

Sada families (i.e. were descendants of the Prophet Muhammad). They could therefore be regarded as merely representing the old elite in new attire. Profound disappointment with the failures of the secular political left in Arabia and the Muslim world preceded the new rise of Islamic 'universalism'. Some of the main questions about the past and present of Hadrami diasporas thus remain open for future research.

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**McGranahan, Carole. 2010. *Arrested histories: Tibet, the CIA, and memories of a forgotten war*. Durham and London: Duke University Press. 307 pp. Pb.: \$23.95/€18.99. ISBN: 978 0 8223 4771 2.**

Much has been said and written about the Tibetan exile community, but rarely has a book engaged with it in as critical yet sympathetic, theoretically rigorous yet ethnographically grounded way as Carole McGranahan's *Arrested Histories*. Given the scarcity of comprehensive, in-depth studies on the history of the Tibetan exile community so far, this is a welcome and major contribution to the field. On a basic level, this book is about the

Tibetan armed resistance against China between 1956 and 1974, offering both the subaltern histories of its (mostly Khampa) veterans and an anthropological investigation of the ways in which these histories are dealt with in the context of exile-Tibetan community politics. McGranahan traces the China-Tibet conflict from the pre-modern period (Chapter 1) to the first local uprisings against Chinese troops in Kham in 1956 (Chapter 3) and the citizen-led army of Chushi Gangdrug operating on a national level, first in Tibet (Chapter 4) and later from exile (Chapters 6 and 8). Interweaving the historical narrative with ethnographic observations and theoretical contextualisation, the author shows how these histories have been 'arrested' through official denial or censorship in the exile community today: they remain public secrets that are not completely discarded, but rather put on hold (like Tibetan Buddhist treasure teachings) for a later time when their telling may be socially acceptable. The veterans painfully consent to this historical arrest out of respect for the Dalai Lama and the desire to belong to the exile community – McGranahan aptly speaks of 'pains of belonging' (Chapter 2) – while at the same time resisting the forgetting of their histories and denial of identities.

But *Arrested Histories* is about much more than the muted memories of Tibetan war veterans, and this is where the strength, but also the limits of this book lie. Using resistance histories as a lens to understand the histories of Tibet (p. 175) and, less explicitly, the condition of the Tibetan exile more generally, McGranahan argues that the veterans' histories fundamentally clash with the type of nation envisioned by the Tibetan exile government. Thus, while Dharamsala claims to represent a unified nation based on a homogenised pan-Tibetan identity, modelled on Central Tibetan norms at the expense of other regional identities (Khampa, Amdowa), the Tibetan resistance movement was based on a very different version of the Tibetan nation that allowed for multiple regional identities, dissent and a higher degree of political participation. What is more, resistance histories are connected not only to the external conflict with

the Chinese, but also to fierce internal conflicts within the diaspora community (see the particularly revealing Chapter 7), challenging not only its official image of unity but also the exile-government's democratic credentials. It is for these reasons, the book's main argument contends, that resistance histories have been arrested; and it is for the same reason that the relevance of *Arrested Histories* extends to the exile Tibetan community as a whole. While it is nothing new that Tibetan history is less about past events than about present politics and future goals, this book's most important contribution lies in offering a critical new perspective on exile politics and nationalism based on subaltern Tibetan histories rather than academic Western critique.

Two minor limitations (besides the confusion of 'inner' and 'outer Tibet' on p. 44) are perhaps worth mentioning. First, McGranahan notes that the previously arrested histories of resistance are now gradually being released (p. 202). Given her convincing analysis of the socio-political dynamics involved in historical arrest, this release appears to be an equally interesting development that, unfortunately, the book fails to explain or analyse. Secondly, as McGranahan herself points out (p. 186f), the veterans' histories reflect a dilemma that not only they, but the entire exile-community is dealing with: the tension between violence and nonviolence, between action and deference. I would therefore have appreciated a deeper ethnographic exploration of how the veterans deal with this inner conflict, these 'pains of belonging', in terms of forming an exile Tibetan subjectivity that, precisely because of this conflict, participates in but also exceeds official identity politics (cf. Chapter 9).

Compared with this book's virtues, however, these limitations remain insignificant. In terms of both its content and its analytical framework, *Arrested Histories* serves as a showcase example for the potentials of combined historical and anthropological research in any setting, making it of interest to graduate and advanced undergraduate students in anthropology, history, Tibet studies, subaltern studies and related disciplines. For those working on the Tibetan com-

munity in exile, this book is nothing less than indispensable.

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**Mittermaier, Amira. 2010. *Dreams that matter. Egyptian landscapes of the imagination*. Berkeley: University of California Press. 328 pp. Pb. \$21.95/£14.95. ISBN: 978 0 520 25851 8.**

Everyone dreams. This makes dreaming a particularly compelling phenomenon for anthropological study. But what might an anthropology of dreaming, dream interpretation and the imaginations that shape dream practices look like? The answer lies in Amira Mittermaier's engaging, theoretically sophisticated and ethnographically rich *Dreams that Matter*. Taking mainly Cairene Muslim dreamers and dream interpreters (in a pre-2011-revolutionary Cairo) as the focal point of her study, Mittermaier argues that these dreamers were not conjuring up a better Egypt for themselves, but that the ways in which they ethically live their lives is often directly tied to the dreams they dream. If the topic seems esoteric, we need only consider the fact that nearly every religious tradition finds itself shaped and/or strengthened in the wake of dreams, miracles and visions, and that these phenomena have long played a role not only in personal human lives but in shaping the very contours of history.

An anthropological study of dreams among Cairene Muslims, *Dreams that Matter* undermines monolithic conceptions of Islam, taken-for-granted notions of the self-possessed subject, and a host of dichotomies ('us/them, real/imagined, subjective/objective, and either/or' (p. 239)). Indeed, this is a work that pushes far beyond dreams as reflections of personal encounters, psychological states or sites of subversion without neglecting the place that these aspects of dreaming have for many Cairene dreamers.

One of the central concepts of the book is that of *barzakh*. Mittermaier explains that