

most valued traditions. Their sense of themselves, though, remains strong" (10), their "way of life is not completely dead" (42), their "ever-present humor" (168) seems unbeatable.

Finally, one of the more interesting suggestions of this very insightful and personal chronicle of an Amerindian experience of extractivism, is "the possibility of reimagining the omnipresent commodity [oil] from a novel, provocative perspective" (15). According to Cepek, an ethnographic approach to "the impact of oil on Cofán lives will motivate us to rethink and transform our own relationship to the substance [oil]" (15). To the extent that ethnography can aspire to become a form of reflexive reimagination of our relationships with the main components of the world, "Life in Oil" will remain a courageous, honest and nuanced account of contemporary Amerindian lives and dilemmas.

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**Domdey, Jana, Gesine Drews-Sylla und Justyna Gołabek** (Hrsg.): *AnOther Africa? (Post-)Koloniale Afrikaimaginationen im russischen, polnischen und deutschen Kontext*. Heidelberg: Universitätsverlag Winter, 2016. 409 pp. ISBN 978-3-8253-6616-2. (Akademiekonferenzen, 23) Preis: € 48,00

The volume appeared as a result of a conference held in Heidelberg in 2012. It contains 15 articles divided into four sections with the introduction written by the first two of three editors of the volume. A short section with the biographies of the authors comes at the end of the volume. Four articles are in English, the other ones (including "Introduction") in German. One of the English articles presented during the above mentioned conference was already published in another collection, though in German, in 2014 (that fact was duly acknowledged there by the contributor).

The content was divided into four sections. The first – "Popular Africa – Lines of Development in (Travel) Literature and Film" – contains four articles. Matthias Schwartz writes on the origin of the images of Africa in the Soviet adventure novels and science fiction. Dirk Götsche deals with the narrative on Africa and history politics presented in new German novels about Namibia. Irina Novikova takes on the racial question in the Soviet cinema. While Justyna Tabaszewska searches for traces of postcolonial reflection in the contemporary popular Polish travel books written by celebrities. Section two – "Multifaceted/Multiple-Coded Africa – Shifts and Projections" – contains another four articles. The first two by Paweł Zajas and Dirk Uffelman deal with the 19th-century material written by Polish writers (A. Rehman and H. Sienkiewicz). Nadjib Sadikou focuses on Arnold Stadler's novel "Ausflug nach Afrika" (1997, 2006<sup>2</sup>), while Jana Domdey analyses the novel "Schutzgebiet" (2009) by Thomas von Steinaecker. Still another four articles come in the third section – "(Post)Socialist Africa – Imaginations between East and West." Apollon Davidson and Irina Filatova present the

reasons and ways in which some Russian historians and political scientists wrote about South Africa between the 1920s and the 1950s. Ingrid Laurien focuses on the West-German narrative about South Africa till the Soweto uprising. Svetlana Boltovskaja's interest is placed on the images of Russia, the Russians, and the Africans from the perspective of the sub-Saharan students in the Soviet Union and the Russian Federation. Carlotta von Maltzan deals with the controversy concerning the socialist perspective of the GDR on Africa presented in the novel "Tintenpalast" by Olaf Müller. Section four – "Travels to Africa – With and in Literature" – contains only three articles. Justyna Gołabek focuses on the matters raised by the expedition of Stefan Szolc Rogoziński to Cameroun in 1882–85. Michaela Holdenried deals with narrative figurations of inversion in recent German novels (Urs Widmer's "Im Kongo" [1996], Arnold Stadler's "Ausflug nach Afrika" [2006], and Alex Capus' "Eine Frage der Zeit" [2007]). Finally, Gesine Drews-Sylla writes about Viktor Erofeev's novel "Pjat' rek žizni" (1998).

An attempt to enclose so diverse material in a volume under one common title presents itself as a hugely demanding challenge. The diversity of contents analysed in the volume and a variety of perspectives employed surpasses almost all expectations. In a way, "Introduction" gives a good overview of the diversity of the contexts and it contains an attempt to bind the various contributions together. The editors also indicate the difficulties that appear when one tries to operate too narrowly within a discourse that has been developed in the English and French postcolonial studies. The colonial experiences of the Germans, Russians, and Poles are quite different from the English and French ones. It could have seemed that these three cultural spaces – the German, Russian, and Polish ones – were so closely entwined during the last two hundred years that setting the results of research together in an apparently comparative perspective with an eye on the postcolonial studies could be quite enriching. That has proved true to some extent. However, these three cultural contexts show themselves very diverse at any closer examination, i. e., they had developed according to completely distinct dynamics. Difficulties in retaining the all-encompassing perspective are already seen in "Introduction," where the description combines the Russian and Polish contexts together, while the German one is described separately. That division is quite ironic, while the 19th-century Polish material analysed in the volume is more related to the German milieu than to the Russian one. In addition, the contemporary travel books authored by the Polish celebrities and analysed in another article also draw on the old Western stereotypes.

