

not made solely of what it says or thinks it is saying, but of what it excludes" (page 144).

In Part II the net is thrown wider, bringing in comparative material from the Tsimshian, Bella Bella, Tlingit, Haida, Shuswap Thompson and Dene. Brilliantly inductive, Lévi-Strauss weaves together myriad far-flung clues to create a rich tapestry of meanings throughout the entire semantic field of Northwest Coast culture.

Of course, the specific hypothesis about inversions at borders needs further testing, and other themes quite boldly asserted in this study need examining and deepening. But to focus exclusively upon problems of specific content would be to miss the greater value of this book. The depth of areal patterns, of shared and interlocking meanings in a cultural fabric extending from Alaska to California, has never before been so convincingly demonstrated.

Working essentially with what happens at the borders of many Northwest Coast cultures, rather than almost exclusively from within one or two of them, Lévi-Strauss has brought a unique and welcome coherence to our scholarship. This book should stimulate numerous challenges, refinements and further studies before its influence has run its course.

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*An Account of a Voyage to the North West Coast of America in 1785 & 1786*, by Alexander Walker. Edited by Robin Fisher and J. M. Bumsted. Vancouver: Douglas & McIntyre, Ltd., 1982. Pp. 319.

Brigadier General Alexander Walker (1764-1831) died in Scotland after a varied career which had included service with the East India Company from 1780 to 1812 and the governorship of St. Helena from 1822 to 1828. In 1952 his personal papers, totalling nearly 600 volumes, were acquired by the National Library of Scotland. Among them was the MS of this book (of which the Provincial Archives of British Columbia has a microfilm).

The expedition to America, which Walker describes, sailed from Bombay and was commanded by James Strange. It consisted of two ships, the 350-ton *Captain Cook* and the 140-ton *Experiment*, and Walker sailed on the latter. Since Strange's account has also been published (the second edition in 1982), we now have the story of this voyage as told by two members of it.

If, as some may feel, Walker wrote the better book, it is perhaps not surprising. He had been well educated before joining the East India Company, and had served in the war of 1780-84 against Mysore (and for a while had been a prisoner of war). Indian army officers had, naturally, to be able to communicate with the sepoys they led, and a man who had done that successfully might be expected to acquire the knack of picking up languages. Walker certainly seems to have possessed such a knack, for his book ends with an appendix containing "A Vocabulary of the Language at Nootka Sound," covering twenty-five pages. This has been specially edited by B. F. Carlson, John Thomas and Francis Charlie, and they describe it as "the earliest extensive example of that language."

Walker's own observations of the natives are full and careful. He also did his best to learn more from a strange character called John Mackoy, a man who "had been brought up for the Medical Profession," but had become "a private Soldier in the Company's service." When Strange left America, Mackoy volunteered to remain "at Nootka Sound to observe the Manners of the Natives, to acquire their language, and to establish a friendly intercourse with them." But he was no more fitted to be an ethnologist than to be a doctor. The natives despised him, and when, after fourteen months among them, he was "rescued" and returned to the East India Company at Bombay, his "habits of drinking and a natural incapacity" made it nearly impossible to learn anything from him. Walker evidently did his best, but could not even discover from him whether the Nootka Indians were or were not cannibals.

This book is not a diary written from day to day throughout the expedition. Walker's original MS was lost and he composed this work "in his later years" from such notes as survived. It is described by the editors as a "blending of the first hand observations of a young observer with the critical understanding of the mature soldier." It is also an account of British Columbia's Indians when their opportunities of acculturation had been slight indeed. Since Captain James Cook had come to Nootka Sound in 1778, only one English seaman had been there, namely, Captain Hanna; and no account of what Hanna saw is known to exist.

It may seem odd that an exploration of western America should be launched from Bombay, as this one was, with backing from the East India Company, and that Anderson, though an officer in the Bombay army, should be one of its members. The answers are that the soldier was free to go because in 1785 India was at peace; and that the company's interest was due to the monopoly it then enjoyed of all Britain's far eastern trade, which included Canton — the only Chinese port to which

“foreign devils” were admitted. Moreover China, with her vast population, her wealthy mandarin class and her extremes of climate, was the world’s greatest market for fur. The Chinese likewise had a very understandable fondness for the wonderful fur of the Sea Otter — as Cook’s crew had learned when they entered Canton; and the Sea Otter is found only on the coasts of western North America. The official account of Cook’s third voyage was published posthumously in 1784, and Strange read it when it first came out. He saw the opportunity that the western American fur trade might offer his company in Canton, and therefore prepared this expedition in Bombay in 1785. When he returned from America, he presented the report of his travels to Major-General Sir Archibald Campbell, the Governor of Madras; and, after lying for over a century in the Madras Record Office, his story of his adventures in what is now British Columbia was first published in that Indian city in 1929 with A. V. Venkatarama Ayyah as its editor. Walker’s recently published volume now provides Canadian readers with a companion piece from Scotland.

This book has a useful index and bibliography and some well-chosen illustrations. Its footnotes are specially conveniently presented. They come at the end of the book, immediately before the appendix on the language of Nootka Sound; and they are numbered not chapter by chapter but consecutively throughout the whole volume from 1 to 490. This makes them much easier to find for anyone who is apt to lose count of his chapters.

*Victoria*

R. GLOVER