

Tigers of the snow and other virtual sherpas. An ethnography of Himalayan encounters.
By Vincanne Adams. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 304 pp. 1996. Hb.: £38. ISBN 0 6 91001 1. Pb.: £11.95. ISBN 0 6 00111 1.

You thought Sherpa were one of those ethnographic terms exclusively used by a bunch of natives in the Himalayas and a handful of anthropologists studying them? Well, you were wrong. Historically, of course, the term has been used to describe the people living around Mt. Everest, but today it is also the name of a computer system in California, a nickname for assistants at political summits in Europe and a label for mountain climbers in Nepal. So don't let the word's exotic connotation make you assume that Sherpas exist, or worse, don't go looking for such a thing as a Sherpa culture or identity. Either you will get it all wrong or you'll end up finding yourself in the mirror of mimesis and seduction that frames westerners' encounters with Sherpas. At least, that was what happened to Adams when she conducted field research among the Sherpas inhabiting the base of Mt. Everest and migrating to Kathmandu and overseas destinations such as the US. Rather than studying the Sherpas as a culture or people – the object of conventional anthropological studies – she investigates the 'virtual' identities that are produced through western imaginations of the Sherpas and explores the persistent anthropological and western desire to find a site of authenticity beyond the Western gaze. In Adams' study, then, 'virtual' describes the authenticating effects of the use of the term 'Sherpa' on the Sherpas and its deauthenticating effects on anthropological representation.

For those of us unfamiliar with the Himalayan region, the book adds little to our scarce ethnographic knowledge of Sherpa life. Certainly, Adams provides the reader with many fine details of the life-worlds of her informants and close Sherpa friends. However, as the focus of the study is on

Himalayan encounters, the social and cultural space in which westerners and Sherpas exchange the images they produce of each other, rather than the life lived in a discrete location or by a confined group of people, the data is never situated within a specific historical or social context. Similarly, Adams portrays the main actors in her book as individuals with very different life experiences from many distinct places (Berkeley in the US, Khunde in Nepal, etc.), rather than as social actors whose agencies are embedded in locally rooted life-worlds.

Yet Adams does not intend to produce another ethnographic description of 'others'. She directs readers looking for 'facts' about Sherpas to other writings on the Himalayas and insists that she wants to interrupt attempts to frame the Sherpas as 'different' or, conversely, 'the same'. Rather, Adams' aim is to discuss the ethnographic production of cultural difference and the response of Sherpas to this endeavour. She argues in favour of an ethnographic transnationalism that can offer opportunities to recognise notions of power and subjectivity that are potentially different from those traditionally employed by the ethnographer. Such a project includes a critical rethinking of anthropological practice in Third World countries such as Nepal and the role of anthropologists in the transnational exchange of images and production of 'difference'/'sameness'. This again leads the author to treat anthropology as part of the modernisation apparatus emergent in the lives of the Sherpas and, thus to a juxtaposing of our profession with other transnational agencies such as tourism, mountaineering, development and social charity. Adams goes as far as suggesting that in Nepal the persistent desire among anthropologists to distinguish themselves from development workers and, especially tourists, breaks down; a claim that must provoke discussion (and protest) among scholars in many parts of the (western) world.

Adams' study addresses questions and

concerns with critical bearings for contemporary attempts to design a modern anthropology; likewise, it appeals to all anthropologists conducting field research outside their own life-world. One of her crucial arguments is that Sherpa identity only exists as an inter-textual construction and that authenticity is the product of the relationship between the observer and the observed. Adams also asserts that the search for authenticity in ethnography is inextricably bound up with the processes of writing texts and the fixing of identities as abstract truths – truths that ultimately are commodifiable.

In her critique of western attempts to essentialise culture and authenticate identity, Adams draws upon French writers such as Bourdieu, Foucault and Baudrillard and their efforts to develop the concept of an economy of meanings. Similarly, she uses the works of Bhabha and Taussig on mimicry and mimesis, which together with the notion of seduction make up the conceptual tools in Adam's analysis of intertextuality and identity construction in Sherpas' encounter with westerners. The works of Friedman on the production of tradition and the consumption of modernity also help Adams through the exploration of Sherpas' identity production. Here the author comes to the conclusion that authenticity is located in the space where tourists' need for an exotic Other collides with the equally persistent Sherpa need for versions of themselves-as-Others. Thus Sherpas' displays of desirability are exhibited in techniques of seduction that draw Others into a space of shared meaning and complicity; just as westerners seduce Sherpas into the desires to become 'modern'.

Whereas Adams' study provides little conventional ethnographic data on everyday forms of Sherpa life, it offers a vivid description of different aspects of Himalayan culture, particularly Buddhism and Sherpa shamans. For instance, the author's analysis of the introduction of western medicine in Khumbu, as well as her discussion of Sherpa notions of the *thurmu* (togetherness) and Buddhist and shamanist concepts of personhood and transcendence, offer a stimulating perspective on intertextuality and identity formation.

