

sen erschwert. Ein interessanter Nebenaspekt der Arbeit besteht darin, in den abgedruckten Interviewpassagen zu lesen, wie die betreffenden HeilerInnen ihre KollegInnen bewerten und wie sie ihre Wertungen begründen. In diesen Bewertungen Anderer scheint vielfach mehr über das Selbstverständnis der HeilerInnen durch als in den direkten Selbstbeschreibungen. Der ausschließlich qualitativ angelegten Studie gelingt es, das oftmals abstrakte und vereinheitlichende Bild, das Außenstehende von esoterischen HeilerInnen zeichnen, zu durchbrechen und diesem ein differenzierendes und nicht wertendes Bild, oder genauer ein Kaleidoskop, entgegenzusetzen.

Am Ende seien dem Rezensenten vielleicht noch Anmerkungen im Blick auf die Bibliografie und die Zitationsweise erlaubt. Es erscheint vielleicht doch angebracht, das kulturell Fremde in Form des Papstnamens "Johannes Paul II.", nicht in das in Deutschland kulturell übliche Schema des Vor- und Nachnamens nach dem Muster "Paulus, Johannes" zu überführen (339, 402). Auch hätte der Autor bei der Verwendung eines weiteren Namens mehr Sorgfalt walten lassen können. Laura Bohannan veröffentlichte unter dem Pseudonym Elenore Smith Bowen und nicht Bowen unter dem Pseudonym Bohannan, wie der Autor schreibt (62). Hätte der Autor den angeführten Feldforschungsroman "Return to Laughter" nicht nur erwähnt, sondern ihn auch in seine Bibliografie aufgenommen, wäre ihm dieser Fehler vielleicht aufgefallen.

Harald Grauer

Walker, Andrew (ed.): *Tai Lands and Thailand. Community and State in Southeast Asia*. Singapore: NUS Press; Copenhagen: NIAS Press, 2009. 261 pp. ISBN 978-9971-69-471-5; ISBN 978-87-7694-049-2. Price: £ 16.99

This book revives and renews an anthropological discussion about village and community in Thai/Tai society which originated in the 1950s when functionalist-oriented anthropologist, such as L. Hanks, J. F. Embree, and others, worked in Thailand. Then followed years of development, nation-building, anti-communist counterinsurgency research, and the "community culture" discussion since the 1970s. This publication is an important critical contribution to the debate and takes the concept into the recent focus on transnational Tai research. It contains case studies from Tai communities in Thailand, China, Laos, and Burma (Shan).

The introduction by the editor takes a critical view on the depiction of Tai villages as traditional communities built on solidarity, subsistence economy, and careful administration of natural resources – descriptions often based on romantic stereotypical associations. Community has also been depicted as a nonmodern unit rejecting marked economy and capitalism. In the debate, Tai communities were seen as egalitarian, self-governing units with their ritual leaders in charge of rituals for the local guardian spirits. Cash crops, trade, and wage labor largely have been considered as destructive intrusion into the community and its primordial solidarity.

In Thailand, a debate on community culture resulted in special constitutional rights, i.e., the 1997 Constitution

to administer local natural resources. For many years the idea of "community forests" has been discussed in Thailand, based on ideas of rights belonging to "original local communities." Thus, the community idea has functioned both as an analytical concept used by researchers and a strategic concept used by NGOs and local communities. The author takes a critical look at both uses of the community concept. He argues that Tai communities are adapted to modern and global conditions, including wage labor, migration, and that the strategic benefits of the traditional concept cannot be taken for granted.

When community is used as a mythical representation it can mobilize villagers in contemporary resource struggles in collaboration with NGOs and in order to defend rights. Walker discusses the concept of symbolic community (Anthony Cohen, *The Symbolic Construction of Community*. London 1985). It is argued that symbolic notions, such as "community work" and "community forest," are vague and aggregate rather than integrate. They may also be shared across village boundaries in local networks. It is possible to live far away and still belong to a village community.

However, Walker argues that simplified symbolic images can constrain development, turn into "elite's nostalgia," and end in a "limited legitimacy of much community rights discourse" (17). An idealized rural lifestyle based on subsistence economy and self-sufficiency is disconnected from the primary livelihood concerns. Does this mean that we better drop the notion as a false imaginary? It seems so, since community is "a false floor, ready to collapse when laden with excessive political expectations" (19) and "most compelling for ... activist and academic advocates ... in ... Thailand" (22), Walker argues, and not for the Tai people. But do villagers really confuse such idealized strategic notions with the daily realities of livelihood? In the experience of the reviewer, villagers often have a critical distance to NGO terminology and promises.

Finally, the community concept is seen as shaped in "dialogue with" (articulation with?) the state. Thus the conclusion is that the symbolic dimension must be analyzed as part of the daily social practice and political context, and that "community" is a contradictory and "slippery" concept, as Craig J. Reynolds demonstrates in the following interesting historical review of the concept's origin in Thailand.

Reynolds states that the "community concept continues to be valorised for its moral, spiritual, holistic and utopian characteristics" (27). The Thai concept of "community" (*chumchon*) seems to be a recent neologism. During the 1960s, it was used by the government (i.e., the military) in relation to "development" and anticommunist "counter-insurgency." In the 1970s, it was discussed by Thai scholars, influenced by Marx, and Buddhist intellectuals in relation to notions of "local wisdom" and "community culture." The traditional community was seen as a self-sufficient unit, with subsistence economy and special consciousness – a somewhat idealized perception. It resurfaced during the economic crisis in 1997 when the king's ideas on self-sufficiency and morality entered all

parts of government and administration. Reynolds shows the many contradictory uses of the term and how it is articulated in different political conjunctures.

After these two theoretical chapters follow some case studies. James Haughton discusses the influence of capitalism and the opposition of community and globalized modernity or morality and economy in Thailand. He argues that a correct understanding of the economic conditions is crucial in order to alleviate poverty in development projects. He makes a critical analysis of the community culture concept and the idea of sufficiency economy, which were used from the 1970s to the 1980s as core concepts by NGOs in counterstrategies against capitalist intrusion into village communities. But as Haughton demonstrates, rice banks, buffalo banks, saving groups, handicraft groups (under royal protection), and other village-based funds became a stepping stone for local entrepreneurs and small-scale capitalists which are now engaged in market economic relations. There has always been trading involving the villages. However, the mode of surplus extraction is the determining factor. Now labor, land as well as crops are commodities, and the state intervenes in resource management, building of dams (e.g., Pak Mun Dam), and in other infrastructure projects. Thus, extended resource conflicts are an important dimension of the village-state relations today. Yet a traditional patron-client hierarchy still exists. The "traditional" village community has adapted to the new determining conditions. The exiled Prime Minister Thaksin Shinawatra's strategy of "capitalism from below" combined the traditional community and the modern ideas of a nationalized economy in a globalized world. He appealed to a *chumchon* (community)-capitalist alliance with his village funds. In all, Haughton's article is a fine analysis with a solid historical foundation.

Nicholas Farrelly discussed the Shan (Tai from Burma) in Thailand, where they are marginalized. Still they figure as an example of an authentic, primordial Tai community in what the author calls "the Tai studies project" (68). They contribute to "nationalism by villagers and not the state" (73). In the discussion led by the influential Thai historian, Chatthip Nartsupha, the community is based on "self-sufficiency." Basically it is an antimodernity critique based on a somewhat romanticized description of village communities and projected into a Pan-Tai symbolic construction of a common culture across national boundaries. The Thai academics seem to search for a lost world: A peaceful, harmonic Buddhist community, independent of the state and the markets – a national identity across borders. The Shan in Thailand are though more a disfranchised class in towns, harassed by authorities, working as prostitutes or low-paid workers, being deported by Thai authorities after having escaped from Burmese persecution. Hopefully, we will learn more about Shan society and culture in Burma in the future.

Holly High writes about the role of the local guardian spirit in community making. Ritual offerings for the local spirit are not only a manifestation of the symbolic construction of community in a Lao village, but includes relatives migrated from the village. She revived the dis-

ussion led by M. Weber and F. Tönnies on the subjective and objective aspects of open and closed communities. The guardian spirit is asked to watch over the members of village households. The rituals, which exclude some relatives and outsiders, are thus protective of the included members and emotive representations of community and kinship. However, networks of migrants also contribute to poverty alleviation by the gifts they send back.

In a second article, Andrew Walker takes up the discussion of religion and ritual, representing the subjective feeling of belonging together in a northern Thai village: "... symbols serve both to create and maintain collective sentiments" (117). The collective effort in organizing a Buddhist festival is analyzed with reference to Durkheim and Anthony Cohen. Monks, relatives, and guests from near and far are mobilized. However, the case also demonstrates how internal conflicts, concerning a controversial monk and money, undermine the symbols of community. Phra Upakhut, the mythical monk related to the Buddha, is called upon to create coolness during the ceremony. Despite his critical view in the introduction, Walker shows that the simplified symbolic construction in rituals is providing legitimacy to community relations.

The following two chapters are based on studies in Laos by Sarinda Singh and Warren Mayes and describe a dormitory community of Lao forestry officials in a poor village and a Vespa Scooter Club. The two cases are interesting, but seem somehow marginal in relation to the general discussion.

The last chapter by Antonella Diana on Tai in Yunnan is an interesting case. She shows how the young Tai Lue manages a double identity, i.e., he is striving to become modern (urbanized) and developed according to the official state/party policy, while at the same time he is following the traditions in marriage and religious rituals. The Tai in Yunnan are both Tai or *daizu* and *zhongguoren* (Chinese people). They often identify themselves more in relation with China than with Pan-Tai identity. This case clearly demonstrates the problems in part of the Tai studies project on an imagined pan-national Tai identity.

Andrew Walker concludes the book with an emphasis on the concept of a "modern Tai community" as an alternative framework for both analysis and empowerment. There are multiple ways of forming communities and senses of belonging. The book is a valuable contribution to the discussion of the community concept as well as to Tai studies.

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Wiencke, Markus: Kulturen der Gesundheit. Sinn-erleben im Umgang mit psychischem Kranksein. Eine Anthropologie der Gesundheitsförderung. Bielefeld: transcript Verlag, 2011. 302 pp. ISBN 978-3-8376-1690-3. Preis: € 32.80

Die Frage, was Gesundheit ist, kann nicht allgemein- und endgültig beantwortet werden. Viele Faktoren spielen eine Rolle, zumal bekannt ist, dass Gesundheit nicht nur die Abwesenheit von Krankheit ist, wie auch schon die Weltgesundheitsorganisation (1967) betont hatte. Gesundheit heißt, sich in allen Aspekten wohlfühlen, kör-