

Wissenschaftler sei es ihm aus Zeitgründen kaum noch möglich gewesen, das von Evans-Pritchard (80) ausgelobte Ideal einer die Persönlichkeit des Feldforschers in vielerlei Hinsicht stark in Anspruch nehmende "anthropology by immersion" (77) zu praktizieren. Dagegen ließe sich eine "anthropology by appointment" (77) eher mit einem stets mit Terminen und anderweitigen Obligationen gefüllten Kalender in Einklang bringen. Die methodische Herangehensweise, die in erster Linie im Buch "Foreign News" (2004) ihren Niederschlag findet, bringt diesen Sachverhalt sinnfällig zum Ausdruck. Der Autor weist darüber hinaus auf den rasanten Anstieg der "anthropology at home" (84) hin, bei der nicht das "being away from home" (84) im Vordergrund steht, sondern die Untersuchung der Kultur, in der der Forscher seine Enkulturation durchlebt hat.

In Kapitel fünf wendet sich Hannerz der Frage zu, wie und mit Hilfe welcher Instrumente Sozial- und Kulturanthropologen, denen er als Interlokutor eine Stellung als Brückenbauer zwischen den Kulturen zugesteht, die komplexe Welt, in der wir gegenwärtig leben, transparent machen. Wie bereits im vorherigen Teilbereich insistiert der Autor, mit dem Verweis auf die im deutschsprachigen Raum nebeneinander existierenden Fächer Völkerkunde und Volkskunde (heute Europäische Ethnologie oder Kulturanthropologie genannt), zunächst auf der produktiven Weiterentwicklung und aktiven Fortsetzung der "anthropology at home" (96), die mit ihrer Expertise im Forschungsfeld der unhinterfragt hingenommenen Grammatiken des eigenen Alltags in der Lage sei, überraschend innovative und ungeahnte Einsichten abseits jenes von Stereotypisierungen infiltrierten Wissens hervorzubringen, das hauptsächlich von unreflektiert vorgehenden Meinungseliten unter Verwendung einer fragwürdigen symbolischen Ikonografie produziert werde. Wie die Überlegungen der "Applied Anthropology" über die Kommunikation und Diffusion von ethnologisch generierten Aufschlüssen bereits vor Zeiten richtigerweise gezeigt hätten, käme es hierbei in erster Linie auf eine eingängige und für breite Gesellschaftsschichten verständliche Schreibweise an. In einem Interview berichtete ein Auslandskorrespondent der *Los Angeles Times* dem Verfasser des hier besprochenen Werkes, dass er stets darum bemüht sei, seine Artikel für seine hauptsächlich in Südkalifornien beheimateten Rezipienten so abzufassen, dass sich eine möglichst breite Leserschaft angesprochen fühle, auch und insbesondere Gus – eine fiktive Person, die nicht den Universitätsprofessor, sondern den Otto Normalverbraucher symbolisiere. Unter dem Slogan "Considering Gus" (105 ff.) appelliert Hannerz deshalb an eine eindringliche Revision von schriftlichen Ausdrucksweisen, denn nur durch eine adäquate Übermittlung anthropologischer Wissensordnungen an Menschen, die nicht zur zugegebenermaßen zahlenmäßig verschwindend geringen Welt der Akademiker zu zählen sind, gelinge die Aufpolierung des öffentlichen Images.

Das siebte Kapitel argumentiert aus der Perspektive der Wissenschaftsgeschichte und fragt danach, wie diese produktiv für die Gegenwart nutzbar gemacht werden kann. Nach einem kurzen Abstecher zu Kon Wajiro,

einem frühen Vertreter der japanischen Anthropologie, der sich hauptsächlich auf dem Feld der Massenbeobachtung in urbanen Settings hervortat (139), folgt die Präsentation der *Œuvres* von Max Gluckman, Marcel Griaule und Melville Herskovits. Anhand der Feldinvestigationen von Hortense Powdermaker in Mississippi, Hollywood und dem afrikanischen Kupfergürtel dokumentiert Hannerz schließlich anschaulich die frühen Arbeiten im Bereich der Medienanthropologie.

