

that dominates Harban. Sher Ghazi's carpenter, Qalandar Shah, tells a harrowing tale of growing up as an Ismaili, a group regularly grouped with Shia, who converted to Sunni Islam and fled his home village to find himself as a skilled tradesman. Frembgen narrates his own conversion to Islam carefully because it took place in the company of followers of a Sufi order in Karachi. To his Harban hosts, Sufi worship is tantamount to idol worship and risked undermining his legitimacy as a Muslim (78). Most anthropologists who conduct fieldwork in Pakistan know the delicacy with which one must discuss Islam. Casual comments about the nature of God or religion that would be entirely acceptable in a European context take on potential for offence there. This book provides a number of rich illustrative examples of how careful one must be.

The violence described is casual and normalised. Beating people to the point where they have difficulty walking, accidentally shooting relatives, killing a rival's animals are all ordinary events which colour the background experiences of everyone in this remote valley. The tenacity of blood feuds is stark and poses real challenges to ordinary functions. Hanifullah, a local man, had lived for 10 years in a fortified tower as a consequence of a blood feud when Frembgen met him (94 f.). Although he might have sought an easier life had he fled the valley, he garnered respect and prestige for his willingness to stay put. Sadly, he was chopped to death by rivals two years after Frembgen met and interviewed him. He had negotiated a truce to the blood feud, but this was apparently not accepted by all.

Frembgen ends his account with a harrowing adventure of a gun battle and having to flee with bullets flying past his head. A local woman had been killed in the cross fire of an earlier gun battle. Her son had been shot and rushed off to the nearest doctor. His friends explained their concerns about being drawn into a blood feud as a consequence. They accepted the fate of those who can no longer exit the safety of their houses and fortified towers without fear of violent death (96–102). Frembgen's host, Sher Ghazi, laments the fact that Tablighi, the Deoband Islamic organisation that preaches adherence to more orthodox, Islamic doctrine, has had next to no impact on what he sees as the damaging un-Islamic relations of blood feud.

The book raises a host of questions, but refrains from providing comprehensive answers. Its goal is to share the individual experiences of fieldwork and leave readers the space to interpret and assign meaning appropriately. Frembgen intentionally set out to construct a richer, more nuanced representation of Kohistan and the misunderstood "Tribal Other" that has appeared in countless adventure stories from the 19th century onwards. He tries to challenge the trope of the ferocious martial Pakhtuns through a relatively balanced account of men who laugh, joke, and tell stories. These men are not simply killing machines who enter into blood feuds with the mindless zeal of Bollywood (or even Hollywood) baddies. The men who are drawn into the blood feud as a result of the unintended killing of the local woman, Frembgen tells us, are visibly frightened. This is not the world they would choose if they had the power to change things. It is the

world in which they live and they respond as any of us would in such circumstances.

For those of us who have worked with groups who espouse the virtue of blood feuds and honour and protecting one's lineage and dependents, the diversity and contradictions of such a representation are easy to see. I am persuaded that the Kohistani tribals befriended by Frembgen are complex characters who cannot be reduced to violent social relations. Sadly, I worry that this may not be the case with those who have no experience of rhetorically violent societies or have had no anthropological training. This is a book I will happily include on my reading lists in the future, but it will come with an advisory warning. I will draw my students' attention to the mundane descriptions of daily life and urge them not to allow the sexy blood feuds and gun battles to dominate their understanding of who these men are. It is *part* of who they are, but it is far from *all* of who they are. I believe this is the message that Jürgen Wasim Frembgen wants us to get from his brave, personal account, and I for one, am very pleased that he has taken the time to try and deliver it.

Stephen M. Lyon

**Geissler, P. Wenzel** (ed.): *Para-States and Medical Science. Making African Global Health*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2015. 369 pp. ISBN 978-0-8223-5749-0. Price: £ 19.99

P. Wenzel Geissler has brought together a theoretically engaging and empirically rich collection of essays in the volume "Para-States and Medical Science. Making African Global Health." The eleven chapters explore various aspects of medicine and health care in Africa while engaging with the novel concept of the "para-state," or "the ways in which the state albeit changed or in unexpected ways, continues to work as structure, people, imaginary, laws, standards, and so on" (1). The concept of the "para-state" is welcomed in the humanities and social sciences because it "helps us to avoid alternative descriptors such as *post-* or *anti-* ... which draw attention to important features but miss the peculiar sense of things changing without losing their form" (1). As Geissler points out in the introductory chapter, "para" enables us to think about the state in a different and unique way and allows us to account for the changing nature of the state, without losing sight of its role in society and people's everyday lives. "Para" encourages us to consider the state as being dynamic rather than static and fixed and in relationship with different publics, private entities, and other states. This collection brings a refreshing perspective not just to studying medicine and health in Africa, but also to studying the state as it counteracts much of the scholarship from across disciplines that treat the state as natural and predefined.

