

ing back to the 19th century – do not? How do they negotiate their identities both as Adventists and as members of a Malagasy community where relationships constructed through ancestors remain central? And what might the answers to these questions contribute to our knowledge of fundamentalist Christianity in Madagascar or elsewhere? Keller's answers to these questions shift the focus of analysis away from conversion, which has dominated much of the literature, to an "ethnography of religious commitment" or why Adventists choose to stay. At the same time, it moves beyond an analysis of Seventh-Day Adventist doctrine and church ceremonies, to concentrate on the everyday practice of lay practitioners.

In section one, Keller provides the social and historical context for the study, including the general history of Christianity in Madagascar, and the history of Seventh-Day Adventism in particular. The section ends with a chapter on profiles of various people who have converted to Adventism, a chapter that is particularly important because it helps to make a crucial analytic point: Adventists do not share a common socioeconomic background or social status. What they share is a religious commitment to Seventh-Day Adventism.

It is the nature of this commitment that is the focus of part two, which is the ethnographic heart of the book. Keller peels away, layer by layer, the reasons why converts find Adventism so compelling. In her analysis of Bible study, what one lay leader calls "the heart of the church," she shows the Socratic, dialogic nature of Adventist practice. In study sessions at both church and at home, Adventists learn to read Bible lessons and interpret them as they apply to their own lives. This is no somber, rote kind of memorization. Rather, as Keller (114) writes, "Bible study was of a dialogical, discursive, and participatory nature, and involved much intellectual engagement and critical thinking for those taking part." It is also clearly fun. Yet despite the intellectual bent, Adventism is not exactly like science – or rather it is both more and less like science than one might suppose. Keller suggests that Adventist practice is similar to what Kuhn called normal science, in that a paradigm exists and people try to match their information to that paradigm.

The following chapter places this Adventist enthusiasm for books and learning within the context of Malagasy beliefs which link studying and learning with the acquisition of potency. Yet once again, it isn't just any kind of potency – for example, the desire to achieve economic power – that these Adventists seek. Instead, the potency acquired from studying is closely linked to the knowledge that everything that has happened in the past, is happening now, or will happen in the future is a result of the struggle for power between God and the Devil. The potency gained by studying is a potency to "see clearly" and according to God's plan, rather than be tricked by the Devil.

The catch, however, is that according to Adventist doctrine, many of the practices through which Malagasy in this area construct their relationship to their ancestors, particularly reburials and cattle sacrifice, are thought to be the work of the Devil. The last third of the book, then,

deals with the contradictions that Adventists face, trying to negotiate between their identities as Adventists and as Malagasy. In contrast to studies in other parts of Africa which have argued that one of the appeals of Adventism is that it enables practitioners to throw off the demands of kin, Keller convincingly argues that these Adventists constantly struggle to reconcile their competing identities in ways that honor both their kinlinks and their religious commitments as Adventists.

The intellectual argument of the book (despite the author's quibbles with that label) is clearly a product of Adventist practice, and I would have liked to know more about how Adventism compares in this respect with other kinds of Christianity in Madagascar, particularly given the historical links between Christianity, literacy, and intellectual endeavor in Madagascar. At the same time, the author's conclusions regarding the potential insights that Adventism might give to an "anthropology of discontinuity" might have been more developed, particularly given that so many aspects of what people found attractive in Adventism seemed (to this reader) so familiarly Malagasy. Nevertheless, these are minor quibbles. As the first ethnographic study of Christianity in Madagascar, this book has clearly set the standard for those to follow.

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Kirsch, Stuart: *Reverse Anthropology. Indigenous Analysis of Social and Environmental Relations in New Guinea.* Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2006. 272 pp. ISBN 978-0-8047-5342-5. Price: \$ 21.95

In "Reverse Anthropology," Stuart Kirsch engages in a comparative ethnographic project that combines indigenous modes of analysis "with more familiar forms of analysis from the social sciences" (2). In writing a reverse anthropology, Kirsch argues that indigenous analyses provide alternative viewpoints that allow for indigenous critiques of culture, history, and political economy. Moreover, in this frame, ethnographers can mediate between forms of social analysis that may be more local, specific, and restricted and those that are more general and accessible, yet are potentially alienating in that they lose the specific context that appeals to wider audiences. An ethnography based on reverse anthropology, then, "can convey the insights of indigenous analysis while evaluating the political factors that may limit its effectiveness" (187). To this end, Kirsch deserves recognition for this refreshing and intellectually stimulating monograph.

The principal setting for this book is a lowland rain forest region that straddles the border between Papua New Guinea (PNG) and West Papua, Indonesia. The people, the Yonggom, as they are called in PNG, or the Muyu, in West Papua, share a common language and culture, although colonial history and contemporary events have combined to create radically different social realities for the groups on each side of the border. Many of the Muyu are currently political refugees in PNG, escaping from the Indonesian state in its reprisals against the Free Papua Movement that is seeking independence

from Indonesia. The Yonggom (along with the refugee Muyu) live along the Ok Tedi watershed, one of the most environmentally damaged and polluted rivers in the Western Pacific due to the large-scale Ok Tedi gold and copper mine some 20 km or so upstream from the nearest Yonggom communities. The political analyses of Kirsch's book center on indigenous struggles, interpretations, and responses related to these two cases – political repression and environmental devastation.

