

Productions” is a recent shining example of Anzaldúa’s influence.

Román-Odio’s work is a critical mapping of Chicana art and literature focused especially on the Virgin of Guadalupe that deploys Anzaldúa’s categories, particularly the borderlands, the theory of crossing, and *nepantla*, the ancient Nahuatl philosophy of dwelling in the existential middle space – between physical and spiritual and conceptual worlds. The book is delineated by six chapters and nine illustrations, which she deftly contextualizes and interprets through a robust interdisciplinary methodology combining history, literary analysis, and visual studies. Her agenda is to analyze “the emancipated selves that Chicanas produce at the juncture of transnational capitalism, colonial expansion, and globalization” (1). This focus on the disruption of global technologies of exclusion, domination, and control is a unique and necessary aspect of the analysis. She writes: “Chicanas look beyond local histories and confront new asymmetries produced by transnational systems in the era of globalization. Empowered by the rich traditions of their indigenous spiritualities, Chicanas expose the failures of these systems that claim to pursue the betterment of all, while actually remaining indifferent to, or possibly ignorant of, the poor of color and the poor around the globe” (2).

The first chapter “enfleshes” Chicana iconography and theory, producing a genealogy of Chicana feminist thought, while arguing that, contrary to popular assumptions, Chicana critical labor engages global discourses and realities, challenging the mythical hegemonic distinction between the local and the international. She does this by focusing mostly on two seminal Chicana artists: Ester Hernández and Juana Alicia Montoya. Her conclusion is that through their transnational work, Chicanas create an “alternative epistemology.” Her analysis demonstrates the ways in which “Chicanas serve as a bridge to the first US feminist movement of women of color, US *third world feminism* – a movement that espouses a transnational feminist methodology and embraces the struggles of third world women from around the globe” (47).

The second chapter is for me the crux of the book. In it, she develops Anzaldúa’s *nepantlismo*, filtered through Walter Dignolo’s critical theory called “border thinking,” also originating in Anzaldúa’s work. Through her masterful readings of the works of Chicana artists, including Yreina Cervántez, Santa Barraza, Lilliana Wilson, and Consuelo Jiménez Underwood, she argues that these artists have moved beyond the coloniality of *nepantla*: “these artists are rethinking identity and history, using the borderlands as spaces for symbolic productions that transgress material relations of power and privilege. Thus, from the original meaning of ‘being at the threshold of two worlds,’ *nepantla* has come to signify a technology of crossing through history, myths, and ideologies, the material and spiritual: a new category in feminist theory that continues to sustain the artistic feminist visions of US women of color” (74).

Even while I would have liked to see Román-Odio more clearly articulate the distinction between theories of borderlands, and *nepantla*, I appreciated the new mean-

ings she brings to the terms. As I see it, “borderlands” is also about being in the middle – paradoxically, a border connects and divides, but it centers the possibilities for transgressing that very border in crossings. Whereas *nepantla* is dwelling in the middle. Still, scholarship is about exchanging ideas, and she has added fruitfully to the conversation.

Chapter three puts the focus on Our Lady of Guadalupe, and the stories told about her. She focuses on various writings, arguing: “Chicanas are not marianistas in the reductionist sense of the term. On the contrary, they use the iconography of the Virgin of Guadalupe to respond to and to challenge their own spirituality, as well as to develop a prophetic vision that empowers their struggles against earthly oppressive forces that often derive from sexist constructions” (78). This chapter also does a nice job of developing the transcultural connections between Guadalupe, Tonantzin, and Coatlicue.

In chapter four Román-Odio argues that Chicana cultural productions engage the political imaginaries and realities at both a local and global level. Here again she nuances the tension between the theories of borderlands and *nepantla*: “Border crossing, which emerges from the state of being in *nepantla*, will serve to produce an alternative epistemological approach to dominant ideologies” (101). She concludes with a clarification: “These artists do not give definite answers, but they help to demystify globalization by speaking about its failures and colonial legacies and, most important, by bringing the world’s most invisible population into the light” (117).

