

## BOOK REVIEWS

### Anthropology and history

ARDENER, SHIRLEY (ed.). *Swedish ventures in Cameroon, 1883-1923: trade and travel, people and politics. Memoir of Knud Knutson*. xv, 288 pp., map, illus., bibliogr. Oxford, New York: Berghahn Books, 2002. £50.00 (cloth), £20.00 (paper)

Knut Knutson was, as Ardener puts it, 'first and foremost an adventurer', and the same goes for his companion George Waldau, who accompanied him to Mount Cameroon in 1882 for a stay that was to last fourteen years. One of the many surprises in this edited memoir is the youth of the two Swedes: when they first arrived in Cameroon, Knutson was 25 and Waldau 20 years old. They had completed their education and perhaps – judging from the size of their arsenal and the dexterity with which they wielded it – some military training, but had little experience of business, politics, or diplomacy, and none of Africa. Their primary interest was not therefore 'colonial': they were not, when they set out, intending to trade, acquire property, set up businesses (though they were to do all of these), or to work for any colonial enterprise. Rather, these two young idealists seem simply to have been compelled to set off for Cameroon by a romantic Victorian ideal of scientific discovery, wanderlust, and perhaps an inchoate sense of engaging in a gentlemanly *rite de passage* into manhood.

As Knutson himself puts it, the works already written on Africa had 'caused a great sensation especially amongst the West European youth', and Knutson and Waldau set out with the intention of doing nothing other than making 'discoveries', not only zoological and botanical, but also ethnographic. Along with two servants who accompanied them, they settled on the upper slopes of the mountain, above the highest villages, where they lived primarily off the game that they shot. When the rainy season set in, however, the mist and fog rendered their rifles useless, and they were forced – half-starved and feverish – to seek shelter among the Bakweri of the nearest village, Mapanja. It was the combination of many factors – the adventurers' naive idealism, their predicament and vulnerability, the care and assistance that they were selflessly

given by the people of Mapanja, and their removal from British and German colonial ambitions – that facilitated the deeply insightful, sensitive, and largely dispassionate observations gathered in this volume.

Of the several memoirs and papers that Ardener brings together here, Knutson's is the most important, both in size and in significance. Ardener first came across the unpublished manuscript when a local chief showed it to her in Buea, Cameroon, in 1997. It is published here for the first time, in Knutson's original accented English that seems curiously more inflected by Pidgin than Swedish, and has been very knowledgeably annotated by Ardener. The memoir consists of twelve chapters covering everything from the observations on local flora and fauna typical of Victorian travellers' accounts to descriptions of the key political events unfolding around the mountain at the end of the nineteenth century, including the annexation of the territory by the Germans and their bombardment of local villages. Knutson also gives a very honest account of his and Waldau's failure to fend for themselves on the mountain, of their debt to the people of Mapanja, and of the deaths of their two servants. Moreover, he does not try to hide the way in which his desperate situation forced him to set up a trade in the wild rubber plants which he had happened to come across in the forest, nor the way in which political developments beyond his control forced him to side with the Germans, despite his own and the Bakweri people's misgivings about them.

Knutson's and Waldau's accounts must be seen as coloured by the fact that the German imperial government abrogated contracts for the sale of land that they had negotiated on the mountain, and the authors' frustration with their ongoing legal battles is evident. Nevertheless, there is no reason to distrust the very detailed descriptions that the Swedes give of the conduct of German officials, traders, and farmers, and of the way in which these were seen by the local Bakweri and the immigrant Kru (both of whom made up songs about them that Knutson – who spoke Bakweri and Pidgin – faithfully transcribed and translated). Knutson's memoir is balanced by extracts from the diaries of some of those to whom he refers, as well as those of other contemporary commentators on the region: his friend Waldau, Sir Richard Burton, George

Thompson, Hugo Zöller, and the quixotic Russo-Pole Rogozinski, Acting Chief Civil Commissioner over the colony of Victoria for the British Crown and infamous liquor-trader, known to contemporary French missionaries as *Droque-Gin-et-Whisky*.

NICOLAS ARGENTI

Brunel University

HECHT, TOBIAS (ed.). *Minor omissions: children in Latin American history and society*. viii, 277 pp., tables, illus., bibliogr., London, Madison: Univ. Wisconsin Press, 2002. \$45.00 (cloth), \$21.95 (paper)

In his introduction to this impressive history of childhood in South America, Hecht sets himself and his co-authors a challenge: to write about children, and not – as so often happens instead – about adult concerns regarding children. Carolyn Dean's chapter opens the book with an analysis of colonial Andean childhood as seen through a series of paintings by anonymous indigenous artists of the late seventeenth century. Dean argues that indigenous Andeans were infantilized by the colonial administration, and that the misbehaving children that pepper these paintings are in fact reifications of adult Andeans conceived of as juvenile and mal-socialized, something that has often been observed in regard to contemporary post-colonial states in Africa (following Mbembe's lead in *Les jeunes et l'ordre politique en Afrique Noire*).

The next six chapters all broadly focus on the emerging post-colonial states of Latin America and their concern with childhood as a source of danger and disorder. Lipsett-Rivera compares the Aztec *huehueltatolli* speeches recorded by the Spanish missionaries of Central Mexico to the discourses about childhood that were later to be developed by the welfare state, revealing how children were disciplined, educated, and made to accept their class positions and social status by states in need of citizens. Milanich shows how the invention of a panoply of types and sub-types of illegitimacy buttressed anxieties regarding miscegenation and helped to support the social inequalities of Latin American states, while Gonzalez attests to the human costs that the creation of these forms of social distinction incurred among the foundlings of eighteenth-century Havana. Premo's chapter on youth in eighteenth-century Lima further underlines the manner in which legal discourses emphasizing concern for young people constructed youth as a dangerous subclass, thus exacerbating socio-racial divisions in the city. Guy's survey of Latin America similarly charts the connections between illegitimacy, child abandonment, the child welfare

congresses of the 1920s, and the emergence of child rights activists – just as often from right-wing dictatorships as from left-wing revolutionary movements. Focusing on this later period, Rizzini's study of Brazil's child-saving movement reveals once again how the infantilization of the state's citizenry led to the domination of children by the state. It was here in the nineteenth century that the term 'minor' was coined to refer pejoratively to children perceived as a brutish, delinquent class that was to be rigorously monitored in order to forge a patriotic and submissive working class.

Returning to an art-historical field, Benson looks at contemporary Haitian mother-and-child paintings as a means of discussing the *marasa*: one who enjoys a perpetual childhood as a result of rejecting the social order. Benson explores the tendency amongst many artists to paint disturbing small-scale versions of adults in the place of children, and whereas Ariès (in *Centuries of childhood*) was happy to see an absence of childhood in medieval European paintings of children, she highlights the subtle political significance of depicting the *marasa*, a child-like adult in a country scarred by the domination and infantilization of its people. Peterson and Read follow with a chapter on children in Latin American wars, usefully countering a number of popular and academic misconceptions regarding this issue the world over: that children are passive victims of war, that they can only be traumatized by their involvement in war, and that war results in the loss of their childhood. In contrast to these clichés, the authors show that children are well informed about the causes and issues at stake in wars, and that they join them of free choice (within a limited range of choices) – not out of ignorance but rather as the result of a rational decision to confront states that abuse their rights and threaten their survival. More than any other contribution to this book, this chapter shows that children are no less moral and political actors in society than are adults.

Veríssimo's diary entry about her life in the streets of Recife, Brazil, vividly confronts the reader with the humanity of its author and her story, putting flesh on the dry bones of academic work about children and young people, and jolting the reader out of the safety of a familiar genre. Likewise, a prophetic afterword first written in 1971 by the Uruguayan novelist, Cristina Perri Rossi, concludes the whole with a dystopian vision that was, alas, about to come true for many Latin American countries. These two writers arguably bring out the lived experience of childhood more effectively than any of the academic contributions to the volume, and if Hecht's initial challenge that academic work on childhood should be about children and not about adults' concerns regarding them is successfully

met, it is wholly appropriate that it should be largely thanks to them.

NICOLAS ARGENTI

*Brunel University*

O'HANLON, MICHAEL & ROBERT L. WELSCH (eds). *Hunting the gatherers: ethnographic collectors, agents and agency in Melanesia, 1870s-1930s*. xii, 286 pp., maps, tables, illus., bibliogr. Oxford, New York: Berghahn Books, 2001. £40.00 (cloth)

For the *aficionado* of Melanesian artefacts, this is a most welcome book. Eleven specialists, eight with museum appointments, have written articles on specific aspects of collecting that, taken as a group, document the historical and socio-cultural complexity of the often strange and compelling objects inhabiting a museum's glass cases. Reading this book should irrevocably change how one looks at an ethnographic exhibit. Instead of simply seeing a spate of static objects, the reader is made vividly aware of the social, political, geographic, and monetary life of objects before they were neatly sequestered in a carefully designed and lighted exhibit for the visitor's gaze.

These wide-ranging articles, originally prepared for a colloquium in Oxford, augment our understanding of museums and their objects by focusing on the collecting of ethnographic objects. Michael O'Hanlon writes in the introduction that

the intention of the papers in this book is to retrieve ethnographic collecting from what has become a selective identification with dispossession, and to reinvest it with its potential to illuminate a variety of processes over a particular time frame, within a delimited ethnographic area and through the lens of specific collectors (p. 5).

The book succeeds in doing just that.

The collecting years chosen for analysis run from the 1870s to the 1930s, a time-span characterized by rampant colonialism and the ascendancy of anthropological theories of cultural evolution and diffusionism wherein ethnographic objects were of strategic importance. It was also the time when many of the world's great metropolitan museums were established as homes for the myriad ethnographic objects collected from around the world as scientific specimens by missionaries, traders, colonial administrators, scientists, and curio-entrepreneurs. By the end of the 1930s, functionalism, with its emphasis on social processes rather than objects, became the dominant anthropological theory and the intellectual infatuation with cultural objects

waned, even as collections, including one by Malinowski, continued to be made. It was not until the 1980s, when museums' ethnographic collections came under stringent criticism as the misappropriated property of colonized peoples, that artefacts again became an important anthropological topic.

O'Hanlon's introduction is a well-informed discussion of many of the factors and problems involved in the procurement of artefacts that grounds and anticipates the individual essays. These include the varieties of collecting, the context of colonialism, funding, the content of collections, issues of local agency, and ethical problems, as well as the 'afterwards' of collecting, including the dynamics of documentation and the question of duplicates. For an edited volume, the papers are of very high quality and, with the exception of Chris Ballard's tangential but interesting paper on New Guinea 'Pygmies', directly relevant to the editors' envisioned topic. The papers appear to be presented in no particular order and I read them as they piqued my curiosity. Four are concerned with individual anthropologists as collectors. The most famous of these, Bronislaw Malinowski, is the subject of Michael Young's engrossing article. It traces the chequered history of Malinowski's collection of Trobriand artefacts across oceans, in and out of various storage facilities, and with a cast of high and low characters – some misbehaving, including Malinowski – before it finally came to rest in the British Museum, Berkeley's Lowie Museum of Anthropology, and the National Museum of Victoria in Melbourne. Beatrice Blackwood, who was as deeply a 'museum person' as Malinowski was a 'university' one, is the subject of Chantal Knowles's paper on Blackwood's fieldwork and collecting in New Guinea between 1929 and 1937. It also interestingly traces her transformation from accomplished ethnographer (*Both sides of Buka Passage*) to her abiding concentration on material culture as a curator at Oxford's Pitt Rivers Museum. Christian Kaufmann examines the anthropological career of Felix Speiser (University of Basel Professor of Ethnology and Director of the Basel Museum of Ethnography) and his shift of interest from bones and artefacts as evolutionary markers to historical processes in the study of Pacific art styles. Finally, Chris Gosden looks at the 1930s collecting of John Todd, an anthropology student at the University of Sydney, in the context of colonialism, showing 'that what Todd took to New Guinea was as important as what he took away' (p. 227).

Turning to those other avid collectors – colonial administrators, missionaries, and artefact speculators – Michael Quinnell explores the political ramifications of the collection made by British New Guinea's famous administrator, Sir William MacGregor, while Helen Gardner's paper on the pioneering Methodist

missionary, George Brown, examines his collecting as it relates to the Christian ideal of the gift. Rainer Buschmann focuses on German New Guinea insightfully to explore the tensions between the scientific and commercial collecting exemplified by German museums and colonial trading firms. Chicago's Field Museum is justly famous for its Melanesian collections, especially the A.B. Lewis Collection, but Robert Welsch focuses on the three less famous ones collected variously by its Curator of Anthropology George Dorsey, a Hamburg curio dealer, and an overseas employee of the German New Guinea Company. Lastly, Elizabeth Edwards makes a case study of Haddon and Seligman's 1898 Cambridge Torres Strait Expedition in terms of the hitherto-little-examined relationship between collecting artefacts and photographs and the way in which meanings are constructed. Concluding the book is a brief epilogue by Nicholas Thomas, who, while acknowledging that the data are probably thin, regrets that the essays have less to say about indigenous agency and 'the issue of negotiation around the practice of collecting' (p. 274) than about European agency.

Overall, this is a rich collection of essays, brimming with data and, for the most part, cogently analysed. It shifts the discussion regarding ethnographic objects from repatriation issues to the original collections themselves and to the social and political arenas which they historically inhabited.

WILLIAM E. MITCHELL

University of Vermont

## General

BANKS, MARCUS. *Visual methods in social research*. xvi, 201 pp., tables, illus., bibliogr. London, Delhi: Sage Publications, 2001. £60.00 (cloth), £19.99 (paper)

In this helpful introductory text, Banks offers advice to social scientists interested in using visual imagery in their work, and discusses the benefits of doing so. The author's approach is neither dogmatic nor evangelical, combining instead quiet confidence with cautionary good sense. The result is a very solid book which will be particularly useful for students in sociology and anthropology hoping to engage with issues of visual representation.

*Visual methods in social research* covers empirical approaches to image creation as well as image analysis. Drawing on wide-ranging examples, from holiday postcards to vintage film, Banks illustrates how methodology relating to visual form in the social sciences is

'[either] scattered or confined to quite specific areas' (p. 2). The author makes effective use of rhetorical questions and discrete subsections (such as 'unnatural vision' and 'reading narratives'), thereby encouraging the reader to reconsider often-unquestioned assumptions about visual culture. Banks is well versed both topically and technologically, and jumps nimbly from caste in India to the Kayapó of Brazil, and from Polaroid to webcams. Moreover, by choosing explicitly contemporary reference points, such as Jörg Haider or Quentin Tarantino's now-cult film, *Pulp fiction*, he succeeds in engaging younger readers on their own visual territory.

A number of sections are particularly strong and worthy of special attention. Discussing the presence of foreign objects and non-indigenous bodies in ethnographic films, Banks points out that in future generations, the 'sight of "imported" artefacts would not be taken as mournful tokens of lost innocence, but celebrated as cultural appropriations' (p. 144). About the aptly named HADDON web-based meta-catalogue of archival ethnographic film and footage, the author's own creation, he is characteristically modest. The existence of this online catalogue and of a supporting website for the book under discussion, <[www.rsl.ox.ac.uk/isca/vismeth](http://www.rsl.ox.ac.uk/isca/vismeth)>, embodies the hands-on approach which Banks advocates. While largely photo-centric, *Visual methods* also offers useful pointers for working with computer-based digital media, one advantage of which is the potential for 'research parity between sound, text and image' (p. 162). Increasingly, as academic publishing becomes a not-for-profit enterprise and publishers attempt to curtail their production costs, a well-conceived website of video clips and images can provide access to a supporting corpus of rich visual data which can help to illustrate a written text. Focusing on the *Yanomamö interactive* CD-ROM, Banks demonstrates how the use of multimedia 'opens up a non-linear space within which the detail can be absorbed at the user's own pace, and the arguments which rest upon that detail can be fully explored' (p. 165). This is the power of bits and bytes: the social researcher can 'usefully employ multimedia to state her own case but also to outline the alternative interpretations and provide access to the raw materials to allow the user to test them all' (p. 164). Banks concludes his otherwise cautious narrative with an unexpected, albeit entirely justified, sting in the tail. Having offered the disclaimer that his book contains little explicit theory, he takes a well-aimed swipe at scholars who advocate nothing other than 'swooping god-like into other people's lives and gathering "data" ... according to a predetermined theoretical agenda [which] strikes me not simply as morally dubious but intellectually flawed' (p. 179).

Students would be well served to read this book alongside James Monaco's now-classic *How to read a film* (currently in its third edition). In tandem, these background handbooks are amply sufficient to prepare researchers in social science with enough practical know-how, together with a healthy dose of reflexive understanding, to ensure the responsible use of visual imagery in their work. Banks is at his best when he stresses the material nature of visual media and the cultural nature of vision (bringing to mind John Berger's work), and in demonstrating how visual objects are entangled in social relations. In his introduction, Banks suggests that 'good visual research rests upon a judicious reading of both internal and external narratives' (p. 12). His own approach – critical yet mindful – does just this.

MARK TURIN

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CAIRNS, ED & MÍCHEÁL D. ROE (eds). *The role of memory in ethnic conflict*, xii, 199 pp., tables, bibliogr. Basingstoke, New York: Palgrave, 2003. £47.50 (cloth)

This book examines a number of case studies in which ethnic conflicts are, it is claimed, fuelled by a sense of past and unresolved injustice. In particular, it explores the paradox that ethnic memories may sustain conflict in this regard, but are at the same time empowering in relation to the present. It also illuminatingly notes that collective memories (enshrined in the group's symbols and sentiments) may well not coincide with the memories of corresponding individuals (enshrined in personal experiences). The book offers some tentative indication of how an awareness of such issues and conundrums might facilitate the practical resolution of inter-ethnic conflict. Of course, it is made clear that memories are as much constructions of the present as precipitates of the past.

The case studies offer an appropriate coverage, notably on Black versus White Australians, the Northern Ireland communities, Israel, and South Africa. There is interesting discussion of efforts to resolve ethnic conflict, for example in the school classroom and in Truth and Reconciliation Commissions. But the book does not display very strong theoretical leadership. The editors offer a brief introduction, mainly devoted to summarizing the ethnographic chapters that follow. This is succeeded by P. Devine-Wright's chapter, entitled 'A theoretical overview of memory and conflict'. This usefully runs through a number of relevant perspectives on the stated topic, but only devotes a couple of pages to the question of conflict between ethnic groups as such; it has little voice of its own. The final chapter, again authored

by the editors, throws into relief some of the analytical distinctions offered in the ethnographic chapters, but adds little more to what is said there already.

For me, a key problem is that memory is only one of the relevant social processes that sustains ethnic conflict – as the title of the book tacitly states. Not to relate it systematically to other factors means that history is seen as the principal impetus of ethnic conflict, and the re-envisioning of history is in turn regarded as the recipe for conflict resolution. As the final chapter states: 'societies torn apart by ethnic conflict must, at some stage, face up to the past, especially if they wish to deal with conflict in the long term' (p. 179).

The notion of 'ethnic group' is also treated as unproblematic. Barely any analytical attention is given to what is at stake in relation to the wider world such that people find it worthwhile to reproduce ethnic allegiances, enmities, and memories. Of course, folk ideas consider ethnic conflict in terms of history and memory, and folk imaginations then conclude that repositioning history is the way that such conflict can be defused.

In fact, some of the more interesting ethnographic chapters in the book are devoted precisely to folk processes in this regard. For example, K. Burton and A. McCully talk about conceptions of history in the school classroom in Northern Ireland and of the difficulties teachers experience in trying to engage pupils' personal and family memories with formal historiography. B. Hamber and R.A. Wilson describe the work of the Truth and Reconciliation Commission in South Africa, and the way in which it tends to force 'closure' in relation to past atrocities when individuals are clearly not ready for it. But one might have hoped that analytical syntheses might produce some propositions as to why 'folk' do uphold their notions, especially since modes of conflict resolution are also under discussion. In sum, although this is a not-uninteresting book, with some nice case studies, I also find it something of a missed opportunity.

DAVID RICHES

*University of St Andrews*

HINTON, ALEXANDER LABAN (ed.). *Genocide: an anthropological reader*. ix, 302 pp., tables, bibliogr. Oxford, Malden, Mass.: Blackwell Publishing, 2001. £55.00 (cloth), £16.99 (paper)

This *Reader* addresses many aspects of genocide: the international law, accounts of particular collective atrocities, the official rationales offered for these acts, the cultural settings in which the killings took place, and last of all

the effects on the surviving victim populations. Alexander Laban Hinton did his fieldwork in Cambodia in the early and mid-1990s. We probably owe the broad range of the pieces he has selected not only to his perspicacity, but to the fact that the Cambodian events of the 1970s did not easily fit the official UN definition of genocide, since the category of persons identified for persecution was a political category.

