

## Reviews

JOHANNES HANO, *Das japanische Desaster. Fukushima und die Folgen*. Freiburg im Breisgau: Herder Verlag, 2011. 174 Seiten, € 14,95. ISBN 978-3-451-30544-3

Das Buch des ZDF-Korrespondenten für Ostasien ist nicht wegen seines Inhalts so interessant – denn dem einschlägig Bekannten über die Dreifachkatastrophe vom 11. März 2011 wird nur wenig Neues hinzugefügt –, sondern vielmehr wegen der Art und Weise, wie er die improvisierte Medienarbeit unter Katastrophenbedingungen, ihre psychische Belastung, die eigenen gravierenden Informationsdefizite und den massiven, nahezu pausenlosen Informationshunger der Öffentlichkeit beschreibt, die die medial vermittelte Version der Ereignisse dann als glaubwürdig akzeptiert.

Eigentlich in Peking stationiert, ist Hano 2011 nur zufällig in Japan, um einen dieser Exotikfilme über Sumo-Ringer zu drehen. Als dann aber in Tokyo und im Nordosten die Erde bebt, die Sturmfluten auf einer Länge von 400 km die Nordküste verheeren und Wasserstoffexplosionen das AKW Fukushima Daiichi zerstören, werden der Sendeplan und die Arbeitsbedingungen buchstäblich über den Haufen geworfen.

Dem Autor geht es dabei, durchaus nachvollziehbar, sehr schlecht. Tagelang lebt er in Todesangst. Er befürchtet voll Verzweiflung, Frau und Kinder in Peking nicht wiederzusehen, sorgt sich um seine Mitarbeiter. Auch Monate später kommen ihm bei der in therapeutischer Absicht vorgenommenen Niederschrift seiner Erinnerungen die Tränen. In diesen Tagen der nur auf die Ausländergemeinde Tokyos – die sich vorübergehend halbierte – begrenzten Panik kann Hano vor Angst und Schrecken nächtelang nicht schlafen, muss aber trotzdem dauernd auf Sendung sein.

Landes- und sprachkundig hat er angesichts der Stromausfälle und der zurückhaltenden, oft widersprüchlichen Informationspolitik der Regierung und des regionalen Strommonopolisten TEPCO auch kaum eine Ahnung, was wirklich um ihn herum passiert, zumal er auch, wie er sagt, nicht weiß, wie ein AKW funktioniert (und sich sein neues Wissen mühsam aus dem Internet beschaffen und erarbeiten muss).

Entsprechend gestaltet sich dann auch die Informationsversorgung der deutschen Fernsehzuschauer, die angesichts der dramatischen Bilder und Töne aus Tokyo den Untergang Japans erwarten – obwohl die regionale Begrenzung der Katastrophe nach dem Abklingen der Nachbeben in Tokyo bereits nach einigen Tagen klar wird. Da sind Hano und sein Team – ebenso wie alle Botschaftsangehörige deutschsprachiger Länder – aber schon nach Osaka geflüchtet.

Das Buch stellt sich im Wesentlichen als rekonstruiertes Tagebuch der Woche vom 11. bis 18. März dar. Das erhöht die Spannung, schafft aber gleichzeitig Wiederholungen. Es beginnt mit dem Beben am frühen Nachmittag des

11. März, das Hano und seine Leute im 13. Stockwerk des TBS-Hochhauses erleben. Das Gebäude schwankt, die Aktenschränke fallen um. Die Menschen flüchten aus Furcht vor stärkeren Nachbeben über das Treppenhaus hinaus ins Freie. Während sich immer mehr deutsche Sender, die keine eigenen Korrespondenten in Tokyo haben, beim ZDF-Studio dazuschalten – Phoenix, Arte, 3sat –, und eine Sondersendung auf die nächste folgt, verliert Hano die Nerven. Er will über den Tokioter Stadtflughafen Haneda in den Süden „abhauen“ (S. 29). Schließlich werden im Umkreis von 10 km um das havarierte AKW herum 45.000 Menschen evakuiert. Weil in Tokyos Apotheken die Jodtabletten ausgegangen sind, behilft sich das ZDF-Team mit dem ununterbrochenen Verzehr von jodhaltigem, getrocknetem Seegras als Prophylaxe. Schließlich zerreißt 24 Stunden nach der Sturmflut die erste Wasserstoffexplosion das Dach des Reaktorgebäudes.

Um seiner Darstellung der Dramatik gerecht zu werden, greift Hano vielfach auf den Stil der Abenteuerschriftstellerin Enid Blyton zurück. Wenn er in wörtliche Rede fällt, heißt es etwa: „Toby, Kiyo, Fuyuko – wir müssen die Windrichtung checken. Auch das noch!“ (S. 29). Tatsächlich werden Fernsehtexte so geschrieben und gesprochen, damit auch 12-Jährige alles verstehen können.

Hano steht als Informationsverarbeiter vor einem Problem: er traut den offiziellen Verlautbarungen nicht mehr. Es gibt aber auch keine anderen Quellen außer Gerüchten (S. 62). Da es keinen nationalen Krisenstab gibt, sondern die Regierung weiter auf TEPCOs Krisenmanagement vertraut, obwohl Premier Kan die TEPCO-Manager öffentlich der Unfähigkeit zeiht, hält Hano am 15. März die Lage in Fukushima für „völlig außer Kontrolle geraten“ und flüchtet nach Osaka: „Erstmal Distanz gewinnen. Wir müssen unsren Kopf freibekommen und versuchen herauszufinden, was sich da in Fukushima gerade wirklich abspielt“ (S. 78) und: „Auf dem Weg ins Zimmer sausen mir tausend Zahlen durch den Kopf und die Einheiten, in denen sie gemessen werden – Millisievert, Becquerel und Mikrosievert. Aber was diese Zahlen wirklich bedeuten, bleibt mir, bleibt uns verborgen“ (S. 83). Tatsächlich verweisen diese Messwerte auf das Kontinuum von der Harmlosigkeit der natürlich vorkommenden Radioaktivität bis zur möglichen unmittelbaren Todesgefahr. Wenn ein Millionenpublikum mit einem solchen „Expertenwissen“ in einer aufnahmewilligen, unkritischen Katastrophenstimmung tagelang gefüttert wird, braucht man sich über die Folgen nicht zu wundern, die dieses Wissen für die Meinungsbildung hat.

Ein Gutteil des Buches ist der sehr berechtigten und in Japan verbreiteten Kritik an TEPCO (und den anderen regionalen Strommonopolisten) gewidmet, die nur formal privatisiert wurden und weiterhin als Kern des „Atomdorfes“ privilegierte Beziehungen zum Industrieministerium METI pflegen, ihre Tarife nach dem System: Kosten plus Mindestprofit berechnen dürfen und entsprechend freigiebig die Medien, die Politik und das Ministerium unterstützen. Alte Liederlichkeits- und Vertuschungsgeschichten werden von dem Autor wieder aufgegriffen (S. 92).

Auch in Fukushima war trotz jahrelanger Warnungen die Tsunamischutzmauer von sechs Metern Höhe nie aufgestockt worden. Tatsächlich maß die Sturmflut hier 14 Meter Höhe. Auch lagen die Notstromaggregate und die Batterien für die Notkühlung so tief, dass sie wegen Überflutung ausfielen. Es fehlten anfangs genügend Strahlenanzüge vor Ort und selbst Stiefel für die Rettungsarbeiter waren nicht zu bekommen. Erbärmlich auch das Verhalten von TEPCO-Chef Masataka Shimizu, der sich nach einer kurzen öffentlichen Entschuldigung krankschreiben ließ und abtauchte (S. 106).

Hano schreibt, man habe sich in Japan nie über die Beherrschbarkeit der Atomkraftwerke Gedanken gemacht und keine Atomdiskussion geführt (S. 116). Das ist, mit Verlaub, grober Unfug. Gerade die ständige öffentliche Kritik an ihrer Atompolitik und die Aufbauschung auch kleinerer Zwischenfälle haben die japanische Energiewirtschaft in einem klassischen Bunkersyndrom erst so eigentümlich manipulativ, beratungsresistent und transparenzfeindlich werden lassen.

Auch dramatisiert Hano hemmungslos. So behauptet er einfach, die Teernte in Shizuoka (350 km vom AKW entfernt) sei „verseucht“ (S. 118). Dann fahren er und sein Team ziellos – anscheinend ohne japanische Karten lesen zu können – im Katastrophengebiet des Tsunami umher. Sie treffen einen Überlebenden, der Frau und Kind verloren hat, und der – wie es Reisenden in Ostasien und in der arabischen Welt angesichts merkwürdiger geschichtsklitternder Bücher gelegentlich passieren kann – ihm gegenüber seine Bewunderung für Hitler zum Ausdruck bringt. Hano nennt ihn ein „Arschloch“ und lässt ihn mit-leidslos stehen.

Kurzum, ein melodramatisches Buch zu einem echten Drama von einem Autor, der von der Situation völlig überfordert wirkt (und mittlerweile jede Menge Medienpreise für seine Berichterstattung einstreicht) und Deutschlands Fernsehpublikum höchst wirksam wochenlang mit intensiv geglaubten Unter-gangsszenarien versorgte.

*Albrecht Rothacher*

CARMEN MEINERT / HANS-BERND ZÖLLNER (eds.), *Buddhist Approaches to Human Rights. Dissonances and Resonances*. (Der Mensch im Netz der Kulturen 3). Bielefeld: transcript, 2010. 246 pages, € 29.80. ISBN 978-3-8376-1263-9

This book is mainly the outcome of an international symposium organized by the editors under the title ‘Buddhism and Human Rights: Theory – Practice – Outlook’. The contributors are from different fields and disciplines, ranging from human rights theorists, political scientists and experts in Buddhism, theology, and philosophy to practicing Buddhists. This transdisciplinary, trans-cultural, and transreligious approach is the strong point of this book. On the

other hand, it leads to a rather unbalanced selection of case studies that excludes several Buddhist countries such as Burma, Japan, Nepal, Sri Lanka or Vietnam.

