

Reviews

JOAN VINCENT, *Politics and Anthropology: Visions, Traditions, and Trends*. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1990. 570 pp., \$ 40.00 (ISBN 0-8165-1137-3)

This book is a detailed history of the development of political anthropology in the English-speaking world. It is concise, brilliantly written and thought provoking, as it examines the various theories that have been advanced, rejected and superseded in political anthropology. It is also very valuable evidence of the great role the Asian area played in the origin and development of this subject.

Vincent examines the progression of political anthropology from 1879 until today. She also gives a detailed discussion of the role played by the government, universities, and socio-political conditions in the growth of this discipline.

The book is divided into six periods and two general parts. Vincent first discusses the rise of various schools of thought in political anthropology and the events and actors which have shaped this discipline over the past 100 years. In part two, she examines the professionalization of political anthropology and the emergence of area studies and regional specialization.

Vincent makes it clear that the early advance in this branch of anthropology did not result from the studies of the American Indians. In her opinion, the British colonization of India and their need to categorize the peoples and civilizations of South Asia, led to an immense anthropological interest in Asian societies by the beginning of the 20th century. This was a consequence of the interest in Asian societies derived from the study of Indo-European societies and linguistics, as many anthropologists searched for Indo-Aryan survivals in South Asia.

Vincent shows that many of the theories and methods of political anthropology were first applied to Asian cultures. For example, she notes that the "fieldwork revolution" may be attributed to the British interest in India [p. 106] and the Pacific. This is especially true of W.H.R. Rivers' work on the Todas; and Malinowski's work in the Pacific. [pp. 106-113]

Vincent's research is superb and the documentation is beyond reproach. She provides a fine discussion of the theoretical trends in political anthropology and the pioneers in the field. This book is easy to read and well or-

ganized. It will prove to be a useful source of information for both professional anthropologists and their students for years to come.

Clyde Ahmad Winters

URSULA ROTHEN-DUBS, *Allahs indischer Garten. Ein Lesebuch der Urdu-Literatur.* (Neue Indische Bibliothek, 18). Frauenfeld: Im Waldgut, 1989. 605 pages, DM 48.-

This reader is most welcome. As a professor of Urdu language - a language spoken by more than 130 million people - at the Islamic Studies Department, University of Bern, Ursula Rothen-Dubs follows the tradition of her family with her interest in South Asian culture and especially Urdu. She is the first German-speaking scholar to introduce a large variety of translated Urdu texts to the German public. Quite consciously the author opposes the common academic style of several works already available on this literature. Hence this book can be regarded as a rich complement to the English contributions by e.g. Annemarie Schimmel, Muhammad Sadiq and Ram Babu Saksena etc. *Allahs Indischer Garten* does not necessarily have to be read from A to Z. Rather, its short poems and short stories etc. can be enjoyed according to the personal interest of the reader who may randomly pick out certain authors or certain periods, browsing over them one by one, or in any other selection. The translated passages offer a splendid insight into the world of Urdu poetry and prose and of Muslim cultures in South Asia.

Chronologically arranged, the *Garten* (Persian: *Bustan*; often used for anthologies in literary circles) starts with poets of the early 17th century and ends with contemporaries. It comprises classical poetry, the phase of the early prose and poetic art of the 19th century as well as of the time of "re-contemplation and reorientation" in the wake of colonial rule. Each phase is represented in the words of the then well-known artists. Contemporary poetry, short stories and extracts of novels make up the chapter on the 20th century. The two important schools of this comparatively young literature - Delhi and Lucknow - are documented.

The different topics and authors are supplemented and introduced by the so called *Zwischenblätter* (interim pages), mostly comments of leading Urdu literary critics, abounding with information. In this way the author succeeds in providing a cross-section of Urdu literature - the development of literary genres and themes - as reflected by its own writers. Nevertheless, not each critic's statement has to be regarded as definitive, especially since some of