BOOK REVIEWS

Barbara Nimri Aziz Tibetan Frontier Families, Reflections of three Generations from D'Ing-ri. 1978, pl. 20, pp xiv, 292. New Delhi: Vikas

Vikas are to be thanked for publishing this long-awaited study to accompany their recent reprinting of Victorian classics of Himalayan and Tibetan exploration. Anthropologists, in working with culturally Tibetan peoples on the southern slopes of the Himalaya, have been long aware of the absence of more than anecdotal knowledge of the circumstances of these same peoples to the north of the Tibetan border. This study of the people of D'ing-ri, a district of some 1000 sq.kms. and 12,000 people, north-west from Kumba on the main trade-route from Nepal to Lhasa, goes some of the way towards filling this ethnographic gap.

Barbara Aziz, who completed her Ph.d. at SOAS under Professor S von Furer-Haimendorf, characterises herself here as a biographer of rural heroes, and the work as an historical portrait, over three generations, of the people of D'ing-ri. The research was carried out in 1970, 1971 and 1975 with people from D'ring-ri now resident in Nepal, and incorporates her earlier published work on Descent and Residence in this community ('Some Notions of Descent and Residence in Tibetan Society', in Contributions to the Anthropology of Nepal, C. von Furer Haimendorf, U.K., Phillips and Aris, 1974). To construct an ethnographic picture from a refugee population is a difficult undertaking, and Barbara Aziz is to be congragulated on her perspicacity in attempting such work. In so doing her focus is, perhaps of necessity, not the single time and place of a village study, but a general consideration of the entire area over a lengthy period. In such a work there are evident limitations of method, and the inclusion of fourty-three case studies as an integral part of the text will allow the reader to judge for himself the nature of the information on which the analysis is based.

The style of the work is unconventional not only in ethnographical format, but also in combining the impressions of individuals, and evaluative, programmatic statements, with social analysis; for example, it is not clear what is meant by 'the spontaneous foundation of a heterogeneous society' (p.50). There are simple errors which careful editing would have eliminated; for example, the 'great-little tradition' was proposed by Redefield, not Tambiah (p.203), the plates are un-numbered, and the correct Tibetan transliteration of ge-tsül is dge tshul, not sge-tshul (p.272). It is hoped that such faults will not deter serious readers, as the book is both a unique source of information on this region, and theoretically stimulating in containing an analysis of a practically unstudied Tibetan institution, the village community of lay-priests who in D'ing-ri are known as the ser-ky'im.

The first chapter gives an ecological account of the region, which together with the nine maps, and the appendices of transliterations of place names, is extremely useful for any student of the area. The second and tenth chapters provide biographical histories of Tibetan religious figures who visited the region; the third puts forward a general framework of social classification, both for D'ing-ri and Tibet as a whole. The remaining seven chapters give an account of economic exchanges, descent and marriage as they centre around the household, and of non-kinship forms of social organisation, namely, friendship

societies, lay-priests, and relations with monasteries and other arms of the administration. Two interesting phenomena are described for specialists in kinship and marriage. The first is that lineages occur only for priests, nobility and outcasts, not for the majority of the people, the commoners whose link to particular land results in the grouping of rules of marriage and inheritance around residence in a household. The second is the significance both of hypogamy and hypergamy for these same household units, here looked at respectively as tactics for obtaining prestige and labour viewed from the system as a whole, such an assymetric form of marriage cannot fail to interest students of South Asian kinship organisation. The general framework is a four-fold classification into priests (t: sngags-pa), nobles (t: sger-pa), commoners (t: mi-ser), and outcastes (t: ya-ba). This is a system similar to the Hindu 'jati' (p.52, jajmani ?), or ideological system of varna, but without the pronounced concept of defilement; these are points that deserve to be developed further than they are in this work. We may accept that in D'ring-ri there is a class of hereditary priests called ngag-pa, but as a general framework for Tibet is being proposed, we would like a fuller consideration of this status than is provided by the notion of dung-gyu as a spiritual quality possessed by the priests alone. A Tibetologist would be sure to point out that (t:) sngags is a literal equivalent of the Sanskrit mantra, that (t:) gdung is the honorific for 'lineage' or 'descent', that (t:) rgyud 'connection', and that (t:) brgyud, means 'connection' with the specific connotation of 'descent': as an honorific for descent, the term would be as applicable to nobles as to priests. The quality that the nobles supposedly possess through inheritance, the ku-gyu-pa, could perhaps also be clarified by considering what the term generally means, one of the translations of (t:) sku being 'body'.

