

L. Beck's ("Anthropological Research in Iran") and F. Adelhah's ("Islamophobia and Malaise in Anthropology") are critical of anthropologists' assumptions, preferences, and conduct. They hold a mirror up to our collective professional sins and encourage us to improve. After many personal disclaimers, Beck suggests that we ought to learn from local ethnographies rather than belittle them; to share insights with colleagues from other disciplines so as to make our and their knowledge more nuanced; to pursue problem-oriented topics that transcend the local; to engage in comparison; and to write, occasionally at least, for a readership other than fellow scholars. This is good advice. F. Adelhah is more abstract. Impatient with social scientists' unexamined, dysfunctional categories for analysis and assumptions about Islam, she demands that we question our perception of social dynamics in the Islamic Republic that led us – most of us anyway – to equalize critique of the state with critique of Islam. Yet after all the intellectual and moral rebel-rousing, she ends with a docile functionalistic analysis of "veiling," a truly dysfunctional category by now.

Ch. Bromberger ("Usual Topics: Taboo Themes and New Objects in Iranian Anthropology") points to Iranian anthropology's inability to make theoretical contributions to anthropology in general, and to anthropologists' near-neglect of issues of daily life in the many new social contexts in Iran. As this neglect, however, is a function of the inhospitable climate for social sciences and field research in Iran, I suggest that we cannot hope for a change soon. In order for such research to be possible, however, he suggests that we focus on modern life in different social spaces and on diachronic as well as inter- and intra-cultural comparisons of traditional social categories such as "village" and "tribe" are dissolving. In doing so, Bromberger realizes that anthropology is moving ever closer to (journalistic) cultural studies and sociology – a rather deplorable development in my view.

In all, these useful and informative articles assess the status of anthropology of/in Iran realistically, even candidly, although the repetitive historical recapitulations are somewhat irritating. The articles reflect the cautiously optimistic attitude at the time of the conference, a hopefulness that meanwhile has withered. They suggest that – as an academic discipline – anthropology in Iran suffers from lack of appreciation, lack of well-trained academics and good students, lack of infrastructure, and lack of a collegiate, cooperative spirit. They further reflect ambivalent attitudes in Iran on all levels important for anthropological research, such as assurances of highest regard for knowledge and for scholarship followed by suspicion of those who pursue and disseminate it. And the articles illustrate the difficulties of transplanting a young social science based on humanism and curiosity (rather than pragmatism) to a society that is distrustful of intellectual pursuits deemed as potentially dangerous to an authoritarian state.

Erika Friedl

**Niessen, Sandra:** *Legacy in Cloth. Batak Textiles of Indonesia.* Leiden: KITLV Press, 2009. 568 pp., photos. ISBN 978-90-6718-351-2. Price: € 54.90

This publication is truly monumental both in size and scope. Sandra Niessen's goal is a comprehensive survey of the textiles produced by the Batak of Northern Sumatra, both historically and into the present. Her academic training is in anthropology, which she studied at Leiden University, and her field research goes back to 1979, when she first came to Indonesia to study Toba Batak weaving in its wider social context. Subsequent visits have kept her engaged in Batak culture and its changes over the years. This book is the culmination of decades of research, both among the Batak and in European museums and archives. The focus is on what is here called the "Lake Toba Tradition," the weaving produced by the Toba, Karo, and Simalungun Batak, as well as a small section of the Dairi. These groups all live adjacent to Lake Toba. The Alas, Mandailing, and Angkola Batak, who share certain cultural and linguistic features with their neighbours (Aceh and the Minangkabau), are not included in this survey.

