
BOOK REVIEWS

REVIEW ARTICLE

Cinema and Anthropology

Gray, Gordon. 2010. *Cinema: A Visual Anthropology*. Oxford: Berg. ISBN: 978-1-84520-794-6, pp. xviii–167.

Grimshaw, Anna and Amanda Ravetz. 2009. *Observational Cinema: Anthropology, Film, and the Exploration of Social Life*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press. ISBN: 978-0-253-22158-2, pp. xx–198.

Film is concerned with a mind-body representation that is visual, aural, verbal, narrative, and enactive. It is a mature means in anthropological research, offering something that written accounts cannot. Cinema is a space where both film and anthropology intermingle in a triangular interaction of the filmmaker, the characters on the screen, and the audience. The two books brought together in this review are also connected to each other. Firstly and most obviously, the words ‘cinema’ and ‘anthropology’ appear in their titles. Secondly, they both deal with the issues of filmmaking, representation on the screen, and peoples’ understanding of film. They are, however, very different from each other in their contents and the message they want to convey to their readers.

Gray’s book is the first in the series edited by Marcus Banks and focused on the key texts in the anthropology of visual and material culture. Gray argues that anthropological significance has been largely underestimated in the analyses of Western and non-Western fiction films, produced particularly in the USA, UK, India, Japan, Indonesia and Niger. Feature films, in his view, have anthropologically much to offer with their cultural constructions of everyday life, symbolic communication, socio-cultural contexts of their production, and their political and economic forces. The book is meant to be a study guide. Its intention is to engage students who share a common interest in fiction films, outside anthropology.

With their focus on the observational style of ethnographic filmmaking, Ravetz and Grimshaw go straight to the heart of anthropology and the filmic practice. They call the observational style a skilled practice and attribute to it intellectual inquiry in its own right. They address its potentials and reconsider its approaches within contemporary ethnographic research. While they are constantly on the move between screening halls and galleries, Gray remains firmly in the cinematic space often defined by the public as a medium of entertainment. He points towards the cinema’s social aspects where the anthropological studies of audience find their reasonable place. The approaches to cinema and anthropology in these two books are poles apart. One is about ‘doing’ and the other about ‘viewing’. One explores the art of filmmaking, innovation, and realisation of ideas; the other focuses on the context and content of the fictional plot, its perception and reception. In the former book, we can read about the concrete settings where a filmmaker also becomes an anthropologist who gives sense to certain cultural specificities, and opens up a space for engagement with the audience. In the latter book, we are the audience making sense of what we see under the fixed structures and abstractions produced by director’s editing-suit.

Grimshaw and Ravetz offer an appealing study of the observational cinematic method in ethnographic research. In its beginnings, this style of filmmaking was linked to

a different epistemology and aesthetic than was known at that time. It was based on the ethnographic encounter itself and primarily on cinematic, non-literary ways of expression. The anthropologist Roger Sandall introduced the term (in 1972). Colin Young followed the idea and three years later established the genre. He was at the centre of the observational movement and started the Ethnographic Film Program at UCLA. This newly established place brought together both filmmakers and anthropologists, including John Marshall, Paul Hockings, Richard Hawkins, David and Judith MacDougall, Herb Di Gioia, David Hancock, Mark McCarty and Mike Hall. They discussed their ideas and experimented with the practice of filmmaking (see also MacDougall 2001). The means of observational cinema can be briefly summarised as follows: observation is not about showing objectivity. The camera is not a surveyor, but it is engaged in observation. There is obvious sensibility of a filmmaker towards the filmed subjects and the (filmed) world. The observational style of filmmaking does not impose the message of the author either on the viewers or on the filmed subjects. It rather allows things to unfold under the attentive eyes of a filmmaker as well as the viewers. Therefore, one could say, the book brings to the light the importance of lived experience and its filmic presentation.

The writings of André Bazin on cinema, the post-war documentary cinema, Italian neo-realism, and the aesthetic of reality are considered to be works of sobriety and humanity; the observational style is their descendent. Grimshaw and Ravetz guide us through the works of ‘social observers’ like Robert Drew, Albert and David Maysles, and Frederick Wiseman, through the works of early pioneers of observational cinema such as Herb Di Gioia and David Hancock, and finally through the films of David MacDougall. The films of Di Gioia and Hancock were often overlooked, poorly distributed, and rarely shown. Since each of their films was built around a particular individual in the context of everyday life, they were not as sought after as other films dealing with ‘proper’ anthropological issues such as, for example, migration, development, and initiation rituals. However, Grimshaw and Ravetz argue that the field of anthropological engagement with ‘the others’ is and should remain broad in its topical possibilities and focus. They write that Herb Di Gioia and David Hancock ‘conceived of their own work as an *analogous* act of making and being’ (p. 78). In contrast to the above-mentioned authors, David and Judith MacDougall’s films are well known among anthropologists. David, in particular, has for more than thirty years been a central figure in discussions about observational filmmaking. Through his works, we can once again learn about the inexhaustible dimensions of the observational style and about the filmmaker’s approach to his filmed subjects. ‘Observational Cinema on the Move’, as Grimshaw and Ravetz aptly entitled the chapter, aims to express MacDougall’s extending and the ever-changing nature of his filmmaking. We move through his works made in Africa, Sardinia, and India. We revisit the Doon School project and not only learn about the rhythm, synchrony and attitude of his filming, but also recognise the filmmaker’s intention ‘to establish a web of associations in which meaning emerges from the complex interplay between individual subjectivities and the material, social, aesthetic, philosophical, and symbolic registers’ (p. 93). There is a sensible point in any creative practice. Once, we use the tool of our expression skilfully, once it has become our extension – a meaning-giving probe – we simply know what we can tell with it.

I found the section entitled ‘Rethinking Observational Cinema’ (pp. 130–136) most appealing, especially the authors’ statement that observational cinema is not about creating an accurate copy of the world, but ‘it hinges upon connection, expressed in an almost intangible, empathic moment’ (p. 136). Observational filmmaking thus stands firmly in anthropological inquiry as a skilled and reflexive practice. For me, the richness of the un-spoken world is revealed in peoples’ eyes and their doings, through subtle participant-observation in the real settings and in an exchange between the filmed and the filming person. At the end of the book, Grimshaw and Ravetz direct us towards new experiments in both anthropology and observational filmmaking. They examine three works which are considered to represent the new observational cinema: *The Box* of Eva Stefani (2004), *SchoolScapes* of David MacDougall (2007), and *Sheep Rushes* of Ilisa Barbash and Lucien Castaing-Taylor (2007).

