

BOOK REVIEWS

BRYAN S. TURNER, *The Body and Society: Explorations in Social Theory*, Oxford: Basil Blackwell 1984. viii, 251pp., References, Index. £16.00.

The Body and Society by Professor Bryan Turner of Flinders University, Adelaide is a complex and paradoxical book. It is a pity that Turner has been unable to incorporate some of the anthropological material into his analysis. He makes only minimal use of the work of Mary Douglas, for example, and does not refer to the extensive literature on sexuality that began with Malinowski's work in the Trobriands and which has continued to expand.

Those familiar with Professor Turner's earlier work will know that his concern with the body arises from his interest in Weberian rationality, religion and the work of Michel Foucault. In *The Body and Society* Turner seeks to flesh out the materialist claims first made in *Religion and Social Theory* (1983) and to explore the parallels between the human body and the body politic. This book contains three separate arguments spread across ten chapters, each of which refers to some aspect of the body. The first argument concerns the failure of sociology to acknowledge the crucial role of bodies in power structures; the second is an argument concerning the nature, role and demise of patriarchy; while the third is a lengthy discussion of the body as an object of rational knowledge as expressed through the illnesses of women's bodies. The first argument is well made. That dealing with patriarchy, however, is flawed and leads in turn to difficulties in the demonstration of the application of knowledge to women's bodies.

Turner begins with the assumption that all societies confront four major tasks, all of which are mediated through the social structuring of the body. He presents a fourfold matrix of reproduction, regulation, restraint and representation that is intended to allow consideration of the intersections between bodies and the social structures within which they are embedded. In the West, Turner argues, these four issues presuppose an opposition between desire and reason, an opposition which articulates with the public:private and male:female dichotomies on which society is based. Furthermore, Turner argues that a 'materialist theory of the body has to provide the linkage between the discipline of the body and the regulation of population in terms of the institutional connections between family, property and patriarchy' (p. 35), and that a materialist sociology must explain 'how certain polarities are enforced through the institutions of sex, family and patriarchy' (p. 41). This book is intended as a contribution towards such a sociology. Because he considers that 'the sociology of the body turns out to be crucially a sociological study of the

control of sexuality, specifically female sexuality by men exercising patriarchal power' (p. 115), it is important to understand Turner's notion of patriarchy. I focus on this part of his argument because it is central and because the form it takes leads to the production of a text which is itself gendered politically.

Turner considers patriarchy to be a form of household structure particularly consonant with feudalism and early capitalism, but one that has been undermined by capitalism through the destruction of the 'traditional' family. By defining patriarchy as a male-headed household which functions to transmit private property to other males, it follows logically that changes in household structure or changes in patterns of property transmission will result in the transformation, if not the destruction, of patriarchy. This leads Turner to the conclusion that the subordination of women to men today is due to a body of law that has been disconnected from its material base. Such an argument assumes that patriarchy is synonymous with female subordination.

A distinction between sexuality and gender is critical to a sociology of the body and to an understanding of the difference between patriarchy and a gender hierarchy in which males are dominant. Gender hierarchy has not been satisfactorily derived from institutional structures, patriarchal or otherwise, but appears more likely to be their cause. For patriarchy is only one form of a gender hierarchy, and its removal will not necessarily alter that hierarchy itself.

One of the difficulties of this book is that the reader is required to cope with so much disparate material, much of it garnered from the author's earlier excursions into capitalism and ideologies. But once the central argument can be sifted from the extended commentaries on political, sociological, religious and philosophical texts, the purpose of the commentaries becomes clearer. Their purpose and often baffling critical stance is to support the argument that the demise of patriarchy has largely liberated women, and that post-modern capitalism has also relegated many equally subordinate men to the domestic sphere of female powerlessness. This latter argument denies the specificity of male domination.

Turner believes that although women today remain second-class citizens and suffer 'everyday sexism and petty discrimination ... they also have much of the legal, political and ideological machinery by which that discrimination can be successfully challenged'. Although men still receive preferential treatment, although women are badly treated in the courts when they challenge men, although women are still the victims of male violence, Turner considers men are actually outflanked by feminist appeals to male, patriarchal ideology, that is, individualism. Women still experience sexism, but this is 'an interpersonal strategy of dominance' (p. 154). The reduction of institutional and symbolic domination to individual practice obscures the processes of sexism and precludes the possibility of sociological analysis.

This form of argument leads to the suggestion that just as capitalism breaks down patriarchy at the centre, it reconstitutes it at the periphery. The use of militant Islam to illustrate this

point is as misleading as it is objectionable, and arises from the approach to Islam found in *Religion and Social Theory*. Patriarchy, defined in the way it is here, lends itself to just such misleading generalizations, a fault which Turner is able to perceive in some feminist works, but not in his own.

This understanding of patriarchy also leads to difficulties when used to interpret women's diseases. Although Turner begins by noting a relationship between patriarchy and anorexia, he develops his argument in such a way as to refute the connection. He suggests instead that the illness is a female rebellion against the dominating mother.

The argument on anorexia has two features. First there is a denial of the institutional structures of male dominance, and then a focus on the domineering mother who creates a daughterly body disciplined nigh unto death. Even in Turner's own scenario, it is not just the mother forcing the daughter to eat, but the mother backed up by, and subordinate to, the father. This section of Turner's argument reproduces the ideology of the nurturing and devouring mother of much medicine and psychiatry. But if as he suggests, anorexia, like other 'women's complaints', is part of the political struggle against the dichotomies of reason:desire, public:private, body:self and female:male, then the struggle can be against the mother only in the most immediate sense, and must instead be against those symbolic categories by which a gender hierarchy is constructed and practised. The struggle takes this form not because the mother is domineering, but because the family is 'close'; because some contemporary families are particularly successful in reproducing the symbolic categories of gender hierarchy.

