

RELATED TOPICS

Transpazifische Kulturbeziehungen. Studien zu ihrer Geschichte. By WOLFGANG MARSCHALL. Munich, Germany, 1972. Klaus Renner Verlag. Maps. Illustrations. Bibliography. Index. Pp. 292. Cloth.

Books like this one make it clear that the study of trans-Pacific contacts has left the stage of adventure-seeking and charlatanism far behind. Here one will find a long section with acute, judicious discussion of criteria for distinguishing diffused traits from ones independently invented. Following this are four chapters on test cases: the blowgun, funerary house models, animal figures on wheels, and techniques of weaving and dyeing. Finally there are sections on nautical aspects and some conclusions for the general history of culture.

No primary research was done for this book. At present, the topic does not demand it or, indeed, very well permit it. The author attains a different kind of originality, by virtue of his sharp mind, which picks salient points out of the endless, uneven writings on his subject. These points are then used tellingly in the test cases. Such simple, general ideas, with the cutting edge of applicability, are never exactly "new." But by emphasizing them, showing them in use, Marschall gives us a good set of working criteria for spotting elements likely to have been introduced. Of the many, I will cite two. Widespread traits are often thought more likely to have been independently evolved. By this notion, says Marschall, one would imagine the Muslim mosque invented several times. A trait must be universal under given conditions to favor an interpretation of independent invention. A trait merely widespread, but not present in some comparable areas, is precisely one most likely to have been diffused, a point the author brings to bear on his discussion of the blowgun. Again, the author emphasizes that a trait based on some principle not understood or freely applied within a given society is likely to have been introduced; here the example is the wheel on the American animal figures.

It is further to Marschall's credit that he makes proper concessions, allowing for the probable independent development of food plants in America, dismissing similar words for blowguns because of onomatopoeia, and expressing himself very cautiously on the possible diffusion of weaving. Nevertheless, no one could mistake this for a truly balanced interpretation. From the beginning Marschall is convinced of multiple important transoceanic contacts; by the time he reaches the conclusion, caution is gone, and the unity of the "high cultures" well-nigh established.

Yet the long smooth curves of pre-Columbian American develop-

ment leave no room for constant introductions from the outside as the *motor* of change. Roughly parallel independent evolution still must play a large role. America retains its attraction as a control. Whatever the contribution of diffusion, preconquest America remains, in relative terms, the world's most isolated cradle of cities, agriculture, and empires. The raw truth of that isolation leaps to the eye in the series of great epidemics, unmatched in Africa and Asia, which European contact brought on in America.

Important pre-Columbian contacts between America and the ecumene must be considered very possible, even "probable." But some better way must be found to study them. The method used here, rather than putting logic and insight to their natural uses of comprehending processes, harnesses them to the hopeless task of determining whether individual events took place in a remote past. Some way must be found to distill laws of diffusion from that portion of the past which is well known, and then to extrapolate to undocumented times inside perimeters less broad than those dictated by probability and logic.

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Beyond Cuba: Latin America Takes Charge of Its Future. Edited by LUIGI R. EINAUDI. New York, 1974. Craine, Russack & Company. Index. Pp. xiv, 250. Cloth. \$11.50. Paper. \$5.95.

The significance of this book depends principally on the question for whom it was written. Most scholars will be disappointed by it; the essays included in this publication hardly go beyond a juxtaposition of journalistic vignettes. But for people who exert a noticeable influence on some aspects of Latin American life without possessing a meaningful background on it, this book is a must. Considering that "the original task [of this study] was to analyze major trends in Latin America during the 1970s for the Department of State" (p. 7), one might conclude that the editor has skillfully accomplished it.

The book comprises six parts where the participation of Einaudi is prominent (he wrote or coauthored ten of the fifteen papers included). The first sums up the goals of the study: to identify broad regional trends likely to condition Latin American development during the 1970s and to interpret the substance of tensions observed currently in the area. Einaudi notes that the emphasis was placed on political and institutional aspects; others like agrarian reforms, population pressures, and employment policies were omitted. The impressionistic tone of