

simbolic, ceea ce denumim aria reprezentărilor sociale, conduc ineluctabil către ideea schimburilor emoționale între indivizi.

Procesul emoțional este văzut ca un proces de tranziție, o stare de fapt care antrenează proceduri automate de adaptare la nivel individual, iar comunicarea emoțiilor acționează sistemele de adaptare individuale, conducând la o mai bună surmontare a situațiilor critice de viață.

Nicoleta Uțiță

James Ferguson, *Expectations of Modernity: Myths and Meanings of Urban Life on the Zambian Copperbelt*, University of California Press, 1999, 326 p.

Using Icons as an Iconoclast

The anthropological inquiry has been hauntingly followed by the idea of the modern in several differently configured narratives even since its inception. This issue is one which the anthropological theory and practice of the latest decades has been actively involved with. James Ferguson's *Expectations of Modernity*, an ingenious and comprehensive choice of a title, is such an inquiry. The author engages in de-mystifying 'modernization' and 'urbanization' (alongside their underlying teleological metanarratives) by providing the reader with a grassroots understanding of the meanings and predicaments of miners who struggle to make sense of their lifeworlds in a context of economic decline. He takes up such a task in Zambia's Copperbelt, a place which, as he notes, used to function as „the icon of African development and modernization” (p. 24) in various imaginaries – from scholarly ones to those of policy makers.

As Ferguson draws the context of his inquiry by describing the economic decline that Zambia started going through in the late 1970s, the reader becomes aware that

Ferguson's aim reaches beyond the classical community study. The Copperbelt in Zambia at that time was tightly connected to the global economy, and its intrinsic inequalities, determined by such mechanisms as „the decline of buying power of Zambia's copper on the world market” (p.7), the country's external debt, and the pressures of neoliberal „structural adjustment” of international bodies. The governmentally-inflicted decrease in urban living standards, in trying to cope with the decline, entailed a downturn in people's life to the point that „old linearities seem[ed] strangely reversed” (p.11). Specifically, the progress and improvement that modernity narratives promise were rather identified as „counter-urbanization”, „de-industrialization” and „de-Zambianization”. Such a situation, sadly and painfully experienced by Ferguson himself, made the author focus not only on how the economic decline affected people's actions and understandings of their lives, but also prompted him to center his inquiry on the experiences of „decline, confusion, fear, and suffering” of people.

Ferguson proceeds with delineating his main argument by pointing to the double mystique of modernization (p.13-15): that of the social sciences and that of the lived experience of Zambians. He makes use of the ambiguity of the concept of myth to refer both to the popular and to the scholarly uses of it. In the former, the myth is considered to be „a factually inaccurate version of things that has come to be widely believed” (p.13), whilst the academics study myths by focusing on the social function that they have, through which they settle „fundamental categories and meanings for the organization and interpretation of experience” (p.14). While the latter are critically scrutinized, Ferguson argues that in their popular usage the concepts pertaining to the narrative of modernization still shape people's „experiences and interpretations of their lives” (p.14), even if in an altered form marked by incredulity. Therefore, by concentrating on how people make sense of their experience in the circumstances of a declining

economy, Ferguson avoids recycling dichotomist and teleological modernization theories.

The first chapter of the book offers a cogent and well documented critique of Africanist anthropological studies. Reviewing previous authors studying the Copperbelt, he points out to their inherent teleology in discussing urbanization in Southern Africa. Analyses centered on delineating clear typologies that would prove the „African emergence”, such as mineworkers being the typical urbanites, or the typical migrant workers. The underlying process, such writings argued, was the progressive transformation of migrant laboring tribesmen into permanently urbanized townsmen. Ferguson argues that this was a way in which such theory hindered variation and generated an evolutionistic picture. In this sense, the author treats classical anthropological theory on the Copperbelt as both record (data) and ethnographic artifact (datum).