There is then, considerable confusion and slippage in the argument being presented, and as the argument is embedded in the present politics of gender, it is one which deserves scrutiny. Here we have a distinguished sociologist assuring women that the institutional structures of their oppression are now largely defunct, or soon will be. Women are assured that the oppression that they continue to experience is simply a male reaction to their loss of real power; and they are reminded that they are not the only oppressed individuals in society. Few women would be so ready to make such an argument, particularly as earlier feminist legislative gains are being steadily eroded. It is here that the particular potency, the seductive quality of Foucault's thought is of value, for he describes the discourses of power, discourses which speak through people and which aim to dominate through the sex/power nexus, regardless of institutional structures, patriarchal or otherwise.

But how, precisely? This question Turner's book cannot answer. And the reason it cannot answer is because it cannot do other than locate gender hierarchy within patriarchy, within a particular form of household unit. The conflation of gender hierarchy and patriarchy produces the conclusion that male dominance is transformed if not ended, a conclusion meant to reassure liberal humanistic men that they are no longer oppressive and women that they are on the way to power.

These arguments are intensely reactionary. In the section on patriarchy, the body, important though it is, is hardly considered. When the body does appear, the female body that is, it is hysterical and agoraphobic in its protests against male power. But if patriarchy is now only residual, why is it that women's bodies increasingly protest and break down? The strain of freedom perhaps?

Despite several perceptive comments on social change, cosmetics, diet and witchcraft *The Body and Society* is a disappointing book. While it establishes the absence of the body from certain sociological traditions, even the parameters of the absence are not usefully described. The overall theoretical framework remains resolutely functionalist and vulgarly Marxist. The sociology of the body, however, has yet to be written.

JULIE MARCUS

FELICITAS GOODMAN, JEANNETTE H. HENNEY and ESTHER PRESSEL, *Trance, Healing and Hallucination: Three Field Studies in Religious Experience*, Malabar, Florida: Robert E. Krieger 1982. xxiii, 364pp., Appendix, Bibliography, Index, Maps, Illustrations. \$74.50.

Few readers would immediately assume that a book entitled *Trance, Healing and Hallucination* had anything to do with Christianity. However, that is just what we find here. All the field studies in this volume were conducted among Christian communities in three 'developing countries' of the New World - the island of St. Vincent in the southern Caribbean, the Yucatan peninsula of Mexico, and the Brazilian city of São Paulo. And, taken together, they allow us to appreciate more clearly how Christianity - largely through the doctrine of the Holy Spirit - can lend itself to the expression of ecstatic, or, at least, dramatic states of trance and possession.

The studies, which focus quite specifically on the description and analysis of 'possession trance' states as observed in various syncretic Christian churches, movements and cults, were undertaken as part of a large research project on the cross-cultural study of dissociational states. Based at Ohio State University and funded for a period of five years (1963-1968) by the American National Institute of Mental Health, it was headed by the anthropologist Dr Erika Bourguignon. In a foreword to the book Bourguignon notes that she and her co-researchers had intended the entire project to be a comprehensive study of 'possession trance' and that they hoped to resolve some of the existing questions about the degree of normalcy or pathology of such states. The project itself largely defined the subject of 'possession trance'; as they use the term, it designates those dissociational states

which informants themselves state are the result of possession by spirits.

The project was conducted in two phases. The first, a review of the ethnographic literature (1100 societies in all), eventually produced a statistical analysis of possession and trance in 488 societies. In the sample, by far the majority (90%) have one or more ritualized altered states of consciousness; three quarters have some belief in spirit possession; and in just over half actual possession/trance occurs. The team analysing the source material concluded that a refinement of the terms 'possession' and 'trance' was essential because native informants attributed spirit possession to a wide variety of behaviours apart from trance: possession by a spirit might just as well be evidenced in mediumship, glossolalia and somnambulism, and in some societies spirit possession is not exhibited by a trance state at all. Besides, in those societies where trance is found, it is not a uniform phenomenon in any event, a fact which led the researchers to designate sub-categories of trance behaviour, such as 'dissociation', 'hallucination' and 'obsessive ideas'. In addition, they found that the specific types of possession behaviour they had isolated required even further subdivisions, so that by the end of their study they had distinguished, for example, eight types of glossolalia.

This sort of preoccupation with the construction of categories seems to have influenced the ethnographies that grew out of the project and constituted its second phase. Certainly, a tendency to microscopic description and analysis of behaviours is evident in the monographs contained in this book. The students seem to have remained well under the spirit, if not the letter, of a sort of 'law of categories' so that what we read are exceptionally detailed studies of altered states of consciousness in a language that strives for technical precision but which, unfortunately, often remains obscure.

Nonetheless the accounts are certainly worth examining. All the ethnographers convey well the character of the ecstatic behaviours they observed and all appear sensitive to the linguistic subtleties of such religious rituals. Henney captures the special vocabulary and turn of phrase of St Vincentian English; Pressel's command of Portuguese is evident in her careful attention to key words used by the São Paulo cultists; and Goodman's analysis of Mayan Christian glossolalia testifies to her linguistic skills. Moreover, the data are fascinating in their own right.

The first contribution, by Jeanette H. Henney, focuses on the trance behaviours of two fundamentalist groups in St Vincent - the Spiritual Baptist Church, whose members are known as 'Shakers' (in Trinidad, 'Shouters'), and a Dutch-based healing cult called 'Streams of Power'. Many of the Shakers voluntarily undergo a highly structured, several-day deprivation ritual called 'mourning' in order to achieve exotic visions. In their routine religious meetings, participants regularly enter advanced states of trance. The moral status of all members is the subject of open inquiry, and reprimands, including physical punishment, are not uncommon. By comparison, the Streams of Power services are convivial, if

somewhat placid, affairs. Though they are essentially thaumaturgic - 'laying on of hands' and glossolalia occur at every meeting - they are routinized, far less moralistic, and appear to be more an occasion for sociability, even social mobility, than religiosity.

Henney provides a brief history of the Spiritual Baptist Church in the West Indies, comparing Shakerism with other syncretic cults of the region, and then turns to a detailed account of the ritual of mourning and the progress of a Shaker meeting. Her report is at such a level of thick description that we know the colour of the headbands worn by Mother B. and Sister W. when they went to mourn; and we know almost everything about the behaviours and the appearance of Mother Q., Sister W. and Leader M. when they enter dissociative states. But we have no idea who they are, what might be their place in the community, nor, indeed, anything about the social dimension of their lives and religious activities. Her account is informative, but without context, and thus raises far more questions than it answers.

