

challenge old cultural forms, to create new ones, and to generate renewed forms of legitimacy for 'traditional' gender norms". She concludes that essentially "[they do] not challenge the structures that reinforce and perpetuate gender inequalities."

Two remarkable figures in Ghanaian Pentecostalism, Francesca Duncan-Williams and Christie Doe Tetteh, emerge in the chapter entitled "Big Women, Small Girls." Soothill was quite clearly impressed (maybe even a little overawed) by these "big women." Soothill feels their power, but they also feel hers, and their relationship was marked by a definite tension. For me this was a particularly fascinating part of the book. She explores the relationship of power between born-again women and argues that leading female figures such as these exert considerable authority over other women in their respective churches. Concluding her marvelous study of these two figures Soothill concludes: "The new churches appeal to many women primarily not because they provide opportunities for communal solidarity – though they may do this to a limited extent – but because they provide access to the spiritual power of prophetic individuals" (179).

While these "big women" have enormous power, other women can also access it and often do particularly in relation to their men. In chapter six entitled "Men, Marriage, and Modernity" the author examines the influence of this form of Christianity on the understanding of marriage and how "born-again women access spiritual power through charismatic practices and use it to try to mediate changes in their gendered relationships."

Going back to the late Adrian Hastings and Richard Gray, and more recently to the work of Paul Gifford and J. D. Y. Peel amongst others, the School of Oriental and African Studies has made an important contribution to the understanding of Africa Christianity. In this book Jane Soothill has made an impressive contribution to that tradition and claimed a significant place in the field.

Patrick Claffey

Stone, Linda, and Paul F. Lurquin: *Genes, Culture, and Human Evolution: A Synthesis*. With an Introduction by L. Luca Cavalli-Sforza. Malden: Blackwell Publishing, 2007. 314 pp. ISBN 978-1-4051-3166-7. Price: \$ 44.95

This textbook results from the collaboration of a cultural anthropologist (Linda Stone) and a molecular geneticist (Paul Lurquin), both inspired by the work of Luca Cavalli-Sforza, who advised on the book and has written an introduction. The book lives up to its title. It provides an invigorating and well-informed overview of human genetic and cultural evolution, one that transcends the disciplinary boundaries that become an irrelevance to a full understanding of where we come from, our nature and origins.

The range of topics covered is wide, but appropriate to the subject matter. Starting with a brief outline of the main ideas of genetic evolution and cultural evolution, it moves on to what we know of human evolution from fossil and material remains. It proceeds to a more detailed

exposition of relevant genetic theory, including the information available from mitochondrial DNA, what DNA studies can tell us about human evolution, and the roles of mutation and natural selection, drift, and migration. Later comes a chapter on "the prehistory of human genes," coalescent theory, and more on the DNA evidence including "mitochondrial Eve" and the "Out of Africa" model (which is supported).

There is an account of theories of cultural evolution, and gene-culture coevolution. Not surprisingly, given Cavalli-Sforza's work in this area, an extended section considers the correlation of human genes with human languages. Key human migrations are considered, including the peopling of the Americas and the Neolithic advance in Europe. Later topics include an analysis of kinship and how it evolved; and, more controversially, a discussion of the cultural evolutionary processes involved in human religions. The book concludes with a chapter on medical implications, eugenics, and the evolutionary future of humankind.

It is a well-written book. Concepts are in most cases carefully explained, with boxes, tables, and figures used liberally to assist understanding, and a glossary of technical terms. There are a few appendices (e.g., one for the Hardy-Weinberg theorem). There is a short summary at the end of each chapter, further reading, and a few discussion questions. At the back there are notes for each chapter; plus key references. The index is satisfactory (no more), although the absence of a consolidated reference list (they are segregated into key chapter references) can be irritating if one wants to see if or how a particular piece of research has been referred to.

In general, the tone of the book is not dogmatic, and controversies are made clear. Nevertheless a definite line is usually taken. In my view the authors succeed well in expounding the intricate relationships between genetic and cultural factors. They are careful to avoid genetic determinism. For example, they point out the genetic closeness between the Jewish population of Israel and the Palestinian and surrounding Arabic populations, such that any explanations of the conflict must be sought in socioeconomic and political/cultural areas, not in biology (156). Of course, in such a wide panorama there are going to be some areas where readers may disagree. For example, the authors ask why the United States is one of the most religious countries in the worlds, and conclude that this can be attributed to a cultural founder effect (247f.), following the fundamentalist beliefs of the early settlers. This is dealt with in less than one page and left me unconvinced that this is any explanation for the situation over 300 years later; but, it could be at least a useful basis for further discussion of the issue.

In sum, this is a clear and authoritative text for getting across our current understanding of human evolution, especially what we know of genetic evolution and of the beginnings of interplay between genetic and cultural factors. It also provides an interesting account of further aspects of cultural evolution (language, kinship, religion, and other areas) which are more open to discussion or dispute; and either provides arguably the best account

so far (as in language), or at least will stimulate further debate (as in religion).

The book makes abundantly clear how our knowledge of our origins has advanced greatly in recent decades. Despite areas of uncertainty, there are growing areas of firm knowledge. This might be disputed by some. The postmodernists, influential in much of cultural anthropology, presumably would object to any prioritising of any particular narrative of human evolution, or to regarding anything as factual. The authors do not contend with this view directly in the text (of course, they do so indirectly), but Cavalli-Sforza does in his introduction. He describes how the leading postmodernist Jacques Derrida carefully avoided speaking to him when on two occasions they both received honorary degrees together! (This at least is Cavalli-Sforza's narrative of what happened ...) Cavalli-Sforza compares the postmodernists to the Greek sophists, using the emotional power of words and their ambiguity to undermine belief in reason.

For someone genuinely seeking to understand our origins, this book is to be highly recommended as a clear, well-written account of what we know so far in a broad multi-disciplinary endeavour. There are indeed some narratives, but also many facts and many very well-founded theories and arguments. It will be most useful as a textbook on courses concerned with human evolution, and as a general resource for those interested in reading a synthesis of research findings and arguments within the area.

Peter K. Smith

Trefon, Theodore, et Pierre Petit (dir.): *Expériences de recherche en République Démocratique du Congo. Méthodes et contextes.* Bruxelles: Université libre de Bruxelles, 2006. 276 pp. ISBN 978-2-87263-006-6. (*Civilisations*, 54/1–2) Prix: € 30.00

It is encouraging that social science research is still being carried on in the Democratic Republic of Congo, with some involvement of local scholars and institutions, even though most of the initiative and the funding comes from abroad. The editors of this collection, both with long experience in the country, insist, however, that there is fundamentally nothing special about research in Congo. Their intention is to encourage interdisciplinary discussion of methods and perspectives, to remind researchers everywhere of the need to show how results were produced, to guide beginners, and to provide practical examples for all, especially but not exclusively in Congo.

Nevertheless, in their excellent introduction, the editors are obliged to discuss the difficulties of research in current conditions. Since the collapse of Mobutu's regime international agencies have interfered in the country's affairs as never before, as invaders, mineral profiteers, armed and unarmed United Nations expeditionary forces, journalists, and nongovernmental organizations of every description. Add in television and the constant traffic of goods and people between the homeland and diasporic communities in Europe, the Americas, and elsewhere in Africa. Congolese now know much more about

the world than they did thirty years ago and have more grounds for suspicion and outright paranoia. Even when there is no immediate physical danger, research can be very difficult; one anthropologist was arrested for "cultural espionage."

An even more serious concern underlined by the editors is the distortion imposed on results and perspectives by foreign agencies demanding "quick and dirty" research. Crowds of young project managers and research experts arrive on tight schedules, believing in surveys and statistics but ignorant of the environment, anxious to advance their careers in the World Bank or UNESCO (this reviewer has seen the like in Ghana). Contracts are written in the buzzwords of today's international social work: "participatory rural appraisal; project cycle management; empowerment, underprivileged; income generating; capacity building ..." The editors note local scholars readily learn this language, and that it is more rewarding for them to join a project or a program than to write a scholarly paper (16). In addition to what the editors call the NGOisation of research, current conditions result in its urbanisation. Rural areas, traditionally the terrain of the anthropologist's long-term participatory observation, are now neglected.

The twenty essays in this volume are written by a diverse group, from beginners to Léon de Saint Moulin, who began research in Congo 35 years ago, and Isidore Ndaywel è Nziem, doyen of Congo historians. Their interests include anthropology, sociology, literature, popular culture, public health, emigrants, and churches, but all deal with the strategies and experiences of research. None of the issues discussed (notably the relationship between quantitative and qualitative research) will be new to the experienced social scientist, but the variety and immediacy of the reports make for stimulating reading.

Wyatt MacGaffey

Ubelaker, Douglas H. (ed.): *Handbook of North American Indians; vol. 3: Environment, Origins, and Population.* Washington: Smithsonian Institution, 2006. 1146 pp. ISBN 978-0-16-077511-6. Price: \$ 72.00

Dieser Band erschien im Herbst 2006 als der 14. des auf 20 Bände angelegten Handbook-Projektes. Es war zugleich der letzte Band, den der Herausgeber der Reihe, William Sturtevant, noch erleben konnte. Sturtevant starb am 2. März 2007 im Alter von 81 Jahren, und damit war ihm leider nicht vergönnt, sein wichtigstes Lebenswerk, mit dem er seit 1965 beschäftigt war, zum Abschluss zu bringen.

Im Vorwort der beiden Herausgeber (W. C. Sturtevant und D. H. Ubelaker), datiert auf den 10. Juli 2006, wird die Entstehungsgeschichte des vorliegenden Bandes ausführlich beschrieben. Die begann 1970 mit der Ernennung von Frederick S. Hulse als Herausgeber, der jedoch 1982 von diesem Amt zurücktrat. Ihm folgte Richard I. Ford, der 1991 dieses Amt wieder abgab, und erst 2002 wurde mit Douglas H. Ubelaker ein Herausgeber gefunden, der den Band vollenden konnte. Die teilweise 30 Jahre alten Manuskripte mussten völlig neu bearbeitet