

may be entirely consistent with Elmore's argument that "religious change has come about in relation to [the] forces of calculation, planning, control, and organization that mark modern forms of power" (147) and is, he insists, authorless, this move positions him as an omniscient interpreter and Himachalis as unwitting and unseeing victims of modernity's refashioning of their culture and subjectivities.

Elmore's analysis is ultimately unsatisfying, perhaps chiefly because he does not sufficiently distinguish among a set of related but not identical questions: How is emergent Himachali religion like or unlike other religion? What is the relationship between the formation of the category of religion and the production of Himachali religion? Is he primarily concerned to train our attention on Himachali *religion* or *Himachali* religion, and what difference would those distinct foci have on his analysis? The author's uneven and sometimes idiosyncratic treatment of his subject matter is finally underscored by a mystifying disavowal of any intent at all: "this book has nothing to teach. It does not offer any theory to abstract and test. It is not a collection of facts to be archived" (236). Presumably bowing to convention, at the very end "Becoming Religious" offers us just a few pages of acknowledgement of a scholarly history in which his study might fall. A more robust engagement with theory and the scholarly literature on the Himalayas might have clarified some of those questions. The book's brief conclusion reads as an invocation of influences more than a critical elaboration of his project. What Elmore claims to give us instead is a "style of interrogation" (239) or even a "listening in the manner [of] Krishnamurti" (236). In very many respects, this is an astute and perceptive treatment of modern Himalayan religion, yet its disorienting asides and never-thorough engagement with the scholarly literature leave this reader wishing for a little more care and rigor.

Brian K. Pennington

**Fantaw, Setargew Kenaw:** Technology-Culture Dialogue. Cultural and Sociotechnical Appropriation of Mobile Phones in Ethiopia. Zürich: Lit Verlag, 2016. 172 pp. ISBN 978-3-643-90739-4. (Beiträge zur Afrikaforschung, 71). Price: € 29,95

This book, which is based on a PhD dissertation conducted at the University of Bayreuth, deals with a highly relevant but also ambivalent topic. At the global scale, 5 billion people were using mobile phones in 2017, making mobile telecommunications one of the most widely diffused technologies on the planet. Despite this ubiquity, there is no general agreement about the appropriate evaluation of this new technology. Does this form of global communication provide the possibility of unlimited access to information for everyone? Or, are we victims of an instrument of total surveillance, and, as a consequence do we have become slaves to an ever greater acceleration of communication?

The author of the publication is careful enough not to rush to one side or the other. His concern is to describe the embedding of use and evaluation of mobile phones in

Ethiopia in the local cultural practices and the local tradition of dealing with technology. He neither condemns mobile phones, nor does he appraise them as the key to a better future. On a more general level, his important and commendable work is a substantial contribution to better understand the cultural diversity in the context of globally diffused technologies.

In order to emphasize the specificity of the local practices with regard to the handling of mobile phones, the conceptual framework for this study refers to two concepts: appropriation and SCoT (= Social Construction of Technology). While cultural appropriation is a useful guideline to study the micro-level, SCoT sensitizes to the level of the society and the different groups within with regard to their evaluation of the technology. The author tends towards a very open definition of appropriation, using, for example, domestication and translation as synonyms. All three concepts are widely used in cultural anthropology. Although slightly different in their focus, they have in common to avoid a one-sided presentation of only the benefits or only the disadvantages. It is up to the reader, whether she or he accepts the author's suggestion to consider the local embedding of mobile phones as a dialogue between technology and culture.

Nevertheless, the author's basic argument that society is not the "passive-receiving side," and that technology is not the "driving force" of change is quite convincing. Beyond such dichotomies, however, we should keep in mind that the metaphor of dialogue includes the eventually unequal position of the participants, and the difference with regard to express themselves (157). The author, referring to Schleiermacher, rightly points out that there are two options in each translation: one can translate in such a way that the outcome is as close as possible to the original language, or one can design a translation that as much as possible fits in the contexts of the target language (9).

