

and of adequate courses of action. Social conflicts, Couch and Kroll-Smith suggest, will increasingly focus not so much on wages and other traditional benefits as on the right to clean environments.

Although it addresses an extremely important topic and does make several good points, the volume lacks theoretical depth. One would have wished to find, among the sociological statistics and empirical conclusions, more interpretive essays like Erikson's. To an anthropologist it is a pity that more actual use was not found for Douglas and Wildavsky's (1982) cultural constructivist perspective, mentioned only in passing. Sociologists may be similarly puzzled by the seemingly total ignorance of the work of Ulrich Beck on "risk society," the six-year delay in English translation (1992) notwithstanding, and even more so by the omission of Anthony Giddens' work on risk as an aspect of modernity. The sociological discourse on the concept of "risk" (and "trust") would have provided a more profound framework for these case studies.

The book would also have benefited from a unitary macro-perspective on the forces responsible for what the editors call the "technological degradation of the biosphere." The essays are highly heterogeneous in terms of *positioning*. In some contributions there is an eerie distance to the anxiety of informants and the impression is that the knowledge produced is of less use to the environmental movement than to the corporations and governments it challenges. Activists are viewed as more or less successful "issue entrepreneurs" (Clarke, p. 108). In other studies, there is an unmistakable and commendable sense of commitment to the victims of disaster. Omohundro, for instance, reveals that he is "not a disinterested party," but an environmentalist. This hard-to-reconcile spectrum of approaches can be illustrated by the difference between, on the one hand, finding it "unfortunate" that victims of Three Mile Island tended to "externalize blame" (Davidson and Baum) and, on the other, criticizing the "organizational myths" of Union Carbide (Shrivastava) or celebrating the political success of organizations like POWER (Wolensky). The lack of overall positioning raises fundamental epistemological questions which the editors might at least have mentioned.

## References Cited

Beck, Ulrich

1992 Risk Society. Newbury Park, CA: Sage.

Douglas, Mary, and Aaron Wildavsky

1982 Risk and Culture. Berkeley: University of California Press.

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## Pilgrimage in Latin America

N. Ross Crumrine and Alan Morinis, eds.

Westport, Connecticut: Greenwood Press, 1991. xvi + 432 pp. \$45.00 (cloth)

Reviewer: Peter Gose

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This well-produced volume provides 15 case studies of Latin American pilgrimage, along with two useful introductory chapters and a conclusion. For the most part, the tone of the book is highly ethnographic and its main appeal will probably be to Latin American specialists. While several authors (e.g., Nolan, Sallnow, Poole) do touch on some of the larger theoretical and comparative issues in the anthropological study of

pilgrimage, most prefer to analyze pilgrimages in their specific cultural and social contexts. This is appropriate since the collection adds important new information on some large pilgrimages that have yet to be properly described. On the whole, this volume succeeds in striking a balance between empirical depth and diversity and is a welcome addition to the literature.

The contributions to the volume are arranged under two headings, "Middle America" and "South America," but most are in fact about the native cultures of Mesoamerica and the Andes. As a result, many contributors discuss the relationship between indigenous and Catholic aspects of pilgrimage, but few do so very helpfully. On the one hand, Harvey, Adams, Konrad, Silverman, Vreeland and Poole all argue that pilgrimage expresses indigenous traditions of ritual and belief whereas, on the other hand, Nolan and Urbano suggest that Latin American pilgrimage is essentially Catholic in form. All of these authors have good reasons for taking the positions they do, but the net effect is to promote an ethnic essentialism that may actually obscure the history and politics of the pilgrimages described here. Older emphases on the "syncretic" nature of native Catholicism in Latin America had many drawbacks, but at least they allowed that more than one logic could operate within the same set of practices, a useful insight that many of these authors have largely abandoned. Fortunately, the papers by Dobyns, Kendall, Pollack-Eltz and Sallnow are an exception to this trend and make the inter-ethnic character of pilgrimage central to their inquiries.

Perhaps the single greatest strength of this volume is at the level of method. There is tremendous diversity in how different authors go about studying the phenomenon of pilgrimage and some of the approaches are very novel and creative. For example, Konrad demonstrates that a lowland Maya pilgrimage is modelled on astronomic ideas, while Slater shows how the miraculous traditions of a Northeast Brazilian town are mediated through oral and written narrative and Poole does a superb analysis of the role of dance in the pilgrimages of the southern Peruvian Andes. In a field of study that was once dominated by Victor Turner's theology of *communitas*, this book provides us with many new points of departure and many local models that are compelling enough to change the way we see pilgrimage in general.

### **From Muyuw to the Trobriands: Transformations along the Northern Side of the Kula Ring**

Frederick H. Damon

Tucson, Arizona: University of Arizona Press, 1990. xvi + 285 pp. \$29.95 (cloth)

*Reviewer:* Naomi M. McPherson

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Deftly combining concepts from world-systems theory and structuralism, this book examines a non-Western world system (the Kula Ring) by presenting a detailed "exploration of relationships exhibited across part of the Kula Ring" (p. 11). That a system exists is established in the introduction with a fascinating discussion of regional continuities, such as lunar month names and sequences, and new year rites, and discontinuities, such as the orientation of new year rites. The latter are spatially oriented in Muyuw whereas they are temporally oriented in the Trobriands. Given that the regional system, from Muyuw to the Trobriands, is related to the larger world