Gray’s main focus lies on description, interpretation, and analysis of feature films. He looks at the film history, theory, production, distribution and exhibition. He begins his book by stating that ‘cinema and anthropology may never go together in people’s minds like bread and butter, but neither should they be like bread and gasoline’ (p. xvii). Well, it is a bit unusual expression, though some may find it to be a straightforward and effective statement for the beginning of a debate. In the opening chapter, we are taken into remote but well-known history, machinery and spectacle of early cinema. There are four very short case studies about the filmmakers D. W. Griffith, F. W. Murnau, Akira Kurosawa and Satyajit Ray. Then comes Hollywood, followed by independent and blockbuster productions. The chapter ends with the unknown tendencies of the internet and the use of films in its virtual space. The second chapter, which deals with the film theory, takes account of almost everything relevant to the feature film: formalism and ciné-art, expressionism, Kracauer and the Frankfurt school, montage and editing, neo-realism and the French New Wave, Marxism, structuralism, semiotics, psychoanalysis, and literary theories. Three short case studies appear somewhere in between: Eisenstein, Hitchcock – Auteur and Psychoanalysis, and Globalised Cinemas – Bollywood, Anime, and Nigerian Video Films. It seems that almost the entire cinema world meets here, on just 39 pages.

The third chapter brings some interesting points into the ‘cinema pot’, namely the cultural and social context of fiction film production and what the anthropology of cinema might entail and could possibly offer with its involvement. The section about *Third Cinema* (pp. 88–96) is particularly revealing. The term was introduced in a manifesto written by Argentine filmmakers Fernando Ezequiel Solanas and Octavio Getino published in 1969. As a film movement, it arrived at the right time as an opposition to models provided by ‘First Cinema’ (Hollywood) and ‘Second Cinema’ (European art film). Its attempt was to contribute to the liberation and ‘cultural revolution’ that were taking place in Western and non-Western countries. In their collective effort, filmmakers crossed regional as well as national boundaries. They made films which were not aimed at the mainstream audience, but rather, for example, to revolutionary groups. The spectators were informed about the political issues and could have become active participants in them. A different form of filmmaking under the label of ‘Third Cinema’ was the rise of indigenous feature films (*Atanarjuat* by Kunuk in 2001 or *Ten Canoes* by de Heer and Djigirr in 2006).

When speaking about the independent production, Gray sees the virtual space and internet as an opportunity to share filmic works. One can ask, however, who finances this independent production and who is the audience? Well, everyone who is a bit more familiar with these issues knows that there are always some gaps connected to realisation, distribution, and technical possibilities. Moreover, someone will always try to gain from those who are open-minded and make their ideas public. Nevertheless, as new ideas are constantly coming, we need to continually create a space for them and be responsive to their presentation. We know that ‘Hollywood exists in a capitalist state economy, and therefore it will produce safe genre films in order to maximise profits and limit financial risks’ (p. 99). It is at this point that anthropology can address culturally embedded issues such as the socio-cultural norms and values, contexts and productions, which are inseparable parts of any filmmaking. Very few anthropological studies have focused on Hollywood films and the development of a commercial filmic genre. One exception worth mentioning is the study by Hortense Powdermaker (2002). First published in 1950, it belongs to the earliest attempts to combine studies of Hollywood and anthropology (p. 99). The final chapter, ‘Context of Reception’, deals with the audience in particular. Besides anthropology, cultural studies, media studies, and communication studies also adopted qualitative methodology in their research. The method of participant observation, which pertains particularly to anthropology, seems to be the most beneficial way how to ‘watch people watching TV’ as it is said in one of the three case studies discussed in this chapter. In the final point of the book, Gray urges anthropologists to expand their interests and become actively involved in media, cinema and audience studies.

Both books – *Cinema: A Visual Anthropology* and *Observational Cinema: Anthropology, Film, and the Exploration of Social Life* – treat ‘cinema’ and ‘anthropology’ as well-established fields. They are in agreement that the spatial meaning of the cinema and methodological issues in anthropology are changing according to technological advancement. The authors of both books seek to find a new way of looking at the production and distribution of filmic works. Last but not least, there is a single question shared by all three authors: What is the epistemology of observation – behind the camera and in front of the screen – in anthropological as well as filmic theory and practice?

References

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Latour, Bruno. 2010. *The Making of Law. An Ethnography of the Conseil D'Etat* (translated Marina Brilman and Alain Pottage). Malden: Polity Press. 297 pp. Pb.: \$18.99 / €22.99 / £18.99. ISBN: 9780745639857.

When the original *La fabrique du droit* was published in 2002, comments ranged from 'a useless study of Conseil d'Etat' to 'a law handbook for dummies'. Eight years later, the reader can fully appreciate the variety of opinions on the original by consulting this 300-page volume, which makes the argument much clearer (and frankly, so much less Latourian) when read in English. This book is a fecund source of information for those who wish to understand why, how and by whom the law is written and how anyone should relate to its letter. However, primarily, it is about the networking of the agents of law, i.e. the people who speak it. Only secondarily, it is about the law's self-production, about the way it works, and the matter this law is made of. Read closely, the book is an extensive claim in support of the Kafkaesque parable about the law in particular, and the social in general: the regulations are installed, made effective, and employed only by those who can relate to them and remain unfamiliar to those who see them as alien feature of individual lives. Nevertheless, let us trace the three points one after another.

The Making of Law takes its reader through six chapters in a full-scale brawl with the ways the Conseil d'Etat makes legal decisions. Unsurprisingly, the design of this volume is determined by Bruno Latour's co-authorship of Actor-Network Theory (ANT), which is hard to overlook in the association of cases, decisions and implications these have on speaking about the law as well as speaking the law itself. Throughout, Latour embarks on an epistemic position which uses 'reference' as a mean of arriving at conclusions. And the reader is confronted head on with the Conseil d'Etat from the first pages of Chapter 1, 'In the Shadow of Bonaparte'. Here, we are introduced to the ways the Conseil makes decisions by referral to pictures of a Doric column and the one of the judges pleading an oath to Napoleon. Then the reader is lead to the practice of the commissioners of the law that takes 'a form of subtlety divorced from conceptual foundations' (p. 16). From there, the reader follows Latour to a description of the judges' balancing between the legal prescriptions and the letter of the law; from the facts as tools of judgements to a legal vacuum turned into regulations, from decision-making as a matter of fact to the legal advisors' resistance to accept *fait accompli* as legal prescriptions. Chapter 1 helps the reader understand Latour's major concern about the common (mis-)perception of the law: it is neither transcendent, nor is it universal. Instead, it is situational and is highly dependent on the tools institutionalising it.

