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Review of Books

(by Othmar Gächter und Anton Quack)

Rivinius, Karl Josef: Im Dienst der Mission und der Wissenschaft. Zur Entstehungsgeschichte der Zeitschrift *Anthropos*. Fribourg: Academic Press Fribourg Switzerland, 2005. 352 pp. ISBN 3-7278-1528-0. (Studia Instituti Anthropos 51). (pbk)

Angesichts des im 19. Jahrhundert zunehmenden Interesses für Völkerkunde und Sprachwissenschaft dachte P. Wilhelm Schmidt SVD an die Gründung einer entsprechenden Fachzeitschrift. Sie sollte den Missionaren die Möglichkeit bieten, darin ihre völkerkundlichen und sprachwissenschaftlichen Arbeiten zu publizieren, außerdem sie zu Forschungen in ihrem jeweiligen Lebens- und Wirkungsbereich motivieren und anleiten. Schmidt legte zudem besonderen Wert auf den wissenschaftlichen Charakter der Zeitschrift, weshalb er von Anfang an Fachgelehrten, auch Nichtkatholiken eingeschlossen, die aktive Mitarbeit anbot.

Im Februar 1906 erschien das erste Heft der neuen Zeitschrift für Völker- und Sprachenkunde, *Anthropos*. Vorliegende Studie behandelt die Genese der Zeitschrift sowie ihre wechselvolle Entwicklung in ihrem weiteren historischen und situativen Kontext bis zum Jahr 1909.

Leopold, Anita M., and Jeppe S. Jensen (eds.): *Syncretism in Religion. A Reader*. London: Equinox Publishing, 2004. 402 pp. ISBN 1-904768-65-2. (pbk)

“Syncretism in Religion” is a selection of essays for students and scholars on the many phenomena that come under the heading of “syncretism.” It is a volume committed to solving the problems of syncretism instead of abolishing the category, which has for so long been controversial in scholarship.

The selection is mainly theoretically oriented to get behind the many problems in the debate. Introductions to

the sections of the volume separate the different issues of syncretism, as presented in the essays, into different levels of analysis. This gives the reader a clear view of the complex history and the problems of the subject, as well as a key by which to examine the subject. The volume concludes with an analytical model that advances a new theory of syncretism. The general introduction and the conclusion form “a book in a book” which will increase its utility in classroom use.

The selection represents the classical contributions and issues as well as some less well known. Some important contributions appear for the first time in English and some of the essays are new and have been commissioned for this book. Included is a list of references for further reading in addition to the references that accompany each essay. Anyone with an interest in religious and cultural history, contact, and change will benefit greatly from reading the important essays in “Syncretism in Religion.”

Handelman, Don, and Galina Lindquist (eds.): *Ritual in Its Own Right. Exploring the Dynamics of Transformation*. New York: Berghahn Books, 2004. 232 pp. ISBN 1-84545-051-5. (pbk)

Historically, canonic studies of ritual have discussed and explained ritual organization, action, and transformation primarily as representations of broader cultural and social orders. In the present, as in the past, less attention is given to the power of ritual to organize and effect transformation through its own dynamics. Breaking with convention, the contributors to this volume were asked to discuss ritual first and foremost in relation to itself, in its own right, and only then in relation to its socio-cultural context. The results attest to the variable capacities of rites to effect transformation through

themselves, and to the study of phenomena in their own right as a fertile approach to comprehending ritual dynamics.

Vincent, Joan (ed.): *The Anthropology of Politics. A Reader in Ethnography, Theory, and Critique*. Malden: Blackwell Publishers, 2002. 476 pp. ISBN 0-631-22440-8. (pbk)

Political anthropology has long been among the most vibrant subdisciplines within anthropology, and work done in this area has been instrumental in exploring some of the most significant issues of the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries, including (post)colonialism, development and underdevelopment, identity politics, nationalism/transnationalism, and political violence. In "The Anthropology of Politics: A Reader in Ethnography, Theory, and Critique" readers will find a remarkable collection of classic and contemporary articles on the subject.

Following on her landmark book on politics and anthropology, in this volume Joan Vincent provides a sweeping historical and theoretical introduction to the field. Selected readings from figures such as E.E. Evans-Pritchard, Edmund Leach, Victor Turner, Eric Wolf, Benedict Anderson, Talal Asad, Michael Taussig, Jean and John Comaroff, and Gayatri Chakravorty Spivak are enriched by Vincent's headnotes and suggestions for further reading. "The Anthropology of Politics" will prove an indispensable resource for students, scholars, and instructors alike.

Kuehling, Susanne: *Dobu. Ethics of Exchange on a Massim Island, Papua New Guinea*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2005. 329 pp. ISBN 0-8248-2731-7. (hbk)

Michael Young: Susanne Kuehling has succeeded in making wholly intelligible the Massim people who became anthropologically notorious in the 1930s with the publication of Reo Fortune's "Sorcerers of Dobu." Her book is an exceptionally sensitive exploration of Dobuan notions of personhood and agency, structured as an ethnographic account of various modes of social exchange, their ethical underpinnings and moral motivations.

Kuehling's achievement rests on three considerable accomplishments. First, idiomatic mastery of the Dobuan language enabled her to "get inside the skin" of her host villagers in a way that most anthropologists can only dream of. She achieved this by the time-honoured method of participant observation, though in her somewhat extreme case she became a genuine, suffering participant in village life – almost an insider. Thanks also to her gifts as linguist, the work is lucidly written in engaging prose.

Second, Kuehling has made a number of significant discoveries about the local operation and "meaning" of

Kula when most anthropologists had assumed there was little more to be learned about it. Moreover, her descriptive, raw-experience accounts of Kula expeditions that she accompanied from Dobu outshine even those of Malinowski.

Kuehling has systemically challenged and comprehensively overturned a pertinacious anthropological stereotype: that of the paranoid, treacherous, and dour "Dobuan" who was created almost seventy years ago by Fortune and elaborated by Ruth Benedict.

Robbins, Joel: *Becoming Sinners. Christianity and Moral Torment in a Papua New Guinea Society*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2004. 383 pp. ISBN 0-520-23800-1. (pbk)

In a world of swift and sweeping cultural transformations, few have been as rapid and dramatic as those experienced by the Urapmin of Papua New Guinea in the last four decades. A remote people never directly "missionized," the Urapmin began in the 1960s to send young men to study with Baptist missionaries living in neighboring communities. By the late 1970s, the Urapmin had undergone a charismatic revival, abandoning traditional religion for a Christianity intensely focused on human sinfulness and driven by a constant sense of millennial expectation. Exploring the Christian culture and the Urapmin, Joel Robbins shows how its preoccupations provide keys to understanding more generally the nature of cultural change. In so doing, he offers one of the richest available anthropological accounts of Christianity as a lived religion.

The Urapmin present a remarkable opportunity for studying how cultural change occurs and how those living in the midst of it experience its consequences – essential questions all too often lost in broad attempts to come to terms with globalization and the spread of modernity. Robbins employs insights from cultural anthropology and broader social theory to fashion an approach to cultural change that highlights the moral struggles so often associated with its course. Theoretically ambitious and engagingly written, "Becoming Sinners" opens a unique perspective on a Melanesian society, religious experience, and the very nature of rapid cultural change.

Jebens, Holger: *Pathways to Heaven. Contesting Mainline and Fundamentalist Christianity in Papua New Guinea*. New York: Berghahn Books, 2005. 284 pp. ISBN 1-84545-005-1. (hbk)

How does global Christianity relate to processes of globalization and modernization and what form does it take in different local settings? Lately, these questions have proved to be of increasing interest to many scholars in the social sciences and humanities. This study examines the tensions, antagonisms, and outright confrontations that can occur within local Christian communities upon the arrival of global versions of funda-

mentalism. It does so through a rich and in-depth ethnographic study of a single case: that of Pairundu, a small and remote Papua New Guinean village whose population accepted Catholicism, after first being contacted in the late 1950s, and subsequently participated in a charismatic movement, before more and more members of the younger generation started to separate themselves from their respective Catholic families and convert to one of the most radical and fastest growing religious groups not only in contemporary Papua New Guinea but worldwide: the Seventh-Day Adventist Church. This case study of local Christianity as a lived religion contributes to an understanding of the social and cultural dynamics that increasingly incite and shape religious conflicts on a global scale.

Gibson, Thomas: *And the Sun Pursued the Moon. Symbolic Knowledge and Traditional Authority among the Makassar.* Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2005. 263 pp. ISBN 0-8248-2865-8. (hbk)

Over the course of a thousand years, from 600 to 1600 C.E., the Java Sea was dominated by a ring of maritime kingdoms whose rulers engaged in long-distance raiding, trading, and marriage alliances with one another. "And the Sun Pursued the Moon" explores the economic, political, and symbolic processes by which early Makassar communities were incorporated into this regional system.