Although it is later pointed out that it has the general meaning of 'tax-paying householder', dr'ong-ba (t: grong-pa) (the class of commoners) is subdivided in such a way that this term is glossed as 'agriculturalist'; this is misleading, as others besides dr'ong ba cultivate the soil. There appears to be little utility in the analytical divisons, as is further instanced by the fact that lay-priests are both commoners (p. 0), and together with lower groups of commoners opposed to upper commoners, nobles and priests (p. 161). That this should occur with an indigenous social classification that is used as a framework for an empirical model of social groups is understandable. It raises the question, however, of whether such a framework can be used, on its own, for social analysis in a society which is not static but allows a degree of personal mobility, and has undergone institutional change. Individual and institutional changes in status, in short history, are problematic for any ethnography that takes as its main model a static framework from the ideology of the people themselves. It is, however, only through the date and analysis given by [illegible], both of marriages between assymetric statuses, and of a possible evolutionary relationship between monasteries and communities of lay priests, that allows us to single out the theoretical question, to which it is hoped more attention can be given in the future. Despite these minor reservations, this book is an indispensible source of information for sociologically oriented students of Tibetan society.

Graham Clarke

Population Problems in the Victorian Age. Debates on the Issue from 19th Century Critical Journals. Vol. I Theory; Vol.II Statistics. edited with introductions by J.J. Spengler. Farnborough, Hants: Gregg International Publishers,1973 unpag. £8.00

One of the principal mysteries of the history of population analysis, at least in retrospect, is the separation of debates about population increases from the development of the apparatus for measuring these changes. In the nineteenth century scarcely a decade passed without an attempt to [illegible]late or defend Malthus; however, the questions necessary to understanding fertility and the statistical mechanics of increase did not appear until the present century It is only with the formal elaboration of the fertility concept that what is now called 'demography' came into being; in the last century, despite collection of some marriage and birth data, and the development of a sophisticated understanding of age structure, the mathematics of population remained the mathematics of mortality.

To raise this question of separation is not to read current issues and formulations back onto a prior period, for rather minimal calculations of fertility and vitality did appear in the nineteenth century. What is of interest is how certain questions led to certain sorts of apparati with differing possibilities of development. From the course of history we know that fertility analysis awaited Darwin's reformulation of Malthus, which gave rise, among other things, to mathematical biology. Why should the formal apparatus for describing increases appear in this context, and not in a long period of direct and intense interest in human population increases? Carefully examined, the contrast of the various developments may tell us something of the nature of blockages in formal analysis. The interest is not in the questions that were not asked, but concerns the closure effected by those that were. It hardly needs repeating that anthropology has a considerable interest at present in understanding what stops formal methods from maturing.

Although the two volume organization of these nineteenth century reprints suggests the separation of issues and available statistics, it does not in fact reflect it. This is because the 'Statistics' volume, while fairly representative of mathematical papers in journals of the time, is, by this limitation, not representative of practice elsewhere (e.g., in actuarial societies, or the Registrar-General's Office). Hence both volumes are concerned with topical issues and not the development of the formal apparatus.

Nonetheless, taking as an example three articles which cluster around mid-century, we can get an idea of the diffuse state of analysis. In the 'Statistics' volume there is an article published in the Quarterly Review (1845) on the Census of 1841. The paper is less about the census than it is a paean to the advantages of calculating percentages of different subgroups (numbers of soldiers dying of tropical diseases, changes in the number of persons per dwelling, etc.) in order to assess social vitality or well-being; the techniques employed show little advance over Graunt's Observations of 150 years before. Another article in the volume, taken from Blackwoods (1851) demonstrates another common practice of the time, the comparison of census tabulations with other statistics. In this case, data on the Irish emigration during the famine are combined with trade figures in order to show that free trade induces population declines. Elsewhere in the volume, there are other ad hoc comparisons, for example, of the relation of population density and immorality to changes in the rate of increase. Reprinted in the first volume is Herbert Spencer's curious paper published in the Westminster Review (1852), in which he reasons that population

increases serve the evolutionary purpose of stimulating the development of the human nervous system; greater intelligence is needed to cope with the increased problem of subsistence, etc., in more populous societies; and greater intelligence, in turn, leads to better regulation of numbers.

These papers show little technical awareness of the actual conduct population analysis at the time. They take unrelated products of analysis and relate them by arithmetic reasoning to other external issues, principally that of social 'vitality'. The interest in [illegible] take the form of 'What limits production (socially or materially)?', which is not at all the same question as that of fertility, viz., 'What is the nature (the mathematical regularity) of productivity?'. The first uses numerical relations in an illustrative way, whereas the second argument has a partially mathematical structure. Under the former conditions the possibility of constructing apparati or partly mathematical systems does not arise.

