BOOK REVIEWS

THOMAS R. TRAUTMANN, Aryans and British India, Berkeley and London: University of California Press 1997. xiv, 260 pp., Figures, References, Index. \$35.00/£24.95.

Thomas Trautmann's latest book successfully and readably manages to keep several historical balls in the air at once: the discovery of Indian languages and culture by Western scholars, the place of India in early attempts to write world history (i.e. the beginnings of anthropology), the development and eventual abandonment of biblical genealogy, and the construction of the racial theory of Indian history, which even today is alive and well, as much in the subcontinent as in the West. As he himself notes, it is also a love story, a story of kinship between Britain and India, and eventually—as race theory raised its ugly head—of kinship denied.

This is intellectual history at its best, with the numerous ironies of conventional subject histories brought to the fore. Historical linguists give pride of place to Sir William Jones as an intellectual forebear, but there has been 'wilful collective amnesia' (p. 56) about the fact that Jones was working within the Mosaic ethnological framework. This meant that, as far he was concerned, the point of his brilliant linguistic discoveries was to assign all the known peoples of the world to one of three classes: the descendants of Ham (Hamites); the descendants of Shem (Semites); and the descendants of Japhet (Japhetites, later known as Caucasians). According to Jones, Africans, Egyptians, Romans, Greeks, Persians, Indians, and Goths were all Hamites, and the flood story found in the Padma Purana confirmed the truth of the biblical account.

The early scholars of India were part of what Trautmann calls 'Indomania...a phenomenon with a structure, which is to say both an internal organization and boundaries' (p. 97). The Indophiles were enthusiastic about Hindu learning and tended to be anti-Muslim. They rejected the immense cycles of time posited in Hindu texts, but otherwise they sought to use Hindu learning to corroborate the Bible and to construct a coherent history of the world. The Indophiles had many enormous scholarly achievements to their credit, but they could also be gullible, as the example of Captain Francis Wilford showed: his Sanskrit *pandit*, working for good money and having been given explicit instructions on what to look for, produced for him scriptures including a Hindu version of the Noah story (which took in Sir William Jones) and copious references to *svetadvipa* ('the white island', i.e. Albion or England).

The Indophobes, who partially overlapped in time but came to dominate later in the century, were very different. They were anti-Hindu and correspondingly pro-Muslim. There was James Mill's well-known and much-cited contempt for Indian learning in his highly successful *History of British India*, and the even more quoted recommendation of Macaulay in his *Minute on Indian Education* (1835) that teaching be in English in order to produce an élite class that was 'Indian in blood and colour, but English in taste, in opinions, in morals, and in intellect'. The Indophobes were either modernizing utilitarians or evangelical Christians, who equally constructed Hindus as morally depraved, duped by crafty priests and oriental despots. Many prominent Indophobes had never been to India. Those who had deplored the common Indophile practice of having Indian wives. For the Indophobes Indians were supposed to assimilate to British ways, but not vice versa. Trautmann suggests that this be called 'one-way asexual assimilation. It became the official creed of nineteenth-century British India' (p. 110).

The book works up to a climax, which is the appearance of race theory after the arrival of Darwinism on the intellectual scene. Suddenly biblical chronology, with the whole of history beginning in 4004 BC, collapses, as does biblical genealogy. Suddenly it dawns on people that there is no necessary connection between race and language. At this point the race theorists attack the Sanskritists and assert that the linguistic affinity of Indian languages is irrelevant: it does not make Indians akin to Europeans. Trautmann remarks, 'I do not wish to leave the impression that the race science crowd were the bad guys and the Sanskritists were the good guys'(p. 191). But every story needs a hero, and this one had at least two, both Sanskritists: William Jones and Friedrich Max Müller. However, even Max Müller, despite his sympathy for Indians, and his inclusive understanding of the term 'Aryan race', for which he was responsible, could not but be part of the emerging racial theory of Indian history. This was the idea that the whole of Indian history is to be explained by the meeting and interaction of a fair-skinned Aryan race of invaders and 'primitive', 'uncivilized' dark aborigines. It led to the influential absurdity of Risley's racial theory of caste in which social position is inversely related to nasal index.

