
Book Reviews / Comptes rendus

George Stocking, *Delimiting Anthropology: Occasional Inquiries and Reflections*, Madison, WI: University of Wisconsin Press, 2001, 406 pages.

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This is a collection of assorted essays by George Stocking, composed at various points over the course of his career. All but two of these essays were previously published. In his general introduction to this volume, Stocking describes all these essays as “at the time of writing tangential” to his main research concerns (2001: x) although they significantly resonate with the larger body of his work. They thus largely focus on key figures and institutions in the historical development of the Anglo-American traditions of anthropology. However, with one exception, the original impetus for these writings did not come from Stocking himself. They were developed in response to invitations variously to deliver lectures or conference papers or to contribute to edited volumes.

The “occasional” nature of these essays imposes a decided challenge to the integration and coherence of this volume. Stocking has attempted to address this challenge in two primary ways. Firstly, he has organized the essays into four general thematic sections: Boasian culturalism, British evolutionaries, Institutions in National Traditions as well as Mesocosmic Reflections, a thematic division which gradually expands the vista of analysis by moving from representative figures to national institutions and finally onto broader disciplinary issues. Each of the sections includes four chapters. The section on Boasian culturalism thus includes a chapter discussing the late 19th-century racial thought and discourse that were subsequently subjected to trenchant critique by Franz Boas. A second essay outlines the basic assumptions of the Boasian orientation in anthropology. The third and fourth essays in this section remind us of the happenstance origins of much of this volume since, in response to conference invitations respectively from the Societies for Psychological and Humanistic Anthropology, they take up more peripheral aspects of Boas’ work, specifically his writings on psychology which were largely restricted to the earliest of his publications and the nascent traces of much later anthropological concerns with textuality and reflexivity.

The second section focusses attention on the field that has engaged Stocking throughout much of his career; the history of British anthropology. In it, Stocking focusses on three early figures in British sociocultural evolutionism: two of them are Edward Burnett Tylor and James G. Frazer who are regarded as canonical figures by anthropologists; the third is an earlier Scottish precursor, Lord Kames. not generally regarded by anthropologists as a significant disciplinary ancestor. Stocking however draws attention to the contribution of Lord Kames—if primarily as provocation for disagreement—to a succeeding early 19th-century anthropological debate about the unity or plurality of the human species. An essay on Tylor provides an overview of his life and work, in particular his establishment of the principle of cultural evolution. Another reproduces lengthy excerpts from Tylor’s diary that detail his investigation of the spiritualist movement, inquiries which appear to have significantly shaped Tylor’s theory of animism. A fourth chapter reviews Frazer’s prominence among the few anthropologists who have spoken directly to a large non-anthropological audience, his eclipse by the growing preeminence of a fieldwork-based functionalist anthropology and the more recent reconsideration of his work in the light of reorientations in anthropology towards science and literature.

The third section turns towards scholarly institutions that are conceived as mediating the relationship between individual anthropologists, their discipline and in turn the larger social world. One chapter in this section probes the history of the Royal Anthropological Institute of Britain through a review of changing emphases in the six editions of the *Notes and Queries on Anthropology* edited by members of the Institute. A second chapter moves somewhat beyond Stocking’s usual Anglo-American focus to provide a comparative review of the distinction between ethnology and physical anthropology in France through the shifting fortunes of the *Société d’Ethnographie Américaine et Orientale*. The endurance of this distinction in France stood in contrast to the synthesis of ethnology and physical anthropology in Britain. A third chapter in this section provides a highly detailed history of the foundation and development of the Sante Fe Laboratory of Anthropology originally occasioned by the 50th anniversary of the Laboratory. The fourth chapter in this section departs somewhat from the circumstances of most of the other essays in this

volume since it was initiated by George Stocking himself as the introduction to one of four collections he edited as part of his *History of Anthropology* series. The introduction reproduced here focusses on museums and material culture.

The fourth and final section in the book shifts from Stocking's usual preference for micro-analyses towards essays that seek to "reflect upon themes of broader temporal, spatial, or historiographic significance" (2001: 262). Specifically, these "themes" include the ambivalent status within anthropology of the idea of progress; a view from the "centre" of more peripheral anthropological traditions; the difficulties of delimiting disciplinary boundaries within the embracing tradition of anthropology; and finally an intriguing essay using cases of unfinished books as an index of the tension between the "scientizing" and "relativizing" impulses of anthropology. The broad thematic ambit of the essays in this section will probably make them the most accessible to the general anthropological audience as opposed to specialists in the history of anthropology.