The UN Genocide Convention of 1948 treats acts as genocidal if they were committed with the intent to destroy national, ethnical, racial, or religious groups. Not everyone agreed at the time that this was the way to define the crime, nor has there been general agreement since. The *Reader* addresses this problem directly by opening with a section on the concept of genocide.

The discussion of definitions in the articles is not merely academic, but rather is an illuminating survey of the politically conceived set of arguments that led to the wording of the UN Genocide Convention. What is included is an essay by Raphael Lemkin, who coined the term; the text of the UN Convention itself; and an informative article by Leo Kuper, who describes the debates that took place in the UN before the adoption of the draft. Those debates ended by quite specifically excluding political categories and cultural genocide. There were other controversies as well, some around the issue of intent and the modes of enforcement. Legal considerations were prominent in these discussions.

The *Reader* moves on to Helen Fein's sociological essay, which argues for an expanded interpretation of the Convention to cover political groups and social classes. This is followed by Hannah Arendt's famous chapter on 'Eichmann in Jerusalem: a report on the banality of evil'. The conceptual discussion then continues in the hands of Zygmunt Baumann, who writes on 'Modernity and the Holocaust'. He argues that the Holocaust was not a throwback to a savage barbarity; that, on the contrary, modernity was one of the necessary conditions for the way in which Hitler's genocide was rationalized and perpetrated.

The second section of the *Reader* develops another twist on this argument with examples of instances in which the modernity of the colonial situation has devastated indigenous peoples. A section from John Bodley's *Victims of progress* makes this point, as does Michael Taussig's chapter, which is a reflection on Roger Casement's 1913 report on the abuse and killing of the Putumayo Indians by rubber traders in Colombia. His emphasis is on the way the Indians were imagined by their persecutors to justify their maltreatment. This then leads to an essay by Eric Wolf on the Nazi conception of what they were doing as they engaged in genocide.

The third section of the book begins by developing the related theme of ethnic cleansing. Two articles have this focus, one on the partition of India and Pakistan and one on the recent manifestations of violent ethnic cleansing in Yugoslavia. Then the focus of the book switches, and Hinton provides an essay on the model of 'disproportionate revenge' in Cambodian culture (p. 255). Hinton's argument is that 'disproportionate revenge' served 'as a template for part of the genocidal violence' that took place, though Pol Pot's followers were mobilized in the name of class struggle. The argument is an interesting one, though it did not altogether convince this reviewer. Along a parallel line, Arjun Appadurai muses on the meaning of bodily violation as 'intimacy gone beserk'. His contention is that 'extreme bodily violence may be seen as a degenerate technology for the reproduction of intimacy where it is seen to have been violated by secrecy and treachery' (p. 296).

Three articles close the book, one by Linda Green on 'Fear as a way of life' in Guatemala in the 1980s, another by John Bowen on the myth of the inevitability of ethnic conflict in the world. These are followed by an impressive piece by Liisa Malkki on the conceptions of Burundian refugees living in camps in Tanzania in the 1980s, the conceptions of the administrators who dealt with them, and the representation of the generic idea of 'the refugee' in instances of humanitarian intervention such as that which followed the genocide in Rwanda in 1994.

This *Reader* will be useful for college teachers and novice administrators. Each contribution examines dramatic and controversial issues of immediate concern. While the collection addresses genocidal disasters, its emphasis is on the differences among them, and the varied interpretations that have been made of their causes and their consequences.

SALLY FALK MOORE

*Harvard University*

KEMPER, ROBERT & ANYA PETERSON ROYCE (eds). *Chronicling cultures: long-term field research in anthropology*. xxxviii, 353 pp., map, tables, illus., bibliogr. Oxford, New York: Altamira Press, 2002. \$75.00 (cloth), \$29.95 (paper)

Like surfers' conquest of the largest wave or running ultra-marathons, sheer size, length, or other quantitative dimensions can loom in anthropology as in sport and business. Sheer endurance is a necessity in fieldwork – necessary, if not sufficient – and 'sticking it out' is part of the folklore as well as the methodology of working in the field. Mostly, though, attention has focused on the individual fieldworker and his or her single stint of a year or

so. This book differs: it chronicles not the 'milers', the Sebastian Coes and Roger Bannisters, but the 'super-marathon' races, the long-term projects which a single person may lead or initiate but which are then carried on by many and by multiple generations extending over decades. By contrast with the one-dimensionality of the sports analogy, the message of this book is the multiple dimensions of human life which come to light gradually over years of fieldwork in a single locale. Time is essential to reveal the meanings of a space, and those meanings are never exhausted because that space evolves over time.

The projects described here are largely, though not entirely, by Americans: the former Rhodes-Livingston Institute in Zambia and Scarlett Epstein's work in India are largely British. Not claiming to be comprehensive, the volume does not include, for example, European or Japanese projects, or long-term work by missionary ethnographers, such as Adriani and Kruyt in Sulawesi. The projects began in the 1950s or 60s, usually, and they continue. They are predominantly led by anthropologists, but also involve other disciplines. And they have been markedly productive in publications, training students, engaging 'natives', and sometimes in affecting communities. Chapters include Richard Lee and Megan Biesele on the Ju/'hoansi-Kung; Royce's work with the Isthmus Zapotec; Wade Pendleton in Namibia; Louise Lamphere on the Navajo; Evon Vogt in the Chiapas; Lisa Cliggett, Thayer Scudder, and Elizabeth Colson in Zambia; and Johansen and White in southeastern Turkey. Royce and Kemper describe their own involvement in one of these, and they give an overview, but the actors largely speak for themselves, representing a series of generations. George Foster gives a spare and dignified account of a half-century of work and involvement, followed by the last essay of the book, by Peter Cahn, who is just beginning.

The approach of the authors is largely to narrate history, to tell the story of the project and place as it unfolded over decades, rather than to summarize findings or concepts; these are noted, and extensive bibliographies are provided, but the emphasis is on how each project evolved rather than on what was produced or learned as a theoretical summation. This is good strategy and is well done. The stage is set for a reviewer to reflect on both the process and contribution of these projects.

One reaction is a kind of envious admiration. Those of us who barged into field situations impetuously can only mourn the struggle and waste of improvising a way to do our research in comparison to the advantages of an organized institutional framework and affiliation.

Yet creative perspectives and insights often come from individual efforts. What is the most

brilliant literary excursus into fieldwork? Not even fieldwork proper, but a quasi-touristic journey, Claude Lévi-Strauss's *Tristes Tropiques*. In comparison, most efforts at reflexive ethnography bumble.

The truth is that both kinds of fieldwork – long-term, short-term, organized, or adventurous – are miraculously impressive. Heavy attacks have been, and can be, launched against anthropological fieldwork of all kinds, whether heroically individualistic or organized and longitudinal. Accusations include ethical abuse, quandaries of method and truth, mistakes, and misunderstandings. Failure is a human condition. But within that constraint, fieldwork is a remarkable achievement on the part of both fieldworkers and hosts. To sustain this basic effort over generations demands a very high level of organizational commitment and savvy; intensive individual efforts are remarkable, too.

What, then, is the contribution of this book? It fills a crucial spot in the history of the discipline, detailing a type of fieldwork of the second half-century of the discipline – the first half-century opening with the expeditions, followed by the individualistic adventures of Malinowski and Mead – but one which continues into our present era. In this continuation may lie germs of further developments, for example, engagements uniting natives and anthropologists as they merge in sustained efforts at preservation and memory as well as transformation and adaptation. Royce and Kemper unobtrusively provide a distinctive body of material to prompt tomorrow.

JAMES L. PEACOCK

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KENT, SUSAN (ed.). *Ethnicity, hunter-gatherers, and the 'other': association or assimilation in Africa*. 360 pp., maps, tables, bibliogr. London, Washington: Smithsonian Institution Press, 2002. £42.00 (cloth)

Susan Kent, who edited the collection under review here, died suddenly in April 2003, aged 50. Her publications in the field of archaeology and of southern African ethnography amount to seven edited volumes and more than sixty chapters and articles. *Ethnicity, hunter-gatherers, and the 'other'* is her last book, and it is a particular testimony to the way in which she felt about recent debates in the field. It originated in her initiative to bring together mutually supporting archaeological, ethnohistorical, and ethnographic evidence in the aftermath of the 'Kalahari debate'. In this debate, her critique of the revisionist position was always very clear and is once more underlined by the three chapters (out of eleven in total) that she contributed herself. In her

introduction she revisits some of the key issues of the debate, and in another chapter she investigates some of these issues with specific reference to historical data which suggest that the recent domination by Westerners has been much more devastating for San than earlier influence by Bantu-speaking agropastoralists. In her critique based on regional history she is seconded by Guenther and Lee, who, in their respective chapters, provide more evidence from written and oral historical sources to underline their argument for the recognition of the autonomy and resilience of a foraging way of life in the region.

Kent's third contribution to the volume is based on archaeological evidence and includes an original comparison between the southern African case and North American data. Here, she uses evidence from North American slave-master interactions to question the validity of the revisionists' interpretation of archaeological remains of material cultural items from agropastoralists in San camps as evidence for the subservience of San with regard to Bantu-speakers. A similar point is brought home by Sadr's chapter, which shows that the material signature left by independent pre-contact hunter-gatherers is very similar to that of post-contact groups, and that a massive change can only be observed at a much later stage, when there is also historical evidence for cultural assimilation and subjugation. Drawing an analogy between his excavation at Thamaga (southern Botswana) and the revisionist interpretation of data from CaeCae, Sadr concludes that there is no evidence indicative of subjugation in the latter case (p. 46). The chapter by Marlowe, based on work with the Hadza of Tanzania, similarly argues that the revisionist debate about the presence or absence of contact completely overshadowed the far more important question as to what the implications of contact are (or were). He also rejects an all-or-nothing answer to the question as to whether present-day ethnography can provide insights into the prehistoric past and points out that with due caution evidence from 'secondary foragers' can be also used for this purpose (p. 248). He dismisses the revisionist obsession with contact which in fact reifies the pristine character of pre-contact foragers. This point is also taken up by Barnard and Taylor, who argue on the basis of a regional comparison of southern African cases that only a recognition of the diversity of degrees and ways in which African hunter-gatherers are subject to domination (not contact!) will help anthropologists to do justice to the evidence and will help (former) foragers to deal with dominating forces (p. 246).

With a few exceptions, Susan Kent, as the volume editor, has succeeded in motivating individual contributors to make reference to other chapters in the book to a greater extent

than is usually the case with edited volumes in anthropology. This is particularly true of those contributors whose expertise lies outside the narrow confines of the Kalahari desert. Like the Hadza case, the Pygmy data provided by Köhler and Lewis put a number of points raised in the Kalahari debate into perspective, explicitly as well as implicitly. Köhler and Lewis point out that the way in which Pygmy and other hunter-gatherers tend to relate to their social environment regularly skews the data on which much of the revisionist debate has relied (p. 301). To illustrate the point, they show that Pygmies themselves see their relation with villagers in parallel to their relation with game animals. In order to reach a goal, Pygmies may learn the 'language' of the animal (and the villagers) and – as a Mbendjele man put it to Lewis – you may follow the villagers like you follow the elephant: 'You must smear its fresh excrement on yourself' (p. 296).

The volume, therefore, clearly points at comparison and analogy as the most promising ways ahead in the debate. A particularly appropriate strategy is outlined by Sugawara's chapter in this book. He complements the evidence that deals directly with subjugation and domination at face value by drawing attention to indirect evidence, for instance to social practices such as naming children and everyday conversation which may be directed at very different purposes but which also permit an indirect insight into the way in which domination occurred and in which it is being dealt with. All contributions emphasize what Susan Kent had always advocated in her work, namely that claims of hunter-gatherer subjugation have to be carefully evaluated by means of a comparative perspective, whether they relate to the ethnographic record or to the interpretation of archaeological data.

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KIM, CHOONG SOON. *One anthropologist, two worlds: three decades of reflexive fieldwork in North America and Asia*. xxvii, 249 pp., bibliogr. Knoxville: Univ. Tennessee Press, 2002. \$30.00 (cloth), \$15.00 (paper)

When we were children, we may have had the good fortune to be handed a kaleidoscope by one of our elders. Peering deep inside, and turning the device one way and then another, we encountered beautiful formations beyond our modest expectations. So it is with this book. It, too, is a kaleidoscope, in the strict sense of the term, for it offers views of 'beautiful' cultural formations.

Choong Soon Kim, born in Korea in 1938, comes to the writing of this autobiographical



account of ethnographic fieldwork experiences after a long journey. His life began as a member of an affluent family, 'one of the big landlords in a traditional pre-land reform village' (p. 3). After surviving the Second World War, the land reform of 1948, and the Korean War, Kim had to find a way to pay for his own education at secondary school and university. During the late 1950s and early 1960s, he struggled to make his way through the Korean educational system, eventually pursuing doctoral work in labour law at Yonsei University, where he came under the influence of Pyong Choon Hahm, a Harvard-educated legal scholar with a strong anthropological orientation. As a result, from 1963 to 1965, Kim had the opportunity to join a research team led by Hahm in studying Korean people's attitudes towards law. What Kim calls his period of 'being an amateur anthropologist' (p. 18) eventually took him far beyond Korea – to the graduate programme in sociology at Emory University in Atlanta, Georgia, in the United States.

Though Kim arrived in Atlanta with virtually no money, with meagre command of English, and even without his new wife (forced to remain temporarily in Korea because of visa problems), he prospered in the American South, eventually obtaining a full scholarship to enter the doctoral programme in anthropology at the University of Georgia, where he was mentored by Wilford C. Bailey. Their collaboration led to Kim's dissertation research on the life patterns of pulpwood workers in a southern Georgia community (referred to by the pseudonym 'Pinetown'), with a long-term return visit in the year 2000.

Kim remained in the American South, accepting a faculty position at the University of Tennessee at Martin in 1971. When he arrived, he had no idea that he would spend some thirty years there before retiring (and returning to Korea to assume the presidency of the Korea Digital University in Seoul). From his academic home in Tennessee, Kim was able to obtain grants and contracts to do research among the Choctaw Indians in the 1970s (with a return visit in the year 2000), at a factory in Korea in the late 1980s (with follow-up visits in 1991 and 1998), and at a Japanese factory in Tennessee in the early 1990s.

His field research and his ideas about the meaning of being a Korean anthropologist living in the American South are reflected in his numerous books, articles, and reviews, especially his well-known volume, *An Asian anthropologist in the South: field experiences with Blacks, Indians, and Whites* (1977). He considers *One anthropologist, two worlds* to be a 'cultural analysis of my career as an anthropologist' (p. 1), following a recent trend towards candid discussions of anthropologists' backgrounds and of the ways in which these

backgrounds have intersected with their fieldwork experiences.

In the closing chapter, Kim asks the rhetorical question, 'Can I go home again?', and answers, 'First, I must decide where home is – then perhaps, there will be an answer to that question' (p. 195). As a Korean who spent most of his adult life in the United States, and who (with his wife and children) came to be well integrated into academic life and into American society, Kim's story is a fascinating personal history of multiculturalism.

In my view, the author is unduly modest about his accomplishments, but perhaps this reflects the Korean side of his personality dominating the American propensity for self-promotion. After quoting an old Chinese saying to the effect that 'when you casually stick a weeping willow branch in the ground, it grows to cast a large shadow' (p. xii), he goes on to remark that 'I have never grown big enough to cast any shadow'.

*One anthropologist, two worlds* reveals that Kim is too modest to appreciate his contributions to the discipline of anthropology and to the field of American Studies, for in fact he has shed light on the anthropological fieldwork experience through his autobiographical reflections. Like a true kaleidoscope, this book offers cultural formations that are good, fitting, useful, and serviceable – in sum, 'beautiful'.

ROBERT V. KEMPER

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POSEY, DARRELL A. *Kayapó ethnoecology and culture* (ed. Kristina Plenderleith). xviii, 285 pp., maps, tables, figs., illus., bibliogr. London, New York: Routledge Harwood Anthropology, 2002. £50.00 (cloth)

Whenever a compilation of articles by an author appears posthumously, it inevitably serves as a career retrospective. The volume under review was intended to showcase Darrell Posey's most important work with the Kayapó, a widely known indigenous people of Brazil's tropical forest and savannah interior. The collected papers thus focus on ethnobiological and advocacy work with the Kayapó rather than the full spectrum of Posey's interests, which in later life centred on intellectual property and traditional resource rights of indigenous peoples.

The volume consists of twenty-one articles penned between 1981 and 1997, weighted towards the beginning of this period, along with an appendix of plants used by the Kayapó and a glossary of Kayapó vocabulary. Five of the papers are co-authored, and several are abridged in order to avoid redundancy. Despite this, editorship has been exercised with an extremely light hand. In particular,

there is no attempt to summarize the salient discoveries or guiding themes of Posey's work with the Kayapó.

Prospective readers will undoubtedly be attracted to the volume in order to evaluate Posey's guiding idea that Kayapó ecological practice has much to teach Western science. Two examples are highlighted in the foreword by the noted ethnobiologist Brent Berlin: forestry practices aimed at concentrating useful species of trees within the savannah region itself (*apêtelê*) and the elucidation of the Kayapó system of natural classification as a culturalized natural history embedded in specialized social forms of transmission. Other ideas featured in the volume also require mention. Kayapó notions of sociality lead to an elaborate classification of bees, wasps, and ants, described in several chapters, including suggestions regarding species antagonism and biological controls, commensality, and symbiosis. Chapter 11 on stingless bees is, perhaps, the volume's most satisfying. Several chapters report results of soil analysis from Kayapó gardens, suggesting that manipulation of soil nutrient content and pH over small areas aims to favour the growth of specific cultivars in intercropped fields.

During his lifetime, Posey championed the idea that the defence of indigenous human and land rights is enhanced by recognition that indigenous peoples are sources of scientifically useful knowledge. This is stated most clearly in chapter 8, 'Indigenous knowledge and development: an ideological bridge to the future', but the spirit of this essay appears to underlie the entire volume. Different chapters argue, in effect, for superior Kayapó science in the areas of bee-keeping; species maintenance through understanding of ecological associations between plants, animals, and soils; forestry management; species diversity; and soil conservation practices in swiddens. Rather than simplifying the environment, indigenous manipulation seems to increase its diversity. Ultimately, Posey favours an idea, foreshadowed by the geographer Nigel Smith, that black soil distribution in the Amazon basin indicates that the present complexity of the tropical forest ecosystem itself may be a result of past human activity.

In short, Posey explicitly advances the claim that the Kayapó, and by implication other indigenous peoples, manage tropical forest ecosystems to favour diversity. Although he is clearly influenced by notions of ecosystem and population regulation, Posey's claim of management goes further than existing anthropological models and raises a series of contentious problems, some of which have been discussed in the literature. In my opinion, the volume editor errs in not exploring some of the issues connected with research on indigenous environmental management. Although many Amazonianists are increasingly convinced of the anthropogenic

origin of wide-ranging environmental features, a host of questions remain, including the degree to which such changes have been conscious projects, the sociological and cultural conditions needed to reproduce specific ecological effects, and the association with complicating factors such as long-term climate change. Posey himself (*American Anthropologist*, 1992, 94) commented that his studies on 'forest islands', concentrations of useful arboreal species overseen by Kayapó elders, were 'clearly identified as preliminary studies' (p. 441). However, the preliminary character of the results does not come through in the present volume and sufficient repetition may result in their slipping unnoticed into disciplinary consensus, rather than serving as a springboard for further research.

A number of drawbacks will prevent readers from using the book in the manner that was apparently intended. The chapters devoted to culture are fragmentary and do little to help us understand how the scientific virtuosity of the Kayapó is reproduced. Posey repeatedly refers to lineages, for example (pp. 21, 25, 42, 248), and cites them as repositories of knowledge, when it is well established that the Kayapó have no descent groups. The 'Notes' and 'Bibliography' cite different journals (one of doubtful existence) as the source for chapter 4, and one can find numerous frustrating errors in many bibliographic entries, inexplicably including those of Posey himself. Additionally, although there is no guide to the system of orthography for Kayapó terms, the glossary clearly includes errors, a sprinkling of Portuguese terms not indicated as such, and no indication when terms describing 'nature' (insect parts, for example) also carry other meanings. The chapter order is also suspect. Why is the more general introductory chapter on Kayapó gardening (chap. 17) presented after two very detailed articles on Kayapó soil management in gardens? Overall, in the rush to get the volume to press, the editor may have undercut the volume's usefulness as a definitive overview of Posey's contribution to our understanding of Kayapó ethnobiology and ecological practice.