Picking this up, Chapters 2 and 3 'How to Make a File Ripe for Use' and 'A Body in a Palace' plunge the reader into the set of material, textual, graphic and experiential environments the Conseil, its files and the councillors themselves are tackling daily. Although these chapters might be of some interest for ethnographers seeking insights on how to do field work in a 'hard-to-access environment', they serve little conceptual purpose beside showing the fallibility of law makers, the limited accountability of law-making and the law's embedding in social life. 'Nothing is less autonomous than this law here; it

must be incessantly confronted with practical problems, which have been brought back from these diverse activities in order to produce legal reasoning' (p. 126). Here, both the observer and the judge are contrasted with their work. While the observer is continuously judging the judge's judgement, the member of the legal council is ruling continuously on the lawfulness of one or many previous legal decisions. In both cases, the decisions – of the observer as well as of the judge – are reduced to a mere commentary on the (previous) decisions (on the methodology and on the observation, on capacity to set a legal precedent, on the legality of a judgement, etc.). The two chapters tell us even more about the method of Conseil's work, which makes connecting extralegal experiences central for the arrival at the legal judgements.

While Chapters 2 and 3 feature the networking of the agents of the law as a central topic, they also herald the problem of the law's self-production. 'The Passage of Law' (Chapter 4) disavows the observer's findings on the fabric of law and how it works while drawing our attention to the way the law 'is being said'. The subject matter of the councillors' (and by proxy of law-makers') activity, Latour argues, is not that the content of their thinking automatically determines that they are correct (see p. 128). Ultimately, what Latour is dealing with in this chapter are the two public perspectives on law – one of the law as a form, another of the law as content. Latour claims that both are misleading. The judges need to remain detached from both the legal decisions and the social reality to produce decisions on the legality of something that is not yet there. In so doing, the council needs to accept that it is fallible. 'In other words, if [the justice] had refused to make mistakes, if she had applied a rule, if she had summed pieces of information, we could not identify her as being either just or indeed legal' (p. 152). As a result, there is a range of objects of law that are modified during the 'saying of the law', which means that the law itself and the ones saying it are in constant transformation (pp. 192–196). What else is there to expect of an ANT-ethnography than to 'persist in describing the law "in action" for some tie to come' (p.196)?

Chapter 5, 'Scientific Objects and Legal Objectivity', informs the reader about the potentialities of the ANT-ethnography, in this case an ethnography of science. Pitching its argument to enforce public understanding of sciences and differences between them, the chapter allows an easy point of entry into Latour's 'cartography of controversies'. However, what is most important here is Latour's focus on 'reference' as a nodal point of any knowledge that is new, especially the one made with regard to facts of real life, which 'are things that one tries to get rid of as quickly as possible, in order to move on to other [more important] things' (p. 215). 'No *in*-formation can be produced without a cascade of these sorts of *trans*-formations' (p. 225, emphases in original). This adds force to the particular theory, formula or interpretation by depositing objectivity as always-already pertaining to the subjectness of the observer, and imposing objectivity as an attribute of observation immediately preceding a judicial decision (see p. 236–237). In the end (luckily Latour says it poignantly himself, summarising pages of contextualisation), 'all matters of fact have become *matters of concern*. [...] It is now essential that science should not be asked to *judge* and that law should not be asked to pronounce *truth*' (p. 242, emphases in original)

The final chapter ‘Talking of Law?’ features a question mark in its title and ends by a series of questions, which not accidentally also close the book. Ultimately, it draws up suggestions on doing ANT-observation work. A reader carefully studying the preceding 245 pages would be desperate from the ANT-jargon in this final chapter, but it seems necessary as the question here is a fundamental one for Latour’s theory, method and observation. Can a researcher attain an independent position to make notes on the reality observed? Can one speak of the law in general terms? Can anyone treat law as being non-objective? Latour finds himself trapped and unable to finish the report on the work of the Conseil without giving a report on the nature of Law (yes, with a capital L) in general, the quality of the judgements he observed and the work he produced while observing. He confesses that ‘an inevitable *tautology* is part and parcel of the definition of Law’ (p. 255, emphasis in original): That is, to talk of the law is to speak of an entire corpus of Law, using the law as its own meta-language can do little more than to explain the language of Law, but not the reality it regulates (see pp. 258–260). But what sort of an explanation is that? Of course, it is an ANT response. It allows the start of a new research programme and prompts us to think *mean*-ingly. The impact of proceedings on results is an ANT definition of the social in general, and of law in particular: ‘Making the connection, linking up these elements, weaving the social: all this is law itself. To be sure, it is a very peculiar type of link, a particular mode of totalisation, among others. [...] Law judiciarises all of society, which it grasps *as a whole* in its own *peculiar* fashion’ (p. 261–262, emphases in original). This take on the social has a potential to open up the space to further understand the essence of law, as covered in the book.

The prose of the book reinforces this impression by short-circuiting the speeches of Conseil’s members on the word of law. The book’s major point is about the legal reductionism of the multifaceted daily reality to the fabric of law, whereas it is obvious Latour would favour the law being more reduced to the social. Ultimately, the ways of constructing legal arguments as sequels of legal reasoning on the ground provided by the law itself supply the council with the legal legitimacy to appear as means of law. Latour’s ANT ethnography presented in the volume constructs itself independently of what it observes; crucially it engages both the observer and the reader in the production of effects of this study. Drawing back onto the observation of several years of the Conseil d’Etat’s work, Latour offers his reader a perspective which is, or ‘should be, a good ANT’s view of law’ (p. x). The ANT-argument of the book flows from steadfast legal reasoning to the council’s decisions that seem to contradict the original premises; from the regulations appealing to the uncertainty of legal reasoning to the affirmation of decisions made by hair-splitting the word of law. ‘Imagine that: social sciences which would be constructive rather than critical or sceptical; social sciences which would be constructive and no longer prisoners of social constructivism’ (p. 275). All this is done to invoke a new methodological turn in the social sciences.

TIMOFEY AGARIN

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Korac, Maja. 2009. *Remaking Home: Reconstructing Life, Place and Identity in Rome and Amsterdam*. New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books. 186 pp. Hb.: \$60.00 / £38.00. ISBN: 9781845453916.

A new volume on issues in forced migration deals with refugees from former Yugoslav Republics migrating to western Europe at the time of war in the early 1990s. The author, Maja Korac, states that almost five million people were forcibly displaced as a consequence of the war following the dissolution of the multiethnic socialist state. Korac focuses on the refugee and asylum seekers who fled to Italy and the Netherlands and whom she was meeting during 1999–2001 in the course of her ethnographic research in Rome and Amsterdam. Throughout the volume, she comparatively points to the difference of legislative realms (administration, regulations, statuses, programs) in two countries: the Netherlands has a so-called welfare model of assisting refugees, which is both state-controlled and supported by a well-organised non-governmental sector; Italy lacks an overarching strategy and sharply defined legislative framework for the regulation of status and social policy matters with regards to refugees. This difference is one of the elements that influenced refugee experiences and decisions.

