einen Ausblick auf die mögliche Zukunft der Inselkultur, die ohne festen Ursprung, so der Autor, wahrscheinlich zu noch mehr Komplexität führen wird, da die Akteure auf ihrer Suche nach einem Platz im Bannkreis des Genres *World Music* den Grad ihrer Besonderheit zunehmend steigern müssen.

Schließlich bietet die beigefügte CD eine reichhaltige und illustrative Auswahl an Musikstücken der wichtigsten Repräsentanten der Musik von La Réunion wie z. B. Danyèl Waro, dem mittlerweile verstorbenen Alain Peters und den Ensembles Bastèr und Ziskakan. Im Buch sind immer wieder entsprechende Verweise auf die Titelnummern der CD angeführt, um dem Leser die Möglichkeit zu geben, direkt zu einem Höreindruck derjenigen Musik zu gelangen, von der das Buch spricht. Dass diese CD zusammengestellt und dem Buch beigegeben werden konnte, zeigt auch, dass die Musikkultur von La Réunion kommerziell noch nicht flächendeckend und rigide mit Copyright-Forderungen großer Medienkonzerne belegt ist und derartige Zweitverwertungen zulässt.

Insgesamt ist "Kréol Blouz" ein Buch, das einen faszinierenden Einblick in eine vielfältige Musikkultur fern des Mainstream gibt, ohne naiverweise den Blick von den Bestrebungen abzuwenden, die die Teilnahme an globalen kulturpolitischen Infrastrukturen erlauben. Wergin versucht an keiner Stelle, das heterogene Bild der Kreolisierung künstlich zu glätten oder in das Prokrustesbett analytischer Einheitssuche einzuspannen. Andererseits umgeht er auch die Falle einer bunten, aber zusammenhanglosen Beschreibung der vorgefundenen Vielfalt. Mit dem Konzept einer *musique composite* macht der Autor unmissverständlich klar, dass die Kultur der Insel nicht als bloße Juxtaposition heterogener Einflüsse oder als durch einen allen gemeinsamen Ursprung zusammengehaltene Identitätsprojektion zu verstehen ist, sondern als sich ausbreitendes Geflecht von Inszenierungen selbstbewusster Lokalität heterogener Ursprungsorte. Für Ethnologen, aber auch Musiker oder Musikerinteressierte und informierte Laien bietet die Untersuchung eine Vielfalt an Einsichten in eine regionale Kultur, die unter dem Aspekt des *postcolonial turn* in den Kulturwissenschaften als repräsentatives Spannungsfeld zwischen multidirektionaler Erinnerung und Einheitssuche gelten darf.

Ralph Buchenhorst

Wilcken, Patrick: Claude Lévi-Strauss. The Poet in the Laboratory. London: Bloomsbury, 2010. 375 pp. ISBN 978-0-7475-8362-2. Price: £ 30.00

Patrick Wilcken has fashioned an accessible "intellectual biography of Lévi-Strauss's long life of the mind" (13). It is vivid and engaging, although often too contrived; it tries to cover everything, with uneven results.

Offered as the first full life of Lévi-Strauss in English, Wilcken's draws spottily on secondary sources in French that proliferated as his subject approached his century-year (2008, before his death in 2009). He cites Denis Bertholet's biographic study (Plon, 2002) that better covers contexts of Lévi-Strauss's career; but he neglects Michel Izard's edited volume (L'Herne, 2004) conveying a fuller international impact (with a helpful chronology) and rich glimpses of Lévi-Strauss's Jewish ancestry, marriages, and family, and collegial encounter. The stunning Pléiade selection of "Lévi-Strauss. Oeuvres" (Gallimard, 2008), with its elaborate critical apparatus, is referenced, possibly hastily. Readers with French may prefer these sources; like Wilcken, they rely on Lévi-Strauss's own canny representations of his research, methods, honors, and artistic tastes in sparkling interviews through the years, including the "conversations" with journalist Didier Eribon in 1988.