The persistence of linear teleology of development comprised in modernist metanarratives and the popular incredulity towards them leads Ferguson to put forward an alternative way of understanding the mineworkers' experience of decline. Moving away from simplistic categorization, he tries to make sense of the „full house of urbanization”, i.e. the diverse reactions, strategies and modes of getting by that people make use of at a certain time. Accounting the „temporal coexistence” (p.20) of such actions, the author approaches the Copperbelt in a non-linear, non-teleological trajectory by employing the concept of cultural styles. These refer to the „signifying practices that mark socially significant positions and allegiances” (p.24), like speech, dressing, manner, lifestyle. Unlike concepts such as habitus, worldview, ideology, „cultural styles” do not express something deeper and do not manifest „transitions between distinct social types distinguished as traditional and modern” (p.220). Simply put, Ferguson's cultural styles are „performative competences” acquired in time

that empower them to cope with the hardships of urban life.

This concept allows the author to engage ever more critically with the „urbanization” imaginary, by moving the analysis beyond the rural – urban dichotomy. He conceptualizes localism and cosmopolitanism based on the experiences of people located in urban settings. In chapter, *Expectations of Permanence*, Ferguson delves into censuses and statistical figures collected from the 1920s onwards, that were used to demonstrate the idea of a „permanent urbanization”. He ultimately proves that this was an obscuring and inappropriate label for the ways of life of people, which rather denote a diversity of forms. In fact, mineworkers „were not urbanized at all” and he points to the changing forms of urban-rural circulation, which comprised an array of strategies in which workers reside in urban areas but maintain rural attachments. The changing realities entailed multiple coexisting variations that created a „bushy variation” of different strategies of urban-rural mobility. The data denote continuing patterns of urban residence incompatible with the permanent urbanization model, in terms of sex ratio and age. Together with these continuities, Ferguson suggests that the nature of changes is not unidirectional, but complex, multivalent, and ambiguous, and hence impossible to be captured in linear models. Therefore, the plurality of patterns or strategies of people who draw on rural and urban resources in a variety of forms question the conventional idea of an end to rural-urban circulation.

Another way in which Ferguson critically approaches the teleology of modernization theory is by questioning cultural dualism, in chapter three, *Rural Connection, Urban Styles. Theorizing Cultural Dualism*. The fieldwork experience sheds light on the reasons that people identified as complicating their retirement. Returning „home” is a stringent problem for those who are „too urbanized” – meaning their dressing, styles of speech, habits, body carriage (p.83). To make sense of these understandings,

Ferguson's employs his alternative theoretical approach of „cultural styles” of localism and cosmopolitanism. As compared to previous theories, his conceptualization refers to urban cultural forms, and, significantly, both are centered around „the image of a rural home”, but in an opposite manner. The localist cultural style maintains a strong sense of continuity, whilst cosmopolitanism implies a distance maintained from „home”. Ferguson furthers his analysis into the micropolitical-economic logic of localism and proposes the idea of „cultural compliance” to describe the pressures that force workers to be in an enduring relation with the countryside. In the context of economic decline, mineworkers see themselves obliged to (re)consider relatives „back home”. In chapter 4, „*Back to the Land ?*”, the author grounds his theoretical framework by discussing the case studies of the life trajectories of particular mineworkers. Challenging unemployment, they have to make use of different assets (economic, social, and cultural) to cope with an uncertain future. In this sense, Ferguson argues, rural life was present in workers' experiences not as a remembered past, but as future possibility of getting by. In this sense, „the rural was shaping the urban, not by inertia or lingering habit but through an active, micropolitical-economic process of contestation over the allegiances of urban workers” (p. 165).

Chapter 5, *Expectations of Domesticity*, comprises another critical engagement that Ferguson assumes, that regarding the metanarratives of modernity. In decentering the modern (Western) ideal of family he sees familial relations as „a site of struggle, locus of micropolitical contestations between wage-earning men and various others who make claims on their earning money” (p.182). Even if the Zambian mining industry was profoundly gendered in its development, by the intense deployment of the image of the modern family, the domestic groups on the Copperbelt were still experiencing high rates of divorce and frequent shifting of partners, brittle marriages, and

„extraordinary levels of antagonism and suspicion” (p.180). Trying to understand the „unremitting misogyny” implied in men's representations of women (as mercenaries that use and deceive men), Ferguson draws attention to the gendered political economic structures in the Copperbelt that marginalize women and make them dependent on relations with men. Therefore, the author considers the modern family in the Copperbelt as being „a liberal attempt to insist on the full inclusion of African within an „emerging” modern industrial sector” (p.204). This ideal, Ferguson notes, inhibited the formulation and expression of political issues related to 'defavorized' groups – children, women, old people, – and reconstructed contestation in the form of „pathology, backwardness, deviation”, thus depoliticizing the analyses of family life.