Central to the final chapter, “Queering the Sacred,” are the writing of Carla Trujillo and the visual art of Alma López, who have both brilliantly (re)imagined Our Lady of Guadalupe as a lesbian feminist. Román-Odio states: “López’s and Trujillo’s recasting of the Virgin of Guadalupe represents, not an essentialist notion of the sacred, but a provisional political sacred that puts out of order, spoils, and denaturalizes heteronormativity” (143). I also appreciated that this chapter provides an expanded definition of spirituality: “By spirituality, I mean the merger and appropriation of Western and non-Western spiritual traditions – a healing form that resists oppression and assimilation – and a politics that generates social justice for the dispossessed and marginalized” (123).

Her conclusion reiterates the main arguments, placing the work of Chicana sacred iconographies within the context of global struggles. Among the many strengths of this work are the extensive interviews the author conducted with artists and writers. I wish she would have engaged the growing literature in Chicana/o religious studies to a greater extent, but the book is nonetheless impressive in its impressive command of sources from many different fields. I recommend it.

Luis D. León

**Schaumburg, Katrin:** *Bonyatsi. Heirat, Status und Beziehungsstrategien in einem südafrikanischen Township.* Berlin: Lit Verlag, 2013. 279 pp. ISBN 978-3-643-12205-6. (Kölner ethnologische Studien, 34) Preis: € 29.90

“Bonyatsi” is an ethnographic study of intimate relations in the context of social distinction and the persistence and transformation of gender relations in the post-apartheid urban society. The study is situated in the field of the anthropology of kinship, gender, sexuality, and class in contemporary Southern Africa. *Bonyatsi* is an institutionalised, rule-based type of intimate relations between single women, usually in their postmarital age, and married men. Schaumburg’s well-developed and convincing key argument is that her informants – single, educated, lower middle-class women living in the township Mamelodi (Pretoria) – actively choose *bonyatsi* over marriage because it enables them to retain their economic and personal independence while nevertheless accumulating social and symbolic capital based on their intimate involvement with respected, financially powerful men. This book is the published version of Katrin Schaumburg’s dissertation in Social Anthropology at the University of Cologne, Germany (2012).

The book is organised into seven chapters with a typical PhD thesis structure. In the first chapter, the author introduces her topic by specifying that although marriage has always been a central institution to the Bantu-speaking ethnic groups in Southern Africa, in 2011, 75% of black female South Africans (above 15 years) were not married. As main research question she inquires which other relationship options lower middle-class women in the urban South African context currently use to secure their social position outside of the institution of marriage. In chapter two, the author situates her work in the research on women’s agency in non-Western countries. Schaumburg criticises Western liberal perspectives which understand agency only as emancipation from structures. Her informants, Schaumburg explains, do not question polygynic relationship practices, but exert agency within the existing structures through the renegotiation of existing concepts such as *bonyatsi* which are usually understood as being disadvantageous for women. She conceptualises the relationship practices of her 27 female informants as “agency of positioning” based on Bourdieu and Giddens. In a competition with married women with a higher social status and younger women with little resources except their sexuality and who, therefore, draw on “transactional sex,” her informants compete for men and the economic, social, and symbolic capital they can offer. In chapter three, a broad and critical literature review of the classical and newer literature on marriage in Southern Africa is provided. Herein, Schaumburg demonstrates that the institution of marriage changed drastically in the context of colonisation, Christianisation, labour migration, apartheid, urbanisation, industrialisation, and democratisation. Chapter four outlines the author’s research approach based on 14 months of ethnographic fieldwork. Schaumburg approaches the methodological challenge of researching such intimate topics by focusing on discursive methods, aimed at providing data about her informants’ experiences and attitudes toward intimate relations, like life history interviews and group discussions. Her focus on a relatively homogeneous group of well-educated, financially self-sustained women who

