

Book Reviews

ROBERT BARTLETT HAAS, *Muybridge. Man in motion*, Berkeley, Los Angeles, and London, University of California Press, 1976, 4to, pp. xi, 207, illus., £12.00.

The English-born photographer, Eadweard Muybridge (1830–1904) was the first to capture instantaneous motion on film and to project it on a screen, and the first successfully to develop a method of analysing movement into continuous series of still photographs. He thus became one of the pioneers of film. Using athletes, girls, and children, himself, as well as horses and other animals as subjects, his revelations of human and animal movement were revolutionary. Thus he verified the long contested suggestion that at one point a galloping horse's feet are all clear of the ground. His extensive labours revealed the potential of the moving picture, and they are described here in an excellent book.

The author has worked on his topic for twenty years and has traced the details of Muybridge's colourful and remarkable career. There is also his elegant photographic studies of American scenery and the Medoc Indian war, and all is discussed in a readable and fully documented and illustrated book, which is a credit to the publisher as well as to the author.

It can be thoroughly recommended as a contribution to the history of biology as well as to the history of photography.

DEREK J. ODDY and DEREK S. MILLER (editors), *The making of the modern British diet*, London, Croom Helm, 1976, 8vo, pp. 235, £6.95.

The editors have gathered together eighteen scholarly essays, which deal with the role of food during the industrialization and urbanization of Britain. They are divided into three groups: 'The supply of food'; 'Factors influencing consumption'; 'A nutritional evaluation'. The first considers specific foodstuffs which reflect food trends: biscuits, bread, meat, sugar, milk, cocoa and chocolate, and tea. In the second, living standards, consumer preferences, the presentation of food and the way in which it is made available to the customer are discussed; these feature agricultural labourers' standards, drink, regional food habits, the corner shop, J. Lyons and canning. The third is of considerable interest, especially to the medical historian, for there are papers on 'Developments leading to present-day nutritional knowledge', 'Some basic principles of nutrition', 'Nutritional surveys', and 'A nutritional analysis of historical evidence: the working-class diet, 1880–1914'. The last of these suggests the use of modern nutritional knowledge combined with computer techniques in making a quantitative evaluation of historical evidence. It will be interesting to see the further results of this new methodology.

This book is an important contribution to the history of nutrition, and also to modern techniques in historiography. It deserves to be widely consulted.

G. REICHEL-DOLMATOFF, *The shaman and the jaguar. A study of narcotic drugs among the Indians of Columbia*, Philadelphia, Temple University Press, 1975, 8vo, pp. xxi, 280, illus., \$15.00.

In the north-west Amazon region the natives make liberal use of hallucinogenic drugs in an effort to acquire powers of good or evil. In a detailed investigation of their religious experience, in which the transformation of the shaman into a jaguar is

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central, the author, an internationally-known ethnologist resident in Colombia, has collected his data from three sources: conversation with natives, their accounts being reproduced in translation, and in particular the services of a remarkable Indian who was able to analyse acutely his own people; the author's personal experience when participating in drug-taking ceremonies; from a secondary source, the Spanish chronicles. The uniqueness of the book lies in Reichel-Dolmatoff's intimate knowledge of these primitive peoples, and together with a thorough mastery of their language and customs he has been able to make close rapport with them, thus permitting him to penetrate their culture more effectively than anyone before him.

A number of books of this kind have appeared recently, most of them attempting to understand the drug dependency of primitive peoples, and so, it is hoped, to assist in the comprehension and thus the handling of addiction in Western nations. Dr. Reichel-Dolmatoff, however, is interested primarily in the former and by studying it closely he is able to understand many basic cultural processes. His excellent book is, therefore, an outstanding contribution to social anthropology.

FRED W. VOGET, *A history of ethnology*, New York, Holt, Rinehart & Winston, 1975, 8vo, pp. ix, 879, [no price stated].

The author's plan is to trace ". . . the intellectual history of cultural anthropology, with special emphasis on ethnology. . . ." The main strands of this vast subject are followed, and the subject-matter is divided into four historical periods: classical, Renaissance and Arabic; the eighteenth and nineteenth centuries, during which the idea of human development towards a perfect social state became prominent, first in the phase 1725 to 1840 when a humanistic view of human progress predominated, followed by evolutionary theory in the second, 1840 to 1890, with breakthroughs in geology, palaeontology, prehistory and anthropology; 1890 to 1940 with a linking of culture and society, attempts to produce a general theory of each, and with the development of scientific approaches and professionalization; 1940 to the present, characterized by increasing specialization whereby links with economics, political science and psychology have been made so that a more integrated perspective and methodology have resulted. There is a lengthy list of references and a useful glossary. Despite the latter, parts are not easy to read, and although aimed at students the book may be of greater interest to scholars. It certainly should be known to the medical historian, who may benefit considerably from a perusal of parts of it.

PAMELA DIXON, *Ginseng*, London, Duckworth, 1976, 8vo, pp. 101, illus., £3.95 (95p paperback).

For millennia in the East ginseng has maintained the reputation of a universal cure-all, aphrodisiac and prolonger of life. More recently it has become popular in the West. This book describes its history from the earliest use of it to the present day, including an account of modern research. No one seems to know how it acts pharmacologically, but it is now being used widely as a natural tonic and antistress agent, as in fact has been the case in China for centuries.

The root of the plant is used and it often grows into the shape of a man, thus resembling the mandragora of the West both in shape, symbolism and therapeutic use;