

from Asia at the time of the prehistoric Amerindian migrations over the Siberian-Alaskan land bridge.

This interesting monograph by Takao Suzuki contains material from his doctoral thesis on the occurrence of osseous syphilis in Japan during the Edo period (17th to 19th centuries). His findings provide new information about a serious disease that, in an earlier historic period, spread rapidly throughout the world and had an important medical and socio-cultural impact. According to historic records, the introduction of syphilis into Japan in AD 1512 represented the first exposure of the Japanese to a treponemal disease; no geographic or historic evidence exists for the presence of yaws, pinta or non-venereal syphilis in Japan before 1512. Suzuki's study, based mainly on the incidence of syphilitic bone lesions evidenced from the archaeology, anthropology and epidemiology of Japan of the Edo period, estimates from the prevalence of lesions of tertiary osseous syphilis that about 50 percent of the adult population of Edo Japan had venereal syphilis.

The evidence for syphilis used by Suzuki is based on characteristic bone changes in 923 skulls from six burial sites. Techniques used to examine the bones included roentgenologic, microscopic, histologic and macroscopic gross anatomic examinations, but the primary diagnosis and differential diagnosis of osseous syphilis was based on macroscopic examination. Differential diagnoses included non-specific suppurative periostitis and osteomyelitis, tuberculosis, Paget's disease, giant cell tumour, osteosarcoma and multiple myeloma. Sufficient historic data enabled Suzuki to classify the osseous material by age, sex and social class (military [samurai], agricultural, artisan and merchant), and to estimate the frequency of syphilitic bone lesions among them. The highest prevalence of cranial syphilis (9.9-11.5%) was found in skulls of common people from the Fukagawa area of Edo (the area of the red-light district). The lowest prevalence was found in the *bushi* or *hatamoto samurai* class (government officials) (3.5%). Suzuki suggests that social values and behaviour played an important role in this distribution. The *bushi* class was composed of well-educated, self-disciplined people operating under the Buddhist and Japanese code of noble ethics known as "*buishi-do*," who would control their sexual passions and remain monogamous. By contrast, the less educated or common people might not be so restricted in their sexual behaviour.

Suzuki's monograph represents a useful and interesting attempt to bring the techniques of paleopathology, epidemiology and elements of social history to the study of the extent of syphilis in earlier Japan. The methods and techniques of this fine book will be of value to paleopathologists, anthropologists and medical historians.

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### **Sons and Seals: A Voyage to the Ice**

Guy David Wright

St. John's: Institute of Social and Economic Research, Memorial University of Newfoundland, 1984. ix + 129 pp. \$9.95 (paper)

*Reviewer:* Will. C. van den Hoonaard  
University of New Brunswick

The primary objective of *Sons and Seals* is to explain "what the seal hunt means to

the sealers" (p. 2). A subsidiary aim is to provide "first-hand knowledge of modern sealing" (p. 3).

Wright journeyed "to the ice" with sealers in the spring of 1979. He effectively portrays the "primordial world" (p. 94) which sets the sealers at sea apart from the rest of the world. His ethnographic account is replete with conversations with and among the sealers. He presents us with details of the preparation and aftermath of the hunt on his vessel. Two sets of photographs enhance our knowledge of sealing: one set which depicts sealing as practised in more traditional times, and the other taken by Wright himself.

The ethnographic material suffers from Wright's unavoidably short stay on the vessel: only 12 days on the vessel out of the sea-going 25 days, interspersed with 13 days in and around a hospital after Wright's fall through the ice and subsequent frostbite. The social organization ("simplified and comforting" relationships (p. 29) bounded by a rigid authority structure) is described superficially, and we are too often left with stereotypical characters and roles: the "green" sealers, the captain, the experienced sealers. The significance of some situations, such as the "indignity" of serving an experienced sealer at mealtime (p. 40), is left to the reader to ponder.

The answer to "Why do sealers seal?" is the main, but weaker, corpus of the book. Economic, social and entrepreneurial reasons, the sense of adventure and tradition are advanced as arguments. These explanations leave us unconvinced. They strike us as artificial, especially after we have read the richer ethnographic portion of the book. Even the author is not heartily convinced by these explanations. He speaks of a "fundamental lure," "the need to take a risk in an unpredictable environment" or even "something more mysterious" (p. 87). Again: "Newfoundlanders have resurrected the hunt as a metaphor [allegory?] for the strength and stoicism that are their heritage" (p. 105), centring around the notion of a "manly ethic" (p. 93), the solidarity and fraternity of the crew.