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RAMASWAMY, SUMATHI (ed.). *Beyond appearances? visual practices and ideologies in modern India*. xxix, 424 pp., plates, illus., bibliogrs. London, New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2003. £39.99 (cloth)

To celebrate 'Martyr's Day' on 9 June 2000 – the centenary of Birsā Munda's death at Ranchi jail – the Hindu Swayamsevak Sangh (HSS, Association of Hindu Volunteers) pro-

duced a semi-iconic poster of tribal India's most famous freedom fighter, depicting Birsa as a saviour of *Hindutva* or 'Hinduness'. This Rightist organization's appropriation of Birsa's image, and their communalization of his political legacy (at the expense of minority religions, notably Christianity), is suggestive of the discursive flows and 'intervisuality' that have defined visual practices and ideologies in modern India. The theory of 'intervisuality' – the visual cross-referencing between different media and discourses – is central to *Beyond appearances?* and enables a critical engagement with the movement of Birsa's visual legacy between and within disparate world-views in colonial and post-colonial India.

In outlining the ideological aspects of cultural practice, I echo the key issues addressed in Sumathi Ramaswamy's excellent volume. Most of the eleven established contributors are concerned with the interface between the artistic and the socio-political agency of people and things in modern India. The strong interdisciplinarity of the volume – which brings into dialogue the methods and materials of art history, visual anthropology, and media studies – encompasses the workings of cultural hegemony, hybridity, and ambivalence in colonial and post-colonial eras. Together, the contributors generate a theoretical vitality and diversity that will prove invaluable to scholars and students of South Asian identities and histories, as well of less specialized topics such as colonialism, post-colonialism, diaspora, popular and public culture, and film studies.

In expounding theories of 'intervisuality' and 'interocularity', Ramaswamy elaborates debates on the nexus between vision, visuality, and modernity in South Asia raised by the editors of volumes already published, namely Tejaswini Niranjana and colleagues in *Interrogating modernity* (1993), Carol Breckenridge in *Consuming modernity* (1995), Vidya Dehejia in *Representing the body* (1997), and Rachel Dwyer and Chris Pinney in *Pleasure and the nation* (2000). Most of Ramaswamy's authors outline their indebtedness to Pinney, who reasserts his own theoretical wizardry in an essay on 'xeno-realism', or the transformation of occidental representational modalities into anti-colonial experiences. Extending his thesis on 'Indian magical realism', Pinney invokes the 'xeno-real' to investigate the strategies of popular nationalist resistance in Calcutta (now Kolkata) during the early twentieth century. By fusing the established art-historical approaches of Tapati Guha-Thakurta and Partha Mitter with new insights in visual anthropology pioneered by Jyotindra Jain, Pinney is able to analyse the ways in which colonial authority was 'hybridized' or 'partialized' by chromolithographic artists and dramatists. Pinney argues that through their visual appropriation of realism (or illusionist perspectivalism) and their political allegorization

of Hindu mythology, popular artists could both subvert the aura of colonial authority and mobilize 'local agendas' of resistance. At a broader level, Pinney suggests, the 'affective intensity' embodied by producers, mediators, and consumers of these subversive allegories is indicative of the historical, and hence scholarly, importance of 'new interpretations and new referents'.

Other contributors reinforce this point, with reference either to mass-reproduced prints or to the cinematic, documentary, and propaganda films that have mobilized various kinds of nationalistic gazes. Mitter assesses how the imagery of Raja Ravi Varma united Indian society before Independence, whilst probing Walter Benjamin's ideas on modernity and reproducibility. Ramaswamy introduces the notion of 'geo-bodies' to contextualize prints of *Bharat Mata* (Mother India) in terms of their Bengali prototypes and their reappearance in later secularist and communalist discourses. Kajri Jain analyses the agency of the printed image in collapsing false boundaries between religiosity and the public sphere. Patricia Uberoi disrupts dominant secularist and *Hindutva* promulgations of 'unity-in-diversity' by locating the multivocality of prints that depict Sikhs. Srirupa Roy unravels the 'diversity-speak' disseminated through the documentary films produced by the Government of India's Films Division and Department of Audiovisual Publicity. Philip Lutgendorf traces the evolution of post-colonial anxieties around the 'hardly hegemonic' deity Hanuman and his 'chunky monkey' iconicity. Christiane Brosius deconstructs the resurgent semiotics of *Hindutva* as visualized in the video 'God manifests himself' (that is, Rama) of 1989, asserting that televisual broadcasts of Hanuman's devotion to Rama transform notions of citizenship into *deshbhakta*, or devotional national service, a primary tenet of the Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh (RSS, Association of National Volunteers).

Although there is a bias towards the visual culture of Delhi, *Beyond appearances?* provides a dynamic forum for the main exponents of the anthropological turn in studies of South Asian popular visual culture, and will prove an inspiration for a generation of emerging scholars.

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SAUNDERS, BARBARA & DAVID HALJAN (eds). *Whither multiculturalism? a politics of dissensus*. 307 pp., tables, bibliogr. Leuven: Univ. Press, 2003. Price: €30.00 (paper)

This book addresses one of the most important subjects which anthropologists of

contemporary Western societies can and should tackle. Multiculturalism is the accepted and most widely used designation for the form that cultural pluralism takes in those societies, and encapsulates the ideologies, policies, practices, and institutions which have been developed to accommodate the fact of diversity and difference and to address the problems which their 'recognition' entails. In Western societies, the diversity to which this refers stems variously from the presence of 'indigenous' peoples, regional minorities (and sometimes majorities), and (most typically) immigrants and refugees: the Others who have come from elsewhere. The precise mix of multinationality and polyethnicity (to adapt Kymlicka's terms) varies enormously (consider Italy, Britain, or Australia); none the less, the challenges posed by multiculturalism, for example to liberal democracy, are in broad terms similar, as indeed (again, very broadly) are the solutions.

The academic literature on multiculturalism often concentrates on policies, legislation, and philosophical questions and, important though these are, what happens on the ground is often poorly documented. We know all too little about what those engaged in implementing multiculturalism actually think they are trying to do, and how they actually go about it – 'actually existing multiculturalism', as Schierup calls it. This collection is not atypical. Based on a conference of the Association for Canada Studies in Flanders, the volume tries to encompass both theoretical and practical aspects of multiculturalism. There is an introduction (by Haljan) and eighteen papers by scholars based mainly in Belgium, Canada, and the United Kingdom. These are grouped into three parts. The papers in Part 1 (Pieterse, Bannerji, and Werbner) examine some general understandings of multiculturalism in both historical and contemporary contexts. Part 2 deals with philosophy (van De Putte, Hirsch Ballin, Visker, Foqué, Vandervelde, Saunders, and van Brakel), while Part 3 has a more empirical focus, as Haljan says, looking at policy 'as it works' (Ceuppens, Billiet and colleagues, Duncan, Colin Coates, Berry, Ken Coates, Kumin, and Burstein). It is impossible to summarize these papers here, but they prompt some reflections.

First, the contributors represent a variety of disciplinary approaches, from law and political philosophy to sociology and anthropology, with some policy practitioners. Their contributions vary greatly in approach (and in length), but the sheer variety is telling and, for those unfamiliar with the literature, reveals a great deal about the state of current debates. For anthropologists, it represents an opportunity to assess the strengths and weaknesses of their discipline's own contribution: the messiness of ethnographic realism versus philosophical rigour, perhaps, as in

the not-unrelated field of human rights studies?

Secondly, the editors conclude that multiculturalism is not a singular phenomenon. This will not be news to anthropologists who will have observed, on the ground, the multitude of initiatives which constitute 'actually existing multiculturalism'. Despite convergences, no two situations are the same – far from it – and there are major differences in the forms that multiculturalism takes in, say, Britain or France. Indeed, comparison is vital, and it is disappointing that the potentially illuminating comparison of Belgium and Canada is not followed through in any consistent way. The failure to do so means that the volume lacks coherence.

Thirdly, the contributors demonstrate once again the doubts prevalent in academic circles as to the value of multiculturalism as policy. These doubts, which are summarized early in the volume in papers by Pieterse and Werbner, reflect concerns that multiculturalism is contrary to the principles of liberal democracy; that social issues cannot be subsumed under 'culture', and may be overlooked in a politics of cultural difference; that the way in which the 'culture' element is conceived in 'multiculturalism' is essentialist; that multiculturalism privileges patriarchy and disempowers women, and so on. Pieterse also argues, correctly, that multiculturalism can only be understood in the context of globalization and transnational migration, but when he adds that 'in this setting [it] is but the downstream of global politics and political economy', he surely underestimates the extent to which demands for it come as much from below as from above. Werbner's discussion of this complex issue is more nuanced.

Finally, there is no going back to the monoculturalism and assimilationism of earlier epochs. For better or worse, and for all its faults, in an era of transnationalism and globalization, some form of multiculturalism is inevitable. As the old soldier said: 'If you know a better 'ole, you go to it'.

RALPH GRILLO

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SCHEFFLER, HAROLD W. *Filiation and affiliation*. xiv, 202 pp., figs., bibliogr. Oxford, Boulder, Colo.: Westview Press, 2001

Taking from Fortes a distinction between filiation, the relation of a child to his or her parents, and descent, the relation between a person and his or her ancestors, Scheffler breaks from a previous position and follows Fortes in restricting the term 'descent group' to groups formed by a patrilineal or matrilineal rule. He then distinguishes between three possibilities according to whether status is

acquired via a parent as a necessary and sufficient condition, a necessary but not sufficient condition, or a sufficient but not necessary condition. The relation may be patrification, matrifiliation, or filiation where the sex of the parent is irrelevant. Generalization across the range of societies where descent group membership is acquired by means of one or other of the three logical possibilities is, he states, bound to be unproductive. Scheffler also acknowledges that the sex of the child might also be relevant, but dismisses examples of parallel and alternating descent as ethnographically mistaken.

The nine possibilities that arise from the three combinations of conditionality and the three forms of filiation (patrification, matrifiliation, and undifferentiated) are not to be described as rules of descent or descent rules, but as rules of filiation. A person is a descendant of another only if the descendant is a child's child of the other. While there are unilineal rules of inheritance, there are no unilineal rules of succession.

Examples of societies in which patrification is a necessary and sufficient condition to membership in a group include the Nuer, Tiv, Tallensi, and Gusii. In such societies, descent relations may have jural values. In societies, such as the Swat Pathan, China, and India, where patrification is necessary but not sufficient, descent relations have no jural values. In societies like the Yakö and New Guinea Highland communities, where patrification is sufficient, but not necessary, descent relations can also have no jural values. It is 'quite inappropriate to describe as a patrilineal descent group any group in which patrification is merely a sufficient condition for inclusion'. Only groups in which patrification is both necessary and sufficient can be called *de jure* and *de facto* patrilineal descent groups. Jural social groups may be jural entities, jural collectivities, or jural aggregates.

The second part of the book reviews the ethnography of the various societies listed as examples of the different possibilities of rules of affiliation. Among the positions adopted here, Scheffler defends Evans-Pritchard's account of Nuer patrilineal institutions from various misinterpretations, while on the other hand arguing that the Yakö, far from being one of the better-described instances of double descent, may have no descent groups at all. Not only that, but, according to Scheffler, Yakö groups lack an ideology of unilineal descent.

Scheffler concludes with a reconsideration of his own Choiseul Island ethnography in which he originally argued that the people of Choiseul possessed cognatic descent groups. He has been persuaded, however, by Fortes that 'in the absence of closure by a descent criterion, relations of descent can have no distinctive jural values or structural significance'.

He reaches a similar conclusion, namely that only *de facto* cognatic descent groups exist, for the Gilbert Islands and Tokelau.

Scheffler has set out his terms clearly and argued his case carefully. Despite various disagreements with Rivers and even Fortes, he has chosen a position broadly within a prominent anthropological tradition, reserving the term 'descent' for the formation of groups, indeed unilineal groups at that. His analytic and ethnographic arguments also serve to emphasize the considerable variety, and complexity, in forms of social groupings that people have chosen to adopt. One issue which might have received somewhat more attention is what the people themselves say about their institutions. When he says that a given society has no ideology of descent, presumably he means that they make no such claims. It is possible, of course, that people may disagree among themselves, that their attitudes and statements may be ambiguous, or that they may suspend judgement. Certainly not all people will set out their ideologies of descent in terms directly translatable as necessity and sufficiency. On the other hand, it is also possible that people might describe their unilineal rules as necessary and sufficient, while in practice permitting other forms of acquiring descent group membership. The book ends rather abruptly. Some readers would be helped by a summation of Scheffler's position.

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STONE, LINDA. *Kinship and gender*. (Second edition). xiv, 322 pp., tables, figs., illus., bibliogr. Boulder Colo.: Westview Press, 2000. \$35.00 (paper)

As kinship studies have returned to the anthropological limelight, it is unsurprising to see new textbooks on the subject: Ladislav Holy's *Anthropological perspectives on kinship* exemplifies this in the United Kingdom. Its parallel on my side of the 'Pond' is the volume under review. A second edition suggests that Stone's book is becoming a standard of sorts, which position, I hope to show here, is virtually entirely undeserved.

Consider the key debate in the field in recent years – whether kinship is a batch of 'cultural constructs' free of the imagined constraints of human biology or has, instead, close biological kin as its focal members everywhere. Utterly ignored in the first edition, it is given only cursory attention in the second. David Schneider's study of American kinship is introduced, as is Harold Scheffler's critique and Schneider's reanalysis of his Yapese materials. But only a single paragraph alludes to the larger significance of these studies. There is no mention of Scheffler's many other painstaking

analyses, or of the questioning of Schneider's Yapese conclusions by several scholars, or of other attempts to restore kinship to nomothetic status by still others.

Nor is there anything resembling a command of the pertinent literature from the Darwinian disciplines. The biology-culture distinction, now widely dismissed in these disciplines, is left untouched, and the treatment of sociobiology, evolutionary psychology, and evolutionary ecology is inadequate. Astonishingly absent is even a mention of the substantial Darwinian literature showing that people generally favour close biological kin, and thus also the bearing of this literature on the constructivist/extensionist controversy.

The index shows more than two columns of entries under 'women' but nothing at all under 'men', in contrast to what one might expect these days in a book with 'gender' in its title. Yet the needs of children for close male kin in their lives, which most of the world has happened to intuit as a key component of fatherhood, is not dealt with here at all. David Blankenhorn, in his *Fatherless America*, has called the impending collapse of the nuclear family in the United States 'our most urgent social problem', but Stone's 'most urgent' need, apparently, is to author a 'feel-good' book for today's reproductively irresponsible women and the men who – for a night or two – love them.

Lest this be thought too grave an indictment, consider her embrace of 'the gathering hypothesis', 'put forth by female researchers' (p. 48) as competitive with 'the hunting hypothesis' of certain nasty male chauvinists. We are told that the former 'fit[s] the evidence better' (ibid.). But the only 'human' evidence Stone considers is Richard Lee's well-known piece on !Kung subsistence. Just what this is supposed to mean in analysing human evolution is unclear. Even if we take Lee's commitment to Marxist eschatology at face value, it exemplifies nothing more than (yet another) instance of an economically productive class's subordination to a less-productive counterpart: compare, say, slavery in the Arab world to this day or more 'traditional' women in the West. And the hunter-gatherer literature rather strongly suggests that, even if hunting provides fewer calories than gathering, it is none the less more prestigious and far more important in dealing with the central civilizational problem, that is, the channelling of youthful male aggression. But this, like fatherhood, can be elided in a confidence-building manual for female undergraduates.

Despite the book's faddishness, it has a curious attachment to outworn conceptualizations. Residential choices are presented as if they depended solely on post-marital moves, as in Murdock's typology put forward in 1949 and anticipated decades earlier. Descent ideologies are considered according

to a unilineal-cognatic dichotomy – this despite the fact that recent analyses of the materials from Aboriginal Australia, North and South America, and perhaps other areas point to very different notions. Tylor's ancient 'marrying out or being killed out' formula is resurrected for another fanciful recreation of 'early humanity'. The overwhelming tendency towards local endogamy in Amazonia, parts of Aboriginal Australia, Sri Lanka, and the 'matrilineal' world is ignored.

This book is a sign of the times in anthropology – and the times are very bad indeed. It should be avoided by serious professionals and students.

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## Material culture

JOANS, BARBARA. *Bike lust: Harleys, women and American society*. xi, 271 pp., illus., bibliogr. Madison: Univ. Wisconsin Press, 2001. \$55.00 (cloth), \$21.95 (paper)

'The bike is front and center. It is not only the means of entering the culture, it is the culture. It is both the symbol and the reality of the culture. Without the bike there is nothing' (p. 184). This quotation from *Bike Lust: Harleys, women and American society* illustrates how a particular idea of group-relatedness emerges from people's complete and passionate engagement with objects of specific significance, in this case Harley Davidson motor bikes. Joans calls this phenomenon of group-relatedness 'culture', but it is unclear whether she is using the term ethnographically or analytically. Because she fails to make this distinction, the book fails adequately to address what is clearly a fascinating theoretical problem. What can we make of the distinction between subject and object when it is clear that subjects can only make sense of themselves as particular kinds of people in relation to their passion for specific objects which they share in common? How can we account for, and make a study of, the emotional transformation – the passion – that object-mediated interactions make possible? How are these interactions structured and how can the object seem to have an influence of its own? Without this kind of analytical engagement, Joans misses the opportunity to make her intriguing data relevant to contemporary social theory.

'Culture', meanwhile, has long been a contested term in anthropological theory, but it remains a widely used term in everyday Euro-American life. Anthropologists are well

placed to document its usage and meaning, but when working 'at home' they are in danger of falling into the trap of treating culture as an unexamined assumption, a signifier of group-relatedness that needs no analytical circumspection. What is easily missed in such an account is a detailed sense of the way that social relationships are organized and lived on a day-to-day basis. Such detail would make a cultural description seem partial, because ideas like culture and society must then be understood in terms of the representations of, and explicit abstractions concerning, the basis of group-belonging, which anthropologists try to convey, and informants are required to explain, in ethnographic interviews.

Despite these shortcomings Joans has nevertheless produced an interesting first-hand account of the different kinds of groups that have emerged, and are continuing to evolve, out of the history of Harley Davidson ownership in California. These include a variety of groups who have in common relationships with other Harley owners as a means of escaping from conventional working life. Together they seek the freedom of the road, but in different groups and in very different ways. Originally, this form of escapism was the preserve of macho, subversive, white, working-class males ('the outlaws'), but more recently the prosperity of the Harley Davidson company has come to depend on the custom of RUBS ('rich urban bikers') and women bikers, who, once frowned upon, are now increasing in numbers.

GILLIAN EVANS

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MASON, PETER. *The lives of images*. 176 pp., plates, illus., bibliogr. London: Reaktion Books, 2002. £25.00 (cloth)

This book tells a fascinating series of stories about the travelling of visual representations across time and place. The quotation on the front cover from Aby Warburg's *The renewal of pagan antiquity* heralds the importance of an analysis of the migration of images that does not fear border guards, disciplinary or worldly. Each chapter takes one particular set of images and studies how they pop up unexpectedly in different parts of the world; the result is to trace the interconnections of various histories. Mason thus develops a kind of Eric Wolf approach to the image. The scholarship behind this book is impressive, and never oppressive – which it could have been in its juggling of the detailed knowledge of history and biography (the lives of the subjects and the creators) and of traditions of representation. Indeed, the writing has an athletic lightness as it crosses continents and periods, concealing

the effort of the (detective) work involved in marking these moves.

The core of the argument (made without reference to Gell's *Art and agency*) is that images acquire a life (intentions) of their own, as they are recontextualized by different people. This vitality means that the image is 'a signifying complex that resists articulation in an unambiguous and definitive way' (p. 13). Thus, in the first chapter, the focus is on the images of an indigenous group of Tierra del Fuegians, who were brought in 1881 to the newly created Jardin d'Acclimatation in Paris (which still can be seen in the Bois de Boulogne) as a new kind of exhibition, and with great commercial success. The exhibit recreated Fuegian domestic life, with a thatched hut, fire, and hunting displays (later in the 1880s such spectacles with others peoples involved mock battles and ritual dances). Most of the Fuegians died. Mason's intellectual sights are on the photographs of the Fuegians, which were used to make composite illustrations for French magazines. By noting the artists' biographical details, Mason shows how the images are part of a longer history of representation which goes back to sixteenth-century portraits of the people from the southernmost tip of the American continent (this analysis also includes a painting by one of Captain Cook's artists on the *Endeavour*) and anticipates their recovery by contemporary artists. Thus, the Chilean Eugenio Dittborn has created a picture called *Histories of the human face, VIII* (p. 50), which juxtaposes images of Fuegians and portraits of criminals taken from 'scientific' work of the nineteenth century. This might seem tasteless, but it makes obvious the reasons for the existence of both sets of images – they share the same history.

This idea is developed in further chapters by considering a range of material which viewed in isolation appears relatively obscure – the first three-dimensional representation of natives from the New World (which is in a church outside Oxford), engravings of natives of Formosa in Lambeth Palace Library (London), and Meso-American codices. In each chapter, the itineraries of images are shown and variations on the theme are considered. For example, in the case of the Fuegians the images are connected with people (artists and natives) and their movement, whereas the second chapter, in a consideration of the tradition of vernacular portraiture of non-European peoples, reveals how the engravings of Formosans were made by a man who never left Europe: he had invented them from drawings and a text. Thus, the truthfulness of images derives not from their documentary accuracy but from their conformity to the rules of ethnographic representation. Mason reveals such discrepancies as meticulously as a forensic pathologist.