This descriptive bias does have some rewards. For anyone interested in the complex symbols and pictographs used in other West Indian trance cults (Haitian voodoo, for example), Henney's Appendix is of interest. Here she has carefully reproduced some of the fascinating chalk-drawn floor designs made for a Shaker mourning ritual. But unfortunately she appears uninterested in exploring their meaning, despite the fact that both the symbols and their native interpretations contain a wealth of information on how this West Indian community has appropriated and creatively incorporated Christian mythology.

The second contributor, Esther Pressel, worked in São Paulo, Brazil, on the Umbanda, one of three religious movements attractive to the upwardly mobile, educated, Brazilian middle class. Together with Pentecostalism and a sedate mediumistic cult founded by a French 'spiritist', Allen Kardec, Umbanda is a major source of concern for the Roman Catholic Church. Umbanda is considered particularly threatening for two reasons: Afro-Brazilian and Amerindian 'fetishes' are central to its belief and practice; and large numbers of Europeans have embraced the cult, so that at the time of this research its membership was fully one half Euro-Brazilian.

Pressel describes briefly, but well, the setting of Umbanda by outlining the social structure of São Paulo city. In her discussion of ritual and belief she identifies the various types of spirits that operate in the cult and places them within the larger framework of Afro-Brazilian cults, noting that a theory of supernatural fluids underlies Umbanda notions of disease and ill health. Her description of a typical cult centre and healing ritual emphasises the special role of the cult leaders whose personality decisively affects the ethos of each centre. Unlike the other authors in this volume, Pressel attempts an analysis of both the psychological and ideological implications of spirit possession. Thus, in her discussion of the biographies of several cult members recognized as the children of specific spirits, she searches for correspondences between the character of the spirits as codified by the cult and the expectations of their human offspring. Finally,

because she has bothered to familiarize herself with the anthropological literature on the many Afro-Brazilian cults (such as Candomblé and Macumba), her description of Umbanda emerges as more than just a compilation of exotic behaviours. We see it in the light of the complex relationships between religion, class and ethnicity that typify Brazilian society.

The third study, by Esther Goodman, covers a five year period (1969-1974) and focuses on one specific event, a religious upheaval, as she calls it, among a fundamentalist Protestant community in Mexico. In the Mayan community where this upheaval occurred, the Pentecostal Movement (known in Mexico as the Apostolic Church) is fairly recent. Evangelization of a community begins with the conversion of an often peripheral individual whom Goodman calls 'the innovator'. The innovator is crucial in the propagation of this religion because conversion spreads almost exclusively along kinship lines. In fact, her treatment of proselytization is one of the more interesting and important contributions in this book: kinship charts detail the spread of Pentecostalism and provide evidence for the reality and vitality of the so-called 'great family', a Mayan kinship unit which most ethnographers had assumed was dead (Redfield declared it unviable in 1941).

The Apostolic Church is fundamentally messianic, moralistic and scornful of this world. On conversion, Apostolics 'leave the world' and actively cultivate possession by the Holy Ghost. Glossolalia is 'a seal of approval' by the Spirit, and not to have entered trance jeopardizes one's chances of heaven. The events surrounding the June 1970 upheaval are indeed fascinating. Normal and anticipated visitations of the Holy Spirit were accompanied by the most extraordinary hallucinations, hysteria and unmanageable trance behaviour. An atmosphere of utter panic reigned as Church members, fearful of 'the coming of the Messiah', made concerted, even aggressive attempts to convert and baptize non-members. Within three months the upheaval subsided, and by early 1971 the entire event was reinterpreted as having been caused by demon possession.

Goodman calls this event a millenary movement, and, finding the theories of Wallace, Labarre, Aberle and others deficient, offers her own framework for the analysis of such religious phenomena. Not surprisingly, possession trance itself figures prominently. She isolates 'culture change' and 'supernatural premises' as major factors, but stresses that their interaction must be observed in light of the peculiar and special role that trance plays in validating a community's interpretation of itself. In her analysis, trance emerges as a phenomenon *sui generis*.

The virtues of specific, problem-oriented research of the sort presented in this volume lie in the accumulation of copious data. However, as pursued by the field-workers whose reports we have considered, this has been at the expense of the larger framework. Because we are told so little about the social institutions of the various communities and the overall patterns of social interaction of their members, religious events appear more spontaneous and arbitrary than they really are. Besides, in focusing on detailed descriptions of trance behaviours without at the same

time inquiring into their content, these accounts fail to explore the meanings that such altered states of consciousness have for their participants. Surely there is more to possession and trance than meets the eye.

Though this volume might not satisfy all the expectations of the social anthropologist, it is still useful and informative. For the student of comparative religion, it provides a remarkable testimony to the variability within Christianity and the dangers inherent in defining a religion solely in terms of its official creeds. These popular or 'little tradition' expressions contain valuable insights into the malleability of doctrine and the creative power of myth and symbol. For those with more theoretical interests, it provides data relevant to the still problematic issue of 'church', 'sect' and 'cult' as sociological categories. And for the anthropologist concerned with New World ethnography, in particular with the implications of colonialism, it is an equally valuable source of information. It indicates the ways in which several colonized peoples have sought to integrate the socioeconomic and political implications of their dependent status into frameworks that include both their religious beliefs and institutions and those of the colonizers. In short, this book is perhaps worth reading more for the rich ethnographic data it provides on religious syncretism than for its attempt to make sense of trance, healing and hallucination.

LYNN TESKEY

TAI-LI HU, *My Mother-In-Law's Village: Rural Industrialization and Change in Taiwan* [Monograph Series B, no. 13], Taipei: Institute of Ethnology, Academia Sinica 1984. vi, 234pp., Index, Bibliography, Glossary, Plates. No price given.

