

communities as they exist today, and they may also be misled about their existing social institutions. Zips wants to read Asante kinship into maroon history. Kenneth Bilby and Jean Besson have both shown carefully that maroons practise ancestor-focused cognatic or bilateral kinship much like many other rural Jamaicans, but unlike the famously matrilineal Asante. It is an unfortunate feature of this book that, though Zips has visited the maroons many times and interviewed key figures, he does not put what maroons themselves say and do at the forefront of his discussion. Interestingly, the afterword by Rastafarian poet and activist Mutabaruka provides a pan-Africanist vision significantly different from Zips's view. Mutabaruka criticizes maroons for accepting a label given to them by the colonists. He also points out that Africa should not be reduced to particular places in Africa and that the collectively labelled 'maroons' of Jamaica have lived in distinct communities with diverse histories. This is, then, a thought-provoking and in certain ways puzzling book.

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Power and politics

BEACH, HUGH, DMITRI FUNK & LENNARD SILLANPÄÄ (eds). *Post-Soviet transformations: politics of ethnicity and resource use in Russia*. 260 pp., maps, tables, plates, figs, illus., bibliogr. DVD. Uppsala: Univ. Publications, 2009. \$82.28 (cloth)

Siberian anthropology has gone through something of a renaissance in the two decades since the collapse of the Soviet Union. For English-reading audiences, however, many of the important contributions to this scholarship from within Russia remain inaccessible. This volume is distinctive in foregrounding the work of anthropologists from the Division of Northern and Siberian Studies at the Russian Academy of Sciences. It presents the results of a collaborative Swedish-Russian project on 'Post-Soviet Indigenous Peoples of Northern Russia: Current Administrative Policies, Legal Rights, and Applied Strategies'. Ten of the eleven contributions were originally written and published in Russian; here they appear with significant editorial revisions to accommodate an audience unfamiliar with Russia's complex administrative hierarchy.

The volume is broad, thematically and geographically, with case studies ranging across

nine Russian time-zones. The contributions touch on questions of ethnicity, property rights, resource use, nativization, religious revivalism, and economic survival in contexts of radical marketization. Running through the contributions is a stress upon the ways in which Soviet policies both reproduced and transformed practices of resource use and allocation through the creation of salaried hunting positions, the forcible relocation of indigenous populations into so-called 'national villages', and the provision of subsidies for populations deemed to be engaging in 'traditional' modes of life (contributions by Karpukhin, Sirina, Pluzhnikov, and Vladimirova). Although collectivization often undermined the transmission of traditional knowledge (notably through the tendency to ship children off to state boarding schools with monolingual Russian education), the contributions to this volume reveal how Soviet administrative practices also served to formalize pre-existing modes of land use, and often, in practice, to institutionalize and economically underwrite 'traditional' sources of livelihood. As Sirina notes in her discussion of Evenki hunters' survival strategies after *perestroika*, '[T]he paternalistic policy of the Soviet state, as paradoxical as it may seem, in certain cases protected the peoples of the North from the planned economy' (p. 151).

What also emerge consistently across the varied contributions are the transformative, and often socially devastating, consequences of post-Soviet marketization in the Russian north. In their chapters on riverine and coastal regions of Siberia, Messhyb and Vakhrushev reveal a shift towards private hunting and fishing as once-salaried state farmers become unemployed. Pluzhnikov documents a colossal decline in numbers of domesticated reindeer in the circumpolar north as state farms are disbanded; and Sirina reveals the obstacles faced by independent hunters to becoming legally documented, with the 'hunt for documents' mirroring Evenkis' hunt for sable. Several authors write of alcohol abuse, suicide, social abandonment, ecological devastation, and the rise of non-state and mafia authorities as the infrastructures that plugged indigenous herders into a vast Soviet economy are undermined.

