

human behaviour, in spite of the world's social and cultural diversity" whereas the latter emphasizes "dissimilarity" (56). Evolutionary psychology and human behavioral ecology endorse a synthetic approach to understanding the relationship between evolved strategies and the socioecological contexts in which they express themselves. In other words, understanding particulars is not possible without understanding universals and vice versa. This requires constant attention to the coordinated workings of biology and culture.

Barnard doesn't deny universals, nor does he deny the inextricable link between biology and culture (104). However, he suggests that the synthetic sociobiological view "was actually less a true synthesis of anything, and more a redefinition of social science in biological terms" (128). While the meeting point of biology and culture is precisely where Barnard rests, his sights are set toward the cultural end of this continuous relationship: while psychological explanations presently dominate the discourse, we still "require social explanation" to complete the picture (107f.). This is true, but these explanatory dimensions must be ultimately unified to the point where biopsychological explanations *are* social and why the coordination of the two makes sense in its various ecological contexts. Barnard, however, thinks a *disciplinary* unification is inadequate and that biology and sociocultural anthropology should maintain a respectful distance from each other (144). Anthropologists should contribute to the conversation, then, but not adopt anything "too biological". Whether this line is, this approach may lead to more problems than it will solve.

Compare, for instance, Barnard's discussion of the origins of religion and his critique of sociobiology. Citing a solitary source from the burgeoning evolutionary and cognitive sciences of religion, he states that the "claim" that there is a concentration of moralistic deities among larger populations is merely "true enough at one level" and that it ignores those found in foraging societies. He asserts that because some modern states have them "is irrelevant to the evolution of the belief systems of hunter-gatherers" (108). This "claim" has been statistically verified many times: the more anonymity, so the argument goes, the greater need to have a cosmic moral cop out there if this curbs antisocial behavior. This does not render this empirical fact "irrelevant to the evolution of belief systems of hunter-gatherers", however. Rather, it suggests that we need to explain these minority cases among hunter-gatherers: barring cultural borrowing and imperialism, what is it about their socioecological contexts which may have given rise to moralistic deities? This suggests a need for larger and more refined databases crafted with methodological rigor. In some cases, Barnard agrees (150). Elsewhere, he suggests that "hunter-gatherer societies should be understood in their own terms" (108). We are indeed at a time where traditional anthropological questions need to be reinvestigated, but by using models and methods designed to overcome the pitfalls of relying on intuition, not by dismissing apparent irrelevancies.

In chapter 8, Barnard criticizes kin selection on the basis of the presence of cross-cultural variation in the mea-

surement of kinship. Because of this variation, "Hamilton's hypothesis could only hold true in a minority of cases, those being typically in agricultural societies, not hunter-gatherer ones" (130). There is plenty of evidence that human institutions mediate, obfuscate, minimize, stimulate, and overcome evolved biases. The very case of fictive kin suggests this. If true, this reemphasizes – not minimizes – the significance of kin selection. What are the ecological pressures for such institutions to develop? These are also empirically testable hypotheses. However, social anthropology will likely not come any closer to answering such questions adequately if it relies exclusively on anecdotal evidence or if its "equivalent to methodology ... [is] *definition*" (88).

The text nevertheless remains a thorough primer on getting these much-needed conversations going among the next generation of anthropologists. Barnard's vision of a future evolutionary sociocultural anthropology deserves serious consideration.

Benjamin Grant Purzycki

**Bernstein, Julia:** Food for Thought. Transnational Contested Identities and Food Practices of Russian-Speaking Jewish Migrants in Israel and Germany. Frankfurt: Campus Verlag, 2010, 451 pp. ISBN 978-3-593-39252-3. Price: € 39.90

This is an ambitious first book by a young social/cultural anthropologist Julia Bernstein that is based on her doctoral dissertation and adds to the growing literature on the global Russian-Jewish diaspora. Herself of Russian-Jewish origin, Julia came of age and started her academic studies in Israel and then spent several years in Germany as a doctoral researcher. This multicultural personal trajectory has both shaped her interest in fellow Russian Jewish immigrants and equipped her with proper cultural skills to conduct this research. In this study, Julia focused on the two sets of related questions, one more general and the other more specific. The general questions were: 1) How do immigrants create and perform their identities through transnational practices in their everyday lives and how do they differ in the two host countries – Germany and Israel? 2) How do immigrants create the image of "home", juxtaposing the old and new homelands, generally and via their consumption practices? 3) How do ex-Soviets experience the transition to the capitalist system with its abundance and the problem of choice? and 4) How do the different contexts of Israel and Germany shape the forms of social participation of the immigrants as well as their coping strategies with the challenges of integration? The more specific focus of Bernstein's study is on food consumption and the expansion of the network of Russian groceries in the two countries. Here the central questions are: 1) What are the driving forces behind this expansion and how do they meet the immigrants' needs in reconnection with former homes via food and culinary practices? 2) How do ethnic food stores help create and sustain Russian enclaves in Israel and Germany? and 3) What is the choice of groceries offered by these stores and what symbolic loads do they carry for the immigrant

buyers? Last but not least, what is the place of pork and other non-kosher products sold in the Russian stores in the construction of Soviet-type secular Jewishness, before and after migration? The empirical basis of the study in both countries was constructed along similar lines: 30 immigrant families (comprising altogether 55–57 informants in each country), with most informants being in the age bracket 45–65 years, i.e., those who spent most of their lives in the USSR/FSU and between 8 and 15 years in Germany or Israel. Both national samples were located in a single city of area with high concentration of ex-Soviet immigrants, Haifa in Israel and a fictional town of Standstadt in Germany (whose entire Jewish community consists of ex-Soviets). The book offers a very detailed and richly illustrated ethnographic account of the lifestyles and attitudes of the participant immigrant families, with the focus on some 10–12 key informants in each country whose experiences and narratives the author deems most representative or colorful.

