Reviews

Review Essay: An Ethnography of Pastness Identity Playgrounds and Battlefields in Post-Post-Soviet Estonia

Francisco Martínez (2018), *Remains of the Soviet Past in Estonia: An Anthropology of Forgetting, Repair and Urban Traces* (London: UCL Press), 259 pp., Pbk £22.99. ISBN 9781787353541, Hbk £45.00. ISBN 9781787353558.

The last time Francisco passed through Lisbon before this book was out, he brought me from Estonia a marine blue rucksack and a shocking-green pin with the words 'believe in the periphery'. These two objects came to my mind when I started writing this review, not just because this is a book about material culture being taken out of the waste and repaired by the youth in Estonia, but mostly because I have had the opportunity to discuss with Francisco the dialectics of the 'post-Soviet' in various travelling contexts. Travelling as method has taken us through the post-Soviet wastelands and its borders, problematizing anew the 'post' and 'pastness' while eating *khachapuri* in Tbilisi, staring at the Soviet Armenian industrial complex of Alaverdi, or crossing silently the ghost town of Agdam, in Nagorno-Kharabakh.

On a personal note, then, this is a book about time travelling – into different temporal regimes – where the urban *flâneur* strives to understand the Soviet 'pastness' as the subjective quality of something being remembered rather than immediately experienced (according to the Merriam-Webster online dictionary). But it is also about shared journeys of knowledge and the critical inquiry into the here and now, about how past legacies get repaired and different temporal-aesthetic regimes are sutured to give rise to a post-post-Soviet condition. On a more academic note, this is a book about materialities – haunted buildings, amalgamated urban centres, objects rescued from oblivion and negligence – and the new meanings the youth ascribe to what had been seen by the Freedom generation as mere waste or rubbish – the leftovers of Sovietism – forgotten, eradicated or just left to rot. Unlike Francisco, I prefer the term 'Sovietism' over 'Socialism'

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because it emphasizes what was a specifically modern project. Turning the famous aphorism on its head, Sovietism equalled Socialism plus electrification: meanings and materialities, ideas embodied in concrete structures.

While contesting the relevance of the ‘post-Socialist’ category to understand the current social and cultural moment in Estonia, this book develops strong ontological, epistemological, and methodological assumptions about how to approach the complexities of change. Drawing on Rancière (2006), and Bolstanski, and Thévenot (2006) among others, and embracing a cross-disciplinary approach, it becomes a most valuable contribution to rethinking the way we understand ‘transitions’ in the post-Soviet world as the contestation among ‘orders of worth’ and ‘forms of visibility’. The book is based on a complex set of ontological tensions: the dialectics of meanings and materialities, articulated with the ‘dialectics of old and new’ whereby reality turns out to be the result of both obdurances and ruptures, producing dyssynchronous temporal-aesthetic regimes that persist side by side. Epistemologically, Francisco problematizes the ‘post’ condition by looking at (and taking part in) the social practices that constitute the idea of ‘pastness’. This way, the kind of multi-sited ethnography practised by the author embodies knowledge and practice as situated phenomena. It is through the engagement of the knower (or observer) that knowledge can manifest itself. By engaging, and not just observing, he deploys the kind of interpretive reflexivity that is critical to understand the research context, in other words, how ideas are appropriated anew, legacies passed on to younger generations, and new meanings ascribed to old materialities that persist in physical and affective landscapes. On an epistemological level, this book engages in the production of situated knowledge in order to identify and understand the micropowers and practices at work in the suturing of dissonant temporal-aesthetic regimes produced in times of transition.

Methodologically, Francisco deploys a thick multi-sited ethnography formed of textured and colourful vignettes that develop his engagement in the everydayness of social relations constituting today’s Estonia – through conversations, artistic performances, interpretive reflections, or mere daily life roles – thereby allowing the reader to go beyond conceptual and structural dichotomies and avoiding simplistic renderings of the ‘post’ condition. On the contrary, and as set up by George A. Marcus (1995), Francisco’s ethnography develops along multiple sites of observation and participation that stress the dialectics of old and new, local and global, material structures and

ideas. Therefore, this is a powerful book about the complex refashioning of identities in today's Estonia escaping simplistic and unilinear renderings of what is, contrariwise, a fleeting process constituted by contingency, negligence, and forgetting. The different ethnographic vignettes that intersect with the more theoretical discussions in the book have the merit to illustrate that identity is the product of a complex dialectics of playfulness, re-appropriation, and confrontation. Throughout the book, the author observes, interprets, and engages with the multiple sites and material structures where old and new ideas and generations are colliding but also being sutured, namely the identity playgrounds and battlefields of post-post-Soviet Estonia.

