

The wall between anthropologists and folklorists was a permeable one, with both groups participating in the American Folk-Lore Society, though with the anthropologists generally in ascendancy, at least until the early 1940s. Zumwalt makes it clear here too that Boas sought the membership of the putatively unscientific literary folklorists in order to bolster the numbers of his society. It seems that there were more folklorists than there were anthropologists, despite the fate of the former to be members of English or literature departments. Further, some of these folklorists also collected and studied American Indian lore, so that their exclusion would have been without ostensible grounds.

The main thrust of her conclusion is that the time for this strife is past. Folklore can benefit from the temporal and geographical perspectives provided by the folklorist, and by the interpretative cultural context offered by the anthropologist. As in some of the hard sciences, it is time now for folklore to be investigated by teams of scholars made up of individuals with complementary training and talents.

I was not prepared for the sort of ugly politicking that Zumwalt has documented, though I hasten to add that she has done so in the most objective light. Yet herein lies the importance of the book for it will force the reflective reader to assess the course of her or his own career, and to ponder the nature of academic achievement and the significance of scholarly work. Until I had read this book I had little appreciated how much we and our academic environment are the products of a few lucky individuals, not only intellectually gifted but also politically ambitious, who asserted their egos and visions at the expense of those of their colleagues.

Anthropology and Politics: Visions, Traditions, and Trends

Joan Vincent

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A large, encompassing account of the work in anthropology that addresses the political domain has long been needed. Since Balandier's very useful and brief *Political Anthropology* (Presses Universitaires de France) of 1967 (English version 1970), there has been one attempt at a text-like review, Lewellen's 1983 book, also entitled *Political Anthropology* (Bergin & Garvey Publishers). Apart from a somewhat updated bibliography, Lewellen's essay represents no particular advance over Balandier's version of the field. Balandier divided his book into a brief history of the subdiscipline, a chapter on the political sphere, three on the relationships between power and, respectively, kinship, social stratification and religion, one on the traditional state and one on modernity and change. His presentation was incisive and in the context of the period, critical.

Vincent's book is an entirely different project. The presentation is somewhere between that of a compendious chronological annotated bibliography (see p. 9 where Vincent indicates that that was her initial purpose), and an attempt to sketch the sequence of historical settings in which anthropological writing on political subjects took place. Vincent starts in the 19th century and ends somewhat abruptly with a short chapter on works from 1974 to the present. Given the length of the book, it is not a

work that anyone is going to sit down to read from beginning to end on a winter evening. Instead, I suspect that it will be most useful as a reference work for those teaching in this field, and for subsequent historical analyses of particular periods in the development of anthropology as a whole.

Vincent goes to some lengths to present the positive contributions of most of the works she analyzes. Her overall thesis is the broad consequence of her historical method, the contention that "The objective world fashions the anthropology of politics as much as anthropology constructs and reconstructs the world in which its practitioners find themselves" (p. 63).

One of the commendable aspects of this volume is its serious effort to trace the course of several national streams of thought and to note their points of difference, parallelism and contact. Vincent addresses developments in American anthropology with as much liveliness as in those in Britain, and here and there gives France attention as well. Vincent also follows a number of topical threads simultaneously, as these weave in and out of the monographs. For example, she gives considerable space to shifts in the anthropology of law, notes changing degrees of attention to history, and marks the shifts in model from the ethnographies of the colonial to those of the post-colonial world. Vincent has a strong interest in Marxist and other materialist approaches, in critical theory, in feminism and in the issues these raise. Yet she clearly dislikes some of the cruder forms of this line of discourse, saying of the 1960s to about 1980, "Megaconcepts like exploitation, domination, and imposition tended to take the place of both causal analyses and explanation" (p. 396). She says of the recent decade that "It would be too simple to characterize the 1980s as a period when two paradigms clashed: on the left, Marxism; on the right, interpretive anthropology" (p. 424). She perceives the current state of affairs as one of eclecticism in which a great deal that was once designated as Marxist anthropology has passed into the mainstream, and in which what is explicitly called Marxist anthropology has developed innumerable subversions of itself (my pun, not hers).

This book is the product of many decades of reading and reflection. It is the summing up by a teacher and analyst of a century of change in an academic field. Vincent's extended commentary on this passing scene does not culminate in a new theoretical framework, nor does it offer any radically new interpretations. Still, there is no book in the field that covers this territory, and this is one that has been mounted with considerable care. To those who know the field well, much is familiar, and inevitably there are places where one might wish to argue about particularities of emphasis or conception, or where the absence of boldly original interpretation makes the text less exciting than it might have been. But this material has not been drawn together previously in this way. There is no single work in the field of political anthropology that attempts anything on the scale of this descriptive, historical compilation. Those wanting to learn something about the shifting conceptions of politics that have appeared in anthropological discourse cannot do better than to begin by consulting this book as a reference. Vincent's views are clearly and simply stated. Her meta-Marxist vocabulary is a gentle, thoughtful form of the genre. Her general approach to the history of the field may be summed up in her statement, "For a hundred years the anthropology of politics has, as Redfield put it, *followed* capital; in the 1980s it began to confront it head on. . . . As the 1980s progressed, it became more and more apparent that one could find Marx's analysis valuable, and even know Marx's writings intimately, without being a Marxist" (pp. 399-400).