Among the quite enriching facets of the book is the embedding of the mobile phone in a broader, but not detailed, technology history of Ethiopia (chap. 2). The reader learns about the first fixed-line telephone (in 1890), the first freshwater pipe (1894), the opening of the Addis-Djibouti railway line (1917), and the arrival of the first two aircrafts in Addis (1929). The author refers to this broad range of historical experiences with innovation in order to highlight the general openness of the Ethiopian society toward new technologies. Through his more detailed observations, the reader learns about the high appreciation of the transistor radio, to which many people have listened so devotedly for decades. One might consider this attitude as a direct forerunner of the mobile phone, which now receives a comparable, if not greater attention.

Due to a lack of subscribers, the arrival of mobile phones in Ethiopia in April 1999 initially did not promise a good start. Twelve years later, at the time of the author's doctoral research in Ethiopia, however, this technology is so widespread that it is difficult for younger people to imagine a life without them. This is the result of several focus group discussions carried out by the author at two universities in Ethiopia (chap. 3). An important difference to usage patterns is the willingness to share, i.e., to lend

out a headset temporarily or to make certain calls for others upon request.

The author sums up the three groups that have been the focus of his empirical studies: students, married couples, and repair shop owners. Although to varying degrees, these groups have proved or have developed specific behaviors as well as material changes to the equipment and thus carried out an “innovation.” With P.-P. Verbeek (“What Things Do”) this appears at a first glance as a complete confirmation of the approach of SCoT. However, there are still some urgent but unanswered questions for the reader: Since the three groups studied to a certain extent belong to an urban middle class, what about the rural population? What use do mobile phones have for those who can afford neither the devices nor the airtime charges? The study joins in the now classic canon of the SCoT, and shows how society changes through technology, as well as how technology is modified or conditioned by society. But this study is also a victim of SCoT’s typical weakness by ignoring those who have little or no access to the new technology. SCoT tends to overstate the presence of technology, thereby marginalizing forces of change that come from those groups in the society that do not participate or who are marginalized by the technology being studied.

Despite these limitations, the book opens up interesting new perspectives, especially in linking mobile phones to the arrival of other technologies. In this way, it draws a thoroughly convincing picture of the Ethiopian society as an open culture that, since long, has been eager to participate in innovations.

Hans P. Hahn

**Feest, Christian, und C. Ronald Corum:** Frederick Weygold. Künstler und Erforscher nordamerikanischer Indianer. Altenstadt: ZKF Publishers, 2017. 260 pp. ISBN 987-3-9818412-1-3. Preis: € 27,90

Mehr als 70 Jahre nach Weygolds Tod erscheint diese Publikation, die in 44 kurze, chronologisch angeordnete Kapitel untergegliedert ist, inklusive Katalogteil, Anmerkungen, Literaturverzeichnis und Register. Dabei handelt es sich offenbar um die deutsche Übersetzung des englischen Begleitkatalogs der gleichnamigen Ausstellung am Speed Art Museum in Louisville, Kentucky, dem Wirkungsort Weygolds. Klar strukturiert zeichnet Feest den Lebensweg Weygolds nach, einem Deutschstämmigen, dessen konservative, religiöse Eltern in die USA emigriert sind. Bereits als Heranwachsender interessiert er sich für Naturkunde und materielle Kultur indigener Kulturen Nordamerikas. Sein Leben lang widmet er sich dem Selbststudium der Ethnologie, bereist Reservate, knüpft Freundschaften mit Lakota (Sioux), dokumentiert ihre Gepflogenheiten und Sprache, für die er größten Respekt empfindet. Gleichzeitig nutzt er seine Kontakte, um als Mittler Ethnographica nach Deutschland zu vertreiben. Als Buchillustrator verdingt er sich zeitweise seinen Lebensunterhalt, bleibt zeitlebens Junggeselle, der sich vehement für die Rechte von Minderheiten einsetzt und Bildung als kostenfreies Allgemeingut sieht. Künstlerlich orientiert er sich am Zeitgeist – Elemente des Jugend-