Der zukunftsweisende Ausblick, gespickt mit Ratschlägen für die folgenden Generationen, mündet in der These: Sozial- und Kulturanthropologe zu sein ist keine temporäre oder vergängliche Aktivität, die möglicherweise nach der akademischen Qualifikation endet, sondern ganz im Gegenteil eine fortdauernde Berufung, die einen – wenn man fleißig, kontinuierlich und aktiv daran arbeitet – ein ganzes Leben begleiten kann.

David Johannes Berchem

**Hastrup, Frida:** *Weathering the World. Recovery in the Wake of the Tsunami in a Tamil Fishing Village.* New York: Berghahn Books, 2011. 150 pp. ISBN 987-0-85745-199-6. (Studies in Environmental Anthropology and Ethnobiology, 16) Price: £ 42,00

The Indian Ocean tsunami disaster of 26 December 2004 affected communities in a wide spectrum of societies situated around the periphery of the Bay of Bengal, from Sumatra to Sri Lanka. This new book by Frida Hastrup begins to satisfy our curiosity about how this catastrophic event has been interpreted and accommodated into the daily routines of people living in different cultural contexts, in different locations, in different social groups. The site of her project is the former colonial outpost of Tharangambadi (Tranquebar, a Danish enclave from 1620–1845) on the southeastern coast of India in the state of Tamil Nadu, about 300 km south of Chennai. Her first visit was in February 2005 as part of a humanitarian charity mission to aid tsunami victims, followed by trips in 2006 and 2008, totaling ten months of fieldwork. Tharangambadi (pop. 7,000) is situated in a predominantly Tamil Hindu region, with some Christians and Muslims as well, and two-thirds of the local population are members of the hereditary Pattinavar sea-fishing caste. Dalit ex-untouchables, not identified by caste name, constitute the second-largest social group (12% of households). It is the fishing families living on the northern edge of town who were most severely affected by the tsunami, and it is their daily experience that Hastrup portrays in this book.

Readers do not learn about the details of post-tsunami life in Tharangambadi immediately. They must first navigate two earnest chapters on "the transmutable character of the site" (25) and the evolving actor-centered epistemology of modern fieldwork, topics that would have made more sense at the end of the book. What is even more peculiar, despite hopeful references to the "topographic turn" in anthropology, is the book's complete lack of maps or layout diagrams of Tharangambadi. Although Hastrup emphasizes "the physical landscape and the spatial practices of the villagers" (19) as the key to their ex-

periences, the reader is taken on a narrative “walk around the village” (34) without any cartographic guide to key landmarks or locations.

The redeeming heart of the book begins with chapter 3, where Hastrup explores the ambivalence of some tsunami survivors toward their newly-constructed SIFF houses located inland, safely protected from future hurricanes and tsunamis. As she explains, these are fishing caste people who have an axiomatic identification with their hereditary profession and with the beachfront as their natural home. They also cling to their original dwellings as sites of meaningful grieving. Despite academic critiques of culturally insensitive house designs, most of Hastrup’s informants are satisfied with the quality and layout of their sturdy new concrete houses, so that is not the problem. Their efforts are focused instead on the emotional challenge of transforming their dwellings into homes, some even planning architectural additions as an expression of their faith in the future.

Chapter 4 explores the indigenous ethnometeorology of the northeast monsoon season (October to December) when rough seas make ocean fishing difficult and dangerous. After the monsoon storms and rain have abated, the beachfront and the adjacent sea are consolidated into a familiar zone of human security and livelihood, but while the monsoon is still in progress the ocean is defined as alien and uninhabitable. The 2004 tsunami struck just at the end of the monsoon season, and Hastrup finds that fishermen today tend to associate the disaster with what they perceive to be a pattern of climate change indexed by heavier rains and more severe storms. Acute awareness of wind and weather is the ingrained skill-set of Tharangambadi fishermen, and it is the culturally-available domain of practical knowledge to which the unprecedented tsunami event can most easily be assimilated.