Francisco and I are now in Yerevan, aboard the night train, all set for the journey back to Tbilisi. The roly-poly woman serving as attendant there takes me back to the USSR. She is grumpy but always about to show her lukewarm humanity vis-à-vis the clients. After a while, she brings the bed linen and Francisco asks her if we have to pay for it. The woman gets heated: 'In what kind of world would that happen?' She spots the bottle of Armenian brandy on the table of our berth and nods acquiescently. In the early morning, I step outside to contemplate the fleeting post-Soviet wasteland and realize the door of her berth is half-open. There she lies helpless in her sleep still, the round body exposed and reclined in the manner of a postmodern Delacroix nude.

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Diarmuid Ó Giolláin (ed.) (2017), *Irish Ethnologies* (Notre Dame: University of Notre Dame Press), 238 pp. 238, \$40.00, ISBN 9780268102371.

Ó Giolláin's edited book offers a broad perspective on the field of Irish ethnology at the beginning of the twenty-first century. The essays here were first published in 2011 in French in *Ethnologie française*. The

original (updated) English essays appear in *Irish Ethnologies* along with the English translation of an essay by French ethnologist, Sylvie Muller. A preface by Martine Segalen sets the Irish volume in a European context, while Ó Giolláin's introduction provides an overview of the field of Irish ethnology. Contributors to the book include many of the key players in the field.

Hastings Donnan's essay considers Irish anthropology, north and south of the border, in both a historical and contemporary context. Its novelty lies in the lens through which these historical and theoretical dimensions are viewed. Donnan's primary emphasis is on the evolution of place as a concept in Irish anthropology. With the rise of postmodernism, the emphasis has been on the fragmentation and de-territorialisation of place, to the extent that 'place' for anthropologists may be a boardroom in Brussels or a stage in Stockholm, which has methodological implications for anthropologists (see Nic Craith and Hill 2015).

Sylvie Muller offers fascinating insights into Irish cosmology. Her contribution on the Irish mermaid is illuminating on issues such as Celtic calendars, the significance of life and death and the evolution of the oral tradition over time. She considers the clash of cultures that has enervated new traditions and severed old ones. The clash of knowledge regarding land use is the focus of Ethel Crowley's contribution on the Rural Protection Scheme in Ireland. She explores knowledge struggles between state officials and farmers about the use of land.

Anthony McCann's contribution 'A Tale of Two Rivers' is a thoughtful evaluation of traditional music in Ireland with reference to two particular outputs. *Riverdance* was first performed at the Eurovision song contest in 1994. *A River of Sound* was a seven-part television series, which was first broadcast in 1995. Both productions drew on the metaphor of music as tradition. Mícheál Ó Súilleabháin, the director of the television series drew the image from Seán O Ríordáin. The image of tradition as river is also prevalent in Scottish folk tradition with the much-cited phrase describing tradition as a 'carrying stream', which was originally coined by folklorist Hamish Henderson (see McFadyen and Nic Craith 2020).

The novelty of Gearóid Ó Cruaíaoich's contribution lies in the picture he paints of growing up at the edge of Cork City in the early years of the Second World War. There was no electricity at the time. An avid reader of books from the library, his mother read by the

gaslight, while the lady who owned the house had no literary skills but was a magnificent storyteller. It was a community in which both orality and literacy thrived – which served as the catalyst for Ó Cruaíoch's lifelong interest in folklore.

