heit), oder in einer Irreduzibilität auf andere Quellen von Macht und Prestige bestehen (dann aber möglicherweise nur zu einer Theorie von Liminalität, nicht aber von "Religion" als ihrer Gestaltung führen würden), scheint dabei notwendig. Ein Problem aber ist, dass unter der Hand der eurozentrische Begriff von Religion durch die Klassiker-Referate (von Frazer bis Agamben) wieder eingeführt und aufgrund der Verfahrenslogik selbst dort, wo Kritiker zu Wort kommen, normativiert wird. Anders müsste die Studie tatsächlich von den Dingen, vom Materiellen, ausgehen. Dies würde dann aber eben nicht einen Zugang über "Religion" implizieren, sondern vielmehr über jene Praktiken, durch die Heilkraft oder das, was Hocart einmal "Lebenskraft" genannt hat, in verschiedenen Kulturen angeeignet oder zirkuliert wird. Damit sei keineswegs behauptet, dass man geläufigen Aporien komparativer Betrachtung ganz entkommt, bei denen ein heuristischer Ansatz dazu führt, alles mit allem zu vergleichen, während ein typologischer Ansatz häufig mit Typologien operiert, die nur wenig mit lokalen Ausprägungen und sozialer Praxis vor Ort zu tun haben. Dennoch scheint der Weg über Konzepte, wie etwa den "Segen", die rituelle Praxis, soziale Bewegung und Personen- bzw. Bildkult zu vereinen, vielversprechender, weil hier die Materialität von Religion nicht das evolutionistische Problem einer idealiter vergeistigten Ambivalenz der "Anthropogenese" bezeichnet, sondern die medialen Bedingungen von Religion bzw. Religion als Medium, das einige seiner Bedingungen hervorhebt als auch andere zum Verschwinden bringt, durchsichtig gemacht werden können.

Ulrich van Loyen

Fernando, Mayanthi L.: The Republic Unsettled. Muslim French and the Contradictions of Secularism. Durham: Duke University Press, 2014. 313p. ISBN 978-0-8223-5748-3. Price: £ 16.99

Mayanthi Fernando's "The Republic Unsettled. Muslim French and the Contradictions of Secularism" is a kind of dual ethnography. On the one hand, it is an empirically rich ethnography of those she refers to as "Muslim French." A purposefully awkward moniker to reflect the awkward fit of Muslim French in dominant national narratives, this category includes "women and men committed to practicing Islam as French citizens and to practicing French citizenship as pious Muslims" (13). On the other hand, "The Republic Unsettled" is an ethnography of secularism and the contested notion of Frenchness. Fernando interrogates dominant French political narratives by studying them obliquely, looking at their forceful enactment on the Muslim French who resist, question, and reimagine the limits of the Republic. The result is a masterful analysis of the inconsistencies and tensions that live at the heart of secularism and dominant articulations of French national identity.

Moreover, Fernando's anthropological approach – open-ended interviews, the inclusion of gripping and deeply meaningful field notes, even direct participation in public French education and Muslim French organizational life – anchors sometimes slippery postmodern discussions about neoliberalism and governmentality in the concrete predicament of Muslim French in today's France. The result is a happy marriage of generalizable conclusions about secularism and context-specific thick description of contestation over the meaning of Frenchness.

Drawing on critics of secularism like Hussein Agrama and Talal Asad, Fernando focuses on tensions within the logic of secularism. It is grounded in bounded understandings of the nature of religion that are derived from the Christian experience and the particular history of Europe; it claims to sweep religion from a public sphere that has supposedly been severed from the private, but it actually aims to identify religion and regulate the behavior of its practitioners in both public and private; and far from limiting state power, secularism actually enhances the governing power of the state.

Chapter one introduces the reader to the Muslim French. Fernando observes that Muslim French are "self-confident" in their claims to Frenchness and their belief that it is possible to be both French and Muslim (53). Chapter two examines Muslim French claims for "indifference" and offers a critique of the politics of recognition: according to Fernando, it continually reproduces an insider/outsider dichotomy. Fernando writes that "the polity envisaged by many Muslim French refuses any stable, essential, or unified political formations … they imagine France as a future-oriented space where politics is the domain of the unpredictable" (98 f.). This is not the politics of Rawlsian overlapping consensus, but of an Arendtian embrace of creating anew.

Chapter three traces state efforts to simultaneously be open to difference and to "Frenchify" Islam. Fernando powerfully demonstrates that there is a politics of recognition at the heart of secularism, but such recognition is often for the purposes of regulation. What is more, Fernando suggests that attempts to recognize difference within secular societies may merely serve the majority's desire to be recognized as good, tolerant liberals.

Chapter four interrogates Muslim French understandings of freedom and autonomy, which involve "turning obligation into desire through self-discipline" (158). Productively drawing on the trope of legibility, Fernando notes that this is a vision of freedom and autonomy that literally cannot be read within European human rights law, which imagines freedom and autonomy as the products of purely voluntary association by atomized individuals. After identifying how these narratives clash, she then deconstructs the European legal narrative: highlighting the disciplinary edge within Durkheim and Locke (and Rousseau, who is explored to a lesser extent), Fernando observes that "These parallels make the common secular-republican critique of Muslim French piety – the critique of submission to normative authority – somewhat confounding" (178). Of course, we should not be completely confounded: foundational ideas profoundly shape the parameters of debate, but we must always attend to how they are interpreted, reworked, and selectively remembered in order to endorse contemporary political values and projects.