Adams' book speaks to a large audience of scholars in general and experts on the

Himalayas in particular. Her discussion of current theoretical issues of anthropological practice and the construction of authenticity and identity is highly relevant for many anthropologists. The book is well written and contains many inspiring illustrations and thoughtful reflections in the appendix section. Read it with gusto, but be careful not to get lost in that mirror of mimesis and seduction.

KARSTEN PAERREGAARD

University of Copenhagen

***The east in the west.* By Jack Goody.
Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
1996. 292 pp. Hb.: £37.50. ISBN 0 521
55360 1. Pb.: £14.95. ISBN 0 521 55637 2.**

Reading a book by Goody is always a pleasure. First, his understanding of what anthropology is about is very much to my liking. For him it is not simply the study of primitive man; instead, he has truly tried to make it the comparative study of man. Second, he combines a keen eye for ethnographic detail with a fine feeling for big theoretical questions. The most obvious example of the latter is his work on the 'great divide', and the way he has attempted to show how it is to be bridged by spelling out the consequences of the change from orality to literacy. But there is another reason why I like his work: it is always stimulating and packed with interesting lines of thought. Even in the numerous cases where I tend to disagree, one feels enriched and stimulated. In short, one cannot leave Goody's work without being changed.

His latest book is no exception. In it he combines all his qualities to take on the vexed question of what constitutes the difference between the west and Asia. To fit this question into an essay of just under 300 pages it obviously has to be cut down to size. This is done by restricting the argument to querying some of the suggestions that have been put forward to explain the uniqueness of the west. So Goody focuses his energy on challenging the adequacy of the standard account of the uniqueness of western rationality (ch. 1), western commerce (ch. 2–4) and of the western family (ch. 5–7).

The general drift of Goody's argument is that 'we need to reconsider the East in the West' (p. 9) simply because the traditional way in which the difference between the two is construed – the west being logical and the east not; the west being individualistic and the east being collectivistic etc. – is on close observation untenable. There is much in the way Goody makes his particular points and there is much to recommend the cautious approach he advocates. I am particularly persuaded by his repeated suggestion that the question of the alleged difference between the east and west has suffered seriously from a 'kind of historical and sociological myopia' (p. 68). Nevertheless, I have a feeling of uneasiness about the whole volume. The basic argument pursued in the book is that there is not as big or fundamental a difference between the two cultures as is generally assumed. This may be a politically correct answer, but coming from a distinguished anthropologist it has a strong ring to it of not being willing to live up to the challenge his chosen discipline has set him. I for one do not believe that Goody is right in watering down the difference between the east and the west as much as he does. To give one example: in Chinese thinking the notion of physical law is completely lacking whereas it is fundamental to our idea of science. Understanding this difference is not helped by books like the one Goody has written.

The way I read the book, it is Goody's own argumentative strategy that has led him to go astray. Two major figures stand above all the others if one wants to write about the perception of the East in the West: Joseph Needham and Max Weber. Much to my surprise Needham hardly figures at all in the book. The reason for this is Goody's claim that: 'we find science in the East, as Joseph Needham amply demonstrated for China' (p. 21). This claim leaves one breathless. Here Goody is simply passing over the consistent criticism Needham received over the years that his (Needham's) way of arguing that science existed in China is fallacious. Put in a nutshell, Needham's argument is based on the nineteenth-century idea that technology is applied science. He amply showed that in comparison with Europe China excelled in technology over for a very long time: for example, gunpowder, the compass and printing with moveable type were all Chinese

inventions. The happy corollary of his position is that science must lie somewhere behind this achievement. The only problem is that nowadays nobody takes seriously the idea that science and technology are in the hierarchical relation that Needham thought they were. Importantly, the claim that Needham amply showed that science existed in China points to a serious misunderstanding by Goody of the issue in question. Of greater seriousness is the fact that that leaves completely untouched a topic that suggests there are substantial differences between the two cultures.

The villain of the piece is Weber. It is mostly through assessing Weber's claims – directly, or indirectly when people are quoted who are expanding on his analyses – about what is characteristic and unique for Europe and/or for China that Goody makes his qualifications and suggestions for seeing things differently. But the fundamental question that has to be asked is 'Is Weber the best guide for comparing the east with the west?' I believe a serious case can be made for a negative answer. Firstly, Weber never was the best guide available for the East. Secondly, his work on Europe also needs much qualification. Here is what the sinologist Sivin once wrote: 'Weber's various assertions about Chinese science so inadequately reflect the soundest knowledge readily available about 1910'.

