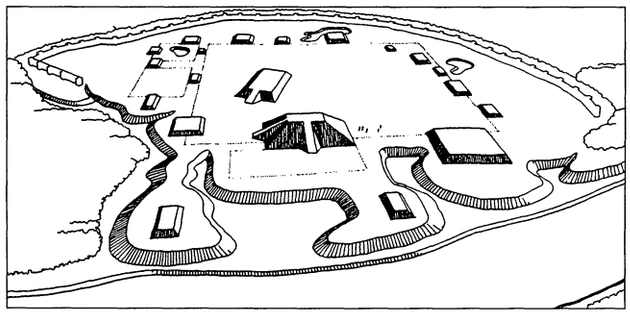
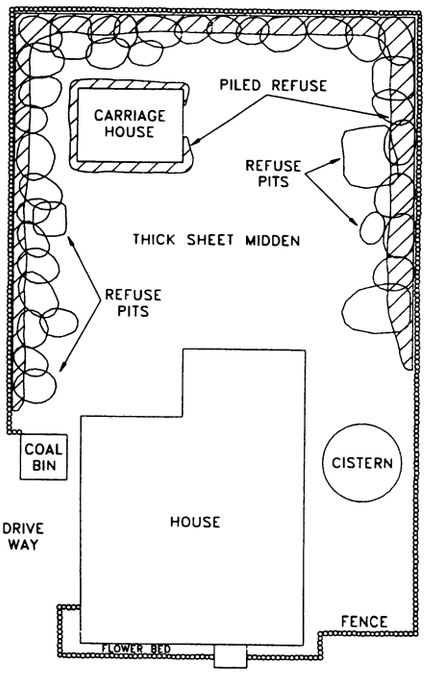


Bird's-eye view of Moundville, a middle Mississippian (A.D. 1200 to 1400) civic-ceremonial center near Tuscaloosa, Alabama. Excavations have been conducted at Moundville since 1905, and a total of 3051 burials have been excavated. [From *Archaeology of the Southeastern United States*]

cisely defined, it generally covers the area south of Missouri, Kentucky, and Virginia. Within this area coverage is slightly uneven, with Florida receiving more and the Mississippi River valley receiving less attention than expected. In contrast, the chronological coverage is unusually thorough, in that the Historic era (to World War I) is covered in as much detail as prehistoric periods. Most laudably, coverage of the Historic era includes the archeology of African-Americans and European-Americans, as well as Native Americans. One of the best aspects of the book is its demonstration of the value of archeology in examining the largely undocumented pasts of African-Americans and poor rural whites. For readers interested in digging deeper, footnotes provide access to the 446-item bibliography. As Bense notes in the preface, the bibliography could easily have been three times as long, though even this abbreviated version is dominated by the "gray literature" of contract-sponsored archeological reports that are rarely acquired even by research libraries.



"Typical pattern of archaeological deposits in a Victorian period upper- and middle-class residential neighborhood," North Hill, in Pensacola, Florida. "This neighborhood was established in the 1800s after the trolley line provided transportation to and from the commercial core downtown . . . A new African-American residential community also sprung up around the base of the hill, composed of domestic employees who walked up the hill to work for the European Americans living on the hill." [From *Archaeology of the Southeastern United States*]

The nature of the literature is not under the control of the author or the publisher, but spelling and grammar are, and here the book has a real problem. There are frequent grammatical errors and misspellings of common English words and archeological site and period names. I was also disappointed by the blobby line drawings of pottery vessels and chipped stone tools. Photographs would give readers a better impression of the artistic and technical talents of southeastern craft producers.

Overall, Bense tells us that changing climate was the engine that drove prehistoric culture change. For example, she argues that changes in settlement types and locations at the beginning of the Middle Archaic period around 6000 B.C. were due to the entrenchment of river courses and regional replacement of deciduous forest species by pines. Bense attributes these environmental changes to northward expansion of the Caribbean tropical air mass, producing frequent summer thunderstorms that set fires that burned away the deciduous trees. This can be questioned on two grounds. First, more recent paleoclimatic reconstruction indicates that the northward shift of the tropical air mass occurred a couple of thousand years earlier. Second, if the dominance of pines was created and maintained by fires, and it coincided with an increase in the region's human population, might the fires have been anthropogenic? Even for more recent prehistoric periods when the human population was far higher, Bense suggests that people's effect on the environment was limited to localized soil exhaustion. It is not until the early 1800s, Bense tells us, that human activity significantly altered the region's soils and biota. In a way, Bense's account of the Southeast's past echoes that of the Corps of Engineers general.

