

Cambodia” by Jan Ovesen and Ing-Britt Trankell, one gains a sense of the ambitious undertakings by these authors. They attempted to map French colonial influences on medical practices in the Southeast Asian region – Cambodia in particular – while bringing the reader forward to medical policies devised by the Khmer Rouge regime and post-regime aftermath.

The bulk of data informing this book was compiled and distilled from the “Archives Nationales du Cambodge” (National Archives of Cambodia), alongside the findings in the doctoral dissertation by Sokhieng Au with the University of California, Berkeley (Medicine and Modernity in Colonial Cambodia. 2005); her work has been published recently: “Mixed Medicines. Health and Culture in French Colonial Cambodia.” Chicago 2011.

Ovesen and Trankell revealed the complex “Give and Take” cycle embedded in colonial history. For instance, the French introduced an ambulance system of emergency care in Cambodia which was manned by French physicians. This system led ultimately to the development of the first independent hospital facility. The authors have artfully revealed the less-than-just colonial dynamic underlying this supposed advantage to Cambodian medical development. Essentially, only French occupants had access to emergency care, and hospitals were designed as places of isolation and confinement for community-oriented indigenous Khmer. Those with leprosy, for instance, were treated as inmates. A major contribution by these authors has been their compilation of data from multiple sources. They illustrate clearly the ongoing competition and lack of integration between public, private, and traditional health practices in public health care today.

To complement their archival work, the authors interviewed hospital personnel, pharmacists, private practitioners, traditional healers, monks, and spirit mediums through use of interpreters. While outcomes are limited by the shortened field study in Cambodia (“... one month in Cambodia and a couple of weeks to read up on existing social science and development literature ...; p. vii), and lack of selection criteria by which informants were chosen or reliable methods by which summaries were compiled, the interviews do bring to life the archival material.

Case excerpts assist the reader in grasping the continued cultural erosion by government authorities and international donors who invest in and import nontraditional medical options for those residing inside Cambodia. Overall the strength of this work is realised in the brave critique by these authors to ask hard questions about the on-going sociopolitical forces from outside Cambodia that are impacting the national health care reform system – and risking loss by the next generation to the complex system of indigenous Khmer cosmology and ancestral wellbeing.

Peg LeVine

Piwowarczyk, Darius J.: *Coming Out of the “Iron Cage.” The Indigenists of the Society of the Divine Word in Paraguay, 1910–2000.* Fribourg: Academia Press, 2008. 368 pp. ISBN 978-3-7278-1620-8. (Studia Instituti Anthropos, 52) Price: sfr. 75.00

While many anthropological studies have focused on the response of indigenous people to missionary efforts, Piwowarczyk follows the lead of T. O. Beidelman, Mary Huber, and the Comaroffs by making missionaries the subject of his interesting anthropological missionary study. The case study is a group of Catholic missionaries of the Society of the Divine Word (SVD) – known in German as “Steyler Missionare” – working in Paraguay. The author aims to highlight and analyze the major historical and sociological factors that shaped their understanding and practice of mission among the indigenous people of that country. The methodology is based on current social theory, primarily that of Pierre Bourdieu. The overall thesis is that “any Christian missionary enterprise not only responded to the institutional ideologies of the church that supports that project, and to the challenges presented by the local cultural settings, but also it has been decisively influenced by a historically situated global economic-political and social-cultural context in which it unfolds” (18). The author situates this dynamic in a reality called the “field of Indigenism,” which is defined as “a conglomeration of institutional and individual players that compete for the symbolic power to interpret and construe Indianness in order to incorporate indigenous peoples into their distinctive visions of society, one of them being the universal-religious model of polity proposed by missionaries of various persuasions” (311).

“Coming Out of the ‘Iron Cage’” is divided into three parts according to dominant discourses or “frontiers” which shape the field of Indigenism in Latin America, particularly in Paraguay, through the twentieth century: “progress,” “development,” and “cooperation-participation.” Each part consists of three chapters. The first chapter in each part (chapters 1, 4, and 7) presents the social-historical context which shaped the ideology and practice of the SVD missionaries who came to Paraguay in that period. The second chapter of each part (chapters 2, 5, and 8) outlines the field of Indigenism in Paraguay at that time. The third chapter of each part (chapters 3, 6, and 9) analyzes the dynamic interplay and positioning between the missionaries and the field of Indigenism. The thesis is developed very clearly and systematically.

Part One on “Progress” in the early twentieth century (approximately 1910–1930) outlines the context of the missionaries, who had ambiguous attitudes of both accommodation and resistance between “traditional” and “modern” experiences in their homeland of Germany. The indigenous peoples of Paraguay also were caught between resistance and compliance in a changing social, cultural, religious, economic, and political reality. The SVD missionaries began in 1910 with a desire to contribute to the “civilizing mission” of the Catholic Church by recreating the earlier Jesuit utopian, reduction-style approach with its collectivist economic schema. However, this would come to an end due to a number of inherent paradoxes

and the unfeasibility of such a utopian vision within that local situation. In 1925, the SVD ended their missionary presence among the indigenous and decided to do parish work among Paraguayan Catholics.