After Michael Zimmermann's "Foreword" (pp. 7–8) the editors explain in the "Introduction" (pp. 9–20) origin, significance and timeliness of the topic. The main corpus of the book starts with general reflections by Alfred Hirsch about "Different Cultures and the Universality of Human Rights" (pp. 21–39). Hirsch chooses the example of Islam in order to recapitulate the relativism vs. universalism controversy from a philosophical and highly critical perspective towards both Eurocentrism and the Islamic handling of human rights and freedoms. The second contribution is Perry Schmidt-Leukel's article "Buddhism and the Idea of Human Rights. Resonances and Dissonances" (pp. 41–61). As suggested in the undertitle, the author is looking for traditional Buddhist concepts which might affirm dignity and rights of all humans as well as for concepts where Buddhism and the human rights discourse differ. Martin Seeger's contribution deals with "Theravada Buddhism and Human Rights. Perspectives from Thai Buddhism" (pp. 63–92), taking into account both human rights discourses and practice in contemporary Thailand. In his article "The Purification of the Mind and the Encounter with Those who Suffer", the fourth author, Kenneth Fleming presents his own "Christian view of Buddhism and human rights" (pp. 93–111). Helwig Schmidt-Glintzer, introduces his "Remarks on Buddhism in China" with the question: "Is Mahayana Buddhism a Humanism?" (pp. 113–124) Again, the reader is confronted with the double-edged [Mahayana] Buddhist perspective: compatibility as well as incompatibility with human rights. The next contribution by Shi Zhiru, a Buddhist nun, "Buddhist Responses to State Control of Religion in China at the Century's Turn" (pp. 125–157) examines the historical relations of Buddhist monasteries with the state until the Republican Revolution, illustrating two different Buddhist paradigms (modernistic vs. traditional-conservative) of response to the respective challenges of politics and society. With Jan-Ulrich Sobisch's and Trine Brox's essay "Translations of Human Rights" (pp. 159–178) the reader is invited to Tibet. The authors dwell on problems of translating Western human rights (and other modern) concepts into the Tibetan context, even doubting the validity of the editors' approach of looking for similarities between global values and ancient cultures. Stephanie Römer's article "Human Rights and Exile-Tibetan Politics" (pp. 179–194) broaches one of the subjects the foregoing contributors had touched upon, but with regard to Exile-Tibetans: How is the concept of human rights politicized in the Tibetan context? This book would be highly deficient were it not for the final contribution "Women's Rights in the Vajrayana Tradition" (pp. 195–210) by Jampa Tsedroen (Carola Roloff), a Buddhist nun and teacher of Buddhist philosophy at the Tibetisches Zentrum, Hamburg. Referring to the institutionalized practice of ranking nuns below monks or attitudes supporting female prostitution as well as girl trafficking (in Thailand), her concern is that women's rights are not consequentially observed in any Buddhist tradition so far (p. 195). These nine highly illuminating and critical contributions are followed by an ex-

tensive bibliography (pp. 211–232), a glossary (233–242) including significant terms in English, Sanskrit, Chinese and Tibetan as well as short biographical notes on the authors and editors.

The overall impression might be summarized as follows: First, the subject “Human Rights and Buddhism” in the context of the ongoing globalization and localization process is so important that further case studies are necessary – last but not least with regard to the complex relationship between Buddhism, war and violence past and present. Second, the editors’ transdisciplinary, trans-cultural and transreligious approach may well prove very promising. Third, Buddhism in the various Buddhist countries is far from being monolithic, as is the case with Western attitudes and practices towards human rights. Fourth, humanism and human rights do not in principle contradict central teachings of (Theravada, Mahayana, Vajrayana) Buddhism. Fifth, the discourse of human rights in the Buddhist context is possibly more a problem of tradition vs. modernity than of a West-East transfer.

*Gudula Linck*

JOSEPH LELYVELD, *Great Soul: Mahatma Gandhi and his Struggle with India*.

New York: Alfred A. Knopf, 2011. 448 pages, US\$28.95. ISBN 978-0-307-26958-4

A scandal has erupted in recent months over the book under review, centring on the author’s alleged mention of an intensely homoerotic relationship between the Indian nationalist leader, ‘Mahatma’ Gandhi, and his German-Jewish friend Hermann Kallenbach. In reviewing this book, I shall use this controversy as my point of departure because it is the author’s discussion of Gandhi’s sexuality, more than anything else, which has captured popular imagination, and which therefore constitutes, in a sense, the book’s most significant message.

To be fair, Lelyveld deserves to be praised for bringing into focus Gandhi’s interactions with Kallenbach. The tenderness of their companionate relationship, “such love as, they hope, the world has not seen”, has occasionally been well highlighted by the author (see ‘An Agreement’, 29 July 1911, in *The Collected Works of Mahatma Gandhi*, vol. 96, Delhi: Government of India, 1997, p. 63). However, the book often misinterprets the relevant evidence. For instance, the author insinuates (p. 89) about the uses of cotton wool and Vaseline, while suppressing Gandhi’s reference to “corns”, probably on the feet, in connection with these objects (Letter to Hermann Kallenbach, 24 September 1909, in *ibid.*, pp. 28–29. I am indebted to Prof. Gita Dharampal-Frick of Heidelberg University for bringing to my attention these discrepancies.). The use of cotton wool and Vaseline, as remedies for blisters which developed into corns, is converted by Lelyveld into a hint about other uses of these same products. Lelyveld refers to a sentence where Gandhi speaks about Kallenbach’s possession of his

body, but does not mention that Gandhi was speaking half-humorously here about his use of a pen and a handkerchief given to him by his friend ( *ibid.*). Jokes between Gandhi and Kallenbach based on the pairing of the lower house and the upper house have also been interpreted in too physical a manner.

Over-interpretations like these seem to result from a lack of appreciation of the historico-theological contours of Gandhi's emotional life. The author cautions the reader about the need to keep the complexities and "the broader context" (p. 90) in mind, yet the text often undermines these injunctions by adopting a tone of insinuation and allusion that belies the author's stern warning to go beyond reductive readings. No wonder then that the media have chosen to pick up on these insinuations. Andrew Roberts, in his review of this book in *The Wall Street Journal* of 26 March 2011, uses 'evidence' like this to argue that Gandhi "was a sexual weirdo, a political incompetent and a fanatical faddist". One suspects that there is quite a bit of racism and homophobia involved in this sort of media coverage, legacies of colonialism which refuse to be exorcised. The perspective of the *Wall Street* reviewer is clarified when we read in the same article that the British left India in 1947 not because of any mass revolutionary politics, but "simply because the near-bankrupt British led by the anti-imperialist Clement Attlee desperately wanted to leave India anyhow after a debilitating world war."

Apart from this context of Gandhi-phobia, the controversies surrounding the book also originate from a modern lack of empathy for supra-mundane aspects of emotional life. We are badly in need today of an approach based on what I would call 'emotional theology', where human relationships can be understood as being linked to our relationship to the transcendental element. An inability to appreciate this has frequently led to controversies about the lives of inspired figures in the past. This is particularly true for India, where, in the pre-colonial period, divisions of gender and sexuality were often quite fluid, until Victorian influence began introducing more rigid hierarchies of sexual propriety from the nineteenth century on (including the criminalization of 'unnatural sex' through the Indian Penal Code).

Given these fluidities, devotionism in precolonial South Asia was often structured through intense imageries of love between devotee and God. Religious leaders also articulated their activities through passions which today would be considered as bordering on the sexual. These included what in some sects of Vaishnavism (such as the Chaitanyite piety of Bengal) was referred to as *radhabhava*, and which implied (in 'historical' terms) the deliberate feminization of the self as a political gesture for building solidarities with the 'subaltern'. In nineteenth and early twentieth century India, patterns of servilization (including, sometimes, feminization) formed a powerful repertoire of emotional behaviour which was often deployed – for instance by the religious leader Ramakrishna, the poet Rabindranath Tagore, and by Gandhi himself – to create a frame of anti-colonial culture. This in turn was related to the political necessity to mobilize the lower classes and women in a broad-based campaign

against the British Raj. Nationalists in late nineteenth and early twentieth century India, apart from deploying precolonial Indian traditions, also sometimes invoked early Christian appeals to women, the slaves, the poor and foreigners, and interpreted these as constituting a critique of the power frameworks of the Roman *imperium*. The vulnerable body was politicized as an ensign of rebellion against the empire. Submission to God and revolt against colonialism were linked together in the aesthetics of the subaltern body.

Modern biographers (sometimes, even ‘academic’ ones) in search of sensationalist stories have often underplayed these complexities, and instead projected the ‘sexual’ behaviour of Indian politico-religious leaders as being symptomatic of their deviancy. In doing so, they continue a longstanding colonial British trope that Indians are effeminate, sexually immature, and hence unsuited for political freedom. Needless to say, I have no intention of advocating a de-historicized reading of personal relationships which detaches the soul from the body, and speaks of ‘pure’ spiritual relationships. That would be to obscure the potential of the body to act as an instrument for uniting with the divine which ‘mystics’ themselves have always emphasized. However, the point I want to make is that Gandhi’s experiments with his flesh, as well as his commitment to human relationships, need to be contextualized within the broader landscape of his efforts to transform his self and the society he lived in. Reading the correspondence between Kallenbach and Gandhi, I was struck by the emphasis on ascetic self-improvement found in the letters exchanged between them. One misses a nuanced analysis of this aspect in Lelyveld’s descriptions of the relationship.

Lelyveld also demonstrates an unwillingness to appreciate the ‘many bodies’ of Gandhi – that is, the manner in which he was perceived and transformed by the Indian ‘masses’. Following the path-breaking studies of historians like Shahid Amin and David Hardiman, we are now aware that there were in fact multiple Gandhis: that peasants and forest peoples, in order to carry out their struggles against the British Raj, shaped their own autonomous images of a messianic-millenarian Gandhi which often widely diverged from what the man himself said or did. A ‘proper’ biography must focus on the connections between Gandhi as he was, and Gandhi as he was perceived, bridging the biographic and social-historical modes of narrativity. Contrarily, the absence of a theoretically informed perspective frequently causes the biographical gaze to lapse into a rehashing of well-known facts, piled up in tedious detail.

An inability to engage with epistemological complexities such as these constitutes a serious lacuna in Lelyveld’s book. After all, who is the ‘real Gandhi’, the Gandhi who mattered the most, who changed Indian history forever: the flesh-and-blood man – or his idealized image, his divine *Doppelgänger*, as imagined and deployed by diverse segments of Indian society? And where would one find the most ‘real’ dynamics between Gandhi and Kallenbach – in empirically unsubstantiated speculations and insinuations about the corporeal nature

of their relationship, or in their commitment to each other in a passionate search for transcendence about which we have enough evidence from their letters?

