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Book reviews

Anthropologies of creativity

Bridges (IV), William H. & Nina Cornyetz (eds). *Traveling texts and the work of Afro-Japanese cultural production: two haiku and a microphone*. viii, 294 pp., illus., bibliogr. Lanham, Md: Lexington Books, 2015. £65.00 (cloth)

Over the last quarter-century, a growing body of scholarship has emerged that examines the historical and cultural intersection of Black and Japanese lives. These Afro-Japanese encounters, as the title of this volume suggests, constitute a discursive metaphor of transnational movement, discovery, and engagement. In their introduction, William H. Bridges IV and Nina Cornyetz describe their work as constituting a 'new wave' of scholarship on cultural, intellectual, and artistic 'transracial exchange[s]' (p. 13) between Japan and diasporic Black culture and communities, noting that texts produced by such encounters tell 'new stories' which, in the case of the volume at hand, include those heretofore untold in part because traditional disciplinary boundaries have impeded their production.

Traveling texts and the work of Afro-Japanese cultural production successfully transgresses these disciplinary boundaries, covering a range of topics as eclectic and syncretic as the encounters themselves. It is divided into three sections: 'Art and performance', 'Poetry and literature', and 'Sound, song, music', with chapters covering such topics as *ganguro* subculture (Cornyetz, chap. 2); the African American blackface *ukiyo-e* portraits of conceptual artist iROZEALb (Crystal S. Anderson); representations of 'black' robots in Japanese popular culture (McKnight); Japanese Rastafarianism (Marvin Sterling); the sociopolitical context behind the Japanese translation of James Weldon Johnson's 'Negro national anthem' (Shana Redmond, chap. 9); the haiku of Richard Wright and Amari Baraka (Yoshinobu Hakutani and Michio Arimitsu's chapters); Japanese rap (Dexter Thomas Jr. and Noriko Manabe's chapters); and Black *enka* performer Jero (Kevin Fellezs).

While the topography traversed in these chapters is diverse, a common thread emerging from them is the Japanese association of blackness with resistance and rebellion as a means to critique the status quo and to forge resistive identities. However, as historian Reginald Kearney points out in his pioneering *African American views of the Japanese* (1998), Japan has historically occupied a similarly reflexive space in the African American imagination, despite occupying, as Sterling puts it in his chapter 12, an 'extra-diasporic space . . . largely untouched by the Atlantic slave trade' (pp. 239-40). Perhaps because of this placement, both sides have seen qualities in the Other that have led them to question, resist, *and* reinscribe essentialist racial tropes as they seek both affinities and differences with that Other. The theme is explored in Anne McKnight's chapter 7 on 'black' robots in the Japanese translation of Czech writer Karel Čapek's 1921 play *R.U.R.* (Rossum's Universal Robots) and other Japanese cultural products in which the multivalent meaning of blackness that these entities embody is presented as a catalytic force for social change, anti-colonial insurrection and liberation, as well as serving as a critique of

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Japanese complicity with white racial hierarchies.

Bridges (chap. 6) observes that for the writer Ōe Kenzaburō, African American literature provided a perspective from which to confront and overcome the 'white gaze' of Euro-American dominance. For Rasta-identifying Japanese, blackness in the form of Rastafarianism provides them with an 'affective community' from which to launch a critique of 'emotionally reserved, or affectively challenged' Japanese (Sterling, p. 244), who in their quest for Babylonian modernity have lost touch with their own emotional roots. Similarly, as Hakutani and Arimitsu observe in their respective chapters 5 and 4, haiku poetics served as a means for both Richard Wright and Amiri Baraka to evolve an outlook beyond a black and white binarism, and to transcend the hegemony of Western intellectual thought by seeking a world-view moderated by Buddhism and Japanese aesthetics. For others still, the current moment presents an opportunity to challenge essentialist views of 'Japanesness' and 'blackness', though the results are often incomplete and contradictory.

At the base of many of these chapters is the question of authenticity. Thomas Jr's chapter 11, 'Can Japanese rap?', echoes an earlier question that continues to plague Japanese jazz musicians (cf. Atkins Taylor's *Blue Nippon*, 2001). Such queries serve as a reminder that though the genre may change, interrogations of authenticity that cross racial boundaries remain persistent and deep, and have, as Fellezs's chapter 8 suggests, expanded to include another question: can Blacks *enka?*

The volume shines valuable light on gender relationships traditionally overlooked in Afro-Japanese research, which until recently has tended towards a phallocentric focus on African American male intellectual, artistic, political, and sociosexual encounters with Japanese. The volume partially corrects this slight in Anderson's chapter 1 and Yuichiro Onishi and Tia-Simone Gardner's chapter 3, which both examine the creative intersections of African American and Japanese women as transcultural producers and consumers.

This splendid collection propels the discussion of Afro-Japanese encounters forward in important, new, and unexpected directions that point the way for future multidisciplinary scholarship into the intersections of identity, Negritude and *Nihonjinron*, cultural studies, critical race studies, and much more.

John G. Russell *Gifu University*

Kuijpers, Maikel H.G. *An archaeology of skill: metalworking skill and material specialization in early Bronze Age Central Europe*. xvi, 318 pp., figs, tables, illus., bibliogrs. Abingdon, Oxon, New York: Routledge, 2018. £115.00 (cloth)

This book is evidence of a welcome resurgence of interest in craft and skill. Maikel Kuijpers gives examples of the previous attitudes to metalworking that have informed archaeologists about prehistory: 'The fantastic transformation of raw copper into finished objects is difficult to comprehend and may well have been surrounded by secrecy and mythical imagination' (H. Vandkilde, 'Metallurgy, inequality and globalization in the Bronze Age', in *Der Griff nach den Sternen*, eds H. Meller & F. Bertemes, 2010, quoted p. 3). As a historian of science, I sympathize with Kuijpers's frustration over this linguistic mystification of craft expertise. *An archaeology of skill* proposes instead an empirical approach based on examining objects for traces of the maker's skill.

Kuijpers first defines what constitutes skill in the working of copper, drawing both on his own experience in an apprenticeship to contemporary metalworkers and his discussions with them, and on written accounts. Metal objects show differences in quality arising from creating the mould, the casting of the metal into the mould (involving factors such as metal and mould temperatures), and the working of the cast object – both in annealing to achieve greater hardness, and in hammer-hardening it to just the requisite solidity without passing into brittleness. Crafting objects depends on coming to know materials' attributes and potentials in order to work them into useful objects. Building on definitions of skill from material culture, sociology, and anthropology, Kuijpers sees craft skill as a dialogue between maker and material that develops through a recursive, experiential, approximating process. Through this a craftsperson becomes increasingly able to recognize and work with a material's affordances and constraints, enabling its manipulation in more effective, useful, or durable directions. A highly skilled craftsperson is willing to take risks, pushing the materials beyond 'good enough' to create something potentially innovative.

Kuijpers's scale of skilled metalworking is one of this intelligent book's most ingenious aspects: he adapts the *chaîne opératoire*'s methodology as a means to compare nine component techniques of metalworking: metal composition, casting

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quality (tendency to produce cracks and porosity), shaping, annealing, hammer-hardening, hardness, dimensions, decoration, and surface treatment. Using a dataset of 300 axes taken from T.L. Kienlin's research (*Frühes Metall im nordalpinen Raum*, 2010), the author is able to compare different axes with the same metal composition, building up a flow chart following the materialization of an 'average axe'. This provides a standard for the 'good enough' axe that allows Kuijpers to measure the axe maker's skill on a scale of 'amateur', 'craftsperson', 'master crafter', and 'virtuoso'. Tellingly, some virtuoso axes are beautifully shaped or decorated but are not hard enough to be used as tools, perhaps pointing to other functions as axe simulacra or deposition objects. The maker's intention and the object's envisioned use may also be inferred through the focus on skill.

Previous analyses of these axes have generally started from scientific examinations of their metal composition, but Kuijpers argues that such measurements alone are not enough to understand skill, for human senses cannot distinguish many of the minute differences these measurements reveal. Rather, in the Copper and Bronze Ages, craftspeople would have perceived and differentiated among metal alloys in their own terms – by means of the material's colour, appearance, castability, and workability. A craftsperson's skill in working with metal consists, then, in recognizing and responding to these 'perceptive categories', as Kuijpers calls them. He resuscitates the concept of 'metalleity' – the properties and potentials of a metal for human use – to denote the metalworker's overarching perceptive knowledge. To flesh out this concept, he relies on premodern metalworking texts.

Kuijpers's ultimate aim is to formulate a theory of craft skill involving four essential aspects: recognition of and response to material qualities (metalleity); use of the senses; use of tools (including the hands and body); and an apperception/knowledge of the material built up through a recursive process of material experimentation and reflection that is an amalgam of cognitively explicit and embodied techniques.

An archaeology of skill will foster a new consideration of archaeological objects from the perspective of the objects' making and provide new insights into objects beyond usual data points of metal content and find context, which reflect only one moment in an object's life. A focus on skill also allows new conclusions about makers' intentions, object purpose and use, change over time, and may provide insight into technological innovation. Scholars from many disciplines, including the history of craft, anthropology, and material culture, will appreciate this book because it enables the assessment and discussion of skill in an empirical manner. While this is something that museums' object curators and conservators already do, it is without Kuijpers's comparative *chaîne opératoire* scale. This book provides a means through which to cogently discuss not just an object's semiotic and communicative meanings, but also its 'material meaning'.

Pamela H. Smith *Columbia University*

Sather, Clifford. *A Borneo healing romance: ritual storytelling and the Sugi Sakit, a Saribas Iban rite of healing*. xvi, 559 pp., map, figs, illus., bibliogr. Phillips, Maine: Borneo Research Council, 2017. RM120 (paper)

Derek Freeman often claimed that Iban 'oral literature' rivalled that of the Greeks, and the book under review is one recent publication which presents evidence to support this claim. *A Borneo healing romance* is a companion piece to Clifford Sather's excellent *Seeds of play, words of power* (2001), which gives the background and analysis of a translated text supporting a Saribas curing ritual. The translation of these texts, full of archaic Iban, is particularly important because the number of contemporary Iban who can understand the vernacular in full can probably be counted on the fingers of one hand.

Sugi Sakit is primarily a healing ritual which is rooted in Iban religious ideas. Iban religion can be likened to a hall of mirrors. You see your reflection, but it isn't you; it is wearing clothes but not the clothes you are wearing. In Iban religion, every Iban had his/her own god (*petara*) in their mirror image, and that god had its own god, and so on to infinity. Clothes and everything else had their own god. The gods were on the other side of an invisible curtain separating a non-material world from the material, both being ever present and mutually interactive. Festivals/rituals of the kind Sather describes were held to entertain the gods, who, if they enjoyed the event, would leave charms to benefit the host.

In the *Sugi Sakit*, the entertainment was the telling of a fable in which, to a Western ear, a serially predatory male, Sugi, overcame and spat out everyone in his path (females, competitive colleagues, and enemies). When asked by her son what his father, Sugi, was like, the heroine described him as a man 'with a thousand wives, all of whom he deserts' (p. 457). In her case, she

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had been left to cope with her farms and other domestic duties in a household consisting of infant, younger brother, and elderly parents. Sugi also left the longhouse devoid of its most capable warrior, whom he had cast off to far shores. For traditional Iban (both male and female), the tale was an enchanting romance. The hero was the man every woman dreamt of romantically – there must have been something in it for the latter.