This difference between fertility and vitality, while an important marker of the period, is not by any means sufficient to account for the absence of formal developments; the co-existence in this century of fertility analysis and popular movements (ecology; birth control) at least suggests otherwise. Indeed, it is the capacity of more topical questions regarding vital forces to cut themselves off from relations of ((theoretical). production - their capacity to distract-which suggests that the problem can never be effectively addressed without examination of the character and effects of apparati.

The tendency to discuss topical issues to the exclusion of contemporaneous methods of formal analysis, and vice versa, characterizes not only the history of population analysis, but the history of methods in social sciences in general. It is disappointing to see this pattern repeated in the present volumes. What is the point of reprinting or unpacking this history unless it is to identify the historical limits of population analysis, and so to improve or change it?

There is however a good amount of sustenance to be gained from these reprints, both on the relation of population topics topolitical economy, and on administrative aspects of the early registrations. The papers will undoubtedly be very welcome to those without access to the original journals (in addition to those already cited, there are reprints from Fraser's and the Edinburgh Review). The photographic quality of the reprints is excellent, although it is regrettable that while each paper retains its original pagination, the two books as a whole have none. This, together with the failure to cite authors (these have to be ferreted out of Spengler's introduction), makes the table of contents of somewhat limited use. Those who are familiar with Spengler's other works on early population and economic analysis are likely to be disappointed by his very brief introductions. In particular, no rationale is given for the selection of articles, and there is only cursory treatment of their inter-relation.

Phil Kreager

Herbert G. Gutman: Work, Culture and Society in Industrializing America. Oxford: Basil Blackwell. 1977 x,343pp. £10.50.

Working class history in America has always been a problematic subject for American historians. For one thing, it is a peculiarly American myth that the working class per se--a group of men and women linked together by the common denominator of their wage labour, fecund with their own cultural traditions and identity--does not exist. The class conflicts which have marked every nation in Europe are absent in America; divisions perhaps exist between 'white collar' and 'blue collar' workers, but classes as such seem un-American - so the argument runs. Instead American culture has given itself a myth of consensus, a myth of itself as the first conflict-free society, whose material abundance and sense of mission must lead it to be better, richer, more ideal than any before it. The underlying consensus of value can thus absorb any lingering social ills in a vision of inevitable progress; present need finds solace in future surfeit.

This myth of consensus has particularly shortchanged the historiography of early industrialization in America. The 'rags to riches' myth preached by such writers as Horatio Alger and Samuel Smiles in fact obsessed historians as well, reinforcing thrift, hard work, simple living and planning for the future as the essential determinants of 'American character'. Because these were viewed in purely moral terms, and because material gain was seen as the reward of moral virtue, historians of industrial America tended to focus on the upwardly mobile and the individually successful, taking them as symbols of the national 'consensus'.

This is the historiographical myth which H.G. Gutman has sought to criticize in the series of essays recently published as Work, Culture and Society in Industrializing America. Basing himself very explicitly on the work of E. P. Thompson in Britain, Gutman tries to elucidate the concepts necessary to a history of the American working class. Disavowing Tonnies' classic distinction between Gemeinschaft and Gesellschaft as too simplistic, he draws instead upon the work of the anthropologists Eric Wolf and Sidney W. Mintz, as well as on the sociologist Zygmunt Bauman. Gutman's title shows his anthropological concern: for he uses the distinction between 'culture' and 'society' to account for both the changes and the continuities of the American working class as it was transformed by industrial society. In contrast to both the functionalist diminishment of 'culture' vis-a-vis the organic model of 'society' and the semantic interpretation of 'society' itself as merely a domain of cultural meanings. Gutman treats these as separate and interrelated tools of historical analysis. 'Culture' is the broad set of concepts and ideas--the modes of understanding and action--which a human group has available to it in the context of its past experience; 'society' the more limited term, is the set of real historical contingencies which the culture must act upon. Thus he avoids both the objectifications of functionalism and the idealizing of semantic anthropology; in contrast to the ahistorical tendencies of each, he can give an account of both continuity and crisis. As Gutman himself says,

> An analytic model that distinguishes between culture and society reveals that even in periods of radical economic and social change powerful culture continuities and adaptations continued to shape the historical behaviour of diverse working-class populations (WCS, 18)