This new biography differs in emphases from preceding studies; it deserves reading (and enjoying) provided its limitations be acknowledged. Wilcken is curious about Lévi-Strauss's sustained renown in France, and ("strangely enough," he remarks) in Brazil, site of Wilcken's own researches on colonialism (14). The study is staged as a bridge across generations and even eras by considering Lévi-Strauss (whom at age 98, he got to interview) anew. Dilemmas of the sometimes dazzled biographer are acutely felt: "What is interesting about Lévi-Strauss is not the minutiae of his life, but the way this ascetic figure, the very opposite of a Sartre-style charismatic intellectual, managed to capture the high ground of theory and ideas at a particular moment in the twentieth century" (13 f.). Yet the book covers "in some detail" and chronologically the eventful "phase" of Lévi-Strauss's life to 1955 and "Tristes tropiques." That Wilcken enacts something other than he announces conforms (I suggest) with Lévi-Strauss's own keen sense of genre-conflict. Even at 98, Lévi-Strauss responded to sometimes inept queries both mordantly and spiritedly, with vivacity of contradiction, working both in and against the format at hand: "interviews" (3).

The spectacularly influential "Tristes tropiques" questioned not just travel-writing but autobiographical representation through its imperfect recollection: "forgetfulness," famously, "having accomplished its task." No writer (save Proust) has more thoroughly questioned chronology's propriety in human life (and human history) than Lévi-Strauss, who remembers fitfully back through multiple exiles and alienations, in order to continue at all – much as cultures do, according to his powerfully concrete notion of myth.

This biography's first half is more successful, despite its flattening effect on Lévi-Strauss's discourse of "time regained." Entanglements of now-legendary expeditions in Brazil – in all their wonder and controversy – are further documented, with edgy intimations about omissions in Lévi-Strauss's versions. Wilcken's disappointment that Lévi-Strauss does not share his interest in Brasilia's architecture leads to some confusion about the category "modernist" that recurs through the volume. Also rehashed are old questions about adequacy of field research; such issues have been partly superseded, today – whether by critically rethinking how relevant "the Malinowski standard" has been to diverse schools of ethnology, or by acknowledging that Lévi-Strauss converted even brief field episodes into grist for descriptive advantage and comparative insight.

Exhilarated by access to an early draft of "Tristes tro-

piques," Wilcken might have more carefully addressed the work's published versions. He judges the non-New World overpopulated-tropics chapters "awkwardly inserted" in the Brazilian material, rather than essential fragments that fill out "tropical" variants spatially and historically. Not just these chapters but pages including the controversial "Islam is the West of the East" formulation (paralleling Napoleon) were excluded in the first English translation. To complain that Lévi-Strauss largely omits his New York years (happy ones, oddly) from "Tristes tropiques," misses the force of "tropes of sadness" comprising a work that is assertively not a chronicle.

Wilcken declares that his second half "leaves behind the biographical detail" to deal with ideas. But does it? Chapters bulge with episodes (some gossipy) of academic politics and strategies, professional strife, and ambiguities of fame. He deals circumstantially with Lévi-Strauss's "skills as an institution builder" – his knack for harnessing to marvelously eccentric work, intimations of a "method," a leading academic journal, and even, once upon a time, an "ism." Much of his disciplinary impact stemmed from superb polemical skills, generally waged in counter-attacks.

Wilcken justifies the book's supposed shift to "ideas" biographically, stressing Lévi-Strauss's relative "retreat" into intellectual (versus experiential) life, with expanding professional success and recognition. We proceed from "Structural Anthropology" (1958) on through "Mythologiques" (1964–71 – with 1968 happening in the meantime) and many subsequent books through 1991 (the exquisite "Look Listen Read"). Lévi-Strauss's life already stretched over double exiles and epochal upheavals (World War II and his bare escape from Vichy France; India's partition and his arrival in Karachi in an official UNESCO capacity, etc.). Through intricacies that border on the mysterious, his career (and life) kept on topping itself – eventuating in the Collège de France, Académie française, and canonization in the Pléiade and 100th birthday visit from France's President, declaring him a virtual national treasure. Through all the achievements and élan, Lévi-Strauss continued executing precisely the analyses he earlier promised (save that second kinship volume on complex structures). The undiminished intensity and sheer difficulty, punctuated with poetic-aesthetic delights, was both austere and playful, and always bold. (A fine sample is "The View From Afar.")

