

Virtanen, Pirjo Kristiina. 2012. *Indigenous Youth in Brazilian Amazonia: Changing Lived Worlds*. New York: Palgrave Macmillan. 272 pp. Hb.: £55.00. ISBN: 9781137265340.

This engaging and thoughtfully written monograph follows the lives of young members of the Manchineri of Brazilian Amazonia, a people located in the state of Acre (Western Brazil), numbering approximately 1,000, who lived in isolation until the 1990s (p. 135). Virtanen outlines in the Introduction her intention to give voice to youth Manchineri, since despite being the subject of studies on sociality, kinship and rites of passage, they have only been discussed as passive agents, and hardly given a voice. She proposes to introduce the youth's points of view, recasting them as active participants rather than inert characters, in their various ways of engaging with otherness.

When discussing the Manchineri, the author situates herself in their context, explaining how her non-Indian (payri) status did not change despite being eventually allowed to share meals: a fundamental way of constructing and maintaining social relations in Amazonia. This contributes to a clearer vision of how her presence elicited reactions and discourses on otherness. Virtanen also uses the methodological device of asking the youth to illustrate their experiences through drawing pictures, several of which are included in the book, or geographical maps, thus eliciting alternative, visual information perhaps more explicit than oral testimony.

The first part of the book depicts the young Manchineri's geographical and social landscape as it unravels in the forest, the gendered tasks expected of each individual, and ways in which correct performance of these duties shapes and develops social relations. In parallel, readers encounter those Manchineri youths (a minority) who for various reasons live in urban areas, learning how their habits and social life differ from those living in the reserve. A comparison between the two lifestyles is drawn; the city's social sphere is one 'in which everyone is parallel to everyone else, rather than complementary to them' (p. 33) by contrast with the reserve, where everyone is known by name and personal qualities.

Various facets of Manchineri life are seen from the perspective of younger members of the community: Virtanen describes local practices, values and beliefs as she learnt of them through conversations with young people. The ethnography explores a range of subjects concerning everyday life, cosmology and ritual, education, political engagement and inter-generational and inter-ethnic relations.

Through the detailed ethnographic description coupled with historical and theoretical contextualization, we access the discourses of today's Manchineri youth as well as those of their parents and grandparents. This frame of reference, combining current shifting realities with traditions of the recent past, provides compelling material for analysing how historical-global changes affect indigenous communities, and how some of these respond to these changes and relative challenges. The communities are not pictured as victims or passive actors in a process beyond their control; on the contrary, the author stresses their capacity to creatively seize opportunities for growth of knowledge – of themselves, of their ethnic-cultural traits, of the white urban society and the Brazilian welfare provision, and to expand their relationship networks.

Importantly, the book captures the tension between life in the reserve and life in the city, and the way young Manchineri relate to urban life and the opportunity it holds. Ambivalence toward the city – viewed as attractive, but also dangerous and impossibly expensive – is effectively portrayed. If on one hand young Manchineri appreciate urban areas for their transformative potential (knowledge and skill acquisition, negotiation with the state, abundant commodities), it is apparent on the other hand that the metropolis accommodates only those individuals whose families have already settled there. Due to high costs and difficult transportation, long and often wearing trips to the city are painful obligations required to draw a state pension. The impersonal relations characterising urban communication contrast starkly with the conviviality of the reserve. The racism and marginalisation suffered by indigenous people in urban areas is discussed, highlighting how prejudice may threaten cordial inter-ethnic relations.

The book also demonstrates how indigenous politics have shifted from personalised relations and negotiation between indigenous and non-indigenous, human and non-human entities in the forest environment, towards the dynamic involvement of Manchineri youth with local government and indigenous organisations and associations. Schooling, literacy and learning skills related to urban life are seen as instrumental to gain autonomy and symbolic capital useful when confronting both the state and Brazilians, as well as the Manchineri community. The wish for schooling illustrates the aspiration to acquire the appropriate knowledge to engage with white people, mastering the Portuguese language and the social skills needed in urban contexts. Once secured, this new knowledge earns young Manchineri social prestige and special status within their village.

Although the reader gathers the general impression of balanced harmony amongst the Manchineri, Virtanen does introduce some data on conflictive areas, mainly associated with positions of prestige and leadership, whenever those in charge fail to fulfil the community's general expectations. Sensitive subjects also include the frustrating experiences that schooling often offers, and the gradual loss of traditional knowledge. If young Manchineri wish to learn intellectual skills for the empowering knowledge they yield, multicultural education is still problematic in the reserve. Books are scarce and often addressed to the general student body, offering pedagogical and practical methods that hardly fit Manchineri views on learning. Young Manchineri are also caught in the paradox of having to learn 'how to be a good Indian' from urban Manchineri teachers who have long forgotten the language. The young are also depicted facing cultural dilemmas, such as realising their limited knowledge of their oral history and traditional practices and songs; this awareness is ironically often prompted by non-native teachers during training courses on documenting and transmitting indigenous traditional knowledge.

