demics (HIV/AIDS), lethal conflicts, economic decline, corruption, and lack of modern democratic principles. Very little of what actually functions in Africa, is portrayed. Two contributors to the "Afrika-Lexikon," however, have made the extraordinary effort of explicitly describing what actually works on the continent. See Sascha Dangmann's last paragraph on the current political developments in Eritrea (140) and Rebecca Miltsch's contribution on Mauritania (313–319). Furthermore, almost all the contributors write about political corruption in African countries and the ethicizing of politics without actually drawing adequate attention to dynamics of social obligations these groups may have towards one another, which may be deeply rooted in their cultural values as well as the historical processes that have led to the present power structures prevailing on the continent.

Regarding the contribution on Sierra Leone, there are a number of statements that need amendments. For example, the political systems of chieftaincy and chiefdoms (392) are not as traditional as the reader might imagine, since these institutions were introduced by the British Colonial Administration to serve their own purpose. Secondly, Paramount Chiefs are not elected for life in all districts of Sierra Leone as p. 392 seems to suggest. Recent Social Anthropological research may prove that such a claim does not in fact apply to the Luawa chiefdom in Kailahun district. There have been instances of violent political struggle for power among candidates contesting elections; the Paramount Chieftaincy may go to the candidate who wins. Again SLBS has functioned even before the civil war, and the US dollar is almost a second unofficial currency in the country. Finally, to speak, by implication, of the Sierra Leonean society today (394), is to suggest that the modern state is identical with society which, in my estimation, is actually not the case for there are many societies living in Sierra Leone. Despite these apparent shortcomings, "Afrika-Lexikon" makes a welcome and important addition to our understanding of the social systems of African countries. John Combey

Gluck, Carol, and **Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing** (eds.): Words in Motion. Toward a Global Lexicon. Durham: Duke University Press, 2009. 346 pp. ISBN 978-0-8223-4536-7. Price: £ 15.99

Carol Gluck, one of the editors of this intriguing book, claims that "Words are always in motion, and as they move across space and time, they inscribe the arcs of our past and present" (3). Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing, the other editor, believes that such wandering lexemes can demonstrate the extent to which nations constitute communities: "By following the histories of words of consequence, the authors track shifting political cultures that both form and exceed nations" (11). In short, then, this book selects some fourteen key terms in a particular nation and time, and explores how they spread transnationally, changing (and being changed) at each point of spatial and temporal contact.

This so-called "words-in-motion" project began with a series of workshops from 2000 to 2004 among an international group of historians, sociologists, political scientists, anthropologists, and others who were interested in how certain aspects of language related to social and political contexts. The first arose in the aftermath of the Asian economic crisis in the late 1990s when agencies like the World Bank and the International Monetary Fund demanded things like "good government," "transparency," and "rule of law" from the fledging Southeast Asian economies before aid would be offered. But at the same time, the Middle East and North Africa was already transmitting a growing vocabulary of community and human rights, as were countries in East Asia, South Asia, and South America. And these were not simple impositions or importations from abroad or the "world system." As Gluck points out, words like "responsibility" resonated in Japan not because they were Western, but because they offered "new possibilities for social, political, and moral action" (5).

I suppose the best way to present the flavor of this book is to start by listing the fourteen terms discussed by the contributors, in order, and their venues: (1) "security" (*segurança*) in Brazil by Itty Abraham; (2) "indigenous" (*adat*) in Indonesia by Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing; (3) "custom" (*'ada*) in the Middle East and Southeast Asia by Mona Abaza; (4) "responsibility" (*sekinin*) by Carol Gluck; (5) "secularism" (*'ilmaniyya/laïcité/sécularisme*) in Morocco by Driss Maghraoui; (6) "sublime" (*saburaimu*) in Japan by Alan Tansman; (7) "minority" (*'aqalliyya*) in Egypt by Seteney Shami; (8) "headscarf" (*hijāb*) in France by Claudia Koonz; (9) "injury" in China and India by Lydia H. Liu; (10) "conspiracy" (*conjuración*) in the Philippines by Vicente L. Rafael; (11) "terrorism" in India by Partha Chatterjee; (12) "commission" (*komisyon*) and "board" (*kurul*) in the Ottoman Empire by Huri Islamoglu; (13) "community" (*chumchon*) in Thailand by Craig J. Reynolds; and (14) "good governance" (*thammarat*) in Thailand by Kasian Tejapira.

The shear breath and variety imparts shock and awe. We see discussions on contemporary words, like the English loanword "sublime" in modern Japanese, juxtaposed with historical terms in Turkey borrowed from the French Revolution. We see how similar terms with a single etymology – e.g., *adat* in Indonesia and *'ada* in the Mideast and Southeast Asia (both originating from Arabic *'ada*, referring to practices not addressed in Islamic law) – becoming currently manifested in very different ways. Some of these "words in motion" – "terrorism" in India and "injury" in China, for example – seem to only have tangential indigenous counterparts. Other concepts – like "secularism" in Morocco – appear to have had multiple or competing inspirations (*'ilmaniyya* and *laikya* from Arabic and *laïcité* and *sécularisme* from French).

