

to break down the prevailing notion of technology as hardware, charts the introduction of a new form of lasso amongst communities in northeast Finland. Here again, we find an account which resists the temptation to explain technical changes solely in terms of the objective properties of particular pieces of equipment. The process of choice, of whether or not people adopted one form of lasso or the other, stretched beyond the simple question of function, to encompass ideas about the self, skill, and relations with others. As he puts it, 'The reindeer man's choice of technical means is dictated as much by considerations of who he is as it is by the mechanical effect he desires to achieve.' (p. 124).

No short review can do justice to a book that spans 420 pages, and cases as diverse as a failed Parisian underground system and the process of perception in pottery production. This could have been a weakness, but in fact it turns out to be one of the strengths of the volume as a whole. These eclectic studies combine to demonstrate that even the most mundane of tools and techniques may be wo-

ven into the fabric of lived experience and social relations in ways which resist conscious articulation or simple description. For the most part, these explorations make fascinating reading. However, there are various points in the volume where one was left feeling that the force of an argument could have been strengthened by clearer discussions of the structure of social and political relations in particular contexts. There are also a number of instances where the focus appears to have become somewhat blurred in the process of translation. These points aside, the book provides a timely reminder that the increasing specialization of disciplines such as archaeology makes it all the more difficult to capture the intimate ties between traditions of making and using and the broader process of social reproduction. That task may be difficult indeed, but we can begin to tackle at least some of the problems that we face if we take a leaf or two from the pages of this book.

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