There are other aspects of the book that distract us in assessing the value placed on sealing. Movements and peoples opposed to sealing are belittled, which does not lend credibility to Wright's otherwise important efforts to grasp the value of sealing. (Does he take the everyday attitudes of sealers towards their opponents for granted?) The sealer's quiet heroism on the ice, selfless courage, tolerance and "pride in one's ability to work well for long hours under adverse conditions" (p. 70) alone will testify to the subjective importance attached to sealing.

There are a few minor omissions. Chartraine's valuable work, *The Living Ice* (McClelland and Stewart, 1980) is missing from the main text and bibliography. Wright should have devoted more effort to providing a more completely annotated bibliography: only 31 of the 61 works on sealing are annotated. Finally, more careful attention should have been given to the two maps. Legends and scales are missing, as well as half a dozen place names mentioned in the text.

In summary, although the ethnographic portion of the work suffers due to the author's short stay on the vessel, it contains valuable impressions of the everyday character of life on such a vessel. We cannot but admire Wright's stamina in fulfilling his pledge to be with the crew and in completing his account.

Although the subjective value of sealing does not entirely open before our eyes, the book contains much of benefit to the general reader. It could also be useful for undergraduate courses on Atlantic Canada or marine anthropology, and those natu-

ral science courses which need the view of another discipline on humankind's intricate and subjective relationship to our environment.

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### **The Garia: An Ethnography of a Traditional Cosmic System in Papua New Guinea**

Peter Lawrence

Manchester, England: Manchester University Press, 1984. xxv + 276 pp. \$24.50 (cloth)

*Reviewer:* Eric Schwimmer  
Université Laval

We are increasingly aware that Papua New Guinea is indivisible, and that an ethnography which supposedly deals exclusively with one of these cultures will answer theoretical questions about all of them. Although the diversity of these cultures is obvious, their family resemblance is no less compelling, though it is less easily demonstrated by our usual methods of analysis.

With this in mind, the late Peter Lawrence's very important book must be read as a somewhat general statement about New Guinea societies. As such, we must salute Lawrence's great versatility and honesty in constantly reappraising and revising his first perceptions. Lawrence's way of dealing with the religious and structural aspects of Garia culture has undergone notable transformations and acquired a contemporary awareness of the Papua New Guinea spirit world that has become the hallmark of the decade. As before, Lawrence subjects all of his ideas to the most severe empirical test possible — namely, his detailed data on the land tenure system. For this reason, the book will remain a model for others to follow.

Having paid Lawrence all these compliments, I must discuss the main theory of his book. Since this theory is enclosed within three separate rubrics whose appropriateness can no longer be assumed without debate, my discussion cannot help being somewhat polemical. The three rubrics are: descent (pp. 42-50), affinity (pp. 50-54) and special relationships (pp. 54-56). Descent retains the lion's share of space, though at a heavy price. An examination of Garia kinship terminology forewarns us of the difficulties of "descent" as a concept, and we are given three main rules. First, siblings of the same sex address each other as "*awai/amayai*," while those of the opposite sex address each other as "*ugi*." Lawrence keeps referring to "*awai/amayai*" as "brother" and to "*ugi*" as "sister," but this is a bad translation — or rather, the translation is correct only for a male speaker, and incorrect for a female speaker. Could Dr. Lawrence be an unrepentant male chauvinist? Secondly, cross-cousins call each other "*epei*," but children of cross-cousins of the same sex address each other as "sibling" (i.e., *awai/amayai* when of the same sex or *ugi* when of opposite sex). Thirdly, children of cross-cousins of the opposite sex address each other as "*epei*" (p. 38). As Lawrence states the last two rules with unintentional ambiguity, only later do we discover that the distinction which is being made refers to cross-cousins of the same sex and cross-cousins of the opposite sex (p. 46). We do not know of any full discussion of the theoretical significance of this particular way of subdividing the cross-cousin category, nor does Lawrence fully explore this point. However, while analyzing the Orokaiva and other Papua New