A recurring theme of Trautmann's book is the fact that, after the mid-nineteenth century, India was felt to be boring by the British who controlled it, but remained of passionate interest to continental intellectuals, particularly the Germans. Britain repeatedly had to import foreigners to fill its posts in Sanskrit. This makes it hard to maintain any crude anti-Orientalist thesis of the Saidian sort, since the country with the Empire showed little enthusiasm for supporting or producing knowledge of India, while the country with no strategic interests in India produced far more Sanskritists (as it still does). Furthermore, as we have just seen, those Orientalists who knew most about their subject, such as Sir William Jones or Max Müller, were often attacked by those who sought to propagate negative stereotypes about India, such as James Mill or the ethnologists Robert Latham and John Crawfurd.

Ultimately, as Trautmann makes clear, a moral polemic such as Said's is incompatible with a reasoned assessment of Orientalism. 'We cannot do without a critical and expert winnowing of [the Orientalists'] work' (p. 25). To his great credit, Trautmann does just that. Rather than leaving us with intimations that the racial theory is false while at the same time insinuating that all views are relative, he actually examines the postulated evidence for mentions of race in the Rig Veda and finds it very thin.

Aryans and British India is not only complex and enthralling intellectual history. It is also, in its understated and wryly humorous way, a polemic of its own against a still influential way of thinking about Indian history, against binary thinking and for segmentary models, against anti-Orientalism and for reflexive Orientalism. That all South Asianists should read this book should be obvious; but given what Trautmann has to say about the origins of anthropology and the role of South Asia in early ethnological speculations, all anthropologists should read it too.

DAVID N. GELLNER

FELIX PADEL, Sacrifice of Human Being: British Rule and the Konds of Orissa, Delhi etc.: Oxford University Press 1995. xvii, 428 pp., Glossary, Bibliography, Index. No price given.

This book can be read on a number of different levels. In one sense it is a critical ethnography of the experience of colonialism by both colonized and colonizers in one corner of the once mighty British Empire, the subject people being the Kond, a tribe of Orissa, central India. In another sense it is a critique of anthropology's conventional methods of working, arguing that these methods appropriate knowledge for unforeseen and often deleterious ends, however well-meaning individual researchers might be. Finally, it is a disguisition on the notion of sacrifice. Indeed, the theme of sacrifice runs right through the book. The text revolves around the Konds' alleged former sacrifice of human servants called meriah. For the record, the author believes that these did take place occasionally, in other words by no means as frequently as British colonial officers alleged on the basis of hearsay (none of them ever witnessed such events). For the record too, informants of my own in Orissa would attribute the meriah sacrifices to fighting with weapons between feuding clans at ritual events, at which blood is frequently spilled. In one of these views, sacrifices made by certain Kshatriyan castes to the deity Durga are more likely to involve humans, as the author himself comes close to admitting. At all events, any previous human sacrifices among the Konds themselves have long been replaced with buffalo sacrifices, though as with other long illegal and supposedly redundant practices such widow-burning and female infanticide, instances are still rumoured to take place from time to time.

However, the theme of sacrifice is exploited much more deeply than this. Administrators' and missionaries' efforts to 'civilize' the Konds also involved a notion of selfsacrifice, in the service of both empire and humanity. As Padel points out, those who are prepared to sacrifice themselves are often also prepared to sacrifice others, in this case the Konds, whose way of life has been seriously disrupted since contact by the interference of well-meaning but often oppressive and always powerful outsiders. This entailed a crisis in role-management for the Konds, who had hitherto enjoyed a more symbiotic ritual relationship with local rajas as part of a common social and ritual system—this was not the case with Europeans. Other activities are also likened to these human sacrifices, such as medieval punishments involving execution and other operations performed on the body, and the collection of human heads and other 'tribal' exhibits in the early days of a more 'scientific' anthropology. Here museums are a general target, from the Pitt Rivers in Oxford to the state anthropology museum in Bhubaneswar, Orissa's capital.