The delights here lie in appreciating both the paths linking the images and the images themselves. The author is fully aware that using the visual as the source material for a text creates its own methodological problems. Images travel in different ways to texts and have their own forms of efficacy; disciplining the visual is more difficult than disciplining the textual. What is more, the boundary between fact and fiction is complicated by the obedience to implicit criteria of representation, as mentioned above. Mason has produced a piece of work that marks out in an original manner its own genre of scholarship, faithful to history and to real connections, and one which disregards disciplinary knowledges. At one point, Mason talks of a para-ethnographic genre (p. 79), which is a hybrid form with a diverse canon, mixing image and text, first-hand observation, analysis and conjecture, detective work, and historical and documentary material. This description is not unlike Mason's new book, which as such reinvents the way in which serious, original, accessible, and valuable 'ethnographies' can be made.

MARK HARRIS

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SCHFELD, REIMAR & HAN VERMEULEN (eds). *Treasure hunting? collectors and collections of Indonesian artefacts*. vi, 324 pp., illus., bibliogr. Leiden: CNWS Publications, 2002. €30.00 (paper)

The title of this book indicates its focus on collectors who hunted for valuable artefacts. The chapters explore the motives and methods of individual collectors, as well as the history of museum collections and the way in which they came to be considered valuable. It begins with an overview of the history of collecting in Indonesia by C. van Dyke, who points out the early association of non-European culture with the realm of nature, illustrated by the tendency of early ethnographic collections to be kept in zoos. The following chapter, by Hetty Nooy Palm, documents the transformation of ethnographic objects from curiosities to *objets d'art*, providing us with revealing portraits of the kinds of people who collected in Indonesia in the early twentieth century.

Ger van Wengen's discussion of the National Museum of Ethnology in Leiden reveals both the importance of the Dutch colonial presence in Indonesia and of the prevailing doctrines of evolution in dictating the museum's collecting policies. There was a perceived need for tangible evidence to demonstrate the evolution of human beings, and potential collectors were urged to collect material from 'tribes' considered to be

at an earlier stage of development. This theme is taken up by Inger Wulff in relation to the collections now held by the National Museum of Denmark. This collection came mostly from Danish colonies, or was collected by Danes travelling or living outside Europe, and it was organized in such a way as to promote understanding of 'the earliest development of mankind'.

The link between museums and the colonial project is drawn out by J.L.W. van Leur in his discussion of the Ethnological Collection of the Indies Institution in Delft. This institution was intended to prepare young men for services in the colonies, and many of its tutors contributed to its collections in the interests of an illustrative education. M.L.R. Djajasoebrata also makes the connection between collecting in Indonesia and the pursuit of learning among the Dutch bourgeoisie, but contrasts this with the Protestant missionaries' tendency to destroy evidence of an earlier culture.

J.H. van Brakel identifies a shift towards the understanding of ethnographic objects as 'tribal' or 'primitive' arts. This gave the artefacts the status of valuable antiques. Collectors saw themselves as racing against time, since the traditional cultures were rapidly disappearing as a result of contact with Western civilization. Art-collecting and the pursuit of scientific knowledge could both be encompassed by an ideal of salvage and preservation, as Sylvia Ohnemus shows in her study of the Sarasin cousins, whose work was part of a wider scheme to document disappearing cultures and populations that were considered to be descendants of prehistoric peoples. In similar vein, Sara Ciruzzi draws our attention to the scarcity value of objects collected by the Italian scientist Elio Modigliani, who sought to document the original culture of indigenous populations that were not yet contaminated by external influences.

Paul Michael Taylor offers us a revealing portrait of the American collector William Louis Abbott, who saw his collecting as working towards the expansion of science that was increasing his nation's prestige. Nico de Jonge and Toos van Dijk also emphasize the scholarly motivations of collectors like Wilhelm Muller-Wismar, who was well educated and from a well-to-do family. The destruction of traditional culture impressed him in the field, and this became an important spur for his collecting activities. Another collector of this kind was Ernst Vatter, an ethnographer who took the documentation of material culture very seriously, as revealed in Ruth Barnes's chapter. Like many of the other collectors, he was convinced that he was seeing the last days of indigenous culture and hoped that his collection would eventually serve as evidence of the historical past of the cultures which he visited.



The book concludes with a consideration of museums in Indonesia by Mohammed Amir Sutaarga. He argues that Indonesians have become more and more conscious of their own past, and their search for a national identity in the process of nation-building has fuelled their interest. The National Museum attempts to express the current ideal of unity in diversity. For the citizens of newly independent nations, treasures from the past must be considered as the material evidence of their history. Museums must play a role in mediating cross-cultural communication and the 'treasures' they hold should be considered as cultural ambassadors.

*Treasure hunting?* hopes to break new ground in its systematic and comparative approach, and in this it is largely successful, providing a wealth of historical information and at the same time offering important insights into the social factors and individual motivations that have shaped the history of museum collecting in Indonesia and of Indonesian collections in Europe and America. Perhaps most importantly, these studies reveal the ways in which museums were often dependent upon individual collectors whose educational backgrounds and interests were extremely diverse.

IAN FAIRWEATHER

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### Political anthropology

ALEXANDER, CATHERINE. *Personal states: making connections between people and bureaucracy in Turkey*. x, 267 pp., tables, figs., bibliogr. Oxford: Univ. Press, 2002. £50.00 (cloth)

The author of this monograph has an unusual background for an anthropologist: she worked as a management consultant in information technology for the Turkish Treasury. This experience proves highly useful in her ethnography of the Turkish Sugar Corporation. In *Personal states*, the author aims to give material form to the rather abstract debates on the nature of the state by conducting an anthropological study of the relationship between bureaucrats, engineers, and farmers engaged in the production of sugar in eastern Turkey. Alexander argues in this study that personhood and the state are mutually and relationally constructed through narratives and representations of persons engaged in a network organized on a familial model. According to her, the state is experienced as an effect of the networks of personal relations in which actors are embedded, and, just as the

state produces persons, persons produce the state.

The different chapters include a discussion of the emergence of the Turkish Republic, the history of sugar production in Turkey, and perceptions and representations of the state, as well as case studies of a factory in eastern Turkey, of sugar-beet-producing villages, and of sugar contracts established between farmers and the Corporation. A discussion of the current era of privatization rounds off the study.

Alexander chose the Sugar Corporation for her study because it is one of the State Economic Enterprises that were created by the Turkish republic in the 1930s. Sugar production, which is highly centralized, operated as a means of subsidizing the rural population as well as of disseminating modernist values. Referred to as 'Atatürk's minarets', sugar factories represented an attempt at internal colonization, particularly in eastern Turkey. 'Sugar families', multi-generational families raised in factory compounds, are a case in point, although Alexander intriguingly concludes that this social engineering project was not especially successful.

For this multi-sited research, the author moved between the central headquarters of the Turkish Sugar Corporation in the capital city of Ankara, a local sugar factory in Erzurum in eastern Turkey, and villages in the same region where sugar beet is planted. Her study shows that the state continues to play a central role in sugar production in eastern Turkey, where factories which operate at a financial loss are maintained for political reasons.

Alexander argues that the state in Turkey remains highly patrimonial, despite the Kemalist rupture which transformed the Ottoman system. She claims that personhood in Turkey is predicated upon being in a relationship of reciprocity based on a model of kinship. She argues that the production of sugar is made possible largely through familiarity, personal knowledge, and trust between officials and farmers, a strategy which proves highly rational in the context of high levels of economic and political instability. In contradistinction to orientalist accounts, she maintains that the opposition commonly made between Western and other bureaucracies is a question of degree and emphasis. According to Alexander, both Turkish and other bureaucracies combine Weber's ideal types of patrimonialism and legal-rational organization. She claims that, despite the oppositional terms through which the concepts of contract and co-operation are constructed, sugar could not be produced without the support of alternative, informal relations of trust and co-operation which coexist with legal contracts.

Alexander rejects a view of a monolithic state, preferring to think in terms of a

'personal state' as a means of orientating a relational self. The state in this view is both produced in relation to, and produces, the self by means of a familial model which has largely remained constant from Ottoman to republican times.

*Personal states* is a well-organized, well-written monograph. The author's inside knowledge of the bureaucracy is strengthened with ethnographic research in the Sugar Corporation, factories, and villages. Alexander successfully challenges orientalist approaches to the state by comparing the Turkish bureaucracy with other bureaucracies, such as the British. Her case study makes concrete debates on the nature of the state and makes room for agency, since she is interested as much in how the state is produced by persons as in how persons are produced by the state. Alexander's discussion of the history of sugar production in Turkey carefully distinguishes between the high Kemalist period and the contemporary age of neo-liberal privatization. One only wishes that she had spent more time in beet-producing villages: her knowledge of the field seems most solid when it comes to bureaucracy. All in all, this study is an important contribution to ethnographies of bureaucracy and to debates on the nature of the state.

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ASKEW, KELLY M. *Performing the nation: Swahili music and cultural politics in Tanzania*. xviii, 417 pp., tables, illus., CD, bibliogr. London, Chicago: Univ. Chicago Press 2002. £50.50 (cloth), £24.00 (paper)

Applying performance theory to her study of nation-building, Askew explores the ways in which music and dance have played a part in constructing a national culture and identity in Tanzania. An ambitious book, Askew's thoughtful and richly detailed ethnography traces the relationship between music, politics, and economic change from the colonial period to the present. In analysing both policy and practice, Askew's work demonstrates that the state's articulation of a national identity has been neither consistent nor entirely successful.

As an observer and also, importantly, as a performer in both *dansi* (popular jazz) bands and *taarab* ensembles, Askew is in a unique position to provide a fascinating view of this musical world. She sees at first hand both the personal dimension and the wider politics involved in the lives and trajectories of these musical groups. By focusing on performance, and incorporating both micro- and macro-level politics, she offers a critique of state-centred studies of nationalism in which the

authority and effectiveness of the state are assumed.

The first half of the book provides an historical overview of Tanga, as well as of Tanzania as a nation. Askew then turns to an ethnography of the various musical and dance forms popular in Tanzania in the past and present. Each genre, from *ngoma* and *dansi* to *taarab* is a unique cultural expression, mixing and accommodating different internal and external influences. These different musical genres also serve to express and shape social and political identities. The music that one listens to or hires for a wedding communicates social and economic status, as well as political affiliation. Askew then focuses her attention on *taarab*. The poetry in *taarab*, laced with metaphor, allusion, and multiple meanings, is well suited to conveying (amongst other things) social critique, political commentary, and gender ideology. By means of their tipping practices during specific songs at *taarab* performances, audience members communicate with the community and other audience members their problems and their quarrels with others.

From this politics of the personal, Askew shifts to the politics of culture by examining national cultural policy over time. Recognizing that *ngoma* provided an outlet for the expression of both political discontent and cultural and social unity, colonial administrators were quick to establish a bureaucratic body to regulate and control performances and performers. At independence, the new state expanded this bureaucracy. Faced with constructing a nation-state from 120 different ethnic groups, Tanzania's founding father, Julius Nyerere, created the Ministry of National Culture and Youth in 1962. Since then it has undergone many transformations of both organization and focus. Initially, its emphasis was on promoting 'tradition' and rejecting 'modern' influences in an effort to assert an African identity. Over time, this poorly funded and organized ministry was to modify its definition of appropriate tradition to mirror the political agenda of the day, from the era of African socialism to the current period of multi-party politics and economic liberalization. Bands and their performances continue to be regulated and controlled to some degree by the government. Relationships with cultural officers and government agents are often crucial to performers' careers. Askew's 'insider view' allows us to see how performers negotiate these relationships through both collaboration and resistance.

The place of *taarab* in the development of a national culture demonstrates well the complexities both of Tanzanian politics and of Tanzania's cultural identity. During the early days of statehood, *taarab* was excluded from national culture on the grounds of its

supposed foreignness. With the advent of multi-partyism and economic liberalization however, *taarab*, a very popular musical genre, was enlisted to help craft a new identity for Chama cha Mapinduzi (CCM), the ruling political party. Yet, ironically, while the party lavished support on one band in particular, this band did not ultimately produce songs that supported CCM's politics. Rather, to achieve popularity, the band had to avoid either singing CCM's praises or criticizing the opposition. Tanzanian citizens, weary of CCM's long-standing dominance, would quickly have rejected such an overt attempt to manipulate their sentiments.

The search for a national identity and culture in Tanzania continues. Askew shows how this identity is created by musicians, politicians, and Tanzanian citizens at all levels and demonstrates that it is not simply a top-down, state-designed, and imposed process. While she emphasizes the dialogic nature of performing a national identity, she might have supported this further by providing more of the audience responses to the 'traditions' and national identity that emerge in national contests and other musical events. This aside, *Performing the nation* is an engaging and thought-provoking work which will have considerable appeal for readers in African studies, ethnomusicology, anthropology, and comparative politics.

KATHERINE SNYDER

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CHAKRAVARTI, ANAND. *Social power and everyday class relations: agrarian transformation in north Bihar*. 311 pp., map, tables, bibliogr. London, New Delhi: Sage Publications, 2001. £35.00 (cloth)

This excellent study of agrarian class relations in north Bihar has some old-fashioned virtues. It is compellingly documented, lucidly written, and deals with issues that clearly matter – and not just for Indianists.

Based on fieldwork carried out between 1978 and 1980 in Aghanbigha, a village in Purnea district, Chakravarti focuses on relations between the dominant class and an underclass of marginal cultivators and landless labourers. The past two decades had seen a shift from a situation in which the former leased most of their land out to sharecroppers to one in which they now dedicated themselves to profit-maximization and cultivated by means of hired labour.

This was a consequence of social and technological circumstances. Neither had 'primacy'. New land legislation led to an exacerbation of class antagonism between the dominant Bhumihar landholders and their predominantly 'tribal' Santhal sharecroppers,

and this resulted in the latter's replacement by more compliant tenants. In one village in the same revenue area the ensuing violence claimed the lives of fourteen Santhals. But it was technological changes – canal irrigation, new crops and crop patterns, and the introduction of tractors – that made it possible to cultivate the land with an altogether new intensity and to dispense with sharecroppers altogether. These innovations produced a greatly enhanced demand for hired labour, a frenetic preoccupation with the scheduling of agricultural operations, and a tightening surveillance over labour. Time discipline was as rigorous as in E.P. Thompson's 'Taylorist' depiction of the factory regime, and was reinforced by verbal and physical abuse, and by arbitrary deductions from the wage. The increased demand for labour went, however, with its cheapening, a phenomenon which is explained by the overwhelming power of the dominant class and the absence of opportunities outside agriculture.

Within the village, five principal classes are distinguished: *maliks* (dominant-caste Bhumihar landholders); *grihasts* (landholders from other castes); a small class of tenant cultivators of mainly middle caste who do not work for others; petty cultivators who do so and who are mostly 'Dalits' and 'tribals'; and landless labourers. These last two together constituted its underclass and accounted for 75 per cent of its households. *Malik* households accounted for 12 per cent, but owned nearly 80 per cent of the land.

The *malik-grihast* distinction (which the villagers do not make) is crucial to a central thread in Chakravarti's analysis – the relationship between caste and class. By virtue of their membership of the dominant caste, Bhumihar landholders are in the unique position of wielding ideological and political, as well as material, power. It is they who define 'the culture of exploitation' and whose links with the local state underwrite their coercive power. Following Godelier (religion or kinship may function as both 'superstructure' and 'infrastructure'), Chakravarti sees caste as a religious institution that determines access to the means, and structures the relations, of production. No analysis of agrarian class relations can afford to neglect it. The nexus that links the dominant caste with the local state is, moreover, key to the hegemony of the dominant class, and allows it to pay wages that are lower in real terms than those paid in the 1950s and which are well below the statutory minimum. It also explains why Aghanbigha labourers are worse remunerated than others in the region and why – unlike their counterparts in central Bihar – they are incapable of meaningful resistance. Though they are angry and resentful, and deploy 'the weapons of the weak' when they can, Chakravarti argues that these change nothing. The only

salvation lies in left-organized class politics – but in Puruea these are stifled by the Bhumi-hars' stranglehold on the state.

Though the class structure of the village has been progressively polarized, its underclass has not been significantly 'proletarianized'. Most village labourers are 'bonded' to a *malik* – most importantly through indebtedness. What then, asks Chakravarti, is the relationship between 'free' labour and capitalist development? Though 'unfree labour' coexists with the *maliks'* thoroughly capitalistic ethic of profit-maximization, in the end he comes down on the side of those who have argued that it is inconsistent with capitalism in its 'pure' form. This is because it robs the labouring classes of economic agency in the market, and political agency in the forum of class politics where they are incapable of constituting a class for themselves – an argument that seems to be implicitly premised on some perhaps-questionable teleological assumptions about the 'natural' historical destiny of the proletariat.

That notwithstanding, this is a very fine book that belongs on the Indianist's shelf alongside such now-classic studies as Bêteille's *Caste, class and power*, Breman's *Patronage and exploitation*, and Epstein's *Economic development and social change*. But it is not only regional specialists who should read it. So, too, should anybody concerned with the way in which 'traditional' agrarian societies respond to the capitalist market, or with the nexus between class hierarchies and state power. It might usefully figure as an exemplary case study on student reading lists in economic or political anthropology.

JONATHAN P. PARRY

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JEFREMOVAS, VILLIA. *Brickyards to graveyards: from production to genocide in Rwanda*. viii, 162 pp., maps, tables, illus., bibliogr. New York: SUNY Press, 2002. \$59.50 (cloth), \$19.95 (paper)

This well-written and thoughtful book provides a particularly fine illustration of the way in which detailed fieldwork focusing on a clearly defined and limited subject, in this case brick- and tile-making industries in clay marshes, can unfold to offer explanations that contribute to understanding grand events such as the Rwandan Genocide. It certainly does not suffer from the historical amnesia characterizing so much current writing about Rwanda.

I particularly enjoyed Jefremovas's presentation of her field data on tile- and brick-making industries, which produces an excellent balance between 'raw' technical, economic, and methodological data and their

contextualization in real peoples' lives. Direct quotations from workers and bosses are very effective in this respect. Indeed, the thorough nature of Jefremovas's contextualization of brick- and tile-making industries in the history, political and economic contexts, gender relations, and the unusual household economics of many Rwandan families is a striking feature of this book.

It begins with a description of the technology used in brick and roof-tile industries in Rwanda. Despite great differences in the scale of these enterprises, the author shows that technology and labour processes remained remarkably homogeneous in the 1980s. Chapter 2 analyses the nature of labour organization in three forms of industry – small peasant production, large capitalist enterprises, and co-operatives, and examines the impact of regional differences in access to land, labour, and power in shaping labour relations and techniques.

The third chapter develops the author's central argument that the regional variations in the organization of labour and the development of brick- and tile-making industries in Rwanda are related to the history of centralization of land, resources, and power; the development of regional diversity; the transformation of the lineage system; gender relations; the recasting of ethnicity in pre-colonial and colonial Rwanda; and changes to these structures in the post-colonial state.

Chapters 4 and 5 examine the reasons why family labour was so conspicuously absent from the brick and tile industries through a detailed description of household reproduction. Beginning with an interesting historical analysis, Jefremovas contends that the transformation of paternal control over resources, and the impact of changes in social relations during the pre-colonial and colonial periods, resulted in household heads being unable to control the labour of grown children. This analysis is built upon to present gender and domestic relations within the household and, with an emphasis on the importance of women's subsistence agricultural labour, explains how such marginally lucrative industries as brick- and tile-making remained viable.

Chapter 6 considers the specific cases of three women who had established brick- and tile-making businesses. These case studies are used to engage critically with the literature on class and gender in Africa. Although this chapter provides interesting ethnography about women in Rwanda, it creates a change in focus that weakens the flow of the argument concerning the relationship between brickyards and graveyards.

Although Jefremovas provides a persuasive and historically informed account of how class, regional politics, power, land tenure, and the role of elite politics were more relevant

than 'tribal' animosity in establishing the circumstances that led to the genocide, I had hoped for something more from this chapter. In particular, I was expecting a more detailed analysis of the ways in which conceptions of work, similar to those so carefully analysed in earlier sections of the book, had been used, transformed, or developed by those planning and implementing the genocide.

The absence of an examination of the language used by the *génocidaires*, which described mass-killings and associated activities as work, or of the remarkably work-like approach exhibited towards mass-killing in some of the largest massacres, in which killers were repeatedly brought to churches and other places where their victims had congregated, particularly struck me and weakened the link, implicit in the title, between brickyards and graveyards.

