

tice and liberation theology to assert their place within the parish. Tapping into their rich cultural heritage, Mexican parishioners, for example, embraced celebrations of *Las Posadas* (a reenactment of the biblical Nativity story and Joseph and Mary's search for shelter in Bethlehem) as a way of reinforcing community bonds and expanding parish life. In both instances, Nájera reveals how both the vocal activism of Chicano organizations and the more subtle acts stemming from the grassroots were necessary to effect desegregation.

"The Borderlands of Race" offers fresh insight into the pernicious nature of Mexican segregation – fiercely maintained in local and intimate ways, and shored up through selective inclusion. By focusing on a small community, rather than a larger city with proportionally larger Mexican communities, which were often centers of Mexican American political access and organization, Nájera illuminates not only the very intimate ways that segregation bled into every facet of life, but also the very personal ways that people challenged its basic premise. Closing with an evocative description in the epilogue of the high school football game, Nájera reminds us that while much has changed, the legacies of this fraught history remain. In recent day La Feria, the best seats in the stadium are occupied by greater numbers of Mexican Americans who represent the town's economic and political leadership, but recent immigration has raised new questions about boundaries and belonging within the community. How those questions will be answered in the 21st century will be determined by how well the lessons from the past are taken to heart.

Monica Perales

**Narayanan, Yamini:** Religion, Heritage, and the Sustainable City. Hinduism and Urbanisation in Jaipur. London: Routledge, 2015. 235 pp. ISBN 978-0-415-84466-6. Price: £ 90.00

The fascinating title of Yamini Narayanan's book raises great expectations, although she relativizes them by clarifying her ambitious project in the subtitle "Hinduism and Urbanisation in Jaipur." Jaipur, the capital and largest city of the Indian state of Rajasthan, has more than 3.1 million residents and about 77% of them are Hindus. The keyword "sustainable" in the challenging title may cover a large number and a wide scope of subjects and Narayanan points indeed at everything relating to environmental and/or ecological implications of citizenship. She emphasizes that gender awareness, religion, and cultural heritage should be decisive in the planning for a viable future of today's megacities.

The introduction contains an overview of social, cultural, political, and environmental realities, following M. Sepe when he says that "a localised sense of place, place identity, and placemaking have been identified as vital elements of sustainable cities ..., and which modernist planning in Indian cities has almost entirely neglected to consider" (3). Well-read, Narayanan argues that various problems cannot be solved without understanding the influence of religion shaping urban space. She emphasizes that reviewing history is important in order to understand

the vital sense of the "*genius loci* or 'spirit of place'," which according to Norberg-Schulz "constitutes the essential, defining, and enduring character of a place" (8). Her main argument for a renewal and a sustainable development of India's old cities is based on the assessment of tangible and intangible heritage. She concentrates on tangible features such as the sociocultural, religious, and gender-based sentiments and manifestations among Hindus, while also interpreting the experience of people in terms of the intangible physical, built, and natural structures and spatial design in Jaipur. Furthermore, she emphasizes strongly that "the current Master Plans [of the Jaipur Development Authority] fully ignore the religious dimensions of place and urban development in Jaipur ... Indeed, it is one of the major tasks of this book to argue that religion's influence – enabling or problematic – *should* be acknowledged in the planning analyses of such cities" (16).

The first chapters contain detailed information on: the urban planning history and policies in Indian cities, especially the Walled City areas; socio-spatial justice, economic sustainability, and environmental protection since independence; religion as a special category of development concepts and religious qualifiers to heritage sites; "equitable gendered participation in the planning and future of Indian cities" (86). Old Jaipur's sacred and secular religious heritage is treated with particular reference to both the classical Hindu *Vāstuvidyā/Vāstusāstra*, which are dealing with architecture, and the modernist planning. The author relies on the excellent expertise and works of V. Sachdev and G. Tillotson to which she refers throughout the book.

Narayanan presents her primary research on Old Jaipur in chapters 6–8. "Hinduism and Space" (chap. 6) reviews critically the role of religion in inter-communal living and their visibility, communal tensions, sectarian violence, trade and commerce. She suggests that shaping space is mainly influenced by a Hindu male dominance and predominantly male values leading to "masculinisation of the city's public spaces ... and spatially marginalising minority religious groups" (125). How the experiences, vulnerabilities, and specific needs of women are determined by religion and culture are discussed in the following chapter. She pays special attention to their social status in the home, women's quarters, and public spaces. Their negative experience is mainly attributed to the prevalence of Hindu patriarchal practices and traditions. She suggests that an amelioration of women's life can be achieved by enforcing "right to mobility, right to employment and education, and right to safety" (168). In the 8th chap., "Religion, Nature, and Urban Development in Jaipur," Narayanan focuses on the actual relationship between Hindu religiosity and four environmental problems, namely: "water scarcity; green cover; the problem of stray animals in the city; and congestion and traffic problems" (184) in view of planning urban ecological citizenship and towards a sustainable development appropriate to the needs of contemporary cities. The chapter closes with "Conclusions. A Bioreligious Approach for Urban Policy" (206 ff.).

In the passionate closing chapter, “Quo Vadis, India? Where Next for Urban Policy?”, Narayanan presents various insights developed again and again in the previous chapters in order to formulate “new roles for South Asian urban planners” (219 ff.). Her concern is that especially policy makers understand the multifaced Indian urban landscapes which, she insists, are to be seen in their historical context. She stresses that inclusive participatory urban planning is the decisive factor for sustainable development. One has to take into account: critical literacy in religious interpretations and lifestyles; shared understanding of the multifaceted communities; awareness of the danger caused by religious nationalists; reform capacity of religions, and bioreligious environmental issues.