While not regretting the disappearance of human sacrifice, Padel argues that it was not the irrational superstition administrators and missionaries saw it to be, but an integral part of a wider system of belief and practice. This system valued the sustainability of nature above its relentless exploitation at the present time, but it also had to incorporate satisfaction of the demands of the earth goddess, who appears to be the local version of a demanding and often terrifying female deity found across India, among tribes and Hindu castes alike. There is also the possibility that human sacrifice is linked to the growth of the trade in turmeric, which had become the Konds' most important cash crop by the time of European involvement with them. Both considerations indicate that, far from being a 'primitive' practice, human sacrifice is linked very much to the arrival of 'civilization', in the form of both Hindu landlords and traders and European empire-builders. But it is the sacrifice of a way of life on the altar of 'progress' that is Padel's chief theme—hence the title, Sacrifice of Human Being. This distorted sense of progress is especially evident today, as the modern Indian state, born out of opposition to British rule, has none the less proved to be the continuator of that rule in many ways, in arguing that tribal welfare demands interference in tribal culture. The most important change is that whereas the British tried in their clumsy way to protect tribals against Hindu intrusions, the government of the republic feels justified in pursuing tribal assimilation into the mainstream of Indian society-something which only gives tribals a low status which is anything but attractive to most of them, even if they do manage to keep their land in the process.

This is an unconventional text which expressly eschews conventional modes of anthropological writing as treating Kond subjects too much like academic objects and as masking a failure in truly understanding other cultures, which no 'scientific' or even conventionally descriptive and analytical approach is ever likely to master. It is none the less outside the mainstream of current deconstructionist work in anthropology, though its overall approach is similar (one of the few concessions it makes to anthropological theory is actually structuralist in form, being a Needhamite list of oppositions between aspects of colonial interpretations of Kond society and the latter's reality). It is also most sensitively written by someone who has made many trips to tribal areas in this part of India and who knows many tribes extremely well. Not everyone will agree with the approach chosen, but few will be able to argue that the plight of tribals in most parts of India is not a serious one, with loss of rights over land to mining and dam-building projects, and the reduction of many from relatively free agriculturalists to poorly paid wage-labourers or industrial scavengers. It is in tracing the origins of this process back to the self-appointed civilizing mission of the British Empire, with its concomitant devaluation of subject peoples' ways of life, that the book has its chief value.

ROBERT PARKIN

BEATRIX HEINTZE, Ethnographische Aneignungen: deutsche Forschungsreisende in Angola, Frankfurt am Main: Verlag Otto Lembek 1999. 458 pp., Plates, Maps, Bibliographies. No price given.

Although this book can be attached to the school of historical ethnology associated with the University of Frankfurt, where the author is based, it is none the less a fundamentally modern piece of work, being concerned above all to examine the history of German exploration in Angola towards the end of the nineteenth century and the relationships between the explorers and the indigenous inhabitants they encountered, as well as their perceptions of one another. Much of this exploration took place in the wake of the journeys undertaken by Livingstone and Stanley in central Africa, which had an impact in Germany, as elsewhere, as a model for later expeditions. Who were to be the colonial masters in this part of Africa had still not been entirely settled, and there were competing claims from the British in east and south Africa, the Portuguese in Angola and Mozambique (both powers wanted to join up their respective bits) and the Belgians in the Congo. The arrival of the Germans therefore considerably raised fears not only among African chiefdoms but also with rival European powers, especially the Portuguese, of interference and quite possibly conquest. The Germans managed to deflect such fears for a time by stressing the scientific (including anthropological) nature of their expeditions, though as Heintze points out, most of them were also actuated, in varying degrees, by the fever for colonies that came to characterize German policy in this period. She also rightly stresses the climate of domination and violence that was involved in these activities, in which stereotypes of Africa and Africans were taken out on expedition along with personal baggage and scientific equipment, not meeting much in the way of subsequent modification through the steady assembling of knowledge. None the less, not all the travellers were gung-ho imperialists, and some showed themselves quite sensitive to the problems of Europeans living and working in such areas, and of the alternative of getting Africans to labour in their stead, if only in the practical sense.