There are several chapters in this book that will be of interest to readers of this journal. Helena Wulff's chapter features literary accounts of the new Ireland from the theoretical perspective of Walter Benjamin (1981). Guy Beiner's very insightful contribution examines traditions arising from the Battle of Ballinamuck, County Longford, which is often considered the last major encounter of the 1798 rebellion. Beiner's essay is an exploration of folk history as process rather than product. Joseph Ruane reflects on changing relationships between Catholics and Protestants in twentieth-century Ireland. This is complemented by Dominic Bryan's exploration of public space in Northern Ireland with particular reference to three events: the Orange Twelfth of July parades, the Lord Mayor's Show, and St Patrick's Day in Belfast. His focus is not so much on the contestation of space between Catholics and Protestants but on the shared, neutral space in the city centre, which has attracted more recent research (see McDermott, Nic Craith and Strani 2016).

Interest in Ireland from abroad features in Anne Byrne's contribution, which focuses on the social anthropology strand of the Harvard-Irish Survey (1930–1936), with particular reference to unpublished letters of the first visit of the American anthropologists to Ireland (and Europe). Pauline Garvey and Adam Drazin explore the representation of heritage in Irish museums with some interesting insights into the 'bracketing' of Ireland's colonial objects from abroad in favour of artefacts that support the national narrative. They borrow the concept of 'bracketing' from Jonas Frykman (2005) who uses it to refer to objects that are set aside since they have no power.

Since this book was published, there have been some changes in the Irish ethnological landscape. The Academy for Irish Cultural Heritages at the University of Ulster is now closed. The renowned musicologist Mícheál Ó Súilleabháin has died. Change as well as continuity are key dimensions of the river of tradition. This volume provides fascinating snapshots of Irish ethnology from a range of perspectives at home and abroad.

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- Larisa Jašarević (2017), *Health and Wealth on the Bosnian Market: Intimate Debt* (Bloomington: Indiana University Press), 282 pp., Pbk \$35.00, ISBN 9780253023827.

This is a remarkable ethnography written by anthropologist Larisa Jašarević. The book offers a fascinating and in-depth insight into the everyday realities in the post-Dayton Bosnia and Herzegovina (BiH) with a focus on the issues of health and wealth as the title suggests. Jašarević's study, thus, views the issue of health within the context of the post-socialist, post-conflict and impoverished state of BiH, with a focus on both formal and informal practices and social institutions in late capitalism. Based on her field findings, Jašarević explores and challenges the existing understanding of the human body and embodiment and describes the interrelationships between health, wealth, debt, and gift. This is a truly unique and inspiring research focus, reconnecting domains that generally have otherwise been studied separately.

Jašarević's primary ethnographic site is the Arizona market located at borders of the independent district of Brčko in north-eastern Bosnia, where health, wealth, work, debt, and gift stand out as closely interconnected within the everyday subsistence strategies, practices, and narratives of the merchants, clients, and other interlocutors. Jašarević provides many specific examples of her ethnographic accounts to illustrate her claims. For instance, she writes: 'Work and health are regularly interwoven, as when I ask a taxi driver about his health and he answers by telling me how poorly the work is going' (131). There are many more examples of how health and wealth are

deeply interlinked in the local emic understanding and everyday language. A good example would be the expression *nafaka* (miraculous and unexpected luck affecting both health and wealth; *nafaka* is sort of a fate, which is not fixed) (87–117) and *sikirancija* (worrying oneself sick) (118–143).

However, these interconnections go far beyond the discursive realm, as they are firmly embedded in the materiality of the market and the bodies of Jašarević's interlocutors. Most important is the market, where the precarious traders try to make their living and the impoverished buyers shop for goods that they would not otherwise be able to afford in an environment of economic marginalization. In chapter 1 (53–86), Jašarević points to the overall poverty and indebtedness in post-war BiH, where the majority of inhabitants are 'just surviving'. Chapter 2 (87–117) focuses more closely on the issue of indebtedness, which Jašarević argues is closely linked not only with current economic and political conditions but also plays an integral role in the practice of gifting and the notion of generosity rewarded by good luck. In this chapter, the author re-examines Mauss's concept of the gift using the critiques by Derrida and Bourdieu (101–104). Bourdieu's ambivalent understanding of gift as something both generous and calculating seems to be most fitting, since the gifting inclinations in Bosnia, as Jašarević emphasises, are variously tangled up in the market proper (102).