This *Sugi Sakit* performance is that of a Saribas Iban bard called Renang, who was both actor and, in large part, poet and composer. The *Sugi Sakits* of no two bards were the same and, indeed, the text of each performance by Renang varied as the circuits in his mind extemporized with new poetic inspiration. His Sugi story overflows with wonderfully evocative stanzas. An unanswered question is how good his version was when compared with past greats. One notices Renang's rhyming needle stuck in a familiar groove from time to time and statements being at odds with the ethnographic reality. Sather's chapter 4 on Iban oral poetry articulates well the bag of tricks the Iban rhyming wordsmith and versifier brought to the formidable task of stringing together up to 10,000 lines of rhyming couplets, triplets, and more while, on each telling, ensuring it remained as fresh to the listener as the very first time they had heard the piece.

Sather takes the reader through the text, Iban and translation, describing what is happening with copious explanatory notes and annotations. There is no approaching-perfect translation of an Iban text. In translation, mood is lost as English has too many word endings to match the economy of Iban for versifying; the descriptions of and metaphors from the rain forest have no English equivalents and remain foreign to anyone who has not experienced it; descriptions of lovers may remain universal; while place and personal names are unfamiliar but captivating, and much of what the Iban took for granted has to be and is explained. A minor point is that the author of this *Sugi Sakit* was the Iban bard Renang, and this version was transcribed by the Iban scholar Jantan Umbat, who also translated and explained every difficult passage; the easily understood Iban was translated by Sather, who annotated the text and whose name alone appears on the cover. This contrasts with the scholarly translated and annotated versions of the *Iliad* and *Odyssey*, which tend to be acknowledged as Homer's work, for example.

That said, Sather has produced a book which permits foreigners to get an inkling of the poetic genius of the Iban. The poetry provides wonderful descriptions of the world the Iban lived in and the imagined world the gods inhabited presented in a language that is suggestive, seductive, and sonorous. It entertained the Iban for generations. *A Borneo healing romance* should appeal to feminists, to scholars and others interested in indigenous oral literature, to poets interested in entering into different worlds, and to those seeking to flesh out the great but unflatteringly sparse anthropological archives of the almost totally lost artistic genius of small indigenous groups now expected to conform to a 'civilized' normality'.

Michael Heppell *Melbourne*

Environmental matters

Hoffman, Danny. *Monrovia modern: urban form and political imagination in Liberia*. xxiii, 205 pp., illus., bibliogr. Durham, N.C.: Duke Univ. Press, 2017. £21.99 (paper)

Danny Hoffman employs architectural theory in *Monrovia modern* to examine what four Monrovia landmarks – effectively abandoned shells during his fieldwork in 2012 – convey not only about the history of the Liberian capital's built environment but also about the political imaginaries of male war veterans who inhabit them as squatters. The earliest constructed of these modernist forms – the E.J. Roye Building, named after Liberia's deposed fifth president – was the headquarters of the country's oldest political party, the True Whig Party, before a 1980 coup toppled it. According to Hoffman, the next two public buildings – the Liberia Broadcasting System (LBS) and the partially finished Ministry of Defence – were 'brutalist constructions, massive concrete edifices meant to house government ministries and service' (p. xvii). The final structure, Hotel Africa, was once a sprawling five-star luxury hotel perched on the outskirts of Monrovia with an Africa-shaped swimming pool.

In form and function, the four buildings were intended to portray Liberia – Africa's first black republic – as an exemplar of continental modernity and prosperity. Each landmark 'is a web of physical spaces and narrative constructions, a material and immaterial aggregation that speaks to the relationship between the forms of the city and the lives of its inhabitants' (p. 6). Furthermore, the fact that the buildings still lie in ruins after a fourteen-year war is symbolic of the promise and peril of that vision for the vast majority of urban-dwelling Liberians, who continue to suffer extreme poverty in the midst of plenty.

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Hoffman's three major arguments are: (a) there is no 'authentic' way of occupying modern urban spaces because individuals' experiences are largely experimental and inventive; (b) urban warfare reveals the difficulties and creative possibilities of inhabiting cities; and (c) the political and economic transactions within a city and the lived realities of its inhabitants do not always intersect. He employs 'photowriting' as both methodology and narrative form, consisting primarily of his photographs and rough sketches of architectural designs interspersed with textual analysis depicting each landmark's context and contents. Through this evocative approach, the images and text are put in dialogue, as are the four buildings under scrutiny, while simultaneously conveying multi-layered meanings of their own. Hoffman begins each chapter with either a large iconic image of one of the four buildings or a scribbled sketch of said structure to orient the reader. He juxtaposes this image with a vignette about the building's squatters, primarily war veterans, to explore how Monrovia's 'poorest residents understand modernist urban forms and their place within them' as well as what the 'built forms of the city evoke for them as possible futures, futures for themselves and for the city writ large' (p. 2). Each of the empirical chapters ends with a succinct photo essay on the buildings' architectural elements, which include conspicuously staged images of male ex-soldiers.

Although *Monrovia modern*'s unique theoretical, methodological, and empirical contributions are obvious amidst Hoffman's exceptional writing, I think that there are a few limitations worth highlighting. First, the author goes to great lengths to demonstrate that his book is more grounded in architectural theory than ethnography, but it is impossible to ignore the anthropological conventions he employs. Second, given the current heightened demands for scholars to adopt decoloniality as praxis, his tendency to rely on primarily European architectural theories to explain African realities undermines the book's theoretical foundation. Admittedly, Hoffman does acknowledge this weakness. Also glaringly missing from the book is a meaningful engagement with the extensive scholarship by Liberian historians and political scientists – namely Clarence E. Zamba Liberty, Joseph Saye Guannu, D. Elwood Dunn, Carl Patrick Burrowes, and George Klay Kieh, Jr – on the country's state formation, economic consolidation, as well as the causes and consequences of its protracted armed conflict. A further deconstruction of the volume points to the need to abandon the misnomer 'Americo-Liberian', which conflates all black settlers in Liberia as having migrated from the United States and/or occupied elite circles.

A third limitation of *Monrovia modern* is that Hoffman's narrow focus on male ex-combatants and their lived experiences of modern urban architecture, which picks up from his first book, *The war machines* (2011), overreaches by making broader claims about all poor Liberian urban dwellers. Truth be told, the veterans who inhabit city ruins are a *particular* kind of urban dweller given their positionalities as former warmongers to some and freedom fighters to others. Moreover, *Monrovia modern* comes across as a masculinist project in both its content and form, with little to no references to women and their perspectives. Perhaps Hoffman is making the point here that the four urban ruins of E.J. Roye Building, the Ministry of Defence, the LBS, and Hotel Africa – as well as the ex-combatants who inhabit them – are emblems of a masculinist project gone awry.

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ONCIUL, BRYONY, MICHELLE L. STEFANO & STEPHANIE HAWKE (eds). *Engaging heritage, engaging communities*. 243 pp., table, illus., bibliogrs. Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell Press, 2017. £60.00 (cloth)

In April 2019, the Museum Ethnographers Group held their annual conference entitled 'Trust, Harm and Ethnographic Displays', exploring how ethnographic museums attempt to give voice to communities by creating environments of trust. The conference responded to a recent, and much-needed, critical engagement with the work that ethnographic museums have, over the last thirty years, undertaken with communities. However, the issues discussed were not limited to the ethnographic museum, and increasingly the museums and heritage sector, and the latter's stakeholders more broadly, are engaging in critical debates about how community engagement can be truly collaborative and beneficial for all involved. *Engaging heritage, engaging communities* gets to the heart of this debate. Following on from core collections such as Laura Peers and Alison Brown's *Museums and source communities* (2003) and Viv Golding and Wayne Modest's *Museum and communities* (2013), this edited volume seeks to critically engage 'with and explore the latest debates and practices surrounding community collaboration' (p. 1) within the museums and heritage sector. Crucially, rather than seek to define what a

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community is, the book explores what a community can be. The eleven case studies, among which are interspersed interviews with heritage 'experts', consider the different ways communities participate and engage with heritage projects in a variety of settings.

The book is divided into three sections – 'Engaging concepts', 'Engaging creatively', 'Engaging challenges' – and begins with a strong critique from the academic and museum professional Bernadette Lynch of outreach work in museums, arguing that 'token consultations without authentic decision-making power and relationships that disempower and control people are widespread within museum public engagement practice in the UK' (p. 14). Many of the volume's essays agree with this sentiment, arguing that conflict, struggle, and debate within community work should be promoted rather than the endorsement of the idea that heritage can somehow solve problems. This is perfectly summed up in Justin Sikora's chapter 12 and Michelle L. Stefano's chapter 13 on ecomuseums, which are followed by Gregory Ramshaw's reflections in chapter 14 on sports heritage's opportunities to challenge dominant populist narratives that draw on examples of sport's role in conflict and community action.

Whilst the essays and interviews fit well in their subdivided sections, common themes also emerge throughout the volume. For example, Elizabeth Pishief (chap. 5), Gemma Tully (chap. 7), Billie Lythberg, and Carl Hogsden and Wayne Ngata (chap. 16) all point to a need within heritage projects for the recognition of the past's value for understanding the present, whether that be engaging with Maori ideologies in archaeological practice or asking contemporary artists to respond to their historic material culture. Philipp Schorch (chap. 2), Elizabeth Pishief, and Helen Graham (chap. 6) each consider how different cultural concepts of heritage need to be shared, mediated, and taken into account in order for all the parties who are involved in heritage projects to communicate effectively, behave appropriately, and achieve collective aims. Importantly, Pishief also highlights that it is important to remember that 'communities are not homogeneous but heterogeneous' (p. 55).

The strength of this volume lies in its development from a series of conference papers into an edited volume, which is reflected in the variety of contexts, theories, and concepts discussed. The interviews – chapters 3, 4, 8, 9, 11, and 17 – are interspersed between the longer essays and beautifully challenge ideas of heritage and community collaboration. Each interviewee was asked roughly the same set of questions, beginning with a reflection on their career to date with a focus on their work in community engagement, and asking for definitions of 'cultural heritage'. The responses highlight the challenges and complexities of working with communities in the heritage sector, as each response is different and shaped by the individuals' own professional training and experience of space and place.

Whilst the collection does achieve its aims, it might have been pertinent to include a few more case studies written by public engagement and outreach officers from museums or heritage sites, as well as community members, in order to more effectively reflect the book's themes. That noted, *Engaging heritage, engaging communities* is a timely collection of critical essays, interviews, and reflections that speak to the contemporary concerns of the museum and heritage sector, drawing out what is at the core of work with communities: relationships. The book sits at the intersection of museum studies, anthropology, history, and critical heritage and is a valuable tool for museum professionals, students, and researchers.

