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The collected volume *Transkulturelle Dynamiken. Aktanten – Prozesse – Theorien*, edited by Jutta Ernst and Florian Freitag, offers a unique perspective on the concept of *Transkulturalität* through its multidisciplinary selection of essays, which represent a variety of methods from disciplines such as American Studies, Ancient History, Cultural Studies, English Studies, Ethnology, Romance Studies, Spanish and Portuguese Studies, Sinology, and Sociology of Sports. The strength of the collected volume lies in its multifaceted research scope, which combines literary and sociological methods to analyze transcultural dynamics on individual, local, and global levels. Consisting of twelve chapters and an introduction, *Transkulturelle Dynamiken* is part of the series *Mainzer Historische Kulturwissenschaften*, which brings together research projects that develop “Methoden und Theorien der Kulturwissenschaften in Verbindung mit empirischer Forschung” (*editorial*). The introduction of *Transkulturelle Dynamiken* discusses various assorted cultural interpretations of the term *Transkulturalität*, offering a historical outline of the etymology and state of research. The anthropologist Fernando Ortiz first introduced the term ‘transculturation’ in his work *Contrapunteo cubano del tabaco y el azúcar* in 1940. His concept of transculturation later spread to Latin America as well as French Canada in 1980, and eventually to the USA and Europe in 1990 (7–8).

The diversity of the essays, organized around the central categories *Aktanten*, *Prozesse*, and *Theorien*, gives a panoramic view of *Transkulturalität*, which introduces “Verflechtungsphänomene” (12) of cultural “Grenzüberschreitungen und Durchdringungen” (13). In scholarly research on *Transkulturalität*, Afef Benessaïeh identifies two different uses of the term as “cross-cultural competence” and “plural sense of self” (13). Both concepts derive from the double meaning of the prefix ‘trans-’ “im Sinne von *jenseits* spezifischer Kulturen anzusiedelnden Praktiken und Konstanten” and “im Sinne von *durch* die Kultur(en) *hindurch*gehenden Beziehungen und Netzwerken, die Individuen oder auch Gruppen eingehen bzw. aufbauen können” (13). Whereas Gilles Deleuze’s and Félix Guattari’s rhizomatic conception of literature supports the understanding of culture as a dynamic, non-hierarchical concept, a study of transcultural dynamics enables one to analyze the difficult-to-grasp mechanisms, practices, and strategies of mixing cultures. Concepts such as Scott A. Lukas’ ‘cultural sampling’ allow a deeper understanding of the impact of transcultural dynamics on the flexibilities of cultures, due to “the tendency to draw on (or sample) a culture for the purpose of recreating or remixing that culture, or numerous variations of it, in another place” (21).

The twelve essays represent the aforementioned manifold understandings of transcultural dynamics. Accessible to a broad range of readers from various disciplines, the book proposes diverse points of entry for further research. Spatiality, diachronicity, mediality, and corporeality in relation to transcultural dynamics emerge as intertwined areas of interest and come across in many of the essays. By

embracing spatial and diachronic perspectives on transcultural dynamics, the collected volume emphasizes an engagement with the medium film and the role of TV “als interkulturelle[r] Vermittler[...].” (25). The focus on corporeality, precisely, eating as a form of communication and cultural contact in Kylie Crane’s essay gives an interesting twist to the study of transcultural dynamics. By mapping transcultural dynamics globally, the book invites the reader to embark on a journey to Asia, Australia, Africa, Canada, Europe, North America and South America, as well as to New Zealand.

