

an adhesion to the Roux-Weismann hypothesis, which Roux himself strenuously repudiated. Unless I am grossly mistaken, his contribution to this hypothesis was limited to the idea expressed in his brochure *Ueber die Bedeutung der Kerntheilungsfiguren*, of 1883; an idea which, it is true, when rigidly developed led to the hypothesis, but which was so developed only by Weismann.

In reading Roux's embryological work it has seemed to me particularly striking that from first to last there is no evidence that he ever believed that development must necessarily follow the rigid mosaic form entailed by the Roux-Weismann hypothesis. If I have dwelt on this matter, it is because Professor Oppenheimer has a great admiration for Roux, who well deserves it; and I should like to convince her that she needs not to attribute to him this particular foible.

A short review must necessarily appear over-critical, for it is impossible to characterize in a few words the general merit of a book. I can only say that this book should be read by anyone engaged in the study of the history of embryology. Among many other advantages, it possesses that of calling attention to the admirable work of Boveri, and to the great merits of Driesch's *Analytische Theorie der organischen Entwicklung*, of 1894. Among the persons who failed to appreciate this work, the one who might most greatly have profited by it was Driesch himself.

Professor Oppenheimer's book implicitly calls attention to the impossibility of dealing with the more recent history of biology without an extensive knowledge of the German language. This, it is abundantly clear, Professor Oppenheimer possesses, though there are a few oddities in her translations.

J. S. WILKIE

## PLAINS INDIAN RELIGION

### O-kee-pa: a Religious Ceremony and Other Customs of the Mandans

By George Catlin. Edited with an introduction by John C. Ewers. Centennial edition. Pp. vi+106+13 plates. (New Haven, Conn., and London: Yale University Press, 1967.) 90s.

In 1832, George Catlin spent about three weeks among the Mandan Indians on the upper Missouri River, during one of his trips to record in paint the rapidly changing life of Indians on the American frontier. Despite the brevity of his visit, he had the good fortune to attend the major Mandan religious ceremony in the company of capable interpreters. This volume reprints his fourth published description of what he saw, written many years later. The credibility of Catlin's earlier accounts had been attacked, because of his frank descriptions of ceremonial self-torture and ritual sexual intercourse; because he had blamed the fur traders for the introduction of smallpox among the Mandan in 1837 and exaggerated (although only slightly) its devastating effects; and because he related his ethnographic materials to a bizarre theory of early Welsh influence on Mandan customs, language and physical type. In 1867, Catlin answered his critics by presenting a more complete description and by printing testimonials to his accuracy. As Ewers makes clear, Catlin's general reliability is confirmed by the briefer accounts of earlier and later eyewitnesses, and also by the much more complete and comprehensible material provided by A. W. Bowers, an anthropologist who interviewed aged Mandan in 1930-31, forty years after the last performance of the Okeepa.

Comparison of the coloured plates in this edition with the original photolithographs shows some loss in sharpness of definition and in colour tones, but in only one case (plate 12) is any significant ethnographic detail obscured in the reproduction. But Catlin's paintings and engravings are notoriously variable in reliability, partly because of his

practice of reworking the same material for many years after his original field work. Thus the thirteen lithographs in this work should be compared critically with the four paintings of the Okeepa which Catlin made while he was still in the Mandan village, and with his other surviving Mandan paintings. It is unfortunate that Ewers has not attempted this here, for his own previous studies of other paintings of Plains Indian subjects provide the best demonstration of the methods which must be applied in evaluating illustrations as historical ethnographic documents. The text, also, must eventually be compared in detail with Catlin's three earlier accounts of the ceremony.

Catlin in 1867 held back some of his descriptions for a "folium reservatum" printed on tinted paper for the use of "scientific men". By 1950, when Bowers published in the University of Chicago's Social Anthropological Series, scientific women were also interested, so he turned to his wife for help in "toning down the accounts of the buffalo-calling rites with their sex licenses to make them readable without embarrassment to mixed audiences". In 1967, Ewers removes some of the sensationalism from this striking feature of Mandan ceremonialism (and indeed of Mandan trading behaviour) by explaining it in terms of general Plains Indian concepts of supernatural "power" and its transmission. The self-torture so vividly described and illustrated by Catlin was shared by other Plains tribes, among whom it was a central element of the widespread Sun dance. Other features which Bowers adds to the Okeepa as described by Catlin also fit it into a Plains context and make it appear to be a deviant form of the Sun dance: the prominence of sacred bundles, the quest for visions, ceremonial distribution of property, sponsoring of the ceremony by a single individual, the importance of clans, and other characteristics. Seen thus, the Okeepa may be remarkable in its complexity and the explicitness of its symbolism, but it is by no means exotic among Plains Indian rituals. Even Bowers's minimally theoretical ethnography maintained that Mandan "ceremonies were native dramatizations of the sacred myths", of which he collected several examples relating to the Okeepa, and so this would be an excellent place to test the utility of modern structural analysis of myths, ritual and symbolism as a tool for evaluating fragmentary and partly contradictory historical evidence, while reconstructing a consistent patterned description of the ceremony. This new edition of the basic eyewitness account, with the editor's helpful introduction and annotation, should promote the attempt.

WILLIAM C. STURTEVANT

## MORE ABOUT STONEHENGE

### Stonehenge of the Kings

A People Appear. By Patrick Crampton. Pp. 171. (London: John Baker, 1967.) 45s. net.

THE author of this book asks "Palace? Temple? Fort? Computer? Calendar? What is Stonehenge itself, the building?" He himself sees it as a place where inauguration feasts of local chieftains took place. "It is in this sort of ceremony and in the seasonal festivals presided over by the king that I see the function of Stonehenge . . . nothing so far points to Stonehenge itself being a utilitarian building, and I think that in its heyday it was the focus in the Stonehenge capital at which the people of southern Britain convened and through a seasonal peaceful assembly expressed overlordship and power . . . I see it as the fit setting for a king to perform his practical and magical ceremonial functions."

All this is possible; no one in his archaeological senses has ever denied that Stonehenge was a place of assembly, and to guess whether that assembly was religious, magical, or secular is to waste time. We do not know, and in the present state of our knowledge of prehistory we cannot