Wilcken's second half has to back peddle to "The Elementary Structures of Kinship" and Lévi-Strauss's ethnography of the Nambikwara. He dwells inordinately on Anglo-American (and particularly English) attraction-repulsion to his kinship studies (full disclosure: this reviewer embroiled in those debates, sided with Lévi-Strauss over, say, Needham). Wilcken notes only in passing Lévi-Strauss's deep regard for Boasian work, and second-guesses the avowed impact on him of Lowie. Readers seeking to relate Durkheim's "inconstant disciple," and Mauss's successor to diverse schools of comparative analysis need look elsewhere to fathom "real differences in intellectual culture" between Lévi-Strauss and his British critics (289).

Wilcken makes a game effort to distill both the marriage theory and social structural component and the sensory-concrete logic and mythology component of Lévi-Strauss's interdisciplinary anthropology ("structuralism," so-called). Readers can rummage through copious connections in his *esprit* to linguistics, mathematics, literature and philosophy, music, poetics, visual arts, biology, etc. His political engagement is tracked, along with its relative abatement, or rather "unhitching," to live out analysis of New World myth in monk-like concentration.

Wilcken nicely characterizes relations with key colleagues and rivals – I'll just mention Jakobson, Merleau-Ponty, Caillois, and Lacan from a cast of 100s. That Derrida is marginalized will not please advocates of this long-time de-constructer of Lévi-Strauss. Of many giants of history germane to the work, Wilcken rightly stresses, say, Goethe, as well as Montaigne, Rousseau, and Marx. To grasp the force of, say, Wagner, for Lévi-Strauss would require less sketchy sampling of the myth and kinship studies and more through engagement with the entire corpus. Too seldom does Wilcken recognize the "mischievous side to Lévi-Strauss," (233) which is actually pervasive, including his engaging ambivalence about psychoanalysis.

Enthusiastically attentive to a scholar of yore, Wilcken's study does not quite envision that Lévi-Strauss's lifework may be less "past" than still-to-be-read, otherwise. The best biography sends us back to the source. Engaging Lévi-Strauss on the page today remains rather daunting, yet doing so may help resuscitate analytic and interpretive thinking both like his own, and different. We anthropologists (unlike Pléiade editors) should keep his kinship opus and his "Mythologiques" opera where they belong: as the twin representative centerpieces of Lévi-Strauss's ethnological world, graced throughout with *pensée sauvage.*

James A. Boon

Zeller, Joachim: Weiße Blicke – Schwarze Körper. Afrikaner im Spiegel westlicher Alltagskultur. Bilder aus der Sammlung Peter Weiss. Erfurt: Sutton Verlag, 2010. 250 pp., Fotos. ISBN 978-3-86680-412-8. Preis: € 34.90

It is by no means accidental that a combination of black and white colors dominates the cover design of Joachim Zeller's latest book "Weiße Blicke – Schwarze Körper. Afrikaner im Spiegel westlicher Alltagskultur" (White Gazes – Black Corpses. Africans in the Mirror of Western Daily Culture). The black-and-white photo presented on the cover succinctly introduces the content of the book and the issues of symbolism it explores. The photo was taken by the Polish photographer Casimir Zagourski (Kazimierz Zagórski) in the 1920s, during his extensive travels through Belgian Congo. It depicts an African woman wearing only beads and bracelets; she also has elaborately plaited hair. Her eyes, however, are hidden behind her arm which she stretches across her face. This gesture hides her face (or at least her eyes) from the gaze of the camera (and the man behind the camera). Commenting this picture (235), Zeller highlights the double symbolism of the woman's gesture. On the one hand,

she is hiding herself from the intrusive gaze of the photographer, which at the same time also shows her defiance. On the other hand, however, this gesture emphasizes a division between the power of the "white gaze" and the powerlessness of the "black body" which becomes even more powerless and objectified when deprived of its own eyes and its own gaze. This black-and-white picture gains more figurative shades and colors inside the book that reveal many layers of meaning hidden in the asymmetrical power relationship between white watchers (gazing, painting, and photographing) and the black objects of their gaze (being watched, gazed at, painted, and photographed).