As successive empires like Srivijaya, Kediri, Majapahit, and Melaka gained hegemony over the region, they introduced different models of kingship in peripheral areas like the Makassar coast of South Sulawesi. As each successive model of royal power gained currency, it became embedded in local myth and ritual. By the time the kings of South Sulawesi converted to Islam at the beginning of the seventeenth century, at least six such models were present in the area. Islam introduced a whole new set of competing religious and political models, adding to the symbolic complexity of the area.

To better understand the relationship between symbolic knowledge and traditional royal authority in Makassar society, Thomas Gibson draws on a wide range of sources and academic disciplines. He shows how myth and ritual link practical forms of knowledge (boat building, navigation, agriculture, warfare) to basic social categories such as gender and hereditary rank, as well as to environmental, celestial, and cosmological phenomena. He also shows how concrete historical agents have used this symbolic infrastructure to advance their own political and ideological purposes. Gibson concludes by situating this material in relation to Islam and to live-cycle rituals.

Reid, Anthony: *An Indonesian Frontier. Acehnese and Other Histories of Sumatra.* Singapore: Singapore University Press, 2005. 439 pp. ISBN 9971-69-298-8. (pbk)

Sumatra is a vast and understudied island with a population of 43 million people divided into a variety of ethnic groups. Apart from William Marsden's great work of 1783, few serious works deal with Sumatra's history and even fewer attempt to describe that history as a coherent whole.

Sumatra's rich resources of land and minerals, and its enterprising people, have made it the prosperous frontier of the Archipelago. But the island's people, the majority of whom were stateless highlanders until the twentieth century, were politically united only by the rule of Dutch Batavia and Indonesian Jakarta. Sumatrans have a tradition of defying central authority, and the Acehnese are once again, as in Dutch times, kept in the nation only by force.

This book is the fruit of a forty years' study of Sumatran history, from the sixteenth century to the present. While seeking patterns of coherence in the vast island frontier, it focuses on Aceh, which has both the most illustrious state history and the most troubled present of any Sumatra region.

Kawano, Satsuki: *Ritual Practice in Modern Japan. Ordering Place, People, and Action.* Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2005. 152 pp. ISBN 0-8248-2934-4. (pbk)

National surveys indicate that most Japanese, while professing no religious commitment, frequently perform rituals: They regularly tend their family home altars, look after family graves, participate in neighbourhood festivals, and visit Shinto shrines and Buddhist temples. Are these rituals mere formalities?

Based on fourteen months of fieldwork in Kamakura city near Tokyo, Satsuki Kawano examines the power of ritual and its relevance for modern urbanites. She reveals the indebtedness of ritual to forms that create an elevated context and infuse the mundane with a sense of moral order. By employing acts and environments common to everyday life, Kawano argues, ritual evokes morally positive values such as purity, gratitude, respect, and indebtedness. Rather than objectify morality in a sacred text or religious doctrine, ritual embodies and emplaces a sense of what it means to be a good person and creates moments of personal significance and engagement. In Kamakura, belief is therefore a consequence and not a prerequisite of ritual engagement.

Chandler, Stuart: *Establishing a Pure Land on Earth. The Foguang Buddhist Perspective on Modernization and Globalization.* Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2004. 373 pp. ISBN 0-8248-2746-5. (hbk)

With more than 150 temples in thirty countries, Foguangshan has developed over the last thirty-five years into one of the world's largest and most influential Chinese Buddhist movements. Each year millions of

devotees participate in the ceremonies, educational programs, and social service projects organized by the disciplines of Master Xingyun – a religious leader known not only for his charisma and energy, but also for his close ties to Taiwan’s power elite, his positive attitude to Taiwan’s power elite, his positive attitude toward big business, and his involvement in both national and international politics. The result of two years of fieldwork in Foguangshan temples in Taiwan, the U.S., Australia, and South Africa, this volume is an unprecedented examination of the inner workings of a dynamic and innovative religious movement.

Foguangshan’s slogans (“Humanistic Buddhism” and “Establishing a Pure Land on Earth”) are placed in historical context to reveal their role in shaping the group’s attitudes toward capitalism, women’s rights, and democracy, as well as toward the traditional Chinese virtue of filial piety and the Chinese Buddhist concept of “links of affinity” (*jieyuan*). Chandler goes on to analyze Foguangshan’s educational system and its understanding of how precepts relate to contemporary problems such as abortion and capital punishment. The book’s final chapters consider the cultural and political dynamics at play in Foguangshan’s ambitious attempt to spread Humanistic Buddhism around the world and how its followers have reinterpreted the Buddhist ideal of homelessness to take advantage of the spiritual potentialities of people’s lives as global citizens.

Anyone with an interest in modern Buddhism or Chinese religion and culture will find “Establishing a Pure Land on Earth” an accessible, in-depth study of one of the important Buddhist movements of the twenty-first century.

Madan, T.N. (ed.): *India’s Religions. Perspectives from Sociology and History*. New Delhi: Oxford University Press, 2004. 428 pp. ISBN 0-19-566829-4. (hbk)

Religion occupies an important place in both the private and public domains in India. This book presents essays on India’s major religions as practised in everyday life. It views religion from ethnographic and historical perspectives rather than from a theological angle.

Thoughtfully organized and integrated, the book opens with a discussion of the dimensions of religious plurality and the ideologies of religious pluralism. The editor characterizes religion as the processes of setting the sacred apart from the non-sacred, and bonding them together at higher level. He further explores the construction and dynamism of religious traditions and points out that religious creativity is as important as tradition.

Divided into six sections, the essays explore sacred places and performances, spiritual power, charisma, piety and passion, traditions of oral narratives and canonical texts, religious creativity and social change, and the interrelationship between religion, politics, and soci-

ety. The epilogue returns to the themes of inter-religious conceptions and syncretism.

This volume will be of interest to students and scholars of sociology, social anthropology, religion, politics, and history.

Masilamani-Meyer, Eveline: *Guardians of Tamilnadu. Folk Deities, Folk Religion, Hindu Themes*. Halle: Verlag der Franckeschen Stiftungen zu Halle, 2004. 279 pp. ISBN 3-931479-61-7. (pbk)

The gods and goddesses that populate the Tamil villages and countryside are rarely called Śiva, Viṣṇu, or Pārvatī and yet, they are understood to be forms or aspects of these pan-Hindu deities. Similarly, the rituals performed for the folk deities show traits antagonistic to Brahmanical values and yet, we find in them symbols and myths common to the “high” Sanskrit tradition. In the present work the author traces patterns and structures that help the reader understand the salient features of Tamil folk Hinduism and its differences to and similarities with the “high” tradition.

The book has chapters on the arrangement of the folk deities in the temple, the deities’ place in the ordered and wild space, their relationship with the pan-Hindu gods and goddesses and chapters on how the devotees connect to the folk deities through myths, rituals, and worship. The great diversity and richness of the Indian folk religion and the ever greater assimilation of folk cults into the “high” tradition are topics that need to be explored in depth. The present book is a contribution towards this goal.

Clark-Decès, Isabelle: *No One Cries for the Dead. Tamil Dirges, Rowdy Songs, and Graveyard Petitions*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005. 242 pp. ISBN 0-520-24314-5. (pbk)

At South Indian village funerals, women cry and lament, men drink and laugh, and untouchables sing and joke to the beat of their drums. “No One Cries for the Dead” offers an original interpretation of these behaviours, which seem almost unrelated to the deceased and to the funeral event, Isabelle Clark-Decès demonstrates that, rather than mourn the dead, these Tamil funeral songs first and foremost give meaning to the caste, gender, and personal experiences of the performers.

David Shulman: This is a book of true creative insight, originality, and extraordinarily rich materials that have never been explored before. Clark-Decès shows a gift for finding and articulating very central, evocative cultural issues in her study of Tamil laments. She writes with sensitivity and care and with a certain daring and boldness that repay close attention.

Mines, Diane P.: *Fierce Gods. Inequality, Ritual, and the Politics of Dignity in a South Indian Village*. Bloo-

mington: Indiana University Press, 2005. 247 pp. ISBN 0-253-21765-2. (pbk)

The importance of temple ritual in constituting political dominance in South India has been well documented. In this vivid and compelling study of caste and ritual in rural Tamilnadu, Diane P. Mines focuses not only on the temples of the socially powerful, but even more so on the powerful temples of the socially weak. Drawing on key works in phenomenological and existential anthropology, she argues that the village is a heterogeneous reality made and remade by its residents through their own activity, most powerfully through their politics of ritual. Through possession by "fierce gods" who inhabit the margins of inhabitable space, relatively powerless village residents offer up public and ritually constituted political critiques of power as they also struggle to pose alternative formulations of justice and egalitarianism. These alternative formulations of the possible derive not from the gods themselves, but from wider historical discourses on caste and power, which are embodied in the material life of the village, in rice, houses, and persons.