The book focuses on the everyday practices and notions of migrants settling in new socio-cultural environments. On the one side, the author shows the reception and integration policies of two countries, and on the other side, she follows connections, interactions and social networks migrant/refugees engage in while constructing their lives in a new country. Korac's main research interest is to understand how refugees actually *nest* themselves in new settings, how they *emplace* themselves in new environments and how they negotiate continuity and change, old and new cultural practices as well as identities in their narratives, notions and everyday practices. In order to set up her focus and arguments, the author briefly discusses key studies in transnational sociological, cultural-psychological and anthropological literature with regard to citizenship issues and the models of migrant integration. In a postmodern vein, this refugee study refocuses from structures to context and process, from institutions to refugees as actors who create own solutions in given circumstances and imposed predicaments. Rather than perceiving refugees exclusively in terms of passivity, extreme loss and victimisation, the migrant experience is seen primarily as *transformative*, while the circumstances in which they found themselves (war, loss, migration) might be *new opportunities*. Migrants/refugees in this study figure as managing, decision-making, goal-oriented and active individuals even in the situations of the most limited options. The author calls for rethinking refugeehood 'by acknowledging it as a process entailing both disempowering and empowering experiences' (p. 8), and furthermore, she calls for rethinking of all binary oppositions dominant in academic discourses in the field since they simplify the complexity of one's experience.

The study is methodologically set as qualitative, combining prolonged fieldwork among migrant/refugee groups in both cities, using methods of participant observation and interviewing. The focus on lived experiences guided the author to analyse the coping strategies, home remaking, the issues of belonging and attachment in refugee circumstances

which are mostly discussed in the third and the fourth chapters with ‘regaining control over life’ and ‘reconstructing life’ as crucial labels. The legislation of the particular countries was relevant for the reconstruction of refugee life but direct, spontaneous, human contact was also of great importance: for some interviewees, the warm, open, cordial approach they experience with Italians was similar to their cultural code of hospitality and generosity (which some called ‘Mediterranean’); therefore, perceived cultural similarity might be the influential factor for making a decision on staying in the country. Some others preferred organised programs of refugee assistance (language learning, education, job opportunities) offered by the northern country to overcome their *liminal* status and see it as an opportunity to change the pure ‘survival’ of the arriving period to constructive options. Within the options and constraints of two different legislative frameworks of settlement policy, the study shows that there was still space for individual and family goal-oriented decisions. Korac rightly points to the fact that individual and family aspirations change following the life-cycle dynamics: the very decision to return or stay changes over time as kids are growing up, people are aging, with regard to the favouring of the native country development, opening up new opportunities in the new country, etc.

One of the main processes of the *emplacement* in a new setting is social networking. The study deals with co-ethnic networking (within groups originating from the same country) – the *bonding* social networks – as crucial for newly arrived groups, as already recognised in migration literature. However, the *bridging* social networks (between refugees and the majority group, as well as with people from other ethnic groups other than majority) have been acknowledged in the analysis as well, not only as a by-product of integration but as a critical resource for re-establishing the lives of migrants.

Another approach that has to be stressed as relevant in the study is gender orientation, revealing the changing patterns of male-female relationships in new circumstances different from previous (patriarchal) in the native country, as well as recognising gender specific variations in notions of home in migrant trajectories.

While the first chapter offers theoretical and conceptual insight into topics of *home*, *homeland*, *place*, *emplacement*, *belonging* and *transnationalism*, the last chapter points again to the same issues, now with embedded ethnographic data in it. Transnational practices used by refugees in the study – financial helping family and friends in the country of origin, visiting homeland, virtual ethnic cyberspace community, organised family reunions – link them and engage them ‘with their new and old homes’ but also gives ground for constant rethinking of their feeling of belonging and attachment, which are dynamic and changing feelings. Some would feel stronger attachment to their places of origin in exile, others to their new homes, while still some might feel a kind of homelessness; anthropologist Jasna Čapo Žmegač (2007) would say in her book on refugee migration that they became ‘strangers either way’, not fully culturally and socially incorporated into a new society, but also somehow no longer fully embedded in the old ethnic community any more due to their lives in a new cultural and social setting. As pointed out by Korac and other scholars, refugee belonging becomes multi-sited, multi-local. Korac’s analysis shows that ‘belonging’ and ‘home’ are variously reconstructed in new countries: in Italy and the Netherlands.

In the mentioned issues, the acquisition of formal citizenship is of a formal nature; what appears to be more central to the meanings of belonging are social connections which *nest* refugees into (local) society and not only just to live *in* the place but to feel like being *of* the place, or feeling at home.

The study abounds with ethnographic material: the author used 60 narratives that reveal individual (and family) trajectories spanning over a decade. Interviewees were mostly in their twenties and thirties when fleeing from the native country, and the majority of them (p. 44) were from Bosnia-Herzegovina (Bosniaks, Croats, Serbs), while other refugees included in the study were from Croatia and Serbia (basic statistical data are given in appendices). The focus on individual narratives is understandable and necessary in the proclaimed endeavour of the author to understand the lived experience of the migrant in the context of particular aspirations, motivations, former experiences, specific cultural situations and concrete legal frameworks one find himself/herself in migrant/refugee/exile circumstances. They place their stories mostly in two axes of time (before-now) and space (there-here) and poles of the axes interact (there-before/here-now) in negotiating continuity and change. The use of individual narratives also serves for respecting the heterogeneity of the refugee experiences, and contesting generalisations. Although such an 'ethnography of the particular' as Lila Abu-Lughod (1993) would call it, and constructing the text by mingling 'native' (original citations from the interview) and academic (analytic, interpretative) discourse is not a novelty in anthropology, the study offers new insights into the specific groups of refugees in the dramatic decade of their life.

The observation one could make is towards a somewhat general depiction of the Yugoslav past (Chapter 2). In contrast to the very sophisticated and sensitive approach to migrants experiences, their heterogeneity, complexity and individuality, the author depicts the Yugoslav political scene in general statements (one could say even with idealisation implying that multiethnic and multicultural communities were settings of peaceful coexistence and 'genuine cohesion'), without referring to federation's particularities in terms of political, ethnic, religious, cultural, social constituents. Furthermore, the post-socialist period and the war in the 1990s are generally and exclusively labelled as 'ethnic and territorial cleansing'. Although it might be justified for the sake of brevity, a more nuanced outline of the situation in Yugoslav Republics and in the war period would be preferable especially for the readers not acquainted much with the 20th century history of the region.

