

had on the Ainu perceptions of themselves. Unfortunately, the authors do not discuss that their own understandings/critique are as time-bound as those that they criticize.

The second thematic cluster focuses on regionalization of Ainu society, highlighting how Ainu migration extends beyond and redefines boundaries of Ainu society. It reflects the fact that Ainu borders or boundaries are largely the product of previous research as is also categorizations of them. The authors point out, that fixed and sedentary metaphors of indigeneity should be taken off the agenda. In the Hokkaido Ainu case, due to migration or mobility to the south, it is not unlikely that more Ainu live outside Hokkaido than within it. The problems inherent in the use of the concept “indigeneity” is illustrated by Ainu who migrate to other areas and their struggle with their indigenous identity, trying to combine their experiences abroad with their Ainu identity and using these experiences to strengthen and preserve their own ideas of what being an Ainu implies. In this way the ambiguous nature of concepts such as indigeneity in today’s world is illustrated as well as pinpointed. The discussions taken up here address the need not only for introducing concepts more in tune with the present, but also the necessity to embrace emic views, narratives, and understandings, without hierarchical barriers. Yet the authors do not discuss the fact that emic understandings – in the same way as research – do not exist in a void but are colored and influenced by predominant ideologies and paradigms. In order to advance our understandings of Ainu and other groups of people facing similar problems, the task at hand is to develop tools to establish a balance between emic and etic understandings. In today’s Ainu research, emic understandings are given preference. This preference is not a way forward rather it paves the way for being accused of one-sidedness (ethnocentrism), as is the case with etic understandings of today.

The third thematic cluster addresses issues of scholarly authority and academic hegemony in disciplining Ainu as a field of study. It problematizes under different themes issues of constraints of periodization, geographic essentialism, and insider politics that currently limit the field of Ainu studies. In the last entry, the author urges future scholars to think carefully about the shifts from one period to another. Among the contributions to this thematic cluster, the first entry stands out. The author discusses the work of three Japanese historians, a selection that reflects his position that for real and sustainable change on Ainu issues to occur, the geopolitical and national parameters within which Japan imagines itself must also shift. In this way he does not embrace mainstream views that are mainly influenced by Ainu activist who envision an Ainu history independent of the colonial state. His conclusion is that for now the reality is that Ainu history must be practiced through the medium of Japanese history. The insertion of the words “for now” points to an awareness that it takes time for fields to mature. The euphoria over having overthrown mainstream paradigms is not immune to backlash. Similar thoughts are the focus of the other entries. In these entries, the authors place their discussions in the field of ecology and cultural environment

when they analyze previous writings on Ainu as hunter and gatherers.

The following thematic theme exposes the potential hazard of policing the boundaries of cultural identity and looks to dismantle erstwhile caricatures of Ainu identity and heritage as fixed and unchanging. In the first entry, the author criticizes the idea of heritage textile as traditional and instead suggests a categorization where stages are part of a multicentury course of continuous evolution. In this sense she firmly establishes her position among social scientists who problematize the concept of “traditional” by arguing that tradition is never static but changes over time. This is a view shared and elaborated in the article following this entry, the point of departure being the on-going Ainu cultural revitalization movement with an emphasis on gender of cloth. In the following entry, the focus is on studies of the Ainu language. It is common to consider the Ainu language a dead language, however it is going through a period of current revitalization, a revitalization that according to the author is impossible. She arrives at this conclusion by referring to the fact that “there are very few examples of successful revival of a dead language” (199). This may be true at least in cases where the people who spoke the language were, in fact, extinct. The Ainu are not extinct – they live on and so does their culture. Proclaiming their language dead is equivalent to proclaiming their culture dead thereby taking up an abandoned tread.

The author of the final entry applies cultural practice as a basis from which to mobilize judicial and legal leverage towards achieving political rights. The focus is legal activism and the results of this strategy. The entry’s main contribution lies perhaps in its synopsis of the time that followed the recognition of the Ainu as an ethnic and religious minority in the 1990s.

Is “Beyond Ainu Studies” a book I would recommend? The answer to this is dependent on the purpose. If it is to collect some ideas of ways in which the Ainu has been studied and some of today’s reactions to this, I would recommend it. However, is the purpose to achieve a more profound understanding, I would hesitate to recommend this book.

Katarina Sjöberg

Hume, Lynne: *The Religious Life of Dress*. Global Fashion and Faith. London: Bloomsbury, 2013. 176 pp. ISBN 978-0-85785-361-5. Price: € 19.99

This book is part of the Bloomsbury series entitled “Dress, Body, Culture,” which is a continuation of the Berg (Oxford) series on textiles, fashion and dress. The series is edited by Prof. Joanne B. Eicher (University of Minnesota, USA), who has been at the forefront of firmly establishing the academic study of dress history, especially with an anthropological emphasis.

