casi exclusivamente líderes masculinos relacionados con proyectos de desarrollo). El autor es elocuente al respecto: "Prevengo al lector de tomar esta etnografía como un ejercicio de ventrilocuismo. Aunque las ideas de algunos intelectuales ishir han sido muy influyentes en mi pensamiento y mi escritura, mi propósito no es representar las subjetividades ishir ni tampoco describir cómo podría verse el mundo desde su perspectiva. Así, si las voces ishir aparecen por momentos como domesticadas es porque no pretendo que ésta sea la historia de 'los ishir' o incluso de alguno de ellos … debo enfatizar que se trata de una historia contada desde mi propia perspectiva y mis propios propósitos, en tanto han sido afectados por mi interacción con algunos, y sólo algunos (varones) intelectuales ishir" (36). No obstante, para el lector que – por más consciente que sea de los dilemas de la ciencia y la representación – cometa el pecado modernista de estar más interesado por las interpretaciones ishir que por la subjetividad académica norteamericana, las salvedades expuestas no impiden que esta obra ofrezca un aporte interesante para la antropología del Gran Chaco en general y la etnología de los grupos zamuco en particular.   Diego Villar

Bräunlein, Peter J.: Passion/Pasyon. Rituale des Schmerzes im europäischen und philippinischen Christentum. München: Wilhelm Fink Verlag, 2010. 621 pp. ISBN 978-3-7705-4944-3. Price: € 58.00

Passion is the opposite of action. But does that make participants in flagellations and crucifixions on Good Friday patients, or are they actors? Is it pathological to inflict bleeding wounds on oneself or to have oneself voluntarily nailed to a cross, while insisting that one is a good Catholic? Or is it, despite real blood from real wounds, mere spectacle, an event to which thousands of people, as well as the national and international media, flock? Does "subject" mean "an agentive self" or "someone subject to hegemony"? Is it agency or passivity if a local population passionately identifies with the religion of the colonizers in a way that makes their official representatives feel rather uneasy about? These are the questions Peter Bräunlein confronts us with in his detailed investigation of Philippine self-crucifixions and flagellation and their European precursors. The book is conceived as a contribution to both anthropology and religious studies, although while the author consistently addresses issues of religious studies, the emphasis is clearly on anthropology. Bräunlein approaches his subject issue with a firm scepticism for the judgments of European Enlightenment on religion in non-European settings. In his analysis, the self-crucifixions performed in the village of Kapitangan, not far from Manila, are neither medieval nor superstitious.

As Bräunlein details in the first of the three sections of his book, European Christianity has a long tradition in flagellation and painful asceticism. However, self-crucifixion was never considered a pious act; it was extremely rare and occurred either among eccentric individuals or was hidden in small, heterodox groups. European history offers nothing comparable to the annual, repeated, and very public crucifixions which occur in the Philippines

since 1961 (in San Pedro Kutud, not far from Kapitangan) and in Kapitangan since 1977. Bräunlein considers these rituals as local innovations inspired by the Catholic focus on the physical suffering of Christ, empathy and penitence. They are informed by both pre-Christian relations with spirits and a secular system of patronage which is partially homologous with the relations of humans with Christ and the Saints. In the second section, Bräunlein addresses the history of Catholicism in the Philippines and demonstrates how missionaries in the 16th and early 17th centuries were perceived as mastering relations with spirits better than the locals. Thus, the previous exchange relations with these nonhuman agents were translated into a Christian semantic. Even more stabilizing was the continuing system of patronage. In this form, Christ and the Saints appear as patrons of their followers, providing them with health and prosperity, but also in need of care, as they are clothed and bathed in their physical shape as statues.

This conception of Christian cosmology informs local beliefs and practices which sometimes clash with Church doctrine and organization. Bräunlein hesitates to call these practices "folk religion," due to the hierarchies of class and intellectual elaboration associated with the term. Rather, local actors carve out their own domain of sociocosmic relations which they protect from church intervention. As Bräunlein shows in the third section, which is devoted to his own ethnographic research conducted from 1996 to 1999, taking care of the Saints, especially the figure of Christ in Kapitangan, produces a localized system of status and religious authority. When the Church suggested turning Kapitangan into a parish with a resident priest, the elders strongly objected to the official interfering with their intimate relations with the local spiritual patron.

The third section also contains lively portraits of some of the major self-crucifiers of Kapitangan. In contrast to San Pedro Kutud, where crucifiers are penitents who fulfil vows that they have taken voluntarily, the crucifiers of Kapitangan are healers who follow immediate orders by Christ when crucifying themselves. Otherwise than in the European tradition, flagellation and crucifixion are not experienced as painful techniques to approach physical empathy with Christ. In fact, flagellants and crucifiers claim to feel no pain, but rather experience empowerment and purification. The perception of bodiliness as an aspect of cosmology – in fact, as a medium to experience the cosmic – thus differs markedly from European examples. In this perspective, subjecting oneself to particular practices and relations – including the subjugation to the will of Christ – provides actors with a privileged position within the sociocosmic system. They become recipients of powers which they employ for healing, thus gaining agency by accepting hierarchy. Christ in his various forms, the patron of his followers, assumes a position comparable to a spirit familiar for spiritual healers. Bräunlein arrives at these conclusions by considering the theoretical, historical, and ethnographic dimensions of the phenomenon in question, all presented in great erudition and with flawless scholarship. In the course of the argument, he manages

to navigate between the Scylla of exotic sensationalism and the Charybdis of ideologically inflected theorizing by consciously reflecting on the attractions and discontents of both. Fluently and wittily written, this is an important contribution to the anthropology of Christianity and a reflection on the potentials of current religious studies.