Following a comprehensive history of these activities and a list of the main expeditions with their participants, the bulk of the book consists of short biographies of the thirty leading travellers. The most famous for the anthropologist is undoubtedly Adolf Bastian, who virtually founded anthropology as a separate academic discipline in Germany, is best known intellectually for his stress on 'elementary' forms of thought and 'mentality', and is generally recognized as having influenced both Boas and Frazer, and, through them, Lévi-Strauss. He made two journeys to Angola, in 1857 and 1873, but he was clearly less significant as an explorer in Angola than some other travellers, like Max Buchner, Paul Pogge or Eduard Pechuël-Loesche. These other travellers were mainly doctors, military officers, or academics in other disciplines, such as geography and natural science, only Hermann Baumann and the even more obscure Alfred Schachtzabel joining Bastian among the anthropologists. Not all expeditions were carried out on behalf of Germany: Hermann von Wissmann was for a time in the service of King Leopold of Belgium, who was mainly responsible for the more or less violent opening up of the Congo basin to European colonialism. Expeditions had varying degrees of success, many having to be aborted because of sickness, death, or problems with porters or supplies. Some, however, more or less achieved their objectives, going

from coast to coast in an easterly direction without major obstacles. Heintze highlights the exaggerated claims that were made of what could be achieved in order to secure funding, much of it private, making a degree of failure almost inevitable.

Attached to each biography are some extracts from the writings that its particular subject almost inevitably composed after his return to Germany. The book is illustrated with thirteen plates of art collected on these expeditions and has comprehensive bibliographies of what are today often very obscure works that are difficult to find, as well as a couple of useful maps. Thus although the author's introduction can be regarded as an important contribution in its own right to the history of exploration and its connections with both colonial policy-making and academia, the work as a whole will also be a useful tool for other researchers wishing to examining this topic in respect of Angola and south-central Africa generally.

ROBERT PARKIN

NIGEL RAPPORT and ANDREW DAWSON (eds.), Migrants of Identity: Perceptions of Home in a World of Movement, Oxford and Providence: Berg 1998. 246 pp., Index, References, Tables. £39.99/£14.99.

In their introduction to this volume, Nigel Rapport and Andrew Dawson clearly state that its focus is on contemporary identity, which is treated as a search. This contemporary identity is evident throughout the volume, and the search for it is nowhere more apparent than in the poignant account of the struggle for post-Yugoslav identities being undertaken by three women writers.

As the words of the deftly written subtitle suggest, the concept of home is considered an anthropological construct, and a useful analytical construct. In their discussion revolving round a world of movement, they give an example of anthropological fieldwork in which one traditionally goes to a place, becomes absorbed in it, and then returns. The metaphor of the rite of passage is without meaning if 'cultures are not seen as separate entities that can be entered and exited' (p. 5). The editors say that movement has become fundamental to modern identity, and this concept is encountered in all the papers, each of which considers the 'attainment of home as an individual search, involving either or both physical and cognitive movement' (p. 11). The editors' definition of home, namely as 'where one best knows oneself' (p. 9), is helpful in respect of the various descriptions of home encountered in the book. They suggest that its suitability comes from its demonstration of 'the ambiguities and fluidities, the migrancies and paradoxes of identity in the world today' (ibid.).

An introductory chapter sets the scene for the other authors in the volume and considers the relationship between movement and identity within the concept of home. The editors suggest that people today choose from the behaviours and beliefs of other cultures in forming their own identities, 'moving amongst a global inventory of ideas and modes of expression' (p. 25). In their discussion of movement and home, they say that 'in a world of travellers and journeymen, home comes to be found more usually

in a set of practices' and not dwelling in a 'fixed physical structure' (p. 27). They conclude by saying that anthropology has just woken up to the idea of there being a correlation between identity and movement and that it is 'through the continuity of movement that human beings continue to make themselves at home' (p. 33).

Vered Amit-Talai analyses the lives of temporary residents on the Cayman Islands and highlights aspects of protectionism on the part of the authorities as well as the globalization resulting from its status as an offshore banking centre attracting an international labour force. As case-histories of temporary residents show, access to residence rights is seen to be denied them and only offered to 'true' Cayman Islanders. Old ways of being 'at home' become redundant in the light of precarious border crossings and shaky legal statuses.

