

Culture



Owen M. LYNCH (ed.), *Culture and Comunity in Europe: Essays in Honor of Conrad Arensberg*, Humanities Press, 1984. 225 pages, US \$22.50 (cloth)

Marilyn Silverman

Volume 6, Number 1, 1986

URI: <https://id.erudit.org/iderudit/1078447ar>

DOI: <https://doi.org/10.7202/1078447ar>

[See table of contents](#)

Publisher(s)

Canadian Anthropology Society / Société Canadienne d'Anthropologie (CASCA), formerly/anciennement Canadian Ethnology Society / Société Canadienne d'Ethnologie

ISSN

0229-009X (print)

2563-710X (digital)

[Explore this journal](#)

Cite this review

Silverman, M. (1986). Review of [Owen M. LYNCH (ed.), *Culture and Comunity in Europe: Essays in Honor of Conrad Arensberg*, Humanities Press, 1984. 225 pages, US \$22.50 (cloth)]. *Culture*, 6(1), 70–72. <https://doi.org/10.7202/1078447ar>

Tous droits réservés © Canadian Anthropology Society / Société Canadienne d'Anthropologie (CASCA), formerly/anciennement Canadian Ethnology Society / Société Canadienne d'Ethnologie, 1986

This document is protected by copyright law. Use of the services of Érudit (including reproduction) is subject to its terms and conditions, which can be viewed online.

<https://apropos.erudit.org/en/users/policy-on-use/>

Érudit

This article is disseminated and preserved by Érudit.

Érudit is a non-profit inter-university consortium of the Université de Montréal, Université Laval, and the Université du Québec à Montréal. Its mission is to promote and disseminate research.

<https://www.erudit.org/en/>

San Francisco et à Sacramento après la découverte de l'or en 1849. La ruée passée, beaucoup de ces Portugais anglicisèrent leur nom et s'établirent comme baleiniers ou agriculteurs dans la région côtière (entre les comtés de Sonoma et San Luis Obispo). Dans le domaine de l'agriculture, ils sont parvenus à contrôler une grande partie de l'industrie laitière, à tel point que les termes «dairy farmer» et «Portugais» sont devenus presque synonymes dans la Vallée de San Joaquin (p. 45). Aux îles Hawaï, ces marins ont retrouvé un style de vie rurale plus semblable à celui qui était le leur aux Açores. Une autre vague d'immigrants açoréens arriva après 1878 pour travailler dans les plantations de canne à sucre. Ils étaient liés par des contrats de trois ans, au salaire mensuel de 10 dollars plus le logement, l'alimentation et l'assistance médicale. Pour un bon nombre d'entre eux, les îles Hawaï ne constituaient qu'une étape vers la destination rêvée : la Californie.

Le chapitre IV analyse les motivations des émigrants açoréens dans le cadre plus large de la théorie du «push-pull». L'auteur y privilégie les causes particulières de ce mouvement migratoire, mettant l'accent sur les données géographiques et socio-économiques. On y trouve aussi de bons éléments de démographie historique et des tableaux statistiques assez pertinents, les uns comme les autres essentiels à la compréhension du reste de l'ouvrage.

L'auteur fait ensuite l'analyse des valeurs açoréennes et explique comment cet héritage culturel a renforcé le sentiment ethnique de ces nouveaux Américains (chapitre V). La concentration dans certaines zones de l'est et de l'ouest du pays a facilité le maintien des liens qui unifiaient la communauté. Elle rendait viable la création de toutes sortes d'organismes pour la protection de la famille et de la communauté, dont les diverses associations d'aide mutuelle fondées au XIX^e siècle sont un exemple. Une partie d'entre elles furent transformées ultérieurement en compagnies d'assurance-vie. L'une d'elles, la Société Portugaise Reine Sainte-Isabelle, fondée en 1898 par des femmes, établit un immense réseau de succursales et, en 1974, comptait encore quelque 13 500 membres (p. 83).

Le chapitre VI est le plus mal cousu. Les observations y manquent de profondeur. Cette lacune est encore plus évidente dans la description des communautés portugaises du Canada. L'auteur semble ignorer la bibliographie qui traite de ces communautés. De ce chapitre, on retiendra surtout les données de deux tableaux : distribution de la terre et évolution de la population açoréenne.

Le chapitre VII, sous le titre «New Immigrants :

The Same but Different», étudie les changements survenus dans les années 1960 et 1970. Les dernières vagues d'émigration açoréenne se dirigent surtout vers les centres urbains de Los Angeles, San Francisco, Toronto, Boston et Providence, et les émigrants de date plus récente ont une scolarisation plus poussée que ceux de jadis. L'auteur estime que «while their forefathers frequently thought of themselves as being from a particular village or island first, followed by the Azores and, lastly, as Portuguese, the perspective is almost the reverse now. A sense of being Portuguese permeates these newcomers» (p. 116). Or, c'est là un point controversé qui mérite d'être vérifié sur le terrain. L'auteur illustre son propos par quantité d'excellents tableaux et cartes géographiques, accompagnés de données statistiques fort utiles.