In sum, this book is a brilliant ethnographic record of a neglected portion of the native population, followed in their pursuit to find, maintain and accommodate their identity as natives while simultaneously adapting to the shifting realities of life in Brazil, dynamically and strategically incorporating into their everyday lives new practical and intellectual resources.

GIOVANNA BACCHIDDU
Pontificia Universidad Católica and ICIIS (Chile)

Kligman, Gail and Katherine Verdery (eds.). 2011. Peasants under Siege: The Collectivization of Romanian Agriculture, 1949-1962. Princeton and Oxford: Princeton University Press. xix + 508 pp. Pb.: \$39.50 / £27.95. ISBN: 9780691149738.

There are books that, as soon as they are published, become classic studies, so to speak, must-reads for everyone interested in that particular field of studies. Already well-known for their excellent and highly inspiring work, Gail Kligman and Katherine Verdery have written a book that belongs to that category and represents one of the finest achievements in the field of studies on peasants' life in central and south-eastern Europe. The truth of such a statement finds a clear proof when one is confronted with the prizes and recognition this book has already received in the USA, and most importantly in Romania. As the title indicates, the book focuses primarily on the 1949–1962 period, when collectivization was implemented in Romania. However, Kligman and Verdery also refer to pre-WWII realities and provide insight on the ways the collectivization process was treated after 1962 in communist Romania and on how these events are remembered today. Reading this book brings to mind the works of Moshe Levin, Jozo Tomasevich, Kenneth Jowitt, Lynne Viola and Sheila Fitzpatrick, to whom the authors refer and pay tribute. However, as Kligman and Verdery state in the introduction they 'treat the collectivization process as instrumental in establishing the nature of the new Party-state itself and of its subjects' (p. 6) and, in doing so, they offer a new and highly inspirational methodological shift in the research on communist regimes in Europe. Moreover, by combining well-documented historical research with in-depth ethnography and the study of mnemonic practices, Kligman and Verdery's achievement opens new paths in studying and understanding not only the communist past, but also the post-communist present.

The book is divided into three parts, followed by the conclusion and three annexes containing information about the research project and the researchers, methodology of research, and a list of interviewees and respondents. The first part is entitled Laying the groundwork and contains three chapters. In the first one (The Soviet Blueprint) Kligman and Verdery elaborate on the influence of Soviet models and ideas on the collectivization process not only in Romania, but in a broader context comprising almost all countries that belonged to the then-communist bloc. The second chapter (The Village Community and the Politics of Collectivization 1948–1962) offers a contrast of socio-cultural mechanisms and models that defined the social life of Romanian village before collectivization with events that took place during the implementation of this process. It leads thus to the third chapter (Creating Party Cadres), which explains how the violence that often accompanied collectivization efforts was not only a result of the incompatibility of dominating Soviet models with the ways of life of Romanian peasantry alongside, but also a "school" for new Romanian communist cadres.

The second part entitled Pedagogies of Power: Technologies of Rural Transformation offers an inquiry on strategies and mechanisms used by Party leaders in order to implement, or better, impose collectivization on Romanian peasants, and on the responses the former received from the latter. These issues are analysed in three consecutive chapters. Chapter Four (Pedagogies of Knowledge Production and Contestation) analyses the ways

and methods Party cadres sought to gain social supports for their collectivization project. In practical terms, this production of knowledge was associated with a series of persuasion strategies, which are the object of analysis in the next chapter (Pedagogies of Persuasion). Finally, the sixth chapter (Fomenting Class War) scrutinizes the ways the Party imposed its will on those who contested the collectivization process, trying simultaneously to legitimize not only these measures, but in fact also its own power.

The third part – Outcomes – analyses the aftermath of collectivization. The seventh chapter (The Collectives are Formed) brings into focus, as authors states, the variability rather than a general pattern of collectivization in Romania. Still, this chapter contains a valuable analysis that shows that neither in Romania, nor elsewhere in former communist countries, was the Soviet blueprint entirely fulfilled. The final chapter of the book (The Restratification and Bureaucratization of Rural Life) leads to even more significant conclusions. Contrary to the general assumption that in Romania people did not show similar sign of resistance as in Poland or Hungary, Kligman and Verdery argue that the history of Romanian collectivization proves the opposite.

In addition to the information included in the preface and acknowledgments, the authors present a full view of, so to speak, ‘behind the scenes’ of their research project. In particular, the part on methodology is extremely valuable not only for students, but also for more experienced scholars. This book is the result not only of the cooperation between Kligman and Verdery, but indeed the effect of the work of a group of researchers, who conducted interviews and fieldwork. Finally, as much as on group efforts, the success of this project depended on the respondents, on those who went through collectivization. It is to them that above all this book pays a great tribute.

Scholars from a wide range of research areas and disciplines will cherish from this book, but obviously those, who focus on Romania, the Balkans and communism will find it at most valuable. Undoubtedly through the abundance of material gathered and analysed in the book, the interdisciplinary approach and the innovative methodology applied by Gail Kligman and Katherine Verdery make this work not only a powerful intellectual achievement, but indeed a landmark in the field of studies on communist regimes in Europe.

RIGELS HALILI
Nicolaus Copernicus University of Toruń, and
University of Warsaw (Poland)