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père pourra attirer un beau-fils pour reprendre sa maison et continuer sa famille.

Les célibataires peuvent entrer dans les ordres, devenir serviteurs dans une famille plus riche ou demeurer dans la leur. Cette dernière éventualité peut correspondre à un cas de polyandrie ou de polygynie déguisé. La seconde éventualité disparaît mais est remplacée par les emplois salariés. L'apparition de revenus autres que ceux de la terre provoque l'apparition de nouvelles maisons. Quant aux monastères, ils offrent un statut honorable aux hommes mais non aux femmes. Être nonne ne vaut pas mieux qu'être servante. La vieille fille est toujours mal vue. En tout cas, « le monachisme est le pendant du système familial et a bien plus à voir avec la démographie qu'avec la dévotion » (p.159). « On entend couramment dire que les moines sont de riches propriétaires, exploitant le peuple et le maintenant dans l'ignorance. Mais c'est le surplus de fils de ces familles prétendument exploitées qui peuple les *gonpa* » (p.159). Il est évident que les moeurs des musulmans sont différentes et l'auteur les compare à celles des bouddhistes. Leur polygynie sert à leur extension et offre un débouché pour de nombreuses jeunes filles d'origine bouddhiste.

Comme aux Indes, il y a une hiérarchie de castes et celles-ci sont endogames. Mais la hiérarchie est parfois floue. Une famille ne voudrait pas s'allier à une autre famille de rang inférieur et, comme il n'est pas simple de déterminer le rang, « on procède par sondages avec l'aide d'entremetteurs et d'intermédiaires. Les deux familles conviendront qu'elles sont de rang équivalent et le mariage peut avoir lieu » (p.176).

Les moines occupent une place supérieure dans la hiérarchie sociale. Ils constituent plus ou moins 5% de la population mais leur nombre diminue rapidement, l'administration et l'armée offrant de nouvelles portes de sortie aux cadets. Ils détiennent le savoir. Les laïcs ne remettent pas leur compétence en doute. « Les détenteurs du savoir occidental ne sont le plus souvent consultés qu'après le *lama,* et sur le conseil de ce dernier » (p.199). Et comme le paysan s'en remet entièrement au savoir ésotérique du lama sans chercher à en connaître plus, la culture populaire est pauvre au Ladakh. Pourtant, à côté de la religion lamaïste, il y a une religion populaire toujours vivante où foisonnent des êtres surnaturels, le plus souvent néfastes, et sur lesquels opèrent chamans et magiciens.

Les derniers chapitres sont consacrés à la religion populaire (chap. 10), au surnaturel, aux chamans et magiciens (chap. 11), à la hiérarchie de l'espace et à ses expressions multiples (chap.12), aux rites de passage (chap.13) et de Nouvel An (chap.14). Suivent des conclusions et, en annexes, la description d'une fête, de légendes, de mythes et de contes, une bibliographie et un lexique.

L'auteur témoigne d'une connaissance éprouvée du Ladakh traditionnel et actuel. Il ne recourt aux théories anthropologiques que pour être plus clair. Il évite pédanteries et querelles d'école. Il a écrit un ouvrage qui répond avec précision et nuances aux questions que je me posais à propos d'une région que je connaissais un peu, un ouvrage assez complet, clair et d'un intérêt soutenu, où abondent les exemples et les contre-exemples. Ce n'était pas une tâche facile étant donné la complexité du sujet.

Manda CESARA, *Reflections of a Woman Anthropologist,* Toronto, Academic Press, 1982. 234 pages, $31.75 (cloth).

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Reflections of a Woman Anthropologist is a personal account by a nameless Canadian anthropologist of the experience of fieldwork among a nameless African people. It is conceived as a "plea" for an existentialist theory of understanding which grants legitimacy to the fieldworker's emotional engagement and active dialogue with the people s/he is studying. "Cesara" urges that the fieldworker be encouraged both to experience in this mode and to report experience openly, as the latter is an essential ingredient in the understanding that is achieved. She offers her own book as an example of this sort of honest reporting.

I applaud Cesara's aim, and so I regret having to say that the book neither provides us with a good example to follow, nor moves us to feel kindly toward her enterprise. As there are more problems than I have space to deal with, I will focus on a few that are most salient for me.

