concept of field, by focusing more on the individual. The subtitle of the book includes the terms "genetic structuralism" and "relational phenomenology." Bourdieu referred to his own work as a version of the former in his book "The Field of Cultural Production" (1993), insisting that he was interested both in the genesis of social structures and the genesis of the dispositions of social agents (their habitus) who both produce and reflect those structures. His theory of habitus argued that the habitus is itself "generative" and "structuring" of practices. Bourdieu used and developed the concepts of habitus and social space to explore the underlying structures that were not apparent to social actors in their everyday lives. There is a long history to the phrase "genetic structuralism," before Bourdieu applied it to his own approach, which Atkinson does not get into and which I do not have the space to explore here. Atkinson signals in his use of the phrase that he is interested in Bourdieu's understanding of structure, and this phrase is used to briefly sum up what that entails without much elaboration. Instead, the approach of "relational phenomenology," adapted from the work of Lois McNay ("Against Recognition." 2008) and focusing on the "individual's lifeworld," is focus for Atkinson as he re-reads Bourdieu's work and seeks expand to upon it through an engagement with this concept.

Atkinson, who has written extensively about social class, work, and family life in Britain, has a few quibbles with Bourdieu that he hopes to rectify. First, he believes that Bourdieu did not sufficiently address the ways in which fields are related to each other nor upon the processes through which individuals move across different fields. Second, Atkinson believes that Bourdieu neglected to examine those early childhood experiences that would lead to the development of the habitus. And lastly, he does not feel that Bourdieu looked closely enough at the specific ways in which "the family" operates as a field in its own right. To demonstrate both the inadequacies of Bourdieu for these questions and to apply the approach of "relational phenomenology" to better address them, Atkinson devotes four chapters (following the "Introduction") to "The Lifeworld," "The Field of Family Relations," "Social Becoming," and "Gender." An epilogue to the book outlines what Atkinson proposes as a "Sketch of a Research Programme."

Atkinson's overall approach is one of reworking Bourdieu's concepts of "habitat" and "legitimation chains" (neither of which are extremely well known to more casual readers of Bourdieu) into those of "lifeworld" and "circuits of symbolic power." Rather than take "field" as the starting point, as many interpreters of Bourdieu's work have done, Atkinson argues that the individual and their movement across time and space (their lifeworld) which creates and is constrained by "circuits of symbolic power" is a better approach. The battles over Bourdieu's understanding of social agency, it appears from this book, continue to thrive. In some ways, Atkinson throws Bourdieu's theory on its head, since Bourdieu wanted to dismantle the entire dichotomy between structure and agency but in so doing focused more on social relations rather than specific individuals (the "epistemic" person or social agent, rather than the "empirical" person). Atkinson offers a corrective by placing the accent on the individual without forgetting the structures of power.

In some places, Atkinson overstates or simplifies Bourdieu's work to make his points. His charge that Bourdieu was not interested in the relationship between fields is hard to fathom. This seems based on a lack of understanding the difference between social space and field in Bourdieu's thought. For example, Atkinson (15) claims that Bourdieu's notion of "cleft habitus" arose from "movement within one field, the social space." This ignores an understanding of the role of regional geography in Bourdieu's understanding of the divisions of French social space, as well as the academic field that produced this split habitus. The social space is not one field, but composed of many fields, including the field of power.

Atkinson situates his work within other existing and previous scholarship on Bourdieu, primarily English-language sources, but fails to mention the work of two key writers – one of whom is a fellow sociologist, Derek Robbins, who has written several important books on Bourdieu's work; and the other anthropologist Deborah Reed-Danahay, whose book "Locating Bourdieu" (2005) is also relevant to the arguments made by Atkinson.

I sympathize with the author's claim that Bourdieu did not focus enough on exactly how it is that "real" individual people navigate social life and (re)produce structures of domination in their everyday lives. I also sympathize with his claim that too much work has taken "the field" too narrowly as the basis for adopting Bourdieu's approach. However, I also wonder if this book strays a bit too far out of the orbit of Bourdieu's key theoretical and empirical contributions. In any case, it is worth considering Atkinson's arguments, and following how he develops them further in future work. This book will be of particular interest to scholars in the sociology of education, psychological sociology, the family, and gender studies.

Deborah Reed-Danahay

Banerjee, Supurna: Activism and Agency in India. Nurturing Resistance in the Tea Plantations. London: Routledge, 2017. 204 pp. ISBN 978-1-138-23842-8. Price: £ 105.00

In her recent ethnography "Activism and Agency in India," the anthropologist, Supurna Banerjee, looks at tea plantations in Dooars in the northeast Indian state of West Bengal. She argues that most of the literature on plantations has been focused on plantations as economic spaces, whereas her study wants to look at plantations as social spaces instead. It is based on 15 months of ethnographic fieldwork, which she conducted between 2010 and 2012 in the course of her PhD research. A comparative approach between two plantations as fieldwork sites is central for the author to understand findings in a broader context through juxtaposition. Therefore, she picked two plantations that differ from each other in size, profitability, and political organisation. Her research is guided by the main question of, "how do agency and activism play out within a gendered space" (9). Banerjee regards a class

analysis as insufficient to understand workers' everyday lives on tea plantations and wants to approach workers through an intersectional lens that is able to understand, "the multi-dimensionality of marginalised subjects' 'lived experiences'" (19). Intersectionality, according to the author, is an analytical tool to analyse the intertwinement of gender, class, caste, ethnic, and religious identities. The different categories, however, are not to be understood as given isolated entities but are to be seen in an "intra-categorical approach" that questions "boundaries and processes through which categories are made up" while accepting "the analytical utility of the categories in question" (21).

