

perspectief van de migrant. Als redenen daarvoor worden onder meer communicatieproblemen, andere opvattingen over ziekte en gezondheid en lagere gezondheidsvaardigheden genoemd. Migrantenvrouwen maken minder gebruik van verloskundige zorg dan vrouwen van Nederlandse afkomst en er komt dan ook veel vaker moedersterfte onder hen voor. Ook maken migrantenvrouwen minder vaak gebruik van kraamzorg, door bijvoorbeeld de relatief hoge kosten en gebrek aan informatie over de wijze waarop dit is aan te vragen. Het is daarentegen positief dat migranten de tandarts vaker bezoeken dan oorspronkelijke Nederlanders, terwijl Turkse en Marokkaanse migranten minder vaak cariës hebben.

De gegevens over de verschillen en overeenkomsten tussen de verschillende groepen in Nederland maken duidelijk dat er veel gezondheidswinst te behalen is met gerichte gezondheid bevorderende activiteiten en preventieve maatregelen voor (groepen) migranten en niet-migranten. De publicatie zou om die reden vooral gelezen moeten worden door beleidsmakers in de zorg en zorgverzekeraars. Daar echter in elk hoofdstuk ook aanbevelingen worden gedaan over specifieke interventies en (na)scholingmogelijkheden is de publicatie voor een ieder die betrokken is bij de publieke en eerstelijnszorg lezenswaardig. Het is een compact boekje met heldere grafieken en mooie illustraties.

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C. Jason Throop, *Suffering and sentiment: Exploring the vicissitudes of pain and experience in Yap*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010. 353 pp. US\$ 24.95 (paperback). ISBN 978-0-520-26057-3.

Throop's 'Suffering and Sentiment', located on the Micronesian island Yap, is without doubt a masterpiece of ethnographic sensitivity and depth. The author sets out to achieve mainly two things. In his own words: "... to provide an ethnographic description of pain's significance in the context of local understanding of subjectivity, social action, and morality... and to address a number of long-standing debates in both philosophy and anthropology over the concepts of 'experience'" (p. 2). My conclusion after reading his book is that the greatest achievement of his study may be not so much the completion of these two objectives but his observations and comments on the way to these objectives: his careful analyses of local morality, personhood and sociality. But let us first briefly summarize the overall study.

Throop starts with a theoretical introduction presenting the various debates about 'experience' and 'pain' in anthropology, philosophy and psychology, which advocate a phenomenological approach. For those who long for the every-day concreteness of anthropological description this may be a somewhat daunting beginning. They are immersed in discussions that may only truly make sense after they have completed the book. But for the growing number of colleagues who favour a high level of theorization in anthropology, this 'daunting' introduction may rather have a welcoming effect. I will return to the thrust of this introduction when I reach the book's conclusion.

The first chapter deals with the pre-colonial, colonial and recent history of Yap, an island in the Pacific Ocean, north of Papua New Guinea. The second introduces the reader to the main topic of the study: pain and suffering in the context of the ethnographic research. Throop, with his strong focus on language, presents a number of key concepts that stand for models of moral thought and action in Yap society (among others: 'suffering', 'exhaustion', 'endurance', and 'compassion').

Chapter three opens up the author's lucid perspective on the moral dimension of nearly everything in Yap society, including land, work, food, relatedness, house building, ritual, hierarchy, respect, hunger, and suffering. The chapter also contains a refreshing examination of idioms of purity and order. Chapter four discusses local understandings of subjectivity in the configuration of body, mind and emotion. Throop argues that 'reflective mental life' is valued over 'impulsive somatic life', which leads to the cultivation of self-mastery as a core value.

This mind-over-body value is beautifully illustrated in chapter five on 'Privacy, secrecy and agency'. Throop describes how mature and civilized living is characterized by self-restraint, which shows itself particularly well in how people communicate knowledge and information. The capacity to keep information concealed proves someone's virtue. That control extends to the non-expression of emotion, personal interest, desire and passion. I found this the most exciting part of the study; Throop describes seven strategies to resist total openness and uphold ambiguity, superb observations of how opacity of knowledge is practised and how this contributes to moral status.

The art of self-restraint leads to the four final chapters that deal with the experience and management of pain and suffering. Chapter six is an exposé of local philosophy and ethics theory about suffering, which can be either destructive and meaningless or meaningful and socially constructive. Throop speaks of 'mere-suffering' and 'suffering-for'. Suffering, he writes, "... may thus present an opportunity for sufferers to highlight their abilities of self-governance. ... an occasion to demonstrate to others their strength of mind and their ability to discipline their bodies" (p. 192).

Chapter seven contains eight narratives of people who reflect on the pain they suffer(ed) in their lives. The purpose is "... to demonstrate the extent to which a temporal orientation to past experiences of pain often provides a means for suffering to be configured in terms of more coherent varieties of experience" (p. 196). Most of the narrators "... cast their experiences of pain within moral frameworks that are shaped according to a constellation of virtues associated with hard work, effort, and endurance" (p. 195). Throop thus demonstrates how temporality moves suffering from disjunctive to conjunctive or, to use Calvin Schrag's terminology, from 'granular' to 'coherent'. Chapter eight is entirely devoted to one case of a young girl with a complicated fracture who undergoes several painful healing sessions at a local bonesetter's. In her case, too, the move from disjunction to conjunction is explicated.

In the conclusion, Throop lifts his ethnographic observations to the level of phenomenology and ethics. Building upon work of Husserl, Lévinas, Csordas, Leder, Kirmayer and others he argues for an understanding of morality and experience that goes beyond "... the often simplistic and partial renderings of human existence tradition-

ally offered in the context of granular and coherence theories of experience” (p. 16). What can we conclude about his ambition to push forward the cultural understanding of morality and the experience of pain and suffering by bringing Lévinas to Yap and uncovering the moral potential of suffering in Yapese daily life?

As I mentioned before, I am not sure that the main achievement of this study lies in the fulfilment of the two objectives quoted before. The experience of pain and suffering remains somewhat distant in spite of his experience-near research. The eight narratives that are presented and analysed speak about chronic pain, which has allowed these people the time to settle with its presence and make it part of their daily lives. The stories tell us mainly how they reworked their pain over the years (perhaps recounted with some degree of performance towards the ethnographer). They provide striking examples of the work of memory in the framing of suffering in the moral world of Yap culture, but the acuteness of the pain sensation itself remains elusive. The only direct observation of pain reported in the study is that of the young girl during several bonesetting treatments. Here again, the language produced around the pain experience is ‘distant’. The child is too young to articulate the experience; others (the father, the healer and the ethnographer) speak on her behalf. They ‘translate’ the pain into moral language and transform it into ‘suffering-for’. But this ‘suffering-for’ is a filtered leftover that has travelled from the moment of acute pain to the later reflection, or from the person in pain to the bystanders. Of course, the moral reworking of pain over time is inescapably tied to the experience of pain and suffering itself, but it is also a ‘departure’ of that pain. The rich moral and meaning-making language for suffering falls still at the moment of infliction.

Interestingly, the first page of the book pictures the opposite of what the entire book sets out to argue. Moral eloquence disappears in the face of suffering and pain; no words suffice. Throop describes how one evening he is conversing with a man about his pain: “The pain, he said, had been unbearable. It was like nothing he had ever felt before; he could not find words to describe it. It was a pain so intense, so insufferable, that it was all that he knew. He could not feel his body, only pain. It was, he said, a pain for which ‘it would have been good had I died’” (p. 1).

In conclusion, this ethnography is not so much about the ‘vicissitudes of experience and pain’ as the title promises but about the moral reworking of pain over time. And it does so extremely well.

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