

link among nations and a resource to be managed on a sustainable basis."

The scope of this compendium is large and its lessons tantalizing. There is no claim to offer the final word, either descriptively or prescriptively. However, the natural environment is laid out, with its constant factors: sea depths, temperatures, waves, tides, winds, currents (as they prevail in winter and summer), and natural hazards. I was reminded by this chapter that, had a nuclear weapon actually been dropped on the China Mainland in the 1958 Quemoy crisis—as was talked about—the fallout would have blown back over Quemoy and even Taiwan itself.

The account of scientific cruises and research tells when and where studies have been made of the resources of the sea—phosphorous, salinity, silicates, and nitrates—and how such studies were reinforced, starting in 1975, by the use of research satellites. Some might be surprised to discover that from 1804 to 1840 more Russian navigators than those of any other country had cruised Southeast Asian seas, but they slipped from the scene as Americans began to mount frequent expeditions in the period 1842-55. Between 1946 and 1971 there were three American and seven Soviet research expeditions.

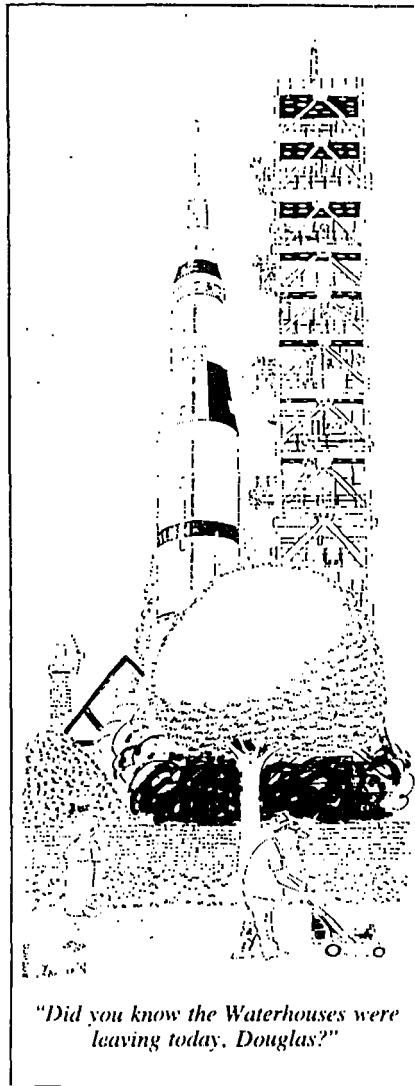
The atlas skillfully reveals the sensitivities arising from conflicts in maritime jurisdictions and boundaries. These involve, for example, Brunei, the Gulf of Tonkin, the Gulf of Thailand, the North Andaman Sea, Philippine claims to the Spratley Islands, the Timor Sea, the vicinity of Mian-gas Island, and Matuma Island.

Identification and protection of the offshore oil and gas resources of Southeast Asia present problems for individual countries, and for the region, that will continue for decades. Twelve brilliantly bewildering maps offer suggestive indications of the infinite possibilities for future misunderstandings or challenges in legitimizing ownership or operating rights in areas of confirmed yield.

There is fascinating treatment of valuable and vulnerable resources. These include mangrove forests and coral reefs, sea turtles, crocodiles, seabirds, whales, and dolphins. Equally engaging is the sober review of present and future sources of pollution—thermal and nuclear power, sewage, oil spills, and so forth.

The atlas plots in great detail the areas and intensity of fishing activity, both demersal and pelagic, for shrimp, snapper, croaker, goatfish, and spiny lobsters, and for scad, mackerel, sardines, tuna, etc.

"Integrations" is the unsatisfactory chap-



Punch

ter title for some concluding observations dealing with delicate and critical interdependencies that require international definition and supervision if the richly varied resources of the "Southeast Asian Seas"—and, for that matter, the lands too—are to continue to be used.

