contains a list of Jettmar's numerous publications)

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REPLY TO FREMBGEN'S REVIEW

In his review of my *Irrigation and State Formation in Hunza*, Mr. Frembgen has raised several dubious criticisms. First, he erroneously refers to my approach as "a materialist research strategy" combined with a "purely functional model of state formation." There is no such thing as a "functional model of state formation," and, on the basis of what Frembgen has written, I seriously doubt that he understands what a materialist research strategy is really about. He then mistakenly accuses me of touting the hydraulic hypothesis, a point he tries to make by deliberately misquoting a sentence from page 75 of my book. Sidky, he writes, emphasizes that "... [*his omission*] command over the hydraulic apparatus gave the Mir ... [*his omission*] political power."' Whereas in fact the actual passage reads:

> In sum, command over the hydraulic apparatus gave the Mir controls over the means of production. This enabled him to intensify agricultural production, dictate economic priorities and objectives, and to appropriate a significant portion of his subjects' produce in the form of taxes. In these various ways, the Mir acquired unprecedented political strength, administrative control, and wealth.

I point out the connections between *political complexity and the control of an intensifiable resource base made possible by irrigation*; I am *not* suggesting a causal connection between the management of irrigation works and political authority, as does Wittfogel. That Frembgen completely missed this central and crucial difference between the two positions illustrates the kind of slipshod analysis that characterizes his entire review.

Equally problematic is Frembgen's opinion that "generally speaking, there is no necessary relation, no adequate principle of causality, between the existence of a large-scale irrigation system and the genesis of a centralized autocratic rule." The jury is still out on the hydraulic thesis (21–25)—Frembgen's categorical assertion discloses a total lack of familiarity with the relevant anthropological literature. However, what I find most troubling is his predilection to misconstrue my account for the sake of his arguments. Indeed, nearly all of his observations are based on such blatant obfuscations and misrepresentations.

Frembgen's next point is similarly biased and unsound. He writes:

> It cannot be proved that Tham Silum Khan III was an autocratic ruler; as with every king in Hunza, Nager, Yasin, or elsewhere in Northern Pakistan, he would have feared for his life if he had dared to be despotic in Wittfogel's terms. Despite the gradual establishing of hierarchical structures and the strengthening of central authority under his reign, he was not the "chief controller of the irrigation works," and there was no "rigorous state water control."

First, I do not recall ever applying Wittfogel's vision of despotic rulers to Silim Khan. Second, Frembgen's opinion that Silim Khan was not an autocratic ruler, i.e., a sovereign with true political power, also cannot be proved! He says Silim "would have feared for his life." Where is the evidence for his claim? Using Yasin and Nagar—where different ecological, demographic, technological, and socioeconomic factors prevailed—to shed light on developments in Hunza is the kind of mistake one would expect of a beginning graduate student. Third, how could a petty chieftain who feared for his life stand watch, "rod in hand," from morning till night (56), while Hunzakut clansmen toiled away on his building projects? Also, how could such a petty and feeble leader possibly compel the local elite to feed these laborers? The answer: Silim was not a petty chieftain.

Silim Khan, as I have shown, was able to undermine the power of local factions (the reason Frembgen says Mir Silim "would have feared for his life"), thereby changing the very nature of political power in Hunza (see pages 56, 59, 65-66, 70,73–75). Frembgen, however, conveniently ignores this aspect of the account. Furthermore, the "gradual establishing of hierarchical structures and the strengthening of central authority" under Silim's reign, to use Frembgen's own words, along with the economic and infrastructural changes that accompanied Silim's rule, lend credence to my interpretation that a new degree of centralization—one with far-reaching sociopolitical and economic consequences—was introduced into Hunza during those remarkable years. Finally, I am astounded at Frembgen's blatantly mistaken statement that there was no rigorous state water control in Hunza, and by his unfamiliarity with the ethnography. He would be well advised to consult the sources I cite (63–64).