In chapter 6, *Asia in Miniature*, the author returns to his conceptualization of cultural styles to call for a need to historicize cosmopolitanism and, in the case of the Copperbelt, to relate it to the micropolitical economy of rural-urban relations. He uses the concept of „noise” to draw attention to situations of mis- and partial communication, and identifies the production of noise as a social practice characterized by unintelligibility. Moreover, Ferguson adds that this noise is actively and consciously produced in the cosmopolitan style as a means of refusing communication. In the case of mineworkers, cosmopolitan practices are a means to refuse to comply with rural expectations. Ferguson also proposes grasping cosmopolitanism which implies that the distancing of workers from home entails a „signifying affinity with an 'outside', a world beyond the 'local'”. The cosmopolitan style is significant in the sense that it determines options and possibilities for the future. Being a socially situated practice (not linked to the breakdown of tradition, nor to incomplete modernity), cosmopolitanism needs to be understood in the context of production. Simultaneously, the resurgence of localism also pertains to the changes in

political economy that put pressure on workers to enhance their rural networks. In this sense, the life of mineworkers is „not inevitable evolution of modernity, but a shifting, variable struggle between cosmopolitanism and localism” (p.187). In this manner, the perspective on urban change that Ferguson creates in this book is not marked by any teleologies.

The final chapter, *Global Disconnect*, discusses the meanings of the economic decline for Zambians by locating it in a global context. The humiliating feelings that workers on the Copperbelt experience is termed by Ferguson as „abjection”. The concept describes their expulsion from the former status of industrializing country back to the imposition of a „second class” status, „by the formation of a new (or newly impermeable) boundary” (p.238) within a new (capitalist driven) order. When Zambians talk about the world out there, Ferguson argues, they articulate „a specific experience of disconnection” (p.238), which bears the suffering of a loss, not of a lack, being the „product of specific structures and process of disconnection (p.238)”. Critical with postmodernist strands of thought calling for an ‘end of development’, Ferguson argues for an engaged approach of the lifeworlds and predicaments of people’s lives, especially in a context in which global inequality seems to be a naturalized fact and in which new, transnational forms of governmentality take shape.

Methodologically speaking, Ferguson’s aim of making sense of the non- and counter-linearities of contemporary Copperbelt is also reflected in the style of his ethnographic presentation. It is not a totality-like community study, but „a mapping”: a „mode of conceptualizing, narrating, experiencing socioeconomic change and its encounter with a confounding process of economic decline” (p. 21). Riveting and provoking, Ferguson’s a production of data is coherent with his alternative conceptualization of cultural styles, even if orthodox methodologists might criticize his inquiry as „loose and empirically weak”. He draws on diverse sorts of

evidence: several months of fieldwork, interviews with mineworkers, newspaper clippings, vignettes with people watching, letters from miners, and several ‘iconic’ inscripts („Asia in Miniature”, the POSH-BOY t-shirt). In this sense, *Expectations of Modernity* bypasses classical distinctions between micro and macro and local and global. Ferguson’s drawing on several sources is at the same time coherent with his own experience in the field – that of uncertainty. Like his informants, the ethnographer went through similar feelings of unease and uncertainty, the sharp line between the natives and the ethnographer, the locals and the foreigner, becoming blurred. Ideas in the book are built from ‘bits and pieces’ and are not systemic explanations of *Culture* as in ‘classical’ anthropological theory about Africa. Moreover, the reader makes sense of the intertwined stances of James Ferguson as anthropologist doing fieldwork (strategies employed for data collection), as ethnography author (how he connects his life experience to writing) and, peculiar for his generation, of Ferguson as a person.

