

founded a church: La confrérie religieuse du Rosaire de Cadix (300).

Talking about 'ethnicity' between the sixteenth and nineteenth centuries without defining the concept and projecting a highly contested concept of our own time on to the past is problematic (199–200). The next book resulting from Roger Botte's and Alessandro de Stella's research will be highly welcome, but it should take into account the oral dimension of the sources coming from the slaves and include maps to help the reader grasping the complexity of the local settings.

"Couleurs de l'esclavage sur les deux rives de la Méditerranée" is highly stimulating and convincingly draws our attention to a number of pitfalls that must be avoided when dealing with race, colour and their political instrumentalisation. Thus the book comes as a timely reminder. It contributes greatly to research on servitude and slavery in their diverse forms and shows brilliantly how cooperation between historians and anthropologists could boost research in this area.

- ⁸ Inès Mrad Dali: "Problématique du phénotype. Approche comparative des esclavages dans la Tunisie du xix^e siècle" (337–369)
- ⁹ Judith Scheele: "Travail et liberté en Algérie" (371–390)
- ¹⁰ António de Almeida Mendes: "Les 'Portugais noirs' des Guinée: destins mêlés (xv^e–xvii^e siècles)" (159–198)
- ¹¹ M'hamed Oualdi: "Des Noirs dans les troupes des beys de Tunis. Deux expériences d'enrôlement d'esclaves et d'affranchis au milieu du xviii^e siècle et en 1837" (315–336)
- ¹² Alessandro Stella: "Destins d'affranchis noirs et blanc en Andalousie à l'époque moderne" (297–313)

Mamadou Diawara

Keir Martin: The death of the Big Men and the rise of the Big Shots: custom and conflict in East New Britain. New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books 2013. 256 pp., 15 photographs, 2 maps

- ¹ Jocelyne Dakhlia: "Le fondu des couleurs? Expériences croisées de captivité dans le Maroc de l'armée noire" (207–230)
- ² Roger Botte: "'Bouc noir' contre 'Bélier blanc'. L'armée des 'Abīd al-Bukhārī du sultan Mawlāy Ismā'īl (1672–1727)" (231–262)
- ³ Mohamed Meouak: "Esclaves noirs et esclaves blancs en al-Andalus umayyade et en Ifrīqiya fātimide. Couleur, origines et statuts des élites *sūdān* et *saqāliba*" (25–53)
- ⁴ Henri Bresc: "Esclaves noirs et esclaves blancs en Sicile (vers 1300–vers 1450). Entre déshumanisation et socialisation" (55–84)
- ⁵ Philippe Braunstein: "Être esclave à Venise à la fin du Moyen Âge" (85–103)
- ⁶ Florina Manuela Constantin: "Liens de parenté et liens sociaux chez les esclaves tziganes de Valachie. Le *sālaş* au xvii^e siècle" (283–295)
- ⁷ Fabienne Plazolles Guillén: "'Negre e de terra de negres infels...': Servitude de la couleur (Valence, 1479–1516)" (113–158)

The Tolai of East New Britain, Papua New Guinea (PNG), were subjected to colonial rule by Germany in the late nineteenth century. Their early exposure to a plantation economy and the possibilities of cash-cropping influenced their attitudes toward landholding and kinship, to the extent that, when the anthropologists Scarlett Epstein and A.L. Epstein began research among them in 1959, descriptions of their 'traditional' social organisation had to acknowledge some 'ambiguity', as A.L. Epstein called it in his 1969 book "Matupit". For example, the Epsteins noted that Tolai debated whether their tradition of matrilineality was an impediment to their economic prospects and should be replaced with patrilineality, rationalised as a corollary of individual landownership, whereby a man could leave assets to his own son (T.S. Epstein 1968). The theme of economic transition, then, has char-

acterised a significant body of anthropological literature on the Tolai, including not only the Epsteins' publications, but also Richard Salisbury's "Vunamami" (1970).

