malinowskian departments took on a particular form, but some loomed more importantly than others on the gossip-circuits in the outposts. Why did so many Africanists eventually fail to foresee the major developments in the subject (with the result that many in the string of names given by Dr. Kuper in this field are now of minor significance)? Why is the tradition that (for example) Professor Fortes will leave, of a different scope, interest or influence from that bequeathed by Evans-Pritchard? Both men are for Kuper (inevitably) 'pre-war Oxford structuralists'. Why is Gluckman (contrary to the author's judgment) surely not credibly summed up as 'Beyond Orthodoxy'? These questions are not asked, and they require for their answer much more thought than we are offered here.

Dr. Kuper's frequently readable history does not account in any way for the present - not even for his fragmented version of it in '1972'. For example, the book finishes with a consideration of Worsley's paper 'The End of Anthropology', first given in 1966, and Needham's paper of 1970 on 'The Future of Social Anthropology: Disintegration or Metamorphosis'. The author does not ask himself why he finds himself having to deal in his conclusion with these particular figures. Where do they spring from to raise such doubts? And do their papers start from the same premisses, predict the same doom? Hardly. Worsley's 1966 doom is merely the death of 'structural-functionalism' (his usage) which was an event in the past ^{even} when he wrote. Needham's future of anthropology is barely comprehensible in such terms; it essentially warns that the subject may become too difficult for some kinds of practitioner it once attracted, if it is not already. There are no tips in it about men to watch, or anything of that sort. It probably falls into Kuper's category of 'the odd bid for grandeur' (the author's phrase for contributions that are 'defused by scepticism' or 'polite inattention').

Finally, Dr. Kuper, in a passage with whose drift few will disagree, contrasts social anthropology favourably with sociology - 'sociology as it is rather than it might have been'. Almost his last sentence is: 'The anthropological contribution to sociological understanding constitutes a standing reproach to those prissy methodologists

and excitable reformists who have made modern sociology so boring and sterile'. Yet in 1951 an eminent social anthropologist declared his subject to be a branch of sociology - sociology as it was. What happened? Clearly something of importance. No history of it is to be found in this book. Dr. Kuper's final scene is a crowded tableau of familiar and, no doubt, well-loved faces with the older generation nodding approval in the wings. Cheers drown any distant sound of dissidence.

Edwin Ardener

Chiefship in Western Tanzania. Aylward Shorter. Clarendon Press, 1972.
£7.50

Students of East African peoples cannot fail to be impressed by the wealth of historical material contained in many of their oral traditions. In 1961, at Manchester University, Evans-Pritchard entered a plea for more interest to be taken by social anthropologists in such historical traditions, and argued strongly that it was their legitimate business to do so. Shorter too, in the book under review, has briefly noted that the social anthropologist is probably in the best position to interpret oral material. But the pendulum has swung far in East Africa from the day when Evans-Pritchard delivered that lecture, and emergent nations are themselves eagerly seeking to establish a broader place in history for their peoples than the colonial chapters written in European history books. Independent governments have promoted the drive; historians of their universities have willingly taken up the challenge; and the various groups of peoples themselves are now freely disclosing their oral traditions in order to ensure their identity and inclusion in the overall picture. With the richness of material at hand, and the indirect pressures exerted, the question is no longer whether the social anthropologist should engage at all in the examination of oral history, but where his emphasis should lie: whether, in fact, he should use an historical knowledge for a proper perspective in the analysis of contemporary social institutions, or an anthropological training for an illuminating reconstruction of unwritten history.

Shorter has chosen the latter course, and the book will therefore be of most interest to historians of Africa, and students of traditional African political institutions. Nevertheless, since social anthropologists cannot ignore political institutions, it also provides a useful case-study for them.

On the whole, the book is concerned with the proliferation of Kimbu chiefdoms, and the nature of their political and ritual associations subsequent to fission. Shorter concludes that proliferation occurred in Ukimbu mainly through competition from foreign invaders, or from other associations of chiefdoms, acting within a physical environment which, coupled to a paucity of population, encouraged far-flung, isolated settlement that could lay claim to wide tracts of country. Wakimbu, in short, would block the entry of an invader by a more effective occupation of their own country. Chiefdoms with a common ancestry formed an association; but the major associations were politically independent of each other, although linked by ritual values. Within each association the founder chiefdom had a limited political influence on its own immediate daughter chiefdoms; an influence which

became more attenuated as the daughter chiefdoms divided in their turn.