In chapter 5 Hastrup describes the roles played by tsunami relief programs and aid agencies. Here, she finds very little grumbling about externally-based NGOs and what has been termed in the Sri Lanka context “competitive humanitarianism,” even though a plethora of foreign agencies responded to the tsunami damage in Tharangambadi. The reason is that virtually all tsunami relief efforts – including government programs – were channeled and implemented through the local fisher caste panchayat, the traditional council of male elders who still exercise authority over most domains of collective fisher caste life. In the Tamil districts of Sri Lanka such strong caste leadership no longer prevails, and there the administration of tsunami relief was more easily hijacked politically, or colonized by foreign NGOs. Hastrup points out that the fisher caste panchayat is often viewed as corrupt and subject to manipulation – not to mention strongly biased against women – yet it remains the institution with the most community-wide legitimacy.

Chapter 6 offers case studies of how the impact of the tsunami has been felt indirectly or unexpectedly even by non-fishing caste families. The lesson Hastrup draws is that disasters are not discrete, self-contained events, and that they are always entwined with ongoing developments through time. The most dramatic illustration is the

case of a college-educated low-caste Dalit woman whose marital life abruptly worsened when her abusive and controlling husband made an unexpected windfall as a post-tsunami TV repairman. Chapter 7 in the book examines local memories and expressions of loss from the tsunami tragedy, a topic that attracts Hastrup’s attention when she observes no one bothering to visit a public stone monument erected to commemorate the 314 souls who died in the tidal wave. Perhaps more surprisingly, she found survivors more likely to enumerate the property and physical possessions they lost in the tsunami than to mention the death of their own children. Hastrup addresses these puzzles by exploring the concept of materiality as a strategy or modality of active Tamil grieving: keeping tangible objects in play – and in mind – rather than consigning them to an event that is finished, closed, sealed off. At the end of her book, she notes that a novel expression, “tsunami time,” has been coined to refer to the post-2004 era, a new age in which children behave differently and fishing practices have been altered.

This book is slender and anecdotal, but the ethnographic case studies are truly fascinating and memorable. It offers fruitful ways to think about the experiential impacts of the 2004 tsunami in a wider Asian context, comparisons that should definitely be pursued on Indian Ocean shores both near and far.

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**Heady, Patrick, and Martin Kohli** (eds.): *Family, Kinship, and State in Contemporary Europe*. Vol. 3: *Perspectives on Theory and Policy*. Frankfurt: Campus Verlag, 2010. 451 pp. ISBN 978-3-593-38963-9. Price: € 45.00

The book is the third and final volume of a series that presents the results of “an interdisciplinary project with an anthropological agenda” – Kinship and Social Security (KASS). The general aim of this project was to improve our understanding of connections between the workings of kinship and state policy. The third volume, as the editors describe it, develops “further some of the themes of the previous [two] volumes before drawing together the threads of the study to derive conclusions that are addressed to both policy makers and social theorists” (15). The book offers a wide selection of chapters that present empirical analyses, historical insights as well as theoretical perspectives on kinship.

The volume contains contributions from 18 authors, mostly social anthropologists and sociologists, but inputs from social demographers, economists, and political scientists are also present. The first half of the volume (chapters 2–9) presents empirical evidence, while the second half (chapters 10–16) is more theory-oriented. The book closes with a chapter on policy implications, derived from the KASS project.

As far as the empirical chapters are concerned, most of the presented analyses are based on detailed kinship network data, gathered within the project. The Kinship Network Questionnaire (KNQ) was administered to 570 respondents in 19 urban and rural locations in eight Euro-