ral residents and their wider neighborhood. Two chapters contain particularly insightful discussions of bar behavior and the social functions of bars, which for men provide a critical locus of activity outside home and work. The social activity of corral women, in contrast, is shown to be mainly restricted to their own homes and to those of female relatives.

This and many other aspects of sex-role segregation emerge in the book as convincingly demonstrated features of corral existence. Press’s explanation of the phenomenon can be summed up in a formula that might be usefully tested cross-culturally: “Where individual identity is strongly linked to sex, where economic segregation of the sexes is pronounced, and where families cede important functions to external bureaucratic entities, the basis for conjugal role segregation exists” (p. 152). Anybody who has studied Andalusian agrotowns, however, can furnish abundant evidence against the author’s contention that “such segregation is more an urban than a rural phenomenon” (p. 152), for most of the social and psychological constraints that seem to force these Sevillians into a sex-segregated mold also characterized large rural settlements of the region, and with similar consequences. Here, as in other portions of the book, Press’s intention to portray the city as unique leads him to overgeneralize.

Particularization, by contrast, is well warranted in the author’s excellent differentiation between Sevillian corrales and the Latin American tenements to which they bear superficial resemblance. Press’s main point is that, unlike the slum dwellers of Mexico City or Santiago, “Seville’s corral residents are thorough urbanites. They are not socially or economically marginal to the mainstream of city life but, rather, well integrated into it” (p. 79). It is this integration that occupies much of the second half of the volume, including, among other topics, the best anthropological discussion of housing and medical facilities in Spain that I know of. The author dissects the most essential laws, values, bureaucratic structures, and informal social ties that have led both to the rise of large-scale condominium living and to the virtual disappearance of folk health beliefs and practices. Similarly, the impact of lotteries, credit facilities, unemployment compensation, and retirement plans on the economic life of corral residents and of the city in general receives superbly detailed treatment. In all these realms of urban life, Press clearly sorts out restrictions and opportunities so that, in the end, the reader comes away with a picture of highly rational Sevillians, realistically aware of the alternatives available to them and able to maneuver within the system to their greatest residential, medical, and financial advantage.

Press’s finest overall achievement is to move adroitly among a variety of levels of urban experience. In passage after passage he successfully combines discussions of governmental infrastructure, individual philosophy, and social environment to yield a highly intimate, personalized perspective on life in a metropolis of more than half a million people. The lasting impression from the second half of the volume is undoubtedly that of a modernized city in the throes of dynamic change, a portrait that contradicts the author’s initial insistence on the extreme conservatism of Seville and its inhabitants. If Press had used his concluding chapter to explain this apparent inconsistency, instead of as a rather bland summation, the book would be even stronger than it already incontestably is.

Contributions to South Asian Studies 1.

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This collection is the first in what is intended to be an annual set of multidisciplinary contributions to the study of South Asian society, and it is a promising start. It consists of six essays: Madhav Deshpande on “History, Change and Permanence: A Classical Indian Perspective”; Friedhelm Hardy on “The Tamil Veda of Sudra Saint”; Rafiuddin Ahmed on “Islamization in 19th-Century Bengal”; Michael Carrithers on “The Social Organization of the Sinhalese Sangha in Historical Perspective”; C. Shackleton “Language and Cultural Identity in Pakistan Punjab”; and D. L. Sheth on “Caste and Politics: A Survey of Literature.”

The essays are varied in scope and quality. With the exception of the essay by Ahmed on Islamization in Bengal, which is a straightforward social-historical piece, the rest of the authors use their own materials to make pleas for new perspectives on their fields. Madhav Deshpande makes a well-argued case for a particular Indian view of the past, exemplified by the classical Indian grammatical theorists, which has wide general implications for our understanding of the Hindu historiographical mentality and for our use of indigenous ‘historical’ sources. I am inclined to agree with his view of this mentality, in which the past and present are treated as coextensive and the imperfect present is always measured by reference to an “eternal” and idealized past. Friedhelm Hardy makes a dauntingly documented study of the role of the poet-saint Namalvar in the Tamil Sri Vaisnava tradition. For the patient reader (and a non-specialist will have to be patient indeed with the indological detail of this essay), this is an important study of the process by which a person becomes a saint, his poetry the center of a sacred canon, and his memory the basis of an iconographic and symbolic tradition. These general problems are richly illustrated and, from the specialist point of view,
an important aspect of South Indian cultural history is brought to scholarly attention.