Existential stress (a type of *sikirancija*) is often managed with the use of medication for 'calming down' (anti-anxiety medication, psychopharmaceutical drugs) or linked directly by the interlocutors to other physical issues and treated with various pharmaceuticals (118–143). Announcements of death, both of close relatives and in the broader community, and occasionally even strangers, are another reason for the consumption of tranquilisers (130–142). Nevertheless, local folk/alternative medicine or magic is also frequently used to cure various health issues. It is generally also more accessible to the poor (in comparison to biomedicine). One of the most important of Jašarević's interlocutors is a healer, known as Queen, who can be found only via the market on recommendation or alternatively on social networks (see Introduction, 1–52, and Chapter 6, 229–266). The materiality of medicinal objects and various commodities present in popular health care practices (including a whole range of herbal and home remedies) is another focus of the study (144–184). Chapter 5 (185–228) examines a popular therapy for both everyday stress and exceptional worries known as *strava*, which in the local understanding 'cures all illnesses', is for everyone, and has no price.

The strength of Jašarević's work is embedded in her critical approach to existing social theories, which she does not take for granted but carefully re-examines against each other as well as against the corpus of ethnographic findings. Jašarević always asks whether these existing concepts and theories match with accounts recorded in the field and why is it so. The author chooses a universalist approach with a focus on human bodies, illness, healers, and patients. Her resulting analysis reveals what is beyond the 'ethnic lines' and otherwise unseen, which is a refreshing new resource for Balkan studies. The result of Jašarević's academic endeavour is an exceptionally well-written book, which beautifully connects intriguing ethnographic accounts with an ambitious theoretical framework combining anthropology and philosophy with a focus on the phenomenology of Jean-Luc Nancy. It is an important contribution to post-conflict, post-socialist and Balkan studies as well as the subdiscipline of the anthropology of body and health.

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Paweł Michał Lewicki (2017), *EU-Space and the Euroclass: Modernity, Nationality and Lifestyle among Eurocrats in Brussels* (Culture and Social Practice) (Bielefeld: Transcript), 328 pp., Paperback €39.99, ISBN: 9783839439746.

In *EU-Space and the Euroclass: Modernity, Nationality and Lifestyle among Eurocrats in Brussels*, Paweł Michał Lewicki looks at the intertwined mechanisms of modernity, nationality, and class that can be found among civil servants working for institutions of the European Union (EU). Taking Polish officials – representatives of one of the EU's so-called new member states (NMS) – as an example, he reveals how prestige and power among EU civil servants (Lewicki calls them 'Eurocrats') are negotiated along stereotyped national boundaries. By comparing different understandings of modernity in the sense of Bruno Latour (1993) and class structures as theorized by Bourdieu, Lewicki also applies post-colonial and queer theory approaches to show how national performances and stereotypes are (re)produced in the 'EU-space'. The latter is historically constructed and defined as 'the cultural and symbolic rules and norms' (14) in the EU context in Brussels.

As a European ethnologist, Lewicki has a keen insight into everyday life in EU-Brussels. He takes us from the streets and squares of the city of Brussels into the buildings and offices of the EU. He shows

how EU officials express and perform their prestige and position in the EU-space by the neighbourhood they live in, the places where they have an after-work drink in order to network, by the people they know, and by the clothes they wear.

The book is based on Lewicki's dissertation, which he handed in to Berlin's Humboldt University during the summer of 2014. By applying an auto-ethnographic approach, Lewicki introduces and describes the EU-space in Brussels with detailed ethnographic descriptions of his visits to the field of research and encounters with fieldwork interlocutors in the first part, while the second part addresses the 'struggles in EU-space over prestige and power' (83). Here, the ethnographer shows how narrations of efficiency, together with performances of visibility through a person's network, are crucial for being able to enter the EU-space. This particular self-positioning combined with the performance of what the author calls 'Eurostyle' is decisive for wielding power and influence as well as navigating through the EU-setting in order to pursue what is perceived as a 'successful' career in an EU institution.

The third part of the ethnography takes a closer look at the 'Eurostyle of the Euroclass' (155) that is dominated by particular class structures and imaginations of modernity. The author demonstrates how the performance of social-liberal political views, rationality, and secularity – 'the European doxa of the North-West' (232) – correspond to the values lived and represented by EU officials of the union's so-called old member states. These performances reinforce ideas and representations of modernity and 'Europeanness' and, in contrast, mark the 'unmodern' represented by EU officials from NMS.