call themselves “single” (non-married, widowed, or divorced) was not a question of sampling choice but the result of snowball sampling strategy which started from her host family. Chapter five introduces the living conditions, lifestyles, and forms of capital relevant to these lower middle-class women. Many of them became mothers out of wedlock at a relatively young age and suffered because of the social stigma attached to unmarried mothers. Nowadays, these women share the attitude that having children is a precondition for achieving social adulthood, yet it does not necessarily demand marriage. In the past, they experienced husbands as irresponsible, unreliable, and violent and their own accumulation of social, economic, cultural, and symbolic capital allows them to forgo the securities which a “ideal” husband would offer. Marriage has become, Schaumburg argues, unnecessary for them. In chapter six, Schaumburg further develops her argument that marriage shifted from a hegemonic ideal to a desired option. She argues that many of her previously married informants decided not to marry again in order to protect their economic capital from irresponsible husbands and greedy in-laws as well as to avoid subjection to a patriarchal household head. Also, the fact that they did not want to marry “down” and the lack of single, educated, and financially well-off available men influenced their choice. As a solution, married and single women “must share” (174) the few eligible and acceptable partners, as one of her informants explains. In chapter seven, Schaumburg shows how these single women use *bonyatsi* in order to accumulate symbolic capital while retaining their independence. *Bonyatsi* is characterised, amongst others, by reciprocal expectations in which the married man provides gifts and the *nyatsi* (the lover) bestows care, affection, and respect; the long-term duration of the relationship that can go up to twenty years; and by a certain social acceptance which allows the married men to show off their capacity to sustain several lovers in front of friends and relatives while hiding them from their wives. Schaumburg shows how her informants rationalise the moral tension resulting from Christian attitudes towards polygyny and adultery by referring to the normality of *bonyatsi* and the lack of suitable unmarried men. Men, on the other hand, legitimate their *bonyatsi* practices by the unwillingness of their wives to accept official polygynic arrangements.

Methodologically, Schaumburg does not reflect on certain of the study’s limitations. By solely focusing on the views, attitudes, and experiences of these single women (she includes only three interviews with men), she is not able to analyse *bonyatsi* in its full complexity, as she claims to do. The author misses the perspectives of other actors, such as married women, men unable to live up to breadwinner expectations, and women engaging in “transactional sex.” Including these perspectives could have helped Schaumburg develop a more systematic, critical analysis of the contradictory utterances of her informants which stereotypically construct poor men as irresponsible, married women as lacking agency and poor, and young women as moneydriven. She adopts her informants’ strict distinction between the morally superior

*bonyatsi*, outdated polygamy, and purely money-oriented transactional sex, but the ethnographic examples that she presents could also be interpreted as illustrating the messiness, fluidity, and blurring of boundaries of types of lived relationships. In addition, a more critical attitude towards her informants' discursive practices of social distinction and impression management, as well as careful distinction between the actual relationship practices and her informants' post-rationalisations in the interviews would have given her conclusions greater precision.

Conceptually, the study unfortunately works with a rigid adaptation of Bourdieu's theory of social distinction and the struggle for social positions based on the accumulation of capital. Although Schaumburg asserts awareness that her informant's agency should be understood as based on intentionality rather than rational choice, her empirical descriptions nevertheless produce a somewhat mechanistic picture of her informants' practices and choices. Schaumburg leaves affection and notions of love largely unexplored, although the interview excerpts indicate that they do play a considerable role for her informants. Thick descriptions of the complexity and messiness of life and relationship trajectories based on her vast ethnographic material could have provided a counterweight.

Thematically, the author focuses predominantly on motherhood and intimate relations for women as the only routes to achieve social status. She fails to ask why these women, who have accumulated so much economic, cultural, and social capital – own a house, are well educated, have good jobs – are still primarily socially validated by their female fertility and ability to please and care for men. Schaumburg omits to analyse how, using Bourdieu's terminology, the rules of the social fields and the exchange rates between the forms of capital become socially constructed. The shifts, persistence, and contradictions in the images of femininity and masculinity that lie behind these social and cultural validations are not systematically explored. Despite locating her study in the shifting structural contexts of action, what is lacking is a systematic conclusion of how these women's agency and other actors involved in the construction of *bonyatsi* contribute to reproducing and shifting these structures. As such, the book does not fully live up to her aspiration of providing a research on the social and cultural dynamics of gender and intimate relations in postapartheid South Africa.