Nevertheless, I enjoyed this book very much. Jefremovas has produced an important and timely contribution to the ethnography of Rwanda. Her thorough research, multifaceted approach to the analysis of her data, and clear writing-style make this a very suitable book for anthropology and development undergraduates and for all those with an interest in labour, the Rwandan Genocide, and the Great Lakes Region.

JEROME LEWIS

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KELLY, JOHN D. & MARTHA KAPLAN. *Represented communities: Fiji and world decolonization*. xiv, 243 pp., illus., bibliogr. London, Chicago: Univ. Chicago Press, 2001. £25.50 (cloth), £11.50 (paper)

In this collection of six essays, two United States academic anthropologists who describe themselves as liberals (p. 199) attempt to give the idea of community a new rendering. Set against the argument regarding community formulated in Benedict Anderson's *Imagined communities*, colonial and post-colonial Fiji is the location for an ultimately unsuccessful mixture of Karl Marx's use of representation and Max Weber's attention to 'coercive apparatuses, especially legal apparatuses that devise and enforce contract law' (p. 8).

Chapter 1, 'Nations and decolonization', subtitled 'On the actual origins of nation-states', provides an account of 'new nation-states'. The second chapter entitled 'Time and the global: against the homogeneous, empty communities in contemporary social theory' takes direct aim at Anderson. Instead of conceiving nation-states and communities as 'imagined', Kelly and Kaplan believe they should be seen in Weberian terms as embodiments of political power, a political community, and a particular form of human emotion.

The next four chapters turn their attention to Fiji, and in particular the connection between nation-state and community. Thus, since Independence, 'Fiji's chartering narrative has been contested, its official rituals have failed to settle the crucial questions, and, as a result, "the nation" is a contested idea, not an experienced reality' (p. 142). Leaving aside the matter of why an idea is not a reality, they consider the basis of this contested narrative, which 'is one justifying violence, division, and inequality' (p. 142).

The basis of contestation is variously described as blood, race, and ethnicity, but boils down to the unoriginal contention that Fiji is divided primarily into ethnic, Indo-Fijian, and European communities. The argument comes to a head in Chapter 4 subtitled 'Colonial communities in Fiji, 1936 to 1947'. Here, it is proposed that the indentured Indians who worked the cane-fields, selling their produce to the Australian-owned Colonial Sugar Refinery Ltd. (CSR), were constructed through the colonial state as a community, in juxtaposition to the other communities, as a means of representing them during strikes and war. Since 'they cannot represent themselves', claim Kelly and Kaplan, purportedly following Marx, 'they must be represented'. As disorganized indentured migrants from different places and occupations in India, they had first to be given a 'group existence' in Fiji (p. 87). Subsequently, as dispersed smallholding cane farmers, the migrants and their descendants gained forms of representation in the colonial state.

In chapters 5 and 6, the authors show how the transition to Independence in 1970, the coup of May 1987 and the subsequent lengthy crisis, the constitutional settlement of 1997, and the parliamentary take-over of May 2000 became moments which further emphasized racial community representation and distance. The distance highlights the absence of national community.

The purported connection to Marx's sense of representation is less than helpful. For Marx, representation expressed a relationship between class power and state power. Thus, in *The eighteenth brumaire of Louis Bonaparte*, 'Bonaparte represents a class, and the most numerous class of French society at that, the small-holding peasants', at a moment when 'the state seems to have made itself completely independent' of all classes. The crucial word in the second phrase is 'seems'. For Bonaparte represents, above all, the particular forms of private property constituted by the diverse and often-contending factions of the French bourgeoisie (Kelly & Kaplan, pp. 88-9).

As Kelly and Kaplan correctly and repeatedly note, race has become the most constant feature of political discourse in Fiji. Yet, to follow Marx, this is how Fiji seems. Beneath

the surface appearance, as the essence and necessary 'other side' of reality, the accumulation of capital continues. This accumulation is the private property of particular individual capitalists, which is secured by the contractual forms and the means of coercion that Weber understood and emphasized (p. 8). Had Kelly and Kaplan attempted, like Marx and Weber, to understand the interconnection between accumulation, private property, and the tussle among capitalists to individualize what is socially created, they might have understood Fiji better. They would also have given *Represented communities* a richer description. For when representation is reduced to the pluralist concern for 'the institutions by which collective will gains its spokespeople, representation as in voting systems and so on' (p. 28), then it is unlikely that communities will be any less superficially grasped.

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PEABODY, NORBERT. *Hindu kingship and polity in precolonial India*. xiii, 190 pp., maps, figs., illus., bibliogr. Cambridge: Univ. Press, 2003. £40.00 (cloth)

Peabody's topic is the kingdom of Kota in northwest India during the eighteenth and early nineteenth centuries, a period which saw the gradual assertion of British regional hegemony. Kota dated as a political entity from c.1720, a product of dynastic segmentation, and at the heart of the book is the curious interrelationship between its longest-lasting ruler, Maharao Umed Singh (ruled 1771-1819), and Zalim Singh, its prime minister (*rajrana*) from 1764 until 1824.

To Europeans of the period, Kota's political structures epitomized oriental despotism. But who was the despot? Was it Umed Singh, abandoned totally to the pleasures of hunting and the flesh – as the French traveller, the comte de Modave, assumed – or Zalim Singh, constraining Umed into an infantilized relationship of dependence as a cover for his own illegitimate usurpation of power – as maintained by James Tod and successive local representatives of the Raj? Peabody argues convincingly that 'this vexing phenomenon of powerful regents and puppet-kings' (p. 149) was culturally consonant with the special characteristics of the Vallabha sect to which most rulers in the region adhered. Vallabha divine images have two characteristics which distinguish them from Hindu images in general. First, the deity is believed to be immanent within them, rather than temporarily invoked there by the coercive imperatives of worship (*puja*). Secondly, these images are not safely rooted in royal temples

at the heart of the kingdom, but are mobile, indeed positively 'mercurial' (p. 52), and under the control of trading castes rather than kings, who must therefore compete for their favour. Vallabhas view *puja* as inherently selfish, comparing it unfavourably with their own practice of *seva*, the selfless service of the deity purely because it is one's duty to do so (p. 60). It was, argues Peabody, this 'same soteriology, with its attendant devotional practices, which informed Zalim Singh's unstinting service to the maharao' (p. 145). Their mutual behaviour, however puzzling it continued to appear to the British, thus conformed closely to the defining cultural logic of their religion.

The ultimate demise of this symbiosis, while immediately caused by jealousies among and between the rival potential heirs of both men, was ultimately the result of the treaties forced upon Kota and its neighbours by the British in 1817, under which they renounced all rights to an independent foreign policy in return for continued internal self-determination. By making lines of authority and responsibility unambiguously clear, and by transferring land between little kingdoms so as to provide them with clear, fixed geographical borders, the British did away with the 'multiple and overlapping' forms of sovereignty which had previously prevailed, in favour of a unitary state-formation which 'increasingly brought the maharao and the rajrana into more direct, head-to-head forms of competition' (p. 156). Within three years of the signing of the treaty, Umed's successor Kishor Singh was at war with Zalim Singh. Even after his decisive military victory, however, Zalim Singh, to the great perplexity of the British, would not hear of the maharao being deposed, but insisted that he be returned to the throne (*gaddi*) under Zalim's guardianship. The logic of *seva* still persisted, although Zalim's heirs never bought into it to anything like the same degree.

The introductory chapter tilts at a few too many orientalist windmills, and throughout one feels that Peabody assumes too readily that Indian kingship manifests itself in the same way everywhere. For example, Dirks's rather different portrayal of the nature of land grants in the southern little kingdom of Pudukkottai (*The hollow crown: ethnohistory of an Indian kingdom*, 1987) is assumed to reflect problems in analysis (p. 82), when it could at least as plausibly, in my view, be ascribed to fairly obvious differences in the political histories of northern and southern India, such as the differential impact of the Mughal empire, as well as distinctive, localized forms of religious practice such as those described above.

Overall, however, books such as this illustrate why kingship continues to hold such

fascination for Indianist anthropologists. Far from attesting to an obsessive antiquarianism or a wallowing in Raj nostalgia, anthropological interest in these issues arises precisely because of what they reveal about the lives of their contemporary interlocutors. It is hard to imagine any ethnographer of the villages, temple towns, and former royal capitals of the subcontinent who will not find that their experience resonated with some aspect or other of Peabody's account.

ANTHONY GOOD

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POTTIER, JOHAN. *Re-imagining Rwanda: conflict, survival and disinformation in the late twentieth century*. xvii, 251 pp., maps, bibliogr. Cambridge: Univ. Press, 2002. £47.50 (cloth), £17.95 (paper)

In this courageous and important book, Pottier succeeds admirably in reaffirming the necessity of scholarly analysis, as enshrined in the academic monograph, to provide the basis for well-balanced and historically informed analyses of major events such as the Rwandan Genocide and the subsequent wars in eastern Democratic Republic of Congo (DRC), formerly Zaire. Pottier rightly berates the current trend popular in media reporting and analyses of conflict situations that tends to prioritize the accounts of journalists and aid workers over those of scholars who take longer to produce accounts than those demanding instant information are prepared to wait. Pottier describes his task as that of recontextualizing the narratives which the international community accepted as accurate during 1994 to 1996. In so doing, he makes a disturbing analysis of contemporary knowledge construction that serves as a warning to the media and international community.

Pottier examines the many and diverse truth-claims that have emerged concerning the crisis in Rwanda and eastern DRC since 1994. This process leads him to offer some insights and perceptive reflections on how contemporary knowledge is produced, and manipulated. In particular, the skilful manipulation of information by the Rwandan Patriotic Front (RPF) to serve the interests of their new regime led to a merging of information and disinformation that was deliberately intended to create confusion. This confusion was then replaced by easy-to-grasp narratives that were so seductively simple that newcomers to Central Africa rarely questioned their veracity or ideological underpinnings.

By unravelling these narratives, Pottier shows how depictions of reality in the Great Lakes Region have come to be led by political visions and ideas, and not by empirical

study. Pottier questions the RPF's functional presentations of Rwandan society, economics, and history and, in so doing, reveals the great care the RPF has taken to engage with all major modern channels of information: news, media, academia, humanitarian aid, diplomacy, and development.

Since April 1994, numerous politicians, foreign diplomats, humanitarians, journalists, aid workers, and academics have engaged in attempts to make sense of a situation seemingly lacking any logic or morality. The search for instant understandings has led to the creation of a model of Rwandan society and history that simplifies complex relations, obscures relevant contexts, and is rooted in the political doctrine of the RPF. Pottier deftly unravels the exceptionally skilful way in which the RPF manipulated international feelings of guilt and ineptitude into an acceptance that the RPF should monopolize narratives that represent events and analyses of their causes.

Pottier provides us with an insightful description of the build-up and aftermath of Rwanda's tragic genocide and ensuing war in eastern DRC by re-examining the history of the region and presenting a variety of different points of view that dislodge and contextualize the simplifying narratives that have been so unquestioningly accepted by the international community. Pottier reintegrates more complex voices back into the debate. People whose experiences are more nuanced, whose stories are not simple and reducible to convenient catch-all concepts, such as 'refugees', *génocidaires*, 'survivors', 'Tutsi', and 'Hutu', nor simplistic portrayals of history that serve the RPF's hegemonic discourse.

Despite succeeding in his stated aims, the book's structure is difficult to follow. For instance, the introduction to the chapters and ordering of the text appears only at page 47. Rwanda continues to be exceptionally emotive to all who have witnessed events there over the past decade and Pottier's anger can occasionally be felt lurking beneath the surface of his words. In particular, his resentment at the rejection of so much pre-genocide scholarship, though justified, gives a sermon-like tone to some passages.

Apart from these minor points, chapter 5, 'Masterclass in surreal diplomacy', stood out for me as a superb anthropological analysis. It is a brilliant example of how the detailed anthropological understandings of a culture as lived by ordinary people can provide the best basis for understanding and interpreting larger and more complex events and (mis)representations at regional, national, and international levels.

This important book should be required reading for anyone – from foreign diplomats and politicians, journalists, aid and develop-

ment workers to academics – committed to building a better Rwanda, and for anyone whose task requires an engagement with the Great Lakes Region of Central Africa. This book is relevant for students of anthropology, history, media, journalism, disaster management, conflict studies, and development and emergency aid.

JEROME LEWIS

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PRATT, JEFF. *Class, nation and identity: the anthropology of political movements*. vii, 220 pp., bibliogr. London, Sterling Va: Pluto Press, 2003. £50.00 (cloth), £15.99 (paper)

A joke common in socialist eastern Europe in the mid-1980s had it that nobody believed in Marxism any more except Western intellectuals. The sudden demise of European state socialism and the rise of ethnic nationalism a few years later largely ended that Western illusion, affording prominence to works such as Anderson's *Imagined communities* and Gellner's *Nations and nationalism*, which sought to explain why 'nation' was, ultimately, so much more useful than 'class' as a symbol for political mobilization in the modern world. Yet these works ignored class too completely. Jeff Pratt points out the glibness of Anderson's famous quip to the effect that while most states built tombs to unknown soldiers few had tombs of unknown Marxists, for there were in fact many monuments glorifying the unknown workers who fought Communist revolutions. Pratt also notes that incommensurable analytical paradigms have seemed to assume either that economic categories of persons are driven by material interests, or that cultural subjects are consumed by passions. His work is aimed at establishing a unified approach to the study of political movements that can cover both class and nationalist politics.

Pratt outlines a model of several components. 'Movement' refers to linked forms of organization for political mobilization that go beyond local patterns of work or recreation, and the repertoire of political action (demonstrations, strikes, sabotage, guerilla warfare, insurrection) used by them. The subject of such a political movement is an actual or potential collectivity, and Pratt uses the term 'discourse' to refer to identity narratives that are used to try to position the collectivity in social processes and in time and place. Pratt sees such discourses as being positioned along an axis of time ('a horizontal axis running through past, present and future') and a vertical axis of opposition to other groups. His identity discourse fuses these axes to form 'a history of enduring "opposition"' (p. 10).

This model is explored through analyses of localized southern European historical processes: the making of a working-class movement in a village near Milan between the World Wars; anarchism in Andalusia from the mid-nineteenth century to the Civil War; the strategy of the Communist Party in Tuscany during the Cold War; ethno-nationalism in the Basque country and in the transformation of Yugoslavia into 'the former Yugoslavia'; and 'hybrid' mixtures of class and regional-ethnic elements in populisms in Occitania and Lombardy in the 1990s.

These case studies are used to build an argument for the utility and necessity of looking at both class and nation as essential elements of political movements in modern Europe. Pratt is successful in this effort. The case studies are concise but thorough, and do illustrate the incomplete nature of analyses that focus on either class or nation to the exclusion of the other. Collectively, these cases also illustrate the misleading nature of teleological explanations of, for example, the inexorable rise of capitalism. Pratt is convincing about the uneven character of political mobilizations within states and regions. Perhaps more importantly, he is also concerned with showing the limitations of seeing similarities in political ideology and behaviour within a region as thereby manifesting a common regional culture in the usual anthropological sense. The workers of, for example, late nineteenth-century Andalusia and Puglia created very similar political movements on very different cultural foundations. This is not to say that the workers really did have no nation but labour, since they were also quite consciously citizens of Spain or Italy. It is to Pratt's credit that he uses his case studies to raise these issues so convincingly.

At the same time, he does not attempt to provide generalizing explanations for political behaviour. The conclusion of the work explicitly rejects such an approach, saying that 'similar processes may generate very different political movements', while 'comparable (not identical) processes may be going on in very different movements' (p. 200). The purpose of Pratt's book is thus 'to bring into one framework the analysis of issues as diverse as the labour process and identity narratives' in order to help others 'to think about the different political configurations emerging and ask further questions about them' (p. 201). This is a rhetorical strategy reminiscent of that of Franz Boas, who also used ethnography to challenge the assumptions of generalizing theorists. When well done, this kind of work is indeed extremely useful. Jeff Pratt has done it well.

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## Religion

ATRAN, SCOTT. *In gods we trust: the evolutionary landscape of religion*. xvi, 348 pp., illus., bibliogr. Oxford: Univ. Press, 2002. £39.50 (cloth)

The 'most stable and recurrent cultural patterns', writes Atran in this readable and provocative book, 'are generated by specialized core adaptations of the human mind/brain' (p. 170). Within evolutionary psychology, this is scarcely controversial – 'stone age minds in a space age world' is the fundamental idea. Where Atran differs from his colleagues is in attempting to glue this model to a very different one, in which social strategies, commitments, and institutions loom large. To explain religion, in Atran's view, cognitive approaches will not suffice. Religion for Atran is more than a mass of internal representations flitting between brain and brain. Instead, he defines it as 'costly communal commitments to hard-to-fake beliefs in the supernatural' (p. 9).

I have never seen merit in the idea that biological, social, or historical facts can be psychologically explained. The currently fashionable tenets of evolutionary psychology therefore seem to me a poor substitute for interdisciplinary research into the origins and diversity of human social and mental life. If you believe that gods and goblins – like contracts and promises – are institutional facts, then it is 'human social institutions' whose evolution must be explained. Atran touches on institutions (p. 90), but only marginally and externally – as if the ritual institutions of religion were no more than 'conduits' for the flow of other-worldly concepts whose origins lay elsewhere. It is the passionate commitment of evolutionary psychology to repudiate Durkheim's legacy in social science, and Atran does his best. But one has the sense of a scholar striving to reconcile the irreconcilable, as if seeking to make amends with that very tradition (Marxist, Durkheimian, social anthropological in the widest sense) which evolutionary psychology set out to annihilate and replace.

'Religious ritual', writes Atran in strikingly Durkheimian mode,

survives cultural transmission by embedding episodes of intense, life-defining personal experiences in public performances. These performances involve sequential, socially interactive movement and gesture (chant, dance, murmur, sway) and formulaic utterances that rhythmically synchronize affective states among group members in displays of co-operative commitment. This is often accompanied

by sensory pageantry, which further helps to emotionally validate and sustain the moral consensus. (p. 16)

What I find amusing is Atran's studied refusal to acknowledge the paternity of such ideas. The book's index lists Dostoevsky and Pope Gregory VII but omits Durkheim altogether. Moreover, it remains quite unclear to me how religious transmission's acknowledged dependency on coercive institutions can be squared with Dan Sperber's and Pascal Boyer's anti-theoretical notion which Atran also accepts – namely, that 'religious concepts need little in the way of overt cultural representation or instruction to be learned and transmitted' (p. 96).

Atran is at his most entertaining in pouring acid on every rival theory he can bring himself to acknowledge. Religion, he persuasively argues, did not originate primarily or exclusively to cope with death, maintain the social order, recover lost childhood security, act as a substitute for sexual gratification, explain the inexplicable, or transmit cultural knowledge. Somehow, the puzzle is deeper than such theories can reach. Religion involves belief in patent absurdities – such as virgin birth, transubstantiation, or life after death. It can prompt you to starve, self-mutilate, or adopt lifelong celibacy. To behave in such ways does not appear to be an evolutionary stable strategy. 'Imagine', writes Atran, 'another animal that took injury for health, or big for small, or fast for slow, or dead for alive. It's unlikely that such a species could survive' (p. 5).

So what is the explanation? Atran dismisses Richard Dawkins's 'parasitic meme' idea – the notion of God as rampant computer virus. Neither is he kind to functionalist, behaviourist, group-selectionist, or game-theoretic models. Unlike Dan Sperber and Pascal Boyer – to whom he is otherwise close – he wrestles with vigour against the constraints of narrow cognitivism. Communal commitments? Costly beliefs? Almost every term in his own definition of religion takes us beyond individualistic psychology – and back into the domain of politics, strategies, and power. Such welcome developments only highlight Atran's refusal to take the final step – to acknowledge religious concepts as internally constituted by the ritual processes through which commitments are made.

There is no cheap way of signalling commitment to an alliance. To generate trust, costly signals are required. Among the many possibilities, Atran includes a lifetime of celibacy, building useless pyramids, slaying one's livestock, chopping off a finger, and killing one's firstborn. The more crazy and pointless the gesture, the more likely it is to convince.

Although it offers many insights, I found this a patchy and ultimately disappointing

book. 'Because there is no such entity as religion', we are told, 'it makes no sense to ask how "it" evolved' (p. 15). But if the strategy of bonding through absurdities in the human case became evolutionarily stable, is it not precisely the job of a Darwinian to investigate how, when, and why? Bypassing modern palaeoanthropology, behavioural ecology, archaeology, and interdisciplinary human origins research, Atran exempts himself from even trying. He is thought-provoking and enlightening as he seeks to reconcile the 'cognitive' and 'commitment' theories which in recent debates have competed for our support. But the whole endeavour reveals more about the limitations of his own psychological paradigm than about the 'evolutionary landscape' of religion. Darwin himself staunchly resisted all attempts to explain human uniqueness by invoking special minds. Our brains are those of primates – designed to distinguish fact from fiction. Primate cognition is Machiavellian, serving functions in terms of alliance-formation, politics, and power. As far as we know, apes cement their coalitions without needing cognitive absurdities. If humans in this respect are so different, it remains a pressing anthropological task to explain why.

