



Innovative Organization for Population Research.

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& Watt's thoughtful paper on literacy and social evolution is misplaced here, alongside of what seems a naïve and journalistic survey of 'Language conflicts and the political community' by R. Inglehart & M. Woodward.
W. McCORMACK

NIXDORFF, HEIDE. *Zur Typologie und Geschichte der Rahmentrommeln: kritische Betrachtung zur traditionellen Instrumententerminologie* (Baessler-Arch. N. F. 7). 286 pp., illus., tables, bibliogr. Berlin: Dietrich Reimer, 1971. DM 60

The author has examined a fairly impressive number of frame-drums in different museums. This gives a high degree of reliability to his findings about the typology and history of this instrument. Nixdorff has not seen the collections of the Instrumental Museum in Brussels or of the Museum of Central Africa in Tervuren. He apparently only checked the catalogues of Mahillon and Olga Boone's book on the drums of Zaire. Since the publication of both these works, the drum collections of these museums have been considerably increased.

The glossary is short but practical. There is an important bibliography. The book is divided into three parts: the first is about classification (some important systems, e.g. Jeremy Montagu's, are not discussed). Since Nixdorff judges no existing system suitable for his object, he proposes a classification of his own, based upon the method of handling the frame-drum (a classification inspired by both Schaeffner and Dräger?). Part 2, far more important, gives the organological description and the catalogue of the instruments examined. Part 3 discusses briefly the theories about the development and genesis of the instrument. Some social and musical functions are mentioned too.

The question of the voices of the drums is also examined (p. 140). Personally, I found different data for the Berbers. The bendir has, I was told, three voices: (a) the voice of the drum; (b) the man's voice (high-pitched rimshot); (c) the woman's voice (deep booming in the centre). For the explanation of this one must refer to their way of singing.

The book ends with a very interesting suggestion: since the development of variants of existing types can be traced, should it not also be possible to reconstruct the history of this instrument, taking into account the known motifs leading to these variants?

F. J. DE HEN

KAPLAN, SYLVAN & ROBERT K. McCORMICK (eds). *Innovative organization for population research*; with a foreword by Philip A.

Corfman. xvi, 596 pp., figs, tables, Springfield: Charles C. Thomas, 1971 \$15.25

The main theme of this book is that there is a population problem in America and that the best way to deal with this is to set up research centres, mostly in universities, where 'multi-disciplinary' teams could devise ways of slowing down such growth. The quality of the contributions is very uneven. Most of the pieces are short and appear to be very superficial. But there are also some thoughtful summaries, for example in ch. 3 where 'A demographer views the population problem' and indicates, once again, that world-wide industrialisation cannot solve population difficulties since such industrialisation cannot occur. One of the most provocative essays is by a student who is disenchanted with universities. There is also a simpler version of the type of predictions which have recently been made by M.I.T. analysts in their study of world growth. The latter half of the book discusses practical problems of how research centres should be organised. Ex-Rand and Defence Department officials point out, for example, that the university is not ideally suitable since 'the independence of the tenured university member which is so desirable up to a point makes him hard to bend in directions that he finds unacceptable' (p. 213). Occasional rays of humour break through the oppressive pomposity.

What value has this book for anthropologists? The index only mentions anthropology once. This, plus various asides, illustrates once again the complete blindness of anthropologists in the past to the huge area of population dynamics. While population exploded around them, they continued to study kinship and marriage—two of the crucial determinants of fertility trends—almost totally oblivious of demographic considerations. Yet, if the anthropologist wants a guide to recent research on fertility he would do much better to look elsewhere, for example at Geoffrey Hawthorn's recent paperback *The sociology of fertility* rather than at this collection. If he would like a summary of the current population crisis he would do far better to read Ehrlich or Borgstrom. The unique value of this book is that we can listen to a group of very distinguished academic bureaucrats talking about the most difficult task of all, how to translate academic findings into policy. The book also contains many hints of the confusions and neuroses of present-day America and of the overwhelming pressures which are destroying any vestiges of freedom in the universities there. A potted biography of each of the informants helps to place their biases. Perhaps a kinship diagram (real or fictive) would also be helpful, as would a few photographs of the species in

their native habitat, surrounded by computer tapes and filing cabinets. Meanwhile, back in Calcutta . . .