I might mention the particular interest I bring to this book. In the Spring, 1980, issue of *Foreign Policy* I published a short article, "ASEAN's Unguarded Coasts." Here I expressed the hope that Japanese financial resources might make possible the creation of a nonmilitary coast guard, trained and commanded by a multinational authority composed, initially, of the five countries participating in the Association of Southeast Asian Nations (Indonesia, Malaysia, the Philippines, Thailand, and Singapore) but eventually to include the participation of countries like Brunei, and even Vietnam. Command would rotate from country to country, and the coast guard's facilities ashore, in the air, and at sea would

be operated by personnel drawn from participating countries and trained at an ASEAN coast guard academy. The coast guard's obvious intelligence-gathering would be a "deterrent" to adventure.

The Southeast Asian initiative necessary to begin to build such a coast guard and to mobilize Japanese and other financing has not been taken. Two doubts may explain this failure. First, the answer to Soviet naval power in East Asian waters is not a coast guard but actual naval forces—something that Japan could not, constitutionally, finance. Second, would a coast guard's field of jurisdiction—weather reporting, sea rescue, detection and control of smuggling and piracy—be worth the costs? The Morgan-Valencia atlas provides a reminder that the Soviet navy is not the only—not even the major—threat to sustainable exploitation of the resources of Southeast Asian seas. This atlas might, indeed, provide ASEAN's coast guard academy with an exciting map for its curriculum as it seeks a way to gain that end.

Whatever its value as a textbook for an ASEAN coast guard academy, this is a monumental survey. It will be of value mainly to students of and participants in the experience of East Asia, but it is crafted in such way as to sensitize any reader to the manifold mysteries and potentials of the oceans in our shared environment. Academies in Southeast Asia can amply afford to buy copies; it is a pity that the price tag will deter some readers from making the *Atlas for Marine Policy in Southeast Asian Seas* a treasured addition to their reference shelves. **WV**

**BEYOND OBJECTIVISM AND  
RELATIVISM: SCIENCE,  
HERMENEUTICS, AND PRAXIS**  
by Richard J. Bernstein

(University of Pennsylvania Press; 284 pp.; \$25.00/\$9.95)

Brian Thomas

Richard Bernstein remarks that his two previous books share a common theme with the present volume. In *Praxis and Action* (1971) he gave us acute insights into Sartre and Kierkegaard, Dewey and Peirce, and Wittgenstein, along with a cogent statement of how Marx and Hegel have been reinterpreted in recent years. In the *Restructuring of Social and Political Theory* (1976) he explored the convergence of several neighboring streams in the sciences of man. Sim-

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## CORRECTION

A line was inadvertently dropped from Robert J. Alexander's review of *Venezuela: A Century of Change*, by Judith Ewell, in the last issue. The pertinent sentence should read: The supremacy of Caracas was reinforced during the "Renovating Revolution" of Cipriano Castro, who seized power in 1899, and by the subsequent dictatorship of Juan Vicente Gomez, who seized power in 1908 and controlled the country until he died in bed in December, 1935.

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ilarly, in the present volume he measures out equal portions of Thomas Kuhn, Richard Rorty, Hans Georg Gadamer, and Jürgen Habermas, with sideways glances at Peter Winch, Hannah Arendt, Karl Popper, and Paul Feyerabend as he sifts through the issues suggested by his title. This new book abounds with the teacherly virtues of the earlier work. Bernstein excels at patiently weaving together skeins of trends and judiciously unsnarling confusions. In fact, *Beyond Objectivism and Relativism* rivals his preceding studies in the ongoing discussion of theory and practice (or praxis, as it is known to hep cats). And as usual his footnotes are full, informative, and at least as interesting as the text.