"Fierce Gods" presents a new view of the village and argues for its re-emergence as a unit of analysis. The village presented here is not, however, closed or self-contained, nor a vestige of isolated tradition. Just as no village can be understood without taking seriously the ways in which the villagers themselves live their lives, so too can no village be understood without seeing how villagers, as historical actors, bring to bear on their own local life the wider world of region, nation, and historical contingencies.

Venkata Rao, P.: Dimensions of Transformation in Tribal Societies (with Reference to Andhra Pradesh). New Delhi: Sarup & Sons, 2004. 199 pp. ISBN 81-7625-505-X. (hbk)

Of the thirty-three registered tribes in Andhra Pradesh, thirty inhabit hilly and forest regions. There was relative stagnation for a long period and significant changes took place starting from the colonial era with the penetration of administration, and migration of non-tribal populations into the tribal areas. The proximity with non-tribals led to the emergence of caste-like features in the tribal communities. Pressure on land and forest resources caused by land alienation and forest policies resulted in serious problems to the tribals leading to misery and unrest. After independence, further changes have taken place under the impact of governmental policies and programmes.

In the present book an attempt is made to present a comprehensive picture of transformation in tribal areas in Andhra Pradesh. The works available on different tribes have been dealt with in terms of tribal profiles, inter-tribal relations, impact of non-tribal contact, land alienation, credit, marketing, forest-tribal interface, unrest, government policies, and programs, etc. This study,

brought out as a survey of research and a source book, will be useful to social scientists, policymakers, and all those interested in tribal areas.

Erny, Pierre: L'éducation au Rwanda au temps des rois. Paris: L'Harmattan, 2005. 344 pp. ISBN 2-7475-8275-2. (pbk)

Après le drame de 1994, quasiment toute la littérature concernant le Rwanda a été centrée sur les massacres à caractère génocidaire qui ont endeuillé ce pays et, par ricochet, plusieurs régions voisines d'Afrique centrale. Le présent ouvrage propose un saut en arrière, à l'époque où il y avait là un royaume remarquablement organisé, d'un très haut niveau de culture, mais dont les structures internes portaient déjà en germe les conflits qui ont éclaté au grand jour lors de la "révolution" de 1959.

En une quinzaine d'essais, l'auteur montre ce qu'a été, "au temps des rois", l'éducation en ce petit pays de montagne, en ayant soin de la replacer dans son contexte écologique, économique, socio-politique, idéologique et culturel. Si ce travail relève essentiellement de l'histoire et de l'ethnologie de l'éducation, il n'en est pas moins susceptible d'éclairer bien des aspects de la situation présente.

Knighton, Ben: The Vitality of Karamojong Religion. Dying Tradition or Living Faith? Aldershot: Ashgate Publishing, 2005. 349 pp. ISBN 0-7546-0383-0. (hbk)

How long can a traditional religion survive the impact of world religions, state hegemony, and globalization? The "Karamoja problem" is one that has perplexed colonial and independent governments alike. Now Karamojong notoriety for armed cattle raiding has attracted the attention of the UN and USAID since the proliferation of small arms in the pastoralist belt across Africa from Sudan to stateless Somalia is deemed a threat to world security. The consequences are ethnocidal, but what makes African peoples stand out against state and global governance?

The traditional African religion of the Karamojong, despite the multiple external influences of the 20th century and earlier, has remained at the heart of their culture as it has changed through time. Drawing on oral accounts and the language itself, as well as his extensive experience of living and working in the region, Knighton avoids Western perspectivism to highlight the successful reassertion of African beliefs and values over repeated attempts by interventionists to replace or subvert them. Knighton argues that the religious aspect of Karamojong culture, with its persistent faith dimension, is one of the key factors that have enabled them to maintain their amazing degree of religious, political, and military autonomy in the postmodern world. Using historical and anthropological approaches, the real con-

tinuities within the culture and the reasons for the mysterious vitality of Karamojong religion are explored.

Kok, Bregje de: Christianity and African Traditional Religion. Two Realities of a Different Kind. A Cultural Psychological Study of the Way Christian Malawians Account for Their Involvement in African Traditional Religion. Zomba: Kachere Series, 2005. 119 pp. ISBN 99908-76-17-7. (pbk)

Over the last 150 years Malawi has changed its religion, from African Traditional Religion to Christianity (majority) and Islam (minority). Statistics are not precise, but currently there may be as little as 5 % of the population who might be counted as “traditionalists.” Still, African Traditional Religion is a widespread reality, not because of the number of its adherents, but as a pervasive (and elusive) reality in the lives of many, both Christians and Muslims. Bregje de Kok makes this seeming contradiction her theme: How come that so many people in Malawi are convinced and active Christians, and still African Traditional Religion is a reality that can not be denied? And if so, is this a case of syncretism, of mixing two religions? In her attempt to answer how Christianity and African Traditional Religion can go together (or can they not?) she uses the tools of discourse analysis to find out that Christianity and African Traditional Religion are realities, but on a different level.

Pradelles de Latour, Charles-Henry: Rites thérapeutiques dans une société matrilineaire. Le *gèrem* des Père (Cameroun). Paris: Éditions Karthala, 2005. 247 pp. ISBN 2-84586-694-1. (pbk)

Afin de fuir les trafiquants d’esclaves qui les traquaient, les Père se réfugièrent jusqu’au milieu du XIXe siècle sur le mont Guénfanlabo (1 500 m d’altitude) situé dans l’Adamaoua, à la frontière du Cameroun et du Nigeria. Appartenant à une société clanique, sans chef ni défense armée, longtemps restée en retrait dans sa montagne, les Père ont développé une conception tératologique du mal, tributaire de leurs croyances en la sorcellerie.

Leurs thérapies ne relèvent donc ni d’une nosographie ni d’une connaissance du corps, mais d’une lutte permanente, à l’aide de la magie, contre les agents du mal à la forme mi-humaine mi-sauvage, chargée par conséquent de contradictions. Le *gèrem*, principale force magique qui a son siège dans des instruments de musique secrets, est utilisé par les guérisseurs dans des rites initiatiques destinés à libérer les enfants des ambivalences de la sorcellerie, et dans des rites thérapeutiques afin d’arrêter les sorciers en dressant sur leur passage des barrages qui font obstacle à leur nature contradictoire.

Pour les Père comme pour de nombreuses sociétés africaines traditionnelles, guérir consiste à se réinscrire dans les différences parentales qui étayent l’ordre social.

Thomas, Douglas E.: African Traditional Religion in the Modern World. Jefferson: McFarland & Company, 2005. 203 pp. ISBN 0-7864-1835-4. (pbk)

This study examines the nature of African Traditional Religion in an effort to determine the common attributes of the religion of the continent, focusing on the West African experience. The author analyzes concepts in African traditional religion by isolating key elements in the Yoruba, Dagara, and Ibo cultures. Principal elements isolated include sacrifice, salvation, revelation, and divination, as well as African resilience in the face of invasions, colonization, and various outside religious assaults. The study also considers the influence of Christianity and Islam.

Robinson, David: Muslim Societies in African History. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2004. 220 pp. ISBN 0-521-53366-X. (pbk)

Examining a series of processes (Islamization, Arabization, Africanization) and case studies from North, West, and East Africa, this book gives snapshots of Muslim societies in Africa over the last 1000+ years. In contrast to traditions that suggest that Africa is not Muslim, or that Islam did not take root in Africa, David Robinson shows the complex struggles of Muslims in the Muslim state of Morocco and in the Hausaland region of Nigeria. He portrays the ways in which Islam was practiced in the “pagan” societies of Ashanti (Ghana) and Buganda (Uganda) and in the ostensibly Christian state of Ethiopia – beginning with the first emigration of Muslims from Mecca in 615 CE, well before the foundational *hijra* to Medina in 622. He concludes with chapters on the Mahdi and Khalifa of the Sudan and the Murid Sufi movement that originated in Senegal. Finally, Robinson offers reflections on the wake of the events of September 11, 2001. “Further reading” sections suggest how undergraduate readers may follow up on the themes of this volume, while illustrations and maps make the processes and case studies concrete.

Charles Stuart: This is the teaching text I have been waiting for ... it offers an historical context for considering a wide range of issues associated with Islam’s introduction and its “Africanization” in specific places, at specific times, across the continent.

Berman, Bruce, Dickson Eyoh, and Will Kymlicka (eds.): Ethnicity and Democracy in Africa. Oxford: James Currey; Athens: Ohio University Press, 2004. 336 pp. ISBN 0-85255-860-0; ISBN 0-8214-1570-0. (pbk)

The politics of identity and ethnicity are resurgent. Civil society, whose revival was much vaunted, was riven by communal tensions particularly of ethnicity and religion. The contributors address questions such as: Why is ethnicity a political problem? How is the problem

manifested? Which institutional models offer ways of ameliorating the challenges that ethnicity poses to democratic nation-building?