Alison Clark *National Museums Scotland*

Siegel, Peter E. (ed.). *Island historical ecology: socionatural landscapes of the Eastern and Southern Caribbean*. xxii, 427 pp., maps, tables, illus., bibliogr. Oxford, New York: Berghahn Books, 2018. £99.00 (cloth)

Can palaeoethnobotany demonstrate that humans settled the Windward Islands (southern Lesser Antilles) thousands of years earlier than archaeological evidence allows? Over the past ten to fifteen years, colonization has re-emerged as a major topic in Caribbean archaeology whilst a new generation of scholars reanalyse the data. Many now conclude that the Windwards were not settled like 'stepping stones' from South America but instead were skipped by both the earliest Archaic and Ceramic Age migrants. *Island historical ecology*, a new book edited by Peter Siegel, offers a rejoinder that not only did Archaic Age humans settle the entire Lesser Antilles between 6,000 and 8,000 years ago, but they also 'domesticated' the landscape by clearing forests of apparently all but the most economically useful plants. Disciplinary debates aside, the volume is a seminal contribution to Caribbean archaeology.

Island historical ecology is the definitive report of a large-scale, interdisciplinary soil-coring project funded by National Geographic and the

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National Science Foundation that was conducted from 2007 to 2009 by the authors of the central chapters: Peter Siegel, Nicholas Dunning, John Jones, Deborah Pearsall, Neil Duncan, Pat Farrell, and Jason Curtis. In total, they discuss seventeen successful cores from nine islands: Curaçao (San Juan, Spaanse Water), Trinidad (St John, Cedros, Nariva Swamp), Grenada (Meadow Beach, Lake Antoine), Barbados (Graeme Hall), Martinique (Point Figuier, Baie de Fort de France), Marie-Galante (Vieux Fort), Antigua (Nonsuch Bay, Jolly Beach, Crosby Lagoon), Barbuda (Low Pond, Grassy Island), and St Croix (Coakley Bay).

The book is divided into three parts – introductory chapters in part I; case studies of each island in part II; and syntheses in part III. Each chapter of part II begins with the island's natural history and a description of each core, followed by a curt summary, while broader interpretation is mostly withheld until chapters 14 and 15. The methods described in chapter 4 are especially integral to understanding much of the book, particularly the phytolith discussion (pp. 69-71), to which I found myself returning repeatedly.

As someone familiar with the project's earlier articles, I was perhaps most surprised by the phytolithic evidence, which appears to have been eclipsed by their focus on pollen and charcoal. To be sure, the latter offer interesting clues, but they remain ambiguous on their own. For instance, large tables throughout the book list each plant family and the economic taxa within. Yet what plants *don't* have some potential use to humans? These data are more convincing when coupled with phytoliths suggestive of Marantaceae (arrowroot) cultigens dating to the Archaic Age at: Spaanse Water, Curaçao (~2490 BCE); Cedros, Trinidad (~3525 BCE); Nariva Swamp, Trinidad (~4765 BCE); Meadow Beach, Grenada (~3400 BCE); Lake Antoine, Grenada (~3600 BCE); Baie de Fort, Martinique (~3000 BCE); Point Figuier, Martinique (~100 BCE); and Coakley Bay, St Croix (~850 BCE). Maize pollen and phytoliths were also found in several cores, mostly dating to the Late Ceramic period (750-1500 CE).

One question that remains unanswered is whether all charcoal and vegetation changes identified are indeed anthropogenic rather than natural responses to a changing climate. How would the vegetation appear in such an environment *without* humans? This is not to propose there were not Archaic peoples present in the Windward Islands – the evidence here suggests there were – but it is questionable whether they were so populous and stationary as to effect vast ecosystem impacts while leaving little archaeological evidence. This stands in stark contrast to the numerous Archaic sites in the northern (Leeward) islands, which have comparable volcanic, sea-level, and colonial preservation obstacles.

Thus, the argument for stepping-stone movement (though not colonization) during the Archaic Age gains much support from the pollen, and especially phytolith, data presented in this volume. Nonetheless, the jury is still out for the Ceramic Age – given the total evidence (here and elsewhere), most of the Windward Islands still appear to have been skipped by the earliest Ceramic migrants (a pattern known as the 'southward route hypothesis'), perhaps because of the same attraction for the crowded Leewards seen during the Archaic (p. 332).

Yet while there may be disagreements, no one can contest the usefulness of having these data in the first place – data that were acquired and analysed by a top interdisciplinary team. Indeed, it is hard to overstate the importance of successfully accomplishing a project of this magnitude. There have been limited coring projects on individual islands, but nothing on a regional scale like this. As such, *Island historical ecology* offers our best evidence yet of human-environmental interactions in the prehistoric (and historic) Lesser Antilles. We will all be referencing this volume for many decades to come.

Jonathan A. Hanna *Kirkwood Community College*

Im/moral economics

Basu, Laura. *Media amnesia: rewriting the economic crisis*. vi, 274 pp., tables, bibliogr. London: Pluto Press, 2018. £24.99 (paper)

In this remarkable book, Laura Basu asks a precise and powerful question: how come 'the origins of the banking meltdown and its roots in the wider economic system' (p. 1) have been forgotten? Her answer explores 'media amnesia', a phenomenon of UK reporting on the economic crisis characterized by 'a lack of historical explanation; an overly narrow range of perspectives privileging elite views; and the lack of global context' (p. 210). According to Basu, instead of questioning the origins of crisis and the necessity for growth, or exploring economic options other than capitalism and austerity, reporting contributed to the legitimization of 'an *escalation* of neoliberal measures' (p. 16, original emphasis) as a response to the problems caused by neoliberalization.

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The initial puzzle is familiar to critical anthropologists working on austerity, neoliberalism, and economic crises. Basu manages to provide major clues on how reporting 'has helped to "commonsensify" neoliberal solutions to the crisis' (p. 23). She does so through a clear methodology which combines a frame analysis of 1,133 news items in the UK mainstream media using interviews with journalists. In the introduction to the book, Basu contextualizes the circumstances of reporting in corporate and profit-driven outlets, the rise of public relations, the increasing speed of reporting, the ideological capture of financial reporting, and the marginalization of sceptical voices.

The book then turns to four analytical chapters which are titled and structured around the chronology of crisis – 'Crash', 'Deficit', 'Slump', and 'Eurocrisis' – followed by a chapter entitled 'Inequality' and a final one named 'Curing media amnesia'. The chronological chapters and Basu's analysis of the 'twists and turns of the coverage of the past decade' (p. 30) are the book's core strengths. While in 2008, terms such as 'greedy bankers' (p. 33) or 'casino capitalism' (p. 38) were prevalent, reporting quickly turned to warnings about 'class war' (pp. 71, 80) when taxes on wealth were discussed. This 'ultrafast revisioning' (p. 107) replaced the first critical impetus of 2008 reporting by implying that the origins of financial crisis were to be found in Labour's 'overspending' (p. 107), or in the 'fiscal miscreants' of the Eurozone crisis (p. 143): that is, the over-indebted Southern European governments. The sources quoted in these news items are telling: 50.9 per cent politicians, 28 per cent financial sector representatives, 2.3 per cent trade unions, and 0.6 per cent activists and protesters (p. 61). Basu's data are often surprising for their unambiguity: for instance, when 0 per cent of analysed news items since 2009 mention the word 'capitalism' at all (p. 43).

Another of the book's strengths is that Basu discusses these findings alongside (a) the political debates of the time, (b) critical social science literature, and (c) her own political/critical questions. She manages to discuss a bewildering array of topics, from automation to taxes, and from Brexit to the rise and defeat of Syriza in Greece, while staying focused on her argument's main threads. This breadth, however, has a slight downside as it somewhat sidelines ongoing discussions about the analytical usefulness of 'neoliberalism' or 'crisis' as brackets for a wide range of political-economic events, or of restructuration's gendered and racialized nature.

In her conclusion, Basu discusses a variety of progressive ideas about how to change the media system. She acknowledges in the book's very last sentences that these ideas might seem overly idealistic, yet that it is crucial to 'imagine other possible worlds' (p. 239). While highly appreciated for its 'optimism of the will', Basu here departs from the important analyses of capitalism that make her analytical chapters so compelling. This seems problematic at a time when right and far-right activism and the media co-opt the language of 'bottom-up' and 'against the mainstream' initiatives or use the potential of social media and the internet for other causes than those imagined by leftist progressives.

In summary, this is an important study and engaging read, and is highly timely in its analysis of economic common sense, and of the manufacturing of consent during the recent economic crisis. Basu provides extensive contextualization for her data and discusses a wide range of scholarship with a candid, critical energy. This makes *Media amnesia* stimulating for all those interested in the cultures of capitalism, and in empirical as well as analytical questions about common sense and the imaginations of an otherwise. It is important for scholars and wider audiences to be reminded of the origins of the economic crisis and to be provided with an impressive discussion of how they could have been forgotten. As such, the book is itself a contribution to the lack it sets out to study: a powerful account of the curious omission of some of the most pressing challenges of our times from public discourse.

Andreas Streinzer *Goethe University*

Cox, John. *Fast money schemes: hope and deception in Papua New Guinea*. xiii, 246 pp., maps, illus., bibliogr. Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 2018. $34.00 (paper)

One result of modernity's insistence that non-Western peoples accept the structural differentiation of institutions is a severing of meaningful agency from local space. Yet such peoples do answer modernity's demand and seek to reassert agency via composites of the differentiated and the local. John Cox offers a fascinating case study of this process from the southwest Pacific. Its focus, which is a money fraud that preoccupied urban Papua New Guineans during the last years of the twentieth century and the beginning of this one, foregrounds the relationship between modernity and its Melanesian interlocutors in the context of

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one of the most differentiated modern institutions of them all, namely banks.

In *Fast money schemes*, Cox rejects the well-known ethnographic stereotype of Melanesians as cargo cult people for whom the ancestors reward ritual work by unlocking the secrets underlying Western power/wealth. Instead, Cox points out that the fraud, called U-Vistract, primarily appealed to disaffected, but educated and cosmopolitan members of the urban middle class, and rather less to isolated rural villagers. U-Vistract succeeded not because of ancestor worship, but rather because of a complicated context that included a widespread disillusionment with banks and banking, a weak postcolonial state, a society riven by emergent class-based inequality, and a fast-moving and thriving world of payday lenders, remittances, and rotating credit associations. In such circumstances, U-Vistract offered an effective mimicry of passbook-issuing bank bureaucracy, and a vision of riches, of course, but it also offered a measure of global citizenship, and a concept of ethical investing in relationship to, of all things, nation building. Drawing from 'post-village' fieldwork in 2009, during which Cox interviewed several dozen multi-ethnic, middle-class U-Vistract 'investors', the book portrays their motives and hopes, and comprehensively compares them to shady, finance-related cronyism, Ponzi frauds, pyramid scams, and kindred cons elsewhere in the world.

U-Vistract was the most popular and longest lasting of the dozen or so fast money schemes by which people were 'led astray' in 1999 (p. 36). Indeed, over half a million people were hooked at one point. Founded by a charismatic charlatan called Noah Musingku, whose money evidently came from Bougainville copper mine royalties, the swindle, which likened itself both to an independent bank and to a Christian ministry, delivered not only big, and well-publicized, pay-outs to initial investors, but also a moral vision of personal responsibility in an egalitarian nation. Subsequent pay-outs were postponed, of course, repeatedly, and ultimately never disbursed.

