

chapter, which is an introduction to the various forms of Malayness and the problematic definitions of “Malay,” Milner goes on with the history of being Malay from the earliest Indian, Arab, Chinese, and archaeological sources to the inclusion of “Malays” into modern nation-states, most notably in Malaysia, Brunei Darussalam, and Singapore, but also Indonesia in chapters 2 to 6. Chapter 7 gives an anthropological-sociological discussion of multiple forms of Malayness in current situations of the states of insular Southeast Asia. The last chapter, finally, analyses Malay ethnicity in the (post?)modern world.

Especially the first chapter should be read by every specialist in modern Southeast Asian studies as an introduction to modern ethnicity. All of the various definitions of “Malayness” have their shortcomings, leading finally to the question whether this “Malayness,” indeed, should be labeled as “ethnicity” or as a form of “identity.” Especially the crude definition of a “Malay race” in Malaysia including elements from language, genetics, religion – the Malay “race” is Muslim! –, ethnicity, and other fields had an immense political, ideological, and social impact in Malaysia but is put *ad absurdum* after the lecture of Milner’s excellent discussion of “Malays” and “Malayness” on the first seventeen pages of this book. But this is seen totally different in Malaysia: this book was launched at the National University of Malaysia in March 2009 and was praised as a study of the greatness of the Malays and their glorious past. Even more, the Crown Prince of the state of Perak viewed it as a tool for defending the strength of the Malays, defending Malay special rights in the Malaysian constitution to keep the Malays away from “extinction” (Raja Nazrin Shah, *Pertahan resipi kekuatan Melayu. Utusan Malaysia* 12. 03. 2009; Raja Nazrin Shah, Raja Nazrin gusar Melayu digugat. *Berita Harian* 11. 03. 2009; Raja Nazrin Shah, Melayu mungkin pupus? *Utusan Malaysia* 11. 03. 2009). Milner, however, cannot be responsible for this misinterpretation: he indeed argued throughout his book that Malayness was once a fluid, less strict, and noninstitutionalized concept.

Milner successfully deconstructs myths of an unchanging “ethnicity” since the times of the Sumatran maritime trade-empire Sri-Vijaya in the 7th century. While it cannot be doubted that Malay language-speaking groups had identities on their own, Milner’s account raises the question why these identities had to be presented solely in ethnic terms. While “Malayness” around 1500 seemed to represent the customs and policies of the state of Malacca or its dynasty (22), a “Malay” ethnicity before 1900 perhaps never existed (76). “Malayness” in Sarawak was a total new concept brought to Borneo in 1841 by the “White Raja” James Brooke, who introduced in his colony ethnic or “racial” concepts from Singapore for his administrative purposes, in other terms: for Milner ethnicity and “race” are new discourses brought to the Malay world in the colonial context of the nineteenth and twentieth century (119), while several other concepts of a communitarian identity were possible in the region, but are largely ignored by now (94). Very soon these new concepts were also coopted by the subjects of colonial Malaya themselves, and already in the 1930s different

constructs of Malay identity were competing with each other (143).

This book is well written and its analysis gets clearly to the point. Although the focus lies on the historical outline of Malayness in the Malay Peninsula and East Sumatra, Milner does not forget the discourses of Malay identity outside these regions. He does not fail to mention the recent revival of “Malay” sultanates in Indonesian Borneo (177) as well as the differing ideological use of the term in Singapore (2), the promotion of “superior Malay culture” in Sabah (164), or “pan-Malay” aspirations, which include Muslim Austronesian groups of Cambodia and the South Philippines as well as the descendants of former Malay-speaking soldiers and plantation workers in Sri Lanka and the Cocos Islands (181).

