

logical reach, that is, chiefs generated power by converting their privileged access to community surplus into prestige objects strategically redistributed for political ends.

As Salomon points out, north Andean polities were remarkably centralized and internally complex—particularly given their small populations (a few dozen to a few hundred people), and the existence of several single-village units. Since these unusual characteristics were found in groups that experienced little if any direct Inca subjugation, Salomon argues that they emerged independent of Cusco's influence. However, the possibility remains that the gnawing and persistent threat of Inca takeover, in and of itself, would have encouraged centralization for community defense.

In any event, Salomon makes a strong case for these highly stratified worlds, when chiefs, with sumptuary privileges and the right to transmit them, dominated commoners and an emergent servile population. With powers to dispossess lower ranking people, stand in judgment over their activities, and intervene in crucial life-cycle rituals, chiefs wielded considerable control over villagers and village resources, or so they would have inspectors believe. However, evidence from the central Andes suggests that while powerful societies like the Incas tended to overstate their de facto control over day-to-day village life, rituals of reproduction, and even factors of production, they often only weakly voiced the limits placed on their demands by the challenges hidden in "customary" expectations and understandings.

Early in the 16th century these unusual chiefdoms were brought under the sway of the Incas; and here Salomon provides a most enlightening and original account of that complex process whereby Cusco transformed autonomous Andean polities into tribute-bearing dominions. The Inca endeavor to refashion the Quito region along the lines of more established—"Cusco-like"—provinces was frozen by the Spanish invasion, and Salomon is keenly aware of the unique opportunity to dissect that process which the ethnohistorical record provides.

The Incas pursued an essentially conservative strategy. Projecting the image of "chiefdom writ large," they took care to make imperial institutions appear as native analogues. All the while, however, the lords of Cusco, manipulating several fronts, worked to undermine north Andean autonomy and to create dependency on Inca ideational and economic structures.

Yet the Inca hold on the northern provinces was tenuous: the Cusqueños found few friends there willing to help resist the invading Spanish. Their debacle at the hands of the Europeans points to the fragility not only of the northern frontier—which Salomon has so expertly analyzed—but of the entire imperial enterprise. For Inca state-making—ironically—reified, depended on, or encouraged the very aspects of conquered societies whose resilience would undermine it: cultural distinctiveness, the authority of chiefs, and the strength of kinship.

***Tsewa's Gift: Magic and Meaning in an Amazonian Society.* MICHAEL F. BROWN. Washington, DC: Smithsonian Institution Press (Smithsonian Series in Ethnographic Inquiry), 1986. 220 pp., plates, figures, tables, notes, references, index. \$19.95 (cloth).**

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The Aguaruna and other Shuar peoples—of which perhaps the best known are the "Jivaro"—are of anthropological interest not only for their head-shrinking, and more recently for their politically successful "Shuar Federation," but also because they have been studied from such a wide variety of viewpoints. Since Harner's religious-symbolic explication of vengeance warfare and head-shrinking in terms of soul beliefs, Shuar groups have been subjects of cultural materialist studies by students of Marvin Harris (Eric and Jane Ross), and of socialization research by Pita Kelekna. The Aguaruna have become a type case of ethnobotanical classification, due to long study of them by Brent Berlin.

They are also the subjects of an outstanding and innovative study by Michael Brown on hunting, gardening, and love magic among the Aguaruna. For all the attention that has been given food-producing infrastructures in lowland South American societies—to ecological aspects of swidden cultivation and hunting—little has been written on the *cultural* side of food production. This book examines the interrelated magical systems for hunting, love, and gardening, with a focus on explicating the *native conceptions* of human interaction with nature in these domains.

At the outset, Brown raises the question of whether the label "magic"—a judgmental term implying that a practice is based on an erroneous or "unscientific" assessment of nature—is justifiable. He decides to stick with the term, as a "convenient, if flawed, term for a congeries of phenomena that are difficult for a Western observer to understand" (p. 20). One could take issue with this decision—after all, many beliefs that strain our credulity, or agricultural practices first decried as environmentally detrimental, have turned out to be based on a better understanding of tropical ecology than we get from our temperate-zone science. (Darrell Posey and Brent Berlin have given us instances of this.) Brown's use of the term is tempered by a recognition of the ethnocentrism implicit in it. In fact, the thrust of the book is to demonstrate both the native logic and, in some instances, the empirical observation that underlie the beliefs. Indeed, the real subject of the book is the system of Aguaruna *beliefs* about hunting, gardening, and love; the songs and objects that constitute their "magic" are but manifestations of the underlying belief systems.

In earlier writings, Brown has already contested Tambiah's view of magical formulae as essentially metaphorical, a point of view he reiterates and elaborates here. As Brown demonstrates, Aguaruna magical songs and objects are believed to have practical efficacy, tested (p. 90) with a Baconian empiricism reminiscent of Evans-Pritchard's Azande. But this does not by any means preclude

that the beliefs and magical songs should have metaphorical significance as well, and much of Brown's analysis is addressed to this level of meaning of songs and invocations. He explicates the elaborate, often highly poetic metaphors on which hunting and gardening songs are constructed; and he embeds this analysis of the song texts in the matrix of Aguaruna beliefs about the respective activities and the spiritual forces that affect them.