The contributors build up discussion from the premise that ethnic pluralism is and will remain a fundamental characteristic of African modernity. For this reason historians and anthropologists have joined political scientists in the discussion about the ways in which democracy can develop in multicultural societies.

Moraes, Fernando Olivera de: *A Festa do Divino em Mogi das Cruzes. Folclore e massificação na sociedade contemporânea.* São Paulo: Annablume Editora, 2003. 156 pp. ISBN 85-7419-384-4. (pbk)

Objetivo deste livro é analisar a festa folclórica do Divino Espírito Santo da cidade de Mogi das Cruzes em São Paulo, no contexto da sociedade contemporânea de massas. Visa estabelecer a relação do crescimento desse tipo de expressão da cultura popular com a ação da cultura de massa. Entender os motivos pelos quais, nos últimos anos, a festa apresenta participação e envolvimento expressivos de parcela significativa dos habitantes da cidade. Compreender porque, à entrada do século XXI, quando os signos das modernas tecnologias estão presentes em toda parte e com a redefinição do papel dos poderes público, privado e do cidadão, essa significativa parcela dos habitantes de Mogi das Cruzes procura resgatar e manter vivos valores e tradições de origem no meio rural. Por fim, identificar os sentidos da festa na relação entre passado e presente. Para tanto, procura utilizarse não de técnicas presentes nos estudos folcloristas, mas bacar a sua compreensão à luz das teorias da comunicação em sua relação com diversas ciências como a Antropologia, a Sociologia, a História e a Filosofia.

Lenaerts, Marc: *Anthropologie des Indiens Ashéninka d'Amazonie. Nos sœurs Manioc et l'étranger Jaguar.* Paris: L'Harmattan, 2004. 273 pp. ISBN 2-7475-7832-1. (pbk)

Qu'est-ce qu'une plante, qu'est-ce qu'un animal aux yeux d'un indigène amazonien ? Ce que l'on sait d'eux y est-il perçu, organisé et transmis de la même façon que chez nous ?

D'après les données recueillies chez les Indiens Ashéninka, à la frontière du Brésil et du Pérou, bien des idées reçues sont à revoir. Pour certaines, c'était assez prévisible : les savoirs indigènes n'ont par exemple rien d'un "trésor ancestral" stable, comme parfois on le croit encore. D'autres soulèvent des questions beaucoup plus troublantes pour les sciences cognitives ou l'anthropologie appliquée : malgré l'universalité du cerveau humain, les perceptions les plus immédiates des Ashéninka semblent remodelées par leurs croyances ontologiques : littéralement, ils ne voient pas les plantes et les animaux comme nous.

Itier, César: *La littérature orale quechua de la région de Cuzco, Pérou.* Paris: Éditions Karthala, 2004. 239 pp. ISBN 2-84586-593-7. (pbk)

Pourquoi le soleil refuse-t-il la main de sa fille-étoile à l'homme qui l'a séduite ? Comment une jeune fille peut-elle ne pas s'apercevoir qu'elle est devenue l'épouse d'un condor ? Pourquoi un renard est-il à l'origine de l'agriculture ? Pourquoi Jésus-Christ est-il sauvé de ses ennemis par un renard, un chat et un puma ? Pourquoi le fils de l'ours perd-il ses forces et son appétit extraordinaires en tuant une âme damnée ? Pourquoi le fils de l'ânesse veut-il être curé ?

Ce livre identifie les expériences vécues et partagées qui ont donné forme et sens aux douze récits de littérature orale quechua qui sont ici présentés et traduits. À travers ces textes se font jour les tensions propres à une organisation sociale, celle du monde rural de la région de Cuzco, en même temps que la personnalité et les préoccupations des conteurs. Bergers monolingues des prairies d'altitude ou migrants installés à Cuzco, ceux-ci font vivre, dans des récits pleins de fraîcheur et d'ironie, une tradition littéraire riche et méconnue.

Lester, Rebecca J.: *Jesus in Our Wombs. Embodying Modernity in a Mexican Convent.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 2005. 344 pp. ISBN 0-520-24268-8. (pbk)

In "Jesus in Our Wombs," Rebecca J. Lester takes us behind the walls of a Roman Catholic convent in central Mexico to explore the lives, training, and experiences of a group of postulants – young women in the first stage of religious training as nuns. Lester, who conducted eighteen months of fieldwork in the convent, provides a rich ethnography of these young women as they wrestle with doubts, fears, ambitions, and setbacks in their struggle to follow what they believe to be the will of God. Gracefully written, finely textured, and theoretically rigorous, this book considers how these aspiring nuns learn to experience God by cultivating an altered experience of their own female bodies, a transformation they view as a political stance against modernity.

Lester explains that the postulants work toward what they see as an "authentic" femininity – one that has been eclipsed by the values of modern society. The outcome of this process has political as well as personal consequences. The sisters learn to understand their very intimate experiences of "the Call" – and their choices in answering it – as politically relevant declarations of self. Readers become intimately acquainted with the personalities, family backgrounds, friendships, and aspirations of the postulants as Lester relates the practices and experiences of their daily lives. Combining compassionate, engaged ethnography with an incisive and provocative theoretical analysis of embodied selves, "Jesus in Our Wombs" delivers a profound analysis of what Lester calls the convent's "technology of embodiment"

on multiple levels – from the phenomenological to the political.

Hurbon, Laënnec: Religions et lien social. L'Église et l'État moderne en Haïti. Paris: Les Éditions du Cerf, 2004. 317 pp. ISBN 2-204-07242-7. (pbk)

Quelle est la nature de l'État qui émerge après la lutte pour l'indépendance menée par les esclaves insurgés de Saint-Domingue de 1791 à 1804 ? Quel rôle l'Église catholique remplit-elle dans la construction et dans l'évolution ultérieure de cet État ? Quelles transformations l'Église va-t-elle connaître dans le contexte de luttes à rebondissements pour la démocratie ouvert depuis 1986 ?

Grâce à des enquêtes approfondies, menées sur le terrain depuis plusieurs années, et à une recherche alliant l'histoire à la sociologie et à la philosophie politique, Laënnec Hurbon met en lumière la fonction des religions en compétition en Haïti depuis la Conquête et la période esclavagiste (catholicisme, protestantisme et vaudou) dans la constitution de lien social. Cette recherche montre que la laïcité de l'État est un réquisit indispensable à l'établissement d'un système démocratique.

En aidant à penser la crise théologico-politique que traverse encore de nos jours la société haïtienne, cet ouvrage nous offre une base solide pour comprendre les

sources du régime anarcho-populiste construit en Haïti autour de "la Famille", sur le modèle d'une "Cosa nostra".

Puri, Shalini: The Caribbean Postcolonial. Social Equality, Post-Nationalism, and Cultural Hybridity. New York: Palgrave Macmillan, 2004. 300 pp. ISBN 1-4039-6182-4. (pbk)

Exploring the relationship between discourses of cultural hybridity and projects for social equality "The Caribbean Postcolonial" reveals a far greater diversity of political and aesthetic practices of cultural hybridity than has been generally recognized in postcolonial and cultural studies. It uncovers the logics according to which some forms of hybridity are enshrined and others disavowed in the Caribbean imagination and in the disciplinary imagination of postcolonial studies. Exploring cultural formations ranging from mestizaje and creolization to mulatto and *dougl*a aesthetics, from literature to music, theatre, Hosay, and carnival, it examines the sources of the appeal of cultural hybridity for both nationalist and postnationalist agendas. The first book-length study to offer an explicitly comparative account of cultural hybridity in the post-colonial arena, "The Caribbean Postcolonial" is a forceful argument for historicizing theory. It intervenes in key debates around popular agency and cultural resistance, feminism and cultural nationalism, the relations between post-modernism and post-colonialism, and the status of nationalism in an era of globalization.

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Review of Articles

(by Joachim G. Piepke and Alexander Rödlach)

Harnischfeger, Johannes: Islamisation and Ethnic Conversion in Nigeria. *Anthropos* 101.2006: 37-53.