*Milinda Banerjee*

ROWENA ROBINSON, *Tremors of Violence. Muslim Survivors of Ethnic Strife in Western India*. New Delhi / Thousand Oaks, CA / London: Sage, 2005. 261 pages, 3 maps, US\$38.00. ISBN 0-7619-3408-1

The communal riots in Mumbai after the destruction of the Babri Masjid in 1992, and even more those engulfing central Gujarat in spring 2002, mark turning points in India's recent political and social history. Several thousand people – mostly Muslims – were murdered, and even more seriously injured, displaced or economically affected. So far, their plight has, however, mostly been reduced to a mere appendix to wider arguments about Indian secularism, citizenship rights, or state-society relations. Important as these issues may be, there has rarely been a sensitive study which listens to the survivors themselves. Rowena Robinson's book closes this gap with a carefully crafted ethnographic account of the aftermath of mass violence.

In her introduction, she reflects on the responsibility of social scientists in times of increasing Islamophobia and emphatically states her intention not just "to talk about Muslims [but], what is of greater significance, to listen to them: their speech and their silences, imperatives and equivocations. Categorized as 'Other', taunted as Pakistani if not vilified as terrorist, the Muslim in India today is an anonymous and frightening figure. [Thus] the time and moment to speak was now; for if we did not we might find that our reticence had cost us our world" (p. 23). Throughout, she remains sensitive to the political implications of her work, and in fact concludes with a string of policy recommendations, ranging from police reform to better education. Her analysis turns truly political in a more subtle way, too: in her insistence to take seriously the irreducible diversity of personal experience in the face of widespread groupism in public and academic discourse.

In the main chapters of her book she thus listens closely to the personal "worlds of violence remembered and the images along which these recollections are borne" (p. 33). Chapter two engages with two particularly powerful images: the increasing spatial segregation of urban living – rampant in Ahmedabad and still in progress in Mumbai – and the disturbing role of state authorities in communal violence. The latter point in particular is worth remembering these days, when Gujarati Chief Minister Narendra Modi styles himself as Prime Minister candidate; the dismissive attitude of his administration in fact marks the strongest difference between the Gujarat riots in 2002 and the violence in Mumbai a decade earlier. After a short but comprehensive statistical intermezzo in chapter three – which places the themes of her book in their wider context –,



Rowena Robinson moves on to discuss a number of narratives in more detail in chapters four and five, paying special attention to gender differences. In many women's narratives, for instance, trauma manifests itself in the ruptures of language itself – and was only tentatively integrated into wider life histories. This long-term process never quite results in a return to normalcy, however – at most it constitutes a strained and tension-filled “new normal”, often by blending the extraordinary violence of riots with the hardships and economic violence of daily life. In her analysis of male voices, the author comes to a key concern of her inquiry: the troubled notion of community. She carefully traces how violence creates “a sense of belonging to a single, and threatened, community” (p. 154), resulting in an overt assertion of unity while simultaneously glossing over sharp sectarian and political differences. Taking recourse to Agnes Heller's writing on personality and individuality, Rowena Robinson explores this paradox by demonstrating how activism in the wake of communal violence challenges earlier religious and secular certainties and opens up creative possibilities of reforming oneself and one's world. Consequently, chapter five ends with an exploration of the considerable diversity of Muslim civil society and Muslims in civil society, a theme broadened in chapter six to include “more ordinary members of the Muslim community, who categorically do not identify themselves as ‘religious’ leaders, for whom work in relief and rehabilitation has woven into a wider concern with social activism and improvement within the community” (p. 196).

Rowena Robinson's account of post-riot Mumbai and Gujarat is engaging and persuasive, while the interweaving of individual voices and wider concerns reveals considerable sociological skill. It is therefore particularly unfortunate that her book leaves implicit most of the methodological and conceptual questions involved in taking individual diversity seriously. One would want to learn more about the hows and whys of her analysis, precisely because the result of her craftsmanship is so compelling. Likewise, her terminology often remains unclear – be it her preference for “ethnic strife” rather than “communalism”, “Western India”, rather than Gujarat and Mumbai, or “survivors” rather than “victims”. All of these terms imply conceptual decisions, which would have warranted a more explicit justification – as would have a more systematic exploitation of the comparative angle in her work.

Her main point is however very well made: social scientists should not be content with confronting communalism, they should also unpack the underlying notion of community as such – a notion which begs explanation precisely due to its discursive omnipresence. In fact, the author herself relates that most of her interlocutors wanted her to write up their often painful stories, and to write them up well, for one specific reason: they believed that only by doing so would their individual voices be heard. Overall, Rowena Robinson truly excels in this mammoth task, which makes her book one of the finest studies on the aftermath of communal riots in contemporary India.

*Raphael Susewind*

ALFRED STEPAN / JUAN J. LINZ / YOGENDRA YADAV, *Crafting State-Nations. India and other Multinational Democracies*. Baltimore, MD: The Johns Hopkins University Press, 2011. XIX, 308 pages, US\$60.00. ISBN 978-0-8018-9724-5

The attempt to find an adequate democratic institutional arrangement and policies for diverse or multinational societies is probably as old as the discipline of comparative politics itself. Suggestions are manifold and cover a whole range of political institutions and policies from electoral systems to the nature of the political system (parliamentary vs. presidential) or federal arrangements. The attempt is extremely relevant because it seeks to provide means to democratically accommodate distinct ethnic and cultural groups within a country while maintaining national political coherence. And indeed, there have always been societies which successfully defied the logic of the Weberian ideal-type of the nation-state with its emphasis on the congruency of the state and the nation, thereby presenting exceptions to this powerful paradigm.

In *Crafting State-Nations. India and other Multinational Democracies*, Alfred Stepan, Juan Linz and Yogendra Yadav use a term already coined when they call these societies 'state-nations' and describe them as those "states (...) [that] are multicultural, and sometimes even have significant multinational components, which nonetheless still manage to engender strong identification and loyalty from their citizens, an identification and loyalty that proponents of homogeneous nation states perceive that only nation states can engender." They present this as some sort of new discovery and their book is meant to explore state-nations' distinct qualities as well as the specific policies necessary for their stability on the basis of various case studies and survey data from, inter alia, the World Values Survey, one of the largest and most original surveys ever designed and employed for comparative political research. In itself, however, such an assessment is not terribly new and there have been many scholarly explorations of why some democracies are more and some less successful in holding together strong, territorially concentrated minorities. The innovative approach of the book lies in its provision of perceptual data or, shall we say, an actor perspective, thereby conveying us an impression of the extent to which these democracies have also been able to inculcate strong loyalty to and identification with national institutions. Secondly, they present a rigorous comparative analysis of some of the policies which they deem adequate to instil such a sense of loyalty and identification among the citizenry (even though the authors state that they "have not aspired to write a "cookbook" for policy-makers or constitution-makers").

In the first chapter, the authors provide the conceptual underpinnings of their model of the state-nation. After contrasting the ideal-type of a democratic nation-state and a state-nation, Alfred Stepan, Juan Linz and Yogendra Yadav propose a set of policies which in their opinion facilitate the emergence and stability of a state-nation. They include, among others, the promotion of an

asymmetrical federalism, the co-existence of individual and group rights and the existence of a parliamentary system. The following chapters provide the empirical testing ground for the comparative assessment of the success of these policies and of the failure of those (potential) state-nations that abstained from implementing these policies and the concomitant institutions. Again, however, their ‘nested policy grammar’ (though it does not always denote policy, for example, when they write about the need for a pattern of multiple but complementary identities and for politically integrated instead of culturally assimilated populations – something which is hard to engineer and more of a ‘condition’ than a policy) reminds one of Lijphart’s characteristics of a consociational democracy as probably the most prominent formulation of an ideal institutional arrangement for diverse societies within comparative politics.

Most of the book draws its empirical evidence from India as one of the most prominent cases confirming the state-nation model. This focus on India is also the strength of the book, because, as the authors rightly state, the invaluable Indian experience has been largely neglected by mainstream democratisation literature. Chapter 2 provides the general narrative of why India succeeded in creating a functioning, democratic state-nation with all the well-known ingredients described in detail by Indian scholars, such as the three-language formula, a kind of flexible and asymmetric federalism, the Westminster parliamentary system and an early recognition of group rights along with a strong emphasis on individual rights. In addition, this achievement was embedded in a context of extreme cultural heterogeneity and poverty. In terms of providing empirical evidence, the chapter presents interesting survey data that confirm that Indians score comparatively high on the authors’ three state-nation indicators of country pride, institutional trust and democratic support.

However, India would not be India, if – apart from providing strong confirmation of the authors’ state-nation model – it did not also present significant challenges to it – at first sight at least. Chapter 3 looks into the most prominent of these challenges, namely the Punjab crisis, the insurgencies in the north-eastern hill states of Mizoram and Nagaland, and the Kashmir question. The authors show that there has indeed been a strong sense of political alienation in all three cases for varying reasons involving different dimensions (religious, historical, international). But while state-nation policies helped to resolve the Punjab crisis and the insurgency in Mizoram, they largely failed in Nagaland and Kashmir. According to Alfred Stepan, Juan Linz and Yogendra Yadav this is because of the endemic factionalism within the Naga insurgent movement, which stands in the way of a lasting solution, and, in the case of Kashmir, because of its unresolved international “stateness” problem and the lack of a truly democratic political setting.

Chapters 4 and 5 treat a topic well known to South Asia specialists: the comparative treatment of Tamil minorities within India and its southern neighbour Sri Lanka, and indeed these represent the most convincing part of the book in terms of a comparative assessment of the authors’ core argument. India’s

success in dealing with its Tamil minority or, for that matter, the Dravidian movement, by applying the above-mentioned 'nested policy grammar' contrasts compellingly with Sri Lanka's failure to craft a multinational democracy as a consequence of its hard nation-state policies.

The remainder of the book serves to further illustrate the main argument developed from the Indian / South Asian case. Chapters 6 to 8 address various attempts to find adequate institutional formulae/models (mainly federal ones) for culturally heterogeneous democracies. While chapter 6 deals with the unitary state of the Ukraine and its treatment of Russian minorities, chapter 7 looks into different federal arrangements, from those in the otherwise unitary nation-states of Finland and Denmark with regard to the Aland Islands in the first case and Greenland and the Faroe Islands in the latter, to the historical cases of South Tyrol and the Azores and the federacy formula that helped craft the recent peace agreement in Aceh, Indonesia. The concluding chapter examines the federal model of the United States, which is regarded as a kind of worst-case scenario for promoting democracy in robust multinational settings due to its legislative malapportionment, indivisibility of executive power, and plethora of veto points.