The book contains several minor faults and some of consequence. For example, Shorter quite rightly attaches great importance to the distribution of conus-shells (in this context an emblem of chiefship with religious associations), but states that "ultimately, what counts in the internal relationship of [chiefdom] associations is the pattern of distribution of conus-shells and not dynastic relationships", and "The associations are distinct because there is no link between them in the distribution of regalia" (p. 128). I am left unconvinced that a symbol generates its own criteria for distribution. Furthermore, when he suggests that the Sagara peoples, who he also remarks may have founded the large Sagari group of chiefdoms in Unyamwezi, were connected with the origin of the conus emblems in western Tanzania (p. 18), it is perhaps necessary to consider that the senior chiefdom of the Sagari group does not use a conus-shell as the main emblem of chiefship, but the horns of a small antelope.

I would also challenge the accuracy of many of his references to the Wanyamwezi on the basis of my own field research. For example, the Bagota society is not, as he states, a society of midwives for delivering twins (p. 28), but ritual specialists dealing with grave danger to the chiefdom engendered by the birth of twins and breach-presentations. On the other hand, it is only fair to say that the majority of these references are made in an effort to establish a separate identity for the Wakimbu, and in this respect I am in agreement with his general conclusion, even though I have arrived at his position by a different route.

The queries I have made do not seriously reflect upon Shorter's main thesis; and I would consequently thoroughly recommend the book as a fascinating disclosure of Kimbu political history, and as a constructive lesson in the contributions social anthropologists can make to historical accounts.

J. D. H. Collinson

From Symbolism to Structuralism: Lévi-Strauss in a Literary Tradition. James A. Boon. Oxford, Basil Blackwell, 1972, £3

I must confess that I found this book severely disappointing. A preliminary inspection had led me to optimism for a number of reasons: the approach from literature, particularly poets like Baudelaire and Mallarmé; the concentration on the concept of 'texts'; the use of Merleau-Ponty (actually one of the originators of structuralism - e.g. La Structure du Comportement, 1942 - though rarely cited in English works on the subject). All augured well for a stimulating book with a partly new approach.

But in fact the book is an unprepossessing mixture of detail and overview, with the implications of each for the other rarely worked out satisfactorily. The author provides us with a number of contrasting statements of the book's aims (e.g. p.16, p.113, pp. 230-1), which serve only to confirm what is already apparent from the main text: that the author is not sure of what he is doing. Agreed, he admits this himself (in the Preface and the Introduction), but

were we to accept all the disclaimers in these two sections, we would be forced to the conclusion that the book was written by an idiot setting himself a sort of elaborate crossword puzzle without a solution.

It is never quite clear whether Boon's main aim is to understand Lévi-Strauss the better by looking at what he calls the symbolists (viz. Baudelaire, Mallarmé, and Proust); or to understand the symbolists the better by comparing them with Lévi-Strauss; or to see what affinities lie between these previously unconnected people; or just to confront the two sets of ideas, and see whether some kind of magical dialectic can't produce an interesting synthesis. Thus he spends most of his time explicating Lévi-Strauss, but occasionally remembers his title. Thus, after over ten pages on Lévi-Strauss and semantics, during which the symbolists are relegated to something like a dream-memory, Boon suddenly interpolates the following (and in brackets too!) "So as not to forget the Symbolists, it should be suggested that such a semantic bedrock was precisely what many of them were after." (p. 88)

So in the end we have what is simply another exposition of Lévi-Strauss' thought (often less clear than Lévi-Strauss himself, or explicit where Lévi-Strauss is deliberately obscure), which too often degenerates into an impassioned defense of the guru on all subjects and against all-comers (including, on one occasion, the master himself). No mention, though, from this devotee, of Lévi-Strauss' rejection of any fundamental similarity between myth and poetry (e.g. the *Overture in Le Cru et Le Cuit.*)

If the general approach is inadequate, so is the treatment of detailed points. To introduce us to the technique of structuralism, Boon provides us with a sixteen-page paraphrase (pp. 38-54) of Lévi-Strauss and Jakobson's (sixteen-page) article on *Les Chats* - the original is better, both as analysis of the poem and as exposition of the method. The two central chapters ('Poetic Everyman' and 'Poetic Straw Man') are convoluted discussions which lead to nothing of significance. Moreover in these two chapters, which constitute the body of the book, the symbolists are almost always primarily represented by Baudelaire - Proust and Mallarmé figure significantly only in chapter five ('Critical Ramifications'), while others such as Rimbaud and Verlaine are used to reinforce the argument rather than add to it. By using 'text' as a denotative term (and a broad one at that) rather than an analytic or connotative concept, he reduces its potential significance to a minimum. His treatment of the problem of consciousness is sporadic and incomplete; unable to get to the crux of the problem, he dismisses it as relatively unimportant.