In the Middle Belt of Nigeria, between the Muslim north and the Christian south of the country, ownership of land is contested. Muslim Hausa-Fulani migrants from the north compete with the indigenous ethnic groups of the area which are mainly Christian and traditionalist. The migrants, who are a minority, actively spread their Muslim faith among the indigenous population. Material benefits and other forms of support motivate conversion particularly among the poor and marginalized. Converts tend to assume the language, culture, and political loyalties of the Hausa-Fulani migrants. This process of ethnic conversion has been reinforced by the recent attempts in various Nigerian states to introduce Sharia, Islamic Law, as the legislative practice of local governments. Sharia privileges Muslims over Christians and traditionalists, thus supporting the tendency among some local indigenous people to convert to Islam. The attempts to introduce Sharia also put the indigenous converts under pressure to prove that their new faith is more important than their ethnic loyalties. Where armed conflicts break out, most converts side with the Muslim Hausa-Fulani migrants and fight, in the name of religion, against their Christian and traditionalist kin.

Members of local ethnic groups resent Islamic proselytism, as they feel it may erode the social cohesion and integrity of their ethnic groups. They bemoan that religious conversion leads also to ethnic conversion and invoke the right to preserve a collective existence against the intrusion of outsiders. At times, group members who converted to Islam have been urged by them to renounce their new faith. In some instances, violence erupted and mosques have been burned down. Such conflicts erupt not only over the introduction of Sharia, but particularly when people compete over scarce resources, such as land. Many of the Hausa-Fulani migrants are uprooted by recurrent droughts in the north of Nigeria and search for farming land in the Middle Belt. Due to a large influx of migrants, the indigenous ethnic groups in that area fear becoming a minority in their own homeland, thus losing political power and subsequently also control over the land, the basis of their existence.

In the past Christianity was appealing to locals because it offered through its schools a sound academic education preparing them for the job market. However, Christianity has lost this appeal because local people know that the Islamic governments control access to jobs in the public sector what is in the end more important than obtaining a good education. Particularly young people who come to town in order to start a new life and to look for jobs are open for conversion to Islam. Though

Christianity has lost some of its appeal, it has currently assumed for local ethnic groups two new functions: first of preserving their ethnic identity, and second of understanding themselves as part of a national and global religious community from which they can expect support. Confronted with the political claims of Islam, Christianity is turning into a political movement as well. In Nigeria, as in other parts of Africa, a militant brand of Christianity is emerging. As the two religions are locked in a fight for political supremacy, proselytism becomes crucial. Conversion is thus interwoven with communal competition for identity, power, and resources.

Seligman, Rebecca: Distress, Dissociation, and Embodied Experience: Reconsidering the Pathways to Medium-ship and Mental Health. *Ethos* 33.2005: 71-99.

It has often been argued that medium-ship is a cultural interpretation or a social response to an individual's entry into altered states of consciousness. This state of dissociation, the so-called trance, is frequently viewed as the central and defining feature of medium-ship. However, this narrow understanding of trance and medium-ship excludes other dimensions; trance is just a single element of the medium-ship role. The medium-ship role needs to be seen as the outcome of multi-layered and diverse interests. This enables us to see various connections of medium-ship to other dimensions besides trance, and to interpret medium-ship from different angles. One aspect is to understand the relationship between medium-ship and mental health, a central focus of this article.

The pathways leading individuals to spirit-possession membership in the context of Brazilian Candomblé encompasses social, psychological, and cultural dimensions, as well as the interactions among them. Becoming a medium is a dynamic process in which an individual's experience of his or her own characteristics and predispositions is influenced by cultural beliefs surrounding medium-ship. The characteristics of mediums and the characteristics of the medium-ship role are uniquely suited to one another because, over time, the medium-ship role has developed to suit the needs of individuals from the Afro-Brazilian population. Similarly, some Afro-Brazilian individuals who have been exposed to Candomblé identify with the medium-ship role, and come to experience themselves in the spiritual terms associated with that role.

The ability to fall in trance contributes to an individual's ability and motivation to successfully occupy the medium-ship role – a characteristic shaped by the dynamic interactions of emotional distress, somatisation, and the cultural meaning system. Learning to induce

trance and experience it as part of a new identity and positive role, may help to buffer against the experience of somatic distress. Ritual trance could, therefore, represent an important therapeutic dimension of Candomblé spirit possession medium-ship and contributes to the individual's management of his or her mental health.

The medium-ship role also provides social support, status, and aesthetic pleasure that are missing from the lives of most poor Afro-Brazilians. In addition, the poverty of many Afro-Brazilians makes them more prone to emotional distress than others. For those, who become involved in Candomblé, the spiritual narrative of the religions allows them to rewrite their own self-narratives in new, more positive terms, and contributes to a therapeutic reduction in existential distress. Finally, some individuals are more prone to experience distress somatically than others, and the embodied nature of the medium-ship role provides a positive outlet for this tendency in the form of ritual dance. Without doubt, different individuals follow different pathways to medium-ship, and for some it is probably primarily a social pathway in which medium-ship represents a socially rewarding or politically empowering status. For others, it is a pathway of psycho-social motivation and embodiment.

This approach of integrating the individual, social, and cultural levels of analysis is helpful for studying various health related issues, and follows the understanding that health and illness are quintessentially multidimensional events influenced by various issues. Such an integrative approach can also be applied to inform our understanding of the dynamic processes involved in the discovery, diagnosis, and labelling of physical and mental disorders, as well as the experience and meaning of these processes for affected individuals.

Toren, Christina: Laughter and Truth in Fiji: What We May Learn from a Joke. *Oceania* 75.2005: 268-283.

Language is a media for communication among and between individuals. People use language differently: in formal discussion, casual conversation, and – the topic of this article – in joking and laughter. The latter usages are often difficult to understand for outsiders of a culture. The question also arises about how far truth is mediated through joking and laughter and how to analyze the two usages of language in this regard. A case study from Fiji serves as the basis for this article and its arguments.

A central question, which we need to ask, is what are the conditions that render what is said or written good and right or bad and wrong? Our idea of these conditions is by and large identical with our idea about what language is good for; it is broadly speaking an idea of its moral force. While we value truthful accounts of what people tell us about the way they view the world and the human experience, and by and large believe that people are telling us the truth, we also know that people tell the truth as a function of what they hold to be true. This personal truth does not necessarily match factual

truth! It is nevertheless important, because it tells us a lot about the speaker, the functions of language, and their society as a whole.

To fully understand a language is also to understand native speakers' ideas about what speech does and the conditions that render it good and right. And it is important to be aware of the process through which native speakers constitute an idea of the moral force that is given in ritualised aspects of language use. The communicative power of ritual is the outcome of a process of making sense through which, over time, a person renders certain ritualised behaviours meaningful. We are coerced by those rituals and ritualised behaviours that were rendered meaningful because we have already embodied an indelible knowledge of the "what" and "how" of these particular ritual practices. In becoming native speakers of a language we are also finding out how to be in relation to others, we are constituting an idea of ourselves as subjects as a function of intersubjectivity, an idea that is itself rendered explicit through language. And in doing so, we are making sense too of those ritualised aspects of language that inform our ideas of the moral force of what is said or written. That is to say, we are rendering meaningful, and thus integral to our language practice, phenomena that are paralinguistic and likely to be remarked upon only obliquely.

An understanding of the moral force of what is said – is it good and right? – and how it is manifest in any given instance is not a complete solution for efforts to understand language. And here laughter presents a difficulty, because it is essentially not an external but an interior form of truth; it cannot be transformed into seriousness without destroying and distorting the very contents of the truth which it unveils. In Fiji, laughter represents a subtly pervasive and fundamental aspect of language use: its moral force. Truth is a function of the moral force of language, which is embedded in and constituted through the everyday social relations that can be analyzed in terms of various aspects, such as gender, kinship, chiefship, and local ideas of the person. Laughter emerges as central both to the events described and their analysis. Subtle though they may be, people's ideas of the moral force of language are amenable to investigation and analysis.

Ho, Ming-Sho: Protest as Community Revival: Folk Religion in a Taiwanese Anti-Pollution Movement. *African and Asian Studies* 4.2005: 237-269.

In 1987 people in Houchin, Taiwan, opposed the further expansion of the China Petroleum Company. This case is an important milestone in the history of Taiwanese environmentalism and famous for its persistent protest over three years. The local community sustained its solidarity throughout the protest-actions through the local folk religion. Religion in action was more than an instrument for mobilization, but rather substantially affected the movement's goal and the movement's meaning for the participants. These highly localised messages were instrumental for the movement but often

escaped outsiders' observation. Folk religion was an integral, yet neglected element throughout the mobilization period of local environmental movements in Taiwan.

The local orientation of folk religion defined the boundary of communal membership and also the meaning of local protest. In the past Houchin villages were organized through religious faith and rituals to strengthen their solidarity in the struggle against hostile outsiders and state control. In the environmental protests, folk religion became a spiritual weapon to fight against encroaching polluters. The actual protest repertoire took scripts from religious ceremonies. Ritualized protests were intended not only to threaten the opponent but also to boost the emotional attachment of community members.

