

is not money as such that is a problem for the Dagomba, rather what money can do to personal relations. Monetary and non-monetary exchanges exist side-by-side' (p. 154). It would be more correct to speak of a deep ambivalence about money, which is particularly felt by the elders. They 'realize that they are losing their control' (p. 177), most tangibly in the flow of money and Western medicines, the central topics of this book.

Bierlich's study taps into recent discussions on the commoditization and politicization of medicine and the surprise reappearance of magic and religion in modernity. Unfortunately, the meanings of these key concepts – 'modernity' in particular – are largely taken for granted. Modernity can mean almost anything, and what the author takes it to mean in Dagbon society remains somewhat obscure. That lack of clarity makes the reader hesitant about what the problem of money really is and how that problem relates to 'modernity' in Dagbon.

All in all, this book provides the reader with a fascinating insight into the intermingling of medicines, morality, gender, and inter-generational relationships in a society that is changing rapidly – in spite of the opposition by some of its most powerful members.

University of Amsterdam

SJAAK VAN DER GEEST

doi:10.1093/afraf/adp025

Advance Access Publication 18 May 2009

Picturing Pity: Pitfalls and pleasures in cross-cultural communication – image and word in a North Cameroon mission, by Marianne Gullestad. New York, NY and Oxford: Berghahn Books, 2007. xviii + 302 pp. \$95.00 (hardback). ISBN 978 1 84545 343 5.

Unfortunately this review has become a kind of obituary. The author of the book under review, Norwegian anthropologist Marianne Gullestad, died in March 2008 at the age of 62, barely four months after her monograph on missionary photography had appeared.

It has become a truism that twentieth-century histories – wherever on the globe they may be written – cannot be understood without considering the massive output of visual material, in particular photographs and films. Beginning rather timidly in the 1980s, research on the visual has gained considerable momentum since the 1990s. Yet, even after what has been termed the 'pictorial turn', missionary photographs have long been neglected. This has changed in recent years and missionary informational material has today become the object of considerable international interest. Looking at the regional distribution of research, we find that a great deal of work has been done and still is done in the Asia-Pacific region and in sub-Saharan Africa.

Access to and work with missionary photography is now greatly facilitated through projects such as the Internet Mission Photography Archive, where several physically separate collections (including the Norwegian Missionary Society's photo collection) have been brought together into a single repository and made publicly accessible on the internet.

Always a fine observer of her own country, Gullestad undertakes an exploratory study of pictures and texts brought to Norway by the evangelical Norwegian Missionary Society (NMS) from northern Cameroon from the 1920s to the present. Gullestad analyses how 'mission propaganda' as she calls it – has impacted on

Norwegian policies, as well as how it has influenced the way that ethnic relations are conceptualized and are played out in Norway today. On a more general level, she attempts to show how an analysis of missionary photographs can add new insights within the ongoing conversation about the meanings and effects of pictures.

The book is structured in ten chapters. Chapter 1 is about theory. Bundling together perspectives as diverse as visual anthropology, post-colonial studies, media studies and feminism, Gullestad develops the framework for the analysis of how missionary material has created, shaped, and maintained new social categories, new cultural boundaries, and new hierarchies. For example, she shows how this information helped in the formation of categories such as 'donors' and 'recipients', which are so widely used in today's discourse on development and foreign aid. The way she reveals the impact of missionary activities abroad and at home on national policies and perceptions is one of the strengths of the book, and something which makes it extremely interesting for an audience interested in the 'other side' of development and foreign aid.

The following chapter presents the context of NMS publications. Readers are given an overview of the work of the Norwegian missionaries in Cameroon and the way their photographs have been distributed to audiences in Norway. In chapters 3 and 4, Gullestad, develops two entry points to the analysis of their published photographs, by examining a set of visualizations of a bible passage, which was central to the Norwegian missionaries, and (second) by considering the missionaries' verbal reflections about their photographs in their own memoirs.

Chapters 5–8 are content-oriented. Here Gullestad analyses specific photographs and films. She presents the subject matter in the photographs in terms of the central biblical notions of the field and the harvest, discusses the specific roles of visualizations of women in the missionary propaganda, presents the missionary portrayal of Muslim men (in particular the sultans), and continues the discussion by analysing a missionary feature film from the time when Cameroon achieved political independence and development aid was institutionalized in Norway.

Chapter 9 presents the recent creation of a digitized collection of missionary photographs that has been returned to Cameroon. Finally, Chapter 10 sums up some aspects of the complex relational dynamics within which the photographs have emerged and circulated over time. Gullestad states that the 'relational uneasiness' between Norwegians and Cameroonians, where one party is constantly giving and the other taking, continues well into the twenty-first century within the structured relations of neo-colonialism and development programmes.

As the Australian historian Max Quanchi recently observed, research on the educative and propaganda power of images in the public domain is still at a formative stage. Gullestad's book is a considerable contribution to a critical understanding of the visual output of a European mission society. It convincingly shows that photographs not only convey ideas, meanings, perceptions, and beliefs, but that they can also configure them. Scholars interested in visual records, missionary history and/or actual questions about the continuous existence of asymmetrical relations between the North and the South will find in Gullestad's final contribution a stimulating study – one which hopefully will trigger a series of similar and expanded research works.

University of Basel

JUERG SCHNEIDER

doi:10.1093/afraf/adp034

Advance Access Publication 18 May 2009