Par cet ouvrage bien écrit et riche en documentation, Jerry Williams apporte une contribution précieuse à l'étude des Açoréens en Amérique du Nord. Quiconque travaille en ce moment sur ce groupe ethnique tirera profit de sa lecture. C'est un outil qu'on ne peut que recommander à ceux et celles qui désirent mieux connaître les Açoréens.

Owen M. LYNCH (ed.), *Culture and Community in Europe: Essays in Honor of Conrad Arenberg*, Humanities Press, 1984. 225 pages, US \$22.50 (cloth).

By Marilyn Silverman
York University

This book, like most festschrifts, ranges over a wide area—theoretically and geographically. The book is an interesting one insofar as it provides an overview of the current state of American socio-cultural anthropology in Europe (with one Canadian contribution). For the same reason, of course, as an overview, the collection is a reminder of the limitations of contemporary anthropology.

Lynch's introduction tries to tie all together by pointing out some currents in Europeanist anthropology today: regional analysis, historical analysis and community analysis combined with world systems theory. Sydel Silverman's article, however, is the only one which attempts to deal with the fundamental problem apparent to me in Lynch's list—namely, how to move away from bounded communities and from assumptions as to boundaries (eg. "rural" vs. "urban") and yet to define

units for study. Silverman recognises that much of anthropology "is still rooted in a place," (p. 14) but, finding the idea of "locality" insufficient, she opts for "region." It is within a region as a whole that the analyst can legitimately explore patterns of rural-urban relationships (ie. the range of settlement patterns and the "distribution of functions, interactional patterns and normative dimensions," p. 19). She tests this using her own data from central Italy, the Schneiders' study in western Sicily and Cole and Wolf's materials from the Tyrol. It is a thought-provoking article; but it begs the problem of how region itself is to be defined and how micro-level data, the anthropological forte, can be incorporated.

In contrast, Alexander Moore has no problems defining his boundaries: they are culture areas and the types of communities which are associated with them. Moore reviews these at length; it would appear that in his view, moreover, ecology, economy, household structure, gender relations, class and community all co-vary—despite, and because of the recent advent of an alien national culture and modernization in Spain.

The second section, entitled "Community-Nation Interactions," provides three approaches to "community study" and rural history. A local-national approach is found in B. Lisa Groger's summary of the contradictions in French, and indeed, contemporary European, agriculture. National policy and programmes, the history of which Groger reviews in some detail, aim both to "rationalise" agriculture and to preserve the family farm; not surprisingly, they do neither very well. When viewed simultaneously from a commune and a constituent parish in the south, Groger not only finds the structure of agriculture largely unaffected, she also finds that small farmers have been saved by subsidies which encourage indebtedness in order to buy machinery and over-priced land so as to increase productivity. However, the greater productivity simply services the debt incurred to generate that productivity in the first instance!

In contrast, the Bulgarian state neither created nor faced such problems: it appears to have simply proletarianized everyone, and seemingly without any great difficulties from either historical forces or people. Eleanor Wenkart Smollett's article is an example of doing anthropology from above, and although located in a village, it is really a description of formal agrarian stages, each accompanied by a dialectical growth in general, ideological consciousness. Cooperativism after World War I led to socialism after 1944 when peasants, it seems, were neatly turned into village cooperative farmers. Between 1958 and 1971, 3,200 such cooperatives

were merged into 800 and then into 168. Finally, there will in future be planned communities of workers—industrial and agricultural—"recalling to mind Conrad Arensberg's description of community as the setting in which the full round of life can be seen" (p. 125). Smollett asks whether "socio-cultural change in socialist conditions... should be viewed as an essentially different kind of process from change in other, earlier forms of society" (p. 126). The answer is only "yes" when the anthropologist fails to see real people, real social relationships and real history.

The real, however, is elusive to me in Patricia Slade Lander's view from below—a study of local stratification in Rukki, Finland. Lander is explicit: "While some awareness of societal context is helpful..., the material from this community... supports Arensberg's... position that the community is not only effective as a sample but is, indeed, a model of culture" (p. 90). Rukki has long been industrialized (iron milling and wood processing): its stratification is therefore complex. Like the 1917 census, however, she finds a "two class division" ("landowners" vs. "crofters, workers and beggars"), which persists today in emic expressions, rival sports clubs and attendance at events. Recently, local political cliques associated with national parties "alleviate... tensions" (p. 99) by dividing/uniting farmers, workers and new occupational groups.