Beneath the faction-ridden movement, there existed an overarching consensus of being united. In this regard, though the movement goal to oppose plant construction failed, the solidarity of the community was sustained during this critical period. The expressive logic of communal solidarity through traditional means was often neglected in past studies. While anthropologists were trained to understand communal dynamics in a traditional setting, only a few of them found their objects of research capable of staging a modern-style movement. Sociologists of social movements suffered from the opposite limitation in that they offered a too modern interpretation, which slights the importance of religion. The Houchin case is by no means a lone example.

Other environmental protests that are equally locally embedded, religiously oriented, and communally based can be observed all over the world. The Taiwanese case shows that underlying religious traditions and dynamics can give rise to the collective action of a community. The Houchin case also exemplifies the possibility to mobilize traditional cultural resources to build a new form of modernity. Traditions are not too intractable to resist learning the new lessons. Folk religion in Taiwan with its explicit messages of communal solidarity and hostility against outsiders becomes the suitable medium to convey the gospel of environmentalism.

However, due to the localized notions inherited from the folk religion, Houchin protesters seemed oblivious to the fact that environmentalism is an inherently universalistic philosophy. Also, the exclusive reliance on local identity rendered the protest isolated and vulnerable. This partly explains why local environmental protests did not lead to fundamental changes in society and the state; local villagers were satisfied with minor and short-term goals. It can be concluded that despite its positive role in channelling and shaping local protests, the role of folk religion is ambiguous. Unless the local solidarity widens to become meaningful as national or even regional and global solidarity, Taiwanese folk religion will most likely not be a successful medium for environmental movements. The same would apply also to folk or traditional religions elsewhere.

Bakar, Osman: The Impact of the American War on Terror on Malaysian Islam. *Islam and Christian-Muslim Relations* 16.2005: 107-127.

Malaysia is a Muslim country with a long record of parliamentary democracy, which is one of the most developed in the Muslim world. The American "War on Terrorism," particularly the American-led wars in Afghanistan and Iraq as well as their involvement in fighting separatist groups in the Philippines, had an impact on Malaysian national politics, especially on its political Islam. Malaysian political leaders have been committed to fighting terrorism nationally and globally, and active in the regional war on terrorism. However, they wanted to join this war on their own terms and publicly distanced themselves from the US.

Governing politicians have been ingenious in exploiting the war on terrorism for their own political agendas: by taking an independent stance on the war, they boosted their image as defenders of Islam and deprived opposition politicians of scoring points in their attack on the US. The Malaysian government also exploited the war on terrorism to weaken the opposition, e.g. by linking some of them to terrorism and arresting them under the accusation of being a threat to national security. There was a widespread perception that the arrests were a government-orchestrated political plot to stem the growing influence of the opposition. As such, the war on terrorism threatened human rights in Malaysia and helped the government to reverse its declining political fortunes. In the climate of heightened anxiety about possible extremist and terrorist networks in Malaysia, many Malaysians were prepared to give the government the benefit of the doubt and support its strong stance against alleged terrorists. It seems that many voters were also prepared to tolerate its authoritarian rule for the sake of security and in the government received a much greater majority in 1999 than in earlier general elections.

In recent times, Malaysia appears to enter a new phase in its war on terrorism. Both the government and the opposition are committed to fighting religious extremism and terrorism, but they are also committed to democracy. If democracy is to be presented as the key to winning the war on religious extremism and terrorism, a position on which both sides seem to agree, then there is a need to address the issue of the ideological dimension of terrorism and to demonstrate how democracy is most suited to combat fanaticism. The democratic reforms in Malaysia, a predominantly Muslim country, presuppose the compatibility of Islam and democracy and could even suggest Islam as a pillar of political pluralism – a proposition with far-reaching international relevance.

Martin, David: Secularisation and the Future of Christianity. *Journal of Contemporary Religion* 20.2005: 145-160.

The very different histories of nations, their particular histories, give rise to particular types of secularisation. It is possible to list numerous general tendencies common in secularisation all over the world, but these ten-

dencies are greatly affected by the particular histories of nations, and these histories can even reverse these tendencies, as in the case of contemporary Islam. If we take as an example the distinctive history of Russia, there is also a distinctive pattern of secularisation. Moreover, one cannot reduce the religious revival in Russia following the collapse of communism to the survival of elements from the past that the regime failed to snuff out, or just a reaction to the partial abolition of an “enlightened” tyranny. There are many other examples of a particular history associated with a particular kind of secularisation. What we see in the history of liberal and republican France differs substantially from what we see in Protestant and post-Protestant Britain and Scandinavia. The future of Christianity, thus, may not be prefigured by post-Protestant Holland or post-Catholic France. In the same way, it may not be prefigured, although it is certainly influenced, by the American model of Protestant pluralism, which today overtakes the French model of secularism, once so influential in, e.g. Turkey and Brazil.

Various aspects of historical situations and their likely outcomes for the Catholic Church can be identified. Where Catholicism has been opposed to the mobilisation of the nation, and specifically set itself against liberal nationalism, a spiral of decline frequently occurred, e.g. in France. Where ambivalence, collusion, and compromise alternated with vicious conflict, the recovery of privileges may be delayed many decades. Mexico is a typical example for that tendency. Where the church has been associated with national struggle, even reluctantly as in Ireland, the positive identification persisted, at least for some time. But nowhere can the church assume that loyal identification is permanent or that it can be translated into obedience to its norms. Particularly a church that looks too much after its priestly leadership at the expense of the laity, and a church that does not understand the ways of contemporary life, tends to loose influence in the long run.

Protestant trajectories vary as much as Catholic ones, but in general, the inwardness and moral discipline of the Reformation broke out of the protective fabric of the church. Protestantism in many nations mutated into a piecemeal of pragmatism and utilitarianism. Yet passivity and apathy characterise mainly the Protestant state churches of Europe. In the US, a vital Protestantism goes together with pluralism and the separation of Church and state. In the developing world, Protestantism has a very different character especially in Africa where, as in the US, the church flourishes in an atmosphere of competitive pluralism and faith is identified with education and modernity.

The search for an individual pathway in the North Atlantic world combined a legitimisation of aggressive greed with the existential rejection of markers, limits, and boundaries, in particular all markers of authority, social cohesion and control. Individuals were disinclined to commit themselves to a long-term maintenance of institutions, and viewed forms and manners, rituals and vestments as mere external constraints. This

relativistic subjectivity not only undermined religious institutions, but was also hostile to the proclaimed objectivity of science and the restrictive protocols of philosophical positivism. Nevertheless, a space for religion was still there. However, this space was devoid of a long-term commitment to a community bound together by strong ethics. Where practices based on self-expression worked in alliance with consumerism, youth culture, and the pressure of the media, spirituality retranslated as working out your own salvation without fear and trembling and without belonging to an institution.

The exceptional situation in parts of Western Europe, due in part to historical factors, including religious monopoly and powerful establishment, not present on the global scene, except in Latin America, led to a specific development in Europe. Some observers, however, regard the European decline as bottoming out. The loosening of ties between the church and the state, between ecclesiastical and social elites, and between ecclesial and secular moral norms, result in social differentiation. The religious landscape in Europe becomes increasingly pluralistic, which may, as in other parts of the world, be beneficial for the established religions. For all churches, loyal identification does not entail agreement with ecclesiastical pronouncements. Lay Christians tend to make their decision independently from the church leadership in terms of what makes sense to them in the life-world. To achieve this, they increasingly draw on diverse religious traditions and sources. Their actual beliefs reflect more a melange of different belief system than of church doctrine. However, whatever happens today and in future in Europe is of decreasing importance for Christianity than it had been in the past. The declining European population will make European developments less significant for global Christianity.

A general conclusion from studying secularisation phenomena from all over the world is that the future of Christianity depends on whether the Christian message and institutions continue to make sense to people. Where churches provide meaning to people, the churches will flourish. Where the churches fail to reach people, they will drift into insignificance and oblivion. Church history knows many examples of such developments.

Sundar, Nandini: Religion and Culture in Bastar: The Politics of “Conversion.” *The Eastern Anthropologist* 43.2001: 255-272.

In the last few years, Hindu nationalist organizations in many parts of India have initiated terror campaigns against Christians. These Hindu groups argue that Christian churches and organizations have elaborated aggressive programs to encourage Hindus to convert to Christianity. Politicians frequently condoned such attacks against Christians and even fuelled the situation by calling for a national debate on conversion and by arguing that it is justified to organize programs and campaigns to trigger reverse conversion, re-conversion, from Christianity to Hinduism.