About halfway through the book, Cox starts to discuss excerpts from his interviews with about a dozen working- and middle-class investors for whom U-Vistract constituted the centre of the 'popular financescape' (p. 93). A retired mechanic talks about how he was persuaded to believe in the fraud because of the ID cards and receipts it issued. An accountant becomes involved after she sees other middle-class people making money from the scheme. A married couple, pressured by village kin, invest in order to please them and appear generous. An urban pastor invests because of the proximity of the 'end times' (p.113). This documents the combination of cosmopolitan value systems for Papua New Guineans: a bank, a Christian ministry with a moral vision of the nation, not to mention global finance. Investors were not to be greedy but were rather expected to become responsible with money and sober, disciplined husbands who had companionate marriages. Musingku, its leader, espoused a neoliberal concept of the state for which U-Vistract offered itself as a substitute, proposing new development programmes. Christian citizenship, investors were told, required personal patronage and generosity. They should become patrons of the nation, and, in so doing, immunize themselves from sorcery attacks arising from jealous rural kin. In the end, of course, the scheme failed to afford these values any 'convincing political expression' (p. 207).

Fast money schemes richly illustrates how modernity provokes non-Western people to reassert that of which it would deprive them, namely locally informed agency. In this instance, banks and banking practices took a composite form in Papua New Guinea that integrated value systems in a way that did not really resemble their Western counterpart at all. What is intriguing about this case was that such a combination was also not related to, nor comprehensible in, indigenous terms of reference. For Cox, U-Vistract was embedded in a series of dubious postcolonial frameworks to which it added its own moral ambiguity.

With its focus on the nation-state, stratification, and Christianity, and, of course, with its urban research, this ethnography is an excellent example of how current Melanesian anthropology can add to the growing literature on vernacular modernities – or multiple modernities, as Shmuel Eisenstadt used to call their variety (S.N. Eisenstadt, ed., *Multiple modernities*, 2002). It is a teachable ethnography that would make a valuable contribution to both undergraduate- and graduate-level courses on the contemporary Pacific, stratification and society, culture and capitalism, and, of course, economic anthropology.

David Lipset *University of Minnesota*

Hughes, David McDermott. *Energy without conscience: oil, climate change, and complicity*. x, 191 pp., maps, illus., figs, bibliogr. Durham, N.C.: Duke Univ. Press, 2017. £20.99 (paper)

Trinidad and Tobago is an oil-producing state with the world's fourth highest per-capita carbon

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emissions, yet its low-lying islands are extremely vulnerable to climate change. David McDermott Hughes's *Energy without conscience* takes a political stand in relation to this paradox, disavowing Trinidad's perceived victimhood and instead showing that its oil economy is not and was never inevitable. The book's strength lies in its nuanced description of both the historical contingencies through which oil's 'myth of inevitability' (p. 65) was written and the infrastructures through which it is reproduced.

Two historical chapters contextualize the islands' present within their plantation slavery past. Hughes shows how slaves were conceptualized as fluid somatic energy. However, their essential humanity stopped them from being fully commodified, thus he argues this eventually led to abolition. In the second chapter, Hughes describes the utopian schemes of Conrad Stollmeyer, an abolitionist who dreamed of a solar-powered paradise. This failed utopia and Stollmeyer's refining of local bitumen into petroleum offered an amoral alternative to slavery. Oil became a form of energy that did not prick the conscience. The book's second section is ethnographic. Its three chapters each focus on a different set of interlocutors in Trinidad: petroleum geologists, local environmental activists, and a group of policy-makers and environmental scientists he terms a 'climate intelligentsia'. These three groups' lack of conscience about their contribution to climate change is presented as the consequence of this history, the materiality of oil, and the technologies of its representation.

Hughes's ethnographic delineation of these populations, particularly the climate intelligentsia and petroleum geologists, fills a gap within anthropological studies of extractive industries. Studying up is critical, but access is often a barrier, so I wondered how this was affected by Hughes's standpoint: 'From the beginning, I encountered oil as immoral – and as an industry that should go extinct' (p. 4). Hughes openly hopes to end his informants' livelihoods. Thus, aside from access, the monograph also raises important questions regarding research methodology and ethics. What levels of empathy are necessary for ethnographic fieldwork, and what are the ethics of this disciplinary position when research is done with interlocutors with whom we disagree?

I think that Hughes's ethnography suffers from his methodological starting point. Although he attempts to describe how fossil fuel 'promoters think, act, and feel' (p. 4), this rarely goes beyond interviews or participant observation at conferences. Glimpses of his personal relationships, such as with petroleum geologist Krishna Persad, start to develop as more complete characterizations. However, even as he recognizes some of the deliberative and ethical tensions that his deeper association with Krishna makes clear, Hughes considers that his friend merely 'brushed against the boundary of conscience' (p. 94) when describing Persad's ethical commitments to his eco resort.

Hughes leaves unclear what he means by 'conscience'. He notes variously that it is 'a sense of responsibility or reverence for energy' (p. 24) and at other times that it is an act of deliberation: 'Conscience centers on alternatives' (p. 11). Here the monograph would benefit from engaging with the growing anthropology of ordinary ethics and morality, such as that summarized in Didier Fassin's edited collection *A companion to moral anthropology* (2012). This lack of engagement with the broader literature leaves one wondering whether Hughes disagrees with the perspective of this scholarly community or merely overlooks the everyday forms of ethical deliberation in which his interlocutors engage.

However, my main concern is politically pragmatic. Hughes tells us that planetary hope 'begins with filling the moral void around energy' (p. 150). In my own research with coal miners and lobbyists in Australia – a highly moralized context – I found that moral accusations led to a hardening of pro-coal positions. Accusations attach more easily to already pathologized populations than they do to the institutions and elites that benefit most from extractive industry (cf. K. Dahlgren, 'Greed accusations in an Australian coal mining town', *Cambridge Journal of Anthropology* **37: 2**, 2019). The rise of far-right populism in former coal mining areas in the United States, the United Kingdom, and Australia similarly show the political divisiveness and counter-reactions that arise when communities face accusations that their livelihoods are immoral and threatening. Reproducing this for the oil industry is not likely to serve the kind of climate awareness and action that the author desires.

Overall, Hughes's *Energy without conscience* gives us a deeply historicized description of Trinidad and Tobago's oil economy. Most importantly, he describes the potentiality of the past to have led to different presents and inspires us to consider different futures. Despite its flaws, I recommend the book. It raises important questions about the ethical considerations and responsibilities of doing research in a world facing climate catastrophe. Owing to the methodical issues it covers, it will be of particular interest to anyone planning and conducting research in the

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broad fields of energy humanities, the anthropology of climate change, and extractive industries.

Kari Dahlgren *Monash University*

Sliwinski, Alicia. *A house of one's own: the moral economy of post-disaster aid in El Salvador*. x, 251 pp., tables, illus., figs, bibliogr. Montreal & Kingston: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2018. £24.99 (paper)

On 13 January 2001, a 7.6-magnitude earthquake struck El Salvador, causing almost a thousand fatalities and destroying and damaging more than 275,000 houses nationally, many of them located in rural areas. Alicia Sliwinski arrived in the municipality that she calls 'Lamaria' (located in the department of Sonsonate) about a month after the quake and soon decided to study the humanitarian response to the disaster that she documents in this book. *A house of one's own* employs the case study of Lamaria to analyse some of the contradictions of humanitarian assistance.

Following an introduction and a first, theoretical chapter, the next four chapters address three modalities of humanitarian assistance: spontaneous help organized by the affected people themselves through pre-existing relationships of kinship and fictive kinship; food assistance from Doctors Without Borders, distributed by a group of resident nuns; and a housing project for fifty families made homeless by the earthquake, organized and paid for by the German Red Cross. Whereas the first two modalities (chap. 2) more closely approximate the Maussian gift, the discussion of La Humanidad housing project, the subject of almost half the text (chaps 3-5), enables Sliwinski to explore the underlying contradictions of one humanitarian project in considerable detail. La Humanidad involved a food-for-work programme in which the German Red Cross purchased land and housing materials, designed the project, and assumed responsibility for the salaries of the technical team and skilled labourers, while future beneficiaries were required to carry out most of the drudge work: clearing the site, compacting the earth, assembling steel supports for weight-bearing columns, and, under the practised eye of hired bricklayers, laying brick and mortar. Beneficiaries received food from the World Food Programme but no monetary payment. Finally, the sponsors told recipients that no one would be allowed to occupy a house until all had been constructed.

This humanitarian project contained a 'restorative' element – providing earthquake-proof homes to those who had lost their living quarters in the disaster – but it also purported to develop community through the required collective work of unrelated persons recruited throughout the municipality. It even contained an element of planned social change, pursued by a Salvadoran feminist social worker assigned to the project, who worked to empower women and foster community spirit. However, the social worker had been allocated only 2 per cent of the total funding and was dismissed halfway through the project following conflicts with the male engineer supervising work on the site. A series of unanticipated gender, cultural, and micro-class distinctions generated tension among participating families, and between them and supervisory personnel, especially as the slow pace of construction dragged the process out to fourteen months. Some people began to doubt that they would get a house, and this suspicion, along with the mounting desperation of those lacking alternative sources of income (remittances, an off-site job, etc.), redounded in growing absenteeism from work.

Sliwinski discusses the power exercised by humanitarian agencies over beneficiaries, who accede to the rules established by others for them because that is the only way they might access desperately needed resources. Ultimately, the humanitarian moral ideal of giving freely without asking for a return butted up against the logic of exchange in which the 'gift' of a house must be remunerated through work, docility before authority, and expressions of appreciation. Ultimately the houses did get built and assigned to and occupied by the fifty participating families, who expressed thanks in a staged ceremony attended by the President of the German Red Cross. But as Sliwinski notes in her concluding chapter 6, the subjects of this humanitarian assistance project were no better off in class terms at the end than they had been at the beginning – even if they now resided in earthquake-proof houses – for their social and economic prospects had not improved. In 2016, fourteen years after the houses were occupied, Sliwinski learned that few families were hooked up to the electric grid and that the settlement still lacked running water. 'New houses', she notes, 'may be "gifted", but the problem of structural poverty remains' (p. 193).

This fine book is appropriate for advanced undergraduate students and graduate students in the social sciences and highly recommended for

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all those involved in the planning and implementation of humanitarian aid.

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Negotiating identity

Bille, Mikkel. *Being Bedouin around Petra: life at a world heritage site in the twenty-first century*. x, 199 pp., maps, illus., bibliogr. Oxford, New York: Berghahn Books, 2019. £85.00 (cloth)

Visitors to Petra, the magnificent Nabataean site in southern Jordan (c. fourth century BCE), are said to account for as much as 90 per cent of the kingdom's tourist revenue, which contributes about 11 per cent of national GDP (p. 13). The local Bedouin were forcibly relocated by the government from their cave and tent dwellings in 1985, on the occasion of the designation of Petra as a UNESCO World Heritage Site. Most of Mikkel Bille's book is concerned with the Ammarin tribe, who had formerly lived for the most part as pastoral nomads. He carried out fieldwork between 2006 and 2011 among some 350 of them in the village of Beidha, a few kilometres to the north of Petra. Among other activities, they manage an eco-friendly Bedouin Camp that offers horse riding and hiking trips.