However, this book – based on ethnographic qualitative research and sensitivity to cultural complexity and human recoursefulness, combining comprehensively and comparatively the research material to theoretical stances of migration cultural processes – is a valuable contribution to the ever growing migration studies literature and to understanding of current European cultural and social ruffling.

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Argenti, Nicolas and Katharina Schraam (eds.). 2010. *Remembering Violence: Anthropological Perspectives on Intergenerational Transmission*. New York and Oxford: Berghahn Press. 270 pp. Hb.: \$90.00 / £53.00. ISBN: 9781845456245.

This collection of essays marks out fertile ground for anthropological investigations of memories of violence and trauma: topics that have hitherto often been left to such disciplines as history, psychology and psychiatry. The book is the result of a number of ongoing conversations between contributors and others at various meetings, first a workshop on 'Violence and Memory' at the 2006 European Association of Social Anthropologists (EASA) conference in Bristol, then a further workshop as part of the Wilberforce Institute for the Study of Slavery and Emancipation (WISE) conference and finally a gathering at the 2007 AAA conference in Washington DC. The chapters offer case studies from a wide geographical area (Africa, the Caribbean, Europe, Latin America, the Middle East, North America and South East Asia) and the fine-grained analyses they contain give the lie to any simplistic, ethnocentric and yet universalising, explanations.

In a comprehensive introduction, Argenti and Schraam offer a review of contemporary approaches to the study of memory. Recognising the need for caution identified by Lambek, Berliner and others because of the contemporary academic interest in and the general popularity of the topic of memory, they remind readers that individual and collective memory are mutually constitutive. The editors insist that the notion of memory itself, its reliability and the potential for selective re-creation and the distinction between memory and history require nuanced interrogation. They make a preliminary claim to challenge standard treatments of the study of memory and violence that draw upon universalising assumptions about trauma and Post Traumatic Stress Disorder. The book is divided into four distinct sections entitled 'Bodies of Memory', 'Performance', 'Landscapes, Memoryscapes and the Materiality of Objects' and 'Generations: Chasms and Bridges'. Argenti and Schramm explain that their guiding questions concern 'how political violence is remembered, how memories of this violence are transmitted, and the uses to which memories are put' (p. 3).

Each contributor to the collection addresses these concerns in innovative and revealing ways. Klungel and Kristensen, respectively, explore embodied aspects of memory in their discussions of rape in Guadeloupe and violence in Southern Chile. In Guadeloupe, Klungel delineates the enduring effects of French occupation and owner-slave relationships in the continuing practice of virginity testing that effectively re-enacts rape. In southern Chile, the memory of the violence of the Pinochet regime is inscribed on the bodies of victims, manifested in somatised illness experiences and treated by indigenous healers, accustomed to treating patients suffering the consequences of spiritual and human aggression. Berliner and Feldman examine ritualised violence in the public testimonies of initiation violence in Guinea-Conakry and in the witnessing by Holocaust survivors at Auschwitz-Birkenau. Berliner looks at the ongoing performance of secrecy in the commemoration of initiation violence. He demonstrates the enduring significance of this violence in shoring up the position of male elders as guardians of powerful secret

knowledge. Feldman searchingly analyses Israeli youth pilgrimages to a Holocaust site with particular emphasis on the role of witnessing and the manner in which youths become ‘witnesses of the witnesses’.

Pichler and Filippucci demonstrate how memories of slavery and war are inscribed on, and produced by, landscapes and objects. Through her analysis of key linguistic terms and of the relevance of material objects in the embodied practice of Palo religious ritual, Pichler carefully disentangles the complex legacy of the Cuban colonial past and plantation slavery. She argues that such ritual offers participants ways of renegotiating their relationship with the past and of imagining alternative futures. Filippucci powerfully evokes a sense of place in her chapter. She documents the violence done to sites in eastern France during WWI in her exploration of the ways in which, despite reconstruction, such sites remain imbued with the violence of the past and, she contends, may act as technologies of remembrance, as bridges between what is ‘known’ and what is ‘unknown’. Kidron and Feuchtwang directly address the transmission of trauma and loss. Kidron is alive to the stark differences in the experience of genocide; she wishes to problematise the often taken-for-granted dichotomy of remembering and forgetting. Her comparative study of the very different descendant memory of Cambodian Canadian and Israeli Holocaust trauma aims to undermine therapeutic and political practices that approach trauma descendant experience as universal. She pinpoints Jewish and Buddhist religious paradigms as the sources for what she describes as very different experiences of descendant trauma between the two groups in her study and urges mental health practitioners of healing and memory work to remain alive to culture-specific conceptualisations of self, person and suffering. Feuchtwang offers a case study of the transmission of traumatic loss in a Taiwanese village. His interest lies in distinguishing between the different modes and means of its transmission. In order to do this, he draws out a distinction between trauma as an event and as a kind of death and as remedied by ritual and other means organised by survivors. He highlights the question of temporalities, ‘one of events, the other of ritual reproduction and presence’ (p. 231).

Rosalind Shaw’s afterword helpfully summarises and highlights the main findings of the contributors, commencing with a question familiar from her work on memories of the slave trade in Sierra Leone, ‘How can people remember what they have never directly experienced?’ (p. 251)

This volume is an innovative contribution to the study of memory and violence. It builds upon pioneering work in the anthropological study of memory and questions the dichotomy between memory and history. Furthermore, it throws a stunning critical spotlight upon many contemporary ‘Western’ therapeutic approaches that insist upon the ‘talking cure’, which privileges the spoken word and is implicitly founded upon very particular constructions of personhood, victimhood, trauma and healing. The collection makes a valuable contribution to the anthropology of time, memory and violence and is suitable for advanced undergraduate and postgraduate courses.

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Theodossopoulos, Dimitrios and Elisabeth Kirtsoglou (eds.). 2010. *United in Discontent: Local Responses to Cosmopolitanism and Globalization*. New York, Oxford: Berghahn Books. 186 pp. Hb.: \$60.00 / £35.00. ISBN: 9781845456306.

Few books have challenged a number of intertwined, crucial issues of the present-day debate on globalisation like *United in Discontent* does. Moreover, it does so thoughtfully and courageously, combining an in-depth presentation of the theoretical background with sound ethnographic work that covers quite many different areas of the world. The issues of globalisation and cosmopolitanism are approached using the standpoint of the peripheries of the global power, where locally meaningful processes of sense-making could generate unusual answers to questions such as: Is the national dimension vital for a democratic citizenship? Is the Western enlightenment-based universalism still an essential value for cosmopolitanism? Do resistance movements to globalisation strengthen the subjective freedom and the agency power of dispossessed social groups or are they just an expression of the reproduction of colonising power relations they intend to contrast?

