

Objekte als Kulturerbe der Menschheit, die daher auch außerhalb der Salomonen zugänglich sein sollten; Entzug der Sammlung für die Forschung; ihre mögliche Entwendung und ihr Wiederverkauf auf dem Schwarzen Markt; oder Kulturwandel, der den Objekten ihre identitätsstiftende Wirkung genommen habe. Auf Seiten der Salomonen gab es keinerlei Anschuldigung über eine mögliche unrechtmäßige oder unmoralische Entfernung der Objekte von Tikopia, und die australisch-westlichen Gesprächspartner akzeptierten ohne Vorbehalt, dass die Objekte aus Gründen der Identitätsstiftung auf die Salomonen gehörten. Geldmittel für die Restitution wurden bereitgestellt und die Sammlung in Vorbereitung auf die Versendung 1980 fotografisch dokumentiert. Dennoch fand die Restitution nie statt; die Gründe lassen sich nicht mehr eruieren. Strukturelle Faktoren wie die Rückkehr der britischen Kuratorin nach Großbritannien 1979 in Folge der Unabhängigkeit der Salomonen und die nicht ganz klaren Zuständigkeiten auf australischer Seite, auf der wegen der Dauerleihgabe an das anatomische Institut sowohl das Department of Health als auch das Department of Home Affairs, dem das National Museum unterstand, als auch in Sachen Rückführung das Department of Foreign Affairs involviert waren, spielten offenbar eine wichtige Rolle.

Aber auch auf Tikopia wandelte sich die Bedeutung von Objekten, wie ethnologische Feldforschungen der 1960er, 1980er und 2000er Jahre zeigten, die in den nächsten beiden Kapiteln beschrieben werden. Vor allem viele sakrale Objekte hatten nicht mehr den Stellenwert und die Kraft wie 1928/29; andererseits zeigte ihre Handhabung, dass sie diese auch nicht komplett verloren hatten. 1966, bei Firth' erneutem Besuch, hatten manche Häuptlinge diese besonderen Objekte an bestimmten Orten konzentriert und diskutierten deren historischen Wert. Firth brachte sich mit dem Vorschlag eines "Schatzhauses" (*treasure house*) darin ein. Interviews während der neueren Feldforschungen seit den 1980ern belegten, dass es gerade Firth' Forschungsaufenthalte und sein Interesse an der Kultur und den Objekten der Tikopia waren, die zu einer Beharrung gegenüber dem missionarischen Veränderungsdruck und zu der fortdauernden Wertschätzung der älteren Elemente der eigenen Kultur unter den Tikopia beigetragen hatten.

Das letzte, zusammenfassende Kapitel reflektiert daher unter anderem den Kulturbegriff und die Rolle des Ethnologen, wie Firth sie verstand: Kultur umfasse die Summe der sozialen und kulturellen Institutionen einer Gesellschaft sowie Symbolsysteme, die etwa durch Sprache und nonverbale Handlungen ausgedrückt würden. Objekte, Aktionen und Deutungen seien daher eng miteinander verflochten. Aufgabe der Ethnologen sei es, diese Einzelelemente und ihre Verflechtungen zu dokumentieren, zu analysieren und zu interpretieren, auch und gerade in Hinblick auf ihre Bewahrung als kulturelles Erbe.

Abgesehen von einem winzigen Tippfehler bei der Nummerierung einer Karte (2) überzeugte Elizabeth

Bonsheks Analyse durch ihre methodische Genauigkeit und die intensive Auseinandersetzung mit der Sammlung Firth. Vorbildlich sind die Kontextualisierung auf ganz verschiedene Perspektiven hin und die sorgfältige Offenlegung der Datenbasis: ein herausragendes, uneingeschränkt empfehlenswertes Buch, das zeigt, wie gute Forschung über Museumssammlungen aussehen kann.

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Breitinger, Jan C.: Zwischen Nutzung und Niedergang. Der Lake Victoria als Ressource in Wissenschaft, Kolonial- und Entwicklungspolitik, 1927–1988. Baden-Baden: Nomos, 2018. 482 pp. ISBN 9783-8487-4778-8. (Historische Grundlagen der Moderne, 18) Preis: € 94,00

In the course of the 20th century, Lake Victoria in East Africa – a quite unique, rich in resources water body (and hence a seemingly inexhaustible source of nourishment and an object of economic interests) – has been attracting the attention of various political and social actors: local communities, colonial administrations, scientists, development organizations, and politicians. All of them used the largest lake in Africa for their communitarian and/or organizational purposes, thus drawing it into complex, global networks of interests and exchange. On the grounds of his detailed archival research and fieldwork, conducted in Great Britain and Uganda, Jan C. Breitinger demonstrates how those external agents, and forces that they activated and manipulated, gradually transformed that once pristine lacustrine environment into a socioeconomic space and – at present – a highly damaged habitat. His multiperspective analysis identifies and brings together several facets of broadly understood exploitation – economic, social, and symbolic alike – to which that part of Africa has been subjected over the centuries.