As for the adequacy of Weber's historical description of the west again serious doubts exist. Detailed work done by historians like Scribner has made this clear. My point should be obvious: the plausibility of Goody's position owes too much to the various inaccuracies that were built into Weber's – and for that matter Needham's – original position. As such, the book has little to contribute to the fundamental question of the difference between the east and the west. Nevertheless, to end on a positive note, it could be argued that the answer to the question of the reliability of Weber does not really matter given the enormous influence he has had, and to a certain extent still exerts on western scholars. Any correction of his views is therefore important. Seen in this light, Goody's book should be regarded as fundamental and essential reading for all social scientists.

DIEDERICK RAVEN
Utrecht University

***Transforming the Indonesian uplands. Marginality, power and production.* Edited by Tania Murray Li. Amsterdam: Harwood Academic Publishers and Overseas Publishers Association. 1999. xxiv + 319 pp. Hb.: £30. ISBN 9 05 702 400 4. Pb.: £14. ISBN 9 05 702 401 2.**

Two of the major socio-cultural features of Southeast Asia as a field of anthropological enquiry are said to be its ethnic diversity and the associated contrast and complementarity between upland and lowland communities, aspects most notably promoted in Robbins Burling's classic introductory text 'Hill farms and padi fields', published in 1965. Tania Murray Li's carefully edited volume bears on both these matters in its focus on the uplands or highlands of the Indonesian nation-state and the communities that reside there. The contributions provide ethnographic and historical data on a selection of upland groups, although the emphasis is primarily on Java (in the chapters by Peter Boomgaard, Michael Dove, Krisnawati Suryanata and Ben White) and Sumatra (the Minangkabau [Joel Kahn] and the Karo Batak [Tina Ruiters]). The remaining chapters concern the Nuaulu of Seram, Maluku (Roy Ellen), the Meratus Dayak of South Kalimantan (Anna Tsing), and the To Pamona of Central Sulawesi (Albert Schrauwers). Boomgaard's paper also provides a more general coverage of Indonesia and Dove's chapter considers comparative examples from Kalimantan.

The volume therefore does not examine a broad range of interior ethnic groups, nor does it select a representative sample of communities and upland landscapes, still less does it concentrate on marginal minorities. The chapters on Java for example focus on upland variations of the majority Javanese. It is also unclear from Dove's chapter whether he is concerned with upland communities at all. His main concern is the perceptions of Javanese and Batak plantation managers of peasant and tribal workers; many of the latter are presumably lowland dwellers. Even Ruiters' chapter on the upland Karo Batak considers, though cursorily, Javanese settlers in the Karo uplands in that 40 per cent of her study village of 70 households were Javanese former plantation labourers or their descendants. In other words, the category 'uplands' or 'highlands' is, as Li says, 'rather

loosely defined' (p. xvi), and it is the experience of being a marginal uplander rather than a member of an ethnic minority or hill tribe that is the main focus of the volume.

In her twelve-page editorial introduction Tania Li gives us a summary of the contents of the chapters and presents the rationale of the volume. Why did she compile an edited volume on the general theme of the transformation of the Indonesian uplands and their residents? She says that, in contrast to the substantial attention devoted to the lowlands, especially irrigated rice cultivation in the context of the green revolution, for the uplands 'there has been, thus far, very little synthetic and comparative discussion' (p. xiii). The editor also advises that the contributors do not follow a particular theoretical line; they represent 'different disciplinary traditions and styles of inquiry' (p. xix). However, the volume is dominated by contributions from social anthropologists or rural sociologists (Dove, Ellen, Kahn, Li, Ruiters, Schrauwers, Tsing and White) and there is a noticeable attention to post-modern perspectives as well as to frameworks from cultural and political ecology. There is also a strong historical orientation in several of the chapters. As one would anticipate the economic and environmental historian, Boomgaard provides yet another detailed and searching paper based on Dutch archival material; he examines the development, expansion and consequences of maize and tobacco growing from 1600 to 1940, particularly in Java. In their concern to trace the constitution of identity and culture and the creation of particular kinds of upland community both Kahn and Ruiters devote some attention to Dutch colonial policy and practice in relation to the 'culturally distinctive' Minangkabau and the Karo Batak peasantry respectively. Krisnawati Suryanata, as the only geographer in the volume, presents a relatively straightforward ecological account of the introduction of fruit-growing and emerging socio-economic differentiation in two upland East Javanese communities.

