Rezensionen

Adams, Vincanne, Mona Schrempf, and **Sienna R. Craig** (eds.): Medicine between Science and Religion. Explorations on Tibetan Grounds. New York: Berghahn Books, 2011. 371 pp. ISBN 978-1-84545-758-7. (Epistemologies of Healing, 10) Price: £ 53.00

"Medicine Between Science and Religion. Explorations on Tibetan Grounds" is an innovative collection focusing around a theme highly relevant in contemporary thought, that of engagement between knowledge according to what can broadly be termed "science," that emerging from notions of "religion," and what can be discovered at the interface of these two, too often considered polar opposites. According to its editorial aims (chap. 1), this collection of work contributes to a neglected area in scholarship concerning biomedicine's attempts to engage on non-Western grounds, by documenting relations between science, medicine, and religion and exploring their engagement across geographical and cultural boundaries. In doing so, the articles included here orient to a "*sowa rigpa* sensibility," referring to the Tibetan "science of healing" (*sowa rigpa*) at the heart of Tibetan medical theory and practice as expounded in the "Gyüshi," its seminal text. The authors in this volume attempt to discuss interactions between Western medical science, or biomedicine, and Tibetan medicine from Tibetan perspectives. This is an admirable and innovative attempt to move away from anthropological ethnographic works taking a Western conceptual frame as starting point, towards an approach in which it is rather Tibetan sensibilities that are taken as grounds upon which to move, as indeed the collection's title indicates.

The editors have structured the chapters into four sections, each prefigured by an introduction clarifying its own particular rationale within the overarching themes outlined above. Part I situates the current debate surrounding Tibetan medicine and its encounters with modernity in historical contexts. Alex McKay's tracing of the uptake of biomedicine in central Tibet (chap. 2) attests to Tibetan medicine as historically syncretic and flexible in nature, willing to incorporate biomedical technologies pragmatically and where it made sense to do so in Tibetan terms. Similarly, Martin Saxer's detailed work on Tibetan medicine's dissemination to Tsarist Russia (chap. 3) implies that the empirical episteme of Tibetan medicine is able to distinguish between healing practices that are other and incorporate aspects of these on a pragmatic basis. The historical perspectives in Part I provide foundation for the research in this book's attempt to make sense of encounters between Tibetan medicine and biomedicine, situating them as it does in historical context of cross-fertilisation.

Part II raises issues manifesting due to interaction between Tibetan medicine and biomedicine in contemporary situations. Stephan Kloos (chap. 4) argues convincingly for Tibetan medicine, as practiced at its primary exile medical centre in Dharamsala, as engaging in legitimising strategies with Western scientific method and modernity as part of its overall cultural preservation project, a project linked to notions of Tibetan identity. Vincanne Adams, Renchen Dhondup, and Phuoc V. Le (chap. 5) continue exploring such attempts at cultural preservation in Qinghai Province, on the Tibetan Plateau, where the practice of Tibetan medicine self-validates through recourse to the biomedical technologies practiced in tandem with it, as well as supplements its own practice with biomedical practices in modified form. Barbara Gerke (chap. 6) opens up debates surrounding the complexities of translation between medical and disease categories, arising as they do from contrasting cultural perspectives, and again shows Tibetan exile communities in India using biomedicine to validate Tibetan medical diagnoses.

Part III continues to explore the ways in which Tibetan medicine is used and interpreted by contemporary practitioners, patients, and researchers, particularly in relation to religious aspects of practice. Mona Schrempf (chap. 7) uses the qualitatively opposed images of magical incantation, mantra, and syringe to illustrate the superficially distant poles between which Amdoan Tibetan communities on the Tibetan Plateau travel in seeking health care and engaging in healing practices. She presents movements between these poles as part of a cultural logic of healing which stands outside dualistic categorizations, such as medicine and religion or mind and body, and biomedical technology correspondingly radically reformulated in Tibetan terms. Kim Gutschow (chap. 8), working in Zanskar, describes care during labour, birth and postnatal care according to both traditional and biomedical practices. Traditional practices include a complex series of rituals and imperatives relating to notions of birth pollution, which prevented the involvement of Tibetan doctors in the process. This is in conflict with the introduction of biomedical hospitals and their methods, which make birth a public rather than a private process, due to its medicalisation. Sienna R. Craig (chap. 9) raises pertinent translative issues relating to efficacy and legitimisation in an

eloquent ethnography telling her story of the first hospital-based randomised controlled trial of a Tibetan medical formula in the Tibetan Autonomous Region. She highlights in her account how ritualised acts, integral to the practice of both Tibetan medicine and biomedicine, can coexist in distinct spaces within one research or health seeking process, thus enabling practices based on apparently mutually exclusive conceptual frames to coexist without one being subordinate to the other.