Clearly, in such an orthodox community approach, the boundaries of both the community and the strata become slippery: if there are "small farmers" and "large farmers" in the new system but "landowners" and "crofters" in the old, how are they linked historically? Similarly, if the national parties come from outside, then surely the history is relevant? Lander's study shows how, in this view, history is a description of persistence and change while classes are occupational groups.

In the third section, "Migration and the World Capitalist System," Harriet Lee Bloch argues that migrants, the host community and the home community are a single system. She details the effects of institutionalized, temporary migration to the United States on a Polish village of small, family farmers: a returned migrant invests in "the traditional security-oriented option of improving his farm and strengthening his status within the village social structure" (p. 140). However, Bloch also provides incidental insight into the regional economy: the "big farmer" aspirations of migrants, the growth of clandestine industries to supply returnees, money-lenders who sponsor subsequent migrants, new taxi-owners, occupational multipli-

city. All this makes one query how well the larger system can be analyzed from one small village.

In contrast, Judith and Hans Beuchler look at migration from the other direction: they describe the life histories of individuals comprising two "kindreds," (really cognatic kinship networks) over several generations, in different locales in Spanish Galicia. They show the complex factors (wealth, gender, birth order, land, timing of inheritance, kin ties) which affect choices in earning a livelihood (investment in land or commercial ventures, skills, migration) in a national and international context.

A compromise between village-focus and individual focus, and a clear attempt to use "social field" as against bounded units and cultural explanation, is provided by the last section and Joan Vincent's exploratory paper on class, religion and marriage strategies in a northern Irish locale between 1846 and 1920. Here, marital patterns varied amongst the gentry, entrepreneurs, artisans, farmers, servants and labourers; and the overall process was one in which land became consolidated in the hands of Protestant farmers.

In all, this volume is an interesting summary (with some exceptions, most notably social history, dependency theory and class analysis) of Europeanist anthropology today. It also sums up what is, in fact, one of Arensberg's legacies: the difficulty social anthropologists have in finding a substitute for "community" and the inability of many cultural anthropologists even to see the problem.

Susan Friend HARDING, *Remaking Ibiaca: Rural Life in Aragon Under Franco*: Chapel Hill and London, University of North Carolina Press, 1984. 221 pages, US \$24.95 (cloth).

By Winnie Lem
University of Toronto

Remaking Ibiaca is a response to the challenge in anthropology of integrating historiography and ethnography within a single coherent framework. It is a lucidly written study of the transformations of rural community life in northeastern Spain between 1950 and 1975, a period marked by the expansion of capitalism and state intervention in agriculture through the reformist policies of the Franco regime. In attempting to portray social change at the local level against a backdrop of historical developments in the national political economy, Harding uses the technique of focusing on individual lives to demonstrate the impact of

larger forces on the village population. Her book is generously laced with detailed accounts of individual and family histories and through these she pursues her main objective—the reconstruction of the events and processes leading to the displacement of both a "preindustrial" (but not "pre-capitalist") labour intensive agriculture and a peasant agriculture by a capital intensive market-oriented agriculture. As a result of closely scrutinizing these case studies, the author suggests that, contrary to the common assumption in modernization theory, peasants are not seduced to give up their preindustrial ways of life by the material rewards offered by industrial capitalism. Rather, not only did the process of transformation precede the advent of capitalist consumer culture but the people of Ibiaca willingly participated in the social processes that irrevocably transformed the village economy and society. One of the main themes in the book is that, for centuries, peasants in Ibiaca had been modifying and adapting productive strategies according to the imperatives of changing political regimes, all with the goal of preserving their *casas*,—the people and property associated with a household. Harding asserts that, despite the commitment to ensuring the continuity of the *casa*, the actions and strategies followed by the villagers during the Franco era yielded the unintended consequence of promoting their own culture's demise.

In the first part of the book, Harding describes the changes in forms of production that obtained in the pre-Franco era under the hegemony of several political and economic orders: under feudalism; under constitutionalism in the 19th century; the constitutional monarchy and the dictatorial politics of Primo de Rivera in the early 20th century; during the Second Republic in the 30's; and finally under the civil war and anarchist revolution. From the manifold changes in the political wind, Harding distills the essence of production relations in the village, and we find that Ibiaca at the threshold of Spain under Franco was characterized by "three interpenetrating realms of social relations". One realm involved the organization of work on the larger estates which generated a hierarchical set of relationships between the families of landowners and labourers. The second generated a set of egalitarian relations between families on smaller estates, while the third involved the continuity of the *casa* and was common to both realms. A subsistence-oriented peasant form of agricultural production made up of small estates existed alongside an early, preindustrial capitalist form on the large estates.

In the second part of the book, Harding