Her book is divided into seven themed chapters (framed by the introduction and conclusion). Theoretical paradigms are introduced in the second chapter after the introductory remarks including space, intersectionality, identity, belonging, gender, agency, choice, interest, activism, and the everyday. Banerjee states that it is "a combination of conceptual tools through which this work addresses the gaps in the existing plantation literature in South Asia" (37). While giving a substantial introduction to the complexity of the different theoretical frames, it remains slightly unclear how this plethora of concepts is related or combined with each other. Moreover, at the background of her central criticism that plantations are always analysed as economic rather than social spaces, it seems surprising that the author does not include Sarah Besky's recent ethnography on fair trade tea plantations in Darjeeling where Besky considers tea plantations as social spaces with a particular focus on the workers' points of view (The Darjeeling Distinction. Labor and Justice on Fair-Trade Tea Plantations in India. Berkeley 2013).

In the third chapter, Banerjee locates the tea plantations within the wider political and economic context in West Bengal and India in general. Dominant political parties, trade unions, and NGOs get introduced along with the structure of labour hierarchies on plantations where the author conducted her fieldwork. Banerjee concludes that almost all leadership positions in parties, unions, and NGOs as well as management positions at the top of the labour hierarchy in the plantations are held by men, and if women get into a leadership position at all, they are directed by their male relatives.

In her fourth chapter on identity and belonging, Banerjee explores "the multiple dimensions … in the analysis of a single category – in this case women workers," to illustrate "not only the complexities of social relations but also how they are managed" (64). The multiple dimensions include ethnicity, caste, religion, age, local proximity, and kinship. According to Banerjee, the dimensions are less obvious in everyday life but become distinctive features of identity in more extraordinary moments when they are called into question. In terms of ethnicity, Adivasis, for example, felt deprivileged compared to Nepalese workers by the managers. Moreover, marriages between different ethnic groups, castes, and religions were seldom. If they occurred at all, they were sanctioned by the communities. Banerjee states that, in all instances, the female bodies become markers of the multiple identities because they, for example, were the ones who perform rituals among other things. A mutual rather than an additive character of the different dimensions of identity is emphasised. To illustrate the intertwinement of the different dimensions, the author, for instance, takes work-group formation of the women pluckers as an example. Here, she also lays out the driving force of self-interest as a form of agency when women strategically chose "what aspects of a composite identity came to be focused on and what were underplayed" (90) in a particular situation.

It is further considered how tea plantation workers in Dooars explored sites outside the plantations such as markets, nearby towns, or other tea plantations in the fifth chapter to show, "how the plantations, in their negotiation with other spaces, function as gendered space" (93). Markets, towns and other plantations were often understood as outside spaces – although this slightly differed between the two plantations that Banerjee looked at. While women had generally more restricted possibilities to access outside spaces often under the pretext of household responsibilities, men, on the other hand, were more likely to access the outside spaces on a regular basis.

Chapter five is closely related to the following sixth chapter where the author examines how the micro-sites within the plantation, the domestic and work spaces, "shape and are shaped by gender discourses and how these naturalise certain social norms" (108). The gendered separation of different types of work, for example, was justified by stating different bodily abilities of men and women. This divide often involved a separation between skilled and unskilled labour. While plucking work was usually seen as women's work and at the same time categorised as unskilled labour, work in the factory, on the other hand, was usually seen as men's work and skilled labour. Skilled labour, according to Banerjee, was paid better. Supervision was almost exclusively performed by men because they are perceived as "naturally suited to having 'more authority' over the women" (130).

In the seventh and eighth chapter, the author tries to understand multidimensional and complex forms of agency and everyday activism among tea plantation labourers within their given structural constraints. To overcome binaries of agency and victimhood, the question in chapter seven is rather, "what sort of agents the women can be despite their subordination" (157). Agency is articulated for Banerjee in her research field either by choice and decision-making or by resistance. An agential choice may be seen in a woman's preference not to remarry or in a young girl's choice to quit school and work to support her mother and enable her sibling to receive a better education. This second example also shows that empowerment cannot always be understood in individualistic terms because agential choices involve decisions beyond individuals – in this case, the family. Agency as resistance is shown in delay at work or cheating the management. Resistance can also be seen in small gestures such as preparing spicy food for a husband who does not like such as revenge for being beating up and in practices such as gossip or critiquing the systems through carnivalesque performances or critical poetry and songs recited in pub-

lic events. While these acts of resistance are, in a way, a critique of an unequal and oppressive system, they do not necessarily challenge the gendered division of labour, labour hierarchies, or patriarchy per se, but may nonetheless "serve as means for the women to achieve their own ends, however limited these might be" (156).

