

tors except Boon, whose praise of Folly and parody of anthropology win favor. The conclusion is, nonetheless, appropriate. It challenges "mystical" passages in some of the papers from the standpoint of empirically grounded British social anthropology, and it suggests that anthropological self-criticism made from a carnivalesque standpoint could go much further than it does in the present volume. Only a Leach could subtly strike this double blow.

But while one must agree with Leach, the volume does, in the main, deliver the goods. It is both an interesting collection and an insightful example about what has happened in symbolic anthropology in the past 15 years.

Symbolic Structures: An Exploration of the Culture of the Dwayos. NIGEL BARLEY. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press (co-published with the *Maison des Sciences de l'Homme*), 1983. viii + 125 pp., map, figures, plates, appendix, notes, references, index. \$27.50 (cloth).

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In 98 pages (with 60 figures occupying about 20 of them), Nigel Barley introduces the Dwayo of northwestern Cameroon through a discussion of their symbolism as "the punctuation of culture" (p. 12). Barley's training is in Anglo-Saxon symbolism, which he has taught in the context of the fine arts, and some will find his approach to African thought refreshingly innovative. Area experts will profit from his rich data, the result of almost two years of fieldwork. Barley is at his most engaging in his descriptions of Dwayo skull houses, circumcision, the use of ceremonial jars, and in his discussion of how such diverse objects or phenomena as rainfall and skull; foreignness, culture, and women (via a key myth of the beating to death of an old Fulani woman [p. 89]); and even death and fertility (p. 66) may be linked or "nested."

Barley dismisses many conventions of anthropological writing. Dwayo ethnographic and historical contexts are reduced to a few sentences. Dwayos are "a pagan, montagnard people" (p. 1) whom Barley distinguishes from other groups often subsumed by the pejorative term "Kirdi"; Barley's phrase, though, seems a mere euphemism for the latter, given J. -C. Froelich's treatise (1968)—to which no mention is made—associating these "montagnards paleonigritiques" with others throughout West Africa. Dwayos have been confused with Fali (p. 113, fn. 2), yet Barley makes no mention of Lebeuf's work (1961) among these latter, to substantiate his claim of a difference.

He writes that Dwayo "disclaim all kinship with surrounding peoples" (p. 1), but cites no informants' statements to this effect (readers never encounter any particular Dwayo, nor are they informed as to who and how many know/believe par-

ticular assertions), and he gives no situational analysis of why such claims might be made at a given moment to a given audience according to factors of local-level politics or wider politico-economic trends. Fulani are said to be important foils to the Dwayo sense of being, yet these Fulani are not identified further; were/are they, for instance, subjects of the Lamido of Rey Bouba, or raiders (or their descendants) on the fringe of Rabeh's jihad? What, if anything, do Dwayos have in common with other major ethnic groups in the general area such as the Mbum (O'Laughlin 1973) or the Moundang (Adler and Zemlini 1972)?

Such timelessness and lack of context is purposeful. Barley writes that "to show an area has structure is not to show that it has meaning or communicates something" (p. 11). Rather, through *bricolage*, Dwayo culture "plays games" resulting in, say, a festival of "material that may be more or less appropriate to its context"; such a configuration does not "make any profound propositional statement about the nature of life, death or man's place in the cosmos," and, indeed, the question "Why do Dwayos [sic] do this?" . . . may be deemed almost irrelevant to the task of analysis" (p. 96).

Barley's alternative to "the catch-all anthropological notion of metaphor" (p. 98) used by many writers to make sense of complicated events like the festivals alluded to above, is to posit "two forms of motivation—internal and external." The first is Saussure's "analogy," the second "makes appeal to the outside world, the world of sense qualities and encyclopaedic knowledge in an unstructured form." Barley qualifies this latter by noting that "although Saussure has boldly kicked this down the front steps, he allows it in again by the back door in his notion of 'folk etymology' whereby the arbitrary becomes at least relatively motivated. We should not forget that motivation is a relative matter" (p. 22).

"It is in the nature of symbolic systems to . . . motivate gratuitously" (p. 49). Reification of this sort typifies much of Barley's presentation ("witchcraft is . . . greedy" [p. 37]; "symbolic activity seems to concern itself" [p. 68]; "a ritual system . . . must face up to problems" [p. 87]). Our knowledge of symbolism and symbolization is not advanced by an approach through which the studies of Turner and others are described as "naive" (p. 21), only to have the multivocal nature of symbols reinvented (in obscure phrasing) as "various ways in which the arbitrary may be converted to the motivated" (p. 38).

Technical difficulties mar the presentation (e.g., some photographs are unintelligible [Figs. 9, 17], or non-instructive [Fig. 8], and line drawings would have been more effective [Fig. 20]). Barley does have fascinating data at his disposition; why did the Cambridge editors coerce or allow him to give it such short shrift? He should have reduced the "squirming facts" of his "associational clusters" (p. 83) to a dense but exciting article of the sort David Sapir writes (AE 1981); alternatively, he might have written a proper book, of sufficient length to fill out and make comprehensible his argument.