The volume was based on a conference held in 1995 that was sponsored by the Canadian International Development Agency (CIDA) and the Indonesian Ministry of State for Environment, which suggests there was

an intention of stimulating discussion on the policy and practical dimensions of change and development in hinterland Indonesia. The chapters by Dove on plantation managers, White on contract farming and nucleus estates in upland West Java, Krisnawati Suryanata on upland Javanese fruit-based agroforestry, Tsing on the collaborative relations between Meratus Dayak 'tribal elders' and urban environmentalists, and Ellen on the Nuauulu reconceptualisation of their relations with the forest and nature bear rather more directly on policy issues. It should be noted that Ruiter's and Tsing's contributions were not part of the conference but were prepared subsequently. Overall, the volume is critical of the development policies and programmes of the Indonesian government, although there is no clear indication of what practical alternatives might be pursued. Instead, according to the editor, the volume is directed to identifying selected issues so that they are made more 'visible' and 'complex'; no solutions are proposed; some of the 'analytical gaps' are filled and practical matters are placed in 'a broader political and economic context' (pp. xvi-xvii). This is a pity; it is rather easier to analyse at a distance, deconstruct and imagine without offering viable and feasible ways forward. And what is surprising in a volume on the Indonesian uplands is that there is virtually no attention given to what is arguably the most significant change in the uplands: dramatic deforestation from commercial logging and the associated environmental, social and economic consequences. Presumably a concentration on Java and Sumatra has resulted in the emphasis on the transition to plantation agriculture and smallholder cash-cropping and not on the clearance of tropical forests and the responses of rainforest-based cultivators to this process.

An important overall theme of the book is the ways in which political, social and economic marginality is constituted, expressed and sustained. In other words, several chapters examine the main characteristics of the uplands and their populations as both an indigenous and an external ideological category, the ways in which uplanders and upland landscapes are thought about and created in cultural terms,

and how they relate to the lowlands and are integrated into national and international political and economic systems. The underlying argument of the collection, and one which is hard to dispute, is that marginality is the result of processes and relationships, specifically relations and engagements with the lowlands. In this connection, writers such as Kahn and Schrauwers refer variously to the processes of 'culturalisation', 'traditionalisation' or 'peasantisation' of the upland communities' to demonstrate that these populations are not the product of the limitations of the natural environment, nor are they inherently traditional, backward, passive and primitive. Rather they are 'constituted' in the context of unequal political and economic relations between uplanders and lowland officials and elites.

Uplanders have been located and categorised in evolutionary models of change based on distinctions between tradition and modernity, or in frameworks that posit relations between defined primordial cultural groups, or in concepts of rational and irrational resource use and kinship-based moral economies, or in popular mythologies of peoples without history, beyond civilisation, living in relatively empty, underused and unproductive terrain. More particularly, the uplanders have been subject to processes generated by the state – colonial and post-colonial – which have been designed to territorialise hinterland peoples and places, to impose administrative order and control on those places and peoples conceptualised as marginal, isolated and different, to promote modern forms of production such as plantation agriculture, agroforestry, smallholding cash-cropping, contract farming and natural-resource exploitation, and to reorganise and resettle communities in regions considered to be in need of development and economic improvement.

In examining the social construction of identity, community and tradition, familiar concepts and terms from post-modern perspectives in anthropology surface frequently in the volume: constituting and imagining categories and classes, formulating 'hegemonic agendas', pursuing 'cultural, economic and political projects', constructing and engaging in the creation, deconstruction and contestation of 'discourses of power',

and so on. Li's introduction, and the chapters by Kahn, Tsing and Schrauwers are especially good examples of this approach, though Boomgaard in rather more materialist mood argues that it is likely that maize and tobacco 'were instrumental in creating upland societies with quite distinct identities' (p. 46).

The volume does provide a valuable corrective to the stereotypes of Indonesian uplanders as either passive 'victims' of external political and economic forces beyond their control or as traditional 'guardians of the forests', or as 'villains' and destroyers of fragile tropical ecosystems. Instead, they are seen as actively and creatively engaging with the outside world, with lowlanders and coastal polities, and with trade and markets in the context of their local social, economic and political circumstances. In other words, they make their own history and ethnic identity, and their own future. Overall the quality of the contributions to the volume is high; Li's editorial introduction and her first chapter on marginality, power and production are especially useful. Kahn's and Dove's chapters also stand out as particularly important. Several of the other chapters, especially those of Boomgaard and Ellen, provide excellent historical and ethnographic detail. For Indonesian and wider Asian regional specialists this book is very well worth reading. It will no doubt also provide food for thought for those anthropologists with an interest in environmental issues.

VICTOR T. KING

University of Hull

Margaret Mead, Gregory Bateson and highland Bali: fieldwork photographs of Bayung Gede, 1936-1939. By Gerald Sullivan. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. 1999. 235 pp. 200 photos. No price given. ISBN 0 22 638 434 9.

This is a book of two parts. The first, which accounts for approximately a quarter of the book, is an introductory essay in which Sullivan gives an account of the background to the project undertaken by Mead and Bateson that resulted in the books *Balinese*

character (1942) and *Growth and culture* (1951), and of the theoretical stance underlying their approach. He goes on to make a critical appraisal of their work, basing his remarks on an analysis of the way photographs were used in the two volumes, and offering a brief summary of aspects of Balinese culture not dealt with by Mead and Bateson. His material is drawn from other studies, chief among them the work of Mark Hobart.