Breitinger addresses three general issues, namely: In what sense can nature be considered as a "resource" to be explored and exploited? What actors take part in exploration and exploitation of nature and how do they intend to achieve their goals? What consequences do such actions have for nature itself and how they can be dealt with? Seeking answers to these questions in reference to Lake Victoria, the author divided his argument into six chapters that he entitled imperatively: "Determine," "Explore," "Exploit," "Develop," "Caution," and "Protect," respectively – each divided into three subchapters – and a conclusive section containing comprehensive evaluation of the presented material.

In the first chapter, Breitinger presents Lake Victoria as an object of scientific interest and study – in the colonial as well as in the postcolonial context – and explores the economic and political consequences of that research. His selection of "research" as the starting point for discussion is very accurate indeed, considering the fact that scientific exploration usually constituted the opening phase of the European intervention in Africa and elsewhere during the second half of the 19th century.

ry. Breitinger discusses this particular interdependence extensively in the section devoted to the incorporation of the area of Lake Victoria to the British Empire after a period of scientific exploration (80–85).

In chap. 2, Breitinger focuses his argument about the political dimension of scientific research on the spectacular development of limnology – the study of inland aquatic ecosystems – at the turn of the 19th and 20th century: the African Great Lakes, in the first place Lake Victoria, with their tremendous varieties of relatively unexplored aquatic fauna, constituted an obvious object of study for the rapidly expanding discipline. The chapter ends with the discussion of an institutionalization of limnological research on Lake Victoria in the form of specialized research institutes and their gradual shift of their scientific purposes toward practical goals dictated by the discourse of “development” that was emerging after World War II, and which acquired clearly political dimension in the context of the Cold War.

And precisely this practical or “applied” aspect of exploration and knowledge about the Lake Victoria is the main topic of chap. 3 of Breitinger’s book. This refers, in the first place, to the colonial exploration of natural resources, which was oriented on producing profit for the Empire and, as the author observes, led to important alterations of the local social and economic structure – the phenomenon that, on the other hand, rarely benefited indigenous communities. Especially interesting in this context is the section devoted to colonial fishery on Lake Victoria in which the author discusses the institutional link between the exploration of the habitat of the lake to its exploitation. Specifically, the colonial government encouraged the exploitation of lacustrine resources for “local consumption” – the expression that did not necessarily mean local indigenous communities but rather settlements of British colonists (192). Additionally, the administration imposed certain restrictions on indigenous fishers that concerned, primarily, traditional technical means used by them, and applied harsh legal measures to enforce its policies.

Chapter 4 concerns the already mentioned “development era” that coincided with the decolonization processes on the African continent and came to particular fruition in the course of the 1960s. During that period, Africa was discursively constructed as a component of the “underdeveloped Third World” and acted upon accordingly by external agents of “development,” for example, FAO. This international organization was also instrumental in the process of transformation of Lake Victoria in an important target of multiple development programs in which the governments of the adjacent littoral states (Kenya, Tanzania, and Uganda) also participated. Still, those programs not only addressed structural problems of that region but also – and above all – reflected economic and political interests of major global players of that era.

The last two chapters correspond to the era of growing environmental consciousness in the 1970s and the emergence of the global conservationist movement that

also put its mark on the way Lake Victoria was conceptualized and institutionally handled. Thus, in chap. 5, Breitinger discusses reactions of major institutional players to negative environmental and economic consequences of development projects of the previous era, especially the introduction of the Nile perch into the lake, and the resulting disturbance of its biodiversity. Another side effect of those projects was the deepening dependence of local economies on external sources of financing and know-how.

Conservationist projects, undertaken in response to the environmental degradation (discussed in chap. 6), have been the hallmark of large-scale institutional initiatives concerning Lake Victoria in the course of the 1980s, although the first organized efforts in this regard had already been made during the colonial era, e. g., by the British “Society for Preservation of the Wild Fauna and Flora of the Empire,” founded in 1903. More importantly, although those programs were still conceptualized, financed, and supervised by external agents, primarily the “International Union for the Conservation of Nature” (IUCN), more efforts have been made toward the local participation, which “constitutes the first moment of liberation for them,” Breitinger concludes (402).

Breitinger’s book, well researched and carefully edited, is an exercise in social history of multiple organizational programs concerning one natural phenomenon – Lake Victoria. All those initiatives – scientific research, colonial intervention, development, and conservationist projects – were all conceived and financed by external centers of power (academic, political, economic), and as such they represented external interests. In this sense, even the “local participation” – the *conditio sine qua non* of “sustainable development” promoted by NGOs since the 1980s – has not quite been “liberating” whatsoever, as it frequently reflected political agendas that were devised elsewhere. Secondly, although the book does not directly address any anthropological or ethnological issues, I would recommend it to anthropologists interested in that area of Africa, precisely because it concerns broader processes of global character that have had impact, to a greater or lesser extent, on local communities, thus altering their cultures. Breitinger’s book expands our view of natural and social processes that have been occurring in that region of Africa by skillfully combining sociological and historical perspectives.

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Cacopardo, Augusto S.: Pagan Christmas. Winter Feasts of the Kalasha of the Hindu Kush. London: Gingko Library, 2016. 314 pp. ISBN 978-1-909942-84-4. Price: £ 40.00

The author of this work under review is, alongside his younger brother Alberto, quite rightly to be regarded as one of the current authorities on the Kalasha, a rapidly decreasing ethnicity that inhabits a small number of val-