

# Editorial Foreword

**FRESH APPLICATIONS OF FAMILIAR MODELS.** As used in the social sciences, models are meant to be tools of scientific method; but inevitably models themselves soon become social as well as scientific and, like aphorisms, can easily be used to substitute old wisdom for new thought. The three essays in this section, however, work from models already familiar to redefine some troublesome issues and in doing so reach some surprising conclusions. Ivan Strenski and Dan V. Segre accomplish this through unexpected comparisons, S. N. Eisenstadt and Louis Roniger by refining the model to assure its applicability to varied cases. In each of these articles the imaginative recognition of relationships that are often overlooked leads to fresh evidence and gives renewed vitality to analyses conducted within established frameworks.

There is an attractive playfulness in Strenski's structural analysis of the similarities between Buddhist thought and Levi-Strauss's structuralism. (One is reminded of the late Myron P. Gilmore's remark that there should in fairness be a Lutheran interpretation of Freud.) By looking at Levi-Strauss in Buddhist terms, Strenski avoids being preoccupied by issues of materialism and discerns instead the importance of Levi-Strauss's views of the relationship of nature to man. That in turn continues earlier discussions in *CSSH of Buddhism and socialism* (Totten, 2:3), communal economy (Miller, Murphy, and Bateau in 3:4), and social control (Gombrich, 17:2). No topic has attracted more vigorous discussion in this generation than the problems of decolonization; and within that larger subject the difficulties of native elites, tied to and torn between two worlds, have received special attention. *CSSH* has shared in the shift of focus from nationalism to national integration (Weiner, 15:2) and in the study of troubled elites in Asia (Benda, 7:3; Spaulding, 14:4) and the Caribbean (Singham and Singham, 15:3) as well as in the nations of Israel and Africa, which are very often written about in this journal. Segre's achievement is therefore all the more striking in bringing clarifying light to bear on contemporary Israel by applying the categories Ekeh developed (17:1) for African cases. Finally, the concept of patron and client relations is a popular triumph of modern social science. Effectively used, especially in studies of Italy and other Latin countries, the model has broadened and thinned, becoming a metaphor and then a cliché usable wherever domineering elites, arrested differentiation, or simple corruption are found. The blooming of so many flowers has created Eisenstadt's and Roniger's Linnean task, in which they meet earlier

calls (Weingrod, 10:4; Kaufman, 16:3) to provide better definitions more firmly linked to the larger society.

PLACING THE FAMILY. If, faced by some insistent interrogator, one had to name a single subject in which our understanding of human society has recently been transformed, the family would be a defensible choice. Social history and demography intersect with sociology and anthropology in studying the family; statistical methods, women's studies, and theories of economic change have all been recently and fruitfully employed. As in so much of modern social science, questions about the family have been largely shaped by nineteenth-century concerns. And as it usually does, research has uncovered a reality more varied and complex than initially realized. The family has proved more durable than conservatives feared and more flexible than evolutionists wanted to believe. Its very composition, long the basis for classifying different types of families, is now a subject of independent study. Much work has suggested that even over short periods of time family size and composition might vary with patterns in landholding (MacDonald and MacDonald, 15:2; Plakans, 17:1; Gibbon and Curtin, 20:3) or the impact of industrialization (Scott and Tilly, 17:1; Minge-Kalman, 20:3). Elizabeth Anne Kuznesof now analyzes an extraordinary body of data from São Paulo in the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries to relate changes in the family unit to the shift from a subsistence to a market economy. More abstractly, Michel Viridon's logical dissection of established definitions carves out a place for the fact of residence as worthy of separate consideration distinct even from kinship or inheritance (Goody, 11:1 and 15:1). He thus suggests a further use for the systematic questionnaire and diagrams proposed by Hammel and Laslett (16:1) as a means of collecting comparable data on the family in diverse circumstances.