One final word must be said on some technical aspects: I cannot understand why such an excellent book did not receive a better and more careful editing. The bibliography bears several spelling and bibliographical errors. Map 3 (48) is just entitled “Sultanates” but also lists Batavia, Manila, Angkor, Ayutthaya, Sukhothai, Mindanao, or Minangkabau. Leaving aside these flaws, it must be said that this book provides an entertaining reading and demonstrates great scholarship. Milner cannot and does not want to answer all the problems he addresses satisfactorily, but the questions he asks are highly important and have to be considered carefully when one uncritically uses the term “Malay” in future publications.

Holger Warnk

**Nga Beyeme, Crescence:** Le droit international de la femme et son application dans le contexte africain. Le cas des mutilations génitales féminines. Frankfurt: Peter Lang, 2009. 322 pp. ISBN 978-3-631-58528-3. (Europäische Hochschulschriften; Reihe 2: Rechtswissenschaft, 4787) Prix: € 56.50

Das vorliegende Buch ist die Doktorarbeit einer Kamerunerin, die sowohl in Kamerun als auch in Deutschland Jura studiert hat. Ihre Frage ist, inwieweit nationale und internationale Gesetzgebungen geeignet sind, *gender*-Äquivalenz zu verwirklichen. Sie behandelt das Beispiel der weiblichen Genitalverstümmelung (MGF – Mutilation Génitale Féminine), ein Thema das im letzten Jahrzehnt eine große Repräsentanz im öffentlichen Diskurs erhalten hat. Nga Beyeme hat gründlich recherchiert. Sie beschreibt die Praktiken von MGF, deren traditionelle Begründungen, die Gesichtspunkte, unter denen der internationale Diskurs darüber geführt wird, die Einbeziehung der *gender*-Frage in die Menschenrechte, ihre Kontextualisierung im nationalen Recht, Probleme der Umsetzung der Rechte der Frauen angesichts ihrer sozialen Position in der afrikanischen Gesellschaft und schließlich auch die politischen Widrigkeiten, die der Abschaffung von schädlichen sozialen Praktiken im Wege stehen. Diskutiert wird die Thematik vor allem am Beispiel Kameruns, aber auch der Senegal wird ins Visier genommen. So entsteht ein Kompendium von Themen, das von Leuten vom Fach wie ein Nachschlagewerk eingesetzt werden kann. Für interessierte Laien ist es aller-

dings nicht gut handhabbar. Allein schon das acht Seiten lange Inhaltsverzeichnis, das wenig benutzerfreundlich gestaltet ist, verwirrt. Buchteile, Kapitel, Unterkapitel und deren Unterpunkte sind alle optisch gleich gestellt. Manche nur wenige Seiten umfassende Unterpunkte haben mehrzeilige Überschriften. Auf Seite 174 zum Beispiel ist Teil I, Kapitel III, Unterkapitel I, Unterunterkapitel C, Unterunterunterkapitel 1., Unterunterunterunterkapitel b) folgendermaßen überschrieben: *Le caractère préjudiciable des clauses facultatives et de réciprocité pour les droits de la victime dans le cadre des communications étatiques*. Dieser Unterpunkt umfasst nur eine einzige Seite. Die Überschriften sind ganz und gar vom Juristenjargon geprägt. Laien haben kaum eine Chance, in diesem Sammelsurium eine Antwort auf ihre Fragen zu finden.

Ihre Schlussfolgerungen fasst Nga Beyeme auf einer Seite zusammen. Sie argumentiert: Die Gesetze, die die Frauen eigentlich befreien sollen, tragen in Wirklichkeit zu einer noch größeren Unterdrückung bei. Denn die Traditionen werden durch sie nicht aufgebrochen, sondern die MGF-Praxis wird durch Verbote nur in den Untergrund gedrängt (295). Dennoch hält sie fest, dass die internationalen Menschenrechte einen entscheidenden Rahmen bilden, innerhalb dessen sich die nationale Gesetzgebung etablieren kann, auch wenn ihre Funktion weitgehend auf der symbolischen Ebene anzuordnen ist. Sie schließt mit dem Satz eines Kommentators des Artikels 2 der von den Vereinten Nationen verabschiedeten Allgemeinen Menschenrechte, da wo es nämlich um die Gleichstellung aller, auch der Frauen, geht: "Der Kampf um die Verminderung sozialer Ungleichheit . . . ist nicht in erster Linie auf juristischer Ebene anzugehen. Er ist vielmehr im Wesentlichen ein politisches Problem. Das internationale Recht kann die Welt nicht ändern. Es kann nur die Mittel liefern, um wirksamer für die Verringerung der Ungleichheit zu kämpfen". Dieser Kampf kann allerdings nur an der Basis geführt werden. Von daher erkennt Nga Beyeme den Nichtregierungsorganisationen eine Schlüsselrolle zu, die mit ihrer Aufklärungsarbeit den Hebel am richtigen Platz ansetzen.

