move up the age-grade ladder. Despite the differences between them, however, the two models address the same issues; and the underlying continuities within Maasai and the complementarity of the models are underscored in space and time by the ceremonial cycle that moves each age-set up the spiral of maturity. In the north, the initiation of boys into an age set and their separation from the domain of the household begin with a ceremony; in the south, the completion of the same set and its full emergence as elders and household heads is celebrated first.

The question of how and why these variations emerged requires consideration of historical time and processes, however: here the deficiencies of the current state of historical knowledge are uncomfortably revealed. There are huge gaps in our understanding of the history of the Maa-speakers, especially before the late nineteenth century, and these Spencer can do little to repair. This is partly a problem of sources. Spencer's north–south continuum cannot take into account those Maa-speaking communities that became defunct before 1900, for we simply have no ethnographic information. Similarly, while he is able to draw on Merker's 1904 study of Kisongo in the south, nothing comparable is available for the north. We thus have barely half the picture at a crucial moment when the Maasai community as a whole was rebuilding itself in the aftermath of a devastating rinderpest pandemic, and at a time when it was beginning to be affected by conquest in an enduring process that included displacement and incorporation into different colonial regimes. Lacking a firm baseline, the book cannot analyze to what extent the emergence of different practices was a response to the uneven impact of colonial change. Spencer's work now challenges historians to think anew about the gaps in the past and to produce analyses of comparable subtlety and assurance.

Overall, *Time, Space and the Unknown* is a fine and fitting achievement. It is a mature reflection on material and ideas gathered over decades—a view from the top of the ladder of age, as it were—and it demonstrates Spencer's mastery of ethnographic detail, his use of illuminating examples, and his deep respect for the communities with which he has worked.

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Catherine Besteman. *Transforming Cape Town.* Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008. xii + 296 pp. Photographs. Maps. Notes. Index. $24.95. Paper. $60.00. Cloth.

The gerund in the title suggests that this book is both about the transformations Cape Town has undergone since 1990 and about people who have been laboring to transform it. This underlines one of the qualities of the narrative put together by Catherine Besteman: it allows the reader to *feel*

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how people inhabiting a particular place relate to that place and how they change in a transforming place.

A professor of anthropology at Colby College, Besteman started working in Cape Town in 1999 and visited there regularly until 2004. At first, engaged in other duties, she did not intend to do formal "fieldwork," but her experiences made her change her mind; this may be responsible for the particular tone of the book she finally wrote: a collection of stories and chronicles—interspersed with interviews and quotations from the press—examined from an anthropological point of view.

The book begins by underlining the contradictions of postapartheid South Africa. Political change has not produced social redress, and interactions among people belonging to different categories, as defined under apartheid, remain minimal; inequalities are widening in many domains—economic, educational, cultural. To be sure, efforts have been made to cross or even erase inherited borders, but these have not always been success stories. Many Capetonians who refused to see the realities of the past remain blind to the realities of the present. Besteman provides some interesting material on whites' attitudes toward the "New South Africa." Ignorance characterizes most of them: ignorance of the past as well as ignorance of the present; tainted by racism, blatant or clumsily disguised in jokes; or shadowed by guilt. Even the few who are intent on combating ignorance do not really know how to overcome it. The idea that the standards according to which they have organized their lives and on which they have based their vision of society should not suffer any alteration underpins their attitudes and behaviors. Although these "standards" come directly from the old South Africa, they are considered universal—which makes other norms and values necessarily secondary to them. They are frequently shared by many who are happy to be part of the "New South Africa" and condemn apartheid but do not seem to realize that "transformation" implies an evolution in what is meant by "standards" and possibly a reconsideration of the relevance of the very notion of a common, fixed, cultural "standard." (On this question, Crain Soudien's study *Youth Identity in Contemporary South Africa: Race, Culture and Schooling* [New Africa Books, 2009] offers a very stimulating counterpoint).

There are, however, white Capetonians who have broken with these conceptions, and who have involved themselves in various endeavors aimed at addressing the contradictory combination of persistent legacies of apartheid with the changes that have taken place since 1990. In a chapter dedicated to "the transformers," Besteman describes various projects implemented by "visionary leaders" and teams of educators from all backgrounds. Transformers "have chosen to embark on transformative agendas that demand lifestyle changes, ideological investment, and the creation of new social worlds" (192). They personify the emergence of "experimental identities [which] allow creative Capetonians to redefine themselves and to transcend race." (14) The question of "identities," indeed, traverses the

whole volume. However, the chapter titled "Identity Issues" deals only with those who were categorized as coloureds and is underpinned by a disturbing contradiction: "coloureds" are treated as a uniform group whose members have partaken in the desirability of a world "characterized by Euro-American culture and norms" (164); teenagers, for instance, are described as exclusively interested in U.S. musical styles. While this fascination does represent one aspect of youth coloured culture (and adult as well), it by by no means excludes an active interest in creole forms that developed from the second half of the nineteenth century—*Klopse* Carnival, *Singkore* ("Malay Choirs") competitions, Christmas Choir competitions, *langarm* dance parties, to name but a few. People who participate in these practices belong mostly to the working class and the lower middle class; it seems that Besteman's coloured interlocutors were drawn from the educated elite who tended to scorn such plebeian cultural forms (although their discourse has significantly changed in more recent times).

This illustrates how much she depended, as all anthropologists do, on her interactions with a limited set of interlocutors, a problem that links up with questions she poses in chapters 4 and 6, where she discusses dilemmas she faced in the course of her research: how could she situate herself, as a white American, within the politics of racial identity? How could she listen with emphathy to privileged whites' discourses (106) and render their racist opinions when they have been so nice to her? How to reciprocate when people have gone out of their way to make her work possible? Besteman offers no definite answer, but invites the reader to seriously consider these questions by looking at the manner in which she (re)discovers them, which is probably more useful. She nevertheless draws two lessons: anthropological research must not only focus on "communities" but also interrogate the idea of community by concentrating on processes; beyond patterns and structures, the anthropologist must take into account individual experiences and the "unpredictable peculiarities" of their circumstances. All this is not, of course, new, but it is made more sensible because Catherine Besteman allows the reader to watch how her conclusions grew from her fieldwork.

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Brad Weiss. *Street Dreams and Hip Hop Barbershops: Global Fantasy in Urban Tanzania.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009. xii + 263 pp. Appendix. Photographs. Notes. References. Index. $65.00. Cloth. $24.95. Paper.

Street Dreams is an ethnography about the struggles, fantasies, and aspirations of youth in the informal economy of Arusha (Tanzania). Although the

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