A thorough analysis of strategies applied by 'newcomers' to the EU-space – different generations of Polish working in EU institutions – is provided in the fourth part. Here, the author illustrates how habits and taste both reproduce cultural hierarchies, yet also enable persons to become 'legitimate' or 'accepted' 'subjects in the EU-space, [and] to be granted belonging to the Euroclass' (246). The ethnography shows that in Europe, dominant national stereotypes, for example 'a particular representation of being Polish' (255), is internalized and reproduced by Poles living and working in the EU-space. It thus shows that even if persons living and working in the EU-space might perceive themselves as mobile, tolerant, and open to the world ('cosmopolitan'), they also show a contrary attitude with regard to 'their class assessments and [. . .] in the way they perceive other cultures, national representations and produce hierarchies' (311).

Even if, in the sense of reader friendliness, some parts of the book could be improved in terms of stringency and transparency (unfortunately, detailed bibliographical references are often missing), Lewicki offers his readers a wealth of data and thick descriptions. *EU-Space and the Euroclass* is an important addition to the literature on the EU and its inner post-colonial and (post-)imperial dynamics in particular as well as to the understanding of transnational working places such as international bodies in general. Using numerous ethnographic anecdotes and descriptions of everyday (working) life in EU-Brussels that he encountered during his fieldwork, Lewicki shows that the EU-space (and possibly also the geographical region it represents) is far from being cosmopolitan or united. On the contrary, national stereotypes are ascribed to enhance cultural hierarchies.

This book should be read by anyone – scholars, students, EU civil servants, and Europeans – who is keen to learn more about the EU's internal dynamics around power and prestige that permeate both the political and the personal life of persons working in the complex bureaucratic entity called the EU.

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Dorothy Noyes (2016), *Humble Theory: Folklore's Grasp on Social Life* (Indiana University Press), 459 pp., \$35, ISBN 9780253022912.

It appears to be a truth universally acknowledged that a junior anthropologist in possession of new ethnography must be in want of theory. We get this all the time from panel discussants, editors, and reviewers. We know what a 'major revision' means even before we open reviewers' comments: a greater engagement with the broader questions of our field. Dorothy Noyes' *Humble Theory: Folklore's Grasp on Social Life* is invaluable for folklorists and anthropologists for its concise identification of those broader questions, and for its provision of a conceptual tool kit that may help us situate our own work in the grander scheme of things. Noyes introduces the book, consisting of fifteen papers published throughout her career, with a caveat that fits the tone of her 'humble' intentions: that they will 'satisfy neither ethnographers nor theorists, and assuredly they will not satisfy historians' (1), that the essays include formulations she now finds 'embarrassing' (6), and everything in any case is more complicated than it looks. As such, the book is a thought process that spans twenty years. As it is

impossible to discuss all fifteen chapters here due to their conceptual density, I will focus on some of the main and/or recurrent themes Noyes addresses throughout the work.

Part I, *The Work of Folklore Studies*, was written for 'disciplinary stock-takings' (5), as its five chapters problematize and historicize such concepts as group, community, network, social base, tradition, and aesthetics. It starts off with an existential anxiety of sorts surrounding the F-word, a stigma that emerged as a result of the field's engagement with status marginals, subalterns, or, as Noyes frequently puts it, 'the intimate Other of modernity' (14). She suggests that, as 'the intimate Other of the academy', folklore is better equipped not to build but to criticize theory from its interstitial position between grand theory and local interpretation. The humbleness of this proposition, and Noyes' careful management of expectations permeate the book. 'We are never going to love one another' or meet and celebrate 'shared values', she concludes after deconstructing concepts like social base and community, and her tour-de-force discussion of folklore as art, occasion, news, and surround in Chapter 5. 'If we are to keep from killing each other off, we need to cultivate collective relationships that are friendly but not intimate' (168). Being a 'provincial intellectual' may not be very glamorous, but it is certainly more consequential than the F-word would admit.

