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GOODALE, MARK. *Surrendering to Utopia: An Anthropology of Human Rights*. Stanford, California: Stanford University Press, 2009. Pp. 200. ISBN: 978-0-8047-6212-0 (cloth); ISBN: 978-0-8047-6213-7 (paperback).

Anthropologists generally mistrust universal moralities, whereas the project of human rights merges all human beings in the idea of universality: every human being is seen as being the same because of a shared ‘humanness’. Mark Goodale, Associate Professor of Conflict Analysis and Anthropology at George Mason University, unravels the uncomfortable relationship created by these fundamental differences in his latest work: *Surrendering to Utopia: An Anthropology of Human Rights*. The book continues his earlier work on the anthropology of human rights and local encounters with the law in Bolivia (Goodale 2006; Goodale and Merry 2007; Goodale 2008).

In a series of interconnected essays Goodale explores how anthropologists at first disengaged from, and later re-engaged with, the study of human rights through the four main issues that have concerned the discipline. First, why did anthropologists abandon the study of human rights after its main academic organization, the American Anthropological Association (AAA), published an advisory report for the UN Commission for Human Rights in 1947? Second, how did human rights experts and anthropologists come to terms with the concept of culture and the problem of relativism? Third, what kind of contributions have anthropologists made since the 1990s as they have been studying the practices surrounding the local application of transnational norms? Finally, he investigates whether anthropologists have influenced the development of so-called neoliberal human rights: rights to social and economical development and indigenous cultural rights.

Goodale’s main purpose is to foster a greater sense of humility about human rights: to acknowledge that human rights norms have to exist in a world of difference and contradiction (p. 15). Goodale emphasizes that human rights never solely exist as legal

abstractions in international conventions, but that instead 'the claims of human rights are invested with meaning and importance that transcend anything that can be said about them conceptually' (p. 15). The unearthing of these meanings is, of course, the task of the ethnographer—which the anthropological community only came to realize in the 1990s.

In Chapter 2, Goodale discusses how anthropology's disengagement from human rights first began with the Statement of Human Rights by the AAA in 1947 prepared by Melville Herkovits, a scholar trained in American historical particularism. The document was issued as an advisory report for the formulation of the 1948 Universal Declaration of Human Rights (UDHR), and it addressed the question: was the proposed universal document able to overcome cultural differences? It was not, according to Herkovits. However, Goodale argues that Herkovits' statement was not inspired by cultural relativism, as has often been argued in retrospect, but rather by political concerns. Herkovits wrote that 'the real problem (...) is that for political and economic reasons, proposals for human rights (so far) have always been conceived for the wrong purposes and based on the wrong sets of assumptions' (p. 27). Although there is little proof that the Statement had any impact on the deliberations of the Commission for Human Rights, it had important consequences for scholarship: after this document—on which no vote was taken by its members—anthropologists practically abandoned the study of human rights for 40 years (p. 25).

In Chapter 3 Goodale moves on to examine the enduring dispute between proponents of human rights universalism versus supporters of cultural relativism. Citing Cowan, Dembour and Wilson (2001), he sees these polar oppositions to yield merely a theoretical and conceptual distinction (p. 45). He notes that strongly opposing views provide good ammunition for academic rhetoric, but are less frequently found in people's everyday lives. Goodale further explains how the nuanced debates within anthropology on relativism fail to resonate with debates inside human rights law, and thus fail to impact, for example, on policy making. Unfortunately Goodale does not offer us a final escape from the debate as he remains cautious in abandoning it all together (p. 64).

In Chapter 5 Goodale analyzes how anthropologists became re-engaged in human rights issues as they started to appreciate the practices of transnational institutions and engage in fieldwork examining human rights practices in multiple, interconnected localities (p. 91; Merry 1992, 2006). This renewed engagement was also reflected in 1999 in a new Declaration on Human Rights issued by the AAA. With this renewed interest, 'culture' made a comeback to anthropological scholarship on human rights with the AAA Declaration also arguing that people had the right to realize their own cultures.

This emphasis paved the way for several new approaches to human rights, of which the 'emancipatory cultural politics' approach was one (p. 36). The same period saw a renewed interest in indigenous rights within international human rights law which started to conceptualize indigenous groups into a special category (p. 123). Within anthropology disciplinary changes occurred that encouraged embracing a 'new rights-based disciplinary orientation to indigenous peoples' (p. 123). These initiatives hold the potential to acquire also practical relevance as 'culture' is often ignored by human rights institutions and experts in their policies.

Yet, as Goodale eloquently points out, in the past anthropologists have had only a trivial impact on the politics surrounding the formulation and implementation of human rights worldwide. Is this another book about anthropologists struggling at the margins?

*Surrendering to Utopia* offers a direct reflection on how anthropology only recently came to terms with human rights and their universalistic claims while the book simultaneously outlines the field's numerous theoretical and methodological challenges. Its message is that anthropology can and should have important roles in how human rights are developed and struggles over culture framed. As Goodale summarizes, to approach human rights, an 'anthropological key' ultimately means 'an acceptance of the complicated and (to some) endlessly frustrating fact of human multiplicity' (p. 133).

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DEBORAH KAPCHAN. *Traveling Spirit Masters: Moroccan Gnawa Trance and Music in the Global Marketplace*. Middletown: Wesleyan University Press, 2007. Pp. 325. ISBN: 978-0-8195-6851-9 (cloth); ISBN: 978-0-8195-6852-6 (paperback).

Deborah Kapchan's *Traveling Spirit Masters* explores the aesthetics, poetics and performance of Gnawa possession-trance ceremonies in Morocco and their recontextualizations into the world music market. It shows how 'dreams, visions, and spirits take material form', and how, on the other hand, 'material and aesthetic forms themselves travel and inhabit each other, producing hybrid cultural imaginations' (p. 5). The first part of the book, 'The Culture of Possession', offers a phenomenological and semiotic analysis of the ritual life of the Gnawa, descendants of slaves brought to Morocco from sub-Saharan Africa since the eighth century.

In night-time healing ceremonies (*lilat*), male ritual musicians employed by a female community perform trance-inducing music characterized by bass melodies played on a three-stringed instrument called *hajhuj* and repetitive rhythmic patterns of metal