

conceptualizations of violence, and social participation, and discipline may help find a way to keep them safe (p. 186).

At this juncture, decolonization invites itself to the debate. Relevant and pertinent, a decolonial approach is also needed to achieve proper child protection and erase the moral superiority that marks programs; it will also help dissipate the concerns about hegemonic discourses and the hierarchy they establish. This 'hierarchy may only be flattened by using a decolonial way of thinking and taking seriously children's and adults' ideas about what being young, growing up, being well mannered, and being safe and protected mean', she argues (p. 186). The book concludes with a series of recommendations intended to improve child-protection policies, governance and effective practice.

For an anthropological intervention, Fay's book takes us into an exercise in situating and listening to children while offering a perspective on international aid, its universalizing discourses, 'civilizing mission' and the issues that ensue. It is a theoretically solid and conceptually well-framed contribution to the anthropology of childhood and youth. It should inspire examinations beyond Zanzibar, in Nigeria or Senegal, for example, where corporal punishment is central to children's social becoming, contributing to what I will call Comparative African Muslim Studies. Its insights feed into debates over raising children and social development across Muslim societies. A critique of international aid, it should be of interest to scholars, policy-makers and development professionals. Those concerned with conceptual and methodological decolonization should also pay attention to Fay's suggestions. Her discussion has the merit of approaching the decolonial debate from the perspective of a Muslim context, international development and child protection. It definitely makes a case for an anthropology that is fully conscious of its modes of production.

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Ungruhe, Christian: Lasten tragen, Moderne befördern: Wanderarbeit, Jugend, Erwachsenwerden und ihre geschlechtsspezifischen Differenzierungen in Ghana.
456 pp. Berlin: LIT, 2018. ISBN 978-3-643-14011-1

This book on young migrants in Ghana provides new insights into current trends in West African circular migration from the migrants' point of view. Yet, it should be placed in a broader context. The anthropology of migration is a long-established thematic focus within the social sciences, with a constant stream of new publications on ever-changing facets of this age-old phenomenon. In the case of migrations from and within Africa, two trends may be detected in recent years: one prioritizes the increasing number of refugees and their political, social and economic motivations in their pursuit

of leaving the continent, while the other focuses on particular groups within inner-African migration flows such as female migrants and, more recently, gender refugees from among LGBTQ communities.

From a theoretical point of view, different perspectives allow for a number of thematic foci, as Caroline Brettell in her article on ‘Theorizing Migration in Anthropology’ (2015) so amply elaborated. Among them are the push and pull factors that urge young individuals in particular to take on arduous and sometimes dangerous jobs far from home, the impact of the globalized economy, the ability to stay in contact via modern means of communication, and not least the idea of ‘cultures of migration’. Even though tackling these approaches may be justified in any research on the issue, they still leave questions unanswered. This is all the truer for micro-studies of the cultural aspects of inner-regional movements and transformations over time. Circular migration in West Africa is a relatively well-documented phenomenon dating back as far as Meyer Fortes’ famous publications on the Tallensi in northern Ghana, who took out temporary labour contracts in the then colonial plantations and urban centres of the country’s South. Later investigations concentrated on the economic factors of north-south and/or rural-urban migration. However, we still know relatively little about intergenerational relations or gender-specific perspectives, and nor what migration has to do with modernity, not to mention what the people themselves have to say about it.

In order to close this gap, Christian Ungruhe, the author of this book, which was accepted as a PhD thesis by the University of Bayreuth (Germany), chose rather unconventional theoretical and methodological approaches in order to understand young persons’ decisions to migrate within their own country. Given the fact that an ever-growing and ever younger number of juveniles from rural areas – male as well as female – today spend a considerable part of their youth as unskilled labourers in urban settings, he focuses on the intersection between migration, coming of age, modernity and gender differentiation. What does youth mean to them if it is characterized by hard work and separation from home? What impact does migration have on their social status? What are the hopes and aspirations of young men and women navigating between their obligations towards stay-behind family members, the social norms of becoming respected adults of their communities and individual access to the promises of modernity?

