

homeland Brazil: Celso de Brito, "The Constitution of a Transnational Sphere of Transcendence. The Relationship between the Irmãos Guerreiros Capoeira Angola Group and Ilê Obá Silekê in Europe" (169–182).

"Candomblé" is one of the oldest Afro-Brazilian religions introduced by African slaves from the 16th century on and has its roots mainly in West-African Yoruba religion. There exists a pantheon of gods and spirits who incorporate in so-called "mediums" during trance and transmit messages for physical healing and social harmony. Worship through bloody sacrifices (pigeons, fowls, goats, and cattle) is required. Every adherent is owned by a special spirit/god to whom he has to serve lifelong. "Capoeira," however, is a martial dance technique, which comes mainly from Angola. Only in later days, it has acquired some aspects of transcendence as to enter in state of trance during the physical exercises. The author put both under the term of "sphere of transcendence," although their origin and purpose are very different. Astonishing is the fact that Candomblé and Capoeira merged to one ritual event in Berlin, where the Candomblé priest and the Capoeira master together explore the demand for spiritual exotic experience of German clients. The common ritual comprises first the Candomblé performance of the mediums accompanied by the *atabaques* (drums), followed by the Capoeira dancers accompanied by the *berimbaus* (single-string percussion instruments, musical bows). The workshops offered to German people aim to "loosen the body," i. e., to enter in the constant flow of body and mind. The Candomblé priest says: "Our goal is to be a *mandingueiro*, loosen your body as if we were in Brazil, in, under the sunshine. Tune into the sound of the *berimbau* and let it take you away, *ginga!*" (de Brito; 177). The term *mandinga* means spiritual power and *ginga* the special, unconscious flow of dancing. The process is a deconstruction of a static corporality, entering in a space and time disorientation, "something like a codirection is rebuilt between the 'self' (conscious movements) and the 'being outside the self' (unconscious movements), being understood as the presence of a transcendental force and legitimized by religious authorities" (de Brito; 181).

The neo-Pentecostalism and the Afro-Brazilian cults, migrating from one continent to another, possess dynamics, which create ever and ever new horizons and adaptations to local conditions. They deconstruct identities and reconstruct them to new modalities of Pentecostal religious experience. They create new religious communities, which build new forms of religious behavior. All is in constant flow, in search for security through transcendental experience in community. The result of these studies shows the spiritual power of people's creativity and the yearning for a transcendental anchor. Those who believe that magic religiosity is primi-

tive or does not match with modernity, may learn the contrary in this volume.

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**Pauli, Julia:** *The Decline of Marriage in Namibia. Kinship and Social Class in a Rural Community.* Bielefeld: transcript, 2019. 296 pp. ISBN 978-3-8376-4303-9. Price: € 44,99

Lavish weddings have become an emblem for the conspicuous consumption of members of the so-called emerging middle classes in many societies in Africa. But why is it, that people stop marrying if they cannot afford such a lavish wedding? And why is it, that most people endorse marriage but only few in fact marry? These are the leading questions, Julia Pauli tackles in her ethnography on weddings and marriages in Fransfontein, a rural town in Namibia. There, only 32 percent of the women of a sample of about 300 people and only 25 percent of the men are married. Using weddings as an ethnographic example for the changes of marriages and reproduction, she pays attention to the field of social inequality and social reproduction that recently has been revived by numerous authors tackling the question of "class" in African societies from an empirical point of view.

The book's introduction lays out the conceptual framework starting with a discussion of Bourdieu's field theory, which highlights processes of positioning as part and parcel of class distinction in French society. With reference to Sherry Ortner she raises the general question whether it is structure that makes people act in certain ways or whether people's actions can create and change structures. Thereafter, Pauli criticizes the idea that class provides a stable structure as suggested by the French example pointing out sudden changes the Namibian society has been going through in the past forty decades. In a comprehensive and well-informed overview on the question of marriage, Pauli criticizes the current dictum of plurality and multiplicity of marriages in recent ethnographies of kinship in African societies. She rightly points out that the emphasis on the plurality of forms of conjugal relationships disguises the aspect of exclusion that many people in Namibia and elsewhere experience in their everyday lives. Therefore, anthropology today is asked to reevaluate the question of structure, and doing so requires researchers to reconsider the question if and in how far people are governors of their own agency.

Following Pauli's argument, that what is needed is an analytic perspective onto systematic exclusions taking place within societies but allowing for an analysis of a rapid (economic) change within the society in question. This is offered in the conclusion of the book and could best be answered by an analytic view on kin relations

and patronage networks, which allow for an agency of actors, on the one hand, but on the other, restrict actors' social, economic, and spatial movements according to their position within kin relations and according to their economic capacities (or the lack of those).