Besides the rich ethnographic material and the convincing key argument, another of the study's strengths is how the author rigorously embeds the contemporary *bonyatsi* practices of the lower middle-class women in the older anthropological literature; both, research documenting similar practices in the early 20th century in Southern Africa as well as research on comparable present-day practices on the continent. This allows Schaumburg to draw out similarities and differences of *bonyatsi* practices in relation to other historical periods and regions that might have been otherwise missed. As such, the study is relevant to research on gender and intimate relations also beyond the contemporary South African case.

Schaumburg is indeed able to fill a gap in the existing research on intimacy in Africa, which overemphasises the lack of agency of poor women who are apparently forced to engage in "transactional sex" due to economic necessity and dependency. Schaumburg's published PhD thesis is an ethnographically rich and deeply embedded study of the agency of an underresearched group of actors. Although Schaumburg does not use the opportunity to directly relate her work to the growing field of research on African middle classes, the study makes a needed ethnographic contribution to the mapping of the diversity of these milieus. The book is relevant for anthropologists and others who are interested in questions of intimacy, marriage, gender, and class in contemporary Africa.

Barbara Heer

**Schlieter, Jens, Marietta Kind und Tina Lauer** (Hrsg.): Die zweite Generation der Tibeter in der Schweiz. Identitätsaushandlungen und Formen buddhistischer Religiosität. Zürich: Seismo Verlag, 2014. 269 pp. ISBN 978-3-03777-134-1. Preis: € 31.00

Die mediale und politische Aufmerksamkeit in europäischen Einwanderungsländern fokussiert beim Thema Immigration und Religion seit zwei Jahrzehnten prägnant auf Muslime, Islam und Moscheen. Auch die Forschung lenkte aus Aktualitätsgründen und erhöhten Finanzierungschancen ihren Schwerpunkt nachdrücklich in diese Richtung. Folge war und ist, dass Studien zu anderen religiösen Traditionen von Immigranten und Immigrantinnen weitgehend in den Hintergrund rückten. Sind Studien zu Zuwanderern hinduistischen oder buddhistischen Glaubens rar (Ausnahme jüngst: Frank Weigelt, Die vietnamesisch-buddhistische Diaspora in der Schweiz. Hamburg 2013), so sind Studien zu christlichen Immigranten in europäischen Ländern weitgehend inexistent. Zugleich mehrten sich im vergangenen Jahrzehnt Forschungen zu der in Ländern Europas sozialisierten und herangewachsenen zweiten Generation und ihrem Verständnis von Religion im Unterschied zu dem ihrer Eltern. Auch hier dominieren Studien zu muslimischen Jugendlichen mit Migrationshintergrund. Umso erfreulicher ist es, dass Jens Schlieter, Professor für Religionswissenschaft an der Universität Bern, und die Forschungsmitarbeitenden Marietta Kind und Tina Lauer einen informativen und facettenreichen Band zur zweiten Generation tibetischer Buddhisten und Buddhistinnen in der Schweiz vorlegen und die veränderten Religiositätsformen analysieren.

In den 1960er Jahren hatte die Schweiz als erstes Land Europas tibetische Flüchtlinge in größerer Zahl aufgenommen und mit der Errichtung des klösterlichen Tibet-Instituts Rikon den religiös-kulturellen Bedürfnissen der Tibeter Beachtung geschenkt. Die Pionierstudie von Martin Brauen und Detlef Kantowsky zu jungen Tibern in der Schweiz (1982) hatte Fragen von sozialer Eingliederung und kultureller Identifikation der damals Jugendlichen und jungen Erwachsenen zum Thema. Diese Generation ist herangewachsen und war offensichtlich bemüht, so die Aussagen heutiger Jugendlicher und junger Erwachsener, die buddhistischen Praktiken mit Ritualen,