Using case-histories of newcomers to a settlement in Israel, Nigel Rapport explores the ways in which settlers manage their status as immigrants, suggesting that there are cognitive as well as physical homes. This is seen in the ties that are preserved with the USA, as well as in how, through their past as Americans, they begin to live the 'dream' of settling in Israel. In their immigrant identity, 'David and Rachel had not moved out of "America": in fact, through the 'old selves', new identities were being created (p. 81).

Stef Jansen uses the narratives of three women writers to highlight ideas of home and identity in Yugoslavia. He says that the disintegration of Yugoslavia was realized not only through the destruction of lives, villages and cities, it also constituted a break in a number of narratives, such as a 'never again' belief in 'civilization' (p. 94). One of the results is what Jansen describes as being 'homeless at home' powerfully featuring in the women writers' narratives.

Ladislav Holy also writes of new nation, namely the new Czech Republic, and how 'home' is equated with 'homeland' within it. Czechs are able to forge the idea of a 'homeland' between those of 'nation' and 'state'. This notion of a homeland allows for a patriotism that is culturally specific. When looking at the idea of home and 'foreignness', Holy highlights the category of tourist and writes of the Czech's ambivalent attitude toward them. On the one hand they bring in much needed income and jobs in the tourist sector, while on the other hand they 'treat as a hotel the same space that the Czech's see as their home', forcing the Czechs to 'act as if they were hotel guests in the space that they conceptualize as their home' (p. 132).

The metaphor of being a child in Britain is explored by Alison James. Included here are the ideas of 'home' and 'family', which effectively provide the stage for the dependency of the child today. Using the suggested definition of home as where one best knows oneself, she then suggests that 'the child might be ideologically at home in the family' (p. 142). Describing pre-school visits and children's first weeks at school, James shows the role of home and family in the social construction of childhood and how they can position a child as 'passively dependent' (p. 158).

Using case-studies, Eric Hirsch examines the role of information and communication technology. He makes a significant distinction between 'home' and 'house' and shows how the acceptance of computers into the home alters these notions. In one of the case-studies, the woman of the household did not want exposed computers or VCRs in the sitting-room (p. 173). Hirsch shows that what happens is 'domestic appropriation' and adds that this 'consumption as a form of appropriation...has as its objective the transcendence of potential alienation' (p. 176).

Sandra Wallman looks at different London settings from the idea of 'home' as a 'proxy for belonging somewhere' and shows how urban dwellers construct this idea of belonging. The relationship between people and place is looked at in terms of identity. Three identities emerge from the case-studies of urban settings: those who had moved into a district to stay, therefore creating new identities; those in a neighbourhood who refused to move under threat of demolition and were therefore seen to be defending old identities; and those who changed identity as they continually moved. She notes the distinction between a home being a conceptual place and a dwelling being a material place (p. 203).

Andrew Dawson's paper is set in the industrial north-east of England and features a club for elderly people in a coal mining area. Notions of community incorporate addresses, namely working-class groups' right to define community on the basis of their strong links with mining, and middle-class groups defining community on the basis that they had resided in the area for a long time. Dawson looks at the setting up of a heritage museum and describes 'a situation where the imagination of other places and times informs images of community constructed in the here and now....' This construction was seen in the continuity of life portrayed in the heritage museum as opposed to the approaching discontinuity caused by the death of club members.

In a review of the book overall, Karen Fog Olwig highlights the way in which the papers stress the relationship between home and movement, migrancy and identity. However, she points out that some of the authors choose to 'examine home as a space of self-knowledge and identity rather than as a space of social relations' and expresses the hope for a different kind of analysis in the future. This, she says, might focus on the 'interrelationship between home as a conceptual space of identification and home as a nodal point in social relations' (p. 236).

As the introductory chapter promises, the papers in this book have much to say about contemporary identity within the context of home and the fluidity of 'home' for many people at the end of the twentieth century. The volume will be of value to anthropologists and others addressing issues of identity and home in the context of some of the great migrations of this era.

