rather than a predetermined set of events. This shows how European colonialism in Africa, and more specifically the Congo, was uneven, tenuous, and tentative, especially in the late 19th century. Second, he does his best to render the perspectives of Lusinga, Kansabala, and other local chiefs, capturing "hidden histories" and simultaneously situating them within wider worlds of meaning and power (John and Jean Comaroff 1992: 17). He does this primarily through the *milandu* that he records with several elderly men in Lubanda discussing the beheading of Lusinga. Such an approach allows readers to see, that specific African individuals (rather than an anonymous group) as well as particular Europeans influenced the unfolding of events and interactions in Lubanda. Moreover, Roberts illuminates Tabwa interpretations of events, which are informed by particular relationships between the living and supernatural realms and counterbalance European interpretations. Third, one of the ways that he seeks to recover hidden histories is through the use of performance. In chapter 3 especially, he draws on ethnographic and other sources to create an "archaeology of performance" to try and imagine the dance that Storms' soldiers used to overtake Lusinga. Such an approach reveals the importance of performance and expressive culture in the everyday politics of Eastern Congo during this time period.

However, "A Dance of Assassins" can also be seen as having some weaknesses, like any other work. More recent ethnographic research and even more interviews with Tabwa-speaking people in Lubanda could have given more of a perspective on Tabwa interpretations of this encounter between Lusinga and Storms. For example, has the recent political violence in the eastern Congo region affected local people's remembrances of the Storms-Lusinga encounter? Also, while Roberts does draw on his ethnographic knowledge and other recent accounts to try and fill some of the gaps in the written archive, occasionally the supporting evidence is scant and could easily be interpreted in other ways. The archaeology of performance was a great contribution, but Roberts could have gone even further in his analysis of performance in everyday life for both Lusinga (performing Lubaness) and Storms (performing Europeanness). Overall, however, the strengths of the book far outweigh the weaknesses.

In closing, "A Dance of Assassins" is an engaging, vigorously researched historical ethnography that uses a set of micro-level events and interactions to reveal the complexity and nuances of the early colonial encounter in what would become the Belgian Congo. This book would be of interest to upper-level undergraduates, graduate students, and scholars in African Area Studies, Anthropology, History, Museum Studies, and even Performance Studies. Yolanda Covington-Ward

Roy, Babul: Zeme Naga. From Polytheism to Monotheism. An Anthropological Account of Religion Transformation. New Delhi: Serials Publications, 2011. 373 pp. ISBN 978-81-8387-456-4. Price: $ 50.00

This is an ethnographic and historical account of the Zeme, a Naga tribe, who live in the Northeastern Indian states of Assam, Nagaland, and Manipur. Drawing primarily on a study done in North Cachar Hills of Assam from 1989–1995, it provides a substantive account of Zeme traditional culture and the different facets of historical and cultural change.

The book is divided into 7 chapters and is organised thematically. The book begins with a helpful introduction into the field and with the Zeme Nagas. It provides the reader with a sense of working in the North Cachar Hills amongst Zeme villages and the challenges faced by the ethnographer. From walking for whole days to meet informants, to being challenged by Naga nationalists with AK-47s demanding to know the identity of the researcher, there is this palpable sense of the "field" as a dynamic and powerful landscape that is imbued with the experiences of the people, their desires, and attitudes that shape both the researcher and the researched.

The main aim of the book, explains Roy, is to examine the socioreligious changes that have occurred amongst the Zeme in the last century by understanding two ideal positions: the "ethnographic past" and the "ethnographic present" (2). In order to accomplish this, Roy is interested in examining the total Zeme universe and how changes brought about by religious movements, such as the reforms initiated by the Heraka (a Zeme religious reform movement), to the recent spread of Christianity amongst the Zeme, are juxtaposed with the "traditional" Zeme who still follow their older practices. The broader aim of the book is, therefore, to look at the transformation of Zeme society through the aforementioned movements and to appreciate the historical context in which these unravelled.

For this to follow, Roy begins with the various historical writings on the Nagas drawn from accounts written by British administrators, travellers, and scholars. Much of this section is a retracing of already established scholarship in this area, with no particular new insight. In fact, it reads like an encyclopaedic entry that attempts to inform rather than provide in-depth historical analysis. The same can be said of chap. 2 – People, Society & Institutions – that provides a detailed account of Zeme history and social structure through a combination of historical material and also ethnographic accounts. This kind of encyclopaedic method is followed throughout the lengthy descriptions in chap. 3 (Ecology, Material Culture & Economy) and chap. 4 (Medicines & Cures). While there is very interesting folk knowledge concerning the local practices amongst the Zeme, there is little to tie these chapters to the main concern of the central argument presented by Roy. It is only from chap. 5 – The Supernatural World – that we get a sense of Roy's thesis unfolding. Initially there is a considerable amount of description of traditional Zeme culture, particularly that of the different rituals practised, which could have been edited down to reflect its resonance with the main argument. Nevertheless, the discussion gets interesting when Roy examines the Heraka movement, particularly its history and its position within the larger geopolitical climate in northeast India. The Heraka movement is a socioreligious reform that has its genesis with a Rongmei Naga leader named Jadonang from around the late 1920s. His reforms were popular in

the Indian state of Manipur amongst the Rongmei primarily and to some extent spread to other Naga areas in Assam and Nagaland. He was eventually hanged by the British on charges of sedition in 1931. His cousin, Gaidinlieu, drawing inspiration from his reforms, took the leadership mantle and mobilised the people into reforming their culture until she was also imprisoned by the British for anti-colonial activities in 1932.

The period between 1932 to 1954, when Gaidinlieu was eventually released from prison, saw a lot of changes occurring in the region that she and Jadonang were both a part of. First, India had gained independence in 1947 and, second, there were various local nationalist movements that erupted demanding independence (e.g., the Naga National Council) that are crucial to understand the Heraka movement. Nowhere in the book is this clearly explained, nor is there any effort to examine this process seen from the perspective of the local village level. In fact, one can argue that it was during this time that much of the reforms were happening in the North Cachar Hills (Roy's ethnographic focus) that were partly inspired by Jadonang and Gaidinlieu, but partly necessitated by realities on the ground (see A. Longkumer, Reform, Identity, and Narratives of Belonging. The Heraka Movement of Northeast India. London 2010). Importantly, some discussion between Jadonang's movement and the second phase of the Gaidinlieu influence (post-1954) needs addressed, if we are to make sense of the Heraka, either as a continuation or devolution from Jadonang. There is some hint towards this but Roy has not developed this very important point. Even an ethnographic understandng of what the Heraka is in the Zeme context (as this is where the majority of the Heraka are), is confused by sources drawn from the Rongmei context in Manipur (and using Rongmei sources to back up Heraka claims). While it is true that the larger pan-ethnic category Zeliangrong (that incorporates three [and others] related kin groups – the Zeme, Liangmei, and Rongmei [who live in Assam, Nagaland, and Manipur] into one composite group) provides a semblance of solidarity on an official level, it must be emphasised how there are conflicting notions of what this "Zeliangrong" represents to people on the ground. Furthermore, the historical tensions between the Heraka and Christianity within "Zeliangrong" needs to be emphasised, particularly to illustrate the difficult process of identity iteration even at a local level that challenges normative constructions.

Chap. 6 (Transformation) and chap. 7 (Towards a Theoretical Proposition) does little to advance the examination of a unique field of study as it relates to the general theoretical studies on the anthropology of religion, and much of the literature is at least a few decades old. There are far too many Western inspired terms – religion, polytheism, monotheism, animism – that are not carefully explained in the Zeme context. This is not the place to examine these categories in detail, but as a point of departure, rather than examining social change through the simple framework of "from polytheism to monotheism," a more fruitful approach would have been to examine how indigenous peoples construct their universe through categories (whether local or otherwise) that shape their experience of change "in their own terms." Finally, the book could have done with a thorough proofreading, as there are simply too many issues with the structure of the argument and content and to do with presentation (grammar, spelling, and sentence structure) that made reading all the more difficult.

Arkotong Longkumer

Schackt, Jon: A People of Stories in the Forest of Myth. The Yukuna of Miritiparaná. Oslo: Novus forlag, 2013. 271 pp. ISBN 978-82-7099-742-8. Price: NOK 295.00

Le premier propos de ce livre est de montrer que les Indiens yukuna (ou yucuna) d'Amazonie colombienne disposent d'un "corpus" particulièrement important de narrations dont une partie significative ne peut être classée avec les mythes au sens de Lévi-Strauss. L'auteur souhaite ainsi apporter sa contribution aux critiques de la vision dualiste Lévi-Straussienne opposant les "sociétés froides" (sans changement) aux "ociétés chaudes" (changeantes) par une vision plus nuancée qui, d'une part, rejoint celle de Jonathan D. Hill, en considérant que les traditions orales des sociétés amazoniennes sont aptes à garder les traces des événements historiques, et qui, d'autre part, s'inspire de Maurice Bloch, en cherchant à prendre en compte la "multiplicité des représentations du passé".

En effet, une large part de la tradition orale des Indiens de langue yukuna est constituée de narrations généalogicaux-historiques (*genealogical-historical narratives*) relatant leur *origine* – du temps des premiers ancêtres de leur groupe de filiation patrilinéaire (*patri-sib*) –, les guerres inter- et intra-ethniques, ainsi que les premiers contacts avec les Blancs.

Contrairement aux mythes des sociétés froides caractérisés par une discontinuité radicale entre le temps passé et le temps présent, et par un processus d'effacement (*eraser*), permettant aux "gens de penser qu'ils vivent dans un monde sans changement prenant sa forme présente au temps du mythe" (26), les récits généalogicaux-historiques des Indiens de langue yukuna permettraient non seulement de les "connecter" en permanence à leur (véritable) passé, mais il donnerait une légitimité d'ordre politique à ses élites traditionnelles pour assurer leur domination au sein de leur "société hiérarchique".

Rappelons que les Yukuna – qu'il conviendrait plutôt d'appeler "Indiens de langue yukuna" (car de nos jours cet ethnonyme fait référence à un groupe ethno-linguistique) – se distinguent en cinq groupes de filiation patrilinéaire (*patri-sib*) : les Kamejeya (endonyme que se donnent les "vrais Yukuna"), les Je'erúriwa, les Jurúmi'i et les Jimíke'e (qui se laissent appeler Yukuna, alors que leur ascendance patrilinéaire et la langue de leurs ancêtres sont différentes), et les Jupichiya (qui, à la différence de ces derniers, se font appeler Matapí). Or parmi ces cinq groupes, seuls les Kamejeya et les Jupichiya pourraient se prévaloir de connaître non seulement le nom de leur premier ancêtre, mais encore la plupart des noms de ceux qui leur ont succédé par filiation patrilinéaire jusqu'à aujourd'hui (sur 12 générations !). Selon les dires des Yu-