This is symptomatic of the general failure to come to terms with the philosophical problems asked, and sometimes answered, in Lévi-Strauss' endeavour. The problems of translation, communication, and meaning are implicit in Lévi-Strauss' explorations, but, more than Lévi-Strauss himself, Boon skirts these questions, masking them with the concepts of 'transformation', 'correspondence', and 'signification'. Only once does he approach these problems in anything like a meaningful way, and this in a single sentence: "And so it is that in language, art, or anything else, communicability lies somewhere between reproduction and randomness; therefore, communicability cannot be exact, yet neither can it be absent." (p. 85).

The style too, like the content, is for the most part clumsy and pretentious. At times it obtrudes in self-conscious display, at others

it is even more depressingly absent. One part of Boon's general theory is worthwhile, if not outstandingly new: that Lévi-Strauss uses the processes he uncovers to uncover those processes; that Mythologiques is a myth; that, given its premisses, structuralism is essentially a method. But in the end, one has to accept the import of all the self-deprecating remarks of the Preface and Introduction - that the book was written without purpose, without meaning, and with little understanding.

Martin Cantor

Concepts and Society. I.C. Jarvie. Routledge & Kegan Paul, 1972, £2.50

Jarvie believes in the explanatory force of what he calls 'situational logic', an approach more commonly known as the 'means-end action schema' or simply as methodological individualism. Unfortunately, Jarvie tries to combine this essentially unobjectionable way of interpreting social life with a rather extreme variety of positivism- 'If today we have any knowledge at all it can only be found among the current theories of science' (137). Consequently, he is unable to agree with those methodological individualists who account for social action by specifying those participant beliefs which serve to relate means and ends. Jarvie feels he should evaluate participant explanations against what the social scientist knows actually to be the case. He follows his mentor, Popper, in arguing that words like 'war' are hypotheses applied by social actors and social scientists to explain what they see to be the case (in this example, to quote Popper, 'the many who are killed; or the men and women in uniform, etc'). Since such words function as hypotheses, there is nothing to prevent the social scientist coming along and telling the social actors 'well, you might think you are at war, but I know better'. Several people, including Winch, have objected that there is an intrinsic or essential connection between being at war and saying that one is at war. Jarvie has to accept this: remarks like 'in the social sciences we are entirely concerned with relationships and meanings as they give significance to things and behaviour' and 'the reality [of social class] is a product of the ideology' (186) show the extent to which he believes that there is no independent social reality against which hypotheses can be applied. In other words, if participant words like 'war' create the reality of being at war and give social meaning to things like wearing uniforms, then the social scientist cannot then come along and say that this is a false hypothesis.

Jarvie cannot have it both ways: if social reality is largely the product of social ideology, one cannot criticise the ideology without criticising and replacing the reality; but Jarvie wants to criticise the ideology in terms of some 'mind-independent' (126/147) social reality against which he can judge participant explanations; if one finds such a reality then one necessarily has to break with the initial assumption.

Exactly the same confusions appear in Jarvie's confrontation with Winch. Crosscultural value judgements - saying that some participant accounts are false - have to rely on the existence of an 'extra-linguistic' reality (53), but 'how society is conceived to be by its members considerably influences how it is' (69). It seems to me that either one follows Winch and the rest, explaining social behaviour in terms of beliefs which can be ascribed to social participants, or one says that men do not always act for the reasons they give, which implies that one has to relinquish the subjective means-end action schema and apply something other than Jarvie's version of situational logic.

Jarvie raises some interesting questions, particularly those concerning the ontological status and explanatory powers of participants' beliefs, but he nowhere shows us how to get to the type of social reality demanded by his ethnocentric scientism. For this reason, Concepts and Society does not provide the useful development of methodological individualism (or perhaps essentialism) that he hopes for.