Globalisation, the editors assume, like capitalism or communism – or, more recently, financial systems – is usually treated as a reified entity: a living creature evoked by organic analogies in everyday discourses. This reification has facilitated the emergence of a new (anti) global awareness that uses the same technology of globalisation to reach out to the world. To demonstrate it, Theodossopoulos and Kirtsoglou have carefully and thoughtfully collected a number of quite high quality ethnographic cases, which stand out for the research skills expressed by the authors and the variety of geographic location.

This reviewer thinks that the first quality of this book is the shared theoretical and methodological work behind it. Both the editors and the contributors tackle the complexity of local and peripheral meaningful contexts of symbolical production, where discontents, disaffections and critiques to the neoliberal global asset and its cosmopolitan outlook make sense. As a result, the book shows how many anti-cosmopolitan stands do not refer exclusively to local issues, but possibly have a global reach. The reason is often to be found in a mutual sympathy, or perhaps envisaged empathy, experienced by the members of a ‘globally imagined’ anti-global community in discontent.

How is this possible, one may ask? First of all, because the semantic imprecision and uncertainty of definitions allow the ambivalent and multi-faced resistance movements to turn the cosmopolitan and global discourse at their advantage, by branding alternative local, though allegedly equally cosmopolitan visions. Consequently, as the authors suggest, symbolic alliances are sometimes redrawn beyond political disagreements and ideological confrontations. Thus, communities in discontent are investigated with the intent to unveil and make sense of the ‘local meaningful terms’, which allow disenfranchised actors around the world to imagine global discontent. Eventually, this is the connecting thread that guides the reader through the study of very different but somehow comparable cases.

The edited work of Theodossopoulos and Kirtsoglou confirms the assertion of Appadurai (1996), among others, that imagination in the globalised world is neither limited by the borders of Anderson’s (1983) national communities nor is a prerogative of elites

and leaders. Differently, it is a social process at the hands of ordinary people that use it ambivalently to turn a sense of being dispossessed by global forces (anti-cosmopolitanism) into a certain degree of cosmopolitan empathy.

However, there is a crucial question raised by the book, i.e. may the alternative and subaltern visions of cosmopolitanism brought forward by those diverse disenfranchised actors really challenge the neoliberal global power structures that sustain hierarchies and exploitation in the world? In other words, one should wonder how much these new types of resistance movements could be creative, innovative and transformative of the global assets. It could be, indeed, that the kind of dissatisfaction expressed worldwide and empathically shared among the anti-cosmopolitans would just reinforce the global and cosmopolitan features of the world power relations. And it is difficult to deny these are the same power relations that colonise and mould subaltern and marginal spaces of social life, that eventually allow an articulation of dissatisfaction and discontent that aims to reach out to the world. So, on one hand, it seems that cosmopolitanism would not necessarily be an exclusive feature of the global and metropolitan contexts of life. As a fact, even movements that promote indigenous identity, vernacularism and autochthony combine quite often particular and local traits with a universal aspiration and a search for 'embeddedness' in a wider moral and cultural dimension. On the other hand, peripheral claims to significance would be both cosmopolitan – by asserting connection with the centre and showing a sense of global outreach – and anti-cosmopolitan at the same time. Can these ambivalent stands be turned into an agenda or the global discontent is eventually functional to neoliberal cosmo-politics?

Perhaps, it is exactly the semantic imprecision and uncertainty of definitions, which eventually affect the analytical precision of the investigations. The disenfranchised subjectivities that aim to be united in discontent are certainly bearing alternative visions of justice, powers and social representations. The way in which they can turn the challenge to ideological monopoly of the neoliberal cosmo-politics into some global forms of agency-based resistance and/or transformative movements, it is still to be clarified. Sometimes, while reading the book, one may be left with the tricky impression that almost everything can be a part of the large community of the 'united in discontent'. However, the authors made an excellent work to convince the reader of the contrary by presenting a sound selection of case studies that is quite fascinating and engender intriguing reflections. This reviewer thinks that all researchers interested in multi-faced and multi-disciplinary readings of cosmopolitanism and globalisation will find this book rich with stimulating questions and fascinating research perspectives.

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Throop, Jason C. 2010. *Suffering and Sentiment: Exploring the Vicissitudes of Experience and Pain in Yap*. Berkeley, Los Angeles: University of California Press. 329 pp. Pb. \$24.95 / £16.95. ISBN: 9780520260580.

This is a fascinating book, based on deep ethnography and linguistic analysis. The author offers a critical discussion of philosophy, especially phenomenology, arguing that a Eurocentric perspective of pain limits our understanding of the phenomenon. The book provides rich evidence of the way Yapese individuals construct pain in line with their dominant moral principles, linking the idea of suffering for the benefit of others with notions of hierarchy based on compassion. Pain thus becomes socially meaningful, a ‘perceptible or discursive object through time’ (p. 283). Such a focus on the cultural phenomenology of moral experience allows valuable insights into political principles, gender roles, and the concept of personhood.

The book begins with an overview of the history of Yap, focusing on the islanders’ suffering and compassion in the past and the ethnographer’s experiences. In Chapter Two, the political structure is presented as ‘interconnections between land, gender, power, and social relations’ (p. 41). By discussing previous ethnographic accounts, Throop shows how working the land is at the base of sociality, because working, as suffering, serves as a local explanation for hierarchical relationships. To be humble and caring, to endure pain and frustration, in short, to master one’s mind and body are principal virtues that cause individuals to work extremely hard, skipping meals and going without sleep for days.

Chapter Three unpacks the notions of purity and pollution in the light of illness and pain, growth and death. Throop draws a convincing image of *kastom* and conditionality, ‘negotiated in the context of ongoing and dynamic interchanges of sentiment between different members of the estate in terms of their alternating experiences of suffering (*gaafgow*), compassion (*runguy*), and endurance (*athamagil*)’ (p. 85). Central to these interchanges are food production, preparation, and consumption.

Chapter Four focuses on Yapese understandings of subjectivity, which demand extreme self-governance of the physical body. The ‘mentally governed moral self’ (p. 105) frowns upon the idea of speaking out one’s private thoughts, opinions, and feelings. Throop provides apt examples of how Yapese children are socialised into hiding their pain, hunger, frustrations, and other emotions. If a reader had romantic ideas about childhood in Oceania, this chapter helps to put them into perspective and shows the training that is needed in order to become a self-disciplined adult in Yap. Severe restrictions of free movement in space are part of this morality: walking on the famous stone paths on the island is an exercise in humble concentration on the task at hand, because they are extremely slippery and anyone who lets his mind or eyes wander is likely to get hurt (pp. 131–134).