*Clemens Spiess*

SHAKUNTALA BANAJI (ed.), *South Asian Media Cultures. Audience, Re-presentations, Contexts*. (Anthem Press South Asian Studies). London: Anthem Press, 2010. 276 pages, £60.00. ISBN 9781843318422

In recent years, the growing academic interest in the field of media reflects the fervently discussed power of media in a globalized world. Media processes are therefore seen as crucial for understanding the realities and interaction of people. Focusing on media in South Asia, a region known for its high cultural, lingual, ethnic and religious diversity, as field of research, can be considered a considerable challenge. *South Asian Media Cultures* deals with various forms of media representation, ranging from cinema, radio or TV soap operas to internet blogs. As the subtitle reveals, the focus of this book is on particular audiences, such as students or marginalized tribal communities, and highlights reception and interaction processes. This enables a reconsideration of the construction of specific identities in varying contexts.

The papers critically examine discourses on (or images of) nationalism, state, gender, religion, class or other forms of community. Most of these aspects are a source of violence and conflict, e.g. the Hindu-Muslim confrontations in India or the civil war in Sri Lanka. Therefore the underlying questions of the book are the impact of media on meaning-making, the circulation of stereotypes and cultural practices in various socio-political contexts. The chapters which deal with production, consumption and experience of media in various case studies are organized around three main topics: "*uses and meanings, represen-*

tations and political context of production” (p. 14). In her article, Shakuntala Banaji considers children as an audience in India, a field of research that has hitherto hardly been of academic interest. Through her analysis of changing viewing habits in different social and regional contexts she deconstructs the idea of a 'typical' Indian child, interlinking her research on children's experience and their access to media with discussions on childhood in general. Understanding childhood as a modern rhetoric she examines its consequences in specific contexts. Another stimulating article by Britta Ohm explores the underlying medial dynamics of the communal riots in Gujarat 2002. This communal conflict between Hindus and Muslim is a politically explosive topic up to the present day. In her investigation she draws attention to press or TV coverage and refers to the problem of political impact and use in this context. She hereby raises globally highly relevant questions – namely, the character of media events and how they affect the construction of reality. Furthermore she reconsiders freedom of the press and the consequences of the quantity of visual representation. Paul D. Green presents another perspective when he illustrates the developments of Nepali music against the backdrop of historical and social-political changes over the last 60 years. Focusing on new audiences and actors on the media market, he examines translocal processes and influences from inside and outside, e. g. India or the United States. Moreover, Green presents an interesting point of view about the changing soundscape in the high, diverse Himalayan region and links it to an emerging Nepali consciousness and language. As mentioned above, processes of production, representation and interaction are identified in an innovative way throughout the book. But the “contributors do not necessarily agree with each other or even attempt to take up conclusive positions” (p. 260) which makes for what the editor claims the richness of this collection.

Regarding media as a global actor/phenomenon brings forth the entanglement of varying research methods and approaches. Banaji, currently lecturer at the London School of Economics, is specialized in Media and Communication in South Asia. Her book offers international and interdisciplinary perspectives and spotlights academically neglected regions like Nepal or Bangladesh. Despite the growing popularity of research on (popular) media forms (especially Hindi cinema), *South Asian Media Cultures* provides great insight into the complex South Asian mediascape. It represents a critical, reflective approach illustrating the recent trend of transnational and cross-disciplinary discussion. Therefore it should not be read as fully covering all media-related phenomena but as a stimulus for further reflection.

*Alexandra K. Schott*

STEPHANIE HEMELRYK DONALD / THERESA DIRNDORFER ANDERSON / DAMIEN SPRY (eds.), *Youth, Society and Mobile Media in Asia*. (Routledge Media, Culture and Social Change in Asia 19). London / Berlin: Routledge, 2010. XIV, 177 pages, US\$130.00. ISBN 978-0-415-54795-6

Mobile media technology affects the lives of young people more than ever before, as mobile users shift from older business people to a younger generation. The volume at hand focuses on the region of East and North Asia, South East Asia and Australia. It analyses new forms of mobile communication, their influence on literature and writing, the importance of family life and social networking, and the creative industry associated with mobile media. The authors of the essays combine a special interest in the Asia-Pacific area and the convergence of childhood, youth, and technology. Important contributions associate the global communications revolution with the dynamics of the latest mobile phones within the Asian region (p. 6). Accordingly, the essays discuss the influence of mobile technologies at the local, regional, national, and global level, and their importance to society.

The volume is divided into three parts: Mobility, Navigations, and Innovations. This division is effective in giving the reader a good overview of the various aspects. It provides, furthermore, a guide through the volume.

The introduction by Stephanie Hemelryk Donald deals with media competency of young people in the Asia-Pacific area. Media are shown to influence young people's communicative practices in both the social and moral sphere (p. 6–7). Nevertheless, one result, demonstrated by numerous examples, is that increasing (virtual) mobile communication carries the risk of anonymous sexual attacks on young women and girls (p. 22), sexualized experiments and fantasy experimentation (p. 11, 61–64, 115), also acting as a tool for the dissemination of sex, violence, and anxiety. Social problems such as interpersonal relations and the “active formation of relationships with anonymous others” (p. 37) are often provoked by new mobile technologies.

The article by Damien Spry discusses the ongoing debates about mobile media and childhood. Although parents want to raise their children to appreciate freedom and democracy, social-related problem areas such as control and discipline are inevitable (p. 28). On the one hand, mobile media are associated with friend-to-friend communication (p. 27–29) and connection with peers (p. 32). It has become a “remote-control mothering” (p. 18) to manage family life. Mobile media enable young people to broadcast themselves, organize their social, cultural and educational life (p. 133) and network with others all over the world – a new mode of “communication, friendship, play and self-expression” (p. 140) has begun. On the other hand, panic prevails as regards their moral effect and in this context the following aspects are taken into account: The role of mobile phones, firstly, for family and social life, secondly, in educational policy and, thirdly, in culture and literature.

Technology is becoming more and more sophisticated. Since 2000, a new Japanese culture of mobile phone, or *keitai*, exists: the *keitai* mail and the *keitai* novel, which is very popular among Japanese youth (see the essays by Misa Matsuda and Larissa Hjorth). Nearly 90 per cent of *keitai* have Internet capabilities (p. 31–33), thus, most of the young generation use it for emailing. A special jargon, a new creative “*keitai* language”, has been created. Misa Matsuda describes the circumstances surrounding this literacy phenomenon. The *keitai shōsetsu* (*keitai* novel) started to appear around 2004 when flat-rate packet service was introduced, and by 2006 almost half of the “Japanese fiction best sellers were originally written as *keitai* novels” (p. 36). Most of these stories are written by amateurs, some by professionals: They deal with teenage love and issues such as rape, teenage prostitution, pregnancy, abortion, suicide, and drugs (p. 36).

Sun Sun Lim gives an overview of how mobile media are presented in the editorials of Singaporean teen magazines, and analyses gender stereotypes in advertising (p. 43–56). Even in India, nation-branding campaigns utilise “mobility images” as symbolising a concrete expression of “modernity”.

Not only in the Asia-Pacific area, but also in India has the mobile phone become an important “friend in the pocket”. Indians are considered to be enthusiastic about technology. With more than 150 million mobile phone customers and the world’s fourth largest number of Internet users, young people use modern technology for communication as well as for the exchange of information, for business, and for self-marketing. For Indians, the desire to be mobile has become a “social event”, and the social significance is enormous. So far, no studies have been conducted that assess mobility in relation to exposition in blogs, portals, or social networks on the Internet. This raises the question of how mobility is assessed in India compared with Germany.

As this volume shows, new technologies influence young people’s lives. In recent years, mobility and mobile phones have become a social phenomenon, a key to the personal sphere (p. 140) as well as a “global defining symbol” (p. 141). Not only for academics but also for the interested public, this comprehensive volume offers insights into different ways of dealing with mobility and its assessment in the Asia-Pacific region. It is important to focus on Asian Media Studies, as Indrajit Banerjee says, especially in the field of intercultural (mobile) communication.

*Maria Rost*

CHRISTIANE BROSIUS, *India’s Middle Class: New Forms of Urban Leisure, Consumption and Prosperity*. (Cities and the Urban Imperative). New Delhi: Routledge, 2010. XVII, 381 pages, £70.00. ISBN 978-0-415-54453-5

The “new” middle class is one of the most fascinating and yet most complex aspects of contemporary Indian society. There are many conflicting views of this specific segment of the population in India, there is not even consensus

about its size. Much of this confusion is due to a lack of detailed qualitative studies of the Indian middle class. Christiane Brosius, Professor of Visual and Media Anthropology at the Cluster of Excellence “Asia and Europe in a Global Context: Shifting Asymmetries in Cultural Flows” at Heidelberg University, attempts to close parts of this research gap. Her study *India’s Middle Class: New Forms of Urban Leisure, Consumption and Prosperity* is the result of several years of fieldwork in India and represents a major contribution to India-related research in anthropology, sociology, media and cultural studies, and political science.

Brosius’ work is not intended to be an exhaustive analysis of the Indian middle class. Rather, it provides an assessment of specific “practices of distinction and regimes of pleasures” (p. 14) that characterise an Indian middle class which finds itself in a constant struggle to define its place and distance itself from other social strata (i.e. “below” and “above”). The re-affirmation of status and “middle-classness” can be achieved through “performative accumulation of various forms of capital [i.e. economic, social, symbolic, and cultural capital] by means of distinction and classification” (p. 15). Here and elsewhere throughout the book, Brosius draws on the work of Pierre Bourdieu. Her theoretical framework also includes concepts from Mark Liechty, Ulf Hannerz, Ulrich Beck, Arjun Appadurai, and Gerhard Schulze whose idea of an *Erlebnissesellschaft* plays a particularly significant role in Brosius’ analysis of the importance of sensuous experiences. The “flexible methodology” used is described as a “multi-sited ethnography” (p. 34ff.). Besides an assessment of an impressive pool of primary sources such as lifestyle magazines, Christiane Brosius also conducted a plethora of semi-structured and open interviews. Her frequent use of telling personal stories helps illustrate broader arguments and makes her book a particularly vivid and worthwhile read.

