

ship to simple binaries, without locating debates in a cultural context, elides the complexities and potential outcomes of each.

Klaus Hilbert provides a fascinating account of relations with water in the world's wettest environment, the Amazon, while noting that anthropogenic pressures have brought droughts and major fluctuations in water levels, along with red dust "from [a] region where there is no rain forest anymore" (243). Petra Weschenfelder takes us back to issues of water and power, describing how, in the ancient Sudan, early Pharaohs benefited from the Nile's "cosmic order," and created reservoirs that drew nomadic pastoralists into supporting profitable trade routes that further empowered their hydraulic kingdoms. And, resonating with the issues raised by Laube, Emmanuel Akpabio's chapter deals with the conflicts in Nigeria between traditional beliefs about water as a connection to supernatural powers, and Christian-led, development-oriented ideas and practices, which seek to override local voices to commercialise and privatise water, with major impacts on people's relationships with resources.

The final chapter, by Anne-Christina Achterberg-Boness, considers one of the most powerfully recurrent cross-cultural themes in relation to water, that of pollution, illustrated by an account of the fears induced by polluting "devils" in the Iraqw wells of northern Tanzania. Her description of how highly localised rules and norms reflect recurrent cross-cultural issues in relation to water encapsulates the way that such research allows anthropologists to engage with unique worldviews and common humanity simultaneously. Thus the volume provides a rich selection of studies that show how attention to ethnographically-located beliefs, values, and practices can flow quite readily into larger anthropological questions. As such, it provides the reader with real insights into the complexities of human relationships with water.

Veronica Strang

**Haller, Dieter:** Die Suche nach dem Fremden. Geschichte der Ethnologie in der Bundesrepublik 1945–1990. Frankfurt: Campus Verlag, 2012. 395 pp. ISBN 978-3-593-39600-2. Preis: € 39.90

With his newest publication, Dieter Haller provides us with a uniquely comprehensive and intriguing investigation of the formative path of ethnology (sociocultural anthropology) in the Federal Republic of Germany between 1945 and 1990. Haller shows how the formation of this academic discipline during the cold-war era was interwoven with the broader issues of rebuilding German society. In the aftermath of National Socialism, genocide, and war, the field of ethnology was linked to the past as much as to the subsequent transformation of society in a divided nation. By contextualizing ethnology (*Völkerkunde*) in German political history, Haller's work makes an important contribution to the current international debates about the place of anthropological research past and present. The book's title, which may be roughly translated as the "search" or "quest for the unknown other" (foreign), captures the disciplinary preoccupation with

non-European peoples and exotic lifeworlds. Organized into seven chapters, accompanied by footnotes, an extensive bibliography, and index, Haller's work provides an exceptional resource for anyone interested in the history of anthropology and its distinct national manifestations. Throughout the book, Haller presents readers with astute insights into the ways in which German political culture has shaped the commitments, debates, and directions of ethnological research and practice.

The research on which this work is based is highly impressive. Haller not only draws on a vast repertoire of published works and extensive archival documents, but he also relies on in-depth interviews with over fifty academic practitioners whose narratives furnish additional insights on formative events. The book thereby provides a superb account of German anthropology by transforming both published materials and archival data into social facts confirmed by the living memory of scholars. Haller has managed to produce a well written, informative, interesting, and in part dramatic text in which the details of specific scenarios unfold along an attention-gripping narrative about influential figures, personalities, political conflicts, and institutional alliances that have steered the ethnological profession in postwar West Germany.

Dieter Haller begins with an overview of the long-standing European fascination with difference and distinction among peoples, cultures, and societies, which culminates not only in the creation of separate disciplines but also forges various national trajectories. From the outset, Haller suggests that the present-day anthropological profession carries a North Atlantic (Anglo-American) imprint, in which German ethnology assumes a special place. While focused on the anthropological study of non-European peoples (formerly called *Völkerkunde*), Haller suggests that postwar German ethnology has not significantly contributed to or nourished international scholarly debates. Nevertheless, Haller insists that the specificities of German sociocultural anthropology can provide a unique voice within the international arena, even if articulated from the global academic margins.

The book brings to light the prominent disciplinary moments, movements, and institutional forms, which are according to the author indicative of the "self-understanding of a discipline in crisis" (25). Haller takes readers through a fascinating political history of the reorganization and rebuilding of German ethnology as an academic discipline. In the immediate postwar years, the field needed to be remade from the ground up. The discipline's active membership was small. Many scholars had died during the war; others lived in exile or had been implicated as Nazis. Libraries, museums, and institutes had been destroyed, like most German cities. Faced with rubble and ruin, ethnologists in training longed to be elsewhere: abroad and in the field. Both curiosity about different lifeworlds and a desire to leave Germany behind promoted the initial rebuilding of the profession. Enabled by new funding sources, younger scholars organized expeditions and field trips to faraway places, including India, East Africa, Latin America, the Pacific, and Australia. Haller recounts the subsequent disciplinary shifts with insight

and clarity: the fluctuating commitment to the study of material culture, linked to the collection of artifacts and myths of different peoples (often housed or exhibited in the anthropological museum); a turn to fieldwork with its holistic analysis of societal forms and meaning constructions among indigenous peoples across the globe; the declining interest in the comparative method, cultural morphology, cultural history, and applied anthropology; the emergence of new perspectives and approaches that struggled to gain an academic foothold; and the uneasy engagement with theory by ethnologists, which Haller in part attributes to the abuse of anthropology during the Nazi era. While German anthropology was implicated in Nazi politics and genocide, Haller notes the apparent disconnect of ethnology from the violent past: a “postwar amnesia” (58) seemed to exempt ethnologists from political scrutiny. Only the most explicit racist and biological foundations of ethnology were expunged or silenced. This fact promoted an undesirable continuity of professional hierarchies: former National Socialists were soon reappointed as university faculty.

After reviewing past entanglements and new beginnings, Haller’s work moves toward an eloquent examination of the subsequent postwar political, ideological, and economic contexts, that impacted the recovery of ethnology in the Federal Republic of Germany. During the era of “consolidation” (1955 to 1967), the cultural engagement with the past remained evasive. Although the Federal Republic’s reentry into the theater of foreign relations enhanced the standing of the ethnological enterprise, the political quest for ethnologists as consultants in development projects with the emergent elites in former colonies found little resonance among German academics, who resented the political misuse of scholarship for purposes of “publicity and propaganda” (117). Until the late 1960s, German anthropology showed little concern for critical social theory and remained committed to the dehistoricization of its ethnographic objects. This should change in the following decade (1967 to 1977), when the political culture in the Federal Republic underwent radical introspection. Discontent with the status-quo of German ethnology, with its dated methodologies and anti-theoretical stance led to a reexamination of the preoccupation with exotic peoples overseas (*Naturvölker*). Inner-political and anticolonial liberation movements as well as overt everyday racism (*Alltagsrassismus*) against immigrants in Germany led to a disciplinary breach with old-guard ethnologists. In West Berlin, Heidelberg, and Göttingen, students demanded scholarly engagement with the ongoing genocides of indigenous peoples by abandoning the ethnographic study of traditional lifeways (201–211). Student-initiated protests against conventional thinking led to shifts in research and theory toward critical, problem-oriented projects. A new focus on health and gender enriched the ethnological field. By the 1990s, as Haller shows, the ethnological obsession with faraway worlds gradually shifted to include research on immigrant communities in Europe. “Innovative and original approaches emerged” but “did not find accommodation in German institutional ethnology” (245). Particularly interesting is

the author’s documentation of the academic detours imposed on Hans-Peter Duerr, Fritz Kramer, Hubert Fichte, and Dieter Haller himself by a field not particularly open to innovative interdisciplinary forays. An Europeanist approach did not make much headway in ethnology. Likewise, ethnomedicine, ethnolinguistics, and ethnopsychiatry failed to gain a foothold. The dialogic, hermeneutic, and reflexive anthropological approach only gained gradual acceptance.

In the twenty-first century, transnational forms of cultural integration and Europe’s loss of a privileged status have altered ethnological engagements. In the postcolonial and postmodern era, a plurality of theoretical approaches have gained acceptance. Under globalization, as Haller notes, “everything has become fluid, mobile, discursive” (325). The public interest in the immediacy of difference and otherness has intensified. The German anthropological museum has in turn transformed into an “event center” (319). Ethnological research has, however, become reinvigorated. According to Haller, field research bundles the quest for the exotic, the immersion in otherness as a search for the negated self, and celebrates an enthusiasm for the plethora of human possibilities. In tracing the ethnological field through a span of sixty years, Haller, however, also observes that institutional matters have not changed much: German academic practitioners have remained “white” and primarily male (19). As an insightful and critical writer, Dieter Haller has composed a most informative and in part brilliant study of the course of German ethnology from 1945 into the contemporary era.

Uli Linke

**Herman, Marilyn:** *Gondar’s Child. Songs, Honor, and Identity among Ethiopian Jews in Israel.* Trenton: The Red Sea Press, 2012. 316 pp. ISBN 978-1-56902-328-0. Price: £ 24.99

Marilyn Herman’s welcome contribution to scholarship on the ever-changing phenomenon of Ethiopian-Israeli musical life opens with a straightforward objective: the “presentation of Beta Israel music, dance and culture in true translation, but without conversion into something outside itself, primarily by allowing the ethnographic data, as far as possible, to speak for itself” (18). The question of whether ethnography can ever provide “true translation” of culture is a thorny one, but “Gondar’s Child” makes an admirable attempt at multifaceted representation by drawing upon historical overview, ethnographic interviews, participant observation, musical transcription, and analysis. The powerful intervention of this book is its sensitive exploration of continuity and change among an ethnic group new to Israel and still forging its own identity within the complicated Israeli sociopolitical landscape. Much has changed in the two decades since Herman carried out her fieldwork with the quasi-traditional Beta Israel musical ensemble Porachat HaTikva (Blossoming Hope), and Herman’s research may have been strengthened by follow-up fieldwork among second, third, and even fourth-generation Ethiopian Israelis. Yet without question, the themes that Herman foregrounds – honor,