One more thing needs to be said in favour of the book. It is thick. While volumes beyond the 500-page-limit usually are a reviewer's nemesis, many of the anorexic ethnographies of late hardly provide the wealth of detail, the complexity of background, and the theoretical elaboration found in a work like this.   Guido Sprenger

Chatty, Dawn: Displacement and Dispossession in the Modern Middle East. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2010. 335 pp. ISBN 978-0-521-52104-8. (The Contemporary Middle East, 5) Price: £ 17.99

Communal, religious, and ethnic heterogeneities are significant features of everyday life in contemporary Levantine societies. These facets of social diversity are often raised in scholarly accounts of Middle Eastern politics and societies, in which the persistence of supranational, national, and subnational identity formations pervading social textures is distinctly emphasized. Emanating from a particular interpretation of processes of Western nation-state formation, most academic enquiries base their reasoning on the assumption that heterogeneous social, ethnic, or religious structures confined to the boundaries of a nation-state are prone to domestic political instability. A subliminal reference to the concept of homogeneity of national communities leads this thinking to deny an outlasting cohesiveness to national societies composed of culturally, ethnically, and religiously diverse communities. Premises of Western European immigration policies oscillating between appeals for cultural integration, assimilation, and social exclusion in the name of homogenized national orders appear to be built on similar reasoning.

Dawn Chatty, reader in anthropology and forced migration, and the incoming director of the University of Oxford's Refugee Studies Center, studies this kaleidoscopic diversity of Levantine societies by starting out with an examination of the regional processes of dispossession, dispersal, and forced migration in the 19th and 20th centuries. By combining a regional social history of dispersion, forced migration, and resettlement with an anthropological account of life experiences of individual members of dispersed communities, Chatty allows the reader to inspect "how various peoples, forced to migrate into or within the Middle East, have survived, founded new communities, integrated, and generally exhibited remarkable coping strategies and resilience" (2). Chatty portrays not only the historical contexts of displacement and dispersal, but also their anthropological contexts, i.e., "the individual and social group life experiences of home and imagined homeland, of single and mixed identities, of spaces and places" (10). These collected narratives of uprooted Palestinians, Kurds, Armenians, and Circassians are contextualized into larger historical dynamics of politics of empire, territorial disintegration of the Ottoman Empire, colonial encounters, and processes of nation-state formation. The objective of the study is both to illuminate processes of integration, assimilation, and exclusion and to answer the question why dispersed Armenians, Circassians, and Chechnyans have assimilated and integrated into Middle Eastern "host" societies and politics, while Kurdish and Palestinians communities have been left homeless within impermanent diasporic landscapes. The Middle East as portrayed by Chatty is a "unique" region with respect to its "multiculturalism" or rather "local cosmopolitanism" which, in contrast to other parts of the world, provides a framework where "different peoples can successfully find a place for themselves without either being assimilated or excluded" (2). Here, the dispersed and forcibly uprooted communities are able to strengthen their social cohesion and to restore cultural identity, without a direct linkage to a "territory which largely had been the cause of their earlier undoing" (10).

The study is divided into two parts, theoretical and empirical. The first chapter provides an overview of theoretical debates on migration, nationalism, ethnicity, and identity formation. It examines how those theories tackle processes and issues of involuntary migration and displacement and introduces essential notions of identity, hybridity, belonging, space, and place. The second chapter presents the broader historical context by situating the displacement of millions of dispossessed peoples into the dynamics of the greater power struggles between imperial Russia, the Austro-Hungarian Empire, and the Ottoman Empire. The majority of the large-scale involuntary migrations were directly or indirectly related with military campaigns as a result of forms of intercommunal warfare. Newly emerging states in the Balkans were determined to shape homogenized national territories in an era of mass ethnic nationalism. Kurdish, Armenian, and Muslim communities from the Balkans and the Caucasus streamed into or migrated within territories of the Ottoman Empire. With the expulsion of the Palestinian people from their native land in 1948, the society composed of a multiplicity of ethnic and religious groups in former Ottoman territories came to an end, to be replaced by nations imagined to be homogeneous. Chatty highlights the Ottoman policies on the resettlement of the inflowing communities formed by the displaced and illustrates the struggle in these communities to maintain their social and cultural cohesion towards a (re)construction of the real, virtual, and imagined coherent communities while being deterritorialized in identity.

In the second part of the study, each of the four chapters provides a comprehensive historical examination of displacement, migration, and resettlement experienced by one specific community in the former Syrian provinces of the Ottoman Empire, namely Syria and Jordan, depicting contemporary political, social, and economic circumstances. Through narratives supplied by key informants from the Palestinian, Kurdish, Circassian, and Armenian communities, Chatty presents varied coping strategies and mechanisms of individual community members and