

Widerwillen und in mehreren literarischen Werken rechnete er scharf mit ihm ab. Hill erklärt die Aufregung von Mochtar Lubis um eine Korruptionsaffäre in den 1970ern, in die General Ibnu Sutowo als Präsident des staatlichen indonesischen Ölkonzerns Pertamina verwickelt war, als “the central focus of Mochtar’s moral passion, as Sukarno had been before 1966” (101). Einen Satz vorher schreibt Hill, dass in den Augen seiner Bewunderer Ibnu Sutowo “personified the dynamic ‘Javanese captain of industry, operating with spectacular *panache*’, refusing to allow legal obligations to constrain his expansive entrepreneurial imagination” (101). Die Aussagen, die Hill in diesen zwei nebeneinander folgenden Sätzen macht, hätten m. E. hier deutlicher miteinander verknüpft werden müssen: Das selbstherrliche Auftreten von Ibnu Sutowo wird Mochtar Lubis wohl direkt in Verbindung mit dem javanischen kulturellen Hintergrund des umstrittenen Großverdieners im Staatsdienst gesehen haben. Immer wieder sind in dieser Biografie negative Bemerkungen von Mochtar Lubis über “Java” zu lesen: So hielt er wenig von “Javanese journalism” (166) und meinte auch, dass “the Javanese cannot write biography, only hagiography, because they are too afraid to broach the negative aspects of a person’s life (186). Hill schreibt auf jeden Fall keine verherrlichende Hagiografie, sondern präsentiert über die eher nüchterne Lebensgeschichte seines Helden hinaus eine kenntnisreiche Studie über die Presse, Politik und Literatur in Indonesien in der zweiten Hälfte des 20. Jahrhunderts. Edwin Wieringa

Hill, Jonathan D.: *Made-from-Bone. Trickster Myths, Music, and History from the Amazon.* Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2009. 195 pp. ISBN 978-0-252-07570-4. Price: \$ 22.00

With this book, Jonathan D. Hill continues with his series of publications about the Venezuelan indigenous group Wakuénai, which started with his Ph. D. thesis in 1983 and culminated in his probably best-known “Keepers of the Sacred Chants” in 1993. In most of these publications, Hill addressed ethnohistory, ethnomusicology, and mythology, and the present volume is no exception. The author interconnects these topics in “Made-from-Bone” through the presentation of a set of corresponding narratives.

Made-from-Bone is the English translation of *Inápiríkuli*, the name of the protagonist character in most of the presented narratives. He resembles the figure of a trickster-creator, who “is an omniscient, powerful being who always anticipates the treachery and deceit of other beings and who skillfully manipulates words and other signs as tools for deceiving and defeating these other beings” (xi). Made-from-Bone is the key character in the creation of the beings who inhabit today’s Upper Rio Negro and Orinoco river basins as well as the Wakuénai themselves and their social and cultural traits.

The main part of Hill’s book comprises English translations of 21 narratives about these creation myths and the primordial organisation of the Wakuénai’s lived world. The stories are presented in three sequences, part

one being the “Words from the Primordial Times” including nine texts, part two the narratives about “The World Begins” with six stories, and the third and concluding sequence being “The World Opens Up” with six more narratives. Each part is preceded by an “Overview,” where the author summarises what is coming up, and concluded with an “Ethnohistorical Interlude,” an “Ethnomusicological Interlude,” and an “Ethnological Coda,” where Hill interprets certain processes, characters, or interactions which appeared in the respective sequences of narratives.

The author begins the preface with “My goal in the following pages is to provide a complete set of English translations of Wakuénai narratives about the mythic past and its transformations” (xi) – a sentence that startled me. He can never reach this goal. Amazonian mythology lives from transformation and variation, from reinterpretations and actual mythopoiesis (as shown, e.g., by Peter Gow in “An Amazonian Myth and Its History,” 2001). It is impossible to provide “a complete set.” For me, this inappropriate sentence cast a shadow over the rest of the book.

In the preface, the main figure Made-from-Bone is introduced, and the sources for the narratives are presented. It appears that most stories were told during the early 1980s by Hill’s main informant Horacio López Pequeira, “who was a highly respected master of sacred chanting (*malikái limínali*) and extraordinarily knowledgeable storyteller” (xii). The stories were then translated and analysed, and in parts finally retold or rerecorded with Horacio’s son Félix in 1998. The author also notes that the chronological order of the texts was made up by himself and Félix. In the following, Hill provides some general ethnological, demographic, and historical data about the indigenous group in an introductory chapter, before the narratives themselves are presented as the main contribution. In an appendix, Hill explains the methods he used together with Félix López to represent the original recordings of spoken texts in Curripaco (the Wakuénai’s language), in written Spanish, and later English. “Although some features of original form and meaning are inevitably lost in translation, such losses can be offset to a large extent through collaboration between researchers and indigenous performers in the making of important aesthetic decisions about how to transcribe and translate narratives” (157). The time Hill and López took to make such decisions will be well rewarded, because the skillfully rendered texts are the unquestionable highlight of the book. Although the reader has to read English texts, it seems in many passages as if one is actually listening to an indigenous storyteller. Another positive aspect, and of no less importance, is the content of the narratives. Hill’s characterisation of Horacio López as an especially knowledgeable storyteller seems justified. The presented narratives appear organically, well organised, and they never fail in detailed descriptions of the character’s actions and their surroundings. Therefore the question arises why the Spanish manuscript of these stories (1998) was co-authored by López Pequeira, López Oliveros, and Hill, but the present English version is not.