The book is divided into three parts, (1) “Western Monotheist Religions” (Christians – Roman Catholic, Amish, Hutterites, Mennonites, Anabaptists –, adherents of Judaism and Islam); (2) “Eastern Religions” (Hindus, Sikhs, Jains, Buddhists); and (3) “The Mystical and the Magical” (Sufis, shamans, pagans). There is also a bibli-

ography and an index. As with many Bloomsbury/Berg books, this volume unfortunately suffers considerably from the lack of images and all of those present being in black and white.

The book is intended to be an introduction to the subject of religious dress rather than an in-depth study of one particular form. It looks at both men and women's religious dress, although there is a gentle bias towards the latter. The book offers tantalizing information about a wide range of subjects from nakedness (India; 101 f.) to ornate liturgical and ceremonial garments (Catholic; 13–23). There are also items about garments that may not be initially regarded as religious (such as the sari; 80–84), but in fact there is a strong, religious element to their forms and use. In addition to individual items of clothing and outfits, attention is also paid to dress accessories such as hairstyles, henna, jewellery, perfume (Catholic) prayer beads, etc.

There are some obvious lacunae in the book, for example, although there is a long discussion about Catholic dress and non-Conformist Christian groups, Protestants, and notably the worldwide Anglican Community are dismissed in a single paragraph (28). Nor is there a mention about Mormons (Church of the Latter Day Saints), although this community deliberately use dress (both outer and under garments) to confirm their membership of this particular group and to show the world who they are. Another slight irritation was that in the section on Sufis there is a long description on the whirling Dervish, but within this there is only one paragraph on the garments worn and over a page on the their rituals and dance (128–130).

Basically, the book is a very interesting and readable introduction to the concepts behind function(s) of and appearance of religious dress in general. The bibliography means it is possible to go deeper into various subjects. As an interested reader with some knowledge about the subject I was left wanting more and wondering what happened in this situation or under those circumstances, and so forth. But it is not the stated intention of this book to cover these and other matters, instead it is designed to pique a student's curiosity and it certainly achieves this aim.

Gillian Vogelsang-Eastwood

Iberoamericana. América Latina – España – Portugal. Vol. 14, Núm. 55. (Dossier “Earthquakes in Latin America and Their Social, Political, and Cultural Consequences”; pp. 97–177.) Madrid: Iberoamericana Editorial Vervuert, 2014. ISSN 1577-3388.

In October 2013, the Institute of Latin American Studies in Berlin auspicated a conference called: “Earthquakes in Latin America – Their Social, Political, and Cultural Consequences.” This review is about the dossier published in *Iberoamericana* by Iberoamericana Editorial Vervuert in 2014 as a result of the conference.

Before briefly sketching the individual contributions to the dossier, allow me to remark on the importance of the issue – disasters and their consequences – and on how rarely it is taken into account by the social sciences; a very surprising fact, considering the severe impacts gen-

erally resulting from disasters, especially in the political, social, economic, and cultural sphere the dossier is focused on. Therefore, the initiative undertaken by the Institute of Latin American Studies is to be appreciated and hopefully contributes to improve the awareness for disaster impacts and their social and cultural determinant, at the same time contributing to a more precise conception of disasters and its causes.

The dossier consists of an introduction and five articles, each of them dealing with one or several aspects of the political, economic, social, and cultural consequences in several Latin American countries at different historical moments.

In an introductory article, Oliver Gliech reminds us of the consequences that may result from earthquakes, in some cases leading to a turning point in the history of a country. He defines the societies of those countries as “risk societies” and proposes a framework to analyze disasters with regard to the following factors: *time*, as the impact of earthquakes changes with temporal distance; *mental and cultural consequences*, *economic life*, as disaster often has an adverse impact on a country's economy; *demography*, *migration*, and *urbanistics*, as changes in demographic patterns have consequences on the exposure to risks; the *social* dimension that implies different risk exposure and disaster impacts for different social segments of a society, and finally the *political consequences* that disaster impacts may have.

Basically, the proposed analytical framework will be helpful, but it is not complete. It lacks, for example, the important concepts of disaster prevention and the reasons for its failures. In my concluding remarks, I will briefly outline a different perspective to analyze earthquakes and their impacts.

The first article, by Marialba Pastor, focuses on the notion of earthquakes in the colonial period. The author provides us with a fine story and analysis about how earthquakes have been explained in colonial times, by the powerful as well as by the general public, and how towards the end of the colony explanations changed hesitantly. Basically, earthquakes and other disasters for hundreds of years were explained as God's punishment for people's bad behavior and the sins they committed. The author concludes that in contrast to the radical changes in Europe during the 18th century, where comprehension of nature and its phenomena changed towards scientific explanations, modernity in Spanish America could not catch up because the underlying roots of the medieval model, the sacralization of the world by religion, and the close entanglement of state and religion in the Spanish colonial society remained untouched.

The second article, by Pablo Buchbinder, is quite interesting in its focus on possible political impacts of earthquakes and disaster attention. Buchbinder analyzes the political and social changes in the wake of the San Juan earthquake in Argentina in 1944. The quake, of the magnitude of 7.8 on the Richter scale, virtually wiped out the city of 100,000 inhabitants, built of adobe and dried mud houses. Juan Perón, the then very dynamic secretary of work and social prevention, emerged as the lead-