Such Hindu reverse-conversion campaigns targeted particularly tribal areas and were based on the dubious assumption that tribal groups are historically Hindu and that their re-conversion is simply a matter of returning to Hinduism. Though there are historical associations between modern Hinduism and tribal religion, the two are not synonymous. The re-conversion campaigns refer to a form of modern Hinduism based on the idea of a distinct and monolithic religious community, often using symbols generated by the contemporary media. As such, this type of Hinduism is quite different from historical Hinduism. Additionally, tribal religions, e.g. in Bastar, were often viewed as folk forms of Hinduism, but they have also much in common with folk forms of Islam. Overall, tribal religions continue to be distinct from both historical and modern forms of Hinduism in terms of their relationship with the earth and natural spirits as the central objects of worship. In folk Hinduism, these are secondary forms, if at all. To sum up: tribal religions in India cannot easily be called a folk form of Hinduism.

There is, however, another problematic issue. The foremost threat to this form of tribal religion today is not so much direct proselytisation of Christianity or Hinduism, as land alienation and the destruction of the forests. It becomes increasingly difficult for tribal people to worship the earth or the spirits as these resources slowly disappear. This however, has not merited any concern of Hindu organizations or local politicians, in contrast to their focus on re-conversion attempts. Overall, Hindu conversion, often assisted by the state, seems to be a bigger force in Bastar than Christian conversion. Hindu conversion is today more successful than in the past as today the reach of the postcolonial state, the media, and the market is much greater than in the past. Re-conversion to Hinduism also is often as divisive for local communities as Christian conversions. While conversion is a source of tension within a village, it is clearly not the only or even most important source of tension. And it is also not the only source of change: much change is induced by national or global changes felt by the local society.

Due to the fluidity of belief and practice that characterizes most lived experiences of religion in the area, the desire of certain Hindu groups to ban conversions to Christianity is not only fundamentally wrong but also impossible to enforce. People convert out of various reasons and sickness is often the most common reason. However, conversions are not final acts of faith, and a common pattern in these areas is shifting back and forth from one religion to another, motivated by social, material, health-related, religious, and political circumstances and events.

Jones, Ben: The Church in the Village, the Village in the Church: Pentecostalism in Teso, Uganda. *Cahiers d'Études Africaines* 178.2005: 497-517.

Much of the literature on Pentecostalism in Africa discusses the role of churches in urban areas, taking the

exclusionary doctrine of Pentecostal Christianity as indicative of the ways in which “born-again” Christian approach politics. It was frequently argued that this brand of Christianity withdraws from active involvement in social life and retreats into concerns about the salvation of individuals. Evidence from Uganda contradicts such a simplistic interpretation.

The development of the Pentecostal churches in Uganda as elsewhere, which started in the mid-1970s, has affected not only the spiritual and economic well-being of individual villagers; it has also brought about deep changes in the wider political landscape. Though Pentecostal churches espouse an ideological commitment to a clear separation between the life of the “saved” and the ways of the world, the practical division is much less clear. Drawing on a case study of a Pentecostal church in Uganda, the article focuses on the way villagers who attend the Pentecostal church continue to participate in other local-level institutions. They engage in local-level institutions such as burial societies, the village councils and clan communities. Through mundane, everyday political activities, such as building up a career or managing a land dispute, Pentecostal Christians utilise their membership in church alongside their participation in other local-level institutions. In materially constrained environments, Pentecostal churches provide one more place where villagers piece together political actions that promise the possibility of economic and physical security. It is helpful for understanding the social landscape to view the church as one arena among many, and the significance of Pentecostalism from a local-level perspective is related as much to its ability to transform village politics as it is to its ability to transform religious beliefs.

These churches are part of the human and physical infrastructure of the village, dealing with a range of concerns also addressed by government and customary institutions. In many cases, there is no easy separation between what transpires in one institution and another. Churches are places where help can be found during the planting season, where one can build up support for an impending court case, or where one can take the first steps on the path to becoming a “big man,” a local leader figure. As such, there are practical intersections with the work of clan committees, the local court system and the village council. The case analysis shows how born-again Christians interrelate their membership of the church with the wider local institutional landscape of the village: their decision to become born-again does not mean to be divisive or exclusionary. Pentecostalism, in this case study, is seen as developing the local political field, making it an addition to the institutional landscape of the village.

What was striking about this church was the degree to which born-again Christianity has been incorporated into the local political field. The tensions that existed between the church and other local-level institutions were not particularly pronounced. The occasional conflicts that engaged the village pastor in disputes with other “big men” were less common than those instances

where the village council chairman came into conflict with clan elders. The Christians continue to participate in local courts, draw water from the community-managed pump, and pay fees to burial societies. The doctrine of personal salvation, the expressed belief in withdrawing from a world of sin, of making a complete break with the past, has to rub along with the economic, social and political necessities that govern life in an income poor, rural area. Although being a member of the Pentecostal church is an important identity, belonging to such a church does not mean that members retreat from other local-level institutions. The church is best understood as part of the local political field.

The intersection of religion and politics at the local level offers an opportunity to open up the study of local politics. The changing shape of village courts, local councils, and even development projects, are better understood when related to the changing significance of religious institutions.

Schnepel, Burkhardt: "In Sleep a Kind:" The Politics of Dreaming in a Cross-Cultural Perspective. *Paideuma* 51.2005: 209-220.

Dreams and dreaming, though typically belonging to the night, may have a great impact on human daytime activities. Conversely, experiences during the day undoubtedly influence our dreams. Occasionally, the dreamer may view the dream as a message concerning his or her true calling and as a request, even a divine order, to make the vision of the dream come into existence in waking life as well. And if the dream is to be made true in waking, it will then initiate, support, and legitimise actions directed towards achieving this goal. This can be called the "politics of dreaming."

Three basic models of the "politics of dreaming" can be recognised cross-culturally. First, dreams may legitimise already existing positions of power, especially when explaining and justifying extraordinary measures or when rejecting and suppressing competing claims. Secondly, dreams may also initiate and justify changes of power, or at least attempts to achieve them. Thirdly, dream experiences may be diametrically opposed to the second variant, when they result in passivity, lethargy, unworldliness, escapism, apathy, and the acceptance of existing conditions by subaltern groups.

Cross-cultural comparison shows that there is a basic problem in understanding dreams. In a scientific and rationalist perspective, the relationship between dreams and wakefulness appears as a chain of unbridgeable oppositions, which can be marked as follows: Dream experiences appear as the private, inner experience of an individual; they have no objective reality, in contrast to the experiences and visions of wakefulness, which are made public by many and which can be checked and measured by means of objective criteria. This dichotomy was often seen as being intrinsically connected with different cultures or stages in human history. Non-Western societies or past cultures were thought to

regard dreams as messages that must be taken seriously. Members of Western cultures, on the other hand, were seen as regarding dreams as being called forth by the body or psyche of the dreamer.

Obviously, this general opposition is problematic. It must be stressed that in all cultures diverse views on dreaming exist. And the boundaries between the two sides are fluid and changeable. In many cultures, dreaming and wakefulness are often seen as flowing into one another, and the attributes of one side may also appear on the other side. Also intermediate zones emerge, for example, daydreams and trances, which are ascribed important functions as intermediaries between the world and the other-world. All in all, therefore, research into dreaming from a cross-cultural perspective is confronted with the problem of the relationship between dreams and wakefulness, true and false, unconscious and conscious, mythical and logical, sensory orientation and rational speech, hard and soft reality, and similar oppositions. It is worth examining how the two sides are seen by the actors as being linked to and supplementing each other, or whether they are partitioned off from one another.

"Dream cultures" have complex approaches to dreams. When actors see a dream as being equipped with a meaning that transcends the life of the individual dreamer, the dream may initiate and legitimise actions in wakefulness, especially when the waking life strongly differs from the dreamt life, or when an alternative is sketched out in a dream, or when the dream contains an explicit demand for action. Individuals, social groups, and even nations may dispute the proper interpretation of these dream messages and thus use a number of strategies.

A common notion in many cultures is that dreams are thought to be not inner processes of the remembering or imagining psyche. Rather, dreams are considered to be powers that have their origins outside the individuals who experience them. The dreamer is often simply a passive recipient of the actions of an external force that influences and even takes possession of him or her. Instead of a single agent, two agents are believed to encounter each other during dreams, which interact dialectically.

Izidoro, José Luiz: A Religiosidade popular na cultura caiçara. A Festa do Divino Espírito Santo em Iguape. *Anthropos* 101.2006: 169-178.

No Brasil, mesclam-se os elementos culturais nas festividades de expressão religiosa: elementos indígenas, elementos da cultura afro e elementos da cultura europeia, particularmente destacando aqui a cultura lusa. Nesse contexto mais amplo está a "Festa do Divino Espírito Santo" em Iguape, cidade situada no litoral sul do Estado de São Paulo. É uma festa que até a década de 60 do século passado representava a maior manifestação de fé das camadas populares da região. Era uma "força viva" no catolicismo popular em tensão com a Igreja

oficial. A tensão que antes se dava no interior das relações de poder da Religião oficial com a Religião popular, a partir do Concílio Vaticano II assume outra feição, devido ao autoritarismo do “Corpo especializado” que se dá a partir das renovações conciliares. Assim, muitos valores intrínsecos ao catolicismo popular foram substituídos abruptamente por valores, teologicamente válidos, mas alheios às prioridades do povo. É certo que hoje houve uma evolução na caminhada da Igreja, com progresso a nível interpretativo e também vivencial das renovações pós-conciliares.