Part IV focuses on research examining how interactions between Tibetan medicine and biomedicine are and can be mutually transformative. Mingji Cuomu (chap. 10), herself an experienced Tibetan doctor, gives a heartfelt account of the epistemological principles and theories of Tibetan medicine, elucidating what could be understood as a *sowa rigpa* sensibility and how this informs Tibetan research methodologies that are essentially qualitative in nature, from an invaluably experiential perspective. Olaf Czaja (chap. 11) thoroughly documents a group of exile Tibetan doctors' perspectives on their encounters with biomedicine as they attend a conference in Dharamsala in 1996 at which they discuss possible Tibetan equivalents for the Western diseases glossed as "diabetes" and "cancer," and possible validations for Tibetan medicine by means of demonstrating its ability to address such types of illness. Alejandro Chaoul (chap. 12), suggests his research into the possible benefits of Tibetan yoga for cancer patients shows the interaction of Western science with complementary forms of healing as a mutually integrative effort. He moves towards a new model on a *sowa rigpa* sensibility in which non-biomedical forms of healing are not alternative but complementary, a model that embraces diversity in rethinking best practices to enable health and well being.

This collection's well crafted framing, introduced as it was by a chapter expressing the editors' perspectives on the themes threading through it and their choices of material, concludes with an insightful epilogue by Geoffrey Samuel (chap. 13), which draws together those thematic threads and situates them within the wider context of contemporary thought. An approach that aims to take *sowa rigpa* rather than European derived biomedicine as epistemological starting point seeks to subvert a colonial knowledge paradigm in which the non-Western is subordinated to a Eurocentric scientific hegemony. Regarding the subject matter of this volume, this could result in extending a sense of what medicine and healing might include. The implications of such an approach to knowledge and research have far-reaching implications beyond the limits of any one academic discipline, and may also inform choices concerning the provision of healthcare worldwide. Hence the insights proffered by the nuanced analyses of this book, framed as they are with such discerning editorial skill, have profound value for medical anthropology and, more generally, for social scientists, practitioners of healing arts, health seekers, and health providers as they (re)negotiate the theories and practices of health care in the liminal spaces that interface the science and religion of our increasingly globalised world.

Dawn Collins

Anderson, Astrid: Landscapes of Relations and Belonging. Body, Place, and Politics in Wogeo, Papua New Guinea. New York: Berghahn Books, 2011. 262 pp. ISBN 978-1-84545-775-4. (Person, Space, and Memory in the Contemporary Pacific, 3) Price: £ 55.00

Ian Hogbin famously called Wogeo, "the island of the menstruating men" in the 1930s. For her 1990s restudy, Astrid Anderson based herself in the very community in which Hogbin lived in sixty years earlier. What she found extends and complements his classic work by way of shedding new light on how these Austronesian-speaking gardeners conceptualize their island and the social life that they live on it. That is to say, while she makes ample use of Marilyn Strathern's concept of personhood and Roy Wagner's semiotics, Anderson's purpose, as she herself defines it, is rather Malinowskian. She wants us to understand how the body is experienced through metaphors of dwelling and paths through the social landscape. In short, she wants us to grasp "the native's point of view."

Contrary to the chic disparagement that culture is no longer attached to place or that anthropology is ill-equipped to think about discontinuity, for all the changes brought about by modernity, e.g., the end of the male cult, the rise of the Catholic charismatic movement, education, out-migration, etc., Anderson's view of Wogeo Islanders remains strikingly of a piece with Hogbin's. For example, gendered, culturally constructed notions of bodily hygiene maintained through the observation of taboos had certainly diminished but remained significant. Ritual penis bleeding had been abandoned by her time: Wogeo was no longer an island of menstruating men. However, the annual New Year's celebration continued to imagine that the island, as well as the year itself, had to be "cleansed like a menstruating woman." Or, to put it another way, the island of the menstruating men continued to be an island largely defined in terms of local, rather than metropolitan, distinctions. Indeed, Hogbin himself had joined the ranks of the culture heroes, a giver of agency, both to the Wogeo as well as to Anderson.

Thus, it is not surprising that the significance of Anderson's two main differences with Hogbin, if one can call them differences, have to do with decidedly local values. On the one hand, he did not appreciate, she argues, the great, but hidden, regard for matriliny in the society. The Wogeo balance patrifilial relations with matriliny, according to Anderson, which is part of a tense, male-female complementarity that is widespread in the culture as a whole (not to mention, of course, elsewhere in the Sepik). And, on the other, the meaning of the house, particularly its rafters, cannot be underestimated. The house, Anderson concludes, is an extremely complicated microcosm of the social and physical composition of the community, its estate, history, and relationships. Houses are owned by matrilineages but do not necessarily domicile them. Their named rafters, which grant land tenure, condense genealogy, but loosely so. A rafter does not signify a single matrilineage, but rather uncertainty and political influence. In the 1990s, land ownership was being registered with the state and rafters were being replaced by corrugated aluminum sheeting. However, the meaning of