

FORFATTERLISTE

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Finn Stepputat er geograf og kultursociolog og er ansat som seniorforsker ved Dansk Institut for Internationale Studier. Han har især arbejdet med tvungen migration, væbnede konflikter og statsdannelse som kulturelt/politisk fænomen.

Henrik E. Vigh, cand.scient.anth. og ph.d. fra Institut for Antropologi, Københavns Universitet. Han har arbejdet med militante unge i Belfast og Bissau og forsker på nuværende tidspunkt i konflikt- og demokratiseringsprocesser i Bissau.

ENGLISH SUMMARIES

Rasmus Alenius Boserup: The Semiotic of Murder. Examples from the War in Algeria 1954-1962

This article analyses the ways in which the paramilitary group FLN-ALN used to kill its enemies in the French and the Muslim populations during the Algerian “War of Independence” from 1954-1962. Through empirical material from classified French military archives the article demonstrates that the FLN-ALN’s methods of killing their French enemies differed from the way they killed their Muslim enemies. Based on this observation, it is argued that FLN-ALN’s war, in fact, consisted of two separate wars: An external war with the objective of establishing an independent Algerian *state* and an internal war with the objective of creating a “liberated” Algerian *society*. These two wars were not only fought against different enemies but also were conceptualized differently. FLN-ALN transformed the two wars into radically different forms and methods of physical violence and killing. Hence, the central argument of the article is that forms of violence are signs, as understood in semiotic analysis, and that FLN-ALN used the physical treatment of the two enemies’ bodies to communicate with friendly and opposed political communities both in- and outside of Algeria.

Helle Bundgaard: Who has the Responsibility? An Immigrant-Family’s Meeting with the World of the Danish Institutions

The article presents an experience near analysis of events, which took place in connection with an immigrant child’s start in a Danish pre-school. More specifically it deals with the inter-subjective meetings between the mother of the child and pre-school staff. The analysis raises questions regarding Danish cultural assumptions about the appropriate relation between children and responsibility as well as the inviolability of the nuclear family. The Danish cultural conception of the integrity of the individual and family means that pre-school staff generally tries to solve problems themselves or call on professional assistance. Due to fear of mixing distinct life worlds, the staff will not contact members of a family network or other people with whom a parent shares mother tongue in order to solve a problem. This principle does indeed safeguard against undesirable interference, but it simultaneously cuts off relations, which in certain situations might have helped reaching a meaningful contact.

Michael Jackson: The Practice of Silence and the Prose of Suffering

The subject of this article is suffering – how it is borne and how it is explained – by people in very different circumstances. The author begins by recounting a young Sierra Leonean woman’s story about her wartime suffering and her postwar

situation. He then turns to consider the kind of suffering “at a distance” liberal Westerners are wont to experience when confronted by the pain, distress, and misery of others, and finding ourselves at a loss to do anything about it. Finally, the author returns to discuss the way Sierra Leoneans address the suffering of war, offering a critique of the way suffering is commonly construed in the affluent West. The article contemplates how Western reactions to the suffering of others tend to involve a narcissistic focus on one’s inner feelings and thoughts, including one’s feelings for and intellectual reflections on the plight of others. In contrast, the Kuranko in Sierra Leone are less prone to fantasise rescue or salvation, or hope for a world in which there is no pain and rather respond to the suffering with resignation and silence. Such silence may be a way of healing and reconciliation, and not a way of evading or repressing an issue. The anthropology of suffering should therefore evade the Western tendency of excessive verbalising. It can, argues the author, only do justice to suffering by examining each situation as if there were no universal measure against which to judge it, only various points of view that must be taken into account in exploring it.

Dorthe Brogård Kristensen: Putting Violence into Words: The Assaults of Everyday and the Past among the natives in Chile

By focusing on narratives and life-stories among Mapuche Indians in the South of Chile the article discusses how different types of expressions and social organizations give actors a way of articulating and managing experiences of social and structural violence. The article also de-

scribes how narratives of violence in the past play an important role in the articulation of experiences of social violence. When confronted with different types of violence the actors feel that their basis as social individuals is threatened, they feel alienated, marginalized and isolated. By interpreting their experience on the basis of two opposite forces – on the one hand destructive and damaging forces, which are thought to violate human existence and on the other hand positive life-giving forces – the actors are given the possibility of aligning with other social beings to combat malignant forces. In this way these expressions of violence brings people together in different types of social organizations and communities, be they in rituals, churches or political organizations. This helps them gain a sense of control and belonging.