Throughout all these volumes Bernstein's central preoccupation has been reason—the conditions of its possibility, where it functions best. He feels that the fruitfulness of much modern thought stems from its broader view of what constitutes rationality. The latest volume falls into four parts. The first outlines what Bernstein means by objectivism and relativism, "why this dichotomy is helpful for drawing attention to the primary cultural conflicts of contemporary life." Bernstein locates the persistence of this sterile opposition in anxiety over the chaos that supposedly awaits those who do not erect their epistemology on a firm foundation. But the foundation metaphor has given way, and other images reflect a keener awareness of the mutability and ambiguity of knowledge.

Improved metaphors, he says, seem to have descended on a number of intellectual fiefdoms at once. Indeed, the streams of continental philosophy and the analytic school have been flowing together for some time now. Instead of laboring in mutually unintelligible fields, the philosophers discussed by Bernstein have been busily breasting walls and opening up communications with each other: Jürgen Habermas draws deeply on C. S. Peirce, the American mathematician, logician, and theorist of science and signs; in a more analytical tradition Richard Rorty revives that beloved wild man William James.

In part two Bernstein traces the development of the postempiricist philosophy of science and history of science. He looks at philosophical reflections on various disciplines, on the relations between natural science and the human sciences, on the status of Popper, and on the wrangle among the positivists. Marshaling his evidence from many sources, he bolsters his contention—accurate in my opinion—that there is a growing sophistication about the notion of rationality. Far from being abstract and re-

mote, reason is seen as engaged, inescapably rooted in its context, "historically situated and practical, involving choice, deliberation and judgment."

In part three Bernstein scrutinizes incommensurability, arguing that it does not entail relativism, notwithstanding the widespread belief that it does. "Rather, it clarifies the openness of language and communication, and the challenges we face in understanding different forms of life."

These reflections prompt him to look at the hermeneutic circle, or the problem of the criterion—a concept formulated by many thinkers, from Heidegger to Charles Taylor. Stated briefly, it suggests that we can only know the parts if we know the whole, yet we cannot learn of the whole without negotiating the parts. Clifford Geertz, cited in this book, describes this circle as "a continuous dialectical tacking between the most local of local detail and the most global of global structures in such a way as to bring both into view simultaneously." Despite the stiff-necked outrage of empiricists over this idea, Bernstein says, there is an irreducible hermeneutical component to the social sciences. The circle is not vicious.

Thus do Bernstein's arguments carry him on to Hans Georg Gadamer, whose *Truth and Method* has helped educate a generation of English-speaking readers in the complexities of interpretation. With much circumspection and sensitivity, Bernstein undertakes an immanent critique of Gadamer's views. Gadamer, he says, is quite right to stress textuality and the hermeneutic basis of realms where interpretation had hitherto been deemed inapplicable. But Gadamer does not search far enough. He relies on an unduly positivistic notion of science that postempiricist philosophy has called into question. Nevertheless, Gadamer's brand of philosophical hermeneutics contributes to a transcending of the futile polarity of objectivism and relativism.

In his final section Bernstein explores the concepts, all interrelated, of praxis, *phronesis*, *techné*, practical discourse, and judgment. "Playing off the strengths and weaknesses of Gadamer, Habermas, Rorty, and Arendt, I show how an underlying common vision emerges, one that illuminates the dialogical character of our human existence and our communicative transactions, and that points to the practical need to cultivate dialogical communities.... [T]he movement beyond objectivism and relativism is not just a perplexing theoretical quandary but a practical task that can orient and give direction to our collective praxis."

This entire trend harkens back to Plato's

"Seventh Epistle," where the philosopher points out that we cannot even disagree unless we are in some sense friends. Being rational requires a dialogue with others who are also trying to be rational. Thus Bernstein sees reason as a community enterprise, something our tribe renews or endangers each day. It is the tale we tell around the campfire. WV

## Briefly Noted

### COFFEE AND CAPITALISM IN THE VENEZUELAN ANDES

by William Roseberry

(University of Texas Press; xv + 256 pp.; \$22.50)

The author, writing from a frankly Marxist perspective, wishes to present a picture of the evolution of the coffee industry in the Venezuelan Andean region—or, more specifically, in the Becono area of the state of Trunillo—and to discuss certain issues of Marxist definition and analysis that are relevant to such a historical account.