Frembgen's own vapid insights on the rise of the state in Hunza are no better than his observations: "I think, rather, that historical forces were at work, such as the fact that a dynasty extended its rule in a political vacuum by military conquest and founded a secondary state." Does he mean to say that the Hunza state arose through mere historical accident? Does he seriously think that this constitutes a plausible anthropological explanation? Unfortunately, yes! Yet he feels justified in accusing me of misunderstanding the ethnographic materials! In my account, which Frembgen would rather toss out, I show that the "dynasty" in question extended its rule at this time (i.e., during the reign of Silim Khan) because of specific ecological, demographic, economic, and sociopolitical factors arising out of local conditions in Central Hunza, not because some power vacuum was created by chance and someone filled it by chance. If that were the case, the petty chief of neighboring Nagar should have surely given Silim Khan a run for his money, but did not. Why? Because he could not. Only Silim Khan had developed the capacity—through his control over the means of production in Hunza—to accomplish such an extraordinary feat, during such a remarkable time in Hunza's history. No other Hunza ruler had accomplished anything remotely similar to this, until Silim assumed power (76).

Frembgen next pontificates about the errors of entering the field with "preconceived ideas," again because he erroneously thinks I have applied Wittfogel's hydraulic thesis to Hunza. My theoretical perspective is founded upon the premise that all sociocultural systems adjust themselves in patterned and predictable ways to ecological, demographic, and technological constraints and possibilities. It suggests, moreover, that the causes of cultural similarities and differences are to be sought in lawful, or nomothetic, processes that give rise to similar effects under similar circumstances. To refer to this analytical framework as "preconceived ideas" only reveals the reviewer's embarrassing unfamiliarity with the nature of theory, research methodologies, and the associated epistemological and ontological issues. His own willingness to accept, as explanations for the rise of the state, not only a fortuitous power vacuum, historical chance, and diffusion, but also "warfare and the role of the king-as-protector

as major catalysts for state formation in Northern Pakistan" (a theory to which I refer on page 74), further reveals his superficial grasp of theoretical issues.

Frembgen also lacks an understanding of ecological matters, which explains why he carefully avoids commenting on the most salient aspects of the study: the complex interactions I have outlined between ecological, demographic, economic, sociopolitical, and historical factors. His comments on cropping patterns in Nagar—based on a slipshod reading of my work—suggest that he is unaware of ecological and microclimatic conditions that affect agricultural production in the Hunza Valley. Areas that are subject to topographical shading in the valley can only grow a single crop! His comments about the ecological conditions in Nomal and Hini (not called Hindi for over a century!) further confirm this point. For his own edification, as an "expert" in this area, Frembgen would be well advised to consult the agricultural studies of Hunza and Nagar villages listed on pages 161 and 166 of my book. Finally, my remark about Hini and its neighbor—which Frembgen also presents out of context—relates to the fact that villagers generally think of all the people living in the valley as "neighbors." The map I have drawn on page 7 reveals precisely where these villages are located.

Frembgen next derides my treatment of Hunza's history, again quoting out of context: "The history of Hunza gets an especially bad treatment in this book: on page 2 the author [Sidky] tells us that 'what little is known about the history of Hunza comes from oral tradition'." What I say is that the history of Hunza prior to the eighteenth century is vague and poorly documented (2)—which is, in fact, the case. Astonishingly, Frembgen himself considers Hashmatullah's sadly outdated and inadequate volume on Jammu and Kashmir, which he cites for our edification, as solid documentary evidence. With respect to the German literature, which he benevolently lists for us, I did in fact examine these sources carefully, including only what was immediately relevant, as I have done with sources in other languages. As for Frembgen's own linguistic skills, the numerous grammatical mistakes in his original submission (corrected by the *AFS* editors) suggest that he lacks the competence to review a work written in English. Frembgen's inane remark concerning the "Japanese anthropologist" is to be expected, given his singular inability to tackle substantive issues. All of this, I may add, illustrates what happens when someone attempts to evaluate a work for which they have not the expertise, talent, nor level of comprehension.