Following the introductory chapter, the book is divided into four parts. The study begins in Part I with a concise analysis of certain design features that are shared by all Batak weavers. Niessen identifies these as tripartition, where two similar sides flank a patterned centre; biaxial symmetry, where the textile is symmetrical along a weft and warp axis; and concentric dualism, where a centre is surrounded by equivalent sides, which she argues is a kind of asymmetric dualism, with an opposition between centre and periphery. These underlying principles are familiar from other Indonesian textile traditions, especially from Eastern Indonesia: they resonate with the design structures of some, if not all, textiles from Flores, the Lamaholot, Timor, and the Southern Moluccas. But rarely have these characteristic features been analysed so succinctly, and its introduction at this early stage is especially welcome. As a result, the reader appreciates from the outset the sense of order apparent in these textiles. The basic colour triad of blue, white, and red also is introduced here; again, this is a feature common to many Indonesian textiles, although with shifting meanings given to each. The early history of Batak design is juxtaposed with the development of new designs in the later 20th century. The nomenclature of motifs and finished textiles is linked to both appearance and techniques, but also to the cloth's role in a particular ritual.

Part II further elaborates on these themes, as it identifies six distinct regions of Batak textile weaving. These regional styles are Samosir, based on Samosir Island (according to Toba belief the origin of their culture), Simalungun, Karo, Si Tolu Huta, Holbung/Uluhan, and Silindung. These stylistic regions are richly illustrated throughout with historical and contemporary photographs, which vividly document the development of textile types, but also of attitudes to dress over the last century, as European-style garments become common and are merged with indigenous Batak wear, or even replace it altogether except for ceremonial dress. Weaving dramatically declined in some of them during the 20th century, especially among

the Karo and parts of the Holbung Batak. Part III is the catalogue raisonné, a comprehensive survey of Batak textiles in European museums, private collections (the vast majority of them in Sandra Niessen's own collection), or still in the Batak region. Nine categories are listed, and the groups are defined by colour (blue textiles), design (stripes in warp and weft: the Batak plaids), or technique (weft patterning), which sometimes creates some confusion: while "stipple ikat" and "chevron ikat" are separate categories, both also appear in the "blue textiles" group. The catalogue groups sometimes transgress the regional style groups. This may irritate a perfectionist, but it actually allows for an overview that makes connections between categories and emphasizes the dynamic interaction between neighbouring groups. All textiles are photographed flat in this part of the book, to show the complete design field, many of them in full length. Close-up details make it possible to appreciate the intricacies of motifs and design arrangements.

The last major section (Part IV) records the making of Batak textiles, from the fibre construction, dyeing, patterning of threads, and yarns prior to weaving (ikat), to setting up the loom, weaving, and creating design while weaving, or after the cloth has been constructed. The elaborate finishing techniques that distinguish Batak textiles, especially their border-twinings, are discussed and described in detail. All aspects of production are illustrated with original field photographs and helpful diagrams. Niessen takes technology seriously, and it shows. She already emphasizes in her introduction that making and meaning are closely linked. I was especially taken with her description of what is considered the appropriate motion associated with a given task: these are typically taken for granted, and yet are very culturally specific.

The book has two appendices: an account of the author's research methods, especially during her stays among the Batak, and an extensive technical vocabulary which gives the equivalent to English textile terms in four Batak languages. The index combines English and Batak terms, which is helpful to the nonspecialist. Although this is a real tome of a publication, the overall design makes it relatively easy to use. References are clearly indicated in the text with a distinct colour and smaller type: an unconventional solution that diverges from the standard styles of citations, but it works well. The physical production is of the highest standard: all illustrations are superbly reproduced, and the quality of paper and typesetting are remarkable. But foremost praise has to go to Sandra Niessen for giving such a readable, engaging account. She has created a genuine monument to her Batak weaver teachers and friends.