In “Words from the Priomordial Times”, most narratives depict Made-from-Bone in a world of violence, as many powerful enemies like Great Sickness (Kunáhwer-rim) or Anaconda-Person (Malfhwerri) try to kill the protagonist. In various situations, Made-from-Bone’s kinsfolk are murdered and he faces challenges in resurrecting or avenging them. Especially the narratives “from Priomordial Times” offer a pool of examples for transformations and illusions, which are often present in indigenous oral literature, as well as for the theories of perspectivism and multinaturalism as formulated by Viveiros de Castro in 1996. However, the expected in-depth analysis in the following “Ethnohistorical Interlude” stays at a fairly superficial level and only provides some more or less speculative comparisons of regional colonial history with excerpts from “Made-from-Bone and Anaconda-Person,” showing parallels which are not too surprising – it would be more surprising if colonial history had passed by the Wakuénai without leaving a trace in their mythology.

The second part, “The World Begins” features also three narratives, where Made-from-Bone does not appear in person. However, he is present as the new protagonist Káali’s older brother. The stories in “The World Begins” are apparently less violent than the preceding ones, and excel in trickery and smart actions, as Made-from-Bone, his brother Káali, or an unnamed man in “The Origin of Bocachico-Fish Dances” obtain material or social items from different non-human beings. The narratives about Káali introducing the *madzerukái* ceremonial drinking songs and the man who learns a dance from fish people lead to the following “Ethnomusicological Interlude.” Again, one might expect an analysis of ceremonial or dance music, but Hill chose to tell us mainly about his personal involvement in Wakuénai social life while organising the “Catfish Trumpet Festival of 1981,” which is an interesting story, but leaves us without much knowledge about the music itself.

The third part, “The World Opens,” finally lets Made-from-Bone retire from the human world in the second narrative, “The Struggle between Made-from-one and First-Woman.” Especially this one (besides the preceding “*Kuwái*, the Powerful Sound that Opened Up the World”) is very important for the history and sociology of Wakuénai ceremonial music: It tells about musical instruments which Made-from-Bone obtained from his son Kuwái, and about his long struggle with his aunt and wife First-Woman (Ámaru) about who were to play the flutes, women or men, and who were not even be allowed to see them, men or women. Here we encounter a masterpiece of inversion of social practices, which is not mentioned by the author. In the final chapter, “Ethnological Coda,” he limits the analysis to the very last story about a man who went to live in the “City of Gold,” in the world of the Water Spirits *Yópinai*. The narrative is a basis for a new, positive interpretation on recent historical and social changes in pre-Chavez Venezuela. Hill concludes, “Along with Made-from-Bone, . . . the Wakuénai of Venezuela are navigating into the new millennium between the historical weight of centuries of discrimination and marginalisation and the promise of unprecedented

political recognition for indigenous cultural and territorial rights under the constitution of 1999” (156). As this was ten years before the book was published, it would be interesting to read at least a note about what finally happened under Chavez’s promising government, but Hill’s analysis ends with 1999.

“Made-from-Bone” obviously lives from the narratives presented in the book and I think this was intended by the author. The English translations are outstanding. However, at least a sample of original Curripaco text would have been an inspiring addition, as speaking rhythms, parallelisms, and onomatopoeics are important factors in Amazonian storytelling (as was shown, e.g., by Bruno Illius in “Das Shipibo.” Berlin 1999). The original texts are archived at AILLA (Archives of Indigenous Languages of Latin America, University of Texas at Austin) and in part retrievable from the internet (after a registration process), but even nowadays not every reader may have the possibility to get them, and it is cumbersome anyway.

Those who expect to find a profound analysis of “Myths, Music, and History” in this book will be disappointed. The analytical chapters are not as inspiring as might have been expected from an author who had been working on the subject for almost 30 years. However, I highly recommend the stories themselves in their excellent translations, but heed my warning: do not read the chapters titled “Overview,” or read them after the following narratives. In these sections, the author anticipates every problem or riddle Made-from-Bone and his fellow protagonists are confronted with along with their solutions and outcomes.

Bernd Brabec de Mori

de Hontheim, Astrid: Chasseurs de diables et collecteurs d’art. Tentatives de conversion des Asmat par les missionnaires pionniers protestants et catholiques. Bruxelles: P. I. E. Peter Lang, 2008. 317 pp. ISBN 978-90-5201-380-0. (Dieux, Hommes et Religions, 12) Prix: € 35.20

The study of indigenous Christianity in the Pacific is an increasingly well-subscribed and sophisticated field for research, and this volume contributes handsomely to our understanding of the subtle variations across the region in the historical experience of proselytization and conversion, and in the nature and expression of faith. Two aspects of this study stand out in particular: the evenhanded treatment and comparison of Christian conversion to both Catholic and Protestant Churches; and the selection by the author of Asmat communities of south-west New Guinea as her hosts.

The estimated 40,000 inhabitants of the Asmat region, resident along the southern coast and its hinterland in the Indonesian province of Papua, have been notoriously resistant to scrutiny – whether by missionaries, colonial and Indonesian administrators, or anthropologists. Like their neighbours to the west, the Kamoro, Asmat have developed a series of strategies that hold acquiescence and resistance in a delicate balance, to the frequent despair of their would-be administrators and proselytisers.