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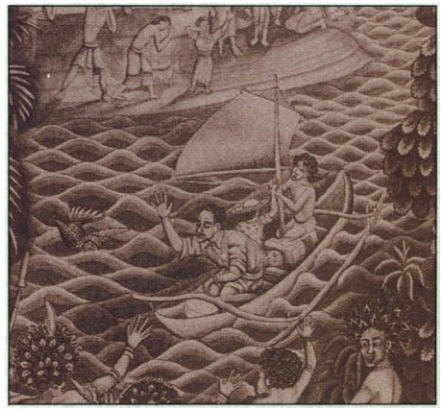
Fears and Dreams

Images of Power. Balinese Paintings Made for Gregory Bateson and Margaret Mead. HILDRED GEERTZ. University of Hawaii Press, Honolulu, 1994. x, 135 pp., illus. $50; paper, $29.95.

All social scientists worry about "selection bias"—when we choose our cases, or subjects, perhaps we predetermine our outcome. Anthropologists' worries, however, are multiple: not only do we choose informants, or consultants, we select from among their many conversations with us a few choice words for publication, and furthermore we usually do so as heirs of imperial pasts.

Hildred Geertz, seeking to better understand Balinese culture, offers one intriguing response: Begin with paintings made by Balinese in a new idiom, that of Western pictorial representation, and see what, and how, *they* choose to paint. In the 1930s Balinese artists began to draw from the styles of some resident European painters. The anthropologists Gregory Bateson and Margaret Mead collected many of these paintings, and in this book, published to coincide with a touring exhibition of the collection, Geertz not only gives us excellent reproductions of some of them but uses them to provide an "eth-



"Goodbye and Good Luck to Margaret Mead and Gregory Bateson." Detail from a painting by I Ketut Ngéndon, 1938.

Three steps in the making of a picture: Ida Bagus Madé Togog's series "The Story of Papaka, the Tiger, and the Monkey," 1936. *Left*, inking in pencil lines; *center*, applying ink wash for shading; *right*, completed picture. [Paintings on these two pages from *Images of Power*]

nography of Balinese imaginations." The plural is key: we see individual artists, their hopes, fears, and developing styles, and yet we also see them working through their shared history of Balinese ideas and emotions.

Two painters play major roles. I Ketut Ngéndon, a commoner fascinated by modernity and driven to throw off the Dutch (who eventually executed him), learned from the painters Walter Spies and Rudolf Bonnet. His paintings remind one of Rousseau's; their naturalism is always busy or "copious," as Geertz renders the Balinese value of *ramé*. Ida Bagus Madé Togog, the book's star, is a noble who immersed himself in local narratives. It is his imagination, particularly his dreams, that flow out through paintings featured here. Both men used dark paints, in contrast to otherwise brightly colored Balinese art. Geertz speculates that the European painters suggested the colors, that the early works sold well and created the easiest path for successes, and that the very darkness then suggested dark and violent themes to the painters.

Buta sungsang or "upside-down demon." Painting by Ida Bagus Madé Togog. "To put one's head lower than the rest of one's body is to pollute the sacred soul-stuff that lives in the head and risk unleashing a powerful destructive force."

Be that as it may, the works do reveal Balinese ever anxious over sorcery and looking to mobilize spiritual power for protection and healing. Balinese invoke demons and sorcerers to explain misfortune; these frequent invocations may fuel new fears. One extraordinary series of paintings shows an ordinary village woman transforming herself into various sorcerers—hell is neighbors. These transformations, elaborated in Togog's pictures of his dreams, also emphasize that, to Balinese, power (*sakti*) may serve good or evil—healers, after all, also ensorcer.

Geertz surveys different genres—the dance-drama, scenes from everyday life, episodes from popular stories. In each case the paintings tell us something new. It is, for example, not the flamboyant cremations that the painters mainly depict but the many steps before and after that ensure a proper death. Process and passage, not spectacle, are most on their minds. Geertz insightfully calls the processes by which these painters worked "bicultural." She looks to European style and touristic market for their enriching, not impoverishing, roles in shaping local creativity; by doing so she has opened up new avenues for our multicultural understandings.

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"The Story of the Demon Who Pretended to Be a Priest." Painting by Ida Bagus Madé Togog. The villagers are gathering firewood for a fire that was part of a trick to force the demon to reveal himself.