JANETTE DAVIES

LUCIO V. MANSILLA, A Visit to the Ranquel Indian (transl. Eva Gillies), Lincoln and London: University of Nebraska Press 1997. xl, 453 pp., Index, Plates, Maps. £47.50/ £18.95.

In 1870 Argentina was a far from settled country. Externally, the Paraguayan War was just ending, while internally there was still an Indian frontier, for it was not until the end of that decade that General Julio Rocal's so-called 'conquest of the wilderness' effectively wiped out the native population. In that year, 1870, an Argentinian army

officer, Lucio Mansilla, made a visit from a frontier fort on the Rio Quinto to the Ranquel Indians in the modern province of La Pampa. The account of his journey, almost certainly penned back in Buenos Aires after the event, appeared in serial form in the newspaper *La Tribuna*. By the end of the year, the various pieces were brought together and published as a book, which, in Spanish, has been in print ever since. This—oddly enough, given the high esteem in which it is held—is the first English translation of a work which is undoubtedly one of the great descriptions of an Indian frontier, for either North or South America.

The Ranquel Indians are very similar to the better-known Araucanians, who, even back in the days of the Inca Empire, had a reputation as warriors. The Ranquel, like the Plains Indians of North America, had fully appreciated, and turned to good effect, all the advantages of mobility that the horse, introduced by the Spaniards, offered for subsistence and warfare. They represented a considerable obstacle to Argentinian expansion and more than a threat to those living on the 'civilized' side of the frontier. This could not be demonstrated more clearly than in the epilogue, where Mansilla attempts to estimate how many Ranquel there were. His estimate is of some eight to ten thousand, a figure which includes around six to eight hundred Christian captives, or perhaps as many as 10 per cent, who had presumably been picked up in raids across the frontier. This is a remarkable suggestion, but I know of no work on the impact of the absorption of relatively large numbers of non-Amerindians by native populations, a topic that would certainly reward examination.

Lucio Mansilla was well connected—he was nephew of President Rosas—well read and well travelled, having visited India, the Middle East and Europe as a young man. He had become a soldier and fought in the Paraguayan War, and in an effort to forward his own political career had actively supported Domingo Sarmiento's bid for the presidency. Sarmiento was successful and, like Rosas, had a hatred of the Indians, but unlike Rosas he preferred to settle their future by treaty rather than with the bullet. It may have been because of this that when, in the late 1860s, Mansilla found himself serving on the Indian frontier, he felt free to undertake some freelance treaty-making with the Ranquel (it was as part of this process that his visit to the Ranquel was undertaken). He was successful in obtaining the Indians' agreement, but unfortunately the Argentinian government never got round to ratifying the treaty.

In order to demonstrate his trust in the Indians, Mansilla travelled with a small and lightly armed party. Even so, the eighteen-day journey that was required to meet the Ranquel chief was filled with excitements and dangers, many of the latter emanating as much from the internal factionalism of the Ranquel themselves as from any direct antagonism towards the Argentinians. In this respect Mansillal's account reads very genuinely, and there is also a great deal of ethnographic information about the Ranquel in these pages, though it has to be picked out. Unlike a modern ethnography, which it was not intended to be, the material is not on the surface but mixed in with descriptions of the countryside, philosophical musings, literary quotations, soldiers' tales from other campaigns, even an account of the fate of his dog. The last gives rise to the following contemplation: 'Will ethics one day be an exact science? Where shall we ever stop, if comparative anatomy, philosophy, phrenology, biology itself begin to progress in as extraordinary a fashion as physics and chemistry do every day, so that there are beginning to be no secrets left for man in the material world?' In other words, it is one of those physical journeys that is also a philosophical voyage, Lévi-Strauss's *Tristes Tropiques* being a more recent South American example of the genre.

Eva Gillies, an Argentinian by birth and a former member of the Institute at Oxford, has produced an excellent and readable translation. Her introduction succinctly locates Mansilla's visit in the political context of the period, and the annotation is use ful and instructive, even if on occasion the expectations concerning the general knowledge of readers seem dismally low. The work has been nicely produced and there are some fascinating illustrations. Nebraska is to be congratulated on publishing the sort of work university presses ought to publish but increasingly shrink from doing.

PETER RIVIÈRE

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