Mental self-governance is further elaborated in Chapter Five, which focuses on privacy, secrecy, and agency. People have to think before acting, knowledge is privately owned and too much honesty is accordingly disapproved. Strategies of concealment, like indirect or oblique speech, outright deception, irony and sarcasm, speaking for others, as well as a body language that provides privacy, are evidence for successful mastering of one’s mind. This chapter is likely to create compassion for the ethnographer who has to find some ‘truth’ that is hidden behind the screens of concealment.

In Chapter Six, the main argument of pain and suffering as moral virtues is recapitulated and elaborated by carefully analysing the linguistic (semantic, semiotic) and symbolic dimensions of pain-related vocabulary. Both pain and suffering can be viewed in a positive light, especially when it is embedded in the notion of *athamagil* (endurance). Suffering for others, enduring the pain and discomforts of work, in spite of being ill or wounded, hungry or tired, is perhaps the best evidence for self-control of one's inner states. The rich linguistic description of this chapter helps to understand that it is not appropriate to show happiness, as '[i]n the face of suffering for another's suffering there is little space for feelings of contentment' (p. 191).

Chapter Seven gives examples of the cultural construction of pain and suffering. Eight interviews are cited and analysed to show how individuals frame their – mostly chronic – pain in the light of morally positive efforts to endure. I was surprised that none of the women talked about their pain during childbirth, as this would be – to us – the most obvious case of suffering for a purpose. The transcripts in this chapter are (I believe) very literal and at times difficult to understand, but Throop's analysis provides the reader with the necessary context, so that the voices become clearer. The extended case study in Chapter Eight follows a similar strategy. By presenting the case of a 10-year-old girl who has her broken bones set by a local healer and endures terrible pain in the process, the author convincingly demonstrates that endurance is a virtuous practice when dealing with pain.

In his conclusions, Throop suggests that his cultural phenomenology of moral experience may be further developed into the ethnography of subjectivity in which temporality is 'an imperative that precedes the temporality of reflexive modes of understanding that are invested with the particularities of a given moral order, a particular theodicy, or a particular eschatology whether narratively, metaphorically, or practically conceived' (p. 273). Suffering becomes meaningful when it is framed as being for someone else, whether it is one's own physical pain that is ignored when working for others, or one's mental discomfort due to compassion for someone else's suffering. The ethnographer's own suffering in the light of the pain of others created the link with his friends and interviewees in Yap (p. 282), enabling him to feel with the people, understanding them as far as empathy can go. The book gives evidence that the black box of emotions can indeed be opened. Pain, through processes of meaning-making, can be 'fashioned into a perceptible of discursive object through time' (p. 283).

Suffering and Sentiment is a well-written ethnography of high quality. It may cause some 'suffering' on the reader's side, when Yapese vocabulary and the philosophical and linguistic elaborations of perspective and perception sprinkle the text with unfamiliar words. The 'pain' is worth it, though, as it rewards the reader with a profound understanding of the hardships that are at the core of being Yapese. I did, however, miss the role of birthing in this account, as this case could open a larger field of endurance in the light of severe pain which links Yap with many more societies. The ideal of refraining from moaning during labour is widespread – providing a powerful example for self-governance. I would have liked a discussion of painful punishment, both in terms of physical violence and magically induced (or so constructed) sickness and pain, as such cases may well blur the boundaries of compassion and satisfying revenge within, and perhaps beyond, the hierarchies and moralities that have been so well described in this book.

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Strang, Veronica. 2009. *Gardening the World: Agency, Identity and the Ownership of Water*. Oxford and New York: Berghahn Books. 326 pp. Hb.: \$95.00 / £58.00. ISBN: 9781845456061.

Water is the prime life-giving substance in the world, and for humans it has symbolic, ritual, aesthetic values along with its more substantive life-sustaining and economic values. The author uses the term 'gardening' to refer to the transformation of the landscape using water as well to reconstructing water sources for human consumption informed by the cultural and social considerations with respect to water. In this way, dam construction and farming are as much a part of 'gardening' activities as growing flowers and making green lawns for aesthetic consumption.

Veronica Strang uses anthropological methodology to focus on one particular universe, the Mitchell river catchment area in Australia, to develop her thesis, yet her analysis is universally applicable and takes a critical look at many of the environmental, political and social issues involving water, globally. She also takes a historical look at the manner in which worldviews and practices informed by such worldviews transformed the world and its attitude towards water, as pre-colonial indigenous societies were uprooted and replaced not only spatially but ideologically by white, colonising power holders. The holistic worldview of the non-white people, here (and as we know from many other ethnographies) all across the globe was replaced by a dualistic, modernist concept of the universe in which culture was separated from nature and humans privileged over all others to transform and consume natural substances, including water in a manner that has now made such rampant remodelling of the natural landscape 'unsustainable'.

The author traces the replacement of indigenous people, often by genocide, by the ranchers and graziers who converted (gardened) natural landscapes into huge farmlands. However in a matter of few decades, these farmers too came to be dominated by another category of 'users', namely urban gardeners and industrialists, and were under pressure from them to save their way of life from the more powerful industrial lobby and increasing population of urban dwellers. Towards the end of the last century, the global recognition of the lack of sustainability of the rampant destruction of nature in the name of development and the real threat of losing many life sustaining resources, such as water, has given rise to another type of agency in the form of environmentalists and conservationists.

This book traces the dynamics of power play between the various groups in this game of 'gardening'; how each group is staking its claim to authenticity and need. For example, the farmers would say that water is better used for productivity, for feeding people than preserved for aesthetic or abstract environmental issues. The left-wing environmentalists of the 'deep green' variety want to give equal rights to every living thing and prioritise nature for the sake of nature. The more right wing, 'pale green' would want to see resources 'managed' for human welfare. The aborigines also have, over a period of time, begun to get back some of their rights, and they too have gained a voice, although not as powerful as that of the industrialists and farmers; both of which are strong lobbies in Australia, whose economy depends upon farming to a large extent.

Other forms of economic enterprises viewed as more environmentally friendly, such as ecotourism, are also appearing as alternative forms of gardening. Moreover, scientists and technical experts are able to put things in a manner of speech that makes them appear more knowledgeable than others. Thus, the aborigines with their life-sustaining world view are not able to project their ecological wisdom as they cannot 'talk the talk'. A nuanced ethnography of all stake holders, their power play and ideological battles in the back drop of the 'most arid continent' in the world are detailed. Issues of water and its management are debated in terms of each group's claim to knowledge as well as legitimacy. The author makes an interesting point that the 'scientific' approach to the issue helps to discourage research into the underlying social aspects as these would bring to light many injustices and hierarchies of power. Funding agencies, being themselves parts of government or powerful stake holders do not want the real social issues to be highlighted and the discussions in the privileged language of Western science automatically marginalises the weaker groups, like the aborigines and even farmers.