Kirsch deploys four indigenous modes of analysis – myth, ritual, magic (primarily in the form of sorcery), and exchange – along three general trajectories – historical, social, and environmental – that structure the comparative part of his enterprise. This arrangement situates the book between two dominant ethnographic perspectives in Melanesian ethnography. The first perspective harkens back to the earlier classics on kinship, ritual, and exchange which, while rich in nuanced analysis, often failed to account for history, colonialism, and local political motivations. The second, and more recent, body of work has focused on the state, modernity, and globalization, aligning Melanesian anthropology with larger disciplinary concerns. Critique of the second ethnographic perspective, however, has been to stress change at the expense of continuity. Kirsch's "objective is to show how these two ethnographic trajectories intersect by ... [making] explicit the contribution of Yonggom modes of analysis to their ability to comprehend and learn from their engagements with capital, the state, and global forces that might have been expected to overwhelm them" (4f.).

Following the introductory chapter, the first two chapters of the book examine Yonggom modes of historical and environmental analysis. Rejecting a production centered mode of analysis, which favors capitalist metaphors and modes of analysis, Kirsch argues that Yonggom understand historical events and human-environmental relations through perceptions of intersubjective connectivity and social relations. Historically, the Yonggom have been connected to the outside world through a centuries long trade in bird of paradise feathers. Moreover, as described in later chapters, Yonggom readily integrated expatriate outsiders into a preexisting mythic cycle that also served as the basis for male initiation rituals. Yonggom environmental relations are predicated on the basis that the other species they encounter in their surroundings also have agency. Through magical rituals and spells the hidden attributes of the nonhuman world are revealed to the Yonggom. Thus, principles of animism and totemism (as reconfigured by Philippe Descola [Societies of Nature and the Nature of Society. In: A. Kuper (ed.), *Conceptualizing Society*; pp. 107–126. London 1992] and Tim Ingold [The Perception of the Environment. Essays in Livelihood, Dwelling, and Skill. New York 2000]) define Yonggom environmental practices and beliefs which deny a distinction between natural and cultural realms.

Connections between things, people, and places provide the basis for Yonggom sociality. Similar to other Melanesians, a focus on exchange plays a central role for the Yonggom in making manifest the inner aspects of the participants of these collective transactions. An-

thropologists of Melanesia have long used the study of exchange as a window into other kinds of relations in these societies. Kirsch does so also, but he focuses on a particularly interesting aspect of exchange to situate his analyses of mining and refugee politics, namely that of failed exchange. The consequences of failed exchange are referred to as "unrequited reciprocity" (80; and the title of chapter 3). Unlike negative reciprocity with its "focus on the agentive party rather than the excluded other," unrequited reciprocity draws our attention to the "interpersonal and emotive connotations" (95) of the dehumanizing aspect of failed exchange that a person experiences when they feel slighted in these settings.

In the case of mining, unrequited reciprocity stems from compensation claims that the Yonggom feel they should be receiving for the environmental damages from the Ok Tedi mine. Granted, the Yonggom successfully litigated against the operators of the Ok Tedi mine for a US\$ 500 million settlement in 1996, but as Kirsch notes, the Yonggom "reject the assumption that the liability of the mining company can be limited to material or economic terms" (126). As a consequence, the Yonggom interpret the mine's failure to provide more compensation through indigenous notions of sorcery. Like a sorcerer, the mine causes the Yonggom to live in fear of death and sickness stemming from pollution. Similarly, sorcery is the antithesis of the harmonious social relations that the Yonggom seek through exchange.

Sorcery also provides the context for Muyu refugees to analyze their relationship to the Indonesian state. Post-mortem sorcery inquests, which determine the identity of the sorcerer, have in recent years expanded out from local contexts to "evaluate the actions and intentions of the Indonesian state and address ... [Muyu] concerns about political violence" (170). Whereas the shared interpretations and fears surrounding the discourse of sorcery helped bring political solidarity to the Yonggom in their struggle against the Ok Tedi mine, the opposite effect occurred among the Muyu by "exacerbating existing social divisions and increasing mutual suspicion" (184). While the Yonggom were able to marshal international support for their struggle, the Muyu have been unable to do so.

Rectifying situations such as this is where ethnographies of reverse anthropology can assume an activist and engaged stance. Kirsch writes, "By documenting political violence and representing its human costs, anthropologists can amplify indigenous forms of political expression, bringing the resources of the discipline and the moral weight of the academy to bear on injustice" (187). That this work combines such an emancipatory potential for anthropology with descriptive, theoretically compelling, and well-written ethnography is a testament to Kirsch's scholarship and activism. This is a book that resonates with ideas and concepts relevant to multiple fields in anthropology – scholars and students with interests in cultural theory, environmental analysis, political and legal anthropology, and Melanesian studies will find this book innovative and compelling. Jerry K. Jacka