

Village, there are four basic divisions or “stadia,” most consisting of two parts, for a total of seven stages. Earlier ceremonies take place outside of the *kurambu* or spirit house, and are designed to introduce boys to the lower spirits including the *kutakwa*. Later stages introduce them to the awe-inspiring *ngwaalndu*, represented by statues, paintings, and sounds. As the initiation stages progress, initiates are shown or given various musical instruments including bullroarers, soundboards, flutes, ocarinas, resonators, and trumpets whose sounds embody spirit voices. Also representing the spirits are costumed dancers with feathered headdresses who perform during the ceremonies. In the last two initiation divisions, special sections of the *kurambu* are arranged with scenes containing painted wooden carvings and other figures symbolizing *ngwaalndu*. At the culmination of the ceremonies, these exhibitions are revealed to the initiates. It is these “display rooms” that Gerrits arranged to have transported to museums in Europe.

The in-depth information reported in this volume details aspects of this male initiation complex and connects it with another set of traditional beliefs and behaviors involving yam growing. The Abelam people may well be the world’s most accomplished yam growers, specializing in the display and exchange of long yams, grown to gigantic size (sometimes exceeding three meters in length) in special gardens. It is a central thesis of this volume that the *wuréngwaal* (rendered by the author as *urungwall*), a sacred wooden resonator that imitates the voices of the *ngwaalndu*, connects these two ritual complexes by playing a central role in each.

The data reported herein are both rich and exacting, at times resembling raw fieldnotes, but broader anthropological context and comparative information are mostly lacking. A very brief introductory chapter is followed directly by another describing the spirit house (called *haus tambaran* in PNG’s lingua franca, Tok Pisin) of Bongiora Village. Although it would have made more sense to me to reverse chapters two and three, because the latter provides some context for the former, chapter 3 describes the initiation cycle in a more general way. Chapter 4 details two initiation stages (those for which the collected displays were prepared) as they were performed in Bongiora in 1972, chapter 5 describes yam cultivation and yam ritual, and chapter 6 describes the role of the *wuréngwaal* in linking the two ritual complexes that the book labels *tambaran* and yam cults. Useful addenda include a list of the volume’s many plates, both black and white and color, illustrated descriptions of objects related to the two displays in the initiation “rooms” mentioned previously, and a glossary/index of key terms in Tok Pisin and Ambulas, the language of the Abelam people.

Although certain aspects of the initiation and yam complexes for which the author has data are reported in meticulous detail, there are many gaps in the overall picture of Abelam ritual. For example, there seem to be regional variations in how the overall initiation sequences are performed and returned by moieties. Anthony Forge described an eight-stage initiation complex for his field-sites (Bengragum and Wingei in the east and Yanuko in

the north) with an alternating pattern in which one moiety would initiate the boys of the opposite moiety in ceremonies 1, 3, 5, and 7; with the other performing 2, 4, 6, and 8; after which the pattern would be reversed, such that it would take two full cycles to complete the initiation. I did not find this to be the case in my own field-site of Neligum Village, in which novices were introduced to the spirits in sequential initiation stages, and I do not know of any other ethnographer who has confirmed the pattern reported by Forge. I had hoped for this volume to shed light on this issue, but, disappointingly, the subject is not addressed at all, and the reader cannot discern how the giving and returning of ceremonies was practiced in Bongiora.

For the specialist, the volume contains a wealth of ethnographic particulars and insights. For the museum professional, it provides one of the most comprehensive contextual studies of a material culture collection in existence today. But for the generalist, there is little overall context, and it is not well-situated within either ethnographic or anthropological writing. Overall, it is a very worthy addition to the ethnographic literature of the Abelam people.

Richard Scaglione

Ghassem-Fachandi, Parvis: Pogrom in Gujarat. Hindu Nationalism and Anti-Muslim Violence in India. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2012. 335 pp. ISBN 978-0-691-15176-2. Price: £ 52.00

How can we account for collective violence? Scholars of Hindu-Muslim antagonism in India have long sought to provide nuanced answers to this question, with some of the more well-known arguments emphasising the legacies of colonial categorisation, regional electoral dynamics, manipulation by political elites, and the presence of riot networks, as well as patterns of civic engagement, shifts in the social mobility of lower-class Hindus, and the effects of neoliberal economic reform. Rather than focussing on cause and consequence, perpetrator and victim, Ghassem-Fachandi’s recent ethnography, “Pogrom in Gujarat. Hindu Nationalism and Anti-Muslim Violence in India,” has a different concern: the complicity of those in whose name the violence is conducted.

His text addresses the 2002 violence in Ahmedabad, Gujarat’s largest city, during which at least 1,000 Muslims were killed and much Muslim-owned real estate destroyed. Ghassem-Fachandi, who conducted fieldwork in the metropolis before, during, and after the spring of 2002, centres his analysis on the days when the violence was at its zenith, from 28 February to 2 March. He defines what happened in this brief period as a pogrom – an event characterised not only by careful orchestration on the part of key political organisations and actors, but also “a specific kind of collective consciousness that makes forms of complicity possible” (9). Ghassem-Fachandi’s principal contention is that violence against Muslims on the scale seen in 2002 was possible because large numbers of Hindus who were not directly involved in the burning, stoning, killing, and looting came to frame the violence as inevitable and even acceptable.