The second and major part of the book contains 200 photographs selected from the many thousands taken by Bateson during fieldwork in Bali between 1936 and 1939. The photographs are arranged in no evident order, and it is hard to be sure just what questions Sullivan hoped to elucidate by presenting them in this volume. In his acknowledgements at the start of the book he suggests that his study of Mead and Bateson's notes was an attempt in part to see what they reveal about the two themselves. Later, in his introduction, he points out that in Mead and Bateson's previously published photographs the two anthropologists do not themselves appear, an omission that is remedied in this collection, at least in relation to Mead. How revealing this turns out to be is questionable, however. Another part of Sullivan's purpose in studying the fieldnotes was to see what they could tell of the life of the fieldsite, Bayung Gede. However, Sullivan himself does not comment in his introduction on what the photographs tell us about Mead and Bateson and their methodology, nor the life of the villagers. By themselves, the photographs can provide only superficial ethnographic detail.

Nor do the captions help much in our interpretation of the photographs. Where they direct our attention at all, it is towards details that appear to have very little significance: 'note the statues in the background' (these are almost indecipherable) (plate 4); 'note not only the crack in the platform but also the woodwork' (plate 53). The relevance of these details to Sullivan's other remarks remains obscure. The captions are also used to point out those occasions on which Mead appears in the background of a scene; where it is possible to identify subjects by name, this is done. However, there is no further discussion and in the end the reader is left

wondering what these photographs can tell us.

One of Sullivan's criticisms of *Balinese character* and *Growth and culture* is that the photographs do not present us with 'simple notations of Balinese life in the raw' (p. 30); that by posing, cropping and selecting subjects and angles from which to take photographs Bateson and Mead have presented a view coloured by their own experience and attitudes. Apart from the first two, these are, of course, criticisms which can be levelled at almost all anthropological photography. And in relation to the posing of subjects, Bateson has pointed out that he was at great pains to avoid this. In the light of his own estimate that of the 759 photographs in *Balinese character*, only eight can fairly have been said to be 'posed' (1942: 49), Sullivan's highlighting as problematic the fact that 'some, though far from all, of the photographs had been staged' (p. 30) is clearly misleading.

More importantly, Mead and Bateson do not pretend that their books provide us with 'life in the raw'. Their photographs were used initially as fieldnotes and then as data, selected according to their relevance to the particular research question that was being addressed, subsequently as illustrations of the authors' findings. However much one might disagree with Mead and Bateson's theories on affective attachment and their relation to childrearing, their photographs are arranged and contextualised in the books and on the page in such a way as to help explain and support their conclusions. The circumstances and criteria behind the photographic project are carefully documented. Sullivan's criticism of the limitations of seeing images of people without understanding the relationships between them (p. 34) could be far more usefully levelled at the collection of photographs contained in his own volume.

Sullivan's discussion of Mead and Bateson's approach based on his examination of their fieldnotes and photographs could form the basis of an interesting and illuminating study, and may well do elsewhere. Unfortunately, in this volume the photographs that form the major part of the book shed little light on the subject. In addition, the book is marred by frequent errors that should have been picked up at the

editing stage: some are spelling mistakes appearing in quotations from Mead's letters, but others appear in the main body of the text. These details, minor though they may be, add to a feeling of disappointment about the book.

FIONA KERLOGUE

References

- Bateson, G. and Mead, M. 1942. *Balinese character. A photographic analysis*. New York Academy of Sciences.
Mead, M. and Macgregor, F. 1951. *Growth and culture*. New York: Putnam.

Women and bullfighting. Gender, sex and the consumption of tradition. By Sarah Pink. Oxford: Berg. 1997. vii + 233 pp. Hb.: £39. ISBN 1 85973 956 3. Pb.: £14.99. ISBN 1 85973 961 X.

The once 'male-only, no females allowed' world of bullfighting in Spain is re-examined through this ethnography of bullfighting women in contemporary Spain. Arising from fieldwork between 1992 and 1996, Pink's analysis addresses how women have been incorporated into a ritual, itself subject to recent processes of change emanating both from within and beyond Andalusia. From this, the book broadens to offer a thoroughgoing re-examination of, and challenge to, anthropological conceptualisations of gender within Andalusia. Specifically, she argues for a greater focus on the *diversity* of experience and the multifarious ways in which gender relations are managed. Her account considers how gendered constructions of self shift according to context. In particular, she focuses on changing representations of the identities of women bullfighters in the context of an opening up of the tradition to new audiences of consumers.

Pink begins by 'slaying anthropology's goat'; she criticises existing static and essentialising models of gender in the Mediterranean. In particular, addressing the notorious assertions of Gilmore, she feels, and I agree, that society is not as evenly textured as he would have us believe. She

offers a welcome critique of the overtly masculine bias inherent in structuralist-inspired binary representations of gender in Andalusia. However, while welcome, her treatment of the issue is excessively polemical. Indeed, paradoxically, the setting-up of a kind of good/bad dichotomy between her and Gilmore serves only to detract from the subtlety of many of her arguments.

