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- 1936a. Science and anthropology. Reviews of (1) *Both sides of Buka Passage: an ethnographic study of social, sexual and economic questions in the North-Western Solomon Islands* by Beatrice Blackwood. Oxford: Clarendon Press, 1935. (2) *Coral gardens and their magic: a study of the methods of tilling the soil and of agricultural rites in the Trobriand Islands* by Bronislaw Malinowski. 2 vols. London: George Allen and Unwin, 1935. *Nature* 137, 46-8.
- 1936b. The pattern of culture. Review of *The fear of the dead in primitive religion* by Sir James George Frazer. Vol. 3. London: Macmillan and Co., 1936. *Nature* 137, 1010-11.
- 1936c. Anthropology as it is. Review of *The economics of primitive peoples* by Stephen Viljoen. London: P. S. King and Son, 1936. *Nature* 138, 904.
- 1936d. Short notice of *Jabo proverbs from Liberia: maxims in the life of a native tribe* by George Herzog, with the assistance of Charles G. Blooah. London: Oxford University Press, 1936. *Nature* 138, 905.
- 1937a. Racial theory and cross-breeding. Letter to the editor. *Nature* 139, 415.
- 1937b. Cinematographic anthropology. Review of *We, the Tikopia: a sociological study of kinship in primitive Polynesia* by Raymond Firth. London: George Allen and Unwin, 1936. *Nature* 139, 447-48.
- 1937c. Polynesia through many eyes. Review of *Religion and social organisation in Central Polynesia* by Robert W. Williamson, edited by Ralph Piddington. Cambridge: at the University Press, 1937. *Nature* 140, 1080.

Item 1934d, which has not been accessible to me, is taken from H. A. I. Goonetilleke, *A bibliography of Ceylon*, 2 vols. (Zug, Switzerland: Inter Documentation Co., 1970), p. 767. The same source, on p. 716, gives a full list of the annual administration reports that Hocart wrote as Archaeological Commissioner in Ceylon in the 1920's.

In addition to the book reviews that Hocart wrote for *Nature*, abstracts of some of his papers published elsewhere were also included in that journal over several years. *Nature* published an obituary notice of Hocart in Vol. 143 (1939) p. 630. It mentions a brief stage in Hocart's career not noted in other biographical accounts of him, namely that he worked for a while as Librarian of the Royal Anthropological Institute. This information is confirmed by the reports of the Council of the R.A.I., according to which Hocart held the position of Librarian (part time) from 1930 until early 1932.

Kitsiri Malalgoda

University of Auckland

The sacred mushroom in Scandinavia

SIR,

Reading rather belatedly the interesting article by Reid W. Kaplan (*Man* (N.S.) 10, 72-9), in which he propounds the identification of a certain Scandinavian Bronze Age motif as representing the fly agaric or *Amanita muscaria*, I have been struck by a somewhat curious omission on his part. He writes: 'On the simple principle that something is what it looks like, it must be identified as the effigy of a mushroom'. However, it does not look like a mushroom at all, but like an 'X-ray drawing' or median cross-section of a mushroom. He remarks at one point that 'All the examples suggest a rounded, almost spherical, cross section with an incurved pileus' (where one must wonder whether a spherical cross-section could exist), but nowhere does he draw explicit attention to the fact that he is interpreting the motif as an X-ray. Perhaps such interpretations are so common in Scandinavian archaeology as not to be worth mentioning, but for those of us for whom it is a rare phenomenon, some defence of its use seems called for before Occam's razor is unsheathed.

Another small, but rather similar point occurs to me when he refers (p. 76) to 'rays emanating from the mushrooms of figs. 1e, f and g, which seem to indicate brightness'. Is there any evidence for the occurrence in ancient art of this well-known form of comic-strip symbolism?

William Fagg

London, S.W. 13