Godula Kosack

**O'Connor, Anne:** *Finding Time for the Old Stone Age. A History of Palaeolithic Archaeology and Quaternary Geology in Britain, 1860–1960.* Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2007. 423 pp. ISBN 978-0-19-921547-8. Price: \$ 185.00

From its inception, prehistoric archaeology has been closely connected to the natural sciences, particularly geology and paleontology. Historians of archaeology, however, have all too often failed to fully acknowledge or investigate this interaction between the natural sciences and archaeology. There are notable exceptions to this and Anne O'Connor's examination of the history of Palaeolithic archaeology during the late nineteenth and early twentieth century is a superb example. This is a critical part of the history of prehistoric archaeology and remarkably little has been written about this subject. But

O'Connor also brings a unique recognition of the significance of geological debates to the efforts of archaeologists to understand and chronologically organize Palaeolithic artifacts.

O'Connor captures the excitement and upheaval caused by the acceptance of a geological antiquity for the human species, as evidenced by the coexistence of stone artifacts with extinct Ice Age mammals. She outlines how this not only spurred people to search for further artifacts but also sparked considerable debate over the geological age of the different deposits containing stone implements, and particularly their relationship to the glacial epoch that had only recently been accepted by geologists. Quaternary geology, and particularly the efforts to correlate deposits of glacial drift, river gravels, and extinct animal fossils became an important point of contention for prehistoric archaeologists since the consequences of these debates would profoundly affect their interpretation of the relative ages of Palaeolithic artifacts found in various kinds of Quaternary deposits and among different species of extinct animals.

O'Connor devotes considerable attention to the theory proposed by James Geikie that the glacial epoch actually consisted of a series of glaciations and interglacial periods, as well as the opposition it faced. The same is true of the archaeological sequence proposed by Gabriel de Mortillet in France, who identified several Palaeolithic tool industries that he arranged in chronological order. These two problems, identifying and organizing glacial deposits and archaeological industries, remained interrelated and central problems for prehistorians investigating the Palaeolithic period. While O'Connor focuses on research in Britain it is impossible for her to ignore the many influential developments taking place elsewhere in Europe since these ideas affected British prehistorians. It can be a difficult task to retain this focus and yet to adequately discuss the Continental discoveries and theories that are necessary for a thorough understanding of British researches, but O'Connor admirably maintains this balance. Thus, she examines the influence that the scheme of successive glaciations and warmer interglacial periods, proposed by German geologists Albrecht Penck and Eduard Brückner during the first decade of the twentieth century, had on British Palaeolithic research. Equally, she devotes considerable time to discussing the ideas of French archaeologists Victor Commont and Henri Breuil, both of whom proposed important chronologies for Palaeolithic artifacts that not only influenced British archaeologists but also integrated the discoveries made by them.

One of the more remarkable episodes in Palaeolithic research was the debate around the turn of the century over so-called eoliths, crude flint flakes that were thought by some to be the earliest stone tools made by humans, but which others thought were merely naturally fractured bits of flint. O'Connor explores in some detail the nature of this debate and the way evidence and arguments were deployed by both sides to make their case. Utilizing recent scholarship from the sociology and history of science, she looks at the role of rhetoric, professional