stils und der Naturromantik lassen sich erkennen – bleibt jedoch zweitklassig, während er als Vorbild Karl Bodmer nachweislich bewundert und kopiert, wie auch Rudolf Friedrich Kurz (147, 181). Auf der einen Seite kritisiert er Catlins künstlerische Freiheit der Umsetzung, um auf der anderen selbst zweifelhaft Kompositionen zu arrangieren oder ungenau zu reproduzieren (z. B.: 30 f., 42, 118, 132, 186, 231). Seinen Nachlass an Zeichnungen, Skizzen, Notizen und materiellen Zeugnissen indigener Kulturen der Plains hinterlässt er der Vorgängerinstitution des heutigen Speed Art Museums. Weygold kann zu Recht als Intellektueller beschrieben werden, der weit-sichtig für mehr Toleranz, Verständnis gegenüber anderen Lebensweisen und die Bedeutung bildender Künste eingetreten ist. Erst jetzt wird mit dieser Veröffentlichung seiner Verdienste erinnert.

Anscheinend ist die Arbeit jedoch unter erheblichem Zeitdruck entstanden. Was zumindest als Erklärung für die zahlreichen Ungenauigkeiten gelten kann. Ein interessierter Leser, der sich von den äußerst langatmigen, einleitenden Kapiteln nicht abschrecken lässt, wird jedoch durch den Katalog mit seinen Ausführungen über Weygolds Einblicke in die Kulturen der Lakota (Sioux) belohnt. Den Schwerpunkt der Abhandlung bildet Feests Ausführung über Sammlungsaktivitäten um und nach 1900, ein kaum erforschtes Kapitel in der Museumsgeschichte. Mit Recht kritisieren die Autoren die vielen veröffentlichten Unzulänglichkeiten der vergangenen und gegenwärtigen Forschung, zum anderen begründen sie selbst neue. Dies scheint umso erstaunlicher, wenn sie in der Einleitung schreiben, “Feest ... konnte alle relevanten materiellen, schriftlichen und fotografischen Unterlagen [in europäischen Museen in Bezug auf Weygold] einsehen” (ix f.). Hier sollen nur einige der gravierendsten Beispiele kurz erwähnt werden. So wurde die Sammlung des Prinzen zu Wied nicht dem König von Preußen wie behauptet geschenkt, sondern angekauft (29; siehe: Bolz und Sanner 1999: 73). Anders lässt sich jedenfalls auch nicht erklären, warum Feest ein Aquarell von Weygold (38) wiedergibt, ohne darauf zu verweisen, dass es sich hierbei um eine Kopie eines fotografierten Verkaufsarrangements Lenders handelt, das sich im Archiv des Linden-Museums Stuttgart befindet, wie auch ein weiteres die Vorlage für die Abbildung auf Seite 39 bildet. Ebenfalls basiert das Portrait von Gnaška (The Frog) auf einer Fotografie, die sich im Linden-Museum Stuttgart erhalten hat. Im Gegensatz zu Feests Behauptung hält der Lakota auf diesem das Pfeifentomahawk, während Weygold es unterließ, den getragenen Oberarmreif wiederzugeben, aber das Hemd modifizierte (42). Lenders Foto “Wańca (Flower) beim Bemalen eines Tipis” (44) datiert laut Archivangabe ins Jahr 1908. Weitere spekulative Zuordnungen, wie die eines Notizbüchleins, vormalig am Linden-Museum Stuttgart, als Werk aus der Feder Weygolds lassen sich anhand eines Schriftabgleichs nicht bestätigen. Auch gehört seine Äußerung über Weygolds Visualisierung einer Bisonjagd hinterfragt, da Paul Kane, ein bekannter kanadischer Künstler, Métis mit Gewehr bei der Jagd auf kurze Distanz zeigt, und selbst an Jagden teilgenommen hat (135).