Tai-Li Hu's *My Mother-In-Law's Village* is sub-titled *Rural Industrialization and Change in Taiwan* and the book itself evidences the same dichotomy as its title. Frankly anecdotal, *My Mother-In-Law's Village* alternates between the anthropologist's sympathetic description of the village into which she married - even including a short story as an appendix - and an examination of the changes which have followed the industrialization of rural Taiwan's villages. Hu herself notes that the approach is an unusual one, quoting her supervisor Professor Burton Pasternak, who encouraged her to write 'a manuscript that is at once empirically sound and informative and also personal and intimate' (from the acknowledgements).

The book does succeed in being 'empirically sound and informative' but is, contrary to its billing, rather lacking in the 'personal and intimate'. That is, Hu's analysis of how Taiwanese

agricultural villages have made the move to home industries is well done. She provides the reader with good ethnographic data on Liu Ts'o, the village in which she worked, including chapters on history, agricultural development, industrialization, the family and religion; while her final chapter, entitled 'On a New Horizon, Implications and Discussion', uses data gathered from her visits to other Taiwanese villages. These villages, all previously studied by anthropologists, provide interesting points of comparison with Liu Ts'o; and by using the information from the earlier studies, Hu gives the reader an excellent survey of change and industrialization in rural Taiwan.

Yet what might be the most fascinating portion of her book, the dilemma of being both an 'outsider' (anthropologist) and 'insider' (daughter-in-law), as well as being originally a 'mainlander' (a Mandarin speaker) while raised in Taipei City, is never more than mentioned. Although Hu refers to these problems in her introduction and tells us that 'doing fieldwork in Liu Ts'o provides an opportunity to know my countrymen who live in an environment exotic to me, and to seek my own cultural identity' (p. 12), she never returns to the issue. The reader never learns of any particular problems confronting the researcher who is *totally* part of the community while also writing about it, nor of how the role of daughter-in-law helped or hampered her research.

Thus *My Mother-In-Law's Village* is an informative description of the alternative ways in which industrialization can take place - away from urban areas and incorporated in the traditional Chinese household - and how industrialization has affected Taiwanese villages. Yet the potentially most interesting aspect of Hu's research, herself, is neglected. Perhaps Tai-Li Hu's interest in creative writing, as evidenced by her short-story appendix, will lead to a book on the subject which could be titled: 'the anthropologist as daughter-in-law'.

D.P. MARTINEZ

MARIE-CLAUDE MAHIAS, *Délivrance et convivialité: le système culinaire des Jaina*, Paris: Editions de la Maison des Sciences de l'Homme 1985. 288pp., Appendices, Bibliography, Glossaries, Plates. 175FF.

Those who have wondered about the scope and possibilities of the 'anthropology of food' could do much worse than start with Mahias' lucid and up-to-date ethnography, which is based on two years' fieldwork with the Digambara Jains of Delhi. The Jains were a good choice: generally ignored by ethnographers until very recently, they are, even by comparison with Indians generally, notably particular, not to say pernickety, on matters of food.

The writer sees the culinary system, *la cuisine* for short, as a social phenomenon in a full sense, a locus of relations between principles of social organisation, forms of thought, and technical activities; she pointedly avoids including anything so ethnocentric as a recipe. Having introduced the Jains (typically urban and mercantile) and Jainism (a religious tradition with a history as long as Buddhism's), she describes the types of permitted food purchased in the bazaar, and the numerous unconditional and voluntary prohibitions; the kitchen and what goes on in it; consumption, with all the special rules bearing on life-cycle and other rituals; and modes of classification such as (to use English terms) crude/refined, hot/cold, light/heavy.

Apart from anthropologists of food and Jainologists, the book, though not specifically addressed to them, could well interest those concerned with women's studies (Jain women, incidentally, usually receive more education than their menfolk). It also has much to offer to students of India in general. A significant proportion of the ethnography applies to Hindu cuisine as well, and the complex relationship with the majority religious tradition recalls the position of other minorities. Like Indian Christians, Jains claim not to recognise caste, but in practice do so willy-nilly. They worship Lakṣmī at the Divālī festival and call on Brahman priests for weddings and horoscopes and even, in some areas, to serve as temple priests. Thus 'Hindu-centrism' seemed to the ethnographer a more insidious problem than ethnocentrism. Nevertheless the Jain sense of separate identity is sharp. The domestic fire is not sacred, nor do ancestors receive worship.

From a more general theoretical point of view there is much to savour. I enjoyed the careful discussion of the semantics of culinary vocabulary, the distinction between the textual-religious justification for not eating after dark and the anecdotic-magical one, the linking of the village/forest and the sacrifice/non-violence oppositions, and the double level of symbolism whereby, for instance, yellow bits of coconut stand for a lamp which in turn stands for the dissipation of psychic darkness. Only one question niggled me: did Mahias enjoy the food?

N.J. ALLEN

ROBERT B. EDGERTON, *Rules, Exceptions, and Social Order*, Berkeley, Los Angeles and London: University of California Press 1985. ix, 260pp., Notes, References, Indexes. £23.50.

In every society there are social rules which are flexible. A flexible social rule is a rule accompanied by a rule for breaking it. Rules for breaking the rules stipulate when and why violations of the rules which they accompany are legitimate. If a

rule is violated on legitimate grounds, the transgressor is exempted from punishment. Edgerton is deeply puzzled by the fact that every society has such flexible rules. He firmly believes that social chaos and anarchy would reign if there were no social rules regulating social life. For him, the human need for social rules is contradicted by the ubiquity of flexible rules. His book is all about the two questions which, according to him, emanate from this paradox. First, if social rules are necessary to avoid social anarchy, why then does every society have rules which allow for legitimate exceptions being made to them? Secondly, do rules for breaking the rules promote social chaos by stipulating that certain violations of certain social rules are justified?

