

Recensions - Book Reviews

A Guadalcanal Society: the Kaoka Speakers. Ian HOGBIN. Case Studies in Cultural Anthropology. New York, Holt, Rinehart and Winston, 1964. 103 pp., 1 map, 1 chart, 2 plates.

The Kaoka speakers occupy the eastern part of the northern coast of Guadalcanal Island, practice horticulture, and are divided into five "politically autonomous villages" and five matrilineal "dispersed clans" which crosscut the villages. Hogbin uses the term "clan" in the British sense (defined on p. 102), but his subclan, composing the core of the hamlet, appears to satisfy Murdock's three criteria for compromise kin group and may be called avunculan, though the avunculocal residence is delayed until some years after the man's marriage and even then some measure of choice is open to him. The present volume is a welcome addition to this series of case studies, in that it brought to the easy access to the students an account of how a matrilineal society with avuncular emphasis works. This possibility within the range of human social organization appears to be, from my experience, the hardest for North American students to comprehend.

The unilineal or compromise kin groups, however, are not directly described in this outline, since the author, probably for a good reason, chose to present social organizational data in a more operational framework. Clans are described in general terms in the introductory section to the chapter on social structure (pp. 4-5), and a section on "Kinship terms and behaviour" (pp. 10-14) lists and describes dyad relations remarkably clearly. Other than these, the information on kinship and kin groups is scattered, especially abundantly in chapter 2 (Sex and Marriage) and chapter 7 (Religion), presumably because these are the spheres of life in which kinship plays a greater role. In his attempt to construct a coherent picture of kin organization, the reader might be baffled at such reference as "the head of the subclan" (p. 84), whose function and recruitment, unlike those of the household head and village headman, are not elaborated.

The social units which receive explicit definition in the chapter on social structure are the village, the hamlet and the household. For each, composition of the group, activities connected, and symbolic associations such as religion or property ownership are described. In later chapters, however, references are often made to "communities" and "settlements", and which of the two territorial groups is meant by these terms was not always clear to this reviewer.

Socialization process and techniques are well covered in Chapter 3 (Rearing a Family) and economic and subsistence activities in Chapter 4 (Getting a

Living). The latter chapter, also informative from the point of view of subclan organization and sexual division of labour, includes a section covering the trades of surplus goods with the interior of the islands as well as with neighbouring islands involving an organized overseas expedition. The political aspect of the native life is described in the next two chapters called "Conflict" and "The Headman", in which kinds of disputes, means of dissolving them at various levels of social units, and the nature and attainment of power are described. The author's clear and vivid prose helps a great deal in the description of this dynamic process.

An attempt is made to place this society in the broader background of Melanesian societies, with frequent comparative reference to the natives of Basuma, Manus, Malaita, New Guinea, Trobriand, etc. In addition, two sections are devoted to the comparison of social structure and religion, respectively, with the hill people of Guadalcanal. The space allowed is naturally too limited for any convincing portrayal of the hill people, and one may wonder if the same space could not have been profitably utilized for a fuller exposition of the Kaoka speakers themselves.

While most of the information is based on the material obtained from the field work of 1933, the recent changes are covered in the final chapter drawn from the author's observation in 1945. It appears that there has been some change in social organization, while material aspect of life remained virtually the same. The author seems to feel that this "state of stagnation" with "the incompatibility of wants and the means of achieving them" led to the form of nativistic movement called Masinga Rule, in which the desired goal is the goods of Western manufacture delivered by the American wartime transports, to be attained by faith and ritual mainly of Puritanical inspiration. Since we are told that his material aspect came in at the later stage of the movement, which in the beginning had political objectives, the reviewer feels that the gap between the needs and their fulfilment should probably be interpreted in a much broader sense than just the material needs. The account of the movement, which is still in progress and involves the organization of people in a hitherto unprecedented scale, is nevertheless very illuminating.

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Marriage in Tribal Societies. Cambridge Papers in Social Anthropology No. 3. Meyer Fortes (ed). Cambridge University Press, 1962. 157 pp. n.p.

This is the third in a useful series of occasional papers being published by Cambridge University. Each of these has been concerned with a unified topic so that the collection itself could achieve a maximum thrust. The presentation brings out new material and interpretation on marriage from four societies, three of these in Africa, and one from the Pacific. On the other hand, each group is treated from a slightly different focus, stemming out of the nature of