

is based more on the paucity of information on social structure, political and economic context, as well as cultural process. Very few of the interlocutors are identified in terms of their positions in the social structure and their occupational categories. The general absence of a systematic comparison of social, occupational structure, land tenure and livelihood activities in both the 1960s and the 1980s is problematic. This very important information would enable an understanding of the multiplicity of factors which might play a role in the production of different subjectivities in different eras or different subjectivities in the same era. For example, would an agricultural labourer or woman home worker share the same kind of modern subjectivity as a member of the landed elite or entrepreneur? By the same token, since the transformation from an economy based on agriculture to one based on wage labour was so key, some attempt to elaborate upon the larger political and economic context is also important in determining the ways in which subjects and subjectivities are produced. For example, how did the change from the repressive authoritarian state, to a relatively democratic state and their different agendas for developing the Spanish economy and agriculture exert and influence the conceptual universe and the techniques of regulating and of managing the self and others? Finally, Collier refers to the changes she notes as "shifts" between 1963 and 1983, no doubt reflecting how her own field work was structured in time. A sense of how those shifts were accomplished is absent. Were there struggles that might have ensued within families over how the family might be remade? The impression offered is that the inhabitants of Los Olivos simply left behind one conceptual universe and stepped into another, all-encompassing one. The question of process is begged and it bears directly upon the question of how totalizing is this new subjectivity. I recognize that the answers to some of these questions require the author to have engaged in a different kind of field work, one that focusses less on narratives, and this is not what she has done. Yet, without some attention to these concerns, some degree of scepticism regarding Collier's assertions can be maintained. Moreover, the questions raised here on problematizing modernity, structure, context and process need to be addressed also for the author to successfully navigate her way around her own stated desire, simply reproducing the tradition and modernity dichotomy. As it stands, the dichotomy persists, in my view and I might hazard, her own, as a reflection of the constraints of the conceptual categories used by a self-conscious modern subject (p. 10). The author, who while being engaged in an Enlightenment undertaking—the practice of anthropology—dutifully imposes it upon the subjects of this scintillating study.

**Richard Katz, Megan Biesele and Verna St. Denis, *Healing Makes Our Hearts Happy: Spirituality and Transformation among the Kalahari Ju/'hoansi*, Rochester, VT: Inner Traditions, 1997, 214 pages, U.S. \$29.95.**

Reviewer: *Mathias Guenther*  
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The trance dance is a prominent feature in the anthropological literature on the Bushmen, ever since the publication, in 1982, of Richard Katz's *Boiling Energy*. As the principal author also of the present monograph, frequent reference is made to this work, which follows the same analytical path (while deviating theoretically from the previous study, in its postmodernist soundings and leanings). The primary focus of the analysis is on the form and function of the trance dance, of the Ju/'hoansi of western Botswana, and on the "moods and motivations" of the trance dancer and his or her relationships with the community as well as the people's political aspirations and actions within what has become for the Bushmen of today a largely post-foraging world. Another, more secondary consideration is the symbolic and phenomenological side of this complex ritual, the principal focus of most of the recent studies of Bushman trance dance which treat this "shamanic" healing ritual as a symbolic key to understanding other domains of Khoisan culture, most particularly rock art, myth and cosmology. This study of the trance dance thus complements existing studies and, by providing a sequel to one of the classics in the field, offers a long-term perspective on one of the key institutions of Bushman culture.

The study examines the Ju/'hoan trance dance from the conventional synchronic and diachronic perspectives of "tradition" and "change" (as well as "continuity," as a strong component of "renewed tradition" attaches to the contemporary trance dance). The first treats the healing dance as a condensed version of Ju/'hoan foraging band society, while the second presents the dance, in both its traditional and "renewed" form, as a vehicle for social change and political action on the part of post-foraging Ju/'hoansi. As an "ancient heritage," which in its *modus operandi* and its values recapitulates Ju/'hoan society; the trance dance's "structure is the same as society itself." In its intense, prolonged, widely attended performance social and gender equality, intra- and intergroup sharing, exchange and kin networking, levelling and co-operation are played out and mediated. Like storytelling—a theme explored in like analytical fashion by one of the coauthors, Megan Biesele, in her recent book on Ju/'hoan folklore—the trance dance becomes an arena for the moral, emotional and creative interplay between the individual and the community. Being so grounded in experience, and rendered real and meaningful, the trance healing dance is seen by contemporary n Ju/'hoansi as "our thing"; it is "quintessentially Ju/'hoan." The reason the dance has assumed this ethnic stamp among the Ju/'hoansi is the ever-expanding presence of the Black pastoralists on their lands, and along with it the oppressive practices and attitudes the Black power holders of the country extend toward this ethnic minority.

But, apart from the ideological boost to ethnic identity and cultural revitalization which the dance might engender, the authors point to a number of other ways in which the dance and the dancers may be a force for political change and even action. In a perceptive section entitled the “dynamics and politics of *n/om*” (the healing potency, or “boiling energy,” activated in the trancer’s stomach), the authors deal, on the one hand, with the mystical, phenomenological elements of the trance dance and, on the other, with the social, performative, moral and affective ones and show how these render the dance a “key to liberating change” and “a linchpin to the evolution of their future.” Regarding the first, the dancer’s spiritual power and courage and his visions and knowledge of the spirit world, and of “the path” to travel to it (as well as back to the community), are all capabilities, it is suggested, that are transferable from the mystical world of the spirits beyond, to the here-and-now, the real world of *realpolitik*. His spiritual work energizes the dancer and enables him to forge on ahead, along a path of political action, through the dangers and pitfalls of power politics, his inner vision now turned outward, becoming one of “critical analysis” of the Ju/hoansi’s present sociopolitical situation, in particular its power structures. The social and performative elements of the trance dance that give it political significance is its morally and affectively integrating, as well as energizing quality, which generates emergent, cathartic and collective healing power in the dancers and spiritual, moral and emotional energy (called *!ka*, “heart,” by the Ju/hoansi) in the participants. Following his 1982 study, Richard Katz refers to these elements of “communal healing” as “synergy.” Factions and conflicts are capable of being suspended in the context of a dance event, and rifts repaired. Notwithstanding certain developments towards professionalization by some trance dancers—prime of them the charging of fees for service—the curing dance still has the same morally integrating quality it had a generation earlier. The main difference is its assumption, today, of a political agenda and edge, with the trance dancers as the people’s most vocal political spokespersons.

However, given their spiritual, otherworldly disposition, one might be led to question the dancers’ efficacy in that role. How well does a “shaman’s path,” to a “higher spiritual power” and through and around dangers and obstacles of the spirit world, translate into a road map through the world of power politics, towards political equality, economic equity and land rights. It is a path to God but not to Caesar, I would think, and one leading more to the past than the present and future. And as the the avatar of the culture’s “ancient values,” namely, “respect, humility, love, sharing and service,” is the trance dancer mentally equipped to get himself and his people “ahead” in the post-foraging world of capitalism, consumerism, political bureaucracy and brinkmanship, power lobbying and jockeying? That there is more than counterintuitive doubt behind my questions here is suggested by the fact that the Ju/hoan informants themselves evidently drew no con-

nection between the trance dance and dancer and politics, saying repeatedly, when asked about the matter by the researchers, that “healing is one thing, the problems of our lands and wells are another” (p. 133), or words to that effect.

The substantive and analytical part of the book is sandwiched between, and discursively interspersed by, postmodernist musings about alterity and power. The book’s preface and final section, on “the politics of research and the ethics of responsibility,” as well as four of the five appendices, all deal, with varying degrees of explicitness, with the problem of voices and authorial authority, of the need, that is, to be mindful against usurping the voices of other people, and subverting, thereby, their identity and political aspirations.

As a people who are largely illiterate, but who, nevertheless, “know about papers”—land-board application and registration forms, hunting licences, lists of food-aid recipients and the like—the Ju/hoansi have asked the three authors to be their “paper people”: to “tell our story to your people” (and to people who hold power and make economic and political decisions that affect the Bushmen). Mindful of Michael Tausig’s admonitions (in his own study of shamanism) about “the politics of interpretation and representation,” the three researchers tell that story, sensitively and self-consciously, with much room for the Ju/hoansi’s own voices, which appear in the text in the form of expansive commentaries. These are set apart from the well delineated voices of the three authors—one, a comparative psychologist with a strong humanist and advocacy bent (Katz), another a cultural anthropologist and folklorist, with much ethnographic experience, linguistic facility and a long and distinguished career in the field of Bushman development (Bieseke) and the third, a Canadian Cree/Métis academic from Saskatchewan with a research interest in the history and contemporary struggles of First Nations peoples (St. Denis). The last appears especially keen in her concern about how the postmodernist issues that stalk today’s ethnographic enterprise like black dogs might compromise the current project. As an Indigenous person, she admits to feeling a special kinship with the Ju/hoansi as revealed in an absorbing chapter written by herself (rather than by the authors jointly). It describes her extensive conversations with the Ju/hoansi about their and her people’s cultural, linguistic, economic, social and political problems, and their mutual recognition of a common cause.

In a revealing appendix, which is presented as a dialogue among the three authors about the aims and outcomes of the study, St. Denis expresses apprehension about this project “getting it right.” I believe the book has succeeded in that goal. Combining the authors’ three voices with those of the Ju/hoansi, at whose behest and in whose cultural and political idiom they have written their joint book, they have produced, on the one hand, a superb ethnographic monograph on the “ancient tradition” of the dance and the society and ethos it embodies. On the other, the book offers an account of a post-foraging Fourth World people who, in a context of intense identity politics that reverberate through post-Apartheid

southern Africa, resiliently and resourcefully confront their problems, by drawing on, and renewing tradition and activating potent spiritual and political energies. It is a portrait of the Bushmen that leave little room for prerevisionist or intro-textbook fancies about peripheral, "harmless," passive people, with iconic, archaic and disappearing life- and folkways. The Ju/'hoansi, as well as other Bushman communities all over southern Africa, are addressing themselves to the political issues of their time and their land and nation. This book may well contribute to having their voices heard.

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**Eric Alden Smith and Joan McCarter (eds.), *Contested Arctic: Indigenous Peoples, Industrial States, and the Circumpolar Environment*, Seattle: University of Washington Press, 1997, 156 pages.**

Reviewer: *Chris Egan*  
*University of Manitoba*

You cannot read this book without digesting the message that the Arctic is indeed the frontier of contemporary colonialism. The controlling gaze may have shifted focus somewhat, but the inspecting and regulating of people and animals persists in the historical space of today's "contested Arctic."

Most of the papers in this edited volume were presented in 1996 at a one-day interdisciplinary symposium on human-environmental interaction in the circumpolar north. A first glance at the table of contents might suggest an imbalance of geographic areas because, of the six papers, three address problems of pollution in the Russian North—though one of these compares Natives in northwest Siberia and northern Alberta (Aileen Espiritu). Since the opening up of the Soviet Union and the Russian Federation, the West had much to learn—and Russia is evidently ready and willing to tell. This book excels in accomplishing its goal of illuminating intersections of "industrial pollution, Arctic ecosystems, national ambitions, and indigenous cultures."

In his introduction, Eric Alden Smith provides us with a succinct discussion of the historical beginnings of ecological degradation (colonial style) as well as current global environmental problems across the circumpolar north. Appropriately, the first chapter in the volume is written from an emic point of view. Charles Johnson reminds us that Native people are active participants in the Arctic ecosystem and are greatly concerned about effects of global warming and Arctic environmental contamination by organochlorines and heavy metals; he argues that these problems can be related to a decline in the physical and social health of circumpolar peoples. In Craig ZumBrunnen's account of the Russian North, significant health problems have been demonstrated in 28 of the 29 cities which have significant chemical industry pollution related specifically to the defence sector. There, the legacy of harmful industrial processing (including mining) gives little reason for optimism as the problems in Russia are now quite

serious. In fact, only 15% of Russia's population reside in areas where the ambient air quality meets health standards. Conspicuously, the Arctic metropolis of Noril'sk is deemed to be the city in all of Russia with the most contaminated air.

Cultural conflict following resource extraction from the Arctic's "storehouse of wealth" is discussed in two additional papers (by Fondahl and Espiritu) which address problems common to Indigenous peoples in the Russian and the Canadian North. The fragility of the Arctic ecosystem is generally downplayed by the developers (or should we say, destroyers) whose manoeuvres engender losses of various kinds to Northern Native peoples. Loss of traditional subsistence regimes (such as hunting or reindeer herding), loss of control of their own environment (including loss of land) and loss of other sociocultural traits which identify them as Inuit, Cree or Saami are examples of human rights issues examined in chapters written by Collings and Beach, and of the Indigenous peoples of Russia in the chapter written by Gail Fondahl, who also examines the development of their land claims.

Peter Collings examines some of the underlying assumptions of wildlife management in the Canadian North. The "tragedy of the commons" paradigm has been used in arguments of famine, overfishing and wildlife overexploitation, and Collings debates how sociocultural contexts can affect conditions that lead to environmental degradation resulting from overexploitation of resources. He argues that social and cultural limitations implemented by the Inuit themselves continue to be effective mechanisms in the prevention of resource depletion. The James Bay Cree, too, have employed a successful system of resource management by means of hunting and fishing territories, as well as by a culturally sanctioned self-limiting principle to take only what is needed.

This book reveals significant information about the real situation in the former U.S.S.R. For example, Craig ZumBrunnen tells about dozens of "secret cities" which were established by Stalin to develop the atom bomb, and discloses little-known facts like nuclear power plants being built without radiation containment vessels, and the secret injecting of billions of gallons of atomic wastes directly into the ground at three separate sites. Not only are the Russian people suffering from the consequences of such irresponsibility, transboundary pollution of toxic products is a growing threat to Arctic peoples across the globe.

One of the great strengths of this book is in its ability to address social and political issues as they relate to various actual problems of pollution, and also to perceptions of pollution by groups with vested interests. For example, a perception of ecological damage being caused by reindeer which, it is contested, are allowed to overgraze and trample the tundra in Swedish Lapland, is a position disputed by Hugh Beach in the final chapter. In spite of, or perhaps because of, seemingly disparate cultural contexts and realities, this book sheds new light on changing sociopolitical and ecological problems faced by Arctic peoples around the globe.

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