In particular, the essays of Florian Freitag, Filippo Carlà, and Kylie Crane demonstrate new research findings through the analysis of global transcultural dynamics from spatial, diachronic, and corporeal angles. A spatial interest in the reading of the book exemplifies the dynamics of symbolic and local borders and intertwining relationships between metropolitan sites and peripheries. Within this framework, Freitag’s essay “Amerikanisierung, Glokalisierung, Branding. EuroDisney, 1992” examines “Expansionsstrategie[n]” (166) of Disneyland, by focusing on the Parisian periphery of EuroDisney, as a “kulturelle Mischform von Disneyland und Europa” (192). The essay begins with a theoretical reflection on expansion strategies of the theme park brand Disneyland. French intellectuals such as Alain Finkielkraut and philosopher André Comte-Sponville criticized Disney for its cultural imperialism (169). By analyzing the actual maps of Disney theme parks in the U.S., Japan, and France, Freitag shows the complexity and dynamics of transcultural transfer on an architectural level. The maps visualize the redesign of EuroDisney and the attempt to reduce homogenizing processes, most noticeably in the reinterpretation of Tomorrowland in form of Discoveryland. While Tomorrowland focuses on the depiction of the future by various exhibitions of American industrial enterprises, the design of the European counterpart Discoveryland is inspired by European inventors and science-fiction authors of the Renaissance and 19th century (190). Discoveryland eventually becomes a role model for the redesign of the U.S. Tomorrowland. Through the analysis of transcultural dynamics in relation to space, Freitag’s study exemplifies how the Parisian periphery turns into a center for Disney’s architectural design ideas for the U.S. theme parks (192).

Theodora von Byzanz and the diverse recreations, remixing, and receptions of her identity are in the center of Filippo Carlà’s case study “Historische Quellen, literarische Erzählungen, phantasievolle Konstruktionen. Die vielen Leben der Theodora von Byzanz,” which focuses on transcultural dynamics from a diachronic perspective. Carlà takes the reader on a stroll through the global reception of Theodora from ancient times until the 21st century and engages with literary and historic documents, costumes, comics, films, and even political movements. The wide scope of research materials offers a multifaceted depiction of the ambiguous figure Theodora, whose interpretations range from a voluptuous prostitute to a devout empress. While the French painter Jean-Joseph Benjamin-Constant

portrays Theodora as a femme fatale in the late 19th century, in the early 20th century the byzantinist Charles Diehl interprets Theodora as a heroine, a dancer, who was lucky enough to marry a rich man (51). The portrayal of her as young woman of the common people in Riccardo Freda's film *Teodora, Imperatrice di Bisanzio* (1954) contrasts radically with the depiction of her as a salacious female in the erotic comic series *Theodora* of the early 1970s (54). In the end of the 20th century, the LGBTQ-movement reevaluated Theodora as a free and unconventional woman (55). *Carlà* shows successfully how societal, political, and religious contexts influence the recreation, remixing, and reinterpretation of identities and makes a case for the contribution of new knowledge due to a diachronic analysis of transcultural dynamics.

Kylie Crane opens up a new perspective on "Entdeckermythen" (115) by opting for a corporeal analysis of "contact zones" (Mary Louise Pratt) in place of a visual, spatial or institutional study typical for the discipline. Instead of using dominant spatial, respectively visual, metaphors of cartography to map new territories, Crane discusses corporeal and material aspects of the contact zones. Food, as a form of communication, is at the center of Crane's essay, which focuses on the mid-nineteenth-century expeditions of John Franklin in Canada, and the expeditions of Robert O' Hara Burke with William John Wills as well as F. W. Ludwig Leichhardt in Australia. By focusing on food consumption, understood as an "In-sich-Aufnehmen" of culture (93), Crane opens up new readings and understandings of the failure of those expeditions. Foremost the lack of food, as well as the ignorance of local food and its proper preparation, lead to the failure of Burke's and Wills' expeditions, and most likely caused the death of John Franklin's whole company (98–99). Leichhardt's first expedition to Australia was marked by more success, due to his willingness to communicate with natives through exchanging food (111). By focusing on corporeal and material aspects of cultural contact, the study of transcultural dynamics of eating ultimately confronts "vorherrschende Denkweisen über Kontakt [...] und [eignet] sich für eine neue Lesart von (Besiedlungs- und) Entdeckermythen" (115).

A unifying feature of the book is the underlying discussion of the double connotation of transcultural dynamics "*jenseits spezifischer Kulturen*" and "*durch die Kultur(en) hindurchgehenden Beziehungen und Netzwerken*" (13). Each essay embraces diverse "Verflechtungsphänomene" (12) of cultural "Grenzüberschreitungen und Durchdringungen" (13) in its unique transdisciplinary perspective that does justice to the highly complex, dynamic concepts of transculturality. *Transkulturelle Dynamiken. Aktanten – Prozesse – Theorien* ultimately makes a case for the innovative methods and multifaceted research scope of Cultural Studies.

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