

intrínsecamente “diverso”, es decir, como constituido de entidades contrastadas cuyas significaciones estarían fijadas de una vez por todas. La diversidad, agrega, no es sino una de las muchas formas que adopta la diferencia, una que implica un mundo previamente dividido en elementos – sociedades, instituciones o culturas – contrastados. En cambio, la diferencia no dependería necesariamente de tal o cual propiedad inherente a las cosas, y bien podría derivarse simplemente del lugar que estas ocupan respectivamente en un campo dado de interrelaciones. En suma, para Ingold, la significación es una cuestión de posición, y no necesariamente de una suerte de contraste estructural (55 s.).

Finalmente, en la conclusión, dedicada a la cuestión de los conflictos sociales contemporáneos, Descola recuerda cómo los conflictos que hoy oponen poblaciones locales, por un lado, y estados o multinacionales, por el otro, revelan divergencias de interpretación ontológica fundamentales con respecto a aquello de lo que el mundo está hecho y a aquello por lo cual tiene valor. En América Latina, estas reivindicaciones vendrían de formas de colectividad que no se corresponden con “sociedades” o, por lo menos, tendrían detrás conjuntos de humanos y de no humanos que contradicen nuestros hábitos de disociar naturaleza y sociedad. Para los europeos confrontados a la cuestión del antropoceno, añade Descola, estos dispositivos de representación conjunta de intereses de humanos y de no humanos son portadores de esperanza, pues estimularían nuestra creatividad política. La posición de Ingold al respecto es que la salida a la catástrofe mundial a la que parece habernos conducido la era moderna no podrá ser elaborada sino por nosotros mismos y por medio del diálogo. La antropología no consistiría, de hecho, nada más ni nada menos que en transformar la vida humana misma en una conversación (75).

En suma, no se puede, pues, sino celebrar la publicación de este debate entre estos dos antropólogos de renombre hoy; pues se trata de un debate que, más allá de lo que nos ilumina sobre las propuestas de cada uno de ellos, nos permite sobre todo repensar las bases mismas de nuestra disciplina y sus posibles desarrollos.

Juan Javier Rivera Andía

**Etges, Andreas, Viola König, Rainer Hatoum, and Tina Brüderlin** (eds.): *Northwest Coast Representations. New Perspectives on History, Art, and Encounters*. Berlin: Dietrich Reimer Verlag, 2015. 219 pp. ISBN 978-3-496-02858-1. Price: € 49.00

Curators have always grappled with exhibiting cultural material in ways that reflect the communities of origin. What “reflect” means, and who gets to decide if that particular reflection is appropriate has changed greatly over the past century. Consultation, collaboration, and shared curatorial authority are now the ethical expectation, or at least aspiration, for museums in North America, and relationships with communities are expected, if not always successfully enacted. The relationships that have grown between Native American and First Nations communities and museums, in large part due to NAGPRA in the

U.S. and the Task Force on Museums and First People as well as the Treaty process in Canada, are often lacking in Europe. This is due to geographical distance and an absence of international regulations that might engender greater communication between European museums and the communities whose cultural material they hold. This lack of relationships with people, does not signal a lack of interest in these collections – in fact, there is a long-standing fascination with Native American ethnographic material in Europe, and especially in Germany.

Museums on the West Coast regularly work with First Nations communities in their exhibits. The Museum of Anthropology (MOA) at the University of British Columbia has a strong record of curatorial practices reflecting personal relationships between curators and artists as well as exhibits that share curatorial authority with First Nations artists, curators, and elders. MOA curator of Contemporary Visual Arts Karen Duffek specifically invited a critical review of her exhibit, “Border Zones,” which featured “community voices, ritual, sculpture and media on a shared terrain” of the ethnology museum (148). Duffek engages with compelling questions raised by Lakota performance artist and UBC professor Dana Claxton on whether anthropology museums can ever shed the stigma of the ethnographic gaze. This openness to critique moves museums to ever more responsive and reflective practices and can be seen as well in MOA curator of the Pacific Northwest Jennifer Kramer’s planning process for an exhibit on the life and work of Kwakwaka’wakw artist Doug Cranmer. Kramer balanced family memory and priorities with an art historical overview of Cranmer’s aesthetic oeuvre in an exhibit that would be on view in both urban anthropological museums and at the cultural centers in the artist’s home territory. Also in the region, the Royal British Columbia Museum has developed a formalized relationship with First Nations through the Treaty Process in B.C. This process “is one of those points of intersection where cultural values, understanding of proper world order and concepts such as the meaning of progress and the nature of authority from two different but interconnected societies both meet and diverge” (125). Martha Black, Ethnology curator at the RBCM, discusses the real-world impacts of this process on museum cataloging and storage where resulting changes seek to clarify ambiguities imposed on collections through stylistic or anthropological analyses rather than collection location, issues that “in the past were troublesome oddities of anthropological classification, [which] now have serious ramifications in light of legal transfers” (141).