Finally, Frembgen's quip about the "*naswarji*" in one of my plates is lamentable. For a professional to use such a pejorative term to refer to this hardworking lad, who supports his aged father (who, in fact, is Shen!), is truly repugnant. As for my *Hunza: An Ethnographic Outline*, which is simply a jargon-free survey of the English literature, Frembgen's opinion is as germane as my documenting the pedestrian reasoning in his works, including *Derwische* (1993), with its numerous errors in fact, its ethnocentrism, its badly deficient bibliography, and its deplorable choice of title, all sadly reminiscent of the brand of anthropology practiced in the 1800s. Hopefully, Frembgen represents the worst rather than the best of his ethnographic tradition.

Space does not permit response to his comments on the length of my book, the "type" (?) of horses imported, the function of watch-towers (see page 51), and my use of the word "Hunzakut" instead of "Hunzukuts" (an editorial decision for the sake of my English speaking audience), etc., all too ludicrous to merit discussion anyway.

Overall, I found the level of discourse in this review sadly disappointing. The problem as I have outlined it in my book has been worked out as far as the evidence available to me has permitted. Naturally, errors occur when one deals with the constraints of limited time, shortage of funds, and absence of written records. Some errors resulting from these factors are to be found in my work—shortcomings that have become evident to me only with the benefit

of hindsight. However, these are certainly *not* the issues our reviewer has chosen to discuss. Otherwise, the time and effort wasted in reading and responding to Frembgen's opinions would have been profitable and intellectually stimulating. Unfortunately, it has been neither.

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AFGHANISTAN

EDWARDS, DAVID B. *Heroes of the Age: Moral Fault Lines on the Afghan Frontier*. Comparative Studies on Muslim Societies 21. Berkeley: University of California Press, 1996. xv + 307 pages. Maps, illustration, glossary, bibliography, index. Paper US$20.00; ISBN 0-520-20064-0. Cloth US$50.00; ISBN 0-520-20063-2.

The book under review deals with the narrative world of Afghan tribesmen living on the Pakistani side of the border. Most of the people Edwards interviewed for the stories analyzed in this volume fled to Pakistan as a result of the 1978 Marxist revolution in their homeland. Yet the stories that people chose to tell the author do not deal so much with their displacement as they do with the moral fiber of Afghan society. As Edwards notes in his introduction, they are "stories in which men of quality are tested, and by dint of their single-mindedness, their courage, and their capacity, demonstrate the qualities of person and action by which greatness is achieved" (1). They are thus heroes in the strictest sense of the term.

All of the heroes dealt with in the book are historical personages who have made a lasting impression on Afghan society, either locally or nationally: a tribal khan (Sultan Muhammad Khan), the prince who became Afghanistan's king (Amir Abdur Rahman Khan), and a Muslim saint (Hadda Sahib). Chapters 2–4 deal with narratives about or by the individuals in question. Chapter 2, for example, examines the life history of Sultan Muhammad Khan as told to the author by the khan's son, Samiullah, while chapter 3 examines a *firmān* (proclamation) written by Amir Abdur Rahman, who ruled Afghanistan from 1880 to 1901. Edwards historically and ethnographically contextualizes these oral and written narratives by teasing out the implicit meanings embedded in them. In chapter 4 the author presents another sort of narrative, one that crosses the boundary between history and myth; namely, miracle stories about the local saint Hadda Sahib. In each case, Edwards seeks out interrelated themes that emerge from these very dissimilar genres to expose a common set of concerns in the Afghan worldview: gender relationships, territorial rights and imperatives, honor and royal duty, the relationship between myth and history, the role of kinship in daily interaction, the appropriate social etiquette required for dealing with friends and enemies, and the interdependence of politics and religion.

The author deftly explores the way the above themes crisscross in the narratives and how they constantly return to the issue of moulding a moral social order. However, this moral code, Edwards argues, contains ambiguities that he sees as contributing to the ongoing political conflicts in Afghanistan. Building upon Hayden WHITE's (1981) argument that narrativity's function is to moralize reality, Edwards demonstrates that stories embody the codes by which humans construct behavioral patterns. Yet beyond this, Edwards clearly demonstrates that the narratives, when properly read for their implicit meanings, hint at the "deep structure" (217) of the Afghan conflict. He convincingly suggests that the narratives analyzed convey profound moral contradictions, such as the tendency in the story of Sultan Muhammad