The themes that underlie the metaphors of Aguaruna hunting magic are fascinating. Once the metaphors are explicated, it becomes clear that hunting is perceived (or represented in the songs) as a highly erotic activity, in which the hunter, the prey, the personified weapon (blowgun), and the hunter's wife are engaged in a complicated game of love and jealousy. Indeed, this is one of the alternative ways in which the hunting songs are believed to function to attract game: they are love songs to the animals' spirits, or appeasement of the blowgun's jealousy. Magical stones for attracting game or lovers are called by the same term, and *anen*, "magical song," refers canonically to songs of love magic (p. 138). Here is the fullest demonstration I have seen of Reichel-Dolmatoff's characterization of hunting as "courtship" and assertion that "men, as hunters, enter into sexual relationship with the game animals" (*Amazonian Cosmos*, pp. 87, 220; University of Chicago Press, 1974).

Even less has been written about the beliefs and symbolism of Amazonian agriculture than about hunting. The Aguaruna and other Shuar groups are exceptional in lowland South America in their extensive use of magic in agriculture as well as in hunting. The chapter on gardening magic shows the depth of ecological knowledge that goes into both the Aguarunas' agricultural practice and their beliefs. Women, for example, frequently improve their domesticated varieties of manioc by crossing them with wild related species. (Their knowledge of mutually conjugate wild and domesticated species of plants is also illustrated in a myth reported by Brent Berlin that encodes several dozen such pairings, some requiring "astute botanical observation" to recognize.) The beliefs outlined in this chapter are also intriguingly reminiscent of those described by Tuzin on yam symbolism among the Arapesh of New Guinea.

Brown raises several basic theoretical issues concerning the ideological aspects of production, and "magic" in particular. He takes on Tambiah's interpretation of magic as metaphorical or "expressive," and challenges Leach's influential distinction between expressive and instrumental (or "ritual" and "technical") aspects of social forms. He probes the question of what the Aguaruna believe to be the underlying mechanism that makes magic work (and, with admirable scientific respect for evidence, acknowledges limits to the anthropologist's final knowledge of the informant's inner assumptions, leaving open several possible answers). He concludes in general that the practitioner of magic "creates order" supplemental to technology in controlling nature.

A six-page "Afterword" sketches the current situation of Aguaruna culture, which Brown has discussed more fully and eloquently elsewhere. A series of appendixes adds useful data on the sources

and collection of the magical texts cited throughout the book, and gives the full texts of two of them in Aguaruna, with both a literal and a free translation into English.

*Tsewa's Gift* is both highly useful ethnographically and an important contribution to the understanding of how a primitive culture conceptualizes its transactions with nature. This book touches on cosmology and religion as well as the ethnoecology of hunting and agriculture—with an interlude on sex. It is also well written and readable. I trust it will soon appear in a paperback edition accessible to students.

**Belize: A New Nation in Central America. O. NIGEL BOLLAND. Boulder, CO: Westview Press, 1986. xiv + 157 pp., notes, tables, photographs, bibliography, index. \$26.50 (cloth).**

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This book follows many years of research and study in Belize by Nigel Bolland. Like the other books in the Westview Profiles of Nations of Contemporary Latin America series, Bolland's most recent work on Belize is one of nationalistic historiography. In this respect the book is timely: Belize became an independent nation-state on 21 September 1981, and this is the most recent work defining its national history since that date. Perhaps in awareness of this significance, Bolland has written this book in a simple style free of much academic jargon, making it accessible to Belizeans as well as academics.

However, Bolland does concern himself with the theoretical term "cultural pluralism." He refutes M. G. Smith's characterization of Belize as a "plural" society "divided between the 'Negro-white Creole' and the 'Spanish-Indian mestizo'" language, race and culture complexes (p. 45). Bolland instead redefines "cultural pluralism" as an emphasis on a diversity of cultural heritages providing a "unique national identity" (p. 49). This redefinition is consistent with the current political discourse in Belize where ethnicity is put to the service of nascent nationalism. However, efforts at forging unity among ethnic groups do not always succeed in Belizean politics.

Bolland's concern with national unity is also apparent in his representation of Belizean "culture." Consistent with labor histories of more industrialized nations, Bolland contends that "the economic organization and work environment of Belize are also parts of the *culture*, in the broadest sense of all these ethnic groups" (p. 52). This is an intriguing formulation; but one that forces the histories of diverse regional groups into a single class/labor history and makes no note of differences such as the maintenance of subsistence agriculture by the Kekchi and, until recently, the Garifuna, or the rise of a bureaucratic middle class (discussed briefly in the section of the book on the early 20th century, but not developed). This formulation of a single class/labor history might hold true for a majority of the population of Creoles in Belize City and might be