

legitimizing, and eliciting mass reactions through rites. Ritual as a constitutive force in political order turns out to be a medium through which the rhetoric and display of power are heard and seen to be done—whether as spectaculars or as spectacular failures (p. 179)—and are disguised by the symbolism of rites (p. 174). Ignored are any native beliefs and claims about the effective power of rites (including those that may be understood as political) to make change happen in their worlds. Ritual is reduced once again to media for the conveyance and mobilization of expressive and affective functions—and this accords extremely well with native conceptions of political ritual in modern states, conceptions that appear over and over again in various analytical disguises supplied by social science. Gone, then, is the transformative (and, indeed, constitutive) force of ritual in the cosmologies of other times and places.

Still, as I remarked at the outset, there is value in this book in its amassing of information (especially for nonanthropologists) and in some fine discussions—for example, on how ritual can produce solidarity without requiring uniformity of belief (pp. 67–76), on cognition and emotion in ritual (pp. 79–83), and on rituals of revolution (pp. 151–173).

But for the record, the Ndembu of Zambia are not a West African people (p. 63); the Siense Palio does not culminate in a horse race through the center of town (p. 75), but in three turns round a central piazza; the S.S. were not Hitler's secret police (p. 94); and Marriott's description of the Holi Festival is set in the Uttar Pradesh village he called Kishan Garhi, not Kinsman Garhi.

**Power and Persuasion: Fiestas and Social Control in Rural Mexico.** STANLEY BRANDES. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 1988. 212 pp., illustrations, glossary, bibliography, index. \$27.95 (cloth), \$14.95 (paper).

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The inspiration for this book is stated in its epigraph, a citation from Durkheim: "it is in spiritual ways that social pressure exercises itself." And it is the subtitle that most adequately describes the book's main theme: the ways in which social control—or pressure—is exercised in the seemingly libidinal excesses and fantasia of fiestas. Neither power nor persuasion, although promised in the title, figure heavily in the book, at least to my eyes. Although Foucault is cited in the first chapter on the idea of the all-pervasiveness of power, the book does not fully explore the implications of that idea. Persuasion, which Brandes defines as informal didactic pressures that "impel people to behave according to the rules" (p. 6), is presented largely in terms of the way fiesta practices encourage proper social behavior by inverse or ideal example. Surprisingly, there is little analysis of persuasion in terms of discursive and metaphoric strategies, such as explored by James Fernandez in his *Persuasions and Performances: The Play of Tropes in Culture* (1986) or by Brandes himself in his linguistically

rich work on Andalusian folklore. Rather, Brandes seeks to persuade the reader that fiesta performances themselves bring about social order. He takes his lead not only from Durkheim, but from the Mexican writer Octavio Paz, whom Brandes takes to be a "spokesman for his people" (p. 3). In *The Labyrinth of Solitude*, a meditation on Mexican national character, Paz suggests that "Mexicans explode into the liberty of their fiestas" when the harsh routines of daily life "become excessively rigid and controlled" (p. 2–3). After the primordial chaos of the fiesta, society is reborn and order can once again be restored (though by whom and for whom is left unstated); rather than fomenting revolution, argues Brandes following Paz, fiestas reaffirm the boundaries of the already existing world.

The setting of the analysis is Tzintzuntzan, the ancient capital of the Tarascan empire, and today a well-known tourist stop for folkloric festivals, sponsored by the Ministry of Tourism and held in front of the ruins of Tarascan pyramids, and for pottery lushly lacquered in dark green hues. Tzintzuntzan is one of those intensively scrutinized Mexican towns, like the Mayan community of Zinacantan in the southern region of Chiapas, that has hosted a series of anthropologists, each in search of a panorama on which to turn an anthropological lens. Brandes' most important predecessors are George and Mary LeCron Foster, who have been working in Tzintzuntzan since 1945. He weaves materials from their ethnographic work, including photographs, into his account, which is based in turn on his own long-term study of Tzintzuntzan, begun in 1967 while he was a graduate student and continued intermittently since then in between research on Spain. Such an approach gives a time-depth and confidence to the description of fiestas that enriches Brandes' ethnography. Brandes also adopts some of Foster's analytical schemes, such as the dyadic contract model of patron-client relations, which Brandes applies to the link between individuals and supernatural beings. He stakes out new ground in his emphasis on the creative and dramatic features of fiesta performances. This is Brandes' first book-length work on Mexico; he is the author of two important ethnographies on Spain, *Migration, Kinship, and Community: Tradition and Transition in a Spanish Village* (1975) and *Metaphors of Masculinity: Sex and Status in Andalusian Folklore* (1980). While Brandes draws a few interesting connections between Iberian and Mexican folk Catholic practices in his new book, his main concern is to offer the reader a close-up view of Tzintzuntzan religiosity.