Ruth Barnes

**Olsthoorn, Thea:** Die Erkundungsreisen der Herrnhuter Missionare nach Labrador (1752–1770). Kommunikation mit Menschen einer nicht-schriftlichen Kultur. Hildesheim: Georg Olms Verlag, 2010. 358 pp. ISBN 978-3-487-14319-4. (Nikolaus von Zinzendorf. Materialien und Dokumente, Reihe 2; Bd. 35) Preis: € 78.00

Auf 350 Seiten geht Thea Olsthoorn in ihrer 2010

im Georg Olms Verlag veröffentlichten Dissertation (betreut durch Dietmar Waterkamp, Lehrbeauftragter am Institut für Allgemeine Erziehungswissenschaft und Karl-Heinz Jakob, Professor für Germanistische Linguistik und Sprachgeschichte – beide Technische Universität Dresden), "Die Erkundungsreisen der Herrnhuter Missionare nach Labrador (1752–1770). Kommunikation mit Menschen einer nicht-schriftlichen Kultur" der Kommunikation der Herrnhuter Missionare auf ihren Rekognoszierungsreisen an der Küste Labradors mit den dort ansässigen Labrador Inuit sowie mit den englischen Kolonialbeamten und Kapitänen nach. Letztere erwarteten als neue Herren von Labrador nach dem Frieden von Paris 1763 von den Brüdern eine friedensstiftende Vermittlerrolle, um den Handel mit den Inuit weg von den Franzosen hin zu den Engländern zu verlegen. Das Buch erschien als Band 35 unter "Nikolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf. Materialien und Dokumente. Reihe 2: Nikolaus Ludwig von Zinzendorf. Leben und Werk in Quellen und Darstellungen" herausgegeben von Erich Beyreuther (verst.), Matthias Meyer und Peter Zimmerling und basiert laut Vorwort weitgehend auf der vorangegangenen Dissertation.

Olsthoorn beschäftigt sich in ihrem Buch mit den Anfängen der herrnhutischen Mission in Labrador aus der Sicht der Herrnhuter. Die Grundlage bilden Originaldokumente der Brüdergemeine aus dem 18. Jahrhundert, in die die Autorin im Unitätsarchiv, dem Zentralarchiv der Evangelischen Brüder-Unität, in Herrnhut in der Oberlausitz in Sachsen Einsicht nehmen konnte. In 9-monatiger Recherchearbeit hat Olsthoorn die in "alter deutscher Schrift" verfassten Manuskripte zuerst auf Papier niedergeschrieben und im Anschluss in den Computer übertragen. Die Studie erhebt zwar keinen Anspruch auf Vollständigkeit, da auf Grund der Menge nicht alle Schriftstücke im Unitätsarchiv berücksichtigt werden konnten, jedoch den Anspruch, die für die Anfänge der Labrador Mission wichtigsten Schriftstücke, darunter jene mit der Signatur "R.15.K", berücksichtigt zu haben.

Zu diesen Kernstücken gehören Journale und Briefe der Brüder Johannes Christian Erhardt, Jens Haven, Christian Larsen Drachardt, John Hill, Andreas Schloezer und Jens Steffen sowie Instruktionen des Unitätsarchivs an seine "Sendboten": das Journal von Erhardt (1752); das Tagebuch von Jens Haven 1764; das Journal der Brüder Hill, Haven, Drachardt, Schloezer 1765; das Reise-Diarium von Steffen Jensen; der Auszug von Jens Havens Aufsatz von seinen Rekognoszierungsreisen und Aufenthalt in Labrador 1764–1784; Jens Havens Rekognoszierungsreise von 1770; Christian Drachardt Rekognoszierungsreise; Extrakt aus Jens Havens Expedition; Andreas Schloezers Brief vom 3. Dezember 1765; Jens Havens Erklärung seiner Karten von seinen Reisen 1765; Lebenslauf Christian Larsen Drachardt; Lebenslauf Jens Haven; J. Havens Erinnerungen wegen der Eskimos; Jens Havens Brief vom 3. Dezember 1765; Drachardts Brief d. d. 4. Mai 1770; Drachardts Brief vom 8. Oktober 1770; Instruktion der Unitätsdirektion für die Brüder Brodersen, Metcalf, Haven, und Hill d. d. 29. Januar 1765; Instruktion der Unitätsdirektion für die Brüder Hill, Haven, Drachardt, Schloezer d. d. 31. März 1765; Instruktion