That said, the book is beautifully detailed and extensively researched. The consideration of such a wide range of sources, ranging from historical representations to contemporary film is laudable. Pink demonstrates her skill as an ethnographer through a very human and personal account of the variety of people among whom she studied. The text is greatly enhanced by the visual resources and photographs she weaves into this subtle and complex text.

The book begins with a fascinating introduction describing the bullfight historically in Córdoba (the location of her research) and the increasing participation of women. Pink then locates herself academically by addressing the contentious issue of representing gender in Andalucía. Rightly, she draws attention to the erroneousness of attempts to draw *one* unitary picture of 'women's position in Andalucía', and emphasises instead the contextually contingent and ever fluid nature of the construction of gender. Of particular interest is her account of how traditional models of gender are still used by some as reference points, but fundamentally as an exploratory reflexive *option* and not as a prescription of how things definitely *were*.

In considering the roles and representations of women, Pink draws upon a variety of identity positions. As well as considering the more historical and traditional ones of the supportive mother and 'beautiful spectator', Pink analyses the subject positions of women *aficionadas* (experts) and the bullfighters themselves. The lives of two women bullfighters are explored, locating in a personal and detailed way the ways in which women accrue success or failure in the bullfighting world.

Particularly strong is the examination of Cristina Sánchez, the most successful woman bullfighter in Spain up to the present time.

The increasing success of Cristina is charted with reference to the reactions and readings of her performance, relating to evaluations of the style of dress, her body and personality, by male and female *aficionados* and particularly the media. Essentially, Pink highlights the changing context of the 'traditional' bullfight that now encompasses live media events. The commodification of ritual and the necessary impact on the representation and construction of women in this domain are of interest to her aim of demonstrating the multiplicity of identities.

Throughout the book, Pink encourages a redressing of schemas in which women's voices are muted and unrepresented. At times, I found this slightly idealistic, as much of her evidence suggests real structural barriers against success. It would have been interesting to explore the degree to which, and *why*, older traditional and masculine ideas still maintain hegemonic superiority, so much so that commentary on Cristina Sánchez's performance is apparently always underlined by some discourse on her body and clothes, rather than her ability as a bullfighter.

Pink's material is dense and rich in addressing the theoretical issues of gender, tradition and consumption. The density of her argument definitely packs a punch, although occasionally this is a little at the expense of clarity. The book would have benefited from a sharper and deeper focus on some areas, and the omission of others. However, this does not take away from the strengths of the book, namely the insights into the variety of ways that gender is negotiated and represented in Andalucía in the 1990s.

CAROLINE OLIVER

University of Hull

***Dance in the field. Theory, methods and issues in dance ethnography.* Edited by Theresa J. Buckland. London: Macmillan. 1999. xv + 223 pp. Hb.: £42.50. ISBN 0 333 71913 1.**

'If I could tell you what it meant, there would be no point in dancing it' (p. 150). This statement by Isadora Duncan tends to

be understood as a reference to a quality in dance and movement that expresses ideas beyond words. For there cannot be any complete verbal versions of the meaning of movement. Yet there are ways to talk, and write, about dance and movement and to include spoken discourse in cross-cultural movement analysis. This is exemplified convincingly by Brenda Farnell in her chapter in *Dance in the field*. This timely volume contains sixteen short chapters, mostly by European and North American anthropologists and ethnologists, as well as by a couple of east European ethnochoreologists whose work has been defined by nationalist ideologies. They all have ample experience of dance ethnography. The volume grew out of meetings of the Study Group on Ethnochoreology of the International Council for Traditional Music.

Although the volume is divided into three sections, dealing with theory, methods and politics (and ethics) in dance ethnography, reports and advice on methodological, including documentation, issues come across forcefully throughout the volume. Field methods are the common denominator that integrates the different chapters. The contributors discuss how to do fieldwork on dance at home and abroad, in Polynesia, Asia, Europe, North America, Australia and Africa, and consider questions of representation and reflexivity.

In the introduction, Buckland brings up the preoccupation with western theatre art dance in the burgeoning area of dance studies, which has tended to leave out dance ethnography. This, however, is about to change. Not only is dance ethnography increasingly being extended to western theatres investigating art dance and culture, including stage versions of ethnic dance, but dance scholars from other disciplines are beginning to take cultural context into account, and consequently recognise the fact that dance and movement systems represent wider structures in their societies. Still, we would not be here without the pioneers, as the volume acknowledges. It thus starts out with chapters by dance anthropologists Adrienne L. Kaeppeler and Drid Williams. Kaeppeler writes about her fieldwork on structured movement systems in Tonga and brings up the important point that audiences vary cross-culturally from ignorant

spectators to well-informed viewers, even sometimes the gods! Williams reminisces fondly about an Oxford pub-meeting with Evans-Pritchard who urged her to be practical in the field, yet maintained that 'practicality doesn't replace imagination or keen observation' (p. 26). For Williams, the act of observing movement, or action, should preferably include questions about the process of writing movement.