The strength and beauty of the Mexican book lie in its detailed presentation and evocation of the Catholic fiesta cycle in Tzintzuntzan, common to much of rural Mexico, which moves from the celebration of Carnival in February through Holy Week in April, the Day of the Holy Cross in May, Corpus Christi in June, All Saints' and All Souls' Day in November, and the Day of the Virgin of Guadalupe and the Christmas Posadas in December. Brandes offers much new ethnographic material on the organization of the fiestas, the changing forms of social and ritual exchange, the meaning of Good Friday penitential performances, the use of fireworks, and the symbolism of the dance dramas with their

Death and devil figures. Of special value is the fascinating chapter on the appropriation of the Day of the Dead by the state in the interest of promoting tourism and a certain image of Tzintzuntzan as the heartland of Tarascan civilization; this was a process in which the local priest played a major role, a role he now regrets because of the enthusiasm with which townspeople have embraced the packaging and selling of such a solemn fiesta to outsiders. Even Brandes got a firsthand taste of the new commercialism when he was asked to pay, as though a tourist, for snapping a photograph in the cemetery on All Souls' Day (p. 108).

Forms of resistance, contested meanings (particularly between priest and parish), ethnic identity struggles, and social class transformation are certainly discussed in the analysis, but they are downplayed; rather, the survival of cooperative norms in the community and of the community itself as a community is highlighted. As Brandes notes, "When a fiesta is over, and both order and cooperation have prevailed, villagers know that their society is intact" (p. 165). The reader comes away from the book with an appreciation of the resilience of old Mexican communities like Tzintzuntzan. My own sense is that issues of change and conflict needed to be explored more thoroughly, and that the ideas of Octavio Paz on Mexican fiestas needed to be viewed critically as a statement of upper-class ideas about the "needs" of the popular classes. Yet the author accomplishes his goals extremely well, and the book is to be highly recommended for its humane presentation of how expressive religious traditions persist in spite and even because of transformations that would seem to pose an inexorable threat to their continuation. Written in the classical descriptive style of ethnography, *Power and Persuasion* will be widely accessible to general readers as well as to students of Latin American and religious studies.

**The Early State in African Perspective: Culture, Power and Division of Labor.** S. N. EISENSTADT, MICHEL ABITBOL, and NAOMI CHAZAN, eds. *Studies in Human Society* 3, PETER J. M. NAS, gen. ed. Leiden and New York: E. J. Brill, 1988. 210 pp., notes, index. Ca. \$32.50 (paper).

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After 1980, ideas regarding the early African state appear to have germinated in tandem, and they are now sending up a visible profusion of theoretical stems and leafy hypotheses. On the one hand, the plethora of African state crises over the past decade has often led scholars to analyze the weaknesses in structural design of these states as sometimes resulting from an experiential past which was cut short by European expansion and colonial conquest. From that perspective, it was only a matter of time before the exigencies of participating in the global political environment caused the deterioration of what was initially an incomplete structure.

There was also a paucity of anthropological theory and ethnographic data on early state processes

in the aftermath of Morton Fried's path-breaking work on the emergence of stratification and centralized society. During the early 1980s, anthropologists and historians in particular worked to marshal the data which informed them about the structures of precolonial African societies and political institutions. Out of the wealth of information on West African states as well as central and southern African states have come theoretical analyses, some of which have roots in Fried's hypotheses and others of which focus on the more synthetic cultural and symbolic implications of state growth.

Eisenstadt, Abitbol, and Chazan's impressive collection of essays belongs to the second category of theorists who are concerned with variations in state form and with the symbolic means by which political centers were constructed, consensus was achieved, and kin-based structures were overcome in these early African states. They see the various evolutionist and structural functionalist assumptions (grounded in the work of Marx, Weber, and Durkheim) as being narrow and economic. Therefore, they focus on the processes of *differentiation and institutionalization* within the state—that is, processes of creating interactional centers from which elites redefined ascribed positions or created new achieved positions having both symbolic as well as power contexts.

Their goal is to compare the political dynamics of different types of *congruent* societies in which kinship positions and power positions overlap with different *non-congruent societies* in which bureaucratic and power elites are distinct from kin elites, but are united in symbolic processes of the state. Anthropologists may wish for more use of ethnography to elucidate distinctions between types of centers and social dynamics, as well as less reliance upon terminology. But they should also appreciate the sophistication that has now been introduced into our discussion of the early state.

The Abitbol and Chazan article on "Myths and Politics" makes a major contribution by pointing out that the political values contained in myths of origin have implications for community definition as well as community action. Particularly in Islamic areas, the traditional elite might overcome the restriction of particularistic values by utilizing this alternative symbol system which links them to a more expansive universe. Where anthropologists, as opposed to political scientists, have always listened to (and often discounted) these myths as emic justification for the present political reality, Abitbol and Chazan demonstrate the potential of myth for helping us understand the changing dynamics between actors and social groups in political culture of Islamicized or non-Islamicized states, whether they are early or contemporary ones.

In the non-Islamicized Asante society, myths legitimized the centralization and transformation of this society by providing a religious-political justification for the subordination of clan elites to the superior authority of the new *Asantehene*. Chazan's extensive article points out the uniqueness of the Asante state experience relative to other African states, in that the new political center emerged out of the kinship realm but surpassed it in significance. The *Asantehene* was able to broaden political access by creating functional (bureaucratic and