

refers to areas, not to people. So far, Heyerdahl has not shown that the Americans were responsible for colonizing the Pacific Islands.

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RECORD OF A CULTURE

The Material Culture of the Peoples of the Gwembe Valley

By Barrie Reynolds. (Kariba Studies, Vol. 3.) Pp. xiii + 262 + 15 plates. (Manchester University Press: Manchester, 1968. Published on behalf of the National Museums of Zambia.) 55s.

UNTIL the decision was taken to build the Kariba Dam, the Tonga, who lived in that remote part of the Zambezi valley often called Gwembe, above the site of the dam, were one of the least known peoples in Central Africa. With the publication of this third volume of the Kariba Studies, intended to record their way of life before they were moved from the valley, they are now one of the best described. Indeed, I know of no other group in Africa which has been so systematically and so ably studied by a social anthropologist, an ecologist and an ethnologist, all working in conjunction with one another.

Reynolds, at that time on the staff of the Rhodes-Livingstone Museum, did his part of the work during six months in 1956-57 which were spent almost entirely on the north bank of the river. He gives us the results here in a very full, descriptive survey of all important aspects of Tonga material culture: buildings and furnishings; tools, weapons and utensils; the technology of subsistence activities; dress and ornaments; arts, crafts and entertainments. The raw materials employed and the processes involved in their manufacture and use are all detailed wherever possible. In fact, Reynolds takes very little for granted, and if his text is therefore sometimes rather unexciting for the general reader, it is precisely this attention to detail which distinguishes the specialist from the amateurs who have written most previous accounts of Central African material culture. A similar care is evident in the way that he notes a number of regional variants within the general Gwembe area. His efforts have been well supported by those responsible for the numerous line drawings essential to a work of this kind, and the book's general standard of production is high. It is a major addition not only to the study of the Tonga but also to our knowledge of a whole region in which, as the author remarks, material cultures are often very similar.

One possible complaint is that rather more might have been included of the Tonga technical vocabulary. For instance, although the vernacular names of artefacts and materials are given, there seem to be no Tonga verbs in the book. As only someone with the author's training and experience could appreciate all the complexities of the manufacturing processes, nobody else could collect the terms which describe them and provide the appropriate English equivalents. He apparently missed this oppor-

tunity of making a contribution to linguistic knowledge and therefore to the wider context in which material culture is included. We have sufficient reason to be grateful to him and his colleagues, however, for the way in which they took the opportunity to make a unique record of a culture which has already disappeared in the form that they knew it. We now wait to learn what has taken its place.

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WORKERS IN OBSIDIAN

Excavations at Saliagos, near Antiparos

By J. D. Evans and Colin Renfrew. (The British School of Archaeology at Athens. Supplementary volume, No. 5.) Pp. xi + 226 + 59 plates. (Thames and Hudson: London, July 1968.) 105s.

THIS volume is a report on two seasons' digging, in 1964 and 1965, on an islet lying off the northern tip of Antiparos. The site proved to be that of a small village of farmers and fishers dating from the Middle to Late Neolithic period of the Aegean. As the existence of Neolithic cultures in the Cyclades had hitherto only been suspected from surface finds, the discovery is of considerable importance. The new material, together with the surface finds, has now been identified by the name of Saliagos culture.

The people of Saliagos were skilful workers in obsidian, importing almost all the raw obsidian from Melos. They were also prolific and original potters, producing dark-surfaced wares often handsomely decorated with geometric designs in matt white paint. A favourite form was the pedestalled bowl or "fruit-stand". As farmers they kept sheep and goats, cattle and pigs, and grew quantities of barley together with some emmer and einkhorn wheat. As fishers they were very successful with tunny, but did not scorn shellfish, such as limpets. They do not seem to have used fishhooks, but rather nets or bows and arrows. Something of their religious ideas may be revealed in two marble figurines, one a magnificently buttocked seated female, the other a "fiddle idol" of a type well known in the Early Bronze Age.

Only parts of the stone foundations of rectangular houses and a rectangular enclosure wall have survived. In the text certain clay deposits are said to suggest that the upper walls might have been mudbrick or pisé, but one of the many appendices makes it clear that the clay had not in fact been derived from such building materials—a culpable inconsistency. Wattle and daub are the most likely alternatives.

In Neolithic times the sea may have been as much as six metres below its present level, and in these conditions Saliagos would have formed the end of a promontory of Antiparos. Sheltered and provided with harbours, it would have offered ideal conditions for a fishing and farming economy.

Professor Evans and Dr Renfrew find the affinities of the Saliagos culture to be in mainland Greece, the eastern Aegean and Anatolia. In general it can be said to represent a local development of the composite Aegean cultures of the day. As for when that day was, the archaeological estimate that the settlement flourished during the transition from the Middle to Late Neolithic times was happily confirmed by carbon-14 figures which for the present can be read as giving a foundation date at about 4300 BC and a duration of five or six centuries.

Except for the inconsistency already complained of, and the omission of "Notes to the Figures" for the pottery section, the report has been painstakingly compiled. There is a vast amount of repetition, and a simple summary of the kind given above might have been a useful addition. Some of the writing is quite good, notably a few pages on "Environment and Life" which include interesting com-