Being Bedouin around Petra is in part an expansion of Bille's essay 'The *Samer*, the saint and the shaman: ordering Bedouin heritage in Jordan', published in *Politics of worship in the contemporary Middle East: Sainthood in fragile states* co-edited by himself and Andreas Bandak (2013). That collection of excellent essays seems to have passed under the radar, perhaps because of an over-ambitious introduction by the editors, which advanced an all-inclusive definition of sainthood before pausing to clarify the basic differences between the Christian concept of a posthumously consecrated saint and its Muslim analogues (especially *walīy*, but also *faqīr*). This new monograph by Bille deserves to be widely read as a lucid study of tensions between what he identifies as competing 'universalities' – though he also uses the arguably more precise term 'universalisms'.

A key pressure point is exemplified by the traditional Al Samer Song and Dance Troupe, one of whose performances of a pre-wedding *samer* dance is viewable on YouTube (*https://www.youtube.com/watch?v=v53H5a4-wz4*), sponsored by the Jordanian Ministry of Culture. The leader of the troupe, the *ḥāshī*, was presented in some of its promotional literature as a shaman entering a trance. Whether or not this characterization is historically valid, which is doubtful, it is at odds with the view held by most Ammarin today that a *faqīr* is simply chosen and blessed by God, not someone with supernatural abilities to make contact with spirits (pp. 83-8).

So, Bille argues, there are three universalisms that interlock and compete around the capacious semiotics of Petra. First, there are the world-wide forces of modernization that have sought to integrate nomads within state regimes, and, paradoxically, to defend and curate, via UNESCO, local traditions as instances of 'oral and intangible heritage' which are of value in compensating for past injustices, in strengthening national identity, and in appealing to a common cross-cultural humanity. Second, there is the growing prevalence of a purist version of Islam, influenced by the Muslim Brotherhood and by day-long satellite television (pp. 125-6), which seeks to dissociate itself from the age of superstition and ignorance (*jāhiliyya*). Whereas amulets – prominent in museum representations of Bedouin culture – are still widely relied on to deflect the invisible powers of envious eyes and the *jinn*, Bille notices a shift away from this protective strategy towards emphasizing the blessing (*baraka*) to be found in spaces where extracts from the Qur'an, God's material words, are inscribed, stimulating remembrance (*dhikr*) of God (pp. 144-6). Again, the collective pilgrimages to the prophet Aaron's tomb on the top of Jebel Haroun in Petra – which were an important factor when UNESCO designated the site, being the only practice that depended on the specificity of the local landscape – have ceased since the early 1990s (pp. 90, 135) on the grounds that seeking the intercession of saints was an illicit innovation (*bid'ah*) corrupting scriptural Islam.

The third universalism, here identified as New Age, rests on the premise 'that there is an original spirituality, shared across the globe, which people have detached themselves from in modern times, and no less so with the Islamic Revival' (p. 100). Thus the Ammarin Bedouin camp offers the opportunity for urban visitors to get closer to an uncorrupted nature, inhaling incense and touching magical stones (p. 99).

Given that UNESCO's version of universality rests on a high-minded, top-down, anti-racist humanism, all three of Mikkel Bille's universalities might be reformulated in Douglasian terms as competing 'purity frameworks'. Bille's final page underlines the current threats to the stability of the Jordanian monarchy and to the many Middle Eastern heritage sites that have so far survived

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wars. His thoughtful, multi-layered analysis has a broad resonance beyond its ethnographic details and would surely be welcomed in tourism and heritage studies if published in a paperback edition.

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Brooks, Alasdair & Natascha Mehler (eds). *The country where my heart is: historical archaeologies of nationalism and national identity*. 346 pp., maps, illus., bibliogr. Gainesville: Univ. Press of Florida, 2017. $89.95 (cloth)

This volume, edited by archaeologists Alasdair Brooks and Natascha Mehler, stems from a 2014 session on regional nationalisms held at the 2014 meeting of the Society for Historical Archaeology (SHA). The motivation behind publishing this session's proceedings was

> a sense that the volume is timely given the continued relevance of post-medieval concepts of nationalism and national identity to international politics, and a sense the potentially important role of historical archaeology (defined here in the New World sense of the archaeology of the post-1500 period) has hitherto been underappreciated in archaeological discussions of nationalism (p. 6).

In other words, instead of focusing on the impact of modern nationalism on the study of the past, the chapters in *The country where my heart is* aim at displaying the different ways through which historical archaeologists are 'uniquely placed to study how the growth of modern nationalism and national identity is reflected in the post-medieval archaeological record' (p. 7). The editors intentionally avoid defining theoretical parameters, a decision which in turn leads to overlaps and the repetition of clichés in several chapters' definitions of what nationalism and identity are, as well as to a kind of ritual revision of both the well-known literature and current assumptions about archaeology and nationalism that emerged and were consolidated early in the 1990s.

The book – which aspires to show the role of material culture in exploring post-medieval nationalism – includes 'papers from northwestern and Central Europe, the Mediterranean, and the Americas' (p. 11). Following the suggestion of one of the manuscript's reviewers, it has been organized into thematic sections rather than by region, as had been originally planned. Thus, the introduction (section I, 'Kilts and lederhosen', the only contribution by the editors) is followed by section II ('Creation: ethnogenesis and identity formation'), which includes chapters on Acadian archaeology (Fowler and Noëlle, chap. 1); a case study from Carinthia in Austria (Eichert, chap. 3); an exploration of civic identity in nineteenth-century New Mexico (Jenks, chap. 4); and an essay on how the othering of the Turk contributed to the 'trans/formation' of various collective identities in contemporary Slovenia, a border zone of the early modern Habsburg lands (chap. 2). These last two chapters – it is worth remarking – are the only ones that rely upon archaeological research and materials. Katarina Predovnik states in her chapter 2: 'I decided not to discuss the practice and (ab)uses of archaeology under the national(ist) agenda. My idea was to consider the role material phenomena, such as architecture and landscape, play in the processes of group identity formation' (p. 69). Predovnik further proposes that 'identity' is built not through ideas or ideology but through the performative aspect of communal projects such as the construction, maintenance, management, and use of the fortification that she analyses. For her, the habitual practices these processes entailed shaped the social memory of the communities involved. Thus, identity is related to the dynamics of these performative administrative practices, which connect and combine objects, people, the past and the present in the most hybrid of ways.

Section III ('Manipulation') brings together 'The role of historical archaeology in the emergence of nationalist identities in the Celtic countries' (Mytum, chap. 5) with Horning's chapter 6 on nationalism and practice in Irish historical archaeology, and a third essay on the archaeology of Danish royalty and democracy (Comer, chap. 7), alongside others on historical ship archaeology from a German perspective (Belasus, chap. 8), the historical archaeology of the city of Plymouth (Newstead, chap. 9), and the archaeology of New Sweden in the United States (de Cunzo, chap. 10). The chapters reunited in section IV ('Absences') are devoted to national archaeology in Turkey (Dikkaya, chap. 11) and to Easter Island's 'aborted formation of national identity' (Schávelzon & Igareta, chap. 12).

Whereas the editors insist that historical archaeology is particularly well positioned to make an important contribution to the study of the topic of nationalism (cf. pp. 7, 11, 29), with the exception of the chapters cited above (2 and 4) and the chapter devoted to Plymouth, the majority of the book's essays are based largely on

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cultural criticism and the analysis of literary texts, concepts, and political discourses. This is a recurrent methodology in this genre, which tends to rely upon the analysis of discursive tropes. In that sense, this reader missed the exploration of the roles played by trade and the market, as well as of the production, distribution, and adoption/consumption of the objects that are appropriated as 'cultural landmarks'.

Irina Podgorny *Museo de La Plata/CONICET*

Capitaine, Brieg & Karine Vanthuyne (eds). *Power through testimony: reframing residential schools in the age of reconciliation*. xi, 239 pp., bibliogrs. Vancouver: Univ. of British Columbia Press, 2017. £28.99 (paper)

Power through testimony is an important contribution to our understanding of the impact of Canada's Truth and Reconciliation Commission (TRC) on Indian residential schools. As the title suggests, the volume is focused on the possibilities for empowerment that come through testimony and other forms of restorying the residential school system and its effects. The editors, Brieg Capitaine and Karine Vanthuyne, ask in their introduction if 'memories of residential schools, as they are now rearticulated, have the capacity to transform social relationships between Canadian society and Indigenous peoples?' (p. 3). The contributors to this volume consider collective memory's nature and the role of the TRC in producing a counter-narrative that challenges the status quo. In the process, they raise questions about memory, identity, and the challenges of decolonization in a settler state.

The volume is organized into three sections: (1) 'The Truth and Reconciliation Commission in action'; (2) 'Conflicting memories and paths of actions'; and (3) '(Un)reckoning with historical abuses'. Anthropologists Ronald Niezen and Charles Menzies provide a 'Foreword' and 'Epilogue', respectively. The first two chapters of section 1 look at how the schools became re-signified as sites of trauma. Eric Woods' chapter 1 details the transformation in residential schools' representation from that of a humanitarian enterprise to a national tragedy. A critical point in this came in 1990 when Phil Fontaine, leader of the Assembly of First Nations, spoke publicly for the first time about his abuse in a residential school. Capitaine's chapter 2 focuses on how survivors' testimony at the TRC constructed a collective identity through representations of cultural trauma. Chapters 3 and 4 by Green, and Gaudet and Martin/Wapistan, respectively, explore the re-signification of emotions that are provoked by the TRC. Green describes how former students reframed one National Event's official theme of 'love' as expressions of survivance and self-determination. Gaudet and Martin/Wapistan use conversation and the teachings of the trickster to begin to dismantle the legacy of shame.

The three chapters in section 2 consider the category of survivor as defined by the Settlement Agreement and then mobilized or contested by former students. For many, survivor is a term of meaningful identification and empowerment. Poliandri (chap. 5) discusses how the category of 'survivor' gives the Mi'kmaq a sense of shared identity that replaces the cultural identity lost in residential schools. Not everyone who attended a residential school is recognized as a survivor, however, nor do all former students wish to say the same thing. In Vanthuyne's chapter 7 we see how residential schools and the ratification of the James Bay and Northern Quebec Agreement are framed differently, through a narrative of loss and disempowerment, on the one hand, or resistance and resilience, on the other. Arie Molema's chapter 6 examines loss and dispossession as a broader consequence of settler colonialism, while addressing how the experiences of Labrador Inuit in residential schools are excluded from recognition in the Settlement Agreement.

The two chapters in section 3 focus on barriers to restorying the residential school system in Canada. Jula Hughs's chapter 8 looks at how the TRC approached the churches as 'co-victims' of the residential school experience, rather than guilty parties, in order to get them to participate in events. Cheryl Gavers (chap. 9) shows that among Anglicans in the Northwest Territories and the Yukon, the idea persists that sexual and physical abuse were exceptions to the norm. These chapters speak to the enormous challenge of educating the public on how the residential school system was a systematic programme of cultural assimilation that also fostered institutional sexual and physical abuse.