The tone of the book is confrontational, hortatory, and self-righteous, part sermon and part call to arms. And considering the emphasis that Cesara places on the importance of honesty —defined in part as the willingness to engage in open dialogue— it is curious that she chooses to use a pseudonym, which protects her from dialogue with colleagues. It weakens her position considerably. It is also strange that she conceals the name of the group she worked with. Would she recommend such practices to the rest of us?

Cesara does not show awareness that discussions have always gone on in anthropology and other social sciences concerning the uses of various modes of understanding and the various routes by which 'meaning' may be arrived at. Neither does she seem to recognize that most anthropologists engage actively and emotionally with the people they study. Many besides herself have undergone a "sea change" (as Bohannan puts it in *Return to Laughter*) and have let us see —sometimes fleetingly, occasionally extensively— something of the shape of that change. Cesara's account is unusual in only two respects. First, unlike others who have told us primarily what they felt *in the field* and how those feelings influenced perceptions of the people studied, Cesara tells us also of the long-term effects the field experience had on her life outside the field, the ways in which it changed her sense of herself, of her personal relationships, and of the discipline of anthropology. Secondly, by constructing the book partly from her personal journal, letters she wrote home, and childhood memories awakened in the field, she invites us to follow, to some extent, the raw process of the changes that occurred.

Unfortunately, to follow that process necessitates running a Herculean obstacle course. Cesara warns us that the book will be hard to read and attributes the difficulty to the fact that she has made "form follow feeling" in the existentialist manner (p. vii). But this—which seems to me a legitimate difficulty, an interesting experiment—isn't the only or even the major source of confusion. In various ways Cesara—perhaps with the assistance of the copy editor (if there was one)—has made it almost impossible to enter her inner world with her, to make our thoughts flow with hers. First one stumbles on one's sense of outrage at being accused of cowardice and dishonesty because one has not oneself chosen the existentialist route to Truth. Then it is necessary to disentangle the edited 'journal entries' from the 'commentaries,' usually without being given the slightest clue as to where one leaves off and the other begins. The subheadings "From my personal journal" and "Comments" do not really separate the two, they only create false expectations of a separation. One isn't even given grammatical clues, since Cesara's use of tenses and other niceties of grammar leaves much to be desired. Indeed, the thicket that is produced by incorrect grammar and spelling, wrong word choice, random punctuation, and typographical errors (not to mention missing references in the bibliography) has to be listed as a separate and serious impediment to understanding.

A further problem is that Cesara is standing at the wrong distance. She tells us both too much and not enough about her personal life in and out of the field. Only rarely does she move in close enough and relate events to one another well enough to produce dramatic effect and with it, empathy. Lacking the pattern that dramatic context would have given it, the personal becomes burdensome.

Cesara's stance also prevents us from consistently distinguishing her point of view from that of the "Lenda." She tells us that she is aware of the danger of confusing the two, and she gives one excellent example of an attempt she made to counteract that danger (p. 123), but throughout most of the book I find myself wondering whether I'm looking at a portrait or an inkblot. If she let us further into her head we might 'feel' with her the distinctions she is or isn't making. If we stood further outside, she would be obliged to analyze them for us and tell us. We stand stranded in between.

The last—and mountainous—obstacle in the course, for me, is the existentialist framework that Cesara adopts and the way in which she presents it. It is difficult to keep philosophical concepts alive when they are taken out of the System that is their natural habitat, and Cesara's attempts to explain the jargon-cloaked ideas she uses are inadequate. The exposition fails also because she presents existentialism as the salvation of anthropology, rather than as a possibly useful addition to the frameworks anthropologists and others already use, all of which open our eyes to some meanings and close them to others—and most of which, in one way or another, implicitly or explicitly, incorporate observer and observed.

It seems to me that Cesara still stands so close to her experience that the whole book, exhortations, philosophy, defensive commentary and all, is best read as her 'journal'—a manifestation of the chaotic, tormented, enraging, and exhilarating process by which knowledge becomes imbued with personal value and so undergoes a sea change which metamorphoses it into Truth.