The three case studies in the book do not interpret the middle class in India as an entity that can easily be analysed. Rather, they provide glimpses of certain exemplary modes of status-creation and their location, i.e. the urban spaces of a megacity, the transnational religious-spiritual market, and the wellness, beauty, and wedding industry. The first part (“Belonging to the World-Class City”, p. 39–142) deals mainly with the “creation of an imaginary of the ‘world-class city’ in and through visual representations and texts of real estate advertisements” in Delhi (p. 40). Here, Brosius also analyses the re-creation of urban spaces and the “social control” exercised, for instance, in shopping malls that not everybody is allowed to enter (p. 49ff.). Secluded areas, gated communities, and condominiums provide the affluent middle class with the opportunity of “living abroad in India” (p. 65). According to Brosius, real estate advertisements generate and reinforce an “enclaved gaze” that legitimises distinction, seclusion, and discrimination and, thereby contributes to an “urban segregation” (p. 141ff.).

The second case study (“A Spiritual Mega-Experience: The Akshardham Cultural Complex”, pp. 143–257) deals with a site that has been described both as the “Vatican of India” and as the “Hindu Disney World” (p. 148). The Ak-



shardham Cultural Complex (ACC) in Delhi, opened in November 2005, is a combination of a leisure space, a spiritual theme park, and a “real” pilgrimage site. The complex was constructed by the Bochasanwasi Shri Akshar Purushottam Swaminarayan Sanstha (BAPS), an organisation of a Gujarat-based branch of Swaminarayan Hinduism that has been very active within the Indian diaspora and has created a transnational network of temples and religious-spiritual centers. In a way, the ACC represents an overseas concept successfully tested in the diaspora and now reintroduced into the Indian context in Delhi. While being a “consumption spectacle” with restaurants, museums, and an IMAX cinema theatre, the ACC also offers a “helping hand” for “those who seek refuge from the ‘dark sides’ of modernisation and westernisation [...], individual alienation and loneliness” (p. 332). Its rituals are seen as a “new means of distinction within the frames of class and leisure” that appeal particularly to a new middle class looking for an opportunity to balance their westernised professional surroundings by the exercise of an allegedly true cosmopolitan Indian identity based on the religious-cultural heritage of Hinduism (p. 333). Through these practices the ACC presents “BAPS as a legitimate authority or custodian of Hindu culture” (p. 222) and attempts to monopolise the provision of a cultural heritage for Non-Resident Indians (NRIs) in the diaspora and for alienated Indians at home. It is indeed one of the merits of Brosius’ book that it also sheds light on such rather problematic issues.

In the third and final part (“‘Masti! Masti!’ Managing Love, Romance and Beauty”, pp. 259–324), Christiane Brosius turns to the wedding, wellness, and beauty industry. In recent years, weddings in India have become more and more important as strategies of class distinction. The idea that leading a “good and beautiful life” has to be demonstrated through one’s wedding has been nurtured by the examples of some of the richest and most prominent families in India, e.g. the Chatwals or the Mittals. Further, this notion is also reinforced through the mass media. However, the search for a “traditional”, “ethnic chic” middle-class wedding may lead to a “heritage production” that reflects “internalised Orientalism” in the “self-conception of (middle-class) Indians along the lines of Orientalist projections” (p. 285). Brosius is equally critical of the booming wellness, fitness, and beauty industry in India: “Beauty and wellness almost become another regime of control and surveillance, and a moral duty [...]” (p. 340). Here, she makes an important observation: The permanent “contest of distinction” pressures middle-class Indians into a system of self-surveillance and self-discipline that seems impossible to escape (p. 340).

In all, *India’s Middle Class: New Forms of Urban Leisure, Consumption and Prosperity* provides an insightful and well-written account of an under-researched topic. The book is complemented by a vast number of colour photographs. It also contains a useful glossary of Indian (mostly Hindi) words, terms, and phrases as well as an extensive bibliography. Christiane Brosius’ impressive study can be highly recommended to all interested in contemporary India.

Pierre Gottschlich

KAMAL SIDDIQUI / JAMSHED AHMED / KANIZ SIDDIQUE / SAYEEDUL HUQ / ABDUL HOSSAIN / SHAH NAZIMU-DOULA / NAHID REZWANA, *Social Formation in Dhaka, 1985–2005. A Longitudinal Study in a Third World Megacity*. Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2010. XII, 406 pp., £65.00. ISBN 978-1-4094-1103-1

Dhaka is the fastest growing and most probably also the poorest megacity in the world. The population in the Capital Planning Region may well reach 15 million in 2012, growing as it is at an estimated rate of 450,000 per year. The exact numbers will soon be known; the figures in the 2011 census were much lower than expected, which has led to a heated debate; detailed numbers for urban areas are not yet available. In any case, every tenth Bangladeshi lives in the capital that is at least twice the size of the second biggest city, Chittagong. Located in the centre of the country, Dhaka has become easily accessible thanks to the many roads and bridges that have been built with international assistance since independence in 1971. The capital can be reached in a day from practically all places, the majority of the population can go to Dhaka and come back on the same day. The inhabitants of the capital hail from all districts. Dhaka is thus a microcosm of Bangladesh. Its people, i.e. that of the capital as well as of the country, is homogeneous, more so than in any other country in South Asia: Almost all are Bengali and speak Bangla. Ninety percent are Muslim, almost all Sunni. That was not always so: Before the partition of India, Bengal and Assam in 1947, almost one third of the people living in the area of present-day Bangladesh were Hindus, most of them fled to India; those who remained belong mostly to the lowest castes; only few of the upper caste/upper class Hindus stayed on. There are a small number of Christians. A large number of the tribal population of around one million are Buddhists, Christians and animists. There are still around 300,000 Biharis, i.e. Urdu-speaking Muslims, often Shia, who migrated to East Pakistan in 1947 and got stuck in Bangladesh in 1971. Many of them live in Dhaka. But for a city of its size the population is unusually homogeneous.

Dr. Kamal Siddiqui, a former top bureaucrat and presently professor at the University of the South Pacific, is the leading capacity on South Asian megacities in general and on Dhaka in particular. In the 1980s he led a team of researchers studying the people of Dhaka. The resulting book was the first of its kind in South Asia: Kamal Siddiqui, Sayeda Rowshan Qadir, Stitara Alamgir, Sayeedul Huq, *Social Formation in Dhaka City. A Study in Third World Urban Sociology*. Dhaka: The University Press Limited, 1990 (for a review see Vol. 21(1990), pp. 369–372, of this journal). Dr. Siddiqui et al. also brought out *Megacity Governance in South Asia* (Dhaka: The University Press, 2004), a comparative study of the region's five biggest cities, i.e. Kolkata, Mumbai, Delhi, Karachi and Dhaka.

*Social Formation in Dhaka, 1985–2005* is the most comprehensive and up-to-date work on the subject. The authors distinguish several social groups,

namely, the residents of government quarters; the educated middle class; the richest people; the formal sector poor; the informal sector poor; beggars, prostitutes and criminals; special areas and groups. Part of the chapter on the 'formal sector poor' deals with female garment workers, the largest group of industrial workers in the country, and particularly in Dhaka, where most of the ready-made garments and knitwear industries are concentrated.

Three findings should be emphasized, namely (1) that the savings habits of the garment workers have not been encouraged through any institutional efforts (micro credit concentrates more on investment in small business than on saving), (2) that garment workers are not recognized by the trade unions as industrial workers, and (3) that the garment sector has not been given the status of a 'real industry'. Why this sector is not considered an industry and what this means is not revealed. But it seems that such a status brings financial privileges that are defended by established industries (pp. 211–217).

Among the 'informal poor' the authors distinguish rickshaw pullers, street children (*tokais*), hawkers, maidservants, poor female heads of households, beggars, prostitutes and criminals.

The authors describe the methods used to collect information as follows: "Finding relevant information to understand social change over a period of two decades was a challenging task. We had to deal with not only 'length and breadth' but also 'depth' issues. We had, therefore, to employ several methods of data collection. These were mainly as follows: (a) a household survey based on stratified random sampling (i.e. General Household Survey, GHS, and Government Quarters Survey, GQS) in both 1985 and 2005, based on a structured questionnaire, covering Dhaka City Corporation area with municipal holding numbers; (b) comparison of data on 100 targeted households, i.e. of the survey data generated for the same 100 households covered by GHS in 1985 and 2005; (c) stratified random household survey for government officials (living in government quarters) in both 1985 and 2005, based on the questionnaire mentioned at (a) above; (d) case studies of selected groups of people; (e) gathering information from selected respondents; (f) focus group discussion (FGD) with selected people, including FGD on certain issues with the participation of various stakeholders; (g) interview of government and semi-government officials; and (h) perusal of secondary materials, including newspaper reports, journals, books and magazines." (p. 21).

Payment of holding tax was used as an indicator that people were "at least out of extreme, if not moderate, poverty" (p. 21). Based on the amount of holding tax paid, four zones are distinguished: Zone 1 of the old lower middle class, mainly living in Old Dhaka and nearby areas; zone 2 of the new middle class in Motijheel, Dhanondi, Gulshan, Mohammedpur, Ramna and surrounding areas; zone 3 of the new lower middle class in Jafral, Shyamali, Jatrabari and Kamrangir Char, zone 4 of the upper middle class and rich in selected areas of Gulshan, Dhanmondi, Ramna, Airport and Uttara. The study is thus restricted to the area administered by the Dhaka City Corporation (DCC); the suburbs

outside DCC, where several million people live, is not included. Appendix I explains the different delimitations of Dhaka used by the various bodies, namely Dhaka Statistical Metropolitan Area (DSMA); Dhaka Metropolitan Area (DMA); Dhaka Cantonment Board; Dhaka conurbation or Greater Dhaka; Old and New Dhaka; Dhaka City Corporation (DCC); Dhaka Planning Area (RAJUK), and Dhaka's Water and Sewerage Authority (WASA).

The questionnaires are reprinted in Appendix II. Laying out the results follows a rigid pattern with little room for explanations, which sometimes leaves the reader guessing. The authors for example tell us that there are 130,000 hawkers, but only 50 were interviewed (pp. 253–54). On other pages of the book we find such narratives. In the chapter on domestic servants we learn that “even in enlightened households known for good behaviour, certain ‘caste-like’ attitudes did not thaw over the two decades [since the first survey]. Thus, the servant never sat on the sofa or chair, but squatted on the floor. ... She or he would in many houses use a separate glass to drink water ... This indeed contrasts sharply with teachings of both Islam and ‘secular liberalism’ to which the city elite owed its formal allegiance.” (p. 262).

