

wird. Ein Schwerpunkt der Darstellung liegt in beiden Kapiteln auf dem Nonnenorden, wobei breiter Raum den Motivationen der Frauen, die in den Orden eintreten, gegeben wird. Im siebten Kapitel wird der Status der Nonnen beziehungsweise die in der buddhistischen Welt andauernde Kontroverse über die *Bhikkhuni*-Ordination diskutiert. Die Situation in Nepal wird im Kontext sämtlicher buddhistischer Traditionen sowie der Stellung der buddhistischen Nonnen seit der Frühzeit des Buddhismus diskutiert, ein Faktum, das dieses Kapitel zu einem kleinen Abriss der Stellung der Nonnen im Buddhismus allgemein avancieren lässt.

Das achte Kapitel geht auf die Stellung der Meditation (vor allem *vipassana*) im Theravāda-Buddhismus Nepals ein. Es ist allgemein bekannt, dass der Meditation bei den Laienanhängerinnen und -anhängern in westlichen Ländern eine bedeutende Rolle eingeräumt wird, während im asiatischen Kontext die Meditationspraxis mehr oder weniger auf den Sangha beschränkt blieb. In den 80er Jahren des 20. Jhs. begann eine Entwicklung in Nepal, die die Laiengemeinschaft nicht mehr strikt an die von den Mönchen und Nonnen vorgegebenen Paradigmata band. Die Laien begannen, eine eigene Agenda zu formulieren. Dies kann sicherlich in Verbindung gebracht werden mit der Ausdehnung des Sangha auf neue Wissensfelder, weg von der Ritualistik und klösterlichen Ausbildung hin zur Laien-Erziehung und, seit den 40er und 50er Jahren, zur Laienmeditation. Im Zuge dieser Entwicklung wurde besonders der Vipassana-Meditation ein hoher Stellenwert eingeräumt, sie jedoch gleichzeitig auch von ihrem spezifisch buddhistischen Hintergrund abgelöst, so dass sich ein vielfrequenties Meditationszentrum im Kathmandu-Tal etablieren konnte, dass Vipassana "für alle", unabhängig von ihrer religiösen Herkunft, lehrt. Die Unterweiser sind hier Laien. Die Loslösung von einem spezifisch buddhistischen Hintergrund führte zur vermehrten Partizipation der Hindu-Bevölkerung an dieser Meditationsform.

Das neunte Kapitel beschäftigt sich mit dem traditionellen Vajrayāna-Buddhismus und dem tibetischen Buddhismus und geht den Veränderungen nach, die sich in diesen beiden buddhistischen Traditionen in Konfrontation mit der Theravāda-buddhistischen Reformbewegung abzeichnen. Im zehnten Kapitel werden die unterschiedlichen Diskurse, die in der Monographie so meisterhaft nachgezeichnet wurden, aufgegriffen und zu einer Synthese geführt. Auch hier gilt ein besonderes Augenmerk der Autoren den Nonnen, deren Motivationen, in den Orden einzutreten, im Kontext der traditionellen Stellung der Frau in der nepalesischen Gesellschaft diskutiert werden. Das Resultat dieser detailreichen Untersuchung kann in dem folgenden Zitat zusammengefasst werden: "For many Nepalis, Theravada Buddhism, vipassana meditation, or other forms of religious activism, provide a way to combine tradition and modernity, to participate in global trends, and, as they see it, be true to their roots too" (285). Dies ist umso erstaunlicher, als der Sangha auch heute nur circa 200 Mitglieder zählt, von denen etwas mehr als die Hälfte Nonnen sind. Der Einfluss dieser kleinen Gruppe auf die Gesamtgesellschaft ist gross.

Beigefügt sind dem Band zwei ausführliche und sehr nützliche Appendices, Kurzinformationen zu den "Dramatis Personae", sowie eine vollständige Liste aller Theravāda-Vihāras in Nepal. Ein Glossar sämtlicher benutzter buddhistischer Termini in Sanskrit, Pāli, Nepal Bhasha, Nepali und Tibetisch ist ebenfalls beigefügt. Umfangreiche Anmerkungen, eine ausführliche Bibliographie sowie ein Register beschliessen den Band.

Nach der Aufzählung der Vorzüge eines Werks folgt in einer Besprechung häufig die mehr oder weniger lange Liste der Fehler und Unzulänglichkeiten. In dieser Besprechung fehlt diese fast schon obligatorische Liste. Natürlich findet sich hier und dort etwas, so die fälschliche Zuschreibung des buddhistischen "Paradieses" *Abhirati* zu dem Buddha Amitābha, aber solche kleinere Fehler sind so gut wie unvermeidlich in einem Werk, das eine überreiche Fülle an Einzelinformationen gibt. Die von Sarah LeVine und David Gellner hier vorgelegte Monographie wird lange Zeit das Standard-Referenzwerk zum Theravāda-Buddhismus in Nepal bleiben.

Karénina Kollmar-Paulenz

**Linger, Daniel Touro:** *Anthropology through a Double Lens. Public and Personal Worlds in Human Theory.* Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2005. 236 pp. ISBN 0-8122-3857-5. Price: \$ 49.95

This is an example of scholarly and critical anthropology, which came after the postmodern fashion. The author goes to great lengths to illuminate the reader about his critical position on almost all theoretical issues of contemporary anthropology. Still, the book is very readable, and contains a genuine ethnography which is as it were covered with a thick layer of epistemological blankets.

Linger attacks culturalism as the still dominant perspective in anthropology (is it? I am not so sure) and proposes a "double lens" for anthropology. That is to say, a view on culture and society which reveals a personal as a public world in everything we are studying. The ethnographic example of political fights in San Luis, Brazil, is presented with this double lens perspective.