The qualitative, thick ethnography, using narratives and cultural historical data, brings to the forefront many social aspects, such as gender, that are seen to not only influence the way people perceive the world but also their actions. Thus, women favour more ecological points of view and men favour more commercially viable options. Another issue that of 'boundaries' and identities, appeared with the recycling of water, where scientific and economic rationality is overridden by cultural concerns of purity and bodily transgressions of individual identity; such 'identities' are also interwoven with claims to legitimacy of each group with respect to right to water.

A key message disseminated by this volume is that environment and its issues are not divorced from the social, historical and cultural realities in which they are embedded. It is therefore imperative that the global is in the last instance both understood and dealt with *in situ*. Each local situation needs to be understood ethnographically and qualitatively, thereby highlighting the anthropologist's role. Each specific case study has its historical, geographical, economic and political specificities that determine the social and cultural substratum on which the environmental issues are situated and consequently need to be debated. The more abstract generalities that emerge will enable the further development of theory in this regard.

This is thus an important book not only from the point of view of competently dealing with the issue of water and its sustainability for future life on earth but also as a book of ecological anthropological theory.

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Haram, Liv and C. Bawa Yamba (eds.). 2009. *Dealing with Uncertainty in Contemporary African Lives*. With an epilogue by Susan Reynold Whyte. Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet. 226pp. Pb.: \$22.95. ISBN:9789171066497.

How do people live with uncertainties in contemporary Africa? How do they deal with it? Given the unending material deterioration of the living conditions in many countries of sub-Saharan Africa, this focus of the publication edited by Liv Haram and C. Bawa Yamba will interest researchers and practitioners engaged in Africa and beyond. The existential deterioration began twenty to thirty years ago with the implementation of the structural adjustment programmes of World Bank and the International Monetary Fund IMF, and there is no end in sight. Even in countries with economic growth, the part of population living on less than one US dollar a day is increasing. For most people, everyday life is a permanent fight for food, income, education, medicine.

The articles of the book refer to research in east and central Africa (particularly on Tanzania, but also Uganda and Zimbabwe), but may be conveyed also to other countries of sub-Saharan Africa. In the introduction, the editors Haram and Yamba state that the articles do not stem from a definition of uncertainty but that the ethnographies themselves are the point of departures in search of the agency of the people: 'We also wish to point out that the issue of agency arises when people act upon their situation by trying to control it, in an effort to minimise the levels of uncertainty in their lives. The scope of possibilities for making a difference through their own action may be quite limited. However, the fact that they do act at all is significant' (p. 24). The recurrent themes of the contributions are the role of religion, witchcraft and migration in search of consolation, meaning and transformation of living conditions. Male violence against women is a theme in nearly all the contributions as it increases under conditions of impoverishment and growing uncertainties.

In Chapter 1, Ezra Chitando examines the signification of the prophets of the Pentecostal church, which proliferated in Harare as consequence of the material deterioration in the late 1990s. He explains that prophets minimise the anxiety and suffering of their clients. First and foremost, women are frequenting the prophets because they are especially burdened by the heavy load of childlessness or their responsibility for the livelihood of the family. Chitando states that many women in their situation, as people seeking advice, are sexually exploited or even raped by the prophets ('Thus, it seems to be rather common for women to have such shocking experiences', p. 39). He also states that women in their situation do not see themselves as 'helpless victims' (p. 40), which may be indeed comprehensible. But to conclude, in the end, that 'prophets empower their clients to face life with a sense of optimism' (p. 45) seems inappropriate in this context. The Pentecostal church is also the subject of Chapter 2. Catrine Christiansen explores with the ethnographic case of Pastor Martin Ouma the question of how the Savedees (Busia, Uganda) construct certainty locally, and she points to the meaningful relation between individual and God in searching for health and harmony. Simeon Mesaki (Chapter 3) describes the tragedy of getting old in Northern Tanzania: the phenomenon of witch killing exists in Sukumaland, which creates uncertainty for elderly women. They (rarely men), mostly widowed or divorced and poor,

are hunted and killed on the demand of younger family members. The belief in witches and the accordant practices existed in pre-colonial times, but only since the 1960s has witch killing become common. The author sees the reasons in familial conflicts on land and inheritance law which are carried out this way, and in the lack of a strong constitutional state, which would be able to take drastic measures in banning it.

Todd Sanders (Chapter 4) examines, in his detailed study on the Ihanzu's (northern Tanzania) imagination of 'modern' and 'traditional' witchcraft, the inter-articulation of the local and the global forces as a consequence of neoliberal economic development. In line with Favret-Saada (1989), who worked on witchcraft in France, Knut Christina Myhre analyses in his very interesting article the witchcraft of the Chagga in Kilimanjaro as a matter of relational closeness and fragility, therewith questioning the close relationship between witchcraft and 'modernity' (Chapter 5). Witchcraft is understood as expression of the uncertainty at play in social life. The narratives of the mentally ill men and women of Dar es Salaam (Tanzania) Mary Ann Mhina talked with (Chapter 6) show that bio-medical intervention may offer some control of uncertainty in cases of mental distress, but it offers not much to social marginalisation people have to live with, it even tends to perpetuate it. In Chapter 7, Noah K. Ndosu explains in his study on female suicide in Dar es Salaam that male dominance against women may be a reason for it. Hanne O. Mogensen (Chapter 8) analyses subtly and with precision, the life of a young woman in Uganda. In times when antiretroviral ARVs therapies were not accessible yet, she learned she was HIV positive. The author describes how uncertainties are also possibilities, and how new possibilities implicate new uncertainties. Liv Haram (Chapter 9) also treats violence against woman. On the basis of Mary Douglas, she analyses why the rape of women, including gang-rape, in Arusha, northern Tanzania, is increasing. Young women in search of more independence are leaving their home and are punished by their community for not only crossing spatial borders, but also the male-biased moral borders. The search for more independence linked with the modern life exposes these young women to uncertainty, intensified by the danger of infection by a sexually transmittable disease like AIDS.

It is only in the epilogue, where (a bit too late and too short) the book, finally, offers a theoretical conceptualisation. There, Susan Reynolds White makes the clarifying distinction between uncertainty as state of mind, insecurity as social conditions and contingency as existential conditions in which she sees as interplay. One would have wished to have more of this kind of conceptualisation as a common theme throughout the book as well as in concluding results. The strength of the book is the striking ethnographic examples.

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