The content is divided into eight chapters: two initial ones offer a general introduction to the phenomenon of post-Soviet Jewish immigration and the contexts of reception in the two countries, particularly the encounter of the newcomers with the German and Israeli versions of capitalism and liberal democracy. The following three chapters focus on the patterns of food consumption before and after migration, its symbolic loadings and the connections between the two (e.g., the symbolic separation of the food items and dishes into proletarian and luxurious; the nostalgic reproduction of practices typical of food shortage in the midst of actual abundance, etc.). The titles of these chapters are rather telling: “‘Chocolates without History Are Meaningless.’” Pre- and post-Migration Consumption” (chap. 3); “Russian Food Stores in Israel and Germany. Images of Imaginary Home, Homeland, and Identity Consolidation” (chap. 4); “Russian Food Stores in Israel and Germany. Different National Symbolic Participations and *Virtual Transnational Enclave*” (chap. 5).

The subsequent three chapters shift the perspective to the matters of “trans-Jewish affiliations” and ethnicity constructions by the immigrants in the two countries. Chap. 6 elaborates on the unique meanings of Jewishness in the Soviet context – as an innate ethnic belonging (or *nationality* in Soviet lore) – rather than religion, hence constructed as a fact of birth unrelated to any religious or cultural practices. Bernstein reflects on the deep rift between this Soviet understanding of Jewishness and the traditional view of Judaism as religion and Jews as a cultural group defined by its ritual and traditional praxis – shared by the hosts (Europeans, Israelis, and Americans alike). She describes multiple social conflicts and mutual alienation between native Germans and Jewish refugees, and to a lesser extent between “Russians” and veteran Israelis, that draw on these divergent concepts and expectations, including recurrent accusations of ex-Soviets of not being real Jews (who are expected to attend synagogues, keep kosher, celebrate Jewish holidays, etc.) but kind of imposers seeking benefits from their host societies. The matter of non-kosher Russian groceries comes in handy as material affirmation of falsehood of these “non-Jewish Jews.”

Bernstein continues her analysis of the inherent conflict between ex-Soviet Jews and their German hosts who construe them as descendants of Holocaust victims (which was a ground of their very entry into Germany as refugees), while the immigrants see themselves as part of the victorious Soviet nation that defeated the Nazis in the Great Patriotic War (i.e., WW II on the Soviet territory). Many of the elderly Russian and Ukrainian Jews were soldiers and officers of the Red Army and take pride in their active role in the war with fascism (as opposed to the passive victimhood of European Jews in the Holocaust); this forms the basis of their self-perception, both as Jews and ex-Soviet citizens. They proudly display their war-time medals during celebrations of the Victory Day on May 8th held every year by the Russian community in all major German cities, seemingly oblivious of how the local Germans – their former enemies and now generous hosts – may perceive it. This analysis of the contrasting visions of the history of German-Soviet-Jewish relations is presented in chap. 7, including its reflections in the German media that helps form public opinion about the Jewish newcomers. Bernstein then offers insightful accounts of how ex-Soviet Jews construct and justify their decision to move to the country of former nemesis and the scene of the Holocaust, rather than to their “natural” homeland of Israel.

The final chap. 8 brings together the paradoxes of living in several contested social worlds by Russian Jews in the two countries, including their differential sense of national affiliation (guests or foreigners in Germany, full-fledged participant citizens in Israel), ties with the FSU, and future life plans. The book is a compelling work of participant ethnography that may contribute to better mutual understanding between former Soviet immigrants and their hosts in Israel and Germany. Its main shortcomings, in my view, are 1) Excessive size, multiple renditions of similar ideas in different sections of the book, and heavy-handed writing style (exacerbated by poor copyediting); 2) The book is much more revealing and interesting in its German-based components than in Israeli ones, which are less empirically based and mainly refer to the existing Israeli literature; 3) The author is unfamiliar with parts of the existing scholarship on Russian Jews in different migration countries and their transnational lives (e.g., the book by the writer of these lines – “Russian Jews on Three Continents. Identity, Integration and Conflict.” New Brunswick 2007) – and as a result often misrepresents her ideas and findings as novel. Despite these flaws, perhaps inevitable for the first-time author, Julia Bernstein’s book is an important contribution to the current scholarship on ethnicity, immigration, and transnationalism.

Larissa Remennick

**Búriková, Zuzana, and Daniel Miller:** *Au Pair*. Cambridge: Polity Press, 2010. 209 pp. ISBN 978-0-7456-5012-8. Price: £ 15.00

Research into au pair mobility should be of relevance for both migration studies and care studies, yet only a few books about the au pair institution have so far been