Roseberry, who teaches anthropology at the New School for Social Research, begins by describing the physical and social environment of the Bocono area, a somewhat isolated and self-contained part of the Venezuelan Andean region, and its evolution during the colonial period. He follows up with an interesting discussion of the nature of the *encomienda* and the *repartimiento*—the systems instituted in Spain's New World colonies to regulate Indian villages and the land they worked—and of the degree to which, if any, socio-economic relations had a "capitalist" quality even in the colonial era. Later chapters deal with the rise of coffee cultivation early in the nineteenth century and its subsequent history.

The rise of coffee, Roseberry notes, tended to result in the substitution of a small-producer pattern for the large landholding system inherited from the colonial past. This was a result of the breakup of many of the colonial estates, the alienation of Indian communal holdings, and the settling by relatively small producers of extensive public lands. The emergent peasant economy of the region, however, suffered under various forms of "exploitation." The peasants had to turn to merchants for credit, usually payable in coffee. The local merchants, in turn, tended to be financed by much larger mercantile firms, many of them foreign owned, in Maracaibo. Those Maracaibo merchants

sold the product abroad. In time, "open-book" credit for the Bocono merchants was in many cases converted into mortgages, which led, not infrequently, to the peasants losing their land to the merchants. Some peasants continued cultivation as sharecroppers or renters.

Beginning in the second quarter of the present century there was a drastic change in the coffee economy. For one thing, the overall prosperity of the coffee industry declined for an extended period. For another, the government moved into the picture in a large way, first by establishing the Agricultural and Grazing Bank (BAP) in the late 1920s and later an extensive series of government institutions to finance and market the coffee crop. Then came the "green revolution," which introduced new strains of coffee and much wider use of fertilizers.

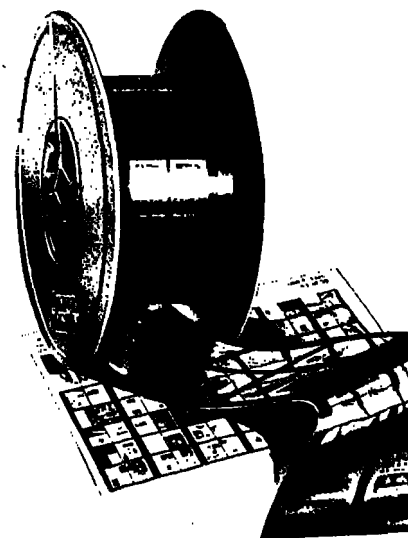
In terms of Marxist analysis, the author is particularly concerned with a definition of capitalism and with the nature and durability of the "peasant." He reviews a number of alternative definitions of capitalism and rejects those that are based principally on the presence of a market economy. Citing Marx in support of his position, he insists that true capitalism does not exist apart from the numerical predominance of a "proletariat"—that is, a group of workers who own none of the means of production except their own labor power and are forced to sell that to the capitalist in order to make a living.

In the case of Bocono, Roseberry sees the emergence of an increasingly large group who are either proletarians or are on the way to being proletarianized. The former are full-time wage laborers on the landholdings of others; the latter are people who, although continuing to have more or less tenuous titles to land, have lost much if not all the decision-making power that usually accompanies landholdings.

Roseberry is quite critical of those who either argue that the peasant must "inevitably" disappear or define the peasant out of existence. He argues strongly that the peasant is a reality, although he himself does not adequately define what a peasant is. In Bocono economic forces may be converting some peasants into proletarians, while others in other circumstances may be becoming peasants. It is also common for a person to cultivate a small piece of land he owns himself while working part of the time as a wage laborer. Roseberry ends with a plea for redefining the anthropological category of "peasant studies" as "proletarianization studies."

—Robert J. Alexander

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