Concluding, the title of Ferguson’s book, *Expectations of Modernity*, quintessentially captures the strength of his ethnography: that of clearly pointing out to modernity as a lived experience in which people actively engage, to which they ascribe meanings and which they are able to reconfigure. In making sense of the complexities and variation of the concept of modern, the book adds up to theory about cosmopolitanism, and also to ways of ‘empirically grasping’ cosmopolitan social practices. Ferguson’s book proves to be a crucial reading not only for Africanists, but also in the anthropology of modernity, owing to the author’s critical engagement with teleological theories and his examination of the policies deployed to modernize Zambia. Moreover, considering the post-colonial strand in the anthropology of modernity, Ferguson’s study proves to be intriguing and thought provoking for anthropologists interested in other areas as well. In this sense, studies of postsocialist societies

might greatly benefit from the ideas developed in *Expectations of Modernity*, specifically because of the similar trajectories of peasants forced to migrate to industrialized areas to become workers during socialism, who afterwards were massively made disposable at the times of postsocialist privatization and were experiencing similar situations of insecurity, fear and uncertainty.

Simona Ciotlaus

Werner Schiffauer, Gerd Baumann, Riva Kastoryano și Steven Vertovec (editori),
Civil enculturation : Nation-state, school and ethnic difference in the Netherlands, Britain, Germany and France, Oxford, New York : Berghahn Books, 2004 (ediția a II-a, 2006), 360 p.

În vânătoarea-mi declarată de texte și studii educaționale cu relevanță sociologică, rareori am dat peste o cercetare atât de complexă, de nuanțată și de bine fundamentată metodologic precum cea realizată de echipa editorială a cărții *Civil enculturation : nation-state, school and ethnic difference in the Netherlands, Britain, Germany and France*. Editată de patru profesori de renume cu pregătire științifică diversă (antropologie, sociologie, științe politice) și afiliați unor instituții de cercetare de prestigiu pe plan mondial (Europa Universităților Viadrina, University of Amsterdam, Centre for Research in International Studies și University of Oxford), cartea expune pe larg rezultatele unei cercetări extinse realizate de editori împreună cu alți patru cercetători din Germania, Olanda, Franța și Regatul Unit în patru școli cu finanțare publică din Berlin, Rotterdam, Paris și respectiv Londra.

Efortul comparativ și interdisciplinar al echipei de cercetare a vizat delinarea acelor conținuturi și practici asociate procesului

educativ prin care trăsăturile culturii civile¹ specifice unui stat-națiune² sunt transmise în mod curent elevilor de diferite etnii în timpul școlarizării. Atenție deosebită a fost acordată acelor elevi care, în calitate de viitori cetățeni ai unui stat, nu aparțin *de facto* și/sau *de jure* națiunii dominante. Pentru a asigura validitatea rezultatelor, grupul minoritar ales spre comparație a fost același în cele patru școli aflate sub observație : tineri de origine/cu descendență turcă. Motivul, lesne de înțeles, a fost acela de a diferenția aspectele culturii naționale dominante transmise la școală de cele minoritare transmise în familie, elementele etnic și religioase jucând, desigur, un rol foarte important în acest caz.

Pornind de la premisa necontestată a legăturii dintre stat-națiune și educație³, autorii propun ipoteza conform căreia ceea ce statul transmite viitorilor săi cetățeni prin conținutul educației publice este „cultura sa civilă” prin intermediul procesului de „enculturație civilă”. Pentru a evita orice confuzie terminologică, „civil” se referă aici, așa cum ne arată chiar etimologia cuvântului (lat. *civilis*), la calitatea de cetățean „locuitor al cetății” în sensul dat de antici⁴. Prin urmare, termenul implică, pe lângă întregul set de drepturi și îndatoriri asociate calității legale de cetățean (date de apartenența *civică* prin obținerea cetățeniei unui stat) și – așa cum autorii țin să precizeze încă din introducere – alte elemente de participare civilă care trec dincolo de aspectul legal validat strict de statul-națiune. Aceste elemente adiționale alcătuiesc împreună exact ceea ce autorii numesc „cultura civilă” distinctă de „cultura civică” (cea pe care „educația civică” urmărea să o transmită, de pildă, în școlile românești).

Astfel, cultura civilă are, în accepțiunea studiului, o acoperire mai largă decât cea civică. Ea include și alte aspecte specifice realității social-politice a statelor Europei de Vest care sunt caracterizate astăzi printr-o diversitate etnică din ce în ce mai vizibilă și mai greu de ignorat⁵. Fenomenul migrației internaționale a forței de muncă, de pildă, oferă o ilustrație demnă de luat în seamă în acest caz, deoarece implică, *inter alia*,