The essays in all four sections have for the most part been reproduced in their original form. Rather than being updated to reflect more recent concerns and perspectives both of the discipline as a whole or of their author, they have been historicized through a set of introductions. Each section and each essay in turn is prefaced with an introduction which explains the circumstances in which these writings were initiated and developed and situates these within Stocking's longer career. Together these introductions constitute the second organizational vehicle employed by Stocking for integrating these occasional essays, an approach which is both illuminating and frustrating: illuminating because Stocking has applied to his own career biography the preference for micro-vignettes which has characterized many of his historical analyses; frustrating because like most of the essays these introduce, their full import and context is elusive. The introductions assume that the reader has more than a passing acquaintance with most of Stocking's better known and more substantial publications. They refer to these works without much in the way of explanation and even more frustratingly, invoke with enigmatic brevity, shifting orientations in Stocking's epistemological approach, in particular the "softening" in his stance for "historicism" against "presentism." While in some cases highly detailed, most of the essays in the first three sections of the volume also assume a fairly broad knowledge of the historical contexts in which these vignettes are situated. In one of the essay introductions, Stocking justifies this style of analysis as "writing between the lines" (2001: 220) but he accurately notes that such an approach "puts a burden on the general reader, insofar as it may require prior knowledge to appreciate relationships that are suggested rather than elaborated" (ibid.). In the case of this volume, the burden of readership is doubled, requiring both knowledge of the historical periods, figures and institutions described in the essays themselves as well as intimacy with Stocking's own career history and contributions. Thus by design, this volume is best

addressed to and appreciated by a highly specialized and hence select audience.

Isabelle Daillant, *Sens dessus dessous, Organisation sociale et spatiale des Chimane d'Amazonie bolivienne*, Nanterre, Société d'ethnologie, Collection Recherches Américaines 6, 2003, 517 pages.

Recenseur : *Bernard Arcand*
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Il est assez décevant de penser que ce livre risque fort d'être limité à un auditoire restreint. Du simple fait qu'il s'agit d'un ouvrage considérable (plus de cinq cents pages en caractères relativement petits) consacré en grande partie à l'étude d'un système de parenté et d'une cosmologie autochtones rédigée dans une langue parfois technique pas toujours facile et qui traite d'une population située à la frontière de deux zones, les Andes et l'Amazonie, nettement mieux connues et plus populaires. Bref, c'est un ouvrage savant qui mériterait une bien meilleure diffusion. Car ce travail admirable, sans être un manuel, fournirait un excellent guide d'enquête moderne en anthropologie sociale. Isabelle Daillant construit avec minutie et grande intelligence un modèle d'analyse attentive, complexe et pénétrante.

Pour exemple, prenons la question fondamentale de comment définir les Chimane. Il serait facile d'affirmer qu'ils forment une population de quelques milliers de personnes habitant le piedmont bolivien, vivant d'agriculture, de pêche ou d'emplois ponctuels, et devenues relativement riches suite à la reconnaissance de leurs droits sur les ressources forestière de la région. Très au delà de cette définition banale, le chapitre résumant l'identité collective des Chimane tient compte, bien sûr, de l'ethnographie régionale, mais intègre également la géographie, la mythologie, l'imaginaire et la mouvance des préjugés, les transformations sociales récentes, ainsi que les contrastes entre riches et pauvres et les distinctions entre hommes et femmes, ce qui, en somme, permet d'atteindre une vision particulièrement riche et subtile de ce que *Chimane* veut dire.

Une partie importante de l'ouvrage traite du système de parenté, des règles de mariage et de résidence ainsi que des relations sociales sous l'influence directe des liens de parenté. La section sur l'analyse de la terminologie de parenté et du cas très particulier d'une cyclicité intergénérationnelle sur fond de mélange subtil entre les systèmes Dravidien et Kariera n'est certainement pas facile, mais la démarche est habile et fascinante. La solution élégante et novatrice à l'énigme de comment concilier deux systèmes logiques qui paraissaient inconciliables aurait pu être sèchement abstraite, mais en faisant appel à l'histoire et à l'évolution démographique, l'auteure réussit à donner de la parenté une interprétation vivante et dynamique. Daillant utilise même le «je» à bon escient et