Along the way there are some fascinating tales. Consider the story of the Arabic *hijāb* (headscarf) in France. Before the 1980s few Europeans had seen veiled women outside of Muslim countries. With increasing immigration of workers and families from Francophone North African countries, France was caught off guard for the "*hijāb* wars" of the turn of the twentieth-first century. While headscarves were tolerated as quaint or cute on grandmothers, the sight of young Muslim French women wear-

ing – indeed, wanting to wear – them signaled to many their intention to reside in France, but with a reluctance to assimilate. This was thought to be an affront to French secular and civic values. The September 11th attacks on the World Trade Center exacerbated tensions, especially when attempts were made to ban the *hijāb* in public schools. Years of hearings and debate followed, and issues became inexorably conflated. Feminists disagreed if the *hijāb* was a symbol reifying alleged Muslim patriarchy or an expression of individual choice. And women were often stuck in the middle, facing taunts from Muslim men if they did not wear a headscarf, or unemployment or intolerance in mainstream French society if they did. The problem is not yet resolved, though the actions of some fundamentalist extremists seem to have encouraged many young Muslim women to compromise to show their solidarity with French values.

As another example, we are shown that "national security" (*segurança nacional*) in Brazil meant something different than in the United States during the height of the Cold War. According to the military theoreticians of the day – many of whom would be become active in the coup in 1964 – Brazilian security necessitated development, which was thought to also have to be addressed before political stability and economic advancement could come about. But this view of security/development meant a break with the previous policy of protecting local industries and national control of production towards an American-style free-market capitalism highly dependent on outside investment. How this could offer *more* security seems paradoxical. However, the Brazilians bought into the language of *in*-security popular in the United States at this time: global leftist elements have infiltrated the domestic sphere on many fronts, and are an insidious threat waiting to strike if robust steps are not taken.

However, for all the enthusiasm and novelty of the contributors, the book does leave the reader a little puzzled at the end, asking "What's the point?" Just what should the lessons of these linguistic journeys be? The editors admit that these essays "do not add up to a single 'story' – which could be summed up as the postcolonial condition, the nature of the modern state, or the effects of post-Cold War geopolitics" (6). To simply claim that these terms all link to one another in multifaceted and unexpected ways is merely to state an obvious fact that could be attributed to *any* set of words, and is ultimately unsatisfying. For one thing, "Some of our words do not at first glance seem 'key' at all" (4), and this is indeed quite true. In fact, important words like "democracy" were intentionally eschewed as being too broad. So what were the criteria used to select a "word-in-motion?" This is never made clear, but they apparently emerged in discussions with particular authors offering particular choices. Cultural key word analysis is a notoriously tricky business, even within a single locale – as anthropologists (Naomi Quinn), linguists (Anna Wierzbicka), and literary critics (Raymond Williams) have demonstrated. The problems only become compounded when crossing borders.

Nonetheless, for all these limitations, this book offers many things to open-minded readers. The unpredictability at times can be refreshing, as we see when words imposed on the powerless become a double-edged sword ("terrorists" becoming "freedom fighters" in India, for example). Also, the words-in-motion project highlights the contributions of "critical public intellectuals who shape ideas and institutions not just in their home nations but also between and beyond national space" (16). All the authors in this collection write with originality, wit, and flair, and deserve a wide audience. James Stanlaw

Gonzales, Rhonda M.: Societies, Religion, and History. Central-East Tanzanians and the World They Created, c. 200 B. C. E. to 1800 C. E. New York: Columbia University Press, 2009. 257 pp. ISBN 978-0-231-14242-7. Price: $ 55.00

The African societies considered in this author's study are the Kaguru, Ngulu, Zigua, Luguru. Sagara, Vidunda, Kutu, Kwere, Zaramo, and Gogo. Toward the beginning of this book, the author states her purpose in presenting this volume: "If there is one frustration that historians of early history likely share when reading ethnographic accounts, it is the occasional tendency writers have to telescope the contents of their accounts into the deep past as if they were an omnipresent fixture of society. As tempting as it is to hypothesize about the likely roots of a cultural practice or idea based on its prevalence across distinct societies in the ethnographic present – and even though in fact such features commonly do represent continuities in ideas and such from times past – doing so without historical evidence amounts to conjecture. What reconstructed language evidence does is add weight to such inferences by showing that there were spoken words in early eras that named such practices and abstract concepts. And that is what this book is able to do, reconstructing word histories on the basis of the proposed language relationships and chronologies and considering them with published ethnographic accounts as well as ethnographic data collected by the author during fieldwork interviews" (9 f.). These assertions typify much that is wrong with this annoying volume. What the author claims for this book actually amounts to very little, but these shallow claims are cloaked in a clutter of verbosity and pretension. First of all, it is very difficult to learn from what she tells us exactly what, if any, "fieldwork" she did or exactly where. If, as it appears, she merely interviewed a few people about some "key" words they knew in their native languages and did not actually "live" with any of these peoples in any rural area for any appreciable time, then I do not think she can have much grasp of what these people traditionally think or do in relation to the words they know. Getting a sense of this would seem important, since all her claims ultimately depend on her capacity to interpret the ethnography of others, an ethnography informed by actual observance of what it means to live an everyday life in rural, less modernized Africa. Second, I have read most of the material published on this area, and I do not believe that the ethnographers of these ethnic groups ever claimed that what they reported would apply to "ancient times." At the most, they assumed that these beliefs and