Appendix III lists the instructions for investigators; Appendix IV introduces the places of interest in and around Dhaka; Appendix V contains a list of organisations directly concerned with Dhaka City and Appendix VI a glossary of abbreviations and local terms, followed by an exhaustive bibliography and a detailed index.

The book will be the authoritative compendium for Dhaka's social formation for many years to come. It sets a fine example of academic rigour and is an excellent starting point for more, and more detailed, research on the City. It is especially valuable for the group of Bangladeshi and German researchers presently engaged in studying Dhaka as part of the programme “Megacities – Megachallenges”, funded by the Deutsche Forschungsgemeinschaft. It came out just in time for all those who are finalizing their reports and for others who have started to take an interest in this rapidly growing city.

*Wolfgang-Peter Zingel*

MICHAEL HITCHCOCK / VICTOR T. KING / MICHAEL PARNWELL (eds.), *Heritage Tourism in Southeast Asia*. Copenhagen: NIAS Press, 2010. 320 pages, £18.99. ISBN 978-87-7694-060-7

A reviewer of an earlier version of this volume, *Tourism in Southeast Asia*, published in 1993, noted that it was a “shame” that Indochina and Myanmar were dealt with only in passing. In the book at hand, this lack has been addressed: the thirteen chapters present cases from Vietnam and Cambodia as well as Indonesia, Taiwan, Thailand, Singapore and Malaysia. Myanmar remains the odd one out, and a few words about its maverick status in the region and in

academia might have been warranted. This nevertheless ambitious regional spread is complemented by the book's coherence. The editors' introduction provides a useful overview of themes in current tourism studies, and competently presents the recurring topics of the volume: the question of heritage ownership, predicaments of access vs. conservation, entertainment vs. education (or that chimera: "edutainment"), the selection and use of heritage for identity politics, and the scalarity of heritage processes, especially when investigating the role of UNESCO at the local, regional and national level. The editors argue that the nations of Southeast Asia have experienced a particular historical development, with colonial powers attempting to foster a sense of national identity in the subject population "to differentiate their territories from other neighboring states, which were in turn invariably in the possession of other competing colonial powers" (p. 4); subsequently, post-independence governments were faced with the considerable challenge of re-inventing their nations without simply maintaining the colonial narratives. They needed to "express indigenous achievement ... against Western interpretations of the sites as evidence of indigenous failure, inertia and neglect" (ibid.). Further, it is argued that there is a specific conception of heritage, which goes against the "Western" grain: according to the very interesting NARA document from Japan, "in East Asian cultures ... the stress is on the continuity of use of heritage buildings rather than structure and material" (p. 7). This dilemma introduces conflicts over "freezing" heritage vs. "lived/living heritage", which are picked up by several of the contributors. The introduction makes it clear that heritage needs to be understood as both a political tool and an element of an industry, two aspects which significantly influence each other in Southeast Asia.

The strongest chapter follows. Kathleen Adams focuses on scalar "romances and rivalries" (p. 30) over a Toraja homecoming festival. In order to address how economics and politics relate to alleged folklore, the term "fixing" is used: "dynamic locales" are both 'repaired' and 'objectified' (p. 31) as various actors struggle over the selection, definition, and use of heritage. Theoretically sophisticated, and empirically rich, Adams is able to convincingly interpret a complex case study. Mami Yoshimura and Nick Stanley go on to describe conceptual shifts in "The reconstruction of Atayal Identity". By means of diagrams, it is shown how, through outside influence and internal dynamics, identity markers are shifted among referents over time. The short chapter by Michael Hitchcock and Nick Stanley on the current popularity of "outdoor ethnographic museums" throughout Southeast Asia connects this phenomenon to narratives of nationhood. Can-Seng Ooi has good points to make about the "self-Orientalization" of Singapore, while Keiko Miura offers a plausible comparison between Angkor and Var Phou, with special attention again to scalarity. The example of Melaka (presented by Nigel Worden) reveals a complex mix of colonial heritage and current concerns well. Gwynn Jenkins looks at urban development in George Town, Penang, and its problem-fraught relation to heritage concerns. Mark Johnson offers revealing insights into the relationships

between tour guides, archaeologists and domestic tourists in Hue, Vietnam: the tour guides find themselves validated by the austere and interested North Vietnamese, while enjoying themselves more in the company of the more leisurely South Vietnamese, who grant them some distance from the earnestness of heritage – a clever twist to the tourist gaze! Hitchcock et al. provide a cogent discussion of the social life of souvenirs in Vietnam, while Michael Parnwell adds the book's only study of natural heritage in his comparison of drowned karst landscapes in Vietnam and Thailand. This is another outstanding chapter, skillfully integrating diverse topics and asking just the right questions about choices and stakes in conservation.

Overall, the chapters are of a sensible length and several will be suitable for classroom use. My criticism concerns the title, which would have been more apt in reverse: "tourism heritage" is what is presented throughout. Tourists as such feature rarely, and though the even-handed introduction masks this imbalance, this (anthropologist) reviewer found the lack of 'actual people' striking. The chapter by Wantanee Suntikul et al. illustrates this well: in discussing "Vietnam's heritage attractions in transition", they begin by questioning tourist motivations, consider 'messages' sent to tourists via heritage etc., but soon lose touch: the rest of the paper concerns urban planning and high level policy decisions, i.e. basically their idea of what tourists expect. Readers seeking case studies on what tourists *actually* do with heritage in Southeast Asia must seek elsewhere.

*Felix Girke*

SØREN IVARSSON / LOTTE ISAGER, *Saying the Unsayable. Monarchy and Democracy in Thailand*. (NIAS Studies in Asian Topics 47). Copenhagen: NIAS Press, 2010. 271 pages, £16.99. ISBN 978-87-7694-072-0

This volume contains a series of articles that challenge the dominant and popular view of the monarchy in Thailand today. The "standard total view" (p. 2) of King Bhumibol – repeated *ad nauseam* by the Western media – portrays him as a benevolent and moral leader and a guardian of democracy beloved and revered as a "god-king" by his subjects. This book examines how this "commodified and mass-mediatised ideology of supernatural royal power" (p. 3) came about and how it is consistently used to undermine Thai democracy.

One focus of the book are the "cultural and ideological foundations" of the monarchy. Peter Jackson examines how the current king has been given "god-like" qualities by weaving together the Buddhist notion of a "righteous king" (*dhammaraja*) with the Brahmanical "god-king" (*devaraja*) (p. 35). This enabled the royalists to tap into the widespread cult traditions of the rural population and later to relate to newly emerging "prosperity religions" (p. 45), commoditising the monarchy to fit the free-market mass-media, whilst at the same

time offering a kind of moral counterpoint to the ravages of globalisation and neoliberal capitalism.

A central part of the king's image is his portrayal as a key development thinker, captured in the many pictures of him poring over maps, striding through the countryside and talking to villagers etc. Lotte Isager and Søren Ivarsson discuss how his "concept" of "sufficiency economy" has become a kind of institutionalised royalist development strategy that increases the king's "pastoral power" (p. 225). Of little substance other than a vague rehashing of Buddhist calls for moderation and a "middle way," sufficiency economy resonates with culturalist rejections of "Western" capitalism that stress "Thainess". As Andrew Walker goes on to show, the theory was particularly useful as a counter-model to attack any vestige of welfare state policies implemented by the Thaksin governments which were routinely dismissed by the royalists as "populist," "unsustainable" and therefore greedy and "unthai." On the ground, however, the sufficiency economy's portrayals of village life contradict the reality of rural livelihoods, where most people do not have any or sufficient land and increasingly interact with a diversified "outside" economy. Rather, its main purpose seems to be to spread the message "that the appropriate role for the rural population lay in localized and modest pursuits" (p. 262).

The second focus of the book deals with "Thai-style democracy" and challenges the "standard total view" head-on, particularly deconstructing the propaganda of the "democratic king." In his discussion of the post-1932 struggle between the royalists and the People's Party, Nattapoll Chaiching shows convincingly that King Prajadhipok (and later Bhumibol) actively intervened and schemed against the new democracy. Kevin Hewison and Kengkij Kitirianglarp show how these royalist anti-democratic manoeuvres were elevated to the "theory" of 'Thai-Style Democracy' (*prachathipatai baep thai*) by general Sarit and royalist politicians like Kukrit Pramoj in the 1950s. This diatribe against "Western" ideas of democracy claimed that "the Thai people" respected their "good" king like a father who offered moral leadership and order. This suggestion of the Buddhist concept of a virtuous king implies a kind of moral constitution somehow answerable to the people – "the monarchy is claimed to be an inherent element of a Thai democratic system that has existed for centuries" (p. 189). The notion of 'Thai-Style Democracy' underpinned consistently anti-democratic interventions by Bhumibol, whose "few statements of support for parliamentary politics" were made in situations where he needed parliament to "restore order when authoritarian-military regimes failed to do so" (p. 190). It is no surprise that the concept was wheeled out as a justification of the 2006 coup.

In order to keep the ideological construct of the "standard total view" intact, the soft "pastoral" and "ethno-political" powers of the monarchy are backed up by repressive power. In particular, rigid *Lèse-Majesté* laws make criticism of the monarchy punishable by up to 15 years in prison. As shown by David Streckfuss, this legislation was used more and more frequently to stifle criticism of the monarchy, with 126 prosecutions in 2007 compared to 5 per year be-

tween 1992 and 2004. Direct military interventions are of course another aspect of repressive power and Han Krittian provides new insights into the link between the palace and the army, particularly in his discussion of the revival of the Internal Security Operations Command (ISOC). Contrary to hopes of Western good governance advisors, the royalist factions within the army are convinced that they need to engage in a “battle for the people” to defend the existing order and the monarchy.

At times, contributors seem to overstate the power of the monarchy, e.g., despite its economic and political clout and its huge ideological and cultural *Überbau*, it was powerless to prevent the recent election victory of the Thaksin camp. As David Streckfuss points out, a “new political consciousness” has emerged with “an openness in voicing discontent [...] with the monarchy” (p. 138), best seen by the redshirt movement. The anti-royalist and republican tradition in Thailand, i.e. those who did and actually do “say the unsayable” would have deserved a chapter or two. Nevertheless, the book is a welcome addition to a small but increasing number of publications critically examining the institution of the monarchy in Thailand and can be highly recommended.