The ethnographic part is divided into three parts. The first part lays out the historical framework in which social distinction takes place in Fransfontein. The context of Namibian Apartheid, which ended only in 1992, deprived many of the land as the basis of their income and forced many women and men to earn their income on farms of White farmers. It was only after Apartheid that people in the rural area were able to accumulate considerable wealth, mainly as teachers, headmasters of schools, pastors, or local politicians, and become members of an economic stratum, which in national surveys is termed as the middle classes. The second part of her ethnography puts emphasis on the changes of wedding ceremonials, which went from "modest" in the 1960s and 1970s to lavish from the 1990s ongoing. At the same time, the number of "never-married women" declined. This part is rich in ethnographic details on the changing material culture and ritual aspects of marriage in Fransfontein. The third part analyzes in two chapters the non-marrying effects on intimate and reproductive relations, providing a detailed analysis about modified female and partly male agency in economically changing times.

In addition, the ethnographic descriptions are nicely interwoven with theoretical discussion on "agency and structure" (e. g., 189ff.). Pauli shows that agency and social and economic restrictions of the latter are closely intertwined and important aspects of the emerging new socio-economic structures: The recent transformation of marriage as being related to a well-documented history of a century-long transformation of gender relations in the changing economy within the Southern African region. Across the region, a new type of conjugal relations evolves. These changed relations result in matrifocal households with female heads of the household who remain unmarried and stay with their children and grandchildren. Pauli argues convincingly that women have to give up some of their economic agency after marrying and that they and their kin only allow for this when their daughters are evaluated by a lavish wedding indicating a (new) economic and social status.

The book is unique in some aspects that I would like to highlight: First, it offers insights into the lives and livelihoods of members of the rural middle classes (or the aspiring middle classes), a perspective which is clearly often overlooked in the recent literature on the so called "emerging middle classes." Secondly, it follows a well worked out methodological approach, combining observations, conversations, and formal interviews with quantifying demographic methods. This en-

ables the author to pin down the structural change in many details and, yet, allowing for a thick description of the expectations, disappointments, fears, and anxieties of people in Fransfontein – women and men alike. These find themselves in vulnerable social positions fighting for economic and social stability. At times, some more structuring remarks could have helped to reflect the information drawn from life histories onto the main argument of the book.

With its balanced discussion of the regional literature the monograph is a good read for social scientists doing research in the Southern African region and of value to anyone researching gender and family relations. In addition, it is an inspiration for anyone interested in class relations in Africa.

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**Penny, H. Glenn:** Im Schatten Humboldts. Eine tragische Geschichte der deutschen Ethnologie. München: Verlag C. H. Beck, 2019. 287 pp. ISBN 978-3-406-74128-9. Preis: € 26,95

Kaum ein Buch über das ehemalige Berliner Museum für Völkerkunde, heute Ethnologisches Museum, hat eine solche Medienresonanz gefunden wie die letzte Publikation von Penny. Er knüpft damit an seine 2002 erschienene Schrift "Objects of Culture" an, in welcher er völkerkundliche Museen der Kaiserzeit miteinander verglichen hatte, vor allem jene von Hamburg, Leipzig und Berlin. An mehreren Stellen wiederholt er in der jetzigen Publikation frühere Ausführungen. Im Gegensatz zu dieser Publikation richtet sich dieses zweite, nur in Deutschland erschienene Buch, das nach Pennys eigenen Angaben nicht geplant war und während seines Aufenthaltes am Wissenschaftskolleg in Berlin entstand, jedoch an ein allgemeines Publikum. Schon der Titel verrät den Aufhänger, das geplante und noch nicht eröffnete Humboldt Forum in Berlin, mit seinen seit Jahren andauernden, vor allem in den Medien geführten Kontroversen und Auseinandersetzungen. Geschickt beginnt Penny seine Einleitung mit einem weiteren Aufhänger, den Diskussionen um menschliche Überreste, den so genannten "Human Remains". So sollen Schädel und Knochen der Grund gewesen sein, warum sich Hawaii-Aktivistinnen an ihn wandten, um einen besseren Zugang zu dem Berliner Ethnologischen Museum zu erhalten. Eine "eindrucksvolle Gruppe von Traditionspflegern und Rückgabeexperten" (9) unter Führung von Halealoha Ayau sollte er begleiten. Penny hatte zwar Archivalien zu verschiedenen deutschen völkerkundlichen Museen gelesen, doch kannte er als Historiker nicht ihre Sammlungen in ihren Depots. So enthält das Buch leider eine Reihe von falschen Informationen, die alle zu einem bestimmten Diskurs geführt werden. In der Einleitung behauptet Penny, dass es "ungeklärt" (9) gewe-