Camilla Kvist: Violence and Being. Anthropology and the Violent Relation

The article addresses “the violent relation” in an anthropological perspective. This entails descriptions of violent encounters made by both victims of domestic violence and by young offenders. The concepts of being and non-being, subjectivity and objectivity, construction and destruction inform the analysis of the violent relation. The body is the primary locus for an understanding of the possibility and the exertion of violence: its power to victimize. Violence is a way to act on the world and others which institutes a bodily sense of agency and power; that is, it becomes a powerful statement of “self”. The claim of one actor, however, is made at the expense of another, whose subjectivity is affected so severely that it questions its own being in the world, both somatically and experientially.

Ann-Karina Henriksen and Marie Rosenkrantz Lindegaard: Living with Violence: Sexuality and Violence among Adolescents in Cape Town

The focus of the article is upon the relation between gender and violence as an aspect of everyday practice. It is suggested that strategies for living with violence inform gender perceptions. The article is based on research in Cape Town, South Africa and concentrates on how adolescents there speak about violence and strategies for safety. South Africa is renowned for high levels of violence such as rape or death by gunfire. Rather than focus on these violent acts from the perspective of either the victim or perpetrator, the focus lies in the implications for the witnesses, who live with the threat of violence in their daily lives. Narratives related to violence and strategies for safety show how violence manifests itself. The authors argue that women and men are discursively informed to respond to and perceive violence differently. Men are agents of violence as protectors and perpetrators, and women are pacified and potential victims. Furthermore the study emphasises that violence maintains patriarchal gender roles and thereby becomes a major barrier to rethinking gender perceptions and gender equality.

Finn Stepputat: Lynchings: A Scourge of Humanity. Collective Violence and the Politics of In/Security in Guatemala

The article explores the phenomenon of mob violence in predominately Mayan towns in rural Guatemala. Since 1996, more than 100 people have been killed by crowds in rural towns. The victims have usually been young men accused of often minor criminal acts, or representatives of the state trying to protect the victims. The

occurrence of mob violence coincides roughly with the area where the army organized civil self-defence patrols during the civil war from 1981-96 as part of the national security counterinsurgency program. The post-conflict transition has paradoxically brought security back to the top of the political agenda as political violence has been substituted and overshadowed by violence related to drug trafficking and other forms of criminality. The article shows how mob violence has been interpreted in the context of post-conflict transformations where the elimination of violence and violent conflicts has been addressed as an object of development, and suggests that we, in addition to common sociological interpretations, may understand lynchings as an exclusive practice of communal sovereignty within a transnational political field of politics of in/security.

Henrik Rønsbo: Tales on Fat-collecting and Violence: Towards an Understanding of the Creation of the Meaning of Violence

During the last ten years it has been argued by anthropologists that violence is constadictory to processes through which meaning is created and sustained, i.e. everyday life. This argument derives from the empirical branches of psychology and psychiatry, which, since the early seventies, have formalized various concepts regarding post-traumatic stress, the best known of which is the concept of PTSD. Taking a point of departure in an alternative understanding of violence as the production of enigmatic signifiers, rather than the destruction of signification and meaning, the author demonstrates how enigmatic signifiers through processes of entextualization are circulated. Hence

meaning is created around enigmatic events. In order to illustrate this argument, the author draws on ethnographic material collected in the Central Peruvian highlands in 1994, in particular, material on narratives surrounding the character typically known as the *pishtaco* or *naqaq*. Through the analysis of narratives surrounding this mythic figure, it is argued that the figure and narratives surrounding him entextualize the otherwise violent enigmatic events of post-conflict societies. It is argued that, although this process is easily identifiable in post-conflict societies, where narratives of conflict can no longer entextualize and therefore explain current violence, it is a process which is general to the experience of violence. Hence the author concludes, entextualizations of enigmatic violence and agency seem to be a general movement through which violence creates meaning in everyday life, and that in order to appreciate this process, ethnographers must realize that violence is not meaningless, but rather enigmatic.

Henrik E. Vigh: The Anthropology of Violence. From Experience to Community

The article positions the different anthropological approaches to violence on a continuum from the phenomenological to the sociological analysis. It argues that anthropological works on violence are crystallized around either the experiential aspects of violence or the phenomenon's ability to create, maintain and consolidate social communities. Yet, in conclusion it offers a perspective, which might be able to combine the different analytical avenues, arguing that the different points of departure intersect as violence creates communities of experience