

This critique of the new right focuses on religious authoritarianism and its contemporary manifestation in the Moral Majority. The tone is set in the Introduction. "Education is man's going forward from cocksure ignorance to thoughtful uncertainty" (9). Following a brief analysis of the present age and a biblical critique of the Moral Majority, Cooper distinguishes between a sick and healthy faith (reminiscent of James) and Karl Popper's closed and open society. He views education as the key to a healthy faith and an open society. Cooper's analysis is more a faith statement than an historical and critical study of the new right. Yet it is one that underscores the dangers of a religious and political authoritarianism which centers on a cult of persons.

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**THE UNFINISHED WAR: VIETNAM AND THE AMERICAN CONSCIENCE.** By Walter H. Capps. Boston: Beacon Press, 1982. Pp. 177. \$13.50.

Capps suggests that the American war in Vietnam has been the most traumatic symptom of the ideological civil war that has been smoldering in America since the end of World War II. *The Unfinished War* carefully charts the chastening of the crusading imagery of the American Camelot by citing the powerful testimony of veterans. Capps points out that the lack of consensus over the national mission in Vietnam only exacerbated the chasm between "two Americas." One camp, moved by the "impulses of Eden," has been considerably influenced by the contemplative sensibilities of Asian religious traditions and monastic insights of the West and seeks a resolution of tensions through the construction of the "global village." The other camp seeks the clarity and resolution of Armageddon. Represented ably by spokesmen of the New Right, members of this camp view Vietnam as a symbol of our failure to carry out our sacred national mission. In addition to providing a sensitive and thorough study of the effects of the war on our national consciousness, Capps has rooted the powerful political and social impulses of the present in our memories and interpretations of the Vietnam era.

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**CROSSCURRENTS ALONG THE COLORADO: THE IMPACT OF GOVERNMENTAL POLICY ON THE QUECHAN INDIANS.**

By Robert L. Bee. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 1981. Pp. xix + 184. Cloth, \$18.50; paper, \$7.50.

This book focuses on a native American group in southwestern Arizona to show the effects of U.S. control over local political, economic, and cultural affairs for a century. Rightly labeling governmental policies "internal colonialism of a most unsubtle sort," the author builds a solid case to prove them condescending, unrealistic, and often illegal. His work is essentially a political history, including a depressing rehearsal of Quechan economic woes plus disputes over land, liquor, and legalized marriages. The school question looms large, too, during the time when Catholic missionaries monopolized reservation life and subsequently when Methodists and Nazarenes added more weight to Americanizing influences. Through all of this manipulation some Quechan baseline culture traits have persisted. Though language and community solidarity still decline, native kinship patterns and their ceremonial priorities survive. These rituals center on mourning where commemoration of the dead recapitulates their creation myth—even when such activities today coincide with Memorial Day on the Anglo's calendar.

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**SOCIETY, STATE, AND SCHOOLS: A CASE FOR STRUCTURAL AND CONFESSONAL PLURALISM.** By R. McCarthy, D. Oppewal, W. Peterson, and G. Spykman (Coordinator). Grand Rapids: Eerdmans, 1981. Pp. ix + 225. \$9.95.

This collaborative effort by four fellows of the Calvin Center for Christian Scholarship at Calvin College is an extensively documented appeal for public tax support of American private education. Drawing on a wide range of sources and models, from Calvin's doctrine of "constructive revolution" to the "sphere sovereignty" principle of the modern Dutch educator-reformer, Abraham Kuyper, Spykman and his co-authors present their case in the context of a broad historical and theological challenge to the alleged dominance of overt individualism, collectivism, and "secular humanism" in the American public domain and a call for a new, biblically-rooted paradigm of "structural pluralism" to remedy what they term the current "crisis of faith" in America's public institutions. Despite a somewhat strained attempt to portray "secular humanism" as the official contemporary dogma of the republic and a very visible (though clearly acknowledged) confessional and theological slant, impressive scholarship and the wide scope of the book transcend mere polemics and make a noteworthy contribution to the debate on school funding and to discussion of larger related issues of public policy in the United States.

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## South Asia

**CASTE IN TAMIL CULTURE: THE RELIGIOUS FOUNDATIONS OF SUDRA DOMINATION IN TAMIL SRI LANKA.** By Bryan Pfaffenberger. Foreign and Comparative Studies, South Asian Series, 7. Syracuse: Maxwell School of Citizenship and Public Affairs, Syracuse University, 1982. Pp. xi + 257; plates, tables; maps; glossary. Paper, \$12.00.

An anthropological study that aims to explain the anomalous high status of the Vellāḷars, a prominent cultivating, landowning caste in Tamil-speaking southern India and northern Sri Lanka. In terms of classical Hindu *varṇa* ranking, the Vellāḷars are Śudras ("servants"). Furthermore, by Brahmanical standards their lifestyle is not very pure, for they eat meat, remarry widows, and are generally much involved in day-to-day affairs. Pfaffenberger rejects the claim advanced by both Dumont and Mandelbaum that the Vellāḷars' lofty rank just below Brahmans is attributable to their economic power. Rather he locates their high status in what he terms "the ritual design of Sudra domination," the Vellāḷar-dominated system of temple and domestic rituals intended to contain supernatural forces of disorder and thus ensure agricultural abundance and general well-being. The ethnographic description is often quite valuable, especially for students of religion, although questions can sometimes be raised about the rather sweeping interpretation that Pfaffenberger puts on his data. Recommended for all students of Tamil culture, society, and religion.

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**THE SACRED THREAD: HINDUISM IN ITS CONTINUITY AND DIVERSITY.** By J. L. Brockington. Edinburgh: Edinburgh University Press, 1981. Pp. 222. Paper, \$10.50.

An amazing amount of information is packed into this book which spans the earliest records of Hinduism to modern times.