The chapters in Part II, *Histories and Economies of Tradition* show Noyes' sweeping range of folkloric knowledge from seventeenth century festival in Languedoc through nineteenth-century myth making across nation-building Europe, post-Franco festival politics in Catalonia, and contemporary adoptions of Brazilian cultural forms in Berlin. Throughout these chapters, Noyes traces the historical ambiguities of the folk voice as it oscillated between submission and rebellion, the local and the state, serfs and sovereigns, class reconciliation and domination, capitalism and domesticity, risk and choice; in other words, the role of the vernacular for mediating tensions in everyday life. It is here that the vitality of the vernacular comes forth most forcefully, as it historically negotiated and responded to mundane local concerns as well as broader social and economic developments, a vitality that has come to be threatened by heritage regimes, and bad policy based on bad theory. A recurrent point throughout the book is that vernacular creation and communication is best achieved not in bounded and homogenous 'communities', but through inflexible, dense and multiplex networks in conditions of scarcity, inflexibility, and enforced inactivity. Noyes establishes the proper weight

of folklore by deconstructing the false romance that heritage titles promise. Communities are not about 'love' and 'homogeneity' but 'obligations', 'juxtapositions', and 'mutual suspicion' (259); one's neighbour is not a fellow citizen but the internal 'Other' who has to be grudgingly accommodated (261); and festival is not leisure but work that needs to be done.

Part III, *Slogan-Concepts and Cultural Regimes* unpacks the question of who 'owns' tradition, and what happens when global Big Wigs like the UNESCO or World Intellectual Property Organization get to make decisions that impact local lives and diminish face to face creative tension from above. Noyes also discusses the corollary problem of local elite brokers who garner power by liaising for these organizations, further divorcing practitioners from control and agency. She flashes the challenges of a Brave New World of heritage regimes: what to do with cultural forms that no longer have organic, autonomous life, such as heritage (which we froze to death), legacy (which we keep on life support out of necessity), and the most haunting of all, the 'zombie' traces of the subaltern body (those we try to kill but cannot). What emerges through these pages is the catch-22 of communities with scarce resources, from which there is no straightforward exit. If they long to be recognized, their culture has to be gentrified, politicized as 'identity', marked as 'community', and packaged as 'authentic' for tourist consumption. The moment it does so, however, it embarks on the dangerous path of essentialization, exclusion, fragmentation, or paralysis. Processes become things, and practices become templates. 'Recognition is no substitute for equality; heritage is no substitute for autonomy' (358), Noyes warns, and the challenge is to turn this impasse into a productive, rather than debilitating, tension.

In Catalonia and Spain in general, the ethnographic locus that Noyes and I share, the word *folklórico* is often used in its F-word sense to describe events that are anecdotal, inconsequential, barren. *Humble Theory* shows why this is so, and how it doesn't have to be. For us junior scholars, it is not just a call to write good theory on which to base good policy; it is the kind of book we should aspire to have written by the time we move, like Noyes, from the presenter's to the discussant's chair.

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Matthäus Rest and Gertraud Seiser (eds) (2016), *Wild und Schön: Der Krampus im Salzburger Land* (Wien: LIT Verlag)

The Krampus is a fascinating figure of socio-cultural life in the Austrian Alps: half-goat, half-demon, it appears at the beginning of winter. The Krampus usually accompanies St Nicholas (the saint of the children) on his home visits in Alpine villages, carrying a cane to punish those who did not behave well. In the days leading up to St Nicholas' day, packs of Krampuses can be found running wild through the streets of villages and towns, spreading fear and excitement as the sound of the big cow bells they have strapped around their bodies announces their arrival and the immanent beatings for anybody who crosses their path. Since the turn of the millennium the Krampus tradition has experienced a remarkable revival, leading to an ever-growing number of people participating in its preservation. The story goes that the Krampus is part of an ancient custom in remote Alpine valleys. Rooted in Celtic or Germanic winter-cults, it is intended to cast out bad winter spirits and bring fertility to Alpine pastures.

