

der anglophonen Dominanz entgegen, und verweist auf die zugrunde liegenden philosophischen/ethnologischen Ansätze, die den medizinethnologischen Schulen in den hier vorgestellten Ländern eigen sind.

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Segal, Daniel A., and Sylvia J. Yanagisako (eds.): *Unwrapping the Sacred Bundle. Reflections on the Disciplining of Anthropology*. Durham: Duke University Press, 2005. 173 pp. ISBN 978-0-8223-3437-3. Price: £ 12.95

This is a very American book. The term sacred bundle refers to the American Indian tradition of anthropology and to the somewhat uneasy definition in the United States (and Canada?) of anthropology in terms of the four field approach, i.e., the integration of the four fields of archaeology, biological anthropology, sociocultural anthropology, and linguistic anthropology. Much stress is laid in the book also on the American tradition of Indian studies as a manifestation of “settler colonialism.” The authors connect this historical background problem with a discussion on what they call the social-evolutionary past of the discipline from which they want to take a distance.

All the authors with the exception of the historian James Clifford are “cultural/social anthropologists” and are in varying degrees sceptical about the unity of anthropology as a “four-field discipline.” This seems to be a rather provocative position in the United States as it may still happen there that graduate students when soliciting for a job are advised not to express such reservations about the unity of the discipline (1).

The book is to a large extent a plea for anthropology being “a queer science” rather than a “normal one” and for a “flexible disciplinarity” in defining its boundaries. It is not that the authors reject any kind of collaboration between the different disciplines of the four-field approach but they support “complementary” rather than “integrated” or “synthesized” relations (12). This seems to be a rather pragmatic approach in which the collaboration between disciplines depends to a large extent on the kind of problems involved and the relative strengths of different kinds of analyses.

This collection of papers is the result of a panel organized by the editors for the AAA (American Anthropological Association) in 2000 in an attempt to “foster an open debate about the definition of anthropology as a ‘holistic’ study of humanity” (2). They make it clear in their introduction that they want to take a distance of what they call the “ideology of settler colonialism” and the identification of anthropology with the social-evolutionary position of the discipline being identified as the study of non-European peoples. All these views can be seen also as a critical note to what appears to be the official AAA position.

The essays in the book are opened by a contribution of James Clifford (“Rearticulating Anthropology”; 24–48) – the well-known outsider but active authority on anthropological matters – who argues that already

since Boas anthropology, just like other disciplines, has known a disciplinary contingency. According to him disciplinary formation has always been accompanied by a conflictual process (31).

Rena Lederman in her essay “Unchosen Grounds. Cultivating Cross-Subfield Accents for a Public Voice” (49–77) is concerned about the relevance of anthropology in the nonacademic public sphere, referring to the Chagnon/Yanomamö controversy. The discussion in the press about this matter makes it clear that anthropological views on “human nature” are commonly seen by the public as to be characteristic of the discipline. Anthropologists appear not to be wholly free in the definition of the identity of their discipline as they often have, for instance, to fight for their position in various faculties of their universities.

In her essay called “Flexible Disciplinarity. Beyond the Americanist Tradition” (78–98) Sylvia Yanagisako elaborates on her view that anthropology should be a “non-essentialist flexible discipline” allowing all kinds of alliances with other disciplines. European anthropologists may be surprised to learn from her essay that American anthropology has been influenced, to the extent that she suggests, by its study of American Indians. But has not been the definition of anthropology everywhere in the world as the study of “primitive peoples” been responsible for the discipline carrying what the author calls a “social-evolutionary burden”?

Michael Silverstein in his essay “Languages/Cultures Are Dead! Long Live the Linguistic-Cultural!” (99–125) insists on the contingency of the distinction between cultural and linguistic phenomena and criticizes the taxonomic and museologizing tradition of anthropology.

Ian Hodder finally in “An Archaeology of the Four-Field Approach in Anthropology in the United States” (126–140) thinks, in discussing the developments within archaeology, that harm has been done in the United States by the integration of this discipline within anthropology. He pleads for alliances between different disciplines around certain themes.

The book offers an interesting discussion of not only the four-field problem which is not an issue that keeps many European anthropologists busy – but it gives a useful insight in American views on the changing of relationships between disciplines in general. Only, I find it a pity that so little reference is made to developments elsewhere in the world. Albert A. Trouwborst

Serbin, Sylvia: *Königinnen Afrikas*. Wuppertal: Peltor Hammer Verlag, 2006. 407 pp. ISBN 978-3-7795-0066-7. Preis: € 24.00

Aus historischen Quellen recherchiert, angereichert mit mündlichen Überlieferungen wird die Geschichte Afrikas aus einem auch den meisten Afrikakennern unbekanntem Blickwinkel erschlossen: als Geschichte, an der auch Frauen teilhatten. Mit der amorphen Vorstellung, Afrika habe, da ohne schriftliche Chroniken, vor der kolonialen Eroberung keine nennenswerte Ge-