Oliver Pye

JOAKIM ÖJENDAL / MONA LILJA (eds.), *Beyond Democracy in Cambodia. Political Reconstruction in a Post-Conflict Society*. (Democracy in Asia 12). Copenhagen: NIAS Press, 2009. XVI, 320 pages, £18.99. ISBN 978-87-7694-043-0

Cambodia is not on the road to democracy. According to the introductory note by the editors Joakim Öjendal and Mona Lilja, one has to go ‘beyond’ the idea of democratic transition in order to understand Cambodian politics and society since the UN intervention in the mid-90s. While UN intervention relatively easily established an ‘electoral democracy’, profound democratic consolidation proved to be more problematic. Foreign intervention did not plant a slowly but steadily growing seed of democracy but created a shaky ‘hybrid’ between authoritarian and democratic structures. While the peacekeeping force UNTAC stabilized the country in the short term and strengthened the ‘moral right to rule’ of the (CPP) government, democratic institutions did not automatically produce a grass-roots democratic consolidation.

Even worse, formal democratic procedures like elections have been used to strengthen traditional authoritarian and patrimonial styles of rule and to tighten the government’s grip on the country. Thus, democracy becomes a vehicle for neo-patrimonial rule. While there are formal democratic rules and institutions, the political habitus of the populace and the ruling elite lags behind and adheres to traditional political values and patrimonial power strategies. In order to measure the ‘realness’ of democratic consolidation, the contributors to



the volume therefore attempt to track the internal and external legitimacy of democratic values and practices as a 'litmus test' (cf. p.17). Hence, the reasoning goes, as long as there is no belief in and no practice of democratic values, there is no 'real' democracy.

The result of the 'litmus test' presented by the contributors to measure success and failure of democratic consolidation is multilayered and complex. Sophal Ear, for example, shows how the regime gained support (aid in particular) from the international community through staging elections. However, at the same time internal legitimacy decreased since the sheer amount of aid made it unnecessary for the CPP government to build up internal legitimacy due to the fact that the aid was sufficient to finance the patrimonial power base of the party. Aid thereby weakens the state's capacity (or will) to collect taxes and moreover leads to a 'brain drain' from the government and private sector to the donor community. Most contributors believe that internal legitimacy of democratic procedures in Cambodia remains weak. As shown by Caroline Hughes in her article, votes during elections reflect the patrimonial authority of the contenders and their capacity to mobilize their clients rather than their (democratic) programmatic appeal and arguments.

Kheang Un's judgement on the establishment of the 'rule of law' is even more straightforward. Due to the lack of financial means and the concomitant widespread corruption as well as constant political interference, the rule of law applies only to the poor and powerless – those who cannot bribe the judge in order to overrule the other. Here, at least in theory, the rule of law applies. But in practice, judges don't 'see the need' to work on cases without financial stimuli. In a similar vein, Laura McGrew contends that instead of bringing perpetrators to justice the Khmer Rouge tribunal (ECCC) only legitimizes a regime that was (at least partially) once party to genocide.

Other contributors take a more undecided and thereby more complex view of democratic consolidation. Kim Sedara and Joakim Öjendal's discussion of decentralization programs such as the UN program 'Seila' aimed at creating formally independent Commune Councils shows how democratic consolidation can be successful, despite being largely ignored by the villagers and the elite while being used at the same time for consolidating power through clientelism. While the election of a Commune Council bridges the gap between high politics and the populace and thereby establishes a certain degree of normalcy and trust after decades of war, it also bridges the power gap between the ruling CPP and the village level. Hence, the CPP was able to make use of the council in order to tighten its control in the countryside.

Malin Hasselskog, moreover, points to the embeddedness of programs like Seila in the local context of power and contestation, thereby leading to hybrid adaptations and reinterpretations of the program. Local conditions prevent an easy 'creation' of councils. The political legitimacy of the new institutions is not simply created from scratch but becomes part of a field of contestation to which it has to adapt and in which it has to prove its usefulness in the eyes of

the populace. Two cases of political protest analyzed by the author, for example, illustrate that the villagers still prefer traditional forms, institutions and patterns of protest. Furthermore, many villagers did not perceive the village meetings as an opportunity to voice their opinions but rather as a small investment enabling them to get more funds from the project later on.

John Marston shows in his contribution how Buddhist institutions and authorities are slowly starting to emerge after decades of suppression. Although still in their beginnings and largely scattered, some religious authorities like Buth Savong and Ven. Sam Bunthoeun have managed to establish themselves as a political force supporting or challenging state power. Still in its fledgling stage is also the emergence of female politicians in a male-dominated political sphere (Mona Lilja). Returnees from diaspora communities in the US and France make use of a new discourse on women as a caring force capable of governing society in times of distress and crisis. Furthermore, they utilize a monopoly over specific knowledge to negotiate the hierarchy between the two sexes.

Overall, the volume contributes to the debate on democratic consolidation in Cambodia by closely dissecting processes transforming formal democratic institutions into vehicles of neo-patrimonial rule (widely known but up till now not closely elaborated). Furthermore, it makes clear how the functioning of democratic processes depends on the political habitus of the populace and the political elite. Unfortunately it fails to elaborate on what is meant by a 'real democracy'. Although the editors dismiss a quasi-natural transition towards democracy, thereby pointing to the complexities of Cambodian politics, they implicitly still propagate an ethical imperative towards 'real' democratic consolidation at the end of the road – while largely leaving its 'realness' as an empty regulative idea.

*Daniel Bultmann*

ARNDT GRAF / SUSANNE SCHRÖTER / EDWIN WIERINGA (eds), *Aceh. History, Politics and Culture*. Singapore: ISEAS, 2010. XVIII, 386 pages, US\$59.90. ISBN 978-981-4279-12-3

"This book is an attempt at providing helpful background information on Acehese history, politics and culture which could benefit expatriate aid workers as well as foreign and domestic scholars in their dealings with the people of Aceh." So it says on the back page of this book.

This is indeed most welcome since Aceh is a region of Indonesia which, due to its prolonged armed struggle, was for a long time not accessible to empirical research. In the meantime, all relief agencies that had come to the country after the tsunami hit the province on December 26, 2004 have left the region. For this target group at least, the book comes a bit late. But it is still helpful for a new generation of researchers.

The 17 contributions in this book are of varying quality and usefulness. No doubt, all the authors are experts on Indonesia but in some cases more elaborate research results are to be found in their previous publications. That is why the articles with up-dated information are rather limited, e.g. on the economic and political setting after the tsunami. There is no documentation of the damage caused by the tsunami or the rehabilitation process which started immediately afterwards. No information is given on the social and psychological disorders caused by this event or on how to overcome them. No word about how relief and reconstruction was organized, or non-organized, or the conclusions one could draw from it.

Nevertheless, the effects of the tsunami are not completely left out: contributions on “tsunami poetry”, music and humanitarian aid, analysis of “letters to the editor” and “a painter’s tale” are all fascinating to read, but they unfortunately deal with rather marginal facets of a tragedy which hit Aceh so severely.

Some other shortcomings of this compilation must be mentioned: There is a contribution on “Nias and Simeulue islands”, but in fact it contains nothing of recent or analytical value about Simeulue. Why did it not just deal with Nias which is interesting enough? Another contribution on “Islam in Aceh” by an Indonesian scholar and expert in Quranic exegesis is indeed significant yet it has one major deficit: no word about recent sharia by-laws (*quanuns*) in Aceh. They were introduced in 2000 and have led to punishments such as caning and stoning. Nor does this text mention how the sharia police now tries to intimidate the people etc., which has promptly caused a public uproar in the secular Jakarta press and also in the international media.

To sum up: This book has two merits: it is a collection of all German expertise on this subject, and the contributions on the history of Aceh, the peace process and the cultural constellation in the province are essential and worth reading. In spite of its shortcomings, this book is an invitation to come to Aceh and do research on the spot, preferably in close cooperation with local scholars.

*Hans F. Illy*

GEOFFREY KEMP, *The East Moves West. India, China, and Asia’s Growing Presence in the Middle East*. Washington, DC: Brookings Institution Press, 2010. VIII, 326 pages, US\$29.95. ISBN 978-0-8157-0388-4

*The East Moves West* is a detailed geopolitical account of economic and strategic relations within the entire Asian continent. Further elaborating on an article with the same title published in *The National Interest* (84:71–77) in 2006, the author, Geoffrey Kemp, emphasizes the growing importance not only of the rising powers India and China, but also of their interconnectedness in the greater region, namely with the countries of the Middle East. Kemp is Director of Regional Strategic Programs at the Nixon Center and used to serve in the

Pentagon and the White House. He begins by posing several questions as 'drivers of the book': To what extent will major Asian countries be drawn into the complicated geopolitics of the Middle East? How will intra-Asian rivalries play out? And how will Asia's new powers interact with the countries that have traditionally dominated the region?

Geoffrey Kemp identifies three characteristics of the region that account for its significance: the accumulation of the world's largest fossil fuel reserves in 'The Energy Ellipse' stretching from Oman and Yemen in the south to Russia and Kazakhstan north of the Caspian Sea; the world's most dangerous conflicts in 'The War Zone' from Israel and Palestine in the West to Kashmir in the East; as well as the emergence of 'The Super Rich' states in the Gulf region.

The book consists of two major parts, the first of which provides a detailed account of the historical and contemporary relations between China, India, Pakistan, Japan and South Korea on the one hand and the Middle Eastern countries on the other. The extensive sequence of geopolitical, economic and military facts turns the reading of this book into an arduous undertaking, although it is meant to be very practice-oriented. Yet, precisely these voluminous details close a knowledge gap and give an overview of recent developments that go unnoticed by the Western reader, due to the fact that, for once, the West is not involved. Only in the second part, that deals mostly with infrastructure projects (such as tourism, the reestablishment of the silk road trading routes, and the construction of pipelines across the region) as well as strategic issues and the maritime environment (including piracy, nuclear proliferation, naval and other military cooperation, as well as unresolved internal and regional conflicts), is the influence and role of the USA in the Middle East and Asia discussed.