The Canadian TRC was a transitional justice mechanism. One of the main questions often asked of it by scholars and non-scholars alike is: how effective has it been? Is there transition, justice, reconciliation? The editors argue that the Settlement Agreement has opened up a space in which the story of residential schools and settler colonialism in Canada is both remembered and reframed. The contributions to this volume certainly speak to this possibility. At the same time, they reveal how testimonies, identities, and memories are shaped, excluded, or ignored, whether through the themes chosen by the TRC

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itself; the legally restrictive terms of the Settlement Agreement; by former students; or by non-Indigenous Canadians who think of the residential school system as a specifically Indigenous issue. The TRC released its Final Report and Calls to Action in December 2015, and analyses of its effects will of necessity be ongoing. *Power through testimony* makes an important contribution to this analysis and will be profitably read by anyone interested in possibilities of and barriers to reconciliation in Canada.

Carole Blackburn *University of British Columbia*

Davidov, Veronica. *Long night at the Vepsian Museum: the forest folk of Northern Russia and the struggle for cultural survival*. xxi, 130 pp., maps, illus., bibliogr. Toronto: Univ. Press, 2017. £26.95 (paper)

Long night at the Vepsian Museum was written with two aims in mind: first to delineate the case of the Vepsian people (aka Veps), and, secondly, to document and reflect on topics usually omitted from other studies of these people, which either were avoided owing to past traumas, such as Second World War experiences, or were seen as not officially representative of Veps culture. To tell their story, Veronica Davidov uses Geertzian thick description combined with an important methodological addition: she gathered narratives in unique fieldwork situations, during which her respondents not only spoke to her but also began reflecting and talking among themselves, reminiscing about their myths, rituals, religion, and historical traumas – subjects normally not discussed with ethnographers. These narratives are never free from the conflict relating to identities built through Vepsian interactions with Russia and Finland.

One of Davidov's strengths lies in the place that she chose as a base for fieldwork: the local museum. Despite the idea that such institutions present only rigid, official discourses about real and lively cultures, what Davidov successfully reveals is that behind the façade of public exhibitions, there is an important vein of hidden and non-official cultural knowledge transfer and production taking place. She argues that the successful intergenerational transmission of knowledge, and thus culture preservation, happens only when ethnic identity construction and family dynamics are combined, as when grandparents visit with their grandchildren, show them exhibited objects, and supplement this with stories and memories from their own childhood.

This process of public identity construction affects the very intimate, hidden worlds of women, who are mainly responsible for the museum's maintenance. The museum is a place of almost exclusive female engagement, and therefore Davidov's perspective is based on female narratives and experiences. Paradoxically, it is through women's interpretations of the reasons for men's lack of interest in Veps cultural affairs that we become aware of their identity crisis. Veps men are no longer employed in their traditional mining and forestry industries, cutting them off from their patrimony and local spirits. In contrast, women are seen as active and productive, they systematically create their identity – and generate a world full of meaning – based on past experiences and memories rather than contemporary practices.

For example, the traditional practices of mining for raspberry quartzite, found only on their traditional territories, and logging for the ancient pine that was used in ship building, have become matrices through which to proactively reassemble Vepsian damaged local identity. These occupations link Vepsian history to that of Russia, which helps them to overcome the image of a people living on the periphery. New museum narratives have been created to describe how Peter the Great's royal navy was built with their timber and Lenin's mausoleum was decorated with raspberry quartzite. Consequently, through actively using elements from their ontologies and disappearing traditions, women reflect on their contemporary positionality.

One of the book's most interesting chapters describes how the Veps experienced the Second World War. During the war, they were occupied by Finland, which saw the Karelian region in particular as the birthplace of their great epic the *Kalevala*, and thus they treated the Veps as distant relatives. Young Veps were recruited as labour and moved to Finland to be transformed into proper Finnish citizens. These territories were brought back under Soviet control at the war's end, and Veps found themselves in a difficult situation. Many were incarcerated and sent to forced labour camps or relocated to distant Siberian regions.

Davidov minutely unpacks the Veps' cosmology as the background to her discussion of their continuing adaptation to modern social and economic changes and regimes of value. She builds her theory on the fusion of two branches of anthropological literature, ontological studies based on cases from Inner Asia and general hunter-gatherer studies, which helps her to position the Vepsian case. Overall, *Long night at the Vepsian Museum* contains important data as

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well as useful theoretical observations about the fusion of personal identity crises with the public crisis of ethnic identity, but there is a topic which could have been further explored. Mixed marriages are mentioned, but they never become the focus of Davidov's research, yet it is easy to imagine that owing to their small numbers, Veps have had to marry out. If mixed marriages with Russians have been frequent, then they may have affected the transgenerational transmission of knowledge. This could have been addressed in more detail, possibly becoming an important element in the model that Davidov constructs. That said, the book tackles important issues, and would be useful for researchers interested in the anthropology of hunting communities, the modern processes of ethnic identity construction, and museology studies.

István Sántha *Research Centre for the Humanities, Budapest*
Tatiana Safonova *Central European University, Budapest/Vienna*

Hoechner, Hannah. *Quranic schools in northern Nigeria: everyday experiences of youth, faith, and poverty*. xxii, 267 pp., maps, illus., bibliogr. Cambridge: Univ. Press, 2018. £75.00 (cloth)

> [W]e daily witness him [the *Almajiri*] in torn, dirty looking cloth, hungry stomach, and unkept [*sic*] body . . . his status to others is not more than that of an eyesore or a pest. (Tilde 2009, commentator on gamji.com, a news site publishing commentary on northern Nigeria) (p. 42).

Hannah Hoechner's ground-breaking book comes as a counter-narrative to the stereotypical and widespread dehumanizing discourses that demean and denigrate *almajirai*, poor boys and young male students in Nigerian Qur'anic schools. Her *Quranic schools in northern Nigeria* is the result of the extensive ethnographic research she conducted in Kano, Nigeria, for her doctorate degree. Hoechner admirably employed participatory methods through encouraging *almajirai* to take photographs and conduct 'radio interviews' with one another, and then further involving the students by helping them produce a documentary film that unveiled their frustrations and aspirations.

Drawing upon insights from education studies, poverty research, and childhood and youth studies, the book's first four chapters shed light on the widespread discourses that describe *almajirai* as 'scruffyfood scroungers' and pliant, obedient followers of radicalized groups, arguing that they would be better understood through applying the concepts of poverty, power distribution, and modernity. Hoechner then discusses how secular education is reserved for the rich and the powerful in northern Nigeria and how religious education has come to take a less prestigious role, for, as in the words of Ibrahim, a 24-year-old *almajiri*: '[N]owadays, if you have only the Qur'anic studies, there are places that when you go there, people will think you are nobody' (p. 69). Scrutinizing *almajirai* enrolment through the prism of Bourdieu's habitus, Hoechner also presents an all-inclusive explanation of the socioeconomic conditions and the religious discourses that render the Qur'anic system as a viable and preferable option for parents like Jamila, who sent her sons to school because of food scarcity.

In chapters 5-7, the author captivatingly follows *almajirai* into town from the countryside and scrutinizes their encounters as domestic helpers in urban households, tracing how such experiences shape and influence their self-image, desires, and aspirations. Hoechner empirically describes how the young *almajirai* conceal poverty in order to depict their deprivation as part of the sacrificial pursuit of knowledge; mobilizing religion to alleviate feelings of incompetence and engaging in acts of agency and resistance at times, but also reproducing the same discourses that marginalize them at others. Lastly, in chapters 8-9, she explores the economic and political significance of Qur'anic knowledge in the 'prayer economy' and the commodified market of 'spiritual services', demonstrating how the life chances of *almajirai* are waning and shedding light on the role of education in social reproduction and the perpetuation of poverty.

Notwithstanding its brilliantly crafted and well-wrought argument, the book is filled with some long-winded sections, repetitions, and digressions, without which – in my opinion – its main argument might have been more focused. On another note, since the monograph was the end result of extensive ethnographic fieldwork, providing more quotations from the research participants and informants could have further strengthened the argument.

However, *Quranic schools in northern Nigeria* is well structured and written in an eloquent and comprehensible style, full of clarifying footnotes and definitions that render it accessible for both an academic and non-academic readership. Grounded in empirical evidence and analyses, it debunks many myths circulating about *almajirai*.

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Relevantly, by addressing the structural educational and socioeconomic inequalities of northern Nigeria, Hoechner commendably brings into the limelight the hybrid identity crisis that has plagued Africa's once-colonized countries and critically discusses the hegemonic and meritocratic discourse of a Western-inspired modernity that sees a 'modern' education as the only pathway to success, and she juxtaposes this with the ostensibly 'backward' *almajirai* system. Indeed, the significance of this work not only stems from its originality and rigour but also from the fact that in-depth studies on Islamic education – ones that depart from stereotypical analyses and attempt to investigate reality – are exceptionally scarce, particularly in sub-Saharan Africa. Being well immersed in the *almajirai*'s world-view, Hoechner efficaciously presents a quasi-insider perception of their trials and tribulations, building up an empathetic and corroborated counter-hegemonic discourse.

Not only is *Quranic schools in northern Nigeria* relevant to academics engaging in the fields of development, African studies, and education, but it also has a pertinent readership among a non-academic audience interested in the subjects of poverty, globalization, and Islamic schooling.

Dina Hassan El Odessy *University of Oxford*

Mackley-Crump, Jared. *The Pacific festivals of Aotearoa New Zealand: negotiating place and identity in a new homeland*. x, 216 pp., bibliogr. Honolulu: Univ. of Hawai'i Press, 2015. £53.50 (cloth)

The Pacific festivals of Aotearoa New Zealand provides an engaging account of the role Pacific festivals play for diasporic Pacific communities as they navigate their place in Aotearoa New Zealand's settler-colonial society. The book's central question is: 'Do festivals and festival performances reflect how the Pacific diaspora is constructed, imagined, and situated within New Zealand?' (p. 95). Mackley-Crump adopts an ethnomusicological perspective to answer in the affirmative, productively mobilizing concepts from Pacific studies and anthropology alongside ethnographic research methods. He sets out the parameters of his argument in part I by contextualizing the 'festivalization' of Pacific cultures in Aotearoa, weaving together interviews, archival material, and theoretical ideas to trace the genealogy of these festivals, their planning and management, and how they changed over time with the 'coming of age' (p. 51) of second-generation Pacific migrants. Part II draws on ethnographic fieldwork conducted in 2010 at two 'festival spaces' – Auckland's Pasifika Festival and Wellington's Positively Pasifika Festival – to explore issues such as cultural competencies, authenticity, and belonging. Overall this book shows that Pacific festivals are ideal sites for examining contemporary debates about migration, identity, and place.

In recounting the various waves of Pacific migration to Aotearoa following the Second World War, part I contributes to literature dispelling the popular myth that this was a 'land of milk and honey' (p. 26) by detailing the hostility and racism experienced by many Pacific migrants. The first two chapters historically contextualize Pacific cultures' 'festivalization', discussing significant events such as the 1970s Dawn Raids, when thousands of Pacific peoples were systematically targeted and deported in an immigration crackdown that wrongly blamed them for the economic recession, in order to illustrate the relations of power and domination that helped marginalize Pacific migrants. Identifying three key 'moments of festivalization' – the 1972 Polynesian Festival, the 1976 Polyfest, and the 1993 Pasifika Festival – Mackley-Crump convincingly argues that these festivals were a sociopolitical response to marginalization and racism, and became an important way for the Pacific diaspora in Aotearoa to celebrate their place here as well as their connection with their homelands. Another important contribution is the insights provided into the ways in which Pacific communities fostered relationships with *tangata whenua* (Indigenous Māori) in Aotearoa, through shared experiences of marginalization (chap. 1), and by including Māori as 'cousins' in these festivals (chap. 6).