Zeller organized his book around a variety of such visuals that document "Western" colonial and postcolonial discourses about Africa. Special emphasis is put on German iconography. The majority of the pictures are from the fantastic private postcard collection of Peter Weiss (Sammlung Peter Weiss; www.postcard-museum.com). Zeller also uses his own iconographic material as well as the pictures owned by various institutions and private collectors. These are mostly postcards as well as photographs, leaflets, printed advertisements, and posters. The illustrations date back mostly to the first half of the twentieth century (but there are also quite a few pictures from earlier and later periods). The author does not discuss the material in a chronological order; instead he is interested in tracing common views, stereotypes, and popular concepts about Africa. These ideas were created and shared by Europeans in colonial times, but they are also – sometimes surprisingly – still present today in popular culture and in imagery.

Zeller orders the visuals into eighteen thematic chapters that are designed for both picture-viewing and text-reading. Each chapter consists of a short written introduction followed by carefully chosen illustrations with detailed captions. The captions not only provide a reader with the information about the origins of illustrations, but also contain short historical commentaries in which Zeller proposes his interpretations and his *readings* of the pictures. The book is thus consciously composed as a photo-essay. And for a reader who is going through the pages, the processes of viewing and reading seem to be a coherent whole – with the text and the image intertwined. The visuals might not be as explicit as written words, but they can definitely communicate and inform, and thus create opinions and shape our perception of reality. In the process of viewing and *reading* them, one is caught up in a complicated dynamic that includes those who were taking the pictures, those who were presented in them, and those who were original recipients (for whom the pictures had been designed).

The eighteen chapters of Zeller's book also describe (and illustrate) various ambivalent – and sometimes contradictory – popular concepts about Africa and Africans. The African "others" were perceived as nonhuman, animal-like creatures that were frequently displayed in European capitals as integral parts of various colonial exhibitions. Some of them also appeared at curiosity shows, next to "dwarfs" and other examples of "deformed" bodies. In another popular discourse, the black – often naked – bodies were seen by "civilized whites" as the image of the lost paradise in which our "living ancestors" lived in harmony with "natural environment." This fear and fascination also went along with the "scientific" approach toward Africa(ns). Introducing a visual typography of various African tribes and physiognomies was one of the means of "taming" the "dark continent" and its people. Zeller remarks that in the context of colonial economy, Africans were often depicted and perceived as anonymous masses, primitive natives, barbarians, and cannibals who were "naturally" predestined for slavery. Additionally, visuals show infantile images of Africans still present and still popular in various games and imagery destined to be used by children. Zeller concludes that humor and jokes about Africans (represented in visual materials, e.g., comical stories and caricatures) should not be seen as neutral but rather weighted with colonial, paternalistic, or even racist ideology.

A truly shocking chapter consists the unambiguously racist "black disgrace on the Rhine" (or "black shame on the Rhine," German: "Schwarze Schmach am Rhein") campaign. This infamous campaign appeared as a reaction against the stationing of French African troops in the Rhineland after World War I. Racist opinions and various allegations against the black soldiers were reinforced by the image of a "black uncivilized beast." In this section, Zeller also displays propaganda images (produced during World War I), which depicted cruelty and barbarism of black soldiers fighting for the French. These pictures are followed by the anti-black and racist imagery produced in the Third Reich. Zeller observes that – once created – racist images used in war propaganda can be easily reused in different historical circumstances. The power of stereotypical images is based on their durability.

Other topics that Zeller addresses include such issues like love and intimate relations between Europeans and Africans in colonial and postcolonial periods. He also recalls a distinct fascination with the exotic African art and black artists in the form of the "black glamour" that was in fashion in Germany of the 1920s. At the same time, there occurred also certain popularization of images of black bodies as sexual objects and symbols of sexual potency. The author finishes his book with stories (written and visualized) of an Afro-German population (from its beginnings through the present day), and presents examples of some antiracist imagery.

Zeller's book reveals the power of images and the power of the gaze. Looking is hardly a neutral act and images of Africans and their bodies created by "Westerners" document not so much the depicted objects, but rather what was present in the minds of the "white observers." In this way, Zeller discloses and systematizes a variety of meanings hidden in black-white relations. The book clearly demonstrates how this kind of iconographic material can be *viewed* and interpreted as if they were reflected in a multilayered mirror because they capture mutual relations between depicted "objects" and those who look at them.

Anna Niedźwiedź