By paying attention to both the radical changes and powerful stabilities in American working class life, Gutman shows us a richer field of interpretation than we have previously seen. His concentration on local history, as opposed to national sources, bears special fruit since the groups studied were never powerful nor even very visible nationally. Working class kinship patterns, mobility rates, cultural mores all raise issues that must necessarily be studied at the local level. Gutman has devoted considerable time to tracing the history of the textile town of Paterson, New Jersey, a town rich in what William Carlos Williams called 'the anarchy of poverty.' In one essay Gutman demonstrates that in the post-Civil War expansion, the town's new industrialists were not well-integrated into the older community whose economy they now dominated. Labour disputes frequently saw Paterson's non-industrial elites--local government officials, newspaper editors, small tradesmen, professionals-- side with workers as often as factory owners. The new economic power of the manufacturers was not immediately transformed into social status, and Paterson's class lines showed anything but the simplicities that vulgar Marxism might expect. Public police forces rarely gave whole-hearted support to the owners - who thus had to hire their own police power-and strikers were not punished for exercising 'peaceful coercion' in persuading scabs not to work. The link between social status and economic power did become closer as the old pre-industrial middle class was eroded by time, but Gutman's point is nevertheless well-taken: there was a time-lag between the new society and the old, and the old culture was slow to relinquish its values to the needs of a factory society.

Another of Gutman's contributions is to avoid too narrow a focus on trade unions, a concentration which has marred most American labour history. It is here that Gutman's debt to the new school of British historians is most marked. In a manner reminiscent of Thompson's The Making of the English Working Class, he discloses in America the pre-industrial work habits which we have already encountered in England: the changing pace of work in the course of a normal week, with long weekends of drinking, gaming, and debauchery ending in the traditional 'Blue Monday' of late arrival on the job. In an impressionistic essay which suggests rather than exhausts the possibilities for a new working class history, he points out instances of gang culture, food riots, Luddism, and violence which mitigate against the usual picture of American 'consensus.' He demonstrates, as Thompson has done, that the working class resisted both the techniques of the new work and the regular hours of the factory - a problem compounded in America, as it was not in Europe, by the regular renewal of the immigrant work force. Each new wave brought with it diverse cultural backgrounds, whether industrial or pre-industrial, which had to be fitted to the Procrustean rule of factory efficiency. Thus Gutman quotes a chillingly coercive textbook with which the International Harvester Corporation taught its Polish labourers the English language:

> I hear the whistle. I must hurry.
> I hear the five minute whistle.
> It is time to go into the shop.
> I take my check from the gate board and hang it
> on the department board.
> I change my clothes and get ready to work.
> The starting whistle blows.
> I eat my lunch.
> It is forbidden to eat until then.

> The whistle blows at five minutes of starting time.
> I get ready to go to work.
> I work until the whistle blows to quit.
> I leave my place nice and clean.
> I put all my clothes in the locker.
> I must go home. (WCS,6).

The march from rags to riches was evidently a well-regimented one. Gutman gives us much other material as well. There is an extended study of the ways in which pre-millennial Protestantism was used to convert Christianity into a revolutionary labour doctrine, and a long essay about the work of an early black trade unionist, Richard L. Davis, who tried to bridge racial barriers in extending the United Mine Workers to black miners. These and other, more traditional studies deepen our understanding not only of the communities he portrays, but also of the methodologies relevant to rediscovering a side of American culture previously obscured.

The book is not without its problems. The essays are uneven in quality, betraying their earlier form as published monographs. It lacks a bibliography, and little attempt has been made to tie the essays together into a coherent whole: the introduction is too brief, there is no conclusion at all, and each chapter is made to stand very much on its own. Gutman's writing style is no more than clear, and its lack of polish gives it somewhat the quality of a scrap-book well-pasted with clippings.

These are not, however, damning weaknesses. Work, Culture and Society is an important contribution to our understanding of nineteenth-century working-class culture and the social structure within which it existed. In attacking the consensus version of American history, it opens the way for a more 'anthropological' examination of the American past. The ways in which kinship patterns encouraged and reinforced the creation of the Tammany Hall boss system; the religious underpinnings of interracial working class solidarity in the trade union movement; the ethic of violence as the concomitant of a culture in social upheaval-all of these deserve fuller and more extended exploration. Not only does Gutman's work remind us that 'the traditional imperial boundaries' of academic study have prevented the broad synthesis necessary to cultural history; it also provides evidence of the richness that can result when such boundaries are traversed. Gutman's reassimilation of immigrant, racial, urban, and labour history for the portrayal of working class experience has been needed in American history for a long time. Avoiding class concepts borrowed too mechanistically from the European experience, Gutman still manages to locate the notion of 'class' within mainstream American history. At the same time, he reminds us of the community attachments which Clifford Geertz has labelled primordial: 'the 'assumed' givens...of social existence: immediate contiguity and kin connections mainly, but beyond them, the givenness that stems from being born into a particular religious community, speaking a particular language and following particular social patterns' (WCS,43).

William Cronon

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