Part II addresses the main themes emerging from Mackley-Crump's fieldwork: logistics, leadership, and development (chap. 4); performances and material culture (chap. 5); community (chap. 6); and place, identity, and belonging (chap. 7). Place is central to this book and, fittingly, the author foregrounds Pacific theories and epistemologies in analysing this and other themes. In chapter 4, he employs Anne-Marie Tupuola's notion of 'edgewalking' with Karlo Mila-Shaaf's concept of 'polycultural capital' to show why 'cultural competencies' matter in planning Pacific festivals, providing ethnographic vignettes to illustrate how event organizers mobilized their polycultural capital (including church connections) in edgewalking through tensions – a result of differing Pacific and Western values – that arose at various stages of the two festivals he attended in 2010. Mackley-Crump's

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argument that Pacific festivals are a 'tool for development' (p. 95) will be of interest to those in the cultural and creative industries, although this point could have been strengthened in later chapters by going beyond an event-management perspective and examining audience experiences and responses in more depth. In chapter 6, Mackley-Crump extends Tēvita Ka'ili's work on *tauhi vā* (a Tongan cultural reference) to argue that Pacific festival spaces in Aotearoa are sites 'where connections within, between, and through communities are (re)made and (re)affirmed, strengthened through the (re-)creation of sociospatial ties' (p. 145). However, by emphasizing the 'unity in diversity' fostered through festival spaces, his discussion sometimes downplays cultural difference and the frictions involved in maintaining such relationships.

For Mackley-Crump, Pacific festivals create spaces where Pacific communities can communicate, contest, and celebrate their evolving identities and cultures. Chapter 5 examines how various social actors negotiate what should be performed (e.g. contemporary hip-hop, Tokelauan *fatale*), for what purpose, and by whom, and illustrating why debates about authenticity and 'traditional' versus 'contemporary' music are insufficient for understanding what constitutes 'Pacific music' in festival spaces. In chapter 7, Mackley-Crump argues that Pacific festivals create 'mooring posts' (p. 170) for diasporic Pacific communities through processes of territorialization, where dynamic music and cultural performances create a dual sense of belonging to the Pacific (as specific places in Epeli Hau'ofa's 'sea of islands' as well as through ideas of Pacific cultures) and to Aotearoa. The book is written with a light theoretical touch, making it accessible to undergraduate students in Pacific studies, anthropology, migration studies, and event management as well as ethnomusicology. It will also appeal to those interested in the intersection of migration, arts, and cultural policies.

Lorena Gibson *Te Herenga Waka – Victoria University of Wellington*

Networks

Coutin, Susan Bibler. *Exiled home: Salvadoran transnational youth in the aftermath of violence*. xiii, 270 pp., illus., bibliogr. Durham, N.C.: Duke Univ. Press, 2016. £20.99 (paper)

Exiled home is an invaluable text, in which Susan Bibler Coutin builds upon her decades of critical ethnographic engagement with the Salvadoran diaspora to produce a theoretically rich and textured analysis of the children and youth who migrated with their families to the United States during the Salvadoran civil war (1980-92). The strength of her approach is rooted in her method, which included 106 interviews conducted from 2006 to 2010 with Salvadoran migrants ranging from activists and poets to undocumented college students and deportees. Additionally, this research benefited from both the longitudinal arc of Coutin's research and her prolific examination of the sanctuary movement and legal anthropology.

The introduction provides a cogent theoretical framework that is developed throughout subsequent chapters that play with the ethnographic form. Coutin's analysis of Salvadoran 'youth', specifically their retrospective perspectives on their childhood, push her to explore the 'power and limitation of the nation-based categories of membership that they encountered, embraced, or rejected' (p. 3). To do so, she develops a clear and revelatory theory about the practices of 're/membering' that contest the rampant processes of 'dismemberment' that emerge from 'civil war, displacement, emigration, the denial of legal status, and removal' (p. 3). Young people, she argues, 're/member' and negotiate their membership, their belonging in the United States and El Salvador, through their memory work on experiences and histories that have been erased.

Chapter 1 is on 'Violence and silence'. Beginning with a salient ethnographic vignette about both wartime silences and the trauma of papers and borders, Coutin captures the tension/dialectic between silence and violence. With an excellent review of US immigration laws and bureaucracies that impact the study population, she highlights the relationship between dismemberment and re/membering and develops a key theoretical point that to deny violence is to deny membership (p. 40).

'Living in the gap' (chap. 2) eloquently captures the experience of living in between or in multiple worlds. Specifically, it provides a social history of Salvadoran migrant youth and the institutions through which they move and that shape their experiences. Here Coutin showcases the contexts from family to neighbourhood, and the experiences of membership and exclusion, those vulnerable gaps that simultaneously can create spaces of possibility.

As the book develops, readers are taken through the research's chronology. Chapter 3 begins in December 2007 and looks squarely at

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the lives of 'Dreamers', opening with a celebration. This sets the tone for an exploration of the ways in which some youth counter dismemberment through their activism. For instance, Coutin explores subsets of youth who were activists supporting the Dream Act, created student organizations, and pursued the arts and justice through poetry collectives (pp. 97-8). Here too, the author contextualizes these examples through attending to larger immigrant rights movements and locating the specificity of this generation alongside the long arc of Salvadoran activism. In doing so, readers are presented with the complexity of youth activism, of the 'study and struggle' that encompasses legal status for sure, but also environmental justice and voting rights and the making of Los Angeles as a transnational space.

Chapter 4 does the crucial work of addressing the lives of returned or deported Salvadorans. This research was conducted via focus groups in El Salvador made possible through Coutin's research networks. This is perhaps the richest chapter, illuminating the violent processes of displacement and the efforts to re/member and to remake lives, thus revealing the 'geography of deportation'. Additionally, by pursuing an 'archaeology' of laws (i.e. the denial of political asylum during the war), the ways in which the 1.5 generations 'were made deportable' through legal violence is depicted (p. 136).

The final ethnographic chapter, 'Biographies and nations', provides a nuanced analysis of the 1.5 and second generation as 'incomplete or partial legal subjects' (p. 167). Here too, we see desire for the 'inclusive relationships with the nations they had called home' (p. 169), and the struggle that makes many 'suspect citizens of El Salvador' (p. 184). This chapter also presents the richest gendered analysis and the making of agentive biographies that contest the dismemberment in countries of origin and destination through recuperative memories that press for accountability.

Exiled home provides a timely and pressing analysis of a broadly defined 1.5 Salvadoran immigrant generation. Indeed, the book's attention to El Salvador, migration, and youth make it ideal for a broad range of undergraduate and graduate courses in anthropology and across disciplines such as sociology, childhood studies, and Latin American and Latinx studies. It will be essential reading for specialists working on topics such as Central America, post-war, and migration. Finally, Coutin ends the text with a series of specific policy recommendations that emerge from her ethnography and emphasis on re/membering. This public anthropology is a powerful call to action.

Irina Carlota Silber *City University of New York*

Fisch, Michael. *An anthropology of the machine: Tokyo's commuter train network*. xi, 302 pp., maps, illus., bibliogr. Chicago: Univ. Press, 2018. £20.50 (paper)

In 2003, when I was visiting the Centre de la Sociologie de l'Innovation in Paris, the sociology student Olivier Thiery was struggling to finish his Ph.D. thesis on Paris's metro system. Bruno Latour, in his thesis-writing seminar, mildly complained about Thiery's use of six different definitions of rhizome in the draft. I, however, sympathized with him: his task of unfolding such monstrous complexity was a daunting one. In the same year, an anthropologist from the United States, Michael Fisch, began to undertake a similar project on what is perhaps an even more complex system: Tokyo's commuter train network, the topic of *An anthropology of the machine.*

The book's introduction looks at the theoretical background, focusing on Gilbert Simondon's philosophical theorization on technology, from which Fisch draws the book's leitmotif: the notion of the margin of indeterminacy. Chapter 1 is a historical summary of the development of Tokyo's train system (JR) in response to the population's growth, briefly referring to CTC (Centralized Traffic Control) and automatic ticket gates. Chapter 2 offers an impressionistic account of the commuter 'ecology' at peak times in terms of silence and mobile phone usage, *inter alia*, along with a description of the posters in the trains that call for proper manners and orderliness. Chapter 3 describes the ATOS (Autonomous Decentralized Transport Operation Control System), introduced by JR East in 1996 to overcome the limitations of centralized control, along with the SUICA (Super Urban Intelligent Card) as a digital ticketing and payment system. Chapter 4 looks at media representations in games and movies related to both the train system in general and its congestion in particular. Chapter 5 turns to *jinshin-jiko* ([human] body accidents), the official euphemism for suicide attempts, offering an interview with a train mechanic, who cleans up the accidents, followed by an account of a movie detailing the mass suicide of some high school girls. Chapter 6 moves to the topic of the 2005 Amagasaki derailment in Osaka, which saw nearly 600 casualties. The excessive burden on the driver

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as well as the conflict between JR West and the concerned community are analysed. The conclusion revisits the introduction's key topic and explores the ethical connotations of running such technological systems at overcapacity.

The commuter train network is central to modern Japanese life, as witnessed in a recent Japanese television program (*Densha otoko*, 'Train man', 2005), and Fisch has done a good job of gathering its diverse aspects into one volume, some of which are highly impressive or even startling. However, a few reservations must be noted. First, although *An anthropology of the machine* is about the network's peak-time operation (with its potential risks) and not about the whole transportation-to-society complex, Fisch's sole reliance on a highly abstract philosophical concept – the margin of indeterminacy – prevents him from more properly relating his work to the corpus of like-minded, mid-range empirical research within and outside of anthropology. No reference is made to the large corpus of detailed *in-situ* studies of such technical operations by Charles and Marjorie Harness Goodwin ('Seeing as a situated activity', in *Cognition and communication at work*, eds Y. Engeström & D. Middleton, 1996) and Lucy Suchman ('Centers of coordination', in *Discourse, tools and reasoning*, eds L.B. Resnick, R. Säljö, C. Pontecorvo & B. Burge, 1997), to name two, nor to the high reliability organization studies that pay close attention to the dynamics of technologically hazardous organizations in action – among others, Emery Roe and Paul Schulmann's work on the real-time management of the California Electric Grid is the most comparable to this volume (*High reliability management*, 2008).

These omissions result in a rather insufficient treatment of the organizational causes of the accident discussed in chapter 6, as the analysis stops short of digging further into JR West's organization, which has evolved differently than that of either JR East or other railway companies. Examining other research, such as James Reason (*Managing the risks of organizational accidents*, 1997) on organizational accidents in general, Diane Vaughan (*The Challenger launch decision*, 1996) on the *Challenger* disaster, and Gabrielle Hecht (*The radiance of France*, 1998) on nuclear politics and labour culture in France, might have helped to deepen the analysis substantially. However, these reservations should be regarded as another facet of the potential in Fisch's work: that is, the impression that it leaves room for further development by way of conversation with the existing corpus – which is very much like the still-evolving commuter network itself. This book is a signal for the coming field of technology studies that will interest not only anthropologists but also the wide range of researchers from risk management to pop-culture studies.