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GAENZSLE, MARTIN. *Ancestral voices: oral ritual texts and their social contexts among the Mewahang Rai of East Nepal*. xviii, 347 pp., maps, figs., illus., bibliogr. London, Berlin: LIT Verlag, 2002. €35.90

Much of the material which informs the present study was collected in the village of Baja in Sankhuwa Sabha District of East Nepal, during the mid-1980s and early 1990s. In the course of his doctoral research on Mewahang Rai kinship and mythology along the western reaches of the Arun valley, six days' walk from the nearest road, the author became fascinated with the 'rich and living ritual tradition' (p. 21) of the *muddum* which he encountered almost daily. The *muddum*, variously translated by Gaenzsle as a 'living, entirely oral "tribal" tradition which forms the basis of Mewahang cultural identity' (p. 3) and as a 'tradition of speaking, consisting of different kinds of speech events' (p. 4), is performed in a ritual language. Struggling already with colloquial Mewahang, Gaenzsle found this important ritual language to be 'totally different, archaic and largely untranslatable' (p. 21). It is a credit to Gaenzsle's commitment to learning, analysing, and finally disseminating these findings that this monograph should be published some fifteen years after the commencement of his initial research.

The book is divided into two parts. Part 1 offers a holistic analysis of Mewahang ritual texts by situating them within their social context, and Part 2 is a detailed corpus of ritual texts together with interlinear translations. The separation works well, allowing the texts in the documentary section to 'speak for themselves' (p. 20). Similarly, the 200 pages of meticulous analysis which characterize the first section are free of dense linguistic explication.

It is the author's contention that among the Mewahang Rai, rituals are essentially speech acts and that these 'speech acts do not differ in a fundamental way from those in ordinary life' (p. 2). The differences that do exist are marked by ritual language which is usually distinct from the vernacular. Distinguishing and defining the salient features of ritual speech and understanding their enduring power in Mewahang social life thus becomes the focus of the study. The strength of Gaenzsle's approach lies in his ability to blend textual and contextual approaches. The nuanced analysis which results shows Mewahang ritual speech to be a resource for both the construction of meanings and for social action. Having situated himself within the wider academic discourses on ritual and performance, the author provides a lucid introductory overview to anthropological analyses of ritual and speech, indenting his discussion with subtitles such as 'formality', 'poetics', 'performance', and 'competence and authority'. Gaenzsle's cogent presentation of the various debates will be of particular utility to students and scholars interested in textuality and looking for discrete definitions of the anthropology of performance.

The author is careful to pay homage to András Höfer and Nicholas Allen, both accomplished anthropologists of Nepal known for their 'ethno-philological' approaches. While definitional debates are essentially futile, I would feel more comfortable with the label 'linguistic anthropology' or 'ethnolinguistics', since the character and aims of such work echoes the very essence of what drives these underrepresented and often misunderstood subdisciplines. As befits a study of this nature, Gaenzsle is transparent about his research methodology. When discussing the dialogue between the ethnographer and his interlocutors, the author shows both sides to have their own perspectives and interests, 'sometimes approaching each other but nevertheless retaining their differences' (p. 22).

Of the six analytical chapters, the first and last are particularly engaging. Drawing on testimonies provided by local experts and village elders, Gaenzsle presents a powerful indigenous exegesis of the *muddum*, which he supplements with comparative data from neighbouring Kiranti groups. The recitation of the Mewahang *muddum*, then, restores social

order and harmony through the enactment of contact with an ancestral world. The link between the present and the ancestral past is realized through a ritual language which is the 'proper register of speech for dealing with matters that concern the ancestors' (p. 56). At the end of his analysis, Gaenszle returns to a central paradox of his work: that the desire of the ethnographer to 'scripturalize' and archive Mewahang oral traditions in no way guarantees their continuity and survival. Easy answers to difficult questions are assiduously avoided, and Gaenszle neatly demonstrates that just as there are 'highly liturgical elements in oral traditions', so too are there 'performer-centred rituals in literate traditions' (p. 199). In short then, *Ancestral voices* is an intricate work brimming with detail and insight. It is undoubtedly an important addition to the growing corpus of Himalayan anthropology.

MARK TURIN

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KOROM, FRANK J. *Hosay Trinidad: Muharram performances in an Indo-Caribbean diaspora*. viii, 305 pp., illus., bibliogr. Philadelphia: Univ. Pennsylvania Press, 2003. £44.00 (cloth), £17.50 (paper)

*Hosay Trinidad* will interest those concerned with religion and those concerned with Trinidad. Its focus is the commemoration of the martyrdom of the grandson of the Prophet Muhammad, Husayn, central to Shiah religious belief and practice. The book describes the way that this commemoration has, over the past thousand years, travelled from Iran to India and thence to Trinidad, and the place of that commemoration in contemporary Trinidadian ethnic politics.

The history is long and complex. The aspect of Korom's tale that is mostly likely to intrigue anthropologists is his presentation of the ways in which the commemoration has taken on a variety of different meanings and participants that extend beyond Shiite adherents and their interpretation of the events of Husayn's death. As one might, perhaps, expect, Sunni Muslims also commemorate the martyrdom; less expected is the participation of Hindus that followed the spread of Shiah adherence to South Asia. With the movement of people from North India to Trinidad in the nineteenth century as indentured labourers, both Shiites and the commemoration spread further afield, and in the twentieth century the commemoration, the 'Hosay' of the book's title, attracted both adherents and spectators (Hosay involves parades with music) among Afro-Caribbeans who are neither Muslim nor Hindu.

Shiites are a minority among Muslims, and a minority amongst a minority in Trinidad

and in many parts of northern India. Korom argues that they have coped with the non-Shiite adherents by a marked separation between public and private commemoration. The public commemoration includes, as I said, parades and music that attract those outsiders. Parallel to this is a private commemoration, which typically takes place in people's houses and, Korom says, remains fairly strictly Shiite. It expresses their distinctive interpretation of the commemoration, which is more sombre and grief-laden than a naive participant in or spectator of the public commemorations might expect.

Thus the sorts of ambiguities and tensions that exist concerning the commemoration in Trinidad are not distinctly Caribbean, much less Trinidadian. Rather, they are yet another example of a set of processes that have been going on for centuries. The Trinidad case is interesting in part precisely because it exemplifies on-going processes. It is interesting as well because the situation there is complicated by the tensions between Indo-Caribbean and Afro-Caribbean identity. From what Korom says, the spectators of the Hosay processions are predominately Afro-Caribbean; the participants are predominately Indo-Caribbean; among the participants, Shiites are a small minority.

The result is that the meaning of Hosay is profoundly complex. Much of the audience is prone to see Hosay as another carnival, albeit one with an Indo-Caribbean flavour, and the Trinidadian government at various times has sought to promote it internationally in just that way. For participants, which include Afro-Caribbeans, the meaning and identity of Hosay is ambiguous. For some, it is primarily an Indo-Caribbean affair; for some others, it is primarily an Indian tradition that links them to their self-proclaimed ancestral home; for yet others, it is a distinctly Muslim commemoration; for yet others again, it is a Shiite commemoration. And this ambiguity is facilitated by the differentiation of the public processional and private devotional dimensions of the commemoration. As if the situation were not complex enough already, a few years ago Shiite missionaries, mostly based in Canada, started to work in Trinidad, and one of their aims is to correct what they see as the errors and improper accretions that have developed around Hosay over the course of its history in Trinidad, and so to return the commemoration to what they see as its proper devotional form.

The history and contemporary situation that Korom describes is intriguing and gratifyingly complex. Korom's description is framed in terms of a number of analytical frames and suppositions, notably that of the distinction between the public and private faces of the commemoration and the associated historical tendency of non-Shiites to

interpret the commemoration in their own ways. Some of the other frames and suppositions are more problematic. Especially, the presentation of the historical material presupposes a core of the commemoration across space and time, though given the limited historical material available the existence of this core is difficult to justify.

Even though readers may have reservations about aspects of the work's analytical apparatus, they are certain to be intrigued and stimulated by the geographical and historical scope of *Hosay Trinidad*, as they are to be pleased with the careful description of the complexities of the religious and ethnic identity of the commemoration in contemporary Trinidad.

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MCCAULEY, ROBERT N. & E. THOMAS LAWSON. *Bringing ritual to mind: psychological foundations of cultural forms*. xiii, 236 pp., figs., illus., bibliogr. Cambridge: Univ. Press, 2002. £47.50 (cloth), £16.95 (paper)

This book is a reaffirmation and, to a certain extent, a modification of an argument developed by the authors in an older work entitled *Rethinking religion*. Like the earlier book, it claims to be a 'cognitive account' of religion. What this means here is that the argument focuses on the significance of types of agency, since much recent work in cognitive psychology has seen the folk psychology by which we interpret action in terms of beliefs and desires as probably 'the' basic human ability.

The emphasis on agency leads the authors to distinguish principally between two kinds of religious rituals: 'special agent rituals' and 'special patient rituals'. Special agent rituals are rituals where God or the ancestors, here called 'culturally postulated supernatural agents', are asked to do something to people, for example, initiate them or marry them, while special patient rituals are rituals, such as Communion, where the patient is the focus of the action. This distinction, here simplified, is key to the argument, and the authors are at great pains to distinguish these rituals as two obviously separate types, though they do this in a variety of ways. This is where my difficulties begin. In nearly all the examples they give, the diagnostic criteria they suggest yield highly contestable results, and this is even more so for cases that they do not consider.

In my book, *From blessing to violence*, I hope to have demonstrated at length that the Merina are right when they say that their circumcision ritual is simply an elaborate variant of their most everyday ritual: the blessing of

a junior by a senior. There are no differences in the relation of the ancestors to the seniors and the juniors in either case. The differences are that circumcision cannot be repeated, that the big performances are more fun and emotionally charged, and that what the authors call 'sensory pageantry' is much more elaborate in one case. These are the things which, according to the authors, should vary according to whether we are dealing with one or other of their type of ritual. Moreover – and much worse for their argument – I cannot see how, in this case or any other which comes to mind, one could decide for significant reasons whether any ritual is a case of either or both of their types. Since I cannot define their starting-point satisfactorily, the rest of the book seems unconvincing, as I believe it will be to most anthropologists, not least because their definitions of ritual and religion raise old and familiar difficulties. Their aim is to demonstrate that their distinction predicts in a most scientific manner certain other features of religious rituals, yet (apart from those which are already contained within, or follow for obvious reasons from, their definitions of the two types) I either totally fail to see what those predictions are or can immediately think of counter-cases.

Throughout most of the book the argument is presented as being in competition with that presented by Whitehouse, who distinguishes between modes of religiosity in terms of their manner of transmission. For Whitehouse, one type relies on repetition, the other on the intense emotions that the performance arouses, which, according to him, can only occur when the ritual is performed very occasionally. The difficulty which the authors have in demonstrating the superiority of their theory over his is one that I share. They, too, have great problems in formalizing Whitehouse's contrast sufficiently precisely for it to be testable. In this case, the problem is what is meant by 'frequent' rituals, and for whom. With great ingenuity, they believe they have managed to give objective precision to Whitehouse's formulation, though – again – they do not convince me, but in any case their purpose is to show the greater predictive value of their types over his. Thus we are asked to judge between two ways of dividing rituals and to see which predicts a number of other independent features. However, since I cannot be clear in either case to which category of ritual any data I might consider belong, the process of adjudication can hardly begin.

In this review, I have used the language of traditional science; thus I have talked of testing, predictions, and measurements. In this, I have followed the authors' style, yet they go much further, making great use of very complicated diagrams, as well as a tortuous rhetoric often rendered so by an apparent desire for precision – although this is precisely

what I have failed to find. The reason is that the basic data on which the 'tests' are to be carried out are extraordinarily complex. What the many different participants believe and feel is only surmised by highly imprecise interpretations, and this does not lend itself to the establishment of suggestive scientific correlations.

This brings me to my final point. The back cover of the book tells us that it explores the cognitive and psychological foundations of religious ritual systems; the front cover has a picture of a human brain; the contents are peppered with references to authors in cognitive science; but, despite all this, I remain unclear as to what is explained by any cognitive finding – from psychology, for example – which has relevance for their theory concerning the implications of their two types of rituals.

MAURICE BLOCH

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PELETZ, MICHAEL G. *Islamic modern: religious courts and cultural politics in Malaysia*. viii, 339 pp., tables, bibliogr. Oxford, Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 2002. £45.00 (cloth), £15.95 (paper)

There are three parts to this book, each of which reflects different anthropological approaches to the themes touched on in the title. First, on the basis of archival research, Peletz provides a brief overview of the literature on the Malay legal system from the fifteenth century onwards. Secondly, and this is the major part of the book, there is a presentation and analysis of thirty-six court cases culled from two periods of fieldwork, in 1978–80 and 1987–8. Finally, the reader is given an account of recent debates about Islam and about Asian values in Malaysia, and there are descriptions of some momentous court cases, including the trials of the former Deputy Prime Minister Anwar Ibrahim, which are the product of information gathered during several short visits to Malaysia over the last few years. All three parts are to be taken together as offering an appropriately integrated overview of the nature of developments in Muslim sensibility in the recent past. I am not convinced that in fact there is a seamless whole here, and the connections between the parts seem to me to be somewhat tenuous, but none the less Peletz's arguments deserve to be taken seriously, especially those which derive from his personal observations and discussions with informants. As he himself remarks, much anthropological work these days seems to be long on theory and rather short on ethnographic evidence.

The historical overview of the first part, with its long summaries and discussion of

nineteenth-century British writers, is out of place, worth a paper perhaps in the context of colonial perceptions of the Malay peninsula, and even then rather thin in not taking account of seminal works on that nineteenth-century colonial vision such as Henk Maier's brilliant *In the center of authority*. The last part of the book, although dealing with topical issues, does not really illuminate our understanding of the dynamics of the dialectic between modernization and the institutionalization of Islam. Furthermore, it is surprising in this context that Peletz makes no mention of Metzger's useful account, *Stratégie Islamique en Malaisie, 1975-1995*, which provides ample detail regarding institutional aspects of Islamization and the responses to it evoked in the popular press.

The book should, however, be judged on its central part (pp. 63–238), where through the cases which he documents and analyses Peletz makes some fine observations about how proceedings in the religious courts need to be understood in terms of both the local Malay cultural context of hegemonic ideas of the nature of men and women – men are disposed towards rational behaviour (*akal*), women are led by their passions (*nafsu*) – and the pressure for the introduction of European-style procedural rules conducted with due legal ceremony. Briefly, Peletz's argument seems to be that the Islamic courts are governed by more equitable and rational procedures than Weber allowed for in his reference to 'kadi justice', but that, none the less, the cultural ambience of the courts, dominated as it is by an ethos which is both Muslim and Malay, tends to make things more difficult for women than for men in issues relating to marriage and divorce. I have doubts about the methodology by which Peletz has come to his conclusions. He relies solely on the evidence of the case history which appears in the records, on what he has witnessed in the court, and on the commentary and evaluation of court officials, having consciously made the choice not to follow up litigants in the aftermath of court decisions.

None the less, it is entirely reasonable for him to confine himself to the workings of the court when his intention is to demonstrate what appear to be the determining factors in decision-making, and his descriptions are a model of clarity. The enchanting account he gives of finding it difficult to concentrate on what was being said because of the noise being made by the *kadi's* child playing in the latter's office where it had been decided to hear cases, rather than in the formal court, wonderfully evokes the degree to which in Malay society the formal and the informal combine to achieve a resolution which is acceptable on all counts, equity in terms of Malay values, Islamic justice, and modern governance. Although one may have,

as I do, one or two reservations about how Peletz is actually reading the minds of the *kadi* and the court officials, the evidence is vividly presented. Consequently, this will be a valuable book for cross-cultural comparison for the contribution it makes both to legal anthropology and to understanding the articulation of Islamic values in contemporary settings.

C. W. WATSON

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### Social anthropology

ALI, KAMRAN ASDAR. *Planning the family in Egypt: new bodies, new selves*. xii, 233 pp., bibliogr. Austin: Univ. Texas Press, 2002. \$55.00 (cloth), \$22.95 (paper)

*Planning the family in Egypt* is a critical anthropological study of the institutions, practices, and ideologies of a crucial project in Egypt: the project to promote family planning. At once theoretically wide-ranging and ethnographically sensitive, the book is an important contribution to literature on development and the demographic transition. It also contributes to the exciting debates in anthropology and post-colonial studies about modernity and its institutions. Ali offers convincing arguments against most of the commonly held assumptions in the fields of population and planning, showing that the liberal models of the individual and the language of choice being promoted by the international donor organizations, NGOs, and state organizations of the family planning industry are in equal measure coercive and inappropriate: coercive in that they seek to mould modern individuals in their image through pedagogy and participation in the institutions of family planning; inappropriate in that (according to Ali's interviews and analysis of local ideas about the openness of bodies, the desire for fertility, and the interconnectedness of individuals in families and larger communities) they do not reflect or mesh with key concepts and goals of poor Egyptians, rural or urban. The heart of his study is the relationship between attempts to impose new subjectivities and the responses of people to the developmentalist agenda.

The book is based on fieldwork of a somewhat unusual sort. In large measure because of security restraints in the 1990s, Ali's fieldwork did not involve long-term residence in any particular community. But what was forfeited in depth was more than made up for in range. Ali creatively pieced together a set of field settings in which he could explore

various aspects of the Egyptian family-planning programme. He interviewed doctors and those involved in family-planning clinics, attended training sessions and seminars for those being groomed to work in this field, but also managed to do revealing interviews and somewhat limited fieldwork in two separate communities, one rural and the other urban, both with fairly poor populations who are, unfortunately, representative of a good part of Egypt. This fieldwork allowed him to write with authority on the pedagogic efforts of those promoting family planning, as well as to offer insight into the experiences of sexuality, the body, religion, and contraception of ordinary individuals. The fieldwork in Egypt is complemented by historical research that places what he observed in a longer-term perspective of the Egyptian state, whether its relationship with foreign ideas and interventions or its changing policies.

Ali speaks to the substantial literature on the demographic transition by showing that the policies and practices of the family-planning industry have not been successful in persuading people to have smaller families. Even the newer discourse about empowerment of women and education is not convincing. However, what seems to be happening in Egypt is that family size is getting smaller, but for reasons of poverty and because of the impossibility of life under the devastating conditions created by the policies of structural adjustment in the 1990s.

Anthropologists will be more interested in the way this book offers a critique of the wider political economy and of the ideological baggage of international development. Along the way, it offers fresh ethnographic insight into little-known phenomena, such as Egyptian men's perspectives on contraception and fertility, careful interpretations of the alternative views of bodies and selves held by Egyptian women that challenge liberal feminist ideals, sharp analyses of the class-based forms of authority and knowledge being deployed in Egypt, and a considered reflection on the ways in which contemporary Islamism may offer a challenge to the secular liberal ideas of those promoting family planning as a solution to Egypt's problems. Ali succeeds wonderfully in using what he has learned about the cultural meanings attributed by ordinary people to those parts of life that are targeted by the family planning enterprise – the family, bodies, the individual – to challenge the assumptions of the experts who determine policies and enforce practices.

Although this book will be appreciated by those who work on Egypt (if angering some), it deserves a much wider audience. It speaks to the grand issues facing most developmentalist states. It is an exemplary study of an aspect of modern governmentality, to use Foucault's concept, that takes seriously the

work of power but is sensitive to cultural meanings. This book proves that eclectic critical theoretical inspirations (Michel Foucault, Emily Martin, Partha Chatterjee, Sidney Mintz) can bring out the deep significance of what might seem a mundane subject.

LILA ABU-LUGHOD

*Columbia University*

ALLEN, DENISE ROTH. *Managing motherhood, managing risk: fertility and danger in West Central Tanzania*. xxii, 303 pp., map, tables, illus., bibliogr. Ann Arbor: Univ. Michigan Press, 2002. £42.50 (cloth)

Taking the Safe Motherhood Initiative of the World Health Organization (WHO) as the point of departure, Denise Roth Allen's ethnography provides an important contribution both to studies of women's health and to critiques of development. Allen begins her book with the WHO's archetypal 'developing world' mother, one whose age, illiteracy, poor health, 'excessive fertility', and rural existence put her on an early 'road to death'. Pointing out that this portrayal homogenizes women's experiences across varied geographies, cultures, and socio-political environments, Allen aims for a more thorough and grounded understanding of the circumstances that lead to maternal and infant mortality in developing countries. Her work among the Sukuma of Shinyanga provides a rich and vivid picture of the circumstances women face from pregnancy through childbirth.