Black’s essay, like the others in this volume, was written for a 2011 conference hosted by the Ethnological Museum in Berlin as part of their planning for the new Humboldt-Forum. Led by Viola König, director of the museum, curator Peter Bolz and three other scholars (Rainer Hatoum, Tina Brüderlin, and Andreas Etges), the research planning project was entitled “One History – Two Perspectives. Culturally Specific Modes of Representation of the ‘Exotic’ Other at the Pacific Northwest Coast.” Issues signaled by the naming of the conference arise almost immediately in the volume, which presents essays

by the German participants and a number of non-Indigenous West Coast based curators and specialists, but no contributions or commentary from the artists and community members involved in the project. This is especially problematic considering König's stated goal "to incorporate the voices of First Nation cultural experts and artists" in the rebuilt Humboldt-Forum (13). Tellingly, the book's "Introduction" thanks numerous participants but no one from the source communities. The stark realities of German methodologies and the economic limitations of working at a distance are underlined by Andreas Etges who says that the "majority of the curators will not come from the source communities, and the respective exhibitions cannot be curated in close cooperation" with those communities (8). Some issues, raised in essays like Duffek's, such as contested ground and institutional presence on unceded territory are not relevant to these far-flung collections, but queries on the function of cultural collections, the effect of the ethnographic gaze, and the consequences of terminology (such as traditional vs. modern or a move to "canonical" and "non-canonical," as posed by Jonaitis on p. 175) are essential as European museums rethink their collections access, storage, databases, and exhibits in light of the needs and priorities of the communities whose history is in their care.

There are both remarkable contrasts and some common ground between the European perspectives and the Northwest Coast-based contributors. Echoed throughout the essays is Black's assertion that "the museum record can be a platform on which ancestral knowledge builds links between past and present hereditary owners, and past and present meanings" (140). But certain statements stand out as insensitive to current language or terminology. For instance, König's use of the word "potlatch" to describe an exhibit celebration in Dresden in 2011 is a reductive gloss on the function of a potlatch in tying family rights and privileges to territory (17) and this reduction is underlined in a footnote defining "potlaches" as simply "celebrations in which presents were distributed" (25). The exhibits planned for the Humboldt-Forum are presented as being exempt from the complexities of material collected under colonial auspices since Germany has "a colonial past, but none in which North America was involved" (8). This is especially troubling since Museum Island, the home of the Humboldt-Forum seems in many ways a tribute to colonization.

What is now a basic starting point of curation – community consultation, and the less-common but growing case of shared curatorial authority – is only just beginning in Europe (see C. Krmpotich and L. Peers, *This Is Our Life. Haida Material Heritage and Changing Museum Practice*. Vancouver 2013). Tina Brüderlin, who trained in Germany but spent two years at the American Museum of Natural History, notes that working with source communities "[is] not yet established within the curatorial practice in Europe" (99). Conversations with members of source communities changed her perspective on how a history could be written – that an understanding of the collection, and its potentials, had to include perspectives of current communities and their understanding of "ma-

terial culture, notions of heritage, time, space and memory" (98). Her community visits drove home the lessons on the relationships that stay in place between people and objects, despite the time and distance of their separation.

The volume as a whole attests to the power and importance of historical collections to communities of origin as well as to contemporary artists and museums. It also shows the great distance both geographically and in methodology between Europe and the Northwest Coast. This is not necessarily a detriment to the volume as it outlines the learning process for museums with cultural collections, the essential guidance needed from the communities whose collections they hold, and points to current and future directions in best practices for curation and exhibitions based on relationships and respect.

Kathryn Bunn-Marcuse

**Fabietti, Ugo E. M.:** *Materia sacra. Corpi, oggetti, immagini, feticci nella pratica religiosa*. Milano: Raffaello Cortina, 2014. 306 pp. ISBN 978-88-6030-717-0. Preis: € 29,00

"Wir suchen überall das Unbedingte und finden doch nur Dinge", steht bei Novalis. Das ist an sich natürlich noch keine Religionstheorie, aber verbunden mit der hier durch Ugo Fabietti ventilierten Überzeugung von Clifford Geertz, dass, wer wissen will, erst einmal glauben muss, lässt sich immerhin die Unableitbarkeit des Religiösen und damit sein enger Bezug zum Vorfindlichen: zu den Dingen, zur Materie schlussfolgern. Im zweiten Kapitel des vorliegenden Buches bereitet der Autor die Legitimität der Autorität Agamemnon's auf, der in einem Gerichtsprozess seine Unschuld beweisen muss und dies durch die Worte tut: "Wenn ich die Unwahrheit sage, soll mich der Blitz treffen". Die Zusammenziehung der göttlichen mit der menschlichen Autorität erfolgt dabei über das mythische Zepter, das er in Händen hält. Dem göttlichen Ursprung dieses Zepters gilt der Glaube, und wegen dieses Glaubens kann Agamemnon eine unmittelbare Entscheidungssituation herbeirufen. Fabietti erinnert daran, dass religiöse Rede, (religiöse) Autorität und heilige Dinge in-trikat miteinander verbunden sind und die Rede ohne ein materielles Substrat haltlos würde.

Es ist Fabietti's Anliegen, in einer Art Lehrbuch dem Gegenständlichen in den Religionen Gewicht zu verschaffen – auch wenn der Begriff der "materia" dem des aus ihm erst zu formenden Dinges vorausgeht. Dies gelingt ihm zum Teil. Wie man es von einem durch die italienische Fächerkultur umfassend gebildeten Religionsanthropologen erwarten darf, geht es für Fabietti nicht ohne Reflektion auf den Religionsbegriff (dessen historische Semantik hinsichtlich von "Lesen" und "Binden", mit allen daraus folgenden eurozentrischen Konstruktionen der "anderen" Religionen und eines generösen Scheinpluralismus klar und deutlich herausgearbeitet wird), und es geht für eine vorgeblich vorurteilsbefreite Religionswissenschaft schon gar nicht ohne Phänomenologie. Merleau-Ponty's Argumentation, wonach dem Menschen anhand seiner Leiblichkeit seine eigene Alterität (und die Vermittlungskraft dieser Alterität: die eine Hand, die die andere