Afirma-se, com razão, que as raízes da festa estão em Portugal nos tempos da Santa Rainha Isabel (1271-1336). A fim de alcançar a paz e unidade para sua terra e família, ela consagrou Portugal ao Espírito Santo e doou como precioso ex-voto sua coroa à Igreja. Ordenou, outrossim, se realizassem anualmente festividades semelhantes, como expressão de gratidão e de uma especial veneração para o Espírito Santo.

A Festa do Divino Espírito Santo tornou-se uma festa típica de cidades pequenas do interior e do litoral do país. A chamada folia que antecede a própria festa e se prolonga por quase dois meses consiste de grupos pequenos que andam com bandeira e instrumentos de sítio em sítio visitando as famílias, cantando e dançando, rezando, recolhendo dinheiro para a festa e reatando os laços de amizade e fraternidade entre as famílias. Este aspecto da religiosidade popular tem sido mais ou menos criticado, porque apareceu nos olhos do clero um vedadeiro vício e até um modo de furto. Porém, tais práticas parecem uma reação contra uma espiritualidade racionalizada, um culto abstrato que as pessoas simples não compreendem e que as leva a apegarem-se a fórmulas antigas e habituais.

Cinco grandes momentos marcam profundamente a vida do povo na Festa do Divino Espírito em Iguape: 1. novenas; 2. festas na casa do Imperador (o festeiro); 3. leilões; 4. escolha do novo Imperador; 5. missa do Divino e a grande procissão. Assim, a Festa é uma realidade de profunda magnitude para a vida do povo. Suas manifestações possibilitam uma constante harmonia existencial e cósmica entre o cotidiano da vida e a vida de fé. São, sobretudo, práticas religiosas, cujas raízes estão na essência do ser humano, que descobre a gratuidade de Deus nos pequenos e grandes gestos de solidariedade do dia a dia.

Córdoba, Lorena: Ideología, simbolismo y relaciones de género en la construcción de la persona chacobo. *Anthropos* 101.2006: 145-158.

Los chacobo de la Amazonía boliviana forman parte de la familia lingüística pano, que cuenta con alrededor de 50.000 miembros y se extiende en la amazonía de Brasil, Perú y Bolivia. Las representaciones y prácticas que constituyen la “humanidad” y la “persona”, y en plano más específico la condición de ser mujer, no son para los chacobos procesos meramente fisiológicos, con propiedades dadas de una vez y para siempre. Parecen estar

constituidas por una serie de procesos de construcción y modelado social de la persona, cuya consistencia y articulación deben rastrearse en el plano simbólico. Los condicionantes de estos procesos son llamados una “ideología”, es decir, un sistema de ideas y valores compartidos en un medio social dado.

Así como existe una fabricación social de la “mujer”, existe también un trazado preciso de sus relaciones con el sexo opuesto; y no pocos datos invitan a pensar que en realidad son dos caras de la misma moneda: la construcción de la mujer es la construcción de sus relaciones con los hombres. Sin embargo la determinación del “sexo social” debe construirse materialmente en la cotidianidad, pues así como no es innata tampoco puede ser calcada sobre el sexo biológico. El imaginario, el simbolismo y la ideología del género ubican en su correspondiente lugar no sólo las relaciones entre los sexos, sino también sus mismas diferencias. Mediante mitos, ritos, discursos y prácticas diversas se bosquejan una cierta lógica de las relaciones de género, la cual modela luego los estereotipos del “Hombre” y de la “Mujer” que cada individuo medio aspira a cumplir.

Los datos sugieren, en definitiva, un cuadro que problematiza – cuando no niega directamente – la imagen indulgente de la “sociedad de la igualdad” que el misionero Prost creyó advertir entre los chacobo hace más de veinte años. No se deben confundir las relaciones de complementariedad entre los sexos con la simetría o la igualdad entre ellos. Siempre y en todos los lugares hay un sexo mayor y otro menor, un sexo fuerte y un sexo débil. Se trata, en este caso, del lenguaje de la ideología. Mismo las prácticas que definen las esferas más íntimas de producción de lo femenino son subordinadas luego al control de los hombres, tal como se evidencia en las fiestas. Podría hablarse incluso de una consciencia social “alienada”, en el sentido de que ciertos grupos sociales deben adaptarse a un orden de las cosas arbitrario y idiosincrásico que, sin embargo, conciben como “obvio” y “natural”. Los hombres forjan una suerte de monopolio de las prácticas de producción y reproducción social, manipulando en su propio beneficio la fecundidad, la sexualidad y la división sexual del trabajo.

Beyer, Peter: Au croisement de l’identité et de la différence: les syncrétismes culturo-religieux dans le contexte de la mondialisation. *Social Compass* 52.2005: 417-429.

Parler de syncrétisme, tant dans les domaines de la religion que de la culture, c’est problématiser des manifestations importantes du changement social. Un phénomène peut être considéré comme syncrétique uniquement si l’on considère son autre face, celle qu’est appelé « pureté ». On peut analyser cette relation réciproque entre pureté et syncrétisme selon trois dimensions : (1) la dimension objective de l’identité ; (2) la dimension sociale du pouvoir ; et (3) la dimension temporelle de l’histoire.

A l’instar de la secte ou de la superstition, le syncrétisme indique une réalité qui relève à la foi d’une iden-

tité déjà reconnue et d'éléments importants extérieurs à cette identité. Les syncrétismes sont, dans ce sens, des mélanges de puretés et sont considérés, dès lors, négativement comme « impurs » ou positivement comme de « nouvelles puretés » potentielles. Des termes comme « syncrétisation » et « hybridation » soulignent l'aspect de mélange, de *métissage*. Ils véhiculent souvent également une autre connotation, à savoir l'aspect quelque peu marginal de ce qu'ils désignent. Cela nous conduit à aborder la question du pouvoir.

Dans la société mondiale actuelle, la religion et la culture constituent aussi des formes particulières de pouvoir. Il s'agit de rôle joué par ces catégories identitaires dans la construction de revendications d'autres formes de pouvoir, non spécifiquement culturelles ou religieuses. Divers textes, comme des déclarations de droits ou d'indépendance, des constitutions d'États et des proclamations relatives à des droits et à la dignité des personnes et des individus, illustrent cela. Dans ce cadre précis, un individu ou une collectivité peut revendiquer un droit à l'accès à diverses modalités de pouvoir allant du politique et l'économique à l'artistique et l'éducatif. L'exclusion de ces formes de pouvoir peut être vécue comme une violation de ces droits, comme injuste, comme un problème à résoudre.

Aux yeux de certains observateurs, l'islam moderne ne peut en rien être perçu comme un exemple de syncrétisation ou d'hybridation. Mais, puisqu'il s'agit d'illustrer l'élaboration contingente de puretés globales apparaissant comme évident, il s'agit peut-être d'un des

exemples les plus significatifs. La construction de la pureté est en elle-même un processus de syncrétisation. Lorsqu'on génère le socialement neuf, on ne part jamais du néant ; on utilise toujours ce qui existe déjà. On dissout certains éléments en les sortant de leur contexte signifiant antérieur et on les recompose dans ce qui apparaîtra ensuite comme une forme originale. Les mythes originels dominants de l'islam montrent clairement que ce processus y est à l'œuvre. En ignorant la question de leur historicité scientifique, les compilations sacrées du Coran et de la Sunna du prophète Mahomet témoignent d'une recombinaison fortement sélective d'une grande variété d'éléments, tirés notamment des traditions culturelles et religieuses juives, chrétiennes et arabes préislamique. Ces éléments sont tissés pour confectionner une toile originale dont quelques fils seulement sont sans précédent ; cette toile est ensuite proposée au monde, non pas comme la chose nouvelle qu'elle est en un certain sens, mais comme « l'original » sous forme arabe.

Le bouddhisme moderne montre très clairement comment la singularité ou la pureté religieuse est le produit d'une syncrétisation permanente. A l'instar des autres grandes religions modernes, l'histoire du bouddhisme regorge de variantes construites, et donc syncrétisées, qui combinent les traditions reçues avec des inventions et des éléments neufs provenant de traditions locales initialement non-bouddhistes. Le développement des lignées et des traditions Vajrayana tibétaines en sont de bons exemples, tout comme leurs versions Mahayana – extrêmement diversifiées – chinoises, coréennes et japonaises.

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