The author effectively analyses the dominant perspectives in anthropology: Durkheimian anthropology does away with the person, who appears as a "discursive effect" rather than a real person with agency. Louis Dumont is presented as a typical case of this type of approach. Linger argues that in Geertz's couple of "thick and thin descriptions," it is precisely the individual level of subjective experience which is best suited for "thick description." The social anthropology outlook has little room for that. On the other hand, mentalism (Lévi-Strauss and cognitivists) often posed the problem of meaning production but failed to think things through here. Linger devotes three large essays to this matter: a) meaning as representation versus subjectivity, b) politics as a field of common sense or not (Gramsci), and c) identities and person, group, or community.

The part of the book on meaning is particularly strong: starting from Reddy's theory of man as the tool-maker makes Linger move away from the old stands

of objectivity: “the anthropologist, *like the native*, is an agent” (37). At the same time the often seen tendency to reify (and deify) is severely attacked. With Geertz symbols are seen as vehicles for a conception, and hence the toolmaker’s perspective is taken up again. The author spots reification in most of the discourse analyses as well, and pleads for a reintroduction of the person in anthropology. The examples of so-called “Japanese Brazilians,” which appear time and again in the ethnographic parts of the book do the job here: regardless of discourses and of sociological analysis these subjects exemplify the personal aspects of identity formation since they are neither here nor there (Japan or Brazil) and present their personal mix as a perspective on life. The metropolis does not help us either for filling in an identity here. Both Simmel and Jameson are refuted as forms of intellectualism. The general proposal reads that modern human beings in the global predicament are not the product of but rather are “‘being thought’ by Culture and History” (74).

In Part II the political theory of Gramsci is of central concern. The fieldwork on a political process in a Brazilian town brings us abreast of the client system which persists through the introduction of the election format, and has us understand how political violence persists, regardless of the form of democratic free elections. Even when the mayor is violently chased from office, the client system persists and yields new and almost identical corruption and undemocratic leadership, called “Wild Power” by Linger. Culture filters, but allows for the system to continue through inertia. The detailed ethnographic report adds convincing evidence for the theoretical stand of the author.

In Part III identities are discussed as either discursive-symbolic constructs or mental features. Again the odd mixed persons offer provoking cases: Eduardo Mori is a Brazilian from Japanese descent, who returned to Japan. He lives there as the stranger he is for the common Japanese, with shifting identities. He is the product of history and culture, but also of personal agency. Which leads Linger to pose the central problem whether “Japanese Brazilian” can at all be a category. He states that this is “an uneasy, controversial question that threads through this entire book. How should an anthropologist conceive of and describe another human being?” (183). Linger closes the epistemological circle here and underlines with a thick line (my metaphor) the problem of adequate description of the person in the cultural being.

Having said so much the book ends in a very abrupt way with a short note against the notion of “Japanese in diaspora” (and maybe muslim, African, etc., in diaspora as well). The reader gets no summary, no conclusion, and is left in a sea of wondering. The ending is consistent with Linger’s position, I claim, but it is odd as an experience for the scholar.

The index and the bibliography are more than adequate. The language of the book is clear and adequate, which is not an easy thing given the philosophical meta-level of most of the argument.

I am convinced that the book will find a loyal readership and will earn itself a place in the university li-

braries. Philosophers of social science, anthropologists, and linguists should read this book and discuss about it. Specialists in migrant studies and the advocates of multiculturalism should take the book seriously, although I am convinced that other similar books will yet have to follow to change deeply rooted ideas on self and other, on culture and diaspora culture. Linger wrote a beautiful and courageous book on the human predicament of mixed identity, which will soon become or may already be the more general human predicament.

Rik Pinxten

**Marsden, Magnus:** *Living Islam. Muslim Religious Experience in Pakistan’s North-West Frontier.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2005. 297 pp. ISBN 978-0-521-61765-9. Price: £ 17.99

Based on long-term research in Chitral, a region of the the Hindukush (northwest Pakistan), the author presents a synchronic anthropological study of the Khowar-speaking Kho (called “Chitralis” or “Chitral people” throughout the book). His focus is on the contemporary village life of this Muslim society. Marsden brilliantly explores the intellectual life in Chitral and questions issues like subjectivity, morality, education, as well as religious and spiritual authority. His main theoretical concern is with the commitment of the Kho to live intellectually independent, emotionally significant, and virtuous Muslim lives and how this interplay of faculties is conceptualised by the people. In this context, moral decision-making, debate, conflicts, critical spirit, principled reflection, and creativity have fundamental importance. Marsden offers refreshing views on Muslim village life enriched by vivid description. His style is very readable and never dry.

An important dimension of this monograph on “lived Islam” is the critical responsiveness of rural Muslims in Chitral to the teachings of revivalist and reformist movements of Sunni Islam. This is all the more to be highlighted because “... it remains widely assumed in both scholarly and more popular accounts that so-called ‘Islamic reformism’ is the dominant trend in the Muslim world today, and that this form of Muslim spirituality is above all else a rationalising force that leaves little or no space for emotion and experience” (241). The present study challenges current hostile stereotypes about Muslims who are often equated in the Western public not only with “fundamentalists,” but even with “terrorists.” But the author also compellingly challenges widely held academic stereotypes of unreflective village conformists who easily get into the grip of Islamic ideology. Thus, emphasis is laid “on the importance of recognising the capacity of Muslims to be critical and reflective of reform-oriented forms of global Islam” (255). In this regard, Marsden shows that the mystical traditions of Persian Sufi texts are still relevant in Chitral inspiring popular creative and aesthetic celebrations expressing joy of life.

The book is structured into eight chapters, six of them major ethnographic texts each containing an introduction, and rounded off by a conclusion. After the first introductory chapter drawing the study’s outline of analy-