Documenting dance is especially complicated because of its ephemerality. Advanced notation systems such as Labanotation, from which some of the contributors draw examples, require highly specialised knowledge, as they do also when they are to be deciphered. In a dynamic chapter on the Kokuma Dance Theatre, an African-Caribbean dance company in Britain, E. Jean Johnson Jones refers to the debate about the applicability of western notation systems on dance forms of African and Caribbean origins, although she ends up advocating this possibility. Notation systems are, however, far from the only technique for recording dance and movement in the field: photography and film have been used for a long time, and video is now very common. In a captivating rendering, Felicia Hughes-Freeland, tells how she took advantage of serendipity and dialogue with informants in the making of two ethnographic films on Javanese dance. But when Frank Hall found himself in the company of his informants listening to funny and dramatic stories on competitions in Irish dancing, and was encouraged by one of them to tape-record the stories, he very sensibly refrained from doing so. Hall saw the tape-recorder as a hindrance to a genuine event and to his urge to be a friend, not only a fieldworker.

Writing about politics and the power of, and around, fieldwork on dance, both institutionally and interpersonally, Andrée Grau argues significantly that dance can have an impact on decision-making outside the dance community and even anticipate political action. Grau's chapter is informed by a reflexive take, as is the one by Georgiana Gore, an insightful statement on how she constructed her post-colonial field on dance in Benin. Theresa Buckland's own chapter is a truly interesting description of the moral dilemma that she found herself in when she was studying the black-faced

Britannia Coco-Nut Dancers of Bacup in the northwest of England. They wanted her to present an official history of the origin of this dance form, while she discovered that they were holding back other versions.

In her capacity as editor, Buckland anticipates that the recent increase in dance and movement studies will provide dance ethnography with a new space for growth as well as opportunities to contribute to its parent disciplines. What, then, can an anthropologist who is not a dance fan learn from this volume? Certainly, to take dancing in the field into analytical account. To pause and allow some reflection over what a dance event suggests about its society, even if it only adds a fraction to a different kind of research perspective. For dance ethnographers are not the only ethnographers who dance in the field.

HELENA WULFF
Stockholm University

***Disrupted lives. How people create meaning in a chaotic world.* By Gay Becker. London: University of California Press. 1997. 264 pp. Hb.: £17.50. ISBN 0 520 209 13 3. Pb.: £10.50. ISBN 0 520 209 141.**

Disrupted lives is introduced by Gay Becker as the culmination of a number of key studies she has conducted on a variety of health related subjects – infertility (dominating much of the discussion), mid-life changes, life after a stroke, late-life changes, and the experience of chronic illness amongst members of ethnic minority groups in later life. The majority of the studies were conducted through the use of qualitative methods – in-depth unstructured interviews, followed up a number of years later, and also the selective use of more ad hoc fieldwork, such as visiting individuals at their homes and attending clinics with them. Methodological issues are discussed quite extensively in a separate appendix.

Taking the title as its central motif, the main thrust of the book is concerned with how life events that are disruptive to a perceived sense of 'normal life' can bring about a process of self-discovery; this process is usually successful once an individual is

able to establish or re-establish ordinary routines, thereby recreating continuity in a previously 'disrupted life'. Further, implicit in Becker's sensitive analysis is a deconstruction of the western idea of the ordinary life biography, the linear unfolding of key events that make up a 'normal' life in US society. For Becker, then, ideas of normalcy and a normal life are culturally embedded, and so discourses involved with interpretations of normalcy are part of what makes up the social order of American society. Hence, the book explores the complex, metaphor-laden narratives that people utilise in their everyday dealings with the world and themselves, in order to come to terms with their disruption and in order to re-establish a claim to 'normal' social and bodily status.

The chapters focus on three interconnected issues. First, the different kinds of disruption that people experience over the life-course. Secondly, the 'normal' pattern of events and narrative reflection that follows the experience of dealing with a period of disruption. Finally, the influence of cultural discourses, norms and values on the narratives of those who have experienced the above. The last of these themes resonates throughout the book. The reasons for this are twofold. Becker intimates at a personal affinity with those individuals who feel (due to the nature of their illness) out of sorts with an imposed idea of what it is to be a man, a woman, a mother or an African-American in US society. More importantly, she argues, contained within these overarching cultural discourses are pervasive ideas about self-responsibility for health and the body, the notion that each person has sole responsibility for creating continuity in a life, and that periods of disruption can be overcome through perseverance and self-control.