Carrithers’s essay on the Sinhalese Sangha uses data on a particular modern Sinhala Buddhist monk-refomer to illustrate a general thesis about the tension between two major, contradictory models of monkhood in Theravada Buddhism. The argument is intriguing, but the brevity of the essay and its lack of attention to the work of other scholars of Sinhalese Buddhism make it seem somewhat grandiose and, with regard to the issue of royal intervention in the Sangha, weak. Shackles’s piece on linguistic revitalization in the Pakistan Panjab is a welcome and lucid presentation of a little understood zone of language politics in South Asia. The information contained in it is valuable, and its message—that we should look to the early literary phase of movements for cultural mobilization—is apposite. D. L. Sheth’s survey of the literature on the relationship between caste and politics in India is well organized and accurate, though scholars unaccustomed to the linguistic usages of sociology may find it occasionally incomprehensible. It nevertheless presents a clear view of the field and a sensible plea for more careful formulation of problems and hypotheses linking micro- and macro-level processes, rather than a continued proliferation of empirical studies. Sheth does not justify his almost exclusive concentration on work by Indian scholars, which is curious for an essay that claims to survey the field. Ahmed’s essay on Islam in 19th-century Bengal again contains interesting information and a fine set of references to other work in this area and to primary sources, but its general argument about the consequences of this process of Islamization remains a little vague, possibly because of the absence of a clearer picture of the general social and historical background.

My main regret about this book is that it does not contain an introductory essay by the editor, which might have served to tie together the themes of the various essays. This is unfortunate, especially because the essays by Deshpande, Hardy, Ahmed, and Shackles raise an important set of interconnected questions about language, cultural identity, change, and mobilization. The essays by Carrithers and Sheth, though not so clearly related to the others, nevertheless raise related problems about social change and cultural norms. One hopes that future volumes in this series will rectify this gap and thereby turn what now looks like a journal between hard covers into a genuinely interdisciplinary symposium. Also, there are a fairly large number of typographical errors. Given the high quality of the essays, this too is unfortunate. In summary, this book will be of considerable interest to scholars from a variety of disciplines who work on South Asia. A proper introduction might have made it more useful to scholars who work in other geographical areas.

The theme of this analysis is survival of a small population by means of matrilineality and adoption of actual or symbolic founding children. For countless generations the Uduk have been victimized by slave raiders from the Nuer, Arabs, Amhara, and Galla. Only about 10,000 persons speak Uduk—the name used for them by British colonial administrators and the (Protestant) Sudanese Interior Mission—as their mother tongue (p. 8). Greenberg classified them as a subdivision of Koman, Grottanelli as “Pre-Nilotes.” Their emic name, “Kwanim Pa,” means “people of the homeland,” where they practice shifting cultivation of sorghum and keep goats and pigs.

A student of the late Evans-Pritchard and of Godfrey Lienhardt, Wendy James credits the Gurunyu cult of adoption, which brings in bearreaved children who are nobody’s kinsmen (pp. 232, 258), with a large share of credit for the survival of the culture. She was also impressed by the militancy of the women who are famous for jousting with each other by means of 6- or 7-foot-long wooden staves (usually over the man they love; p. 129 and photos 8a and 8b). She retells versions of the Uduk “origin of sex and marriage” myth three times. According to the myth, the first man was discovered sitting in a fig tree like a bird by a woman who took him home, initiated sex relations with him, and became pregnant. Soon after, the other women climbed all over him for their share of sexual activity, until he was so exhausted that in desperation he revealed where other men could be found (pp. 2, 79–80, 226). James also notes that “wife beating is far less common than it is among Arabized tribes, but only among the Uduk is husband beating by the wife no cause for astonishment” (p. 131). Since payment of bridewealth is not essential, Uduk women are popular with non-Uduk men (p. 258).

This contribution to the social anthropology of survival may be welcomed by ethnologists and others, and feminists may be gratified to read another case history of resilient “sisters.”


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