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Critique of Anthropology 2008; 28; 339
DOI: 10.1177/0308275X08094393

The online version of this article can be found at:
http://coa.sagepub.com

*Reverse Anthropology* reflects Kirsch’s long-term involvement as a ‘hybrid scholar-activist’ (p. xi) with and for the Yonggom communities of the Ok Tedi River of Papua New Guinea, near the border with Indonesian West Papua. The book explores Yonggom dreaming, magic, myth, ritual, exchange and sorcery as ‘indigenous modes of historical, social, and environmental analysis’, highlighting how these have shaped, and been shaped by, two particular ‘political struggles’ faced by these people. The first involved the opening of a large copper and gold mine at Ok Tedi in the mid-1980s. As Kirsch explains, the mine has since been responsible for significant environmental degradation along the Ok Tedi River, including the areas inhabited by the Yonggom. The second related to the flight of 6,000 Yonggom from West Papua (where they are known as the Muyu), who in 1984 came to live as refugees with their Papua New Guinean Yonggom kin.

Two main themes run through Kirsch’s book. The first is a focus on how the Yonggom imagine and relate to the environment. Thus Chapter 2 draws on recent ethnographic notions of animism, totemism and perspectivism. It argues that the Yonggom fully recognize the ‘interagentivity’ of humans and non-humans, and that they predicate production on the capacity to elicit (whether by enticement or by coercion) certain desired responses from the non-human entities that inhabit their environment. In Chapter 7 we see that the Yonggom also associate place with memory. As a result, the pollution caused by the mine not only threatens indigenous subsistence strategies, but is also experienced as a loss of personal and collective history. Moreover, we are told that pollution diminishes the efficacy of Yonggom magic and dreaming, thus compromising relations between humans and non-humans. However, Kirsch does not cast the Yonggom as passive victims of global forces that are irrevocably eroding and disenchanting their world. Rather, he shows how their creative development of new forms of map-making that combine European conventions with Yonggom notions of personal and collective history have allowed for a continued emphasis on relations to place in the face of mining-related environmental degradation. Moreover, he argues that these ‘old’ and ‘new’ spatial imaginaries based on the recognition of non-human agency and the capacity to connect movements of people and resources allowed the Yonggom to make sense of the damage caused by the mine and to forge alliances with international environmentalists that led to a largely successful campaign against the Ok Tedi mine (in which Kirsch acted as an advocate and consultant).

The second theme of the book is a focus on the negative impacts of failed transactions – or, as Kirsch himself puts it, on the threats posed by ‘unrequited reciprocity’. In Chapter 3 we learn that for the Yonggom unrequited reciprocity can transform a person’s capabilities and intentions, dehumanizing people and even turning them into sorcerers. In this light, Kirsch interprets the Muyu Shell Cults of the 1950s as indigenous attempts to harness European wealth and power to obviate the dangers posed by unrequited reciprocity between the Muyu and the Dutch. Expanding on these insights, Chapter 5 discusses Yonggom male cult myths as both interpretive and practical attempts to explain and obviate historical relations of unrequited reciprocity between Melanesians and Europeans. Chapters 4 and 6 continue to address this issue, this time observed through the lenses of Yonggom...
sorcery. Thus Kirsch argues that the Yonggom use sorcery as a way to talk about and understand the environmental pollution caused by the Ok Tedi mine, which is framed as unrequited reciprocity between the mine and those living downstream of it. Along similar lines, he explains how Muyu refugees use sorcery divinations to analyse the problems they face as a result of their negative relations with the Indonesian state, so that responsibility for mortality and misfortune is gradually shifted from fellow community members to the Indonesian state.

It could be argued that Kirsch’s involvement in the Yonggom campaign against the Ok Tedi mine constrains the scope of his book – for example by making it focus more on how ‘indigenous modes of analysis’ enabled the Yonggom to form alliances with international environmentalists than on the divergent motives and understandings that these two parties may have brought into their alliances. In my view, though, Reverse Anthropology remains an accomplished work that combines rich ethnography, personal experience and original theoretical insight to show how appropriate attention to ‘indigenous modes of analysis’ can help challenge a range of European dichotomies and assumptions, including, among others, the modernist emphasis on the separation of nature and society, and the idea that pollution is a purely environmental issue that can be exclusively tackled through technical and scientific means. What is more, Kirsch’s approach succeeds in revealing the extent to which indigenous modes of analysis can both facilitate and hinder the promotion of indigenous rights and the more equitable and sustainable development of their resources. As a result, his book provides an important resource for those interested in environmental anthropology, resource development, indigenous rights and Melanesian ethnography. Even more so, it should be essential reading for those interested in the challenges and opportunities involved in combining anthropology with consultancy and advocacy.

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This is Paul Christopher Johnson’s second book, following Secrets, Gossip and the Gods: The Transformations of Brazilian Candomblé (2002), a very original historical and ethnographic account of the transformations of Afro-Brazilian religions, in a dialectical process that has brought them from secrecy to ‘publicness’. The author described this process in terms of ‘theologization’ or ‘protestantization’, ‘the push towards verbal articulations of meaning for a religion once expressed and transmitted primarily through ritual’ (p. 103). Johnson has changed fields, from urban Rio de Janeiro to a multi-sited ethnography between the coast of Honduras and the Bronx, to work on the religion of the Black Caribs, also known as Garifuna. The result, much like his previous book, is a well-written, erudite and theoretically sound historical ethnography. The central issue of the book is how to address ‘Diasporic religions’. Johnson is still working with Afro-American religions, but the question of Diaspora was not central to his previous work on Brazil. Nevertheless, some of the core arguments of both books are very similar.

The Garifuna are a fascinating case to start with, because they are three-times Diasporic. Their mythical origin is a shipwreck in the 17th century that unloaded hundreds of African captives on the coast of the small island of St Vincent in the