Overall, the picture that emerges from the collection is bleak; the style of narration sometimes rather unequivocal. In his discussion of marine hunting in Chukotka, which is accompanied by an informative, if rather roughly edited, DVD, Vakhrushev notes that the now-abandoned fur farm on the Chukotka coast

stands like a symbol of collapsed empire, providing 'a horrible impression to the unfamiliar visitor' (p. 114), while the village in which it is situated 'is characterized by a depressive psychological atmosphere' (p. 116). In her discussion of livelihoods in the Amur basin under market conditions, Messshtyb asserts categorically that 'those who cannot find employment do not revert to their old traditions. Instead they are forcibly recruited into a life of criminality' (p. 45). Missonova laments the 'sorrowful strategies of ethnic identification employed as a means of economical survival' (p. 96) in her analysis of strategic identity claims among the Sakhalin Uil'ta.

Within this rather uniform portrait of decline and desperation, some of the most interesting contributions explore counter-practices that seek to reclaim and transform the label 'indigenous' and to advocate for the economic benefits that are granted to those deemed to be pursuing a traditional mode of life. In his chapter on Selkup identity politics in Tomsk region, Shakhovtsov demonstrates how the benefits that attach to the practice of traditional modes of life for those populations deemed officially to constitute a 'small-numbered people of the north' foster proliferating, and often overtly strategic, claims of indigenous membership. Meanwhile, in Altai *krai*, where members of a Moscow-educated local intelligentsia are actively campaigning for the recognition of Teleuts as a national category, Batyanova quotes one of her informants who noted that 'it is the wrong time to ponder if you are Teleut or not. Now the main point is to survive' (p. 130).

A final cluster of contributions extends this concern with the reification of culture to the realm of religious practice. Perhaps the most ethnographically rich contribution in this respect, by Pimenova, considers the revival of shamanism in the Tuvan republic and its formalization in designated 'shamanic centres'. Drawing on extensive life histories with practising shamans, Pimenova explores the contestation over sources of authority and modes of legitimation. What kind of certification should be required to practise as a shaman? And how do shamans combine alternative (and sometimes incongruous) sources of medical expertise to make ends meet?

Overall, the volume provides a detailed insight into modes of economic and cultural strategizing in a context where benefits attach to the demonstration and official codification of membership in a 'small-numbered people of the north'. It also affords an insight into the

theoretical and empirical concerns of contemporary Russian anthropology at the start of the 2000s. However, while the volume is united by broad ethnographic attention to coping strategies in the face of rapid economic and political transformation, it could benefit from a stronger editorial steer. The translation is often unwieldy and multiple stylistic errors and copy-editing oversights hinder easy comprehension. More significantly, it is not clear that the contributors are engaged in a coherent intellectual project, or even asking comparable questions. While some contributors are attuned to the discursive and practical articulation of the 'indigenous community', other contributors take that community as an unproblematic ethnographic object and lament the 'elementary errors in statistical accounting' that have led certain populations to be mis-recorded (Missonova, p. 96).

In his introduction to the volume, Beach notes that 'Western scholarship has remained effectively deaf' (p. 17) to scholarship emerging from Russia. While this may be a fair critique in general (and one that deserves restating), the pages of this volume also suggest that more complex dynamics of intellectual boundary-work may be at stake. Very little non-Siberian literature is referenced in the individual chapter bibliographies; and there are only occasional attempts to engage comparative ethnographic analysis of property rights, resource use, and the contested work of articulating indigenous identities in contexts of rapid economic transformation. While the volume will be of value to regional specialists interested in detailed case studies of particular populations, this dearth of engagement with broader theoretical discussion will limit the collection's appeal to a broader anthropological audience.

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HAUSCHILD, THOMAS (transl. Jeremy Gaines). *Power and magic in Italy*. xxv, 230 pp., map, figs, illus., bibliogr. Oxford, New York: Berghahn, 2011. £53.00 (cloth)

Basilicata, the setting for this book, is one of the least well-known regions of Italy, yet we are on familiar territory here. Mediterranean ethnography provides many examples of studies of evil eye beliefs, possession, saint cults, and healing practices that straddle the permeable boundary between Catholic and 'folk' ritual activity. The monograph draws on fieldwork conducted in the town of Ripacandida in the 1980s, the author's acquaintance with the