

count of kinship terminology and its usage, which requires knowledge of the language and also systematic interrogation, but little analysis, is thorough and of the highest quality. By contrast, the account of the organizational principles of Busama's social groups (chapter 2) is thin, especially for those that are not unilineal descent groups. He characterizes the Busama clubs as non-unilineal groups, but does not tell us in any detail how they work. The data analysis needed to do this is not evident, so that the Busama case cannot be considered a contribution to our understanding of nonunilineal kin groups. His general discussion of nonunilineal groups is not without merit, but is again marked by some misunderstandings to which attention ought to be called. He treats "nonunilineal" as a synonym for "bilateral" and "cognatic" and goes on to "stress the fact that the definition of a nonunilineal system refers only to the lack of patrilineal or matrilineal groupings. A society may have a nonunilineal structure and still recognize one or other line of descent for a particular purpose, perhaps the inheritance of personal property or the succession of titles" (p. 33). He confuses descent as the basis on which biological kinship is recognized in a society (along with the occasions for which this recognition may have functional relevance) with descent as a principle of recruitment to membership in groups in which all the members must have a real or putative ancestor in common. It is in connection with the latter that nonunilineal descent has become a matter of theoretical interest. In a footnote on page 35, Hogbin indicates that the Busama club resembles the Lakalai hamlet, as I described it in *Ethnology* (1:5-12, 1962). But the Lakalai hamlet, however much a kin group, is not a descent group. Recruitment to it involves the use of consanguineal and affinal kinship ties, but it could not conceivably be regarded as a group exemplifying a principle of nonunilineal descent, at least in the sense that this reviewer originally formulated the idea of nonunilineal descent (*American Anthropologist* 57:71-83, 1955) as something distinct from a bilateral mode of reckoning kinship. Hogbin's criticism of one of this reviewer's suggestions regarding the kinds of problems to which the formation of nodal kindreds like the Lakalai hamlet may be an adaptive response is not without merit, though he ignores the more serious suggestion. But this lack of conceptual clarity regarding the subject inevitably detracts from his discussion.

Finally, to speak of social institutional forms as adaptations to problems does not necessarily imply that we must view such adaptive responses as "logical solutions" consciously arrived at by a society's members. Over and over Hogbin returns to this theme in his theoretical asides, assuming that those who seek to interpret the development of institutions as adaptive responses to recurring or chronic problems are either mechanistic in their theories of causation or attribute to people a self-consciousness and rationality about social processes that is unwarranted. Here it strikes this reviewer that he is knocking down straw-men of his own creation.

These criticisms, however, in no way detract from the basic ethnographic merits of the monograph under review. Hogbin's talents are considerable, and this report makes a valuable and lasting contribution to our knowledge of New Guinea's inhabitants.

The Family among the Australian Aborigines: A Sociological Study. BRONISLAW MALINOWSKI. Introduction by J. A. BARNES. (Schocken Book SB52.) New York: Schocken Books, 1963. xxx, 322 pp., index, references and reading list. \$2.45 (paper); \$5.00 (cloth).

Reviewed by RODNEY NEEDHAM, *University of Oxford*

Many social anthropologists must have deplored the decline in intellectual discipline which marked Malinowski's work, and that for which he is most famous, after he

had felt on his pulses the vigor and variety of Trobriand life, the human warmth of what he had previously only read about as Frazerian "savages." Out of respect for the memory and just reputation of a great anthropologist, therefore, they will be gratified to see this reprint of what may well be argued to be Malinowski's most considerable piece of sociological analysis, first published in 1913 and now conveniently reissued in a paperback edition with a useful introduction by Professor J. A. Barnes.

Malinowski sets out simply "to describe in correct terms and as thoroughly as possible all that refers to actual family life in Australia." This he does quite admirably, and Radcliffe-Brown had good reason to judge the work, in his review of the first edition (*Man* 14, 1914:31-2), as "by far the best example in English of scientific method in dealing with descriptions of the customs and institutions of a savage people." The first contrast, indeed, between this doctoral thesis and the Trobriand monographs is Malinowski's scrupulous and methodical examination in it of every item of evidence and the reliability of every source, and, equally importantly, the soundness of his own reasoning, as compared with the relatively slack arguments and sentimentally florid exposition of the more renowned works. The most telling point of comparison, however, is theoretical. Here, the acknowledged influence of Durkheim is plain throughout, and as clearly in Malinowski's respectful criticisms as in his frequent references to collective ideas and collective feelings, to the importance of social context, and to "structural features, the really essential facts." His distinction between genetic connection and categories of relationship, for example, his conclusion that the position of the father is established "socially only, as the husband of the children's mother," or his recognition that sexual jealousy is moulded by innumerable social factors and is not a simple psychic constant, bear clear witness to the source of his analytical ideas. While we are no longer obliged to contend with a theory of "group marriage" as earnestly as Malinowski had to, there is still ample occasion to benefit from this early application of French sociological theory. To applaud this feature is by no means to be academically partisan, as the present work shows, for here there is a compelling illustration of the fact that these ideas are worth considering, not merely for their philosophical ingenuity, or for any other intrinsic intellectual merit, but because they really do help us to get things straight.

Westermarck found this book "one of the best sociological monographs which I have ever read" (*Folklore* 24, 1913:408), something which would be difficult to assert of Malinowski's magnificent ethnographic descriptions. We today may well learn something simply by pondering the reasons for this disparity of judgment.

Les Religions de l'Océanie. JEAN GUIART. (Mythes et Religions, Collection dirigée par GEORGES DUMÉZIL.) Paris: Presses Universitaires de France, 1962. 155 pp., bibliography, cover photographs. NF.6.

Reviewed by CARL A. SCHMITZ, *Museum für Völkerkunde, Basel.*

This booklet is written primarily for the French public. However, the six chapters contain many arguments and discussions of interest to the scientific reader as well. The book offers a selection of what Prof. Guiart considers the most important essentials of the religions of Pacific peoples. He does not attempt to present a complete structural study, but rather gives a prologue to it.

In the first chapter the author discusses ancestor worship. He particularly discusses the "Australian" concept of pre-existence. This belief is in his opinion an Australian speciality, while in the rest of the Pacific the possibility of rebirth is rather a privilege or an incident. The second chapter deals with fertility cults, which are so important in