Edgerton claims that the answer to the first question lies in the fact that two types of factor operate in every society: factors that press for rule-flexibility and factors that press for rule-inflexibility. A factor of the first type is 'status'. In every society persons who have a specific social status - the status of 'stranger' for example - are exempted from punishment if they break certain rules precisely because of their status. A factor of the second type is 'perception of danger'. In time of danger - wartime for instance - every society forces its members to keep themselves strictly to some of its rules - the rule not to help the enemy for example. According to Edgerton, the universal co-activity of both types of factor generates and explains the universal co-presence of flexible and inflexible rules. As to the second question, Edgerton is convinced that rules for breaking the rules do not form a threat to the establishment and maintenance of social order. On the contrary, since they stipulate the reasons a person can and cannot legitimately invoke to justify his breaking a rule - i.e. to claim exemption from punishment for doing so - they establish social control over rule-breaking behaviour. Consequently, they promote social order.

I find most of what Edgerton has to say quite unconvincing, but for reasons of length, I will concentrate on one point only. There is something very strange about Edgerton's paradox: at first sight, there seems to be no ground at all for claiming that there is one. Flexible rules are surely still rules, so why claim that they contradict the human need for social rules? Edgerton can only do so if he assumes not only that man needs social rules, but also that he needs inflexible rules. Apparently he does so assume since it is not the ubiquity of inflexible rules but the ubiquity of flexible rules which puzzles him. Now it is one thing to claim that man needs rules but quite another to claim that he needs inflexible rules. The second does not follow naturally from the first. Since it is the second claim which brings Edgerton to detect this paradox, the first thing he should do is to make clear that he makes this second assumption and justify it. The bewildering fact is that he does not, apparently because he finds it evident that saying that man needs rules is the same as saying that man needs inflexible rules. Bizarre evidence!

Edgerton makes abundant use of ethnographic data to illustrate and support his argument, and for that he deserves praise.

It is therefore the more unfortunate that his argument is based on a logical flaw.

ALDO MARTIN

JOHN EDWARDS, *Language, Society and Identity*, Oxford etc.: Basil Blackwell in association with André Deutsch 1985. x, 170pp., Appendix, Notes, References, Index. £25.00/£8.95.

Though language, society and identity is a trendy triad in today's social science, Edwards' is the first multidisciplinary attempt to survey this academic zone. He early admits that he hasn't the teeth for 'the mammoth task' of constructing a theory of language and ethnic-group relations. Instead he summarizes what has been said and then deduces what can now be said. Edwards takes an avowedly 'middle-of-the-road' approach. He does not eschew 'extremism' - whether 'irrational nationalist' or 'impassioned ethnic' - he simply attempts to value what their proponents and enemies have said. The side he takes is that of 'academic commentator' concerned that most people get what they want in an atmosphere tolerant of cultural diversity.

Early theorists of nationalism (e.g. Fichte, Herder) thought language an almost sacred component of their political programmes. But one of Edwards' main points, suitably bolstered by a weight of evidence, is that there is no necessary link between language and identity. Ethnic and nationalist groups can maintain an identity despite loss of their particular languages. Indeed, Edwards demonstrates that, despite attempts at revival, dead languages stay dead. (Hebrew is an easily explained exception.) Speakers of a 'minority' language usually want their children to speak in the 'majority' language, not because of external pressure, but out of pragmatic self-interest. People tend to learn new languages because of economic factors. So attempts to revive a mother-tongue merely by obligating schoolchildren to learn it (the Irish case) are bound to fail. As is the case for many other 'minority' languages, Irish is now effectively a symbolic language rather than a communicative one. It is valued because of Irish nationalism, not because a few old people still speak it in isolated corners of the Atlantic coast.

Edwards argues that there has not been an ethnic revival in the USA, rather a persistence of ethnicity which is now more visible because of the dominant group's tolerance. This persistent ethnicity is often based on symbolic markers, i.e. ones which do not hinder socially mobile members of the ethnic group from changing social class. A group may change the content of its ethnicity, but it maintains a boundary defining the difference between group members and others. Edwards counsels that since

administrative attempts to prop up aspects of ethnic culture fail unless they enjoy popular support among members of the ethnic group, multicultural programmes in schools should end. For him, the only possible successful courses are leaving the incitation to group members themselves and ensuring that schools teach a more fundamental, diffuse multiculturalism - schoolchildren should learn core skills, as before, plus a tolerant regard and understanding of other cultures.

Edwards draws on information from historical, sociological, linguistic, educational, and psychological sources. But it is his chapter on the social psychological approach to language and identity which highlights his ignorance of anthropology. For, while bemoaning the 'artificial' nature of social psychological experiments, yet stressing the worth of research into 'subjective perceptions', he seems unaware that anthropology can contribute, with its studies of how communities of people use, live and manipulate language and identity. Further, Edwards defines ethnic identity as allegiance to a group with which one has ancestral links. But we already know that these links can be more imagined than real: an Andalusian, for instance, can become 'Basque' and be regarded as one by all if he/she consistently acts as a radical Basque nationalist.

Despite his occasional chatty tone ('I must say that I find Gellner's position a compelling one'), it is worth anthropologists reading Edwards' wide survey if they wish to ensure that the grand generalizations they might wish to make about nationalism and ethnicity cannot be refuted by a few exceptions they have overlooked. One point Edwards has overlooked is that if it is correct that groups change their mother tongue for reasons of pragmatic self-interest, then English will become the dominant language in all parts of the globe where capitalism rules. Basque nationalists have already begun to call English language schools centres of 'linguistic imperialism'.

JEREMY MACCLANCY

JEAN-FRANÇOIS LYOTARD, *The Post-Modern Condition: A Report on Knowledge* [transl. G. Bennington and B. Massumi], Manchester: Manchester University Press 1984. 110pp. No price given.