Allen first examines how maternal health risk has been evaluated and what policies have been formed in the colonial period of British rule; by the international health community and the Safe Motherhood Initiative; and, finally, by the post-colonial Tanzanian state. What is striking, although perhaps depressingly not surprising in Allen's account, is the similarities that exist across these different time-frames and geographic spaces. For example, Dr Mary Blacklock wrote an article in 1937 that heavily influenced colonial policy around the world. In it, she suggests certain steps to address maternal and child health: '(1) improving native women's access to the medical management of pregnancy and childbirth, (2) eliminating cultural superstitions and traditional practices surrounding childbirth and child rearing, and (3) increasing young girls' access to formal education' (p. 20). Fifty years later, the Safe Motherhood Initiative emphasized these very same steps (albeit with slightly different wording).

In Chapters 5 and 6, Allen provides an historical overview of Shinyanga Region, and then focuses on the pseudonymous site of Bulangwa, the location of her fieldwork. She provides a sketch of the ethnic and cultural

diversity in the community and briefly mentions cultural factors, like gender roles, sorcery, and witchcraft beliefs, that might have a bearing on her study of motherhood and risk. This is probably the weakest section of the book, as the author does not sufficiently connect certain historical and cultural information, such as *utani* or joking relationships, or cattle-raiding among different ethnic groups in the region, to her principal theme of motherhood and risk. While containing interesting material, this information does not add much to her main story.

The third and final section, covering chapters 7 to 12, is the most compelling part of the book. Weaving together first-hand observations with personal stories, and systematically examining the risks associated with childbirth, Allen constructs a very powerful and often-harrowing account of the experiences of childbearing women. Allen's examination of 'tradition' convincingly illustrates how unimportant this category of beliefs and practices is in understanding or addressing the risks of motherhood. While 'traditional' beliefs are often seen as a threat to maternal health, Allen shows that in Bulangwa the taboos associated with pregnancy revolved not around possibly harmful food taboos (often assumed to contribute to poor nutritional status of the mother) but rather prohibitions on behaviour, such as the taboo against carrying rocks on one's head, a restriction both richly symbolic and practical.

The case studies of specific women's experiences in pregnancy and childbirth illustrate quite clearly the deficiencies in the portrayal of Mrs X in the Safe Motherhood literature. The author observes birth in both hospital settings and in one local midwifery practice. One of the most powerful issues to emerge in Allen's study is the quality and expense of care available to women. For poor women, the fees required for receiving biomedical care and a hospital birth are often out of reach. If they are lucky enough to raise this money, they are then subjected to often-overworked, and frequently hostile nurses who slap them, tell them to lie down and not to move so as 'to give birth in the European way', ignore them, or chastize them for their 'illiterate' ways. Those with higher socio-economic status are treated with greater respect, but are still subject to poor facilities and overworked and frustrated staff. Poor treatment, combined with economic obstacles, on the part both of the patient and of the hospital and its staff, are unfortunately unlikely to change in the near future in this post-structural-adjustment era. Yet, given the convincing evidence in Allen's book, these factors are clearly the most important ones for policy-makers to address in their fight to curb maternal mortality. Allen's work does much to challenge the assumptions embedded in

international development interventions aimed at 'Third World' women.

KATHERINE SNYDER

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BECKERMAN, STEPHEN & PAUL VALENTINE (eds). *Cultures of multiple fathers: the theory and practice of partible paternity in Lowland South America*. 291 pp. map, tables, figs., bibliogr. Gainesville: Univ. Press of Florida, 2002. \$59.95 (cloth)

This volume is a rich compendium of previously unpublished field reports from across Lowland South America. It consists of an excellent introduction, followed by twelve chapters in which a range of regional specialists debate and dispute the implications of their own and one another's challenging and often-unexpected findings. Jargon free, tightly edited, and with a consistent focus, the book should interest not only Americanists but anyone concerned with kinship, gender, origins scenarios, sociobiology, or the history and evolution of the family. If you think you already know about such things – think again.

Beckerman and Valentine offer the first systematic account of a belief found deeply entrenched in a substantial number of Lowland South American societies. If a woman has sexual relations with several men before and during her pregnancy, then all are in varying degrees considered biological fathers of her child. Becoming pregnant is not an all-or-nothing event – it is a matter of degree. Since a baby is formed initially from sperm, all those who have sex with the mother play a role in making and strengthening that baby. In the case of at least one Venezuelan community, the indigenous belief turns out to be statistically well founded. A long-term investigation into the reproductive histories of 114 Bar women (involved in a total of 916 pregnancies) shows that infants with two fathers are significantly more likely to survive to age 15 than those with just one (pp. 27–41).

The editors adopt a sophisticated modern Darwinian framework, showing that they are well aware of the wider evolutionary significance of their results. Most modern scenarios of human evolution invoke paternity certainty as a key factor in the transition from African hominids to modern *Homo sapiens*. What is sometimes termed the Standard Model of Human Evolution links the emergence of a sexual division of labour with food-sharing, large brains, lengthy juvenile dependency, and continuous sexual receptivity. Evolving human females (so the argument runs) were burdened with increasingly dependent children, making it difficult for them to find sufficient food on their own. But males would only go hunting

and bring back their kills if females – faithful to an unusual degree – could offer paternity certainty in return.

In the study of kinship, this model can be traced back to Malinowski's doctrine of the individual family as the cellular unit of all human kinship. Malinowski's explicit agenda was to discredit the 'dangerous' evolutionism of Morgan and Engels, whose origins account had set out from collective parenthood. I have always suspected (current fashion notwithstanding) that Morgan's scholarship and evolutionary insights were a good deal less ideological, more honest, and more accurate than Malinowski's. But redressing the balance in this area has taken longer than any of us could have imagined.

Napoleon Chagnon backed the Standard Evolutionary Model with his celebrated account of male violence and jealousy among the Yanomami. Championing the same model, Steven Pinker observes that 'in no society do men readily share a wife'. This book offers a fuller picture by reminding us of a constellation of alternative observations – such as that evolutionary fitness is related to infant survivorship, and that it is in no woman's interest for her viable child by a previous partner to be subjected to the infanticidal attentions of her current mate. Balancing these considerations, women can pursue strategies for penalizing men who are excessively jealous while instead encouraging tolerance and co-operation. Given the enormously heavy costs of infanticide, why would it be in any woman's interests automatically to divulge information about paternity? Under conditions in which a partner might one day die or disappear women will enhance their reproductive success if they strive to confuse paternity, compelling mates to act on probabilities, not certainties.

In an especially engrossing chapter, Catherine Alès (pp. 62–85) shows partible paternity to be a significant factor among the Yanomami, where women engage systematically in multiple sexual partnerships – calling into question both the genealogies and socio-biological interpretations of Chagnon. Other chapters show that where residence is uxorilocal and women have corresponding freedom to choose, they strive to limit male control over their reproductivity, confusing paternity and fostering varying degrees of sexual tolerance. The groups discussed in this volume illustrate widely divergent patterns, but the chapters are sequenced and organized in such a way as to clarify the dynamics of variability across this vast region.

Partible paternity is most beneficial to children in those societies – such as the Canela (pp. 86–104) – where sibling unity is valued at the expense of marital bonds. Beckerman and Valentine interpret cross-cultural variability in this respect as reflecting 'a competition



between men and women over whose reproductive interests will dominate social life'. The authors conclude that in small egalitarian societies such as those under study,

women's reproductive interests are best served if mate choice is a non-binding, female decision; if there is a network of multiple females to aid or substitute for a woman in her mothering responsibilities; if male support for a woman and her children comes from multiple men; and if a woman is shielded from the effects of male sexual jealousy (p. 11).

This, then, is the authors' tentative answer to the Standard Model of Human Evolution. Conducting his research in a different part of the continent, Lewis Henry Morgan founded the study of kinship on the basis of intriguingly similar conclusions.

CHRIS KNIGHT

*University of East London*

BUJRA, JANET. *Serving class: masculinity and the feminisation of domestic service in Tanzania*. 222 pp., illus., bibliogr. Edinburgh: Univ. Press, 2000. £14.95 (paper)

Domestic service in the houses of the rich and middle classes in Tanzania is largely the preserve of men, yet domestic labour is almost wholly the responsibility of women and children. Janet Bujra considers the apparent paradox of this position in a book outlining the history of domestic service in the country and the reasons why men continued to dominate the sector until well into the 1980s. An account based on archival research and in depth interviews demonstrates the strong link between domestic service as a kind of wage labour and a twentieth-century masculine identity bound up with labour migration and earning a wage. Despite performing what are culturally considered to be demeaning female tasks, which most men would not publicly perform in their own homes, Bujra argues that the male identity of the labourer is not compromised by domestic service, which is perceived by male servants in terms of work for pay rather than women's work.

In recent years, women have begun to encroach on men's monopoly in the service sector, although they remain restricted to those tasks conventionally associated with women. By contrast, men can transcend the gender division of labour in a service setting where servant status seems to override the usual expectations about proper gendered behaviour. Bujra argues that the social relations of domestic service can transcend gender in certain ways because domestic service is primarily a class relation, and class takes prece-

dence in the racialized social hierarchies of Tanzania, where the power to control the labour of others derives not so much from gender or ethnicity as from access to the resources which enables some to command the labour of others.

According to Bujra, domestic service in Tanzania has become not merely an artefact but a symbol of class. Having servants indicates middle-class and elite status. It is also associated with expatriates and members of Asian ethnic groups who have managed to consolidate distinctly middle-class lifestyles, despite the constraints of socialism. But domestic service is not only confined to wealthy households. Bujra shows how idioms of service are bound up with the short-term migration of young people, mostly women, between rural and urban families and across less-wealthy and poorer households. For these women and girls, service, submission, and kinship inform the performance of domestic duties for both one's own and relatives' households. Domestic service becomes an elaboration of household relations for the powerless occupying subordinate positions. Such relationships are often transient. Young girls soon tire of servitude and are replaced by others keen to take their place in urban family homes.

*Serving class* is a potentially intriguing book about a phenomenon that is widespread across many countries in Africa, and elsewhere. It provides an insight into the development and scale of domestic service in a poor country, from the early days of colonial rule to its unanticipated expansion during the socialist regime at a time when employment of others was discouraged by the government. Bujra shows how the formal role of the male domestic servant has been superseded by social changes which have empowered women to participate in wage labour at the same time as demand for male house staff, with the exception of gardeners and guards, has declined.

Where the book is less convincing is in its analytical framework, which insists on viewing domestic service in Tanzania only in relation to class. This perspective means that the critical links between service, kinship, and domestic hierarchies are underplayed, especially in relation to young women servants who often have some link with employing families. Similarly, the class perspective seems to legitimate the omission of cultural factors from the accounts of both servants and employers. This is a pity. It is obvious from the cases presented that different employers perceive their relationships with servants in very different ways, depending on who the servant is and on the employers' own status and ethnicity. Tellingly, Bujra disaggregates interviews and case studies with servants and employers by ethnicity and race. Disappointingly, there is little analysis of

the differences which emerge, differences in such areas as, for example, attitudes to service, the extent to which servants are regarded as those towards whom one has obligations, and the extent to which servants can be considered as members of one's own household. Such an analysis would have shed considerable light on contemporary political and social relations in the country, and on the perspectives of the ordinary people who earn their living by subordinating their wills and desires to those who can afford to pay them.

MAIA GREEN

*University of Manchester*

FARQUHAR, JUDITH. *Appetites: food and sex in post-socialist China*. xii, 341 pp., illus., bibliogr. London, Durham: Duke Univ. Press, 2002. £14.50 (paper)

Farquhar's elegant and evocative book about embodied pleasures in post-socialist China provides delightful provocation for anthropologists. Farquhar ranges over domains conventionally kept apart: food, sex, health, and medicine. These practices, what Farquhar terms a 'modern Chinese imaginary of bodily life' (p. 246), have become the object of the most intensive public discourse in China since the end of socialism. Farquhar has focused precisely on what is distinctive about social life in China today: the encouragement to trace the minute senses and pleasures of the body.

The first half of the book, devoted to food, includes chapters on medicinal meals, the relationship between politics and feasting, and problems of excess and deficiency. The second half addresses sexual desire in chapters on a national sex survey, sex education, and contemporary recoveries of the ancient texts on *ars erotica*. Throughout, Farquhar convincingly argues that these appetites are intimately connected in the manner in which they articulate desires for a healthful body as informed by traditional Chinese medicine with a rejection of Maoist politics through a passionate embrace of pleasure. Farquhar refuses to conceive of the body only in the language of symbolism or in the universal terms of phenomenology. Rather, she beautifully delineates the historical and political production of embodiment. Farquhar argues that embodiment in post-socialist China is allegorical as well as concrete, coalescing beliefs about health rooted in Chinese medicinal theories of flavours and fluids, post-Mao empiricist knowledge practices, cultural nationalism, modernity, the rise of a Chinese middle class, the growth of a consumer economy, novel forms of gender differentiation, and cosmopolitan imaginations. The writing, so evocative, brings alive the everyday experiences of the appetites.

Thankfully, Farquhar does not argue that Chinese people have finally had their desires 'liberated' with the end of socialist repression. She presents a far more nuanced argument about the desires and dilemmas – and the beliefs about human nature – that have been produced in the context of political, economic, and social change. In her discussion of the recovery of *ars erotica*, for example, Farquhar argues that the ancient texts present a philosophical canon about how the inherent nature of things (*xing*) is revealed in the course of their characteristic activity, not in static visible structures or free-standing individual essences. But the contemporary reading reduces this rich canon to the modern category of sex (the term *xing* also means sex). Further, the ancient prescriptions for preserving male fluids have been linked to a contemporary anxiety about male impotence, which in its turn is a representational discourse infused with a national allegory about the failures of the past and the potential banalities of the future.

Farquhar also provokes anthropologists to consider widening the boundaries of what we should accept as legitimate ethnography. She presents an anthropological analysis of embodiment in what she terms an 'itinerant ethnography', through written and visual representations of embodiment, as well as the use of vignettes from her own fieldwork. Farquhar balances detailed interpretation with cultural artefacts ranging from medical texts, novels, sexology surveys, popular magazines, and films. Her goal is to overcome what she sees as the dualistic tendencies in much anthropological writing, that conceives of bodies and texts as two separate levels of being. Instead, Farquhar treats bodies as formations of everyday life and everyday life as suffused with discourses.

Had Farquhar remained within one of the sub-disciplines – medical anthropology, sexuality, or the anthropology of food – or had she used only ethnographic data from her fieldwork, she would not have produced such an original text.

LISA ROFEL

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FISHER, WILLIAM F. *Fluid boundaries: forming and transforming identity in Nepal*. xviii, 295 pp., maps, tables, illus., bibliogr. New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 2002. £36.50 (cloth), £13.50 (paper)

With a total population of under 13,000 (according to the 2001 population census), the Thakali community of central western Nepal are the subject of a remarkable volume of published anthropology. By 1985, the Thakali were already the most-studied group in Nepal

in relation to their number: the subject of over fifty published works by fifteen trained anthropologists. Since then, the number has only increased.

For anthropologists interested in Himalayan populations, the Thakali make a natural choice. Research permission for the lower reaches of Mustang is easy to obtain and field-work conditions are pleasant. According to an article jointly written by Gurung and Messerschmidt (which Fisher never cites, but with which he implicitly disagrees), the 'existence of a cohesive sense of Thakali ethnic identity' has been the dominant factor in explaining the great attention given to the Thakali by anthropologists (*Contributions to the anthropology of Nepal* (ed.) C. von Fürer-Haimendorf, 1974, p. 212). Alongside the traditional Thakali dominance in the trans-Himalayan salt trade and their present control of the trekking economy along the Kali Gandaki River, their well-documented growing alliance with Hinduism and concomitant turning-away from Buddhism are issues which have generated considerable interest among the scholarly community and amongst the Thakali themselves. Fisher's excellent and long-awaited *Fluid boundaries* appears at the crest of this wave.

Fisher's involvement with the Thakali community dates back to 1983, when he conducted dissertation research in a region southwest of the traditional Thakali homeland. In the present book, he refines many of the findings presented in his 1987 thesis and, in so doing, takes his earlier arguments to a deeper level. Fisher demonstrates the paradox inherent in the desire for clear identity formation: before the Thakali are able to return to a tradition, they are first obliged to create it. These processes of (re-)creation establish conventions and customs which have never previously existed. So much so, in fact, that to return to tradition, to become Thakali again, is to become Thakali for the very first time. As Fisher puts it, in his own words: 'Thakali culture is not composed of rigid institutional and cognitive pieces that form stable and static structures; it is instead flexible, permeable, and malleable, with fluid boundaries' (p. 12).

Taking issue with earlier anthropological studies of Nepal which have tended to isolate ethnic groups, making them discrete and ahistorical 'timeless entities' (p. 14), Fisher provides a wealth of data to support his view of Thakali culture as an ongoing process which is continually renewed. Using the metaphor of boundaries – national, geographical, social, cultural, and historical – the anthropologist teases out conflicting narratives and re-examines them in a theoretical light. Previous depictions are found to be wanting, leading Fisher to make a provocative, if well-substantiated, assertion: 'scholars need to avoid making their conceptual boundaries more

rigid than those of the people they study' (p. 195). In this vein, it is particularly interesting to compare the present work with Michael Vinding's *The Thakali: a Himalayan ethnography* (1998). It was Vinding's stated purpose to 'present a comprehensive ethnography on the Thakali', a claim which Fisher would never dare to make. The two books should be read side by side, not only by the handful of scholars specializing in Himalayan ethnography, but also by students interested in comparing profoundly different ethnographic approaches to the same ethnic community.

Fisher has a particularly strong writing-style, combining personal anecdote (often as the initial paragraph of a chapter) with vivid ethnography and the prudent application of theory. The result is readable and illuminating, careful but never plodding. The only quibbles would concern his overreliance on multiple adjectives when just one would do and the relegation of many interesting details to the copious thirty-five pages of endnotes (perhaps at the behest of the publisher). A few more photos of Thakalis in urban locations or involved in non-traditional activities might also have been welcome.

In short, *Fluid boundaries* offers a sophisticated and intellectual evaluation of Thakali culture and identity formation. The book is an essential addition to the bookshelf of any scholar of the Himalayan region, and of considerable utility to anthropologists interested in social change, ethnohistory, and modern identity politics.

MARK TURIN

*University of Cambridge*

GARDNER, KATY. *Age, narrative and migration: the life course and life histories of Bengali elders in London*. vii, 254 pp., bibliogr. Oxford, New York: Berg Publishers, 2002. £42.99 (cloth)

This book describes processes of migration and ageing from the viewpoint of elderly Bengalis living in Tower Hamlets, East London. It also offers a reflection upon the ethnographic use of narrative and the kinds of tale it can be made to tell; this concern, in turn, reflects the circumstances and methods of the research. From 1996 to 1997, eleven elderly men and sixteen elderly women, identified through a community centre providing day-care for elderly Bengalis, agreed to tell their life stories to Gardner or her male research assistant (who carried out most of the interviews with men). Gardner commuted from Brighton to conduct the research, after making appointments with her informants. She notes that the relative formality of the research process had the ethical advantage that, in comparison with more 'conventional'

participant observation (including her own earlier research in rural Sylhet, where she was 'by the end no longer sure of the boundaries between participation and observation'), her informants were probably always aware that research was being conducted.

One central theme in this book is the gendered shaping of narrative. Despite much common experience, men and women express different concerns and project different self-images. In their accounts of their early migration history, women tell of suffering and separation from loved ones, through stories that express acceptance of fate or hidden protest, and which tend to portray the speakers as carers, downplaying their economic contributions to migration. Men, by contrast, talk of adventure, movement, and work, themes central to 'the construction of masculinity', while presenting themselves as respectable elders. Much of the early migration history is familiar from other sources, but is here recast through these gendered lenses.

The ethnographic and analytic value of narrative is well established in the study of illness. Three chapters in Gardner's book explore narrative representations of the body in ageing, illness, and death. Gardner seeks to link contradictory images of the 'homeland' (*desh*) and 'abroad' (*bidesh*) to aspects of the social and material circumstances of the lives of elderly Bengalis – to the fact that, for example, significant changes to 'traditional' patterns of household organization have occurred, whereby family members who might otherwise be living together are dispersed across council flats. All her informants were dependent upon the state for their incomes (by means of pensions, income support, and disability and sickness allowances) and lived in council accommodation. Because of their inadequate English, the women faced particular difficulties in finding their way around the bureaucratic obstacles to accessing services, which, Gardner writes, 'seemed overwhelming even to me, a native English-speaker'. Gardner reveals the contradictions and potential humiliations surrounding dependency in old age. For Bengali elders, social dependency is, in 'traditional' ideal terms, positive – where one is cared for by the family; by contrast, professional English carers seek to preserve the social and bodily independence of the elderly for as long as they can. Yet, ironically, state support for illness and disability is forthcoming only after dependence and incapacity have been demonstrated.

