Review
Reviewed Work(s): The Dark Side of Humanity: The Work of Robert Hertz and Its Legacy by Robert Parkin and Robert Hertz
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Larry Naylor, whom the book describes as the director of the Cultural Sensitivity Training and Research Center at the University of North Texas, offers a comprehensive discussion of numerous anthropological concepts associated with culture, culture change, and applied anthropology over the past century. After devoting the first two chapters to a historical review of the culture concept, the author presents in chapter 3 an "environmental adaptation/interaction" model of cultural change in the form of a flow diagram. Naylor devotes chapters 4 through 7 to a discussion of directed cultural change processes. Chapter 8 treats the problems and considerations associated with introducing culture change or applied anthropology. These considerations include psychological factors such as motivation and adherence to tradition.

Naylor's approach falls within the positivist tradition. Throughout these chapters, he illustrates various ideas with empirical references to particular societies and published works. He does not, however, offer fully developed case studies.

Naylor's writing tends to be wordy, and on occasion it tends to rely key concepts. He writes, for example, that "culture is real, yet we speak of it in the abstract" (p. 16), and "evolution points to the continuous nature of change" (p. 38). Although his "environmental adaptation/interaction" model clearly grants priority to the natural environment as the major causal element of culture change, he qualifies (or contradicts) this on occasion. For example, at one point he writes that "[communication] may be the single most important force of change" (pp. 158-159), and at another point, he states that "change may begin with an idea" (p. 18). Thus the author's logic in use is more eclectic than his stated model suggests.

Naylor's approach is certainly multidimensional in that he considers various facets of the cultural change process as conceptualized by many different anthropologists over the decades. His references to the literature are abundant and well chosen. Consequently the work should appeal to anyone seeking an organized review of the topic. He ends the book with some advice with which I certainly agree: "Anthropologists must move from their parochial cultural research interests, develop more global interests, and become more willing to engage in international activities" (p. 213).


Among the countless innocents who died in the first World War on the distant battlefields from Ver-
in the next four chapters he provides a systematic and exemplary analysis of Hertz’s main ideas and their present significance. First Parkin presents Hertz’s ideas, then Parkin presents the reactions of Hertz’s contemporaries to his work. Only then does Parkin direct us to the lines of connection from the discussions of the 1920s and ’30s in France and England to present-day concerns. We are presented with essentially four main issues. The problem of “right and left” leads into a useful discussion of “oppositions”; the work on “death” leads into an examination of rites de passage and the organization of ritual; and Saint Besse concerns the problem of “solidarity” and the management of history. Finally there is the ambitious and incomplete (and highly Durkheimian) project on “Sin and Expiation.” How does the moral dimension of society express itself in the individual conscience through the sense of sin? How does expiation work? How are transgressions to be treated? What are the ritual patterns through which solidarity is reaffirmed and errant individuals are reunited with their group? These are the main concerns of Hertz’s writings. Their connection with the Année sociologique tradition is evident.

Parkin is to be commended for the way that he links these problems to the past and present. He has compiled interesting notes to show how Louis Dumont, who had been a student of Mauss in Paris, is invited to Oxford in the period after the war. Through Dumont, Evans-Pritchard became involved and then included the work of Hertz every year in his lectures. The main questions raised by Hertz have certainly remained of perennial interest. Parkin’s commentary is extremely helpful in providing the timelines of the most recent of the investigations around these subjects without digressing into a lengthy discussion of the associated controversies. The work of Needham is discussed. Lévi-Strauss is only mentioned.

This is a valuable and admirable work. We are indebted to Parkin for his meticulous and extensive research on critical intellectual traditions.

For all its merits, I did not find this book very enlightening methodologically; fieldwork (i.e., participant-observation) is mentioned but rarely discussed and does not seem to be problematic for most of the authors. I struggled sometimes to “translate” what this must have meant if it came from researchers who were members of a highly traditional, even class-bound society where “work” could only assume, “women’s liberation” was still less viable than in the United States. I also saw the need to translate various more prosaic, non-American references and terms (e.g., “tendering,” as in putting up for competitive bidding [p. 164], and “gangmasters,” meaning subcontractors who find seasonal farm labor for farmers [p. 142]).

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