Part Two shifts to the discourse of “Development” during the mid-twentieth century (approximately 1930–1970). The post-World War II years or reconstruction gave birth to economic boom in Europe and North America and the notion of the “Third World” of underdeveloped Latin America. Destructive economic dependence would lead to the proliferation of totalitarian and populist regimes in many countries, including Paraguay. The discourse of development likewise impacted the Catholic Church and the three SVD missionaries who had returned to work with the indigenous in the mid-sixties. Piwowarczyk does an interesting study of the activity and attitudes of these missionaries within the field of Indigenism. In sharp contrast to the first group of German SVD missionaries, this smaller group consisted of a Brazilian priest claiming Amerindian ancestry, an Afrobrazilian Brother, and an Italian Brother devoted to development work.

Part Three treats the discourse of “Cooperation/Participation” during the late twentieth century (approximately 1970–2000). The social context included the development of transnational economy, resurgence of nationalism, and ethnic consciousness, emergence of the environmental movement, shift from development to neoliberal cooperation, and the Catholic Church’s commitment to social concerns. The author contends that the Barbados Conference of the World Council of Churches in 1971 “was the turning point in the recent history of the Paraguayan Indigenism” (227) and he points to the key role of NGOs, particularly the indigenous ones in Paraguay, in the further developments. In the late twentieth century, the SVD dramatically increased their personnel (eighteen men from ten countries) and resources for a new engagement with the indigenous people. The author states that the emerging redefinition of Paraguayan Indigenism “was accomplished by socially radical intellectuals in alliance with a group of progressive Catholic missionaries” (259).

The final chapter (10) is much more than a summary as the author draws together concluding insights. First of all, the author has described and analyzed how the ideology, policies, and practices of the SVD missionaries in Paraguay “have been responding to and were shaped by hegemonic relations of power as expressed in three globalizing discourses” (317). Secondly, he explored “the impact of the SVD indigenists on the local context of the Paraguayan field of Indigenism as well as the effect that their work had upon the organizational policies of the Society [SVD] in that country” (317).

On the one hand, the author’s “insider” status may have on a couple occasions effected the total objectivity of his observations, particularly in Part Three. On the other hand, Piwowarczyk, as one of the SVD missionaries in Paraguay in the late twentieth century, generally used his “insider” perspective from many years of living and working in that context to delve professionally and deeply into the complexities of the situation for both the SVD and the indigenous people. Furthermore, he was able to appropri-

ately weave in theology and church developments within his treatment. Recognizing the tension in missionary motivation between salvation and social concerns, and the impact of post-Vatican II trends and liberation theology is extremely important. Very few anthropological studies are able to make this particular interdisciplinary connection. It is also interesting to trace the threads of the commitment to the social sciences by the SVD since its founding in the late nineteenth century (38 f., 71 f., 277 f.), including the foundation of the *Anthropos* journal in 1906.

This fine work will be of particular interest to scholars and students studying cultural interaction, social change, missionaries, church-state relations, and Latin America in general. It also contributes to the new approach of writing the history of Christianity and mission, which takes into serious account the social location of the missionaries, the active agency of the “recipients,” the complexities of the social-cultural context, and the interdisciplinary approach of history, theology, and the social sciences. Finally, many academically-inclined missionaries would be extremely interested in this book.

Roger Schroeder

Piwowarczyk, Darius J.: Coming Out of the “Iron Cage.” The Indigenists of the Society of the Divine Word in Paraguay, 1910–2000. Fribourg: Academia Press, 2008. 368 pp. ISBN 978-3-7278-1620-8. (Studia Instituti Anthropos, 52) Price: sfr. 75.00

Piwowarczyk seeks to “identify, analyze and explain” the historical and sociological factors that most influenced the Divine Word (or “SVD”) missionaries in their dealings with the indigenous people of Paraguay. The author focuses on what have been the religious order’s three principal objectives over time – conversion, human promotion, and self-sufficiency of the Native communities. He addresses the Divine Word “text” within the larger “context” of progress (chapters 1–3), development (chapters 4–6), and cooperation-participation (chapters 7–9). Chapter 10 discusses his conclusions.

Founded in 1875, the Divine Word missionaries were “creations of modernity.” They transgressed social limits and internalized the qualities that their founder, Arnold Janssen, embodied: sobriety, self-discipline, and diligence. Emerging within a Romantic period, these emissaries of evangelism were weaned to seek the exotic, the alien, the wild, and irrational. Among their number was the renowned priest-anthropologist, Wilhelm Schmidt, whose distinguished career within anthropology predated the field’s later antipathy toward people of religion. The order’s presence among the Guaraní was partly due to legislators thinking the SVD might bring “progress” to the “savages.” Missionaries sometimes wondered if they were trying to create a bourgeois society or one wherein social justice prevailed.

Come the twentieth century, the major institutions (each with an agenda that affected “Indianness”) were the State, the Catholic Church, yerba and timber extracting companies, the Anglican mission, and the SVD. It was the State that led a multi-pronged conversion process. Other institutions helped in the transformation of nineteen eth-