This is the most common narrative people participating in the Krampus tradition go by. It is also the story the media and wider public like to tell to explain the role of these mythical figures. Upon closer inspection, however, this story proves to be everything but settled. In their edited volume *Wild und Schön* (Wild and Beautiful), Matthäus Rest and Gertraud Seiser cast critical light on the figure of the Krampus and its role in contemporary social-political life in Alpine towns and valleys. Together with anthropology students from the University of Vienna they attended numerous Krampus events and gatherings across the Salzburger Land in Austria, accompanied men dressing up as Krampuses, participated in Krampus club gatherings and talked to the inhabitants of the villages and towns where the Krampus tradition is practised. By submitting the experiences, stories, and activities they found in the field to critical social analysis, the authors establish a complex and nuanced picture of the figure of the Krampus. In seventeen chapters they draw out the many layers of social and cultural life the Krampus links into. From an auto-ethnographic description of life behind the Krampus mask, an interrogation into the various forms of Krampus events that have taken shape in the Salzburger Land, more 'classical' anthropological interpretations of the links between local customs and processes of group-identification, to the role of masculinity in Krampus clubs and in the performance of exclusionary ideas

of belonging, the book gives insight into a vast array of phenomena linked to the figure of the Krampus. The ethnographic accounts are accompanied by many pictures and photographs, pulling the reader into some of the sensual dimensions of the Krampus phenomenon. The visual representations as well as the book's structure – which also contains a chapter explaining what ethnographic research is and the questions it pursues – make it accessible to a wider, non-academic readership. Given the many stubbornly persistent myths surrounding the figure of the Krampus, I see the ambition to translate socio-anthropological findings to a wider audience as an important step in forming a dialogue between various communities of interpretation and the 'truths' they harbour.

The volume sheds crucial light on a phenomenon that, even though immensely popular, has received scarce academic attention. While folklorists have written about the Krampus, they have tended to do so in a removed, culturally deterministic way. Rest and Seiser convincingly show that the narrative of the Krampus as an ancient figure demonstrating mountain villagers' intrinsic, 'indigenous' relationship to the land is a modern fabrication in urgent need of critical re-reading. It was first introduced at the beginning of the twentieth century when some of the most important representatives of *Volkskunde* started to inquire into Krampus customs in Austria. By looking into the various representations and manifestations of the Krampus across history, the authors trace its genealogy as a socio-cultural practice that is inextricably linked to modern projects of nation-building. They show that as much as the Krampus formed an important tool in local struggles over autonomy, it was always also crucially embedded in global capitalist processes. It allowed impoverished mountain villagers to present and sell their heritage to curious tourists and city people, thereby linking the Krampus into a global economy of heritage-making. By paying attention to the ways the Krampus has come to permeate the entertainment and tourism industry as well as to the ways famous Hollywood characters have left their traces on contemporary Krampus masks and performances, the authors show how deeply the Krampus phenomenon is embedded in processes of globalization.

Rather than portraying the Krampus as reminder of a past that was marked by more social cohesion and harmonious relationships between people and nature, Rest and Seiser invite their student-authors to carefully look at the social practices surrounding this figure in the here and now. In doing so, they manage to bring much-needed complexity and nuance into Alpine ethnographies. In Austria, the

move to more processual and critical global frameworks of analysis has paradoxically led European ethnologists to abandon the study of cultural practices in rural Alpine villages altogether. Eager to create a clear differentiation from the folklorist paradigm in *Volkskunde*, they have shifted their focus to urban settings, arguing that this is the more suitable place to capture global phenomena. *Wild und Schön* helps to readjust this misbalance. It brings a seemingly ancient tradition into the present, showing the ways it pulls rural mountain villages into global circuits of exchange. I believe that the ethnographic interventions form an important starting point for a renewed Alpine ethnography that pays attention to the ways global transformations shape the everyday lives of people living in mountain towns and villages. That Rest and Seiser involved the next generation of Austrian social anthropologists in this project points the way for more critical ethnographic engagements with the German-speaking Alpine region.

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C. Nadia Seremetakis (2019), *Sensing the Everyday: Dialogues from Austerity Greece* (Abingdon, Oxon; New York: Routledge), 250 pp., \$35.96, ISBN 9780367187767.

Everyday life is a playground for multi-layered epistemological conflicts. The truth and the social memory that are transmitted by the institutional and ideological tools such as mass media, however, are not the only ones that shape the daily realm of remembrance. Imagining everyday life as a terrain of practice and exploring its micro events as transformative, antiphonic, and dialogical, Nadia Seremetakis analyses the performances of counter-truth and counter-memory by everyday people in the times of austerity in Greece.

