

akademischen Gemeinde der Ethnologen treffen. Damit findet natürlich auch eine wissenschaftliche Institution wie die internationale Zeitschrift *Anthropos* zunehmende Anerkennung auch außerhalb des Kreises von "incidental ethnographers", um die sie sich seit ihren Anfängen 1906 ausdrücklich kümmerte. Michaud lässt keinen Zweifel an seiner überaus positiven Einschätzung dieser Situation.

Dem Autor kommt ein zweites nennenswertes Verdienst zu: Er erschließt einem englischsprachigen Fachpublikum französische Quellen und Texte, vielleicht sogar eine Thematik, die ihm sonst wohl nicht zugänglich wären. Doch bietet das Buch keine lockere und leichte Lektüre, wie schon der Aufbau des Bandes zeigen konnte. Gleichwohl ist mit dem Autor zu hoffen: "that this [book] constitutes only a first step to stimulate colleagues in a number of fields to dig deeper into the rich and original textual legacy of the authors brought to light here" (ix). Anton Quack

**Mimica, Jadran** (ed.): *Explorations in Psychoanalytic Ethnography*. New York: Berghahn Books, 2007. 245 pp. ISBN 978-1-84545-402-9. Price: \$ 25.00

At their best psychoanalytic ethnographies reveal the dynamics of culture deep within the psyche, where conflicting forces inform the construction of self. One thinks of Obeyesekere's "Medusa's Hair" (Chicago 1981), a study of "personal symbols" in Sri Lanka, as illustrative. Cultural symbols, like matted hair, are interpreted through individual experience, where they represent and resolve oppositions that are constructed both culturally and through patterns of child development. Unlike the studies of earlier era, modern psychoanalytic ethnographies do not depend on assertions from first principles backed up by catechistic references to Freud.

Such is the case generally. But there are always exceptions. "Explorations in Psychoanalytic Ethnography," edited by Jadran Mimica, is a throwback – a collection that hearkens back to an earlier time when psychoanalytic interpretation was mostly the domain of the high priests of the Freudian unconscious, all but inaccessible to the uninitiated. Mimica's book goes further, however, and invents its own jargon-laden vocabulary, as if to make sure the collection is read only by its own contributors. A few examples of its abstruse and turgid prose will suffice: "the mirror of alterity" (122); the "cosmo-ontological and psychic depths of this vicissitudinous dynamics" (78); and the "matrixial psychoanalytic perspective on borderlinking, co-implications, and co-poiesis . . ." Amid this welter – or is it deliberate obfuscation – one finds only comparative relief, as when one of the contributors loses himself in raptures of self-reflection: "Myself, I have sat in many such conversations, the ants busy, the fire dimmed by psychic pain, on a cold concrete floor, dull with ash and grease, supporting so many suchlike conversations, a hundred times, somewhere between two worlds" (150).

Not all the chapters read like dime novels, however. Always a model of lucid prose, Sudhir Kakar (chapter 1)

provides an excellent overview of his previous work in "The Inner World" (Delhi 1978), a psychoanalytic study of childhood and society in India. Weiss and Stanek (chapter 2) return to the Iatmul (East Sepik Province, Papua New Guinea) *naven*, a ritual made famous in Gregory Bateson's 1936 ethnography of the same name. The authors describe the meaning of the ritual for a young woman who performs the *naven* for her baby, and so reveal the dynamics within the relationship between ethnographer and informant. Chapter 3, by Mimica, focuses on the Yagwoia, a group resident in eastern New Guinea, and on "mythopoeic cosmo-ontological imagery and formulations" (5 f.) whereby fatherhood is articulated as the implantation of the father's bone into male and female progeny. Negotiating the tangle of Mimica's neologisms is not easy. In the more coherent chapter 4, Waud Kracke discusses the Parintintin Indians of Western Amazonas (Brazil) and finds that dreams express cultural patterns that are reshaped by individual desires.

René Devisch, in chapter 5, dwells on the "co-implication" of "borderlinking," by which (apparently) he means the various ways in which members of the Congolese Yaka tribe stimulate the author's ruminations on the "post-colonial predicament." Craig San Roque, in chapter 6, engages in a series of "reveries" (the author's term) on Central Australian shamanism and how they capture "the Jungian attention." Ramblings of this sort eventually lead the author to conclude there is no "Descartian [sic] split within such people" (163). In chapter 7, Renata Eisenbruch traverses the well-travelled territory of trauma theory, and argues that fantasies sometimes develop from acute ruptures in the continuity of a person's history or that of a community. There is nothing new in this view, nor does Eisenbruch present any case material or ethnographic data to back up her claim. Likewise, in chapter 8, James Glass rediscovers the psychoanalytic precept that "cultural belief systems can be as crazy as individual ones" (191.) He develops this theme in a discussion of Nazi paranoia and fear of contamination – topics already explored in greater depth by Robert Lifton, Vamik Volkan, and others. In chapter 9, Dan Merkur explores the category of the numinous in an attempt to differentiate between *mysterium tremendum* and *fascinans*. Religious concerns with the sacred, he claims, are symptoms of the repression of numinous experiences. The last chapter, Shahid Najeib, argues from an analysis of Keats's poetry that psychoanalysis is simply the latest repository of "soul theory" preserved in ritual and practices.

"Exploration in Psychoanalytic Ethnography" is a disconnected amalgam of clinical ethnography, literary criticism, and self-involved rumination that unfortunately only reinforces the traditional reaction against psychoanalysis as an inaccessible *ars arcana*.

Charles W. Nuckolls

**Murdock, Donna F.:** *When Women Have Wings. Feminism and Development in Medellín, Colombia.*