The variety of the volume's content is multidimensional. The types of the analysed material are diverse – travel books, successive reporting from journeys, various kinds of novels, and in addition films. Some authors focus their attention on one work, others compare and assess a number of them. It is not always quite clear

why these particular works have been chosen for the analysis and not others. The geographical spread of the original locations providing the material needed to build up the image of Africa and Africans is also vast (Republic of South Africa, Namibia, East African Coast, and explicitly Kenya, Senegal, Benin, 19th-century Egypt and Sudan). The contributors to the volume themselves have their backgrounds in a variety of disciplines – Slavonic, German and Dutch studies, African studies, history, literary studies, cultural and postcolonial studies.

All that makes it quite difficult to find a clearly binding framework with the explicit thread that connects all the articles. The image(s) of Africa and the Africans could have seemed to be that binding common thread, but given the wide variety of the contents of the volume, it is extremely difficult to come to any overarching conclusion(s) apart from stating that these images were/are different. The title of the volume, “Another Africa?” shows the tension of combining so different subregions and postcolonial interpretation of the material. The subtitle provides a hint at the (possible) focal point of the volume but the focus is blurred by the inclusion of the 19th-century material, hence the amendment captured by the brackets: “(Post-)Koloniale.” The fact that the analysed material comes from the timespan between the late 19th-century and the present undermines any hope for reaching common conclusions.

All in all, we have a richly diverse volume with a clear indication of the difficulties involved in any attempt to provide a clearly binding framework.

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**Dore, Kerry M., Erin P. Riley, and Agustín Fuentes** (eds.): *Ethnoprimatology. A Practical Guide to Research at the Human-Nonhuman Primate Interface*. New York: Cambridge University Press, 2017. 307 pp. ISBN 978-1-107-10996-4. (Cambridge Studies in Biological and Evolutionary Anthropology, 76) Price: \$ 84.99

With the possible exception of nonhuman primate groups in the remote high Himalayas, all living nonhuman primates are impacted by human activities. Thus, it is important to understand the degree to which human presence, contact, and habitat alteration influence the life and survivorship of nonhuman primates.

A cultural anthropologist (L. E. Sponsel, *The Human Niche in Amazonia. Explorations in Ethnoprimatology*. In: W. G. Kinzey [ed.], *New World Primates. Ecology, Evolution, and Behavior*. New York 1997: 143–165) invented the term “ethnoprimatology,” but most articles written on this topic have hitherto been written by primatologists or other biologists. Sponsel documented that arboreal nonhuman primates are a significant component of the vertebrate biomass in Amazonia, and are thus subject to major human hunting pressure. In this volume, most of the researchers utilize the methodology

and theoretical schema of cultural anthropology to investigate human impact on nonhuman primates. These methods include questionnaires, interviews, participant observation, surveys, cultural mapping, discourse analysis of modern and historical texts, and archival research. Some researchers utilize a more traditional biological approach, utilizing nonhuman primate behavioral assessments, parasitology, the collection of biological samples, phenological monitoring, transect surveys, camera traps, GPS tracking, and geospatial and isotopic analysis. This dual approach is necessary, because evaluation of human/nonhuman primate interaction means that cultural behaviors and mores must be analyzed.

The book is arranged in three parts: the human/nonhuman primate interface (behavioral ecology, epidemiology, predator-prey interactions, and human/nonhuman primate competition and conflict); ethnographic analysis; and conservation. In lieu of an abstract, each chapter begins with a summary of what major questions are asked, the theoretical approach used, the methods applied, and a summary of how these methods can be used to illuminate major topics in the human/nonhuman primate interface. Each chapter ends with a cautionary section “Lessons from the Field,” detailing problems that arose during fieldwork, including deficiencies in training and preparation, language or communication difficulties, unmonitored tourism, political upheavals, and threatening human behavior. This section exemplifies the practical nature of this book. Every chapter seriously addresses the problem of life in the Anthropocene – that is, none of the authors pretend that the animals that they study are immune from human impact or environmental alteration. Thus, the authors strive to understand the degree to which animal behavior and ecology have been changed by human presence or direct action.

A major problem is how to quantify the human impact through time. It is easy enough to see how modern human population growth and globalization affect animal and plant life, but how can one assess the impact of human hunter-gatherers or traditional, small-scale farmers? Was there ever a time when modern humans (first appearing 300,000–200,000 years ago) left no trace of their presence? Given the long shadow of human presence, there may have been no time detectable in the archaeological or historical records when the world was entirely free from human taint. This implies a different perspective: that humans are a natural part of the environment. Human alteration of the environment may currently be global, but modern humans always were affecting their environment. Significant human alteration of the environment through control of fire even predates modern humans, because it dates back to 800,000 years ago.

Do the authors in this volume attempt to nullify human presence, and reconstruct nonhuman primate behavioral ecology in its pristine state? No. Given the existence of the Anthropocene, this would not be possible. Can there be attempts to limit human impact? Yes. A