ALAN MACFARLANE

HENSHAW, PAUL S. *This side of yesterday: extinction or Utopia*. x, 186 pp., illus., map, tables. New York, London: John Wiley, 1971. £3 (cloth), £1.35 (paper)

It took all the millennia before 1650 to reach half a billion living humans; the second half billion took two centuries; the seventh took eight years (1960–68). 'It is apparent to thoughtful people everywhere that human society is on a collision course. Freedom to procreate with abandon, to pollute without restraint, and to exploit with increasing intensity, quite obviously cannot go on indefinitely' (p. 1). Unfortunately this author's analysis of the problems cannot be recommended for it is pretentious and superficial. For example if we turn to 'Quantitation [sic], art, and ritual' we find nine lines of generalised platitude, such as 'Art and rituals are also forms of abstractions, and their use by human beings is much more prevalent than use by other animal types' (p. 56). Definitions are arbitrary; 'cosmology is a term used to connote change in the universe' (p. 13). Conclusions are banal: 'Man is a strange creature and he is a mixture of things; he is different things at different times . . .' (p. 155). There is a strange belief that 'Nature' is purposeful: 'Without any doubt, man is part of a system that is leading somewhere' (p. 13). Nor are the solutions to the crisis of much interest. The first is 'A realistic facing of the population problem together with steps to maintain a growing economy without growth in numbers of people' (p. 175). Such 'growthmania' would, according to most ecologists, be disastrous. How did the book come to be so disappointing? We are told that it 'grew out of experience in preparing . . . broad-scope courses such as "Science and society", "Population behaviour", and "The evolution of man" . . .' (p.v). If anthropologists were to lift their heads from the sand this book would soon make them bury them again.

ALAN MACFARLANE

GUERRA, FRANCISCO. *The pre-Columbian mind: a study into the aberrant nature of sexual drives, drugs affecting behaviour, and the attitude towards life and death, with a survey of psychotherapy, in pre-Columbian America*. xvi, 335 pp., illus., plates, bibliogr. London, New York: Seminar Press, 1971. £4.50

In this book the works of authoritative churchmen and administrators in Spanish America of the sixteenth and seventeenth centuries have been compared and checked until we have a group of most reliable witnesses who have recorded information upon the health and morality of the pre-Columbian Indian populations.

The author has set out to re-examine the realities behind the ancient accusation that the Indians were not truly human. He shows the wide range of local variations in practice of morality, discusses cannibalism, human sacrifice, and the whole range of unusual sexual deviations revealed by his authorities. What emerges is a new vindication of the Indians as psychologically close to their accusers. In fact the book through its corpus of quotations gives us as much material for grasping the reality of European thought on these matters as about the practice among the Indians. It becomes a very important study of the cultural clash between the two worlds.

A wide geographical diversity in custom is revealed. Tribal custom, obviously important, becomes more concentrated in conditions of geographical separation. The climatic variations lead to Mexican divergence between the highland peoples and the more lax conventions of the people of tropical lowlands. The use of hallucinogens in Mexico was more intended to promote visions and assist in religious ritual than to bring physical relaxation. In Peru the emphasis was the opposite. The high degree of eroticism of the peoples of the Peruvian desert coasts was balanced by an excess of activities which would produce maximum emotional enjoyment without risk of resulting pregnancies. This is seen as greatly influenced by the ecological conditions which would not permit a population explosion.

A very important feature of the book is the evidence that the psyche of the Indian has developed an apparatus of symbols derived from past American Indian cultures, and thus differs somewhat in content from that of the European so strongly influenced by the ancient religious traditions of the Mediterranean. From the mass of evidence quoted in the book we can deduce that the Indian is basically different in outlook because of a quite unconscious accumulation of traditions which were not those of the people who studied him. Some mysteries are cleared up by the book, much obscure evidence is made available to us, and the conclusions are of real importance.

C. A. BURLAND