Britain is seen as a place where bodily needs are met, in contrast to Bangladesh with its physical privations, yet the illness narratives contain implicit critiques of care received that probably reflect the Bengali elders' general disempowerment in their dealings with the British National Health Service. Gardner documents the frustrations and tacit resistance of

elders' negotiations with statutory and voluntary agencies. While recognizing that much of her discussion would apply to all elderly people, she also explores the ways in which cultural difference is important, in, for example, aspects of belief and practice surrounding death. With its references to a wide range of anthropological themes and their expression and exploration through narrative, this book will be of particular interest to students of medical anthropology. It will also be of immense value to those involved in delivering health and social services to ethnically diverse populations, and therefore deserves a wide readership.

ALISON SHAW

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HARPER, JANICE. *Endangered species: health, illness and death among Madagascar's people of the forest*. xvi, 273 pp., illus., bibliogr. Durham, NC: Carolina Academic Press, 2002

This important book is concerned with the impact of Western environmentalism on a poor Malagasy community of rice farmers. The Ranomafana National Park (RNP) in southeastern Madagascar, established in 1990, is one of thirty-six 'protected areas' on the island. The RNP is financed and monitored by USAID, the World Bank, and the World Wildlife Fund. The project staff, other than at the lowest level, are either American or from Madagascar's urban elite.

The project's objective is the preservation of the region's supposedly pristine ecosystem, now endangered by deforestation. The local residents who practise swidden rice cultivation have been identified as the main culprits. They are not allowed to enter the park, which has been their ancestral land for generations, though they continue to do so illicitly. While for the project management trees are more important than land, to the forest residents land means food, and thus swidden cultivation is not a choice but a necessity.

Harper argues throughout the book – which is based on fieldwork in a village on the edge of the park – that from its inception the project has been based on an utterly misguided concept of local ethnic divisions. Having established the misleading dichotomy between Tanala and Betsileo, and having identified swidden cultivation as 'fixed in Tanala tradition', the project fails to recognize that local agricultural practices are not bound to ethnic identity, but result from the history of people's varied responses to pre-colonial and colonial outside rule. Differences in local farming techniques, Harper argues, have nothing to do with being Tanala or Betsileo – in fact, local people recognize themselves as

both – but have much to do with internal social stratification based on ancestry and differences in economic strength.

The social divisions among the population are significantly linked to issues of illness and health, another central theme in Harper's discussion. Indeed, much of the book is a moving account of the extreme poverty of the people concerned, illustrated by stories of malnutrition, illness, and deaths (which occur extremely frequently in the village), and of the ways in which people try to cope. But it is also the story of just how little the project management seems to care. The only health care measure – among those promised in exchange for the abolition of swidden agriculture – which the project offers to the villagers is birth control aimed at reducing the forest-cutting Tanala population. Otherwise, the project staff turn a deaf ear to the many severe health problems of the village residents. The announcement to one staff member of yet another death is met with indifference, and Harper rightly wonders what the reaction would have been had the dead been lemurs rather than people (p. 160, n. 3).

*Endangered species* makes a number of important points. It exemplifies the danger of imposing on people a view of the environment as pristine nature, separate from the humans who inhabit it and therefore needing to be rescued from human activity. It also demonstrates the continuities between pre-colonial, colonial, and contemporary forest policies, all of them marked by the simultaneous protection of the forest from swidden agriculture and its exploitation by commercial companies.

However, anthropologically, the account at times seems somewhat thin. For example, Harper does not seem to be aware of the Malagasy concept of the person and is thus at a loss to understand why villagers invest more resources in saving an adult than a child (chap. 8). Nor are the general points raised always supported by sufficient ethnography, especially regarding the impact of the RNP on the lives of local people.

Harper promises to demonstrate that local power structures have been reinforced as a result of recent conservation policy and the establishment of the RNP, but, regrettably, these issues are not fully explored and are left unclear in the reader's mind. Perhaps these shortcomings should not be attributed solely to the author. In a disturbing account of events (introduction, epilogue), Harper describes how the project management hindered her research and tried to intimidate her so that no critical comments concerning the RNP would be included in any future publication. It is much to her credit that she nevertheless did so.

This is an important book because national parks, employing exactly the politics described

here, exist all over Madagascar. My hope is that people working in development will read this book and be moved to act against the lack of concern for the well-being of the local population as exhibited by the management of the RNP project.

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MAYER, ENRIQUE. *The articulated peasant: household economies in the Andes*. xvii, 390 pp., map, figs., tables, illus., bibliogr. Oxford, Cambridge, Mass.: Westview Press, 2001. £22.99 (paper)

Enrique Mayer is a veteran scholar of the Andean region who has spent over thirty years researching in Peru. He was a graduate student of John V. Murra at Cornell in the late 1960s and has made a substantial contribution to anthropological studies of the Andean region, particularly in the fields of economic anthropology and human ecology. He has also witnessed, and been part of, various theoretical shifts in the discipline over the years. This new volume brings together a selection of his essays for the first time. Some of these date from the 1970s, others are reprints, some are translations from Spanish originals, and others are new material. While established scholars of the region will be familiar with much of the content of the earlier essays, for example from the volume in Spanish edited with G. Alberti (*Reciprocidad e intercambio en los Andes peruanos*, 1974), it is good to see these works printed together in one volume and made accessible to an English-speaking audience.

The essays take as their common theme the household as an economic unit in Andean society and the ways in which the Andean household articulates with wider entities. The introductory essay outlines different approaches to the household in economic anthropology, the pros and cons of each, and the ways in which they have been used by the author. Following on from this, the next two pieces are ethnohistorical and conduct a dialogue with Murra's work: the first deals with redistribution and trade in Inca society, and takes up the thorny question of whether markets were present in the Inca economy, and the second is a lively study based on a sixteenth-century census (*visita*) of the community of Tangor, where Mayer has conducted ethnographic research, that attempts to get inside the head of an indigenous tribute-payer of the time. The next four essays are ethnographic and look at different aspects of economic life in the Andes – reciprocal exchanges (principally of labour); barter; the role of coca as a commodity and luxury good; and profit and loss in Andean agriculture. Two of the remaining essays address the themes of

land use and human ecology: the first takes up Murra's concept of verticality and looks at production zones in Andean communities, and the second explores contemporary land use in the community of Laraos and, through a mixture of archival work and oral testimony, outlines the changes that have taken place in land tenure over the past century. The final essay in the volume addresses the contemporary issues of neo-liberalism, the identification of Andean households as 'the poor' and policies aimed at 'poverty alleviation'.

Established scholars will appreciate having access to Mayer's essays within the space of one volume, but those new to Andean studies will find the work invaluable. In part, this is because of the author's exceptionally clear style of writing, but it also stems from his concern to contextualize his work. In putting this collection together, Mayer has done much more than simply reproduce his earlier essays. He provides each with introductory notes that outline the background of academic debates against which they were written and postscripts that revise his thinking in the light of current developments and explain how debates have moved on since the time of writing. During the course of the volume, for instance, Mayer explains the background to Murra's thinking and to the contributions of Olivia Harris and Tristan Platt to debates on gender, complementarity, and reciprocity. Students would be well advised to read his comments in conjunction with the often-cited essays to which he refers. Among the more interesting postscripts are Mayer's comments on the ideological uses to which the work of Murra and his followers had been put by those wishing to examine neo-colonialism and Western notions of development. Some, he comments critically, have elevated his work from the status of scholarly theory to that of unquestionable ideology.

Students seeking reflexive accounts of Andean social life may be disappointed by this volume. From none of the essays do we get a detailed account of Mayer's relations with the communities he studied, nor do we become particularly well acquainted with individual social actors – in fact we get to know more of the imagined motivations of the sixteenth-century tribute-payer, Agostín Luna Capcha, than we do of any contemporary inhabitant of the Peruvian Andes. However, for those wanting to understand the debates that have underpinned Andean anthropology over the past three decades, this volume is to be highly recommended.

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MEISCH, LYNN A. *Andean entrepreneurs: Otavalo merchants and musicians in the global arena*. xiv, 314 pp., maps, tables, illus., bibliogr. Austin: Univ. Texas Press, 2002. \$50.00 (cloth), \$19.95 (paper)

Based on close to three decades of research, Meisch's remarkable *Andean entrepreneurs* portrays a people and a place as they are affected by globalization. The Otavalos, a Quichua-speaking, indigenous Andean ethnic group, come to life as they design fabrics for electric Jacquard looms, compose songs blending reggae beats and Andean melodies, fight for civil rights by means of a beauty pageant, and rent meeting-halls in Amsterdam and Chicago so that hundreds of expatriates can come together on 24 June to dance in the fiesta of *Inti Raymi*. The author's argument is deceptively simple. First, she outlines the organizing themes of her analysis: entrepreneurship, material culture (especially textiles), reflexive ethnicity, transnationalism, and the narrowing base for asserting cultural differences. Then she writes, 'My basic argument is that Otavalos are coping with globalization by relying on a combination of traditional values and practices and modern technology to preserve as well as to market their ethnic identity, including others' (mis)perceptions of them as Incas or noble savages' (p. 10).

The book's strength lies precisely in contextualizing what it means for this group 'to market' their identity. Far more than a simplistic assertion of an Inca heritage and close-to-nature native wisdom (although certain Otavalos have promoted this stereotype), marketing identity interweaves many relationships and narratives. It involves historical self-consciousness, political rebirth, inter-ethnic conflict, transnational romance and sex, tourism, a Weberian ethic of rational hard work, and a faith in capitalist progress.

Meisch tells the story through a wide range of materials. Moving well beyond her own interviews and experiences, she samples carefully and broadly from travel writing, tourism promotions, album notes from over 100 recordings dating back to the 1960s, as well as colonial and early republican era primary documents. The book begins with historical background on 'How the Otavalos became Otavalos'. Tackling the distinctiveness of Otavalos among Quichua-speakers, Meisch covers concrete historical experiences, such as the horrors of *obrajes* (colonial textile sweatshops). But she also explores the history of the representation of Otavalos. Through the propaganda of Ecuadorian exhibits in the world fairs, they became 'model Indians' in the late nineteenth century, 'intelligent, hard-working and sober' (p. 29). Born of invidious ethnic distinctions and nationalist aspirations, the discourse elevating Otavalos over other indigenous people was to be embraced by both

locals and outsiders to project an Otavalo identity in ever-wider arenas.

Meisch's richest material lies in the three central chapters concerning the way in which Otavaleños transform their textiles and their music to create their brand of indigenous Andean prosperity. Her years of work in the region, not only as a scholar but also as a development-worker, teacher of textile techniques, and textile-collector for museum exhibitions garner a rich return. She traces the mechanization of weaving, the Peace Corps' role in launching sweater-making (now a multi-million-dollar branch of the trade), and the continual innovation of new products based on Otavalos' ever-more worldly experience.

Moving beyond crafts and music, she tracks the ways in which healing practices, residence patterns, and even the banal reality of potato-vendors in the weekly market all partake in the changes prompted by tourism. She describes, for instance, how Spanish humoral principles inform traditional Andean medicine, and offers a wonderful, brief description of an older Otavalo woman's encounter with a *curandero* (healer), who employed an X-ray image, an egg, tobacco, and cologne in his treatment (p. 93). She extends the discussion to the links between Andean and Amazonian healers and the long journeys that urban patients have made to well-reputed, provincial practitioners. Thus, when we finally read about the ways in which *curanderos* 'play up' to New Age tourists who come to Otavalo seeking exotic 'dream changers' (p. 95), we can see how this new marketing both differs from and yet extends long-standing habits of cultural interchange.

The final three chapters turn directly to the question of globalization and the stress of growing competition, declining profits, and worsening legal troubles in the international 'underground' handicraft and world-music economy. Dwelling at times on somewhat obvious points, such as the Andean stereotypes offered in the cover-art of the CDs that Otavalo musicians sell, Meisch underplays seemingly more crucial stories. For example, do people who have for so long believed in international entrepreneurship re-evaluate their faith as an increasing number of Otavalos find themselves failing in a Europe that 'is burned out' as a market for Andean crafts (p. 190)?

In the chapter, 'Otavalo wealth and changing social relations', Meisch provides an excellent analysis of the Yamor beauty pageant of 1996, ethnic mixture in Otavalo's private schools, and the sexual liaisons between male Otavalos and female foreign tourists (*gringas*), in order to illustrate the rising social power of a once-stigmatized ethnic group. Aside from acknowledging growing inequality within Otavalo communities, though, her analysis stops short of tackling how the new power is

actually being distributed within such a dispersed and diverse ethnic group.

*Andean entrepreneurs* is a rare work in anthropology these days. While it is the product of thirty years' work, the writing has none of the fustiness of a retrospective community study. Rather, Meisch tackles the crucial concerns of post-colonial, transnational ethnography. This nuanced, warmly told account will be of great value to those interested in globalization and tourism, Latin America and indigenous peoples, and craft and musical art.

RUDI COLLOREDO-MANSFELD

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PETRYNA, ADRIANA. *Life exposed: biological citizens after Chernobyl*. xvii, 264 pp., figs., tables, bibliogr. Oxford, Princeton: Princeton Univ. Press, 2002. £37.95 (cloth), £13.95 (paper)

On 26 April 1986, Unit Four of the Chernobyl nuclear reactor exploded during tests. The radioactive plume rose an estimated 8 kilometres, and the graphite core burned for days. Five thousand tons of quenching materials were dropped from helicopters but increased the temperature of the nuclear core and spread the radioactive cloud over an even vaster area. Eighteen days later, Gorbachev acknowledged the accident on Soviet television. Tens of thousands of people had by then been exposed to radioactive iodine-131, resulting in a massive incidence of thyroid cancers, many of which might have been avoided had iodine pills been distributed in the first week. In the years that followed, more than 600,000 military and civilian personnel were put at risk in the course of clean-up operations and the construction of a 'sarcophagus' to entomb the reactor, which is now surrounded by a 30-kilometre exclusion zone. Nearly 9 per cent of the territory of Ukraine (and 23 per cent of neighbouring Belarus) is considered contaminated; around 5 per cent of its population (3.5 million people) are classified as 'sufferers' and more than half a million were resettled. Estimates put the death-toll from Chernobyl-related illness between 1993 and 1996 at over 100,000.

It is a dramatic and important story, and *Life exposed* is a compelling book – despite an overdose of overblown anthropological prose. The field research focused on interactions between 'sufferers' and the bureaucratic and medical apparatus of the state. The analysis was honed in Berkeley under Rabinow's Foucauldian tutelage. A short review can only convey the barest gist, but Petryna's title is a useful starting-point. The new market economy of the post-socialist Ukraine encourages people to 'expose' their lives to

radiation risks, and the differential value of the lives of 'sufferers' is 'exposed' in the amount that is paid to them in sickness benefits, pensions, and other benefits. As the state has withdrawn from welfare provision, the 'healthy' find themselves 'orphaned', and (Chernobyl-related) biological injury is for many the only way to make claims upon it. In resisting their 'abjection', Soviet citizens have become the 'biological citizens' of the subtitle.

The biological damage is inestimable, expert opinion deeply divided, and medical diagnoses heavily inflected by politics and policy. The Soviet authorities predictably drew the line narrowly – at the 237 victims who were airlifted out of the disaster site, of whom 134 were diagnosed as affected by acute radiation syndrome and 31 died. The exposure of the general population was supposedly insignificant. The Ukrainian authorities counted 'sufferers' in the hundreds of thousands. Partly to gain popular legitimacy and to distance itself from the callousness of the Soviet *ancien régime*, the newly independent state recognized that the pool of sufferers was a sea. A larger swathe of territory was judged dangerously contaminated and biological damage was deemed to be done at lower thresholds of dosage. Symptoms that had previously been regarded as stress related or psychosomatic – fatigue, dizzy spells, black-outs, and severe headaches – might now be radiation related. But each case had to be judged on its merits, while the criteria for making such judgements keep shifting.

Given the desperate state of the Ukrainian economy, where 50 per cent of the population lived below the poverty line in 2001, it is hardly surprising that many people volunteer to work in the contaminated zones. They can earn two or three times more and living costs are subsidized. Nor is it surprising, given unemployment and the lack of a safety net, that those who can claim to be Chernobyl 'sufferers' do so, and devote enormous energy to working their way up the hierarchy of 'sufferers' into the ranks of the 'disabled', who are guaranteed a pension and other benefits. Illness has become a career. It is an ironical inversion of the old Soviet value of *lichnost* (which valorized commitment to work on behalf of the collectivity), and involves a redefinition of the self from active 'worker' to invalid. Given the open-ended nature of the diagnosis, the whole process is inevitably susceptible to *blat* (bribery), the soft-heartedness of the doctor (who is all too aware that the worse the diagnosis the better it is for the patient), and political influence. Compensation levels reflect status, and occupational groups 'suffered' in proportion to political clout.

The 'human actuality' of all this comes across vividly in Petryna's case histories. Her focus, however, is on atomized individuals or households, and there is little sense of the

importance that wider kinship networks or communities might have for them; nor of the way in which 'sufferers' form collectivities to put pressure on the 'experts' (as they plainly do). Remarkably, no reference is made to Françoise Zonabend's subtle study (*The nuclear peninsula*) of the fears and evasions of those who live around, and work in, the nuclear installations on the Cotentin peninsula in Normandy, which might have provided comparative insights into the way in which people handle the daily experience of exposure to invisible dangers. And if Petryna's informants are 'biological citizens', whose bodies are subject to continual monitoring by the state and become the basis for their relationship with it, the extent to which they are 'disciplined' by the state and made amenable to its power is unclear. They also subvert its purposes. But these are merely loose ends in an important study that will interest a wide anthropological audience.

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SMITH, JENNIE M. *When the hands are many: community organization and social change in rural Haiti*. xii, 229 pp., illus., bibliogr. London, Ithaca: Cornell Univ. Press, 2001

*When the hands are many* describes conventional forms of rural social organization in Haiti, focusing on groups that can be thought of as agricultural labour co-operatives that can also have general economic, political, and religious aspects.

The book begins with three chapters that place Haiti, the rural population, and the book itself in their larger contexts. Smith puts the country in an extended historical context, from French colonization through to its dire economic and political condition in the twentieth century, and she locates Haiti in the nexus of aid, development, and outside interference that has had an important but generally ineffective or harmful influence. Smith addresses the rural population's material position and their relationship with the Haitian urban elite, in which they are cast primarily as alien outsiders. She intends the book to rescue rural Haitians from their common representation as traditionalistic, passive, and ridden with mysticism, a representation that would be familiar to those concerned with aid and development projects in the country or with common media images of Haiti.

The next four chapters present different forms of rural co-operative social organization. The first of these describes general patterns of rural co-operative labour, and the simplest forms of this in the area of Smith's field work, the *konbit* and the *kòve*. In *konbit* a person with a substantial agricultural task



will invite specific neighbours and kin to come work, in what is usually an all-day affair in which workers are rewarded with food and drink. A *kòve* is typically a half-day, is not as restricted to agricultural work, and workers are not given food but are given cash. These are the foundation for the more elaborate forms of organization described in the next three chapters.

The first of these is the *atribisyon*. This is a small (seven-to-twelve member) and relatively undifferentiated organization based on the neighbourhood, and many people belong to more than one. Its members regularly do *kòve* together, both for each other in a co-operative way and for others in order to earn money. The money that the group earns is not distributed to members, but is spent on a group feast, usually celebrated on Haiti's Independence Day, 1 January.

The second of these is the *sosyete*. This is a mutual aid group as well as a work group, offering support in times of illness or death. In addition, occasionally it will adjudicate disputes between members or act as a representative of a group member who is in dispute with someone from outside the group. As well, this sort of group may carry out religious functions at the funerals of members or to celebrate ancestors.

The final sort of group Smith describes is the *gwoupman peyisan* (peasant grouping), best considered as intentional, voluntary organizations that are formed to bring about some sort of social, political, or economic change or improvement. These emerged from government policy in the 1960s to create community councils, apparently to extend state control in rural areas. Foreign aid and devel-

opment bodies saw them as an obvious local counterpart, which led to the formation of groups solely to take advantage of the money these bodies disbursed.

The book ends with a chapter of Smith's reflections on the way that these organizations can contribute to the social, political, and economic betterment of rural Haitians, and hence to the relationship between development and democracy as defined by rural Haitians, a definition that is not restricted to formal political representation, but has a strong egalitarian component.

This is an accessible, detailed study of co-operative forms of social organization in a section of rural Haiti, of the position of Haiti in the world, of people's political and economic aspirations, and of the recurring efforts by outside agencies to shape the country. Although Smith does not develop the theme, it is also interesting in light of the increasing importance of 'civil society' in international political-economic rhetoric. 'Civil society' sounds a fine idea, but this work makes it clear that the phrase is not to be taken at face value, referring to social organizations and structures that exist independently of state and market. Haiti is, in Smith's account, full of those. Yet generally they are ignored by aid and development agencies, who seem not to want 'civil society', but civil society of a particular sort, a sort that reflects a particular, liberal political-economic vision. *When the hands are many* illustrates that when the reality does not fit the vision, it is the reality that suffers.

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