The eighth chapter focuses on activism in the everyday which means that Banerjee does not want to look at organised protests as in social movements but rather protests that occur spontaneously among local people. Traditional social movements on the plantations were trade union movements. They, however, remained alien to the workers and lost importance over the last years. Newer social movements include various NGOs that act as interest groups on behalf of the workers. NGOs help to teach workers about their labour rights and facilitate protests but workers creatively employ the strategies they learn from NGOs according to their own needs (161 f.). Banerjee then introduces four examples of everyday protest from her fieldwork that go beyond organised forms of protest. She describes a train track blockade to pressure the government to deliver provisions or women's refusal to work until a new assistant manager begged their pardon for a mistake he committed towards them (deducting too much weight from collected tea leaves). Another example of everyday protest appeared when a woman filed a complaint against men who stole a chicken from her. When the men threatened her with rape if she does not withdraw the complaint, the woman went with a group of women to a public place where the men gathered and challenged them to rape her immediately, thereby publicly shaming them and preventing any further menaces on their part. The last protest mentioned happened after an incident where a manager kicked a pregnant woman in the stomach and she lost her baby. This caused protests with speeches, songs, and street theatre against the everyday violence that workers had to bear on plantations. Banerjee wants to show with her examples of everyday protests that sometimes female bodies become a re-embodiment of patriarchy, but at other times, they "become the tools to protest against normative codes of gender performance which construct women as docile, passive and mute bodies, and provide a means of empowerment not only as women but as conscious political agents" (180). Protest brought women together across common ethnic or religious groups in building "strategic alliances" (178). Banerjee wants to go beyond measuring protest in terms of failure and success regarding changes in government policies or legislation as it is often done in protest literature to showing a transformative power of protests when women through their participation in protests reclaim their citizenship or re-establish a "political subjectivity" (179).

Finally, Banerjee's conclusion contains a passage on limitations of her study that indicates topics for further research on plantations. She mentions that future research could focus on male workers, on ethnicity as a central identity category, or on plantation as spaces of increasing mobility. Notwithstanding, Banerjee sees her study's contributions to the existing literature in four major ways. First, in overcoming the dichotomy of public and private spaces in the notion of the everyday. Second, in understanding agency and victimhood not as opposed to one another but as mutual because agency in a context of severe subordination and marginalisation is shaped by the restricting structural patterns rather than being its antithesis. Third, the author emphasises her contribution to activism and social movement literature by focusing on everyday protests rather than on organised or institutionalised forms of protest. Forth, according to the author, her main contribution is that she gives voice to women who are otherwise only displayed either as undifferentiated victims or as idealised images on tea packages. Banerjee's ethnography on activism and agency on tea plantations in Dooars is an important contribution to understand plantations as social and gendered spaces. It convinces by ethnographic depth which can be seen in the detailed and ramified ethnographic descriptions the book contains and the complexity in which the social worlds of plantations are analysed through a plethora of analytical lenses. The book is a must-read for everybody interested in the social embedding of plantation economies, for scholars on social movements, and for researchers interested in the interplay between structure and agency.

Anna-Lena Wolf

Berger, Peter, and **Justin Kroesen** (eds.): Ultimate Ambiguities. Investigating Death and Liminality. New York: Berghahn Books, 2016. 278 pp. ISBN 978-1-78238-609-4. Price: $ 105.00

"Before there was wonder at the miracle of life," wrote Hans Jonas identifying what he described as the *problem* of human finitude "there was wonder about death and what it might mean" (The Phenomenon of Life. Toward a Philosophical Biology. Evanston 2001: 8). It is a problem that has remained active throughout history and which continually challenges the combined knowledge of science, religion, and culture. Peter Berger and Justin Kroesen's excellent contribution to the debate and discussion about the shared condition of human finitude – in the form of their edited collection, "Ultimate Ambiguities. Investigating Death and Liminality" – takes as its central theme the uncertainties and ambiguities that frequently surround and mediate death and dying. The assembled authors, who are mainly drawn from social anthropology, history, and religious studies, explore the different kinds of transition and transformation that arise on the boundaries of life and death, including when confronting one's own or another person's death and dying. Death is approached as something that frequently locates persons, as well as families, societies, and cultures, at the furthest reaches of comprehension, understanding, and knowledge and in doing so is generative of different forms of ambivalence, ambiguity, and uncertainty. Individual and collective attempts to come to terms with death, including through ritual processes and when negotiating the threshold between the living and the dead, are explored in relation to a broad range of social, cultural, and religious contexts.

An important point that Berger wants to draw attention to in setting up the book in his introduction is the