The Tolai and economic transition have now been revisited by Keir Martin in a book which examines them in the context of post-colonial neo-liberalism. Martin's research was conducted not only well after PNG became an independent nation in 1975, but also after a devastating volcanic eruption in 1994. Ash from the twin volcanoes of Tarvuvur and Vulcan destroyed Rabaul, the provincial capital of East New Britain and surrounding villages, including habitats on the nearby island of Matupit which had become anthropologically famous as the Epsteins' research site. The eruption's aftermath added new complexities to both landholding and rhetorics of *kastom* (custom), as some Matupi (the people of Matupit) resettled on agricultural blocks allotted to them at Sikut, a rainforest location some distance away, while others returned to the island to rebuild houses and communities. For Martin, the comparative examination of contemporary land claims in both places enables insights into how Tolai are reconstituting sociality in a climate of postcolonial neo-liberalism.

From Martin's perspective, while the volcanic eruption was not a bringer of cataclysmic change, its aftermath exposed emerging social trends and tensions generated by decades of changing patterns of integration with a global political economy. In particular the book is concerned with an enduring fundamental tension in Tolai society that manifests itself in contestation over the appropriate limits of reciprocal interdependence and obligation, a theme whose precedents in economic anthropology stretch back to Marcel Mauss's 1924 essay on the gift (1970). The book's title refers to local terminology used in contrasting two types of individual. The 'Big Man', someone who extends and draws upon gift-debt relations to raise his prestige, is now a popular

stereotype in Melanesia. Big Men are reliant on the support of followers and have to be careful not to antagonise them, thus successful Big Men negotiate a difficult relationship between their individual ambitions and their obligations to kinfolk and others on whom they depend. But when he arrived at Matupit and asked who the Big Men were, the author was told: 'all the Big Men are dead' (192). 'Big Shot' is a contrastive and derogatory label for Tolai who have forgotten, or ignore, their moral obligations to others in pursuing socio-economic elitism. In the eyes of villagers they display something akin to possessive individualism.

The distinction between the Big Man and the Big Shot is not, however, as simple as the popular terminology suggests, and Martin problematises the typology in the context of landholding and discourses of *kastom*. As the author points out, use of the term *kastom* at village level is complicated. People debate not only what *kastom* is or was, but also whether a person's actions are *kastom* and whether *kastom* is relevant or applicable in contemporary instances. This disputation is significant in issues of landholding, where, in the engagement with neo-liberalism, 'customary' landholding is seen by some Tolai as an impediment to economic development. In these instances Big Shots are likely to be portrayed by villagers as pursuing individual ownership to the detriment of customary relationships and obligations. Yet *kastom* is such a flexible concept that Big Shots can sometimes appeal to it as a legitimisation of their commercial activities, inasmuch as they have followed some kind of ritual or formalised *kastom*. A villagers' response might be to accuse the Big Shot with having 'commercialised' *kastom* in some way.

Noting this kind of flexibility in discourses of *kastom*, Martin argues that *kastom* is best understood not as a historically equivocal set of procedures or folkways, but as 'a shifting term for moral evaluation' (121). He demonstrates the undetermined nature of *kastom* and

the rhetorical devices through which a form of individuality and individual rights can be asserted and contested with a case study of a land dispute involving equivocation about who had the right to sell a piece of land. The question was whether the right rested with a small group of people immediately associated with the piece of land, or whether a wider group of people engaged with them in relationships of reciprocal interdependence also had a claim. Both sides appealed to *kastom* in one way or another to rationalise their argument. The case study demonstrates the extent to which long-term social change in Tolai life is exemplified in the dynamics of so-called *kastom*, where contradictions between obligations to one's immediate family and other kin are manifest in an ongoing struggle to set the boundaries of reciprocal interdependence and obligation.

The historical trajectory traced by Martin is the evolution of individualism, but the Big Shot is not simply a figure created by the replacement of collectivism with Western individualism due to the adoption of Western capitalism. The Big Shot is not an entirely new phenomenon – he has historical precedents (as indicated in the Epsteins' publications) – but the author carefully argues that changing circumstances allow some people to rationalise a partial denial of inherent obligations, whereas in the past this was not possible to the same degree. Big Shots are also now likely to be periodic absentees from local life who return from elite positions in PNG's capital or even overseas to participate in a customary ritual without being bound by other customary obligations.

