



The World's Population: Problems of Growth.

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bears witness to the wide learning of the author.

A foreign reader is greatly helped to appreciate the work by an excellent introduction, notes and a highly polished French translation. The vocabulary, an account of reading variants, the photographic reproduction of the manuscript, and the text in romanised transcription all contribute to the value of the book for literary and historical documentation; it could serve as a model of how works of this kind should be edited, and shows a thoroughness of approach which is unfortunately still rare in African studies.

The editor anticipates in his preface that 'les hommes de culture' will be surprised to see an edition of a literary work in an African language. This might be so, but he is probably unduly pessimistic. There is a considerable, and steadily increasing, number of translations of written works from Africa with which 'les hommes de culture' ought to get acquainted if they wish to continue to be regarded as such.

B. W. ANDRZEJEWSKI

THOMPSON, J. ERIC S. *Maya hieroglyphs without tears*. 84 pp., illus., maps, bibliogr. London: The Trustees of the British Museum, 1972. 80p

This handsomely produced paperback handbook briefly and lucidly summarises the origins and nature of Maya hieroglyphic writing. Aimed at the informed layman, the heart of the volume consists of sixteen 'rules' of composition, followed by the step-by-step decipherment of several illustrated texts.

The work displays Thompson's immense erudition in Maya glyphic research, as well as his vigorous and at times acerbic prose style. Specialists will find themselves on quite familiar ground. The 'rules' of composition (mainly a series of generalisations about the nature of glyphic elements) assume that glyphs are ideographic and/or logographic. Thompson strongly rejects arguments put forward by Knorosov and others that Maya glyphic elements had phonetic value.

Major successes in decipherment have come from limited domains, whose boundaries have often been inferred from non-linguistic aspects of the inscriptions. Certainly, Thompson emphasises the calendrical and religious aspect of many of the texts. Thus it is surprising that he makes no direct reference to the decipherment of politico-historical inscriptions pioneered by Proskouriakoff and Kelley. Despite this omission, this remains a most useful and readable introduction to Maya hieroglyphs.

ROBERT E. FRY

DADOUN, ROGER. *Géza Róheim et l'essor de l'anthropologie psychanalytique* (Petite Bibliothèque Payot; Collection Science de l'Homme 196). 320 pp. bibliogr. Paris: Éditions Payot, 1972

Like Nadel and Malinowski, who incidentally also hailed from eastern Europe, the Hungarian Géza Roheim was a remarkable field linguist (chiefly Melanesia and central Australia, 1929-30). Like Malinowski, too, he was an ebullient and outspoken leader of his own cause, and ironically we can see from Roger Dadoun's book how much Roheim's anthropological doctrines at best *resembled*, in their broad reductionist tendencies, those of Malinowski and Kardiner whom he took to be his chief antagonists!

For fifteen years after his death in New York City in 1953 the textbooks and surveys on psychological anthropology contained little or no mention of Roheim. It was perhaps fortunate for him that he wrote his anthropological studies in English. (His equally fluent German and native Hungarian were reserved, as Roger Dadoun observes, for his articles on psychoanalysis and folklore.) His name regained prominence again in 1968-69 thanks to books by Marvin Harris and Paul A. Robinson, a volume edited by Warner Muensterberger and reprints of his major books. French translations also appeared, and one of the translators now gives us a lengthy introduction to the man, his work and legacy in an attempt to consolidate all the recent gains on Roheim's behalf.

Possibly on account of the author's own bias towards psychoanalysis his book contains much more Freud and much less anthropology than the reader might have expected and, consequently, Roheim is made to seem more representative of *l'anthropologie psychanalytique* than he really is, or was. Dadoun also neglects to make clear the regularity with which Roheim's interpretations somehow contrived to bring back the same small repertory of Oedipal fantasies, such as phallic mothers, penis-kings, erect foetuses, appetising patriarchs and so on. In other respects, however, his painstaking detail and abundant citations are highly informative.

A fascinating and frustrating book and a well-produced one too. There is a brief anthology of Roheim's writing (1919-52), although strangely the volume lacks a portrait of the subject.

W. D. WILDER

STANFORD, QUENTIN H. (ed.). *The world's population: problems of growth*. xiv, 346 pp., illus., tables, bibliogr. Toronto, New York: Oxford Univ. Press, 1972. £2.75

The central concern of this book of reprinted extracts is 'Why is the race between food and

population being lost?' The first section explains the background and contains a useful summary of demographic terminology and the distribution of world population in time and space. Then the factors affecting mortality and fertility, and the biological, economic, nutritional, and political implications of present growth are considered. Included here is the devastating analysis by the Ehrlichs of the rapid destruction of mineral and fuel resources. The third part suggests possible solutions, including birth control, the 'green revolution', industrialisation, and alteration of trade patterns.

The book is clearly edited and is a useful compilation of much of the best writing between 1960 and 1970. It is written for the intelligent layman, not specialists. But even since 1970 the problems have changed and there are some important debates omitted. For example, economic growth and industrialisation are, in almost all the extracts, seen as a good in themselves. The vast problem of whether birth control, if it does succeed and allow the promised economic growth, will only lead to a different kind of nemesis (through resource depletion and pollution) is not considered. Nor is there a satisfying discussion of whether food or social factors (Malthus or Wynne-Edwards) is the limiting factor in population growth. The 'conventional wisdom' that population

growth is essential to economic progress, at least in the west, is accepted uncritically.

Anthropologists will find that the book is written too much from the top looking down; it is too full of economists and development specialists, and too little consideration is given to social constraints. It is still filled with the stereotype of the 'backward peasant' who must be bludgeoned into co-operation. Yet it is difficult to think of many useful anthropological contributions to the field of population studies that could have been included. Unfortunately, as the book establishes, it is too late to avert massive famines and epidemics unless drastic action is taken (which is highly unlikely). But there are still tasks for the anthropologist. First, we know far too little about the social context of fertility and mortality: why, for example, the age at marriage varies between different societies, or what the effects of urbanisation are. Secondly, we know little about the influence of religion on fertility. Thirdly, the politics of birth control are a topic which abound with superstition and irrationality and would be a good hunting-ground for anthropologists. Fourthly, what are likely to be the effects of the almost inevitable rise of death rates as famine and epidemic sweep the world? The problems for research can be multiplied indefinitely; many of them have a starting point in this book.

ALAN MACFARLANE