One of the author's findings should be pointed out: the bulk of the relations established between Asia and the Middle East is of an economic nature and thus morally blind. In spite of many long-standing conflicts in both regions, states have been able to build and maintain good relations with conflicting parties, because they do not relate their activities with political demands or religious issues. That greatly differentiates these relationships from Western involvement in both regions. The book states clearly that even though rising Asian influence in the Middle East means a decrease of Western impact, the Asian powers are not seeking to replace the United States in the region, but prefer to maintain their own neutrality. Equally, the Middle Eastern states also seem comfortable with the diversification of relationships towards the East, as this creates a diversification of dependencies at the same time. This neutrality is seen especially in the case of Israel, which "the most successful Asian countries regard [...] as a similarly successful country that they can do business with rather than a pariah to be boycotted". But the author also wonders "how long they can sustain their hands-off approach [...] if [...] they get drawn into the messiness of Middle East politics at a time when the United States becomes disillusioned by the burdens of hegemony."

The last chapter of the book is devoted to 'Alternative Scenarios and Uncertainties', of which there are various in this part of the world. Geoffrey Kemp chooses to develop four scenarios which include critical uncertainties that could hamper the present developments and give them a completely different direction. These scenarios illustrate additional answers to the 'driving' questions of the book, especially concerning possible intra-Asian rivalries, and thus round it off.

*The East Moves West* is an important contribution to a field of study that has so far been neglected by Western scholars. It is a solid introduction to the topic for students of international relations and at the same time a detailed basis for further research, not only providing comprehensive information on the region, but also depicting possible future developments and research avenues.

Luisa Seiler

JOHN MAKEHAM, *Transmitters and Creators. Chinese Commentators and Commentaries on the Analects*. (Harvard East Asian Monographs 228). Cambridge, MA / London: Harvard University Asia Center, 2003. XI, 457 pages, US\$50.00. ISBN 0-674-01216-X

Anliegen der vorliegenden Publikation ist es, wie in der Introduction (S. 1–20) formuliert, die einschlägige Kommentarliteratur zu einem der weit über China hinaus auch für Japan, Korea und Vietnam wichtigsten Bücher „zwischen den Zeilen“ zu lesen. Es handelt sich um vier Schlüsselkommentare zu den „Gesprächen“ (*Lunyu* bzw. *Analects*), die Konfuzius (551–479 v. Chr.) von seinen Schülern zugeschrieben wurden. Die Kommentare erstrecken sich über einen Zeitraum von mehr als einem halben Jahrtausend, von He Yan (190–249) und Huang Kan (488–545) über Zhu Xi (1130–1200) bis hin zu Liu Baonan (1791–1855) und Sohn. Da die vorangegangene Kommentarliteratur der Frühen Hanzeit im letzten Teil und systematischer noch in den Appendices A und B in den Blick genommen wird, setzt die Studie erst danach ein. Entsprechend ist das Buch in vier Teile gegliedert mit jeweils 2–3 Kapiteln. Kapitel 1 liefert jeweils eine historische, philosophische sowie gattungsgeschichtliche Einordnung des Kommentators bzw. seines Textes, während die anderen Kapitel mit der Kommentarliteratur als Philosophie befasst sind, und zwar in ihrer epochenspezifischen Ausprägung ebenso wie in ihren spezifischen Fragestellungen, die diesen Zeitraum übergreifend als Teil des kulturellen Gedächtnisses erhalten sind.

Um das Problem der Autorintention oder des hermeneutischen Zirkels gar nicht erst aufkommen zu lassen und seinen eigenen Ansatz zu veranschaulichen, wählt der Verfasser die Metaphorik des Spiels: So gelingt es ihm, die vom Autor gesetzten Spielregeln, die Spieler (Leser/Kommentatoren) und das gespielte Spiel (Lesart/Interpretation) in ihrer kon-kreativen Situation zusammenzuschauen. Im Fokus auf das, was der Text (das Spiel) selbst nahe legt (*scrip-*

*tural meaning*) kann nach Meinung des Verfassers am ehesten grenzenlose Hermeneutik bzw. Semiotik vermieden werden.

Wenn auch die Genese der „Gespräche“ des Konfuzius als Narrativ im Dunkeln bleibt, so wissen wir doch, dass Sammlungen von Aussprüchen, die ihm zugeschrieben wurden, lange im Umlauf waren, bevor sie als Buch zwischen 150–140 v. Chr. vorlagen. Die Textgeschichte der untersuchten Kommentarliteratur ist in den Appendices C bis F dargelegt. Auf die insgesamt sechs Appendices folgen 30 Seiten Literaturverzeichnis sowie 12 Seiten Indices, von denen der erste auf die behandelten Textstellen aus den „Gesprächen“ und der zweite, der General Index, auf die Textstellen der Publikation selbst verweist.

Teil I „Commentary as Authority. He Yan et al.: *Lunyu jijie* (Collected Explanations of the *Analects*)“ (S. 21–77) dreht sich vor allem um zwei Fragen: 1. War He Yuan, dem dieser Kommentar zugeschrieben wird, der alleinige oder wenigstens der maßgebliche Autor? 2. Da He Yuan der philosophischen Strömung der *Xuanxue* (Lehre vom Dunkeln) zugeordnet wird, stellt sich die Frage nach konzeptuellen bzw. terminologischen Spuren dieser epochenspezifischen philosophischen Neuorientierung. Beide Fragen, die offensichtlich miteinander zusammenhängen, verneint der Autor. Vielmehr ist davon auszugehen, dass der Kommentar von mehreren Verfassern stammt und damit übrigens den Reigen des Genre der kollektiven Kommentarliteratur eröffnet. Dahinter stand offensichtlich das Anliegen des Verfasserkollektivs es Konfuzius nachzutun, d. h. nicht als Innovatoren (*creator*), sondern als bloße Übermittler (*transmittor*) zu fungieren.

Teil II „Commentary as Philosophy. Huang Kan’s *Lunyu yishu* (Elucidation of the Meaning of the *Analect*)“ (S. 79–167) setzt mit der Feststellung ein, dass Huang Kan tatsächlich der alleinige Verfasser dieses Kommentartextes war. Auch Huang Kan ist ein innovativer Beitrag zur Geschichte der Genres zu beschreiben, gilt sein Text doch als einer der frühesten Sub-Kommentare zu den „Gesprächen“ bzw. zum *Lunyu jijie* (s. o.). Gleichzeitig setzt Huang Kan die dort entwickelte Neuerung fort, wenn auch sein Kommentar bedeutungsträchtiger (*meaningful*) ausfällt als der kommentierte Text selbst: Insbesondere, wenn es um die Frage nach Abstufungen der menschlichen Natur zwischen „naiven“ und „weisen“ Menschen und nach dem Verhältnis zwischen Natur und Emotionen geht, zeigt sich das eigenständige philosophische Anliegen des Autors. In einer Zeit verfasst, in der Übersetzungen buddhistischer Texte an der Tagesordnung waren, muss es verwundern, dass in diesem Kommentartext der Buddhismus inhaltlich kaum figuriert, dafür umso mehr der auf das *Daodejing* bezogene Daoismus. Formal hat sich Huang Kan allerdings, z. B. in der Textgestaltung, von der Art buddhistischer Darlegungen und Gespräche zwischen Meister und Schüler ganz eindeutig inspirieren lassen.

Teil III „Beyond Method. Zhu Xi’s *Lunyu jizhu* (Collected Annotations on the *Analects*)“ (S. 171–250) behandelt einen Kommentar, dessen Verfasser die tradierte Exegese weniger interessiert als die direkte Lektüre der Klassiker. Zhu Xi (1130–1200), dem als Haupt der *daoxue* bzw. *lixue* maßgeblich die Renaissance des Konfuzianismus zugeschrieben wird, war davon überzeugt, dass

bereits nach Mengzi (4. Jh. v. Chr.) die Weitergabe des (von Konfuzius aufgezeigten) Weges (*Transmission of the Way*) unterbrochen war, so dass angesichts der großen zeitlichen Distanz nur ein intuitives Verstehen möglich sei. Daraus leitet Zhu Xi unterschiedliche Lesequalitäten zwischen meditativem und (lautem) Lesen ab. Auch in Zhu Xis Kommentar-Text setzt sich die Diskussion um das Verhältnis zwischen den Emotionen (*qing*) und der angeborenen menschlichen Natur (*xing*) als Ausdruck der Prinzipien (*li*) fort.

Hatte Zhu Xi vor allem gegen die Kommentarliteratur der frühen Hanzeit polemisiert, so sollten sich Liu Baonan (1791–1855) und sein Sohn Liu Gongmian, wiederum auf diese gestützt, gegen Zhu Xi wenden. Deren Kommentar steht in Teil IV zur Debatte: „Method and Truth. Liu Baonan and Liu Gongmian’s *Lunyu zhengyi* (Correct Meaning of the *Analectics*)“ (S. 253–347). In einem intellektuellen Umfeld, das von sprach- bzw. textkritischen Studien dominiert war, kommt dieser Kommentartext der Späten Kaiserzeit nur scheinbar philologisch daher, erweist sich vielmehr als Auseinandersetzung mit der gesamten Geistesgeschichte Chinas, wobei das alte Gelehrtentum (*guxue*) der Hanzeit und der ihr vorangehenden Epoche eindeutig favorisiert wird. Da die Autoren zur Einsicht gelangt waren, daß es unmöglich sei, aus den „Gesprächen“ allein die Botschaft des Konfuzius „korrekt“ zu ermitteln, stellten sie intertextuelle Bezüge her, z. B. zu den „Frühlings- und Herbstanalen“ (*Chunqiu*). Auf diese Weise sorgten sie unfreiwillig dafür, dass die „Gespräche“ selbst mehr und mehr in den Hintergrund rückten. Damit erweist er sich zugleich als Kind seiner Zeit, in welcher der Zusammenbruch des schriftlich tradierten Konfuzianismus unmittelbar bevorstand, wenn auch seine Verfasser mit dem gegen teiligen Anliegen angetreten waren, d. h. die Lehren des Konfuzius für ihre Zeitgenossen zu dechiffrieren. Ein Epilog (S. 349–359) fasst die vier untersuchten Kommentartexte noch einmal vergleichend zusammen.

Es ist erfreulich, dass die alte sinologische Tradition der Textgeschichte angesichts der Spezialisierungen von Lehre und Ausbildung auf das zeitgenössische China noch nicht ganz in Vergessenheit geraten ist – umso erfreulicher, da dieser Ansatz in der vorliegenden Publikation auf geradezu spannende Weise mit Philosophie- und Sozialgeschichte auf höchstem Niveau verknüpft ist.

Gudula Linck