On first encountering the book's prosaic title, I was apprehensive of what its substance might be. It is a common lament in PNG that traditional leadership has given way to an unsavoury new style typified by self-interested individuals who manipulate customary processes or simply buy their way to prestige. A book-length iteration of the point would not

be academically rewarding to read. However, Martin's arguments transcend this simple portrait of change. He has also largely avoided the fashionable invocation of Melanesian 'modernity'. Political economy is his touchstone, and he draws on Marx, Chris Gregory's work on gifts and commodities (e.g. 1982) and the Marxist linguist V. Vološinov (1973) to good effect. His account of historical transformations in Tolai has a dialectical character, which emerges most specifically in a synthesising chapter on "Big Men, Big Shots and bourgeois individuals" (176–211). He addresses the notion of the individual in some detail (I was relieved to be spared facile allusions to the 'dividual'), convincingly distinguishing the Melanesian case from conventional Western representations.

There is a degree of repetitiousness through the book, of the kind found, for example, in a doctoral dissertation where ellipsis and brevity are considered to be risky strategies. Yet the author provides much food for thought on the long-term engagement of some Melanesians, such as the Tolai, with global processes which began with the nineteenth-century arrival of missionaries and colonial agents – long before the jargon of 'globalisation', 'development', and 'modernity'. Eschewing dichotomies of continuity and rupture, Martin has effectively demonstrated the nuanced moral evaluations Tolai make of the competing value systems whose social consequences they continue to navigate.

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Michael Goddard

Sidney Littlefield Kasfir und Till Förster (Hrsg.): *African art and agency in the workshop*. Bloomington: Indiana University Press. 2013. 424 S., 24 Abb.

Manchmal ist das Naheliegende so selbstverständlich, daß es immer wieder übersehen wird, bis endlich jemand darauf kommt und damit grundlegende Einsichten in relevante Debatten einbringt. Die Idee, sich mit dem „Workshop“ als Ort der Entstehung von Kunst in Afrika zu befassen, löst bei dem Leser einen solchen „Aha!“-Effekt aus, und man wundert sich, warum diese zentrale Institution des Kunstschaffens nicht schon früher behandelt wurde.

Sidney Littlefield Kasfir und Till Förster ist dieses Verdienst unbedingt zuzuerkennen. Sie haben ein dringend fälliges und unmittelbar vor Augen stehendes Thema endlich einmal thematisiert. Aber mit der Feststellung dieser unbestreitbaren Leistung und der Annäherung an das zentrale Thema beginnen auch schon die Probleme: Wie definiert man eigentlich einen Workshop? Schon die Einlei-

tung der beiden Herausgeber präsentiert eine Typologie (speziell für die historisch nachweisbaren Formen in Afrika) und wenigstens zwei Definitionen.¹

Die drei „Typen“, die kurz zu erwähnen lohnt, betreffen erstens die klassische „Meisterwerkstätte“, in der ein Handwerksmeister sein Wissen an eine Gruppe von Lernenden weitergibt, zweitens den von Fremden (in der Kolonialzeit oft: von Europäern) inspirierten Workshop, und drittens die Werkstatt, die durch einen König oder eine Zunft dauerhaft (oder wenigstens für längere Zeit) als Ort meisterlicher Produktion aufrecht erhalten wird. Das sind historisch nachweisbare „Grundtypen“, die gleichzeitig nebeneinander existieren konnten.

Daraus ergibt sich auch eine erste Definition, die auf die doppelte Natur von Workshops verweist: Einerseits handelt es sich hier fast immer um wirtschaftlich relevante Institutionen, die etwas produzieren. Zugleich sind es aber auch Institutionen, die die Imagination ihrer Teilnehmer formen, die also stilbildend sind. Diese Definition wird durch eine genauere Bestimmung vertieft und erweitert, bei der es um die Werkstatt als „Mittel der Produktivität“ geht. Das führt die zweite Definition in folgender Weise näher aus: Werkstätten sind ganz allgemein Institutionen, die Zugang zu Rohmaterialien und Werkzeugen regulieren. Damit sind die Herausgeber bei so grundlegenden Aussagen angekommen, daß die Überleitung zu den spätmittelalterlichen Werkstätten von Künstlern, zu den Zunfthäusern und sogar zur Ausbildung im Bauhaus der 1920er Jahre nur noch ein kleiner Schritt ist.

Die beiden Definitionen, die durchaus auch komplementär gedacht sind, enthalten in sich den Kern einer Problematik, die das ganze Buch durchzieht: Es geht dabei um die Frage, ob solche Werkstätten als Institutionen für sich oder nur als Kristallisationspunkte von Kunstgattungen, Künstlerleben oder nationaler Politik gedacht werden sollten. Die