Ultimately, the strength of Becker's book lies in the depth and quality of the ethnographic detail that comes through the interviews she conducted, and also, in the balance she strikes up between biographical detail and carefully constructed analysis and theory. My only criticisms of the book are that this detail and intuitive analysis is used at the expense of other key themes within the literature on human suffering. Situating it more explicitly and comprehensively would

have helped the reader to appreciate the subtleties in her analysis. In addition, though Becker recognises that the ideology of individualism is internalised in the minds of people in US society, she addresses this issue by focusing somewhat excessively on the role of the social group (ethnic, class-based, gendered) as that which determines the way individuals cope with a disruption to a 'normal life'.

Nevertheless, Becker should be applauded for conducting such wide ranging research on issues as varied as ageing and the life course, chronic illness and disability, reproductive health and illness, and the health of ethnic minorities. As a culmination of these studies, *Disrupted lives* is a thorough and sensitive theoretical and ethnographic contribution to contemporary medical anthropology, and should be read widely across the social sciences in general.

STUART McCLEAN
University of Hull

***Nieuwe Nederlanders en musea*. Edited by Ineke Van Hamersveld. Amsterdam: Boekmanstudies/Mondriaan Stichting. 1998. 128 pp. Pb.: f22.50. ISBN 90 6650 051 4.**

The Netherlands has the third highest density of museums *per capita* in Europe, with more than 1200 in 1998. In the last decade, a number of important Dutch museums have undergone a cultural revolution that has turned organisational structures and exhibition policies inside out. The shift of emphasis in many museums towards public service is integral to the privatisation process. But who is 'the public' in contemporary European states? The eight essays comprising *Nieuwe Nederlanders en musea* address issues surrounding new Dutch citizens as members of the museum public. There is an introductory essay by Lavrijsen, followed by essays on migration history and museums (Lucassen), cultural participation by allochthonous and autochthonous youth (Van Wel), cultural pluriformity in museums (Hermes), and the transition from 'white box to multicoloured museum' (Van der Plas). Outreach and other innovative programmes at the Amsterdam Historical Museum

(Konsten), the National Museum of Ethnology in Leiden (Van de Sande) and the Museum of Ethnology in Rotterdam (Reedijk) are also considered.

A recurrent theme is that, until very recently, museums' cultural products have not reflected the cultural heterogeneity of the Netherlands. Museums have catered for a restricted cultural elite since the nineteenth century, but are now being forced to take account of the fundamental changes of the past four decades. Decolonisation, the worldwide economic system and global tourism have produced accelerated cultural transmission, that has splintered the clear, monocultural, western, male view of the world and hence the value-free, scientific matrix underwriting museum authority (Reedijk). The Dutch museum world, according to Reedijk, seems scarcely to have noticed this transformation in thinking about its goals and place in society.

Museums have a double role: not just as guardians of cultural-historical memory, but also as generators of culture in the business of moulding and channelling consciousness. The Dutch government is beginning to take an active interest in the way the contemporary population uses museums. Worries about young Dutch people rarely if ever visiting museums feature regularly in newspaper articles. Current concern about including allochthonous groups as museum visitors adds fuel to an earlier debate about cultural participation. Indeed, this was a core issue that led to the opening of museums to the general public (read bourgeoisie) during the nineteenth century. Extending this area of civil society to new Dutch groups (especially of Turkish and Moroccan origin) builds upon that insight. The challenge for the Netherlands, as a traditional land of immigration, is therefore to deploy existing collections in ways that are intelligible (and therefore involve) less experienced museum visitors.

Contributors discuss various strategies for reaching such potential visitors used in particular projects by several Dutch museums. The respective advantages of frameworks emphasising cross-cultural contacts or focusing on single identity are discussed with reference to projects at the Amsterdam Historical Museum (Anatolia in Amsterdam, 1996; 'I have an aunt in

Morocco', 1997). There are commercial interests at stake in conquering new segments of the market, in addition to issues of legitimisation and democratisation, at the National Museum of Ethnology in Leiden. There is a need both for exhibits with wide public appeal, such as '*Sluiers ontsluit*' (Veils unveiled), and projects which use the museum as a forum for new Dutch citizens to present their own culture and to (re)discover their ancestors' culture. The Rotterdam Museum of Ethnology has pioneered work in this field, contacting target groups and offering them facilities; using positive action to build networks in the communities; highlighting aspects of existing exhibits to make them interesting for new Dutch visitors; designing special exhibits outside the museum; hunting through depots for materials that might be suitable; using schools and so on.

It is clear that if this sort of activity is

taken on board throughout museumland, and not just among the ethnographic museums, Dutch museums will undergo a sea change. This volume is very welcome for charting (some of) the current discussion on multiculturalism and museums in the Netherlands. One quibble is that since the cultural diversity issue is so central, a basic profile of this heterogeneity would have been useful. This aside, the volume provides fascinating insights into an area of current concern for students of museology and museum professionals alike. Its publication in Dutch makes it, unfortunately, inaccessible for a much wider potential readership.

MARY BOUQUET

Utrecht University

This article is reprinted on the request of the author. We apologise for the printing error which made this necessary.