Geissler states, "[m]edical and medical-related bioscientific knowledge has been generated from and applied to tropical Africa for over a century, transforming global medical knowledge and health in Africa ... what marks biomedical science is its particular moral valence. Preoccupied with saving lives and reducing suffering, medi-

cal research is a science of human life itself, which intertwines technical, political, and moral action" (2). The focus on life and improving its quality clearly ties into the "moral valence" of medical science, and this is evident in the chapters, including Vinh-Kim Nguyen's (chap. 1) discussion of foreign funded HIV treatment programs and Uli Beisel's (chap. 9) analysis of a malaria control program in Ghana, which started as "a citywide [corporate social responsibility] project" and is now "being extended to the currently largest national Ghanaian malaria control project" (282).

The human body and the population as objects of government programs and policies is not a new phenomenon and has been a trend throughout the world for centuries, but what has changed is the nature of the state's control in this. The authors demonstrate through their detailed accounts that non-state actors – corporations, international agencies, non-governmental organizations, pharmaceutical companies, academia, and research organizations – largely shape the form of and trends within medical science in Africa. However, this does not mean that the state is completely absent or non-existent. The chapters in the volume work together to illustrate that medicine and health in Africa have in fact transformed in light of globalization, economic reforms, neoliberalism, and privatization, but even with the importance of non-state actors, the state continues to be a dominant force – hence the use of the term "para-state" to highlight its changed nature and role. Geissler writes, "[g]iven the independence of these entities from the nation-state, why is the state still necessary for para-statal science? The answer is that it provides legitimacy and rationale to the scientific undertaking ... It allows legitimate access to citizens' bodies and avails public medical facilities for the recruitment of participants ... And finally, it serves as the ultimate destination of findings" (13). The contributors do not theorize the state as being absent or a non-actor in neoliberalism or privatization – as some literature on the state in Africa tends to do – but rather takes into account the unique ways that its nature and role may have changed.

One of the many strengths and intriguing theoretical points of the book is that "[t]he authors do not position 'the state,' with its biomedical technologies, in opposition to people or locality, as in the 'state versus people' imaginary of liberal anthropology ... Instead, they share an interest in the mutual, open-ended constitution of health and larger collective forms and in the political possibilities of collectives engaged or evoked by scientific and medical action" (24f.).

The first section of the book examines changes to biopolitics in Africa in the present and past. This section includes Nguyen's discussion of mass treatment programs to eliminate the HIV epidemic known as "Treatment as Prevention" (TasP) and John Manton's (chap. 2) current and historical account of leprosy research in Nigeria. The next section of the book engages with the impact of neoliberalization on medical research in Africa. Guillaume Lachenal (chap. 3) traces trajectory of HIV research in Cameroon and uses the notion of "nihilism" to "problematize the recent transformation of the landscape of

medical research and public health in Africa" (106) and Geissler (chap. 4) explores the National Clinical Research Organization (NCRO), which is "non-government founded" and "[t]ied in with wider processes of privatization and drastic reductions of government funding" (143). The third section of the volume investigates whether or not the state has disappeared in Africa through looking at medical research and treatment programs. This includes Rene Gerrets' (chap. 5) analysis of malaria research in Tanzania and Susan Reynolds Whyte's (chap. 6) discussion of Ugandan government employees who collaborate in AIDS research. The fourth section focuses on relationships and transformation given that multiple entities situated on different levels (community, national, international, etc.) are involved in medical science in Africa. This includes Branwyn Poleykett's (chap. 7) discussion of HIV research in Senegal and Lotte Meinert's (chap. 8) investigation of the "meeting of scientific research and lived realities" through an analysis of "the encounter between a major internationally funded medical antiretroviral therapy (ART) research project" (257). The final section of the book focuses on the changing nation in Africa and includes Beisel's chapter on malaria control in Ghana; Anne H. Kelly's (chap. 10) analysis of medical research in the Gambia, even though it is one of the smallest countries in Africa "it is also one of the most researched ... Gambian populations have yielded key insights about nutrition, agronomy, and infection and vector-borne diseases, transforming the field of tropical medicine" (303); and Didier Fassin's (chap. 11) exploration of the "scientific and political biography" of the HIV "wonder drug" nevirapine, whose "scientific life became political, revealing tensions and divisions inherited from the recent past of [South Africa] and still profoundly inscribed in the present" (336).

This volume is a crucial read for those interested in medical anthropology, science and technology studies, HIV/AIDS research and treatment, malaria, public health, development, and policy making and will be useful for graduate courses on these topics as well as those focused on Africa, globalization, neoliberalism, and the nation-state. The authors give careful attention to the many complicated networks and relationships between people, institutions, and states that inform medical science in Africa. Their writing styles are overall smooth and easy to comprehend, even for those who are not specialists in the issues covered. I can see this entire volume to be of interest to readers, and at the same time, I can see readers selecting particular chapters to read that focus on their specific areas of interest. Geissler created a provocative account of medical science and health care, which not only contributes to scholarly discussion, but also to public debates about foreign funded treatment programs and research, which benefit from clinical trials, and the development of new drugs and their side effects.

Cortney Hughes Rinker

**Gifford, Paul:** *Christianity, Development, and Modernity in Africa*. London: C. Hurst & Company, 2015. 187 pp. ISBN 978-1-84904-477-6. Price: £ 18.99