Masato Fukushima *University of Tokyo*

Irek, Małgorzata. *Travelling with the Argonauts: informal networks seen without a vertical lens*. viii, 226 pp., bibliogr. Oxford, New York: Berghahn Books, 2018. £85.00 (cloth)

This ethnography follows labour migrants from Poland and their informal smuggling, taking the reader on a fascinating journey that covers a period of nearly three decades and traverses several locations throughout Europe. The journey begins in the late 1980s in the socialist era, with observations of cross-border illicit smuggling 'raids' by Polish entrepreneurs in Germany, and covers more recent EU-period waves of migration from Poland to Germany and the United Kingdom. *Travelling with the Argonauts* is undoubtedly a treasure trove of information for anyone with a broader interest in informal trade and migration in Central and Eastern Europe. More specifically, this study is an excellent first-hand resource on informality: that is, social interaction unregulated 'by official institutions and rules' in Poland (p. 19).

Małgorzata Irek's mixed-methods, ethnographic-sociological approach enables her to provide a vivid account of individual informal actors as part of and beyond case studies, often through their own words and experiences. The book is undeniably an exciting read not only for scholars of informality, but also for a broader readership as the well-researched academic writing is supplemented with skilful storytelling. The author is personally involved with and immersed within her research participants' lives and experiences. It is this rather unconventional approach to presenting the findings and discussing research methods that distinguishes *Travelling with the Argonauts* from many other studies of informal economies.

Although Irek's development of a theoretical framework which she calls 'Restricted Verticality Perspective (RVP)' (p. 7) can be a bit challenging at times for a reader with no expertise in sociology, the author has done a great job in transcending disciplinary boundaries by presenting this informal phenomenon as one that encompasses several disciplines, including anthropology, ethnography, and economics.

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Chapters 1-3 on research methods are an excellent take on the importance of combining various methods in studying informal activities, which are far too often ignored by many scholars of informal economies in the postsocialist region and beyond. The tips and suggestions for conducting fieldwork amongst informal actors are well illustrated through the author's personal experience of conducting long-term fieldwork amongst Polish cross-border traders and labour migrants. While some experiences are context- and location-specific and would not be easily replicated in other settings, her many practical examples of 'dos and don'ts' when interviewing and observing informal entrepreneurs would be easily applicable beyond the postsocialist context to other informal actors. The down-to-earth approach of working with research participants and the significance of being a fully embedded researcher are obviously inseparable components of any empirically rich and thought-provoking research on informality. I have little doubt that many of the hands-on suggestions of approaching research participants offered by Irek are more than transferable to research on informal phenomena beyond economics and into the realms of social relations or politics.

The focus on space, locality, and sectors in chapters 5 and 6 provides readers with a timelessness demonstration of informality's versatility and adaptability to changing economic circumstances. Irek's decades of studying these informal actors and their environments allow her to enrich the data with detailed spatial and sociocultural contexts, both much needed in order to understand the dynamics of informal relations. The individual case studies are perhaps one of the best examples of the author's successful efforts to transcend the often-impenetrable boundaries between being an outside observer of a phenomenon and an involved, concerned participant, closely engaging with the interview subjects. The sheer diversity of Irek's case studies and the scope of issues discussed are a strong indication of the degree of her immersion in the research environment and her ability to interact with research participants. All of this clearly enabled the closest and most engaging interaction with her research participants, one that other research on informal economies cannot boast. The numerous interview excerpts are yet another successful example of the author's great skill in conveying her interlocutors' feelings and thoughts. This book is a valuable read not only for researchers of ethnography and anthropology, but also for graduate students and practitioners with broader interest in the postcommunist region, and particularly of informal relations there.

Huseyn Aliyev *University of Glasgow*

The politics of change

Boret, Sébastien Penmellen, Susan Orpett Long & Sergei Kan (eds). *Death in the early 21st century: authority, innovation, and mortuary rites.* 295 pp., table, illus., bibliogrs. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2017. £88.00 (cloth)

Death, if seen strictly through an individualist and rationalist lens, signifies an abrupt end. A more positive engagement with the phenomenon would be to treat it as a continuity of sorts. Anthropology, since at least Robert Hertz, has been the discipline par excellence in its documentation of such a positive attitude, providing scholars with cross-cultural perspectives. *Death in the early 21st century*, edited by Sébastien Penmellen Boret, Susan Orpett Long, and Sergei Kan, not only lives up to this broader legacy, but also benefits from the post-Hertzian (and, hence, post-Durkheimian) critical evolution of this tradition.

The first benefit is the general understanding that practices and views concerning death, the dead, and those left behind do not merely reflect broader social dimensions but actually constitute them. A second benefit involves how one understands such social dimensions. A post-Durkheimian stance is not only concerned with continuity, coherence, and homogeneity but also with change, ambiguity, and heterogeneity. Now that social scientists are uncertain about 'grand narratives', such a balanced framework works well, and at the very least avoids any uncritical adoption of binarisms. *Death* critically engages with binaries through their dynamic interrelations: authority vs negotiation (or even resistance), individual vs collective, continuity vs change (or tradition vs modernity), secularity vs religiosity, idiosyncratic vs official, and spiritual vs material are the most prominent and well-balanced binaries treated.

Such a balance is also evinced in the choice of ethnographic contexts. Here there is no sharp distinction between 'the West and the Rest'. We are offered a multiplicity of contexts and within them an array of varying, contrasting, negotiating, and co-opting perspectives and practices. For example, Bacchidu's chapter 2, which describes how Catholic and Chilean indigenous views are creatively intertwined and

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places the dead within an immanent and potentially both benevolent and afflicting pantheon. We move on to Wanner's (chap. 3) interesting historiography of the persecution of Ukraine's Greek Orthodox religious minority in the Soviet era, wherein the otherwise anti-religious regime of the latter co-operated with the Russian Orthodox Church against the former. Death rituals provided a key arena for contestation and resistance on Ukraine's part.

Chapter 4 presents Mathews and Kwong's comparative study of the United States, Japan, and China, three of the world's most economically developed countries. Rather than getting a flat and linear image of death's 'silencing' in such contexts, we are presented with a careful exploration of how each one offers us 'similar yet contrasting readings of senses of life after death' (p. 87). Merz's chapter 5, my favourite in the volume, unravels an intricate and heterogeneous ethnographic bundle in northwestern Benin, where traditional conceptions of reincarnation, colonially imported Christianity, and the materiality of coffins create various controversies. We continue with death and materiality, this time through photography, in Uganda (Seebach, chap. 6). Interesting in this case is how technology is now enmeshed with the traditional social structure in its opposition to the state's centralized governance.

Kneese's chapter 7 crosses borders, as it deals with 'online bonds' and 'digital afterlives' (p. 181): that is, websites and blogs that share experiences of illness and anticipations of death, and which continue existing after death. We return to the case of Japan in Boret's chapter 8, for an account of alternative 'natural burials', wherein ecological choices are combined with a move away from traditional household values, towards more individuating ones. The last chapter, by Long and Buehring, offers us North American case studies of interreligious families, where continuing religious communal values are negotiated through 'ideas of agency and authority based on secularism, radical individualism, and democratic participation in the creation of the self' (p. 260).

A general conclusion that may be drawn from *Death in the early 21st century* is that death is a very particular condition, one in which broader twenty-first-century tendencies such as rationalization, modernization, secularization, institutionalization, and centralization have yet to take root in any firm and unambiguous way. On the contrary, a transversal and transgressive crossing of physical, political, religious, perceptual, and cosmological borders takes place when faced with death, dying, burial, and mourning. One is left wondering whether the big monotheistic and established religions, the secular state, scientific progress, and centralized politics (representative democracies or totalitarian regimes), even if institutionally dominant, have ever managed to infringe upon what completely encompasses and defines the more intimate spheres of life (and of death, in this case) and personhood. Possibly, the exact opposite holds. Processes of high (religious or otherwise) centralization, secularization, and rationalization in civil life have been detrimental to the constitution of what is conventionally understood as co-emergent with them: the self. The more 'vernacular' tools of ethnography are perhaps particularly apt for the nuanced exploration of these spheres.

Anastasios Panagiotopoulos *Centro em Rede de Investigação em Antropologia/Universidade Nova de Lisboa*

Burnyeat, Gwen. *Chocolate, politics and peace-building: an ethnography of the Peace Community of San José de Apartadó, Colombia*. xxviii, 263 pp., bibliogrs. Basingstoke: Palgrave, 2018. £101.00 (cloth)

Gwen Burnyeat spent two years doing solidarity work in the Peace Community of San José de Apartadó before she began her research there. She and her colleagues from Peace Brigades International accompanied a set of hamlets in Colombia's northwest region of Urabá that lived under constant threat, primarily from paramilitaries and their military enablers. The underlying motivation for such solidarity work is to use the value ascribed and attention paid to Western lives and voices as a shield that protects locals from the violence that can so casually befall them. Although Burnyeat's role transformed when she began her participant observation as a postgraduate anthropologist, remnants of her previous station persisted, most palpably in the trusting relationships she had forged. I make this observation as a compliment, for *Chocolate, politics and peace-building* is written with a deep empathy that lends the book its force.

Burnyeat is clear from the outset that she has shifted gears from human rights reporting to sociocultural analysis, likening her focus on the material and political dimensions of cacao to Michael Taussig's attention to gold and cocaine (*My cocaine museum*, 2004). While the descriptions of Urabá's lush countryside are

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literary, this ethnography is not a Taussigian experiment in form. Rather, in her search for underlying cultural logics, Burnyeat's book can resemble old-school village-level ethnographies from the discipline's earlier years. She takes pains to survey the history and context of the formation of San José de Apartadó's peace community. With headings such as 'Urabá: the ethnographic scenario', she is aspiring to a panoramic sweep of the environmental, social, and economic aspects of life in the region – a breadth that is refreshingly classical.

Combining this wide-ranging contextualization with her socially committed ethnography, Burnyeat draws out two threads in the community's self-narrative, 'the radical narrative' and 'the organic narrative', which are contraposed to the gradual paramilitarization and growth of extractive economies (legal and illegal) taking place in the region. Such a radical narrative can be a liability. Facing a right-wing assemblage of capital and violence, the community strives to declare its independence and autonomy from all armed groups. In practice, however, it must continually counter allegations of being tied to the guerrillas operating in the region, especially the FARC (Revolutionary Armed Forces of Colombia).

The foil to the 'organic narrative' are the monocultures (bananas, African oil palm, coca) in the region. San José de Apartadó highlights its difference by focusing on cacao production as part of a more varied agricultural development scheme, while its connections with the national and international markets of chocolate goods buttress its claim of being a quasi-sovereign entity. The community's embrace of cacao cultivation, which benefits from the global discourses on organic goods and fair trade, is a substrate of this 'organic narrative'.

By the ethnography's end, the analytical effort to separate the 'radical' and 'organic' narratives fades as Burnyeat acknowledges that '[t]he logics overlap and interact. Separating them in a schematic way, the radical versus the organic narrative, or chocolate and politics, is useful only to a certain point' (p. 227). This is a welcome acknowledgement since the analysis occasionally slips into structuralist dualisms. For example, on p. 232 we have: