followed the prophecy told in the cult's own myth. The leaders of the movements—most of whom were women—killed the cult. And within a few months, Tuzin arrived from America and was inevitably identified by some with Nambweapa'w's long-lost son.

While Tuzin obviously failed to bring the hoped-for millennium to Ilahita, he does assume the prophet's mantle in the final two chapters of this book. The death of the *Tambaran* turned the world upside down and represents the final, long-feared (by men at least) revenge of Nambweapa'w. Under the old regime, men's fear of women was nurtured by their perceived need to dominate them. The complex, laborious and often excessively violent demands of the cult sublimated much of their aggressive impulses, "resulting in a relatively low incidence of actual violent acts by men against women." In the new order, the men no longer fear women and thus no longer dominate them in the forms of "ritual menace and rhetorical violence." These have been replaced by the "real thing." In post-*Tambaran* Ilahita, wives have turned on husbands who, without recourse to ritual sanctions, rely on their own fists. From valuing their wives as vital links between kin groups, they have come to see them as "chattel" to be bought and sold. The ironic outcome of the cassowary's revenge, then, "is not the liberated savagery of women, but the unsublimated savagery of men" (p. 177). Things are falling apart, and the present mix of church, state and commercial options open to the Ilahita are unlikely to provide disrupted lives with a new social centre.

Tuzin saves his most provocative prophecies to the final chapter, "Sanctuary." The parricide of the *Tambaran* marks the death of masculinity in Ilahita. But masculinity is dying elsewhere, nowhere more visibly than in the United States. Just as the *Tambaran* was allowed to whither for a decade before its murder, so to American males have lost their exclusive occupational and associative prerogatives during the 20th century, "culminating in a traumatic, ideological assault on masculinity during the latest generation" (p. 187). Just as the end of the male cult unleashed the demon of domestic violence upon Ilahita, the "assault" on male privilege has had unforeseen negative consequences contributing to family breakups, sexual abuse of children, drug wars, racism and even the growth of the radical militias. Without "sanctuary" to air their insecurities and anger against women, many men, Tuzin asserts, will turn to actual violence.

Tuzin makes these assertions, but he does not try hard to substantiate them or to win over sceptical readers. He no doubt recognizes that most readers will find his social analysis of the ills of America unconvincing and distasteful (as indeed I do). Unlike Weiner's triumphant celebration of "universal womanhood" as expressed in the Trobriand Islands, Tuzin has written an elegy on the death of masculinity as dramatized by the Ilahita Arapesh. The book ends in a dirge of defeat. In the death of the *Tambaran*, Tuzin believes, we can perceive a universal insecurity within men which, if not addressed, can lead only to disaster. Not unlike the Ilahita *Tambaran* cult itself, however, Tuzin's construction of the death of universal manhood appears grossly out of scale with its surroundings, obsessively focussed in its ideology and overbearing in its hyper-vivid prophecies.

Sam Migliore, *Mal'oucchiu: Ambiguity, Evil Eye, and the Language of Distress,* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 1997, xiv + 159 pages.

Reviewer: *Paul Antze*
York University

At first glance this appears to be yet another in the long line of "evil eye" studies so familiar to medical anthropologists. However, Sam Migliore contends that his book is different, and he may be right. Rather than looking to the literature on social control, moral transgression or the culture-bound syndromes, Migliore draws his theoretical inspiration from the later Wittgenstein and from the Sicilian playwright, Luigi Pirandello. For all their differences, he argues, both these figures were passionate advocates of context and ambiguity as central to the meaning of human activity. Migliore's point is that theories and explanations of "the evil-eye complex" are bound to lead us astray, since the power of *mal'oucchiu* in Sicilian culture depends precisely on its ambiguity.

The book is unusual in another respect. Migliore carried out his field work among the sizable community of Sicilian-Canadians (some 25 000) living in Hamilton, Ontario. Most members of this community either came from or can trace their ancestry to the town of Racalmuto in central Sicily. Migliore himself was born in Racalmuto and grew up in Hamilton. This is his community; his informants include his parents, relatives and friends. Migliore's insider status may help in part to explain his distrust of theoretical abstractions. He knows well that his informants will be among his first and closest readers, and he wants to tell a tale that both he and they will recognize as true.

Like many ethnographers, Migliore developed a special relationship with one informant. It was the healer Don Gesualdo who first opened his eyes to the complexity of *mal'oucchiu*, and it was while serving as Don Gesualdo's assistant that he gathered most of his data. Migliore also came to regard Don Gesualdo as his intellectual collaborator in many ways; in fact he stresses that "the model of the evil eye complex I present . . . belongs as much to him as it does to me" (p. 29).

Migliore elaborates this model in his third chapter, first by locating *mal'oucchiu* within two distinct networks of indigenous terms, one organized under *disgrazia*, or misfortune, the other under *sortilegio*, or the power to disrupt the natural course of events. He notes that Sicilian-Canadians have their own version of the witchcraft/sorcery distinction made famous by Evans-Pritchard, but that they place *mal'oucchiu* under a third heading, *ittatura*, or "evil-casting," which shares

some characteristics of both. *Ittaturi* can be *stregi*, or witches, but they can also be ordinary people whose envious or hostile emotions become strong enough to broadcast harm. Having presented the tacit system of beliefs underlying *mal'oucchiu* and the ritual techniques most commonly used for its prevention and cure, Migliore ends this chapter with a caveat: the model described here is after all an abstraction, half cultural concept, half ethnographer's construct. As such it can never capture the living complexity of *mal'oucchiu*. We can begin to appreciate that complexity only by attending to the many uses that this cultural form assumes in different contexts, or in Pirandello's terms, to its place in "the flux of life."

The book's remaining chapters take up this task, presenting a wide range of different cases in which *mal'oucchiu* serves variously to explain illness, define neighbourly conduct, account for the falling-out of friends, mark degrees of social distance and provide a rich resource for argument and moral commentary. These cases are the real strength of Migliore's book; beyond demonstrating the versatility of *mal'oucchiu*, they offer a series of vivid cautionary tales for anyone who may feel tempted to explain a cultural idiom by invoking one of its functions.

Some readers may find this book's very limited engagement with current anthropological theory to be a real drawback, while for others it will be a reminder that theory is not everything. Certainly the questions raised and cases presented here would lend themselves well to general courses in ethnography, as well as to courses in medical and psychological anthropology and Mediterranean culture. Migliore's clear, straightforward style and frequent use of anecdotes would make *Mal'oucchiu* an excellent choice for undergraduates, even at the introductory level.

Melanie G. Wiber, *Erect Men, Undulating Women: The Visual Imagery of Gender, "Race," and Progress in Reconstructive Illustrations of Human Evolution,* Waterloo: Wilfrid Laurier University Press, 1997.

Reviewer: *Pamela R. Willoughby*
University of Alberta

Palaeonthropologists, like most people, are fascinated with our remote history. They present ideas about our past, and back them up with fossils and reconstructions of early social life. Describing and explaining our origins began well before anthropology developed as a formal academic discipline. But by the middle of the 19th century, these once-speculative ideas had been incorporated into evolutionary and progressive models of our past. When I was young, one of my favourites was a coffee-table book called *The Epic of Man*, published by Life Magazine (1961). It is full of pictures of ancient people and sites, but what were really fascinating were the reconstructions of life in the past, presumably drawn from archaeological and historical sources. Very little was about human evolution, only the first 20 or so pages. But the ideas of progress and developmental change resonate through the book as it visually describes human history from the most remote period up to the beginning of civilization. One never thought to question what was portrayed or how it was presented. This was the generally accepted picture of the development of society, progressing from its most primitive to its most complex stages in a unilineal fashion.

In the study of human evolution, palaeoanthropology, visibility is often a means to success. New fossil discoveries are well reported in the press and popular publications, but their significance and interpretation is not often discussed. Fossils are facts, as is their anatomy, context and position in time and space. All else is interpretation, and is often subjective, not to mention culturally loaded by our own preconceptions. It is well understood within the discipline that fossil specimens are rare and are hotly contested. But in general publications, there seems to be a clear party line or consensus view of human evolution.

Misia Landau (*Narratives of Human Evolution*, Yale University Press, 1991) was one of the first to recognize that the stories palaeoanthropologists tell us about their discoveries are structured in the same way as origin myths found in all societies. They function in the same way, providing an explanation of our place in nature. While these narratives share much with mythology, labelling them as "science" says that the accounts presented by palaeoanthropologists represent the absolute truth, rather than just being folk tales. As the co-discoverer of the structure of DNA, James Watson, recently said while opening a conference on human evolution, all societies have origin myths. But only geneticists had access to the truth, as one's DNA does not lie.

It is within this context, and in the context of deconstruction of scientific thought, that one can place *Erect Men/Undulating Women*, the new book by Melanie Wiber of the University of New Brunswick. Ostensibly it discusses the issue of how early humans are portrayed in scientific illustrations, and how these illustrations reflect the dominant society's preconceptions about gender and race. These reconstructions are presented as facts, but often omit a discussion of how they are created. Many rely on the assumption that human history is composed of technological and cultural advances which divorced us from biological controls, as culture and nurture replaced nature. Some of these models are familiar to all of us, such as the idea that all human societies share a sexual division of labour. Women gather, look after the kids, stay at home while men hunt, make tools, and protect the family. As recently as 1980, Owen Lovejoy used monogamous pair bonding and a sexual division of labour as the basis of a model for the origins of bipedal locomotion which was published in *Science*, the flagship journal of the American Association for the Advancement of Science. Other models assume that technology and hunting, both realms of (predominantly) male behaviour, directed human evolution. These often fly in the face of ethnographic data which show the