

Toutes ces questions sont abordées au moyen de nombreux portraits et entretiens qui offrent un peu de simplicité à un texte au parti pris volontairement théorique (il s'agit, pour l'essentiel d'une thèse de doctorat en Anthropologie sociale et Ethnologie soutenue en 2005 à l'EHESS – École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales – à Paris), et donc d'une rédaction un peu austère.

On regrettera que la graphie, confinant parfois au minuscule, desserve la lecture, même si cela ne saurait être reproché à l'auteur. On a parfois aussi l'impression qu'Anne-Christine Trémon s'évertue à reconstruire seule toute l'histoire de la communauté chinoise de Tahiti, à retracer seule les logiques identitaires qui s'y manifestent, faisant assez peu cas des écrits des autres, notamment des Chinois de Tahiti, largement passés sous silence. La monumentale thèse de doctorat en psychologie d'Ernest Sin Chan "Psychopathologie et identité des Hakka de Polynésie française" (Université Paris VIII, 2002) est absente de la bibliographie, hormis sous sa forme éditée (2004, "Identité Hakka à Tahiti"). Son contenu aurait surtout pu inspirer nombre de références et de commentaires à propos du culte des ancêtres et des rites familiaux. Également, si les ouvrages "identitaires" de l'écrivain chinois de Tahiti, Jimmy Ly, figurent dans la bibliographie, cette matière à l'analyse aurait pu être exploitée dans la troisième partie de l'ouvrage. Enfin, le lecteur vivant en Polynésie française est gêné par l'attribution systématique de prénoms et noms fictifs aux familles et aux individus. Je n'ignore pas cette règle que se fixent certains chercheurs, voire qu'imposent certaines institutions, visant à "dépersonnaliser" les individus pour en faire des personnages représentatifs d'une catégorie sociale. Néanmoins, les travaux d'ethnologie ont aussi des lecteurs parmi les gens qui ont fourni la matière à ces travaux. C'est évidemment le cas en Polynésie française, où l'ouvrage d'Anne-Christine Trémon trouvera des centaines, voire des milliers de lecteurs, au sein d'une communauté très désireuse de connaître son histoire. Ils ne manqueront pas d'éprouver une certaine frustration à devoir procéder au moyen de toute une gymnastique mentale pour retrouver l'identité des uns et des autres : des leurs.

Ce sont là des critiques mineures, en rapport aux multiples qualités dont fait montre ce travail d'une ethnologue bien formée, dont on attend avec impatience les prochains travaux.

Bruno Saura

#### **Villar, Diego, Lorena Córdoba, e Isabelle Combès:**

*La reducción imposible. Las expediciones del padre Negrete a los pacaguaras (1795–1800).* Cochabamba: Instituto de Misionología, 2009. 262 pp. ISBN 978-99905-946-5-2. (Colección Scripta Autochtona, 3). Precio: Bs 150

Amazonian Bolivia is one of the most understudied regions of Latin America. Little of scholarly quality was produced before 1970, and only a handful of scholars have investigated the area since then. Archaeologists have written about Amazonian Bolivia's mounds, causeways, and raised fields; cultural anthropologists have produced ethnographies of contemporary indigenous communities; and historians have studied the Spanish Jesuit

mission province of Mojos and the rubber boom era. Yet much remains to be discovered, and for this reason, *La reducción imposible*, by anthropologists Diego Villar, Lorena Córdoba, and Isabelle Combès, comes as a welcome addition to the scholarship.

The strength of this work lies in the authors' ability to combine the methodologies of ethnographic fieldwork and research in historical archives. The result of this cross-fertilization is an ethnohistory of Southern Panoan-speaking indigenous people, which occupies the first half of *La reducción imposible*. In this section of the book, the authors use archival and published historical material as sources for the ethnonyms, toponyms, personal names, and naming customs of the Southern Panoans. They successfully use information provided by modern Chacobo people to interpret several previously unexplained Panoan ethnonyms, and identify the Sinabo as the Xënabo or "worm people," the Isabo as the Ísabo or "porcupine people," and the Capuibo as the Capëbo or "caiman people." The authors bring together information from all known written sources to reconstruct the history of the Southern Panoans from the seventeenth century to the present. They note the vast number of ethnic names recorded for these people at different times, and observe that the Chacobo, Pacaguara, Sinabo, Capuibo, and Caripuna, traditionally regarded as separate groups, in fact appear to be interchangeable names for the same people. Replacing the old depiction of peoples as reified and unchanging with the modern approach of ethnogenesis, the authors argue that ethnic identity was constantly evolving. It is for this reason that they propose the name Southern Panoans (*panos meridionales*) as a way to provide an overview of groups whose designations (whether exonyms or endonyms) have changed several times in their history. To Villar, Córdoba, and Combès, "the history of the Southern Panoans is a history of interethnic relations," (p. 102) whether among constantly changing Southern Panoan subgroups, or between those groups and their non-Panoan neighbors. They depict the Southern Panoans not as an isolated and timeless culture, but as people who interact with the world and transform their identities over time.

The second half of the book contains transcriptions of documents from the Mojos y Chiquitos section of the Archivo Nacional de Bolivia in Sucre. Most are related to the mission of Nuestra Señora del Pilar de Pacaguaras, founded by Padre Francisco Xavier Negrete among the Pacaguaras on the lower Mamoré River in 1795. Other documents provide information on those Pacaguaras who were resettled in the Cayubaba mission town of Exaltación from the failure of the mission due to epidemic disease in 1797 until 1800. The documents detail the preparations for, execution of, and results of each of Negrete's three expeditions to the Pacaguaras, and include many lists of Pacaguara names. One document offers an early written example of an Arawakan language: a letter from Mojo leaders of Trinidad and San Javier offering to help the second expedition, written in Mojo and Spanish. In several appendices, the authors present tabulated information on the fate of each Pacaguara individual contacted, on modern Chacobo names, and on the Chacobo equiva-

lents of Pacaguara names from the documents. The final appendix transcribes an 1804 document which refers to Pacaguaras and other groups.

In a book that crosses the disciplines of anthropology and history, there are bound to be minor errors such as the authors' misidentification of the Bolivian explorer José Agustín Palacios as prefect of the Department of Beni on page 56 (he was actually governor of the Province of Mojos). Nevertheless, this in no way detracts from the value of the book. Villar, Córdoba, and Combès clearly know and care about the modern Chacobo people. *La reducción imposible* demonstrates their interest in moving beyond the "ethnographic present" of their fieldwork to reconstruct the complete history of the people they study. Their relationships with the Chacobos and knowledge of their language have given them insights that a historian would be unlikely to have. The resulting ethnohistory provides a glimpse of both cultural continuity and change. It gives us, as much as is possible, an inside interpretation of the Southern Panoans, an understudied and poorly-understood indigenous people. And although the Chacobos only appear in documentary records in 1845, the authors prove that the same people have occupied the land for at least 400 years under different names, thus providing the Chacobos with an even stronger claim to their own territory.

Gary Van Valen

**Vinicius, Lucio:** *Modular Evolution. How Natural Selection Produces Biological Complexity.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010. 235 pp. ISBN 978-0-521-42964-1. Price: £ 60.00

This is a book after my own heart in that it concerns the big questions in evolutionary theory. It may be of interest to evolutionary theorists and philosophers of such as well as to social scientists. The latter are likely to be particularly interested in the critical analysis of recent research on cooperation among humans in chapter 6, and in the views concerning behaviour and culture presented in chapter 7.

There is something of a gap between the grand claim made about progress in evolution, even in restoring the hierarchical view of life that Lovejoy called "the great chain of being" with humans at the top, on the one hand, and the quite conservative view taken of most substantive issues, on the other. Hence genetics, development, behaviour, and culture, including language, are "modular", i.e., particulate or discrete; speciation is pretty much exclusively allopatric; the comparative molecular genetics of development shows evolution to have been gradual; the key characteristic of multicellular life cycles is the development of a germ-disposable soma differentiation; the function of sex is to acquire beneficial mutations or to get rid of deleterious ones; males foist the cost of reproduction onto females who make the best of a bad job; eusocial colonies are not super-units, and cooperation in evolution is always attributable to either kin selection or "selfish cooperation." Much of this strikes me as harkening back to a simpler time when we thought we understood almost everything. For example, who can today think of

the gene as particulate in structure and function given genetic recombination which ignores functional boundaries, the existence of trans- as well as cis-acting controls on gene expression, and all the cutting and pasting that goes on at many points from transcription to posttranslation?

The theoretical target of the book is the evolution of complexity which can be understood, according to the author, by means of making dynamic Schrödinger's principle of "order from order," by which I understand Vinicius to mean the existence of biological information and that subsequent forms of order evolve from previous ones. More specifically, Vinicius agrees with an element (but not the main element) of each of Maynard-Smith and Szathmáry's major transitions, Jablonka and Lamb's four dimensions of evolution, Barbieri's organic codes, and Dawkins extended phenotypes. Along with Maynard-Smith and Szathmáry, he understands major transitions in evolution as increasing complexity but not by the emergence of new aggregate units. He thinks that levels of selection – individuals, families (kin groups), groups, species, etc., – should not be confounded with levels of organization or complexity – cells, eukaryotic cells, multicellular organisms, etc. – which is an important point. At the same time, it was a large part of Maynard-Smith and Szathmáry's genius to recognize that perhaps the concept of "multiple levels of selection" only makes sense in the context of the latter – or as a minimum, that the latter are particularly worth investigating from that point of view as being possibly based on similar principles. Along with Jablonka and Lamb, he believes that the origin of brains and behaviour should be included as a major transition – but not their emphasis on Lamarckian processes. Along with Barbieri, he believes in the existence of a number of biological "codes" – but not so many as the former claims. Along with Dawkins, he uses the expression "extended phenotype" but with a different meaning – namely, something like extended out into the phenotype of the organism rather than necessarily to artifacts or the phenotypes of other individuals. From that combination he derives an ontological hierarchy of levels of organizational complexity rather than of aggregates which evolve by "modularity transfer." Disposable phenotypes become modular information carriers, themselves coding for disposable phenotypes so that not only do genes code for proteins but regulatory proteins do so for somatic cells in multicellular development, neural cells and activity do so for learned behaviours, and language does so for human cultural traits. The thesis incidentally is beautifully illustrated on the cover by the lego sculpture artist Nathan Sawaya's "Yellow" showing a yellow lego man pulling his chest open and all of the modular bricks spilling out.

Vinicius gives most substantive attention to multicellular development (two chapters) mainly on the regulation of gene expression and the evolution of senescence. If he had paid as much attention to traditional developmental biology as to pattern formation in the molecular genetics of *Drosophila*, he might have come up with a different conclusion about individual phenotypes – namely, that their development is achieved by a largely self-contained or encapsulated evolutionary process itself (also compat-