The myriad micrological actions that blur the dichotomies such as traditional and modern, national and transnational, private and public, past and the future, Hellenistic and European are the case studies for this research where anthropology, following Stanley Diamond's belief, is considered as 'the study of people in crisis by people in crisis' (21). Against the official discourses that are mainly analysed through the declamation of the mass media in the book, Seremetakis turns herself to the empirics of the experience of the present tense in order to analyse the 'social nervous system' (144) in the expression of trauma and pain.

The book follows an intercultural positioning in order to analyse the complex intertwinements of the Greek national identity in a globalizing world. Consisting of six parts, fourteen subchapters and even further divisions, it is fragmented, fractured and ambiguous like the everyday occurrences. Seremetakis senses the streets, the familial, and the invisible. Her ethnography wanders from the histories behind the little memorial graves that are installed in the public realm by the families of the victims of the street killings in Greece to the sculptures of dead professors at the University of Vienna and wooden benches for the reminiscence of the dead in Edinburgh (Part II). The socio-cultural symbolism around death is studied further through the medicalization of Gioconda which renders her into a disabled person (91), 'the social death of an indebted living person' (174), the gossip and rumour arising in a Greek university's corridors that bring their subordinates literally and socially dead (Part VI). She aims to use the ethnography as a 'public pedagogical tool' (11) and alternates the performative citizenship against the museumification of culture. The synesthetic experiences of feminine daily performances, such as a change of saliva through food between the grandmother and the grandchild (104), the sob in Maniat death ceremonies conducted by women (135), the evil eye exorcisms, coffee cup readings, and dream interpretations (Part IV) are understood against the medicalization of the pain and elaborated as transformative sensory acts against the hegemony of western ocularcentrism. The mundane rituals, gestures, and affections are not only considered as an alternative inscription of the memory, history, and truth but also as *détournements*, transformations, and ruptures of the dominant ideologies that render the body and the pain visual, verbal, and finally invisible.

The inter-relationality of the othering processes is discussed in multi layers of literal and symbolical border crossings. At times, the Greek body in crisis is examined as the other of Europe. Then, following the stigmatization and pathologization of the Albanians, especially women, as carriers of the diseases that are crossing the Greek borders (Chapter 5), it is shown as the perpetrator of the othering. The crisis that Greece has been experiencing is multifaceted. It is socio-economical and bounded with the global refugee crisis that has been dramatically manifested on the Greek islands. The border has been thought of in national, imaginary, medical, and social forms. The etymological journeys of Greek terms such as *eros*, *thanatos* (Chapter 6), and *pothos* (39) amongst many more and their intercultural elaboration deepen this study of in-betweenness of both citizens and the

body they complete, namely Greece, in times of cultural, economic, and natural disasters.

Seremetakis brings many auto-ethnographic insights that reflect her own experience: as an academic in both Greek and US institutions; from her talks in local memorial ceremonies in the form of ethnopoiesis (Chapter 12); of creating an exhibition with school children from the Peloponnese region who are traumatized by earthquakes. Every intimate moment is carefully analysed. Her observation of micro-affectations, the feminine appropriations of everyday life, and her self-reflection are mesmerizing. The ambiguous identities in the face of multi-sensorial modes of everyday life and the omnipresence of shattered identities are both transmitted by the richness of ethnological reflections and the writing style. Seremetakis, claiming that 'ethnography is always a minor canon' that could be used as a 'critical engagement with colonialism and postcolonial reality' (187), rethinks and practices *native ethnography* and its intercultural transfer through language (Part V).

Coming from a neighbouring country, I can conceptualize the cases presented with a transcultural imagination. However, a glossary at the end of the book for the non-Greek-speaking reader would have been helpful to follow the terms that arise. The variety of the examples and sources used mainly from the media and their multi-sensory interrogations are overwhelming. This effect, however, is what gives the book its main strength. Nevertheless, the treatise of the modern media as an antagonist that produces an authoritative rhetoric, a hierarchized dialogue, and the official memory feels sometimes more generalized as the numbers of examples increase, especially when they lack temporality and historicity for the reader who is not familiar with the events that are discussed in Greek society. Yet, *Sensing the Everyday* is a reciprocal manoeuvre between theory and practice, affective divinations and verbal deconstructions that anticipate, reshape, and transfigure the daily realm. It is an assemblage, a montage of a complex ethnography that proves the vividness of the senses and scrutiny of its author.

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