This book is diligently worked out to review problems of urban planning, renewal and regeneration projects of cities in India, yet Narayanan’s use of concepts and terminology is sometimes ambiguous and irritating. Some examples may illustrate it: “I use ‘Hindu’ as a religious notion that integrates a secular worldview ... Hinduism does not distinguish between the sacred and the secular on the basis of faith alone; the profane and worldly dimensions of human life are integrated within a Hindu religious worldview” (83); “... the city walls manifest a religiously secular ideology” (110); “The popular perception of Jaipur, thus, is that it is a ‘Hindu city’; however, the city is secular, and its secularity in fact is religious, drawing from its accommodation and royal patronage of *all* religions, rather than only Hinduism” (107). Note, there was “a multireligious secularism ...” and “Hindu religion is part of the multireligious meta-narrative that provides the sense of place, anchoring, identification and attachment ... in Old Jaipur” (125). “The lack of acknowledgment of bioreligious approaches, and the potential for urban religious environmentalism ... can be a significant loss to ... sustainable development in the city” (121). However, there remains an open question: What does Narayanan really mean by “Indian secularism” and specifically by her all-inclusive category/terminology of “religion” or “religious”? One has not to adhere to a traditionally incommensurable divide between strong religious beliefs and a secular worldview and to rethink the current secular-religious impact includes the historical specificity. However, does it mean that religion means somehow an universalism that considers “religion’s latent secularity” (86) as a subcategory? The debate on the interlink of these notions is to be continued further provided that Narayanan’s requested participation in the decision making processes and the right of self-representation of religions is taken seriously.

No doubt, the book covers very important issues in planning and restoring cities, but it is sometimes sending out confused and confusing signals, because the author does not always discuss sufficiently problems from a range of different positions, e.g., with regard to policy formation and implementation. Readers will get familiar with some correct but also false or, at least, debatable and sometimes useless complaints about the neglect of ecological and feminist leanings that Narayanan came across, for instance, in the discussion of published literature by some religious leaders and Western-oriented cul-

tural anthropologists, architects, governmental officials, transnational corporations, and other powerholders. Narayanan’s claim that local interventions from faith communities worthy of discussion are crucial for our common future is certainly appropriate. The lively dialogue atmosphere among Christians and other religious people in many parts of the West is certainly more positive and widespread than acknowledged in the book.

The rather broad frame for this interdisciplinary study on social differentiation may be useful for some experts in town planning and architecture. General public readers who are unfamiliar with the topics might get trapped into a documentation and discussion of recent literature and may wonder about the consumer-friendly price of £ 90.00.

Othmar Gächter

**Nikolić, Mona:** Identität in der Küche. Kulturelle Globalisierung und regionale Traditionen in Costa Rica. Bielefeld: transcript Verlag, 2015. 371 pp. ISBN 978-3-8376-2979-8. Preis: € 49.99

Ein Buch über das Essen “Anderer” zu schreiben ist ein nicht einfaches Unterfangen. Ernährung ist nicht nur biologisch notwendig, sondern auf vielfältige Weise in Gesellschaft eingebettet. Essen hat u. a. soziale, kulturelle, religiöse, rituelle, gesundheitliche Bedeutung und wird beispielsweise von Geschlechterbeziehungen ebenso bestimmt wie von ökonomischen Rahmenbedingungen. Seit den Konsumstrukturen im Zuge der “Kulturellen Globalisierung” Ende des 20. Jh.s vor allem in ökonomischer Hinsicht neue Aufmerksamkeit zu Teil wurde, sind diese Kontexte auch für ethnologisch-kulturwissenschaftliche Analysen interessanter geworden. Die identitätsstiftende Bedeutung des Essens in einem globalisiert-lokalen Umfeld steht oft im Mittelpunkt des Interesses.

Auch die Ethnologin und Soziologin Mona Nikolić hat sich dieser Herausforderung gestellt. Ihr fast 400 Seiten umfassendes Werk zur Bedeutung der Küche Costa Ricas für die lokal-nationalen Identitätskonstruktionen wurde 2013 als Dissertationsschrift an der Freien Universität Berlin eingereicht und 2015 im transcript Verlag veröffentlicht. Der Struktur einer (kulturwissenschaftlichen) Dissertation folgend werden nach einer Einleitung in sieben Großkapiteln der theoretisch-diskursive Rahmen (1), die Forschungsmethodik (2), der Diskurs um die nationale Küche Costa Ricas und die damit verknüpften Identitätskonstruktionen (3) sowie die drei Fallbeispiele aus den Regionen des Valle Central (4), Limón (5) und Guanacaste (6) dargestellt. Eine Zusammenfassung der Ergebnisse (7) schließt das Werk ab.

Schon in der Einleitung führt Nikolić in die Komplexität des Themenfeldes ein. Ausgehend von der Konsumpraxis in Costa Rica erläutert sie in Abschnitten, warum die Analyse des Bereichs Ernährung globale und lokale Einflüsse innerhalb einer Gesellschaft sichtbar macht und deren identitätsstiftende Bedeutung aufzeigt. Ihr Interesse an (national-regionalen) Esskulturen als Identitätsmarker geht über die gängigen Studien zum Einfluss der globalisierten Nahrungsmittelindustrie auf eine nationale Nahrungsmittelversorgung hinaus. Sie thematisiert den