These research questions and the general setting of the study are carefully discussed in the introductory part of this well-structured book. As a point of departure, the author accompanied two groups of rural-urban migrants, all from Ghana’s northern region (referred to by the collective term *Frafra*) working in the markets and bus stations of Ghana’s economic hubs: male truck-pushers in Ashaiman and female load-carriers (*kayayei*) in two of Accra’s largest markets. In chapter two, the author presents his choice of theoretical approaches taken from the anthropology of youth, migration and modernity, as well as his selected methods, such as participant observation, interviews, ‘thick description’ and multi-sited ethnography. All are equally well documented and thoroughly explained. Not only are the pros and cons discussed at length, so is the

author's own positionality as a white male European trying to be 'one of them'. His efforts to participate in truck-pushing apparently failed quite miserably not because of his shortcomings but because customers just wouldn't believe he could manage and refused to give him a job. So his 'participant observation' had to be reduced to 'observation' and sharing time in between the work assignments of his interlocutors. In the case of the female load-carriers the author did not even seriously consider carrying loads on his head for fear of appearing ridiculous. All these procedures and his own failures are presented with a great sense of honesty and humour. What I find most intriguing, however, is the way the author lets the reader participate in the process of analysing his empirical data. He argues that the reader would best be able to follow when tracking the individual migrants' stories. So we get to know *Captain, Dodger, Trouble* and *Rich* from among the Ashaiman truck-pushers, and the *kayayei Asana, Fatima* and *Miss Ghana* from Accra's Mokola Market No. 2, among others. The author recounts their daily work, joys and aspirations, their actions of solidarity (or lack of them) in times of illness and worry, and also their way of enjoying modern urban life and sexual freedom as part of their youth. It was interesting to learn that the female migrants investigate their earnings in their own dowries to make sure there is enough for a spectacular wedding, whereas males saved less for their bridewealth (leaving that to their fathers) and spent more on consumption goods, alcohol and gifts to bring back home, and possibly also on their girl-friends in town (even though the author doesn't say too much about that). Inserting these passages, which are written in the style of a field diary, makes the text very lively but is not limited to mere storytelling. Instead, all passages are followed by interpretations and comparisons with other publications on the issue of circular migration (chapters 3 and 4).

We then accompany the protagonists in planning their way back home to Zenindo and Bongo (chapter 5) for the upcoming harvest and the festival season. We get to know the views of parents, friends and others who stayed behind, and the hopes of the returnees and of those who postponed their visits for fear of having to show up with empty hands. It also becomes clear that there are substantial differences between male and female migrants, and that negotiations between the generations may be conflict-ridden. Again, the author argues that it was only because he accompanied the young people back to their home towns and villages that he fully understood what migration meant to them and why they embarked on the gruelling adventure of heading south in the first place. Rather than becoming wealthy (none of them did), it is the experience of having been away, the 'showing off' before their peers after returning home and the touch of modernity wafting around them that are significant. In comparing their stories with those of the elderly generation who had migrated decades before, the author demonstrates the differences in time and space. There is no such thing as a uniform migration paradigm, nor is there an overarching view of African modernity.

The results of his investigation are quite convincing. The author shows that young persons' migrations from rural sites to urban centres are not only (if at all) caused by economic push factors but have a much deeper significance. They are also indicators of

the quest for freedom, promoting modernity and gaining the social status of respected adults, even if their plans do not always work out the way they wished. Youth and adulthood are not separate phases in life but compose a continuum, with migration offering a chance to find the balance. But this ‘tightrope walking’, as the author calls it, may have a high personal and social price.

Nevertheless, I felt that some questions remain unanswered. One is the western idea of ‘youth’ that permeates this investigation, suggesting that ‘being young, free and unbound’ must be attractive everywhere, which seems doubtful when looking at the data. Rather, for young Ghanaians it seems to be a time they prefer to get over as quickly as possible. The second question revolves again around the issue of modernity. It appears to me that modernity – however defined – is considered to be found mainly outside one’s own little world and that only migration, hard though it may be, allows one to be modern and free. But what about those young people who do not migrate and are still very up to date in their life-styles or consumption preferences, and would still call themselves ‘modern’? This book hopefully inspires much further research on such looming questions connected to the issue of migration. It should definitely be published in an English translation.

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Schick, Johannes F.M., Mario Schmidt and Martin Zillinger (eds.): *The Social Origins of Thought: Durkheim, Mauss, and the Category Project*. 319 pp. New York/Oxford: Berghahn, 2022. ISBN 978-1-80073-233-9

The *Année Sociologique* school provided sociology and anthropology with a set of ideas that not only gave birth to a cascade of crucial theoretical turns in anthropology, such as structural functionalism and structuralism, but that also ripple well into the present. Its success is partially due to the fact that this group of scholars, orchestrated by Émile Durkheim and later his nephew Marcel Mauss, complemented each other like players in a first-rate band, each of them soloing on the motifs that others had provided. This