The final two chapters can be read as case studies of political complaints commonly made about Muslims in France, and how Muslim French respond. Chapter five examines assumptions at work within the political accusation that Islam oppresses women, weaving together reflections on sexularism (Joan Scott), carceral feminism (Elizabeth Bernstein), and heterofemininity. Chapter six, meanwhile, investigates the political framing of homophobia as a Muslim problem, despite the continued presence of homophobia throughout populations in Europe.

Fernando draws attention to the discomfort Muslim French sometimes experience in working alongside varying political allies, some of whom support causes they might not (such as gay marriage). Fernando uses this discomfort as an opportunity to meditate on the limits of the liberal spirit of respect for others. There is an asymmetry to the liberal demand for respect for others: the already-othered individual is expected to tolerate that which is different from him far more than the insider, whose limits of tolerance may be read as brave, humanitarian, or even common sensical. One soon picks up on Fernando's appreciation of the conscious effort of Muslim French to reflect on the limits of their respect for others, even when it makes them uncomfortably uncertain about deep moral and political commitments. Fernando admires the honesty of this admission, as opposed to the liberal shell game by which some theorists – she names as examples Michael Walzer and Alain Touraine – slip and slide between "their commitment to procedural reason and their attachment to [particular, I would add] moral norms" (238). Fernando also sees within these moments of Muslim French discomfort an opening, a place for politics to happen.

This brings us to Fernando's conclusion, which boldly asks: if not secularism, then what? Fernando draws heavily on William Connolly, whose alternative to liberal tolerance is the embrace of epistemic doubt: "critical responsiveness" regards nothing as a settled issue and asks us instead to continually engage in political negotiation while being open to the possibility that we may be forced to question our deepest moral and political convictions. Fernando is sympathetic to this, but recognizes that Muslim French cannot accept a basis for respect that is rooted in doubt. She notes that Muslim French actually base respect for others on their certainty in God: since he is the one who judges, humans must not. Fernando sees in this a radical embrace of non-sovereignty that allows for the kind of negotiations Connolly describes.

Hers is a fascinating suggestion, and one that will set alight many productive discussions. What should we make of Fernando's suggestion that the political work that takes place when we embrace "human non-sovereignty," happens in the realm of the affective – the "visceral register of subjectivity" (265)? What of those convictions that foreground evangelism? Their recognition of human non-sovereignty produces continual efforts to reshape the will of others, not respect for their decisions. How would they fit in this alternative to secularism? And even if we accept Fernando's premise that the underlying logic of secularism is the same everywhere, is there anything to be gained from examining differences in application and discursive mobilization across national contexts? I offer the highest praise for "The Republic Unsettled": it is a beautifully written book that readers will be eager to continue discussing long after they finish it.

Jennifer Fredette

Frembgen, Jürgen Wasim: The Closed Valley. With Fierce Friends in the Pakistani Himalayas. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2014. 124 pp. ISBN 978-0-19-940023-2. Price: £ 15.99

"The Closed Valley" is a vivid personal account of fieldwork that will earn the ire of professional academic anthropologists while helping to draw the next generation to anthropology. Like Barley's, "Innocent Anthropologist," Frembgen is not speaking to the professional debates that advance careers or shift intellectual paradigms. He is speaking to a host of people who may never do fieldwork and/or experience that realisation that research "subjects" have real power over you. Frembgen reminds us that while the populations in the Tribal areas of Pakistan may not wield much power globally, in their own domains, they have both authority and power. This book reveals much about Frembgen and he is refreshingly candid about his own motivations for going to one of the more remote parts of Pakistan. He sought epiphanic moments in which he might discover pristine truths of faith and human existence. He speaks guiltily of his weakness at not rising in the middle of the night to join his host, Sher Ghazi, for the extra prayer recommended by the Prophet (36). The self-criticism implicit in such comments is endearing and provokes both sympathy and smiles. Frembgen has written an honest account of fieldwork that courageously embraces the frailty, naivety, and ignorance of even well prepared anthropologists.

Prior to Frembgen's arrival in Harban Valley, Kohistan, the local people had made clear their lack of patience with outside researchers. The few European researchers who had ventured into the area were escorted out of the village after outstaying a short welcome. Local relations in the area appear not to have been better. Local lineage groups were very suspicious and exhibited persistent animosity for one another. Sher Ghazi, for example, in explaining why he will not give his own sons guns, following local custom, tells a very sad story of being mistreated by his stepfather, his father's younger brother (32 f.). Such snippets of ethnographic information reveal much about the tensions inherent in the area. Brothers, Sher Ghazi tells Frembgen, must present a united front to the outside world, yet internally, they may not provide the care for one another's widows and offspring in the protective manner one expects.

Frembgen provides no grand theoretical analysis to draw together the rich accounts provided in this book. Indeed, he provides only a cursory attempt at analysing his experiences. Instead, he offers a more visceral experience of living and working with men, who live with the daily threat of violence. The sectarian tensions that permeate the region are brought up repeatedly as Frembgen describes the somewhat strict Sunni Deoband Islam