The central problem in the present work concerns the process of legitimation of knowledge and the status of the ascription of 'truth value' to a statement. The problematic nature of legitimation has become one of the central concerns of much of French thought since the eclipse of structuralism and is shared by such writers as Bourdieu and the ex-members of the group *Socialism ou Barbarie*; it was also a preoccupation of Frankfurt critical

theory, whose major exponent Habermas, is the subject of an implicit critique in the present work. Lyotard contends that the modernist period legitimated the truth value of scientific statement by recourse to meta narratives. Manipulated by the state and other active agencies, they provided 'epics' by which scientific and technological projects could be justified. By stipulating goals, the success of the project could be gauged by reference to the achievement of the aspirations of the epic. Meta narrative masqueraded as possessing a similar objective status to scientific investigation. Meta narrative thus established the programme of scientific enquiry and scientific enquiry measured its success in relation to the programme. In consequence meta narrative legitimated scientific investigation and the results of such investigation were teleologically referred back to legitimate the meta narrative. The result was to produce the culturisation of nature and the naturalisation of culture as has been well argued and documented by such writers as Baudrillard, Bourdieu, Castoriadis and Sahlins.

Lyotard argues that the misrecognition of scientific knowledge and meta narrative as corresponding to a similar natural epistemology is effected by the preoccupation with structure over strategy. Texts are not composed of identical epistemes. The statements which constitute a text contain complex and dissimilar values. He identified denotative, interrogative, evaluative and prescriptive statements (p. 16). While scientific enquiry is properly made of denotative statements, meta narrative is composed by the domination of the others (p. 25). Since meta narrative prefaces scientific enquiry, not only is scientific knowledge guaranteed by a discourse external to it, but according to tenets which are not confirmed by its methodological protocols and which fail to comply with the requirements of an objective standard demanded by the scientific practice. Given the different epistemological statuses of meta narrative and scientific knowledge, Lyotard refutes any special status being given to the latter, while at the same time denying that any principles held by it can be used to evaluate meta narratives. It is not enough to reverse the equation and begin from nature to analyse culture, since nature will also be a problematic quality. Scientific knowledge, therefore, he concludes, is only a special type of meta narrative which concerns itself (paraphrasing Medawar) with telling stories (p. 60).

Lyotard's position is, of course, not entirely original. His concern with the strategic manipulations of language as being more important in the generation of contingent meaning than structure was the subject of Volosinov's critique of Saussure in his *Marxism and the Philosophy of Language* (1930), and it is a short path which leads to the linguistic philosophy of Wittgenstein, which echoes so strongly through much of Lyotard's text. It is worthy of note that the relationship between Soviet formalism and Wittgensteinian philosophy has found cogent expression in social anthropology, in the works of Rodney Needham, who has done more than anyone to establish a postmodernist anthropology, if by postmodernism we mean, in Lyotard's words, an attitude of incredulity towards texts (p. xxiv). A further influence on Lyotard is the

work of Gaston Bachelard, particularly on his view that knowledge is constantly under the threat of deflection by what he calls a tendency towards 'reverie'. Since Lyotard does not accept Bachelard's confidence in the ability to isolate a pure knowledge by successive critical cleansing of the results of scientific enquiry, he sees these critical encroachments as being goals in themselves which motivate the mutations of knowledge without necessarily making it more objective. (Interestingly, in a recent review, Ivan Karp has drawn a parallel between Needham's *Against the Tranquility of Axioms* (1983) and Bachelard's *La poétique de la rêverie* (1960). Both comparativist and philosopher agree on the importance of the critical reading of the text, but with Needham showing much more interest in the latent strategies and active uses of value-laden words in the production of different effects by the ethnographic text.)

Finally, it is perhaps not surprising that in accepting the fall of 'unconditional' objective knowledge, both Lyotard and Needham have limited their aspirations so as not to provide any grand systems nor establish a method of investigation. Instead, in accordance with postmodernist edicts, they have contented themselves with the consideration of how best alienated man might be made to feel at home in an alienating world.

ANTHONY SHELTON

PIETER VAN DE VELDE (ed.), *Prehistoric Indonesia: A Reader* [Verhandelingen van het Koninklijk Instituut voor Taal-, Land- en Volkenkunde 104], Dordrecht and Cinnaminson: Foris 1984. vii, 383pp., Maps, Tables, Figures, Plates, Bibliography, Index. No price given.

Van de Velde writes that with the exception of Java, Kalimantan (Borneo) and some of the eastern islands, 'the whole of Indonesian prehistory is still unexplored'. These circumstances are hardly propitious ones for producing a 'reader', which implies a collection of standard works on the topic. They help to account, though, for the editor's ambivalence toward his selection. All of the articles, none of which is by Van de Velde, have been published previously. Except for two, all have appeared during or since 1975. The oldest is a translation of the summary of Heine-Geldern's classic statement (1932) of his theory of a series of migrations of Austronesian and Austro-Asiatic peoples through Southeast Asia during the neolithic. The second, a speculative gallop through the prehistory of Borneo by Tom Harrison, was published in 1970, the year which the editor says marked both the first appearance of non-colonial Indonesian archaeological studies and the international revival of archaeology as the 'new

archaeology'.

Van de Velde's intention is to bury the legacy of colonial archaeology, characterized, as he says, by 'fragmentarily described excavations, plundered sites, displaced and haphazard museum collections and, most conspicuously, a number of Grand Southeast Asian Prehistory Schemes'. How do things stand today? For one thing, the editor writes that two articles in the present book, Solheim's 'Reflections on the New Data of Southeast Asian Prehistory' (1975) and Blust's attempt by linguistic means to reconstruct the cultural inventory of prehistoric Austronesian societies (1976), are just as out-dated as Heine-Geldern's work. Soejono's description of the Archaeological Service of the Republic of Indonesia details a pattern of an inadequately trained and insufficiently numerous staff turning exclusively to administrative chores and neglecting field excavations, documentation and scientific publication. Glover, author of the two reports of actual excavations reprinted here, concludes his study of 'Bird Cave' in South Sulawesi by lamenting the inadequacy of his data and recommending that a younger generation complete the half-finished excavation. Things seem not to have changed substantially since the colonial period.

The editor argues that migrations and diffusion are vectors of transmission, not causes of change. If today Indonesian cultures are greatly varied, so must they have been in prehistory also. The categories of European prehistory are inapplicable to Southeast Asia. The Hoabinhian adaptation, according to Solheim the only culture of truly Southeast Asian origin (northern Vietnam and elsewhere) and placed by Hayden at between 40000 and 8/6000 B.P., is a 'technocomplex', i.e. a common means of adjustment to changing conditions producing a polythetic family of artefact types. Furthermore, innovations need not always be explained by origination outside the island area. Glover therefore suffers criticism for attributing archaeological changes in finds from Timor and Sulawesi to the arrival of neolithic farmers, possibly Austronesian speaking, around 5000 B.P. According to Van de Velde, they may well have resulted instead from indigenous neolithization.

Nevertheless, the big questions are still 'Where did the Austronesians and their predecessors come from?', 'Where did they go and when?', and 'Why did they do so?'. Behind these questions are some extraordinary facts. *Homo Erectus* was living on Java around two million years ago. Finds of flake tools from the Pleistocene associated with a fossil elephant (*Stegodon*) have been claimed for Sulawesi, Flores and Timor. Remains of agricultural activity in the highlands of New Guinea date to 9000 B.P. The oldest settlement recorded in Australia dates to 35000 B.P. Despite sea-level drops that connected Java and Borneo to the mainland during the late Pleistocene, the strait between Bali and Lombok was never bridged during the Pleistocene, so that any travel to the east required boats or rafts. New Guinea and Australia, which are thought to have been inhabited for 50,000 years, could only have been reached by crossing many kilometres of open sea.

The coverage of this book extends from Mainland Southeast Asia through the islands to New Guinea and Australia, with mention of Polynesia. Many of the articles are important and each has its

merits, but the only thing uniting them is that they have been selected by the editor. They fit poorly under the rubric 'Indonesia', a term which is just as inapt to designate an archaeological area as it is to name a field of anthropological study. The two translations are to be commended and the inclusion of the ten articles taken from journals can be justified. The remaining four, however, are easily available elsewhere. Smith and Watson's Introduction to *Early South East Asia* and the two papers from *Sunda and Sahul* derive from Southeast Asian archaeological collections that are more important than this one.

R.H. BARNES

MARY ANNE KENWORTHY, ELEANOR M. KING, MARY ELIZABETH RUWELL and TRUDY VAN HOUTEN, *Preserving Field Records: Archival Techniques for Archaeologists and Anthropologists*, Philadelphia: The University Museum, University of Pennsylvania 1985. x, 95pp., Illustrations, Bibliography. No price given.

The intentions of this little volume are admirable, but whether any practical good will come of it remains to be seen. One hopes it will have the circulation it deserves. The authors aim to explain the basic requirements and processes in the preservation of records before they ever reach the archive repository. This crucial question is seldom addressed, either by scholars creating the record or by archivists. Yet I know from bitter experience the dismal physical state of many fieldwork records after thirty or forty years of totally inadequate care and poor storage. Archive conservation is an extremely complex field, and it is essential that one understands exactly the dangers of a given set of conditions and precisely what one is doing in attempting to remedy the situation - the damage caused by misplaced good intentions can be devastating and irreversible. Therefore the authors guide through this minefield the conscientious fieldworker who wishes unique information to be preserved for future generations of scholars.

The necessarily vast amount of information crammed into each chapter makes for rather indigestible reading, and one fears that this will deter all but the most determined. However, each chapter is prefaced by a series of recommendations (which are amplified and explained in the following text), and these at least should be required reading for anyone seriously involved in the collection of unique data. A chapter is devoted to each of the various media which make up the record: paper, photographs, film and video, sound recordings, machine-readable records etc. The chapter on machine-readable records, which have an extremely limited life, is particularly useful, for it gives an excellent

'state-of-the-art' resumé of a set of problems to which the archive profession is only just beginning to address itself. Given the amount of research data now being processed by computer, the position is becoming increasingly serious.

The key to the successful preservation of records, awareness and long-term planning, is stressed throughout. Ideally, the likely historical or archival importance of a project should be assessed at its inception, the choice of materials for both recording and storage being made accordingly and written into the budget. A programme should be developed to cope with initial preservation in the field, often under extremely difficult local conditions (but even then careful choice of materials, e.g. acid-free notebooks, will greatly improve the long-term survival of the record): then long-term strategy for the preservation of material on return from the field, particularly in the form of correct storage and adequate documentation, should be planned. In my experience, trouble often occurs at this stage. Whilst in the field, preservation - getting the data home for analysis - is surely everyone's preoccupation. Once home the data spends thirty years being stored on top of central heating pipes, mended with sellotape, flooded with coffee and so on.

One of the weaknesses of the book is that while it makes an excellent statement of the ideal, it assumes a sizeable level of funding and institutional back-up which in practice is quite simply not available in many cases, especially at an individual level. But maybe on reflection, the weakness is in Britain's awareness of the long-term archival value of unique anthropological records which lags far behind that of many other countries - a situation surely mirrored in the dire state of funding for both field research and specialist archive collections in this country.

ELIZABETH EDWARDS

ROSS MOUER and YOSHIO SUGIMOTO, *Images of Japanese Society: A Study in the Structure of Social Reality* [Japanese Studies; gen. ed.: Yoshio Sugimoto], London etc.: KPI 1986. xxxii, 432pp., Appendix, Notes, References, Index. £30.00.

The publication of this book and the recent *JASO Occasional Paper Interpreting Japanese Society* (1986) provides students of Japan with an up-to-date picture of one of the most significant contemporary debates in Japanese studies. At the same time, they provide an excellent example of just how much anthropologists and sociologists can differ in their approach and the varying effect of their methodologies on the study of other societies. At times, the lines drawn between the two disciplines appear almost

uncrossable, but my conclusion after reading both books is that there is much for anthropologists and sociologists to learn from each other. The debate engendered by accounts such as these will, one hopes, enrich the subject as a whole and not result in retreat into sullen solipsism.

Certainly, neither side can claim that their work is ignored by the other. The first two pieces in the *JASO* volume are a discussion of the arguments of Sugimoto and Mouer, whose ideas are also introduced in two other papers. For their part, Sugimoto and Mouer concentrate much of their attack on anthropology in general and the better-known anthropologists of Japan in particular. Indeed, few outside their own group of thinkers escape their censure: the interpretations of Chie Nakane, Ruth Benedict, Ezra Vogel, Edwin Reishauer, Doi Takeo and Ronald Dore (the bulk of any Western bookshop's Japanese shelf) are put under the spotlight and rejected.

Sugimoto and Mouer's argument centres around two axes: the concepts of holism and scientism. Studies of Japan, and in particular those carried out by anthropologists, with their holistic approach, present Japan 'as though it emerges from a single cultural mould' (p. 10), which Sugimoto and Mouer title the 'Consensus or Group Model' which explicitly emphasises the 'uniqueness of specific traits among the Japanese as major determinants of Japanese behaviour' (p. 11). This description of Japan they perceive as 'an ideology ... and that as such it represents an example of how the Japanese elite controls or manipulates the rest of society' (p. 15). Authors of such works are, therefore, by implication either the dupes or the stooges of this elite. Anthropologists, by definition, are especially guilty of such acts. Or rather, by the definition Sugimoto and Mouer choose to apply, since their view of anthropology is old-fashioned to say the least. They decide to follow the usage of a certain Stephen Cotgrove (who he?), who in 1967 apparently wrote that 'holism' was 'an approach which emphasizes the influence of the whole (society as an organic, though abstract, entity) over the parts (individuals) who make up society ... [and] has come to be known as *functionalism*' (p. 22). As a description of anthropology in the 1940s, this might have been reasonable, but to tar the subject with the same brush today is to ignore everything that has been achieved since Evans-Pritchard. Hendry, in the *JASO* volume, points out this distinction between functionalism and structuralism, and shows why the search for underlying structural patterns should not be confused with static and functional ideologies.

Because of their emphasis on scientism, though, it is doubtful whether Sugimoto and Mouer would accept Hendry's argument. Ethnography is dubbed as 'Anecdotism and Episodism' (p. 131), and they question the feasibility of genuine anthropological methodology: 'Without a more careful assessment of how the situation is affected by the presence of a foreign observer ... it is difficult to evaluate accurately data obtained by methods such as participant observation and interviewing' (p. 167); unless, significantly, those findings agree with their own view of Japanese society, such as the discovery of poverty in contemporary Tokyo. As is often

the case with sociologists, they appear to equate 'objectivity' with 'scientific'. They feel happier with quantifiable data such as statistics and graphs than with qualitative material, but a closer examination of just a single example leaves one uneasy about such an approach. A comparative study of popular disturbances in four countries, which according to the authors demonstrates high levels of conflict in Japan, leaves unanswered many questions about the definition and reporting of violence in each country and also singularly fails to explain the simple fact that a Japanese woman walking the streets of Tokyo at night has few of the fears and inhibitions of her French, German or Australian counterparts in Paris, Berlin or Sydney. The fact that even minor acts of violence, which would be ignored as everyday in other countries, are in Japan reported widely is evidence of the shock such incidents evoke and not of their frequency.

There are, in my opinion, several further weaknesses in Sugimoto and Mauer's book. First of all, they demand that others eschew all a priori theorising, yet they engage in it extensively themselves in their search for aspects of social control and conflict in Japanese society. Secondly, they at times appear to present a rather simplistic Marxist conspiracy theory whereby the 'elite' in Japan are hoodwinking the rest of the country for their own purposes. Such theories rarely stand up to close historical examination. At the very least there must be a certain amount of public complicity and, therefore, it is faintly ludicrous to appear to suggest that the Japanese themselves do not know the difference between the official version (*tatema*) and the reality (*honme*) of life in Japan, and that they do not talk to foreigners about this distinction. The authors are absolutely correct that there is great variation in Japan and considerable dissatisfaction with the way the society works, but it is *because* of this that any sensitive foreigner who learns the language should not have problems discovering these different versions of social reality. Finally, some of the evidence which the authors use appears slightly inconsistent. For example, Whiting's book is criticised as a simplistic explanation of Japan in terms of paradoxes (p. 39), when in fact it is a very sophisticated study of the way baseball is played in both Japan and America and actually fulfils the three demands the authors make of such studies on p. 359. On the other hand, Wilkinson, who is cited apparently approvingly several times, surely fits squarely into their definition of an author in the *nihonjinron* mould which they are attacking.

The editing of their book is not, unfortunately, as good as it could be. The problem is perhaps compounded by the fact that one of the authors - Sugimoto - is also the General Editor of the series in which this book appears. Much of the book has already appeared among the 53 examples of their own work the authors cite, and it is frequently repetitive. The index and bibliography are not well cross-referenced, and the book badly needs a glossary to help non-specialist readers. Perhaps most unfortunately, on the flyleaf we are told in bold capitals that the authors are jointly responsible for a work entitled 'NIHOJIN WAS NIHONTEKI'. This is the equivalent to being told that a leading anthropologist of

French society has written 'LES FRANDEIS SONT FRANÇAIS'.

It is to be hoped that these minor problems have been rectified in time for a second edition, since Sugimoto and Mouer do have some important points to make. As they say, researchers have tended to ignore the importance of class and conflict and to emphasize homogeneity and consensus in their work on Japan, and there is a genuine need to redress the balance of the hundreds of often superficial books produced every year, both inside and outside Japan, which attempt to explain the 'Japanese Miracle' in terms of uniqueness and the lack of self. I think that it is slightly unfair, though, to blame anthropology as a discipline for the perpetuation of these myths. Though anthropologists of Japan are likely to be put off, therefore, by some of Sugimoto and Mouer's more abrasive generalizations, I hope that they will discover that the book does provide them, at the very least, with an excellent sounding board for their ideas and forces them to reflect on many of their methodological and theoretical assumptions. On the other hand, I hope that some of the arguments and reports contained in the *JASO* volume will enable those of Sugimoto and Mouer's way of thinking to re-examine some of their own out-dated ideas about anthropology and prevent them ignoring the great contribution anthropology can make to Japanese studies.

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