Unpacking the legitimisation of violence in this context requires, Ghassem-Fachandi argues, a close consideration of the Hindu right's "clever and systematic politicization of vegetarianism" (17). Through careful analysis of media representations, as well as the speeches of elected politicians and ideologues associated with the Sangh Parivar (the family of organisations that make up the Hindu right), Ghassem-Fachandi provides compelling evidence of the ways in which a dichotomy between vulnerable, vegetarian Hindus and meat-eating, Muslim aggressors became a prominent feature of public discourse in the period surrounding the violence. During the brutality, Ghassem-Fachandi demonstrates that many "ordinary" Hindu Gujaratis articulated stereotypes which drew on this pervasive social imaginary, effectively legitimising the anti-Muslim violence going on around them and making them "accomplices" (123) to it. As one of his middle-class Hindu friends explains over lunch soon after the pogrom, "[Muslims] do not see what is right, what is wrong. They see the blood. If they can kill animals without a thought, how can they have problems killing humans?" (127).

Such discourses, which ultimately locate Muslims as deserving of the violence that befell them, were coupled with a radical reformulation of the Vedic concept of *ahimsa* (nonviolence), famously adopted by Gujarat's most renowned historical figure, M. K. Gandhi. While Gandhi saw violence as indicative of an absence of power, and hence advocated *ahimsa*, Hindu nationalists today see the ideology of nonviolence as the basis of Hindu weakness past and present. However, being acutely aware of the power the image "Global Gandhi" commands, theorists of the Hindu right have simply redefined *ahimsa* to suit their goals. During the spring clashes the head of one of the more militant nationalist organisations explained that it was only possible to truly practice nonviolence if one had the ability to inflict violence but chose not to. The logical conclusion of this reversal of Gandhi's position is that violence is sometimes necessary: "the timid and non-violent Hindu has to prove capable of defending himself against the ever bold and naturally violent Muslim" (191).

Praised as an important contribution to the anthropology of violence, this ethnography is also a critical intervention in the field of food studies. While the role of meat as a symbol and agent of division, transgression, and status (both high and low) has been addressed by many scholars of the Subcontinent, Ghassem-Fachandi is one of the first to consider the significance of food discourses in fostering and facilitating forms of violence that go beyond the symbolic.

That said, historical evidence calls into question his claims to the novelty of the present era. For instance, Ghassem-Fachandi suggests that the intertwining of *ahimsa* with extremist anti-Muslim rhetoric is a recent phenomenon, popularised by cow protection societies over the last two decades. However, a thesis by S. Krishnaswamy (A riot in Bombay, August 11, 1893. A Study in Hindu-Muslim Relations in Western India during the Late Nineteenth Century. Chicago 1966) on the 1893 riot in Bombay demonstrates that the violence of well over a century ago was triggered by a media campaign launched

by the newly organised cow protection league, vilifying Muslim butchers and beefeaters and "predicting the coming of the divine wrath on account of the inaction of the Hindus in the matter ..." (Krishnaswamy 1966: 137). The similarity with contemporary discourses is striking, and suggests that Ghassem-Fachandi's analysis could have benefited from a more historicised approach to the politics-vegetarianism nexus: if such imaginaries have long been a staple of everyday life in western India, why do they only sometimes facilitate violence?

Another concern is that the links between the rhetoric expounded by the media, political figures, and animal welfare associations, with the thoughts and actions of individuals that Ghassem-Fachandi actually spoke to, are often implied rather than explained. His interpretation of one informant's "hyperbolic" vegetarianism (162), an extreme bodily reaction to the sight of meat, is a case in point. The affect of disgust, Ghassem-Fachandi contends, has been utilised by Hindu nationalists (it is not clear who), as indicative not only of the Hindu's natural nonviolence – an inherent proclivity towards *ahimsa* – but also of a readiness to fight to defeat the Muslim threat. Although we are told that Bharat, the vegetarian in question, is staunchly Hindu, we are given no indication of how he understood this episode himself. Indeed, the ethnography is curiously lacking in informants – individuals like Bharat appear fleetingly; because we do not develop a connection with these characters nor a sense of the relationship between informant and ethnographer. The reader is left wondering whether Ghassem-Fachandi's interpretations accurately reflect the experiences of the "ordinary" citizens on which his argument pivots.

The text would also have benefited from a more detailed discussion of two key theoretical issues. Ghassem-Fachandi's approach relies heavily on psychoanalysis, exemplified by his assertions that disgust is evidence of a repressed desire, rumour stems from a "collective libidinal economy" (83) and that meat-eating women evoke a fear of castration amongst Hindu men. My critique is not with Ghassem-Fachandi's use of psychoanalysis per se, but rather the absence of a thorough elaboration of this rich school of thought that would enable the reader to appraise his interpretations in their own terms. Finally, while briefly mentioned in the introduction, Ghassem-Fachandi never adequately unpacks his central concept of complicity, nor does he expand on the methodological conundrum it poses. Do thoughts make people complicit or only public talk and action? Is the act of witnessing also a form of complicity – and what implication does this have for the figure of the ethnographer?

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Dem Sammelband "Medizinethnologie. Eine Einführung" gehen drei Bände voran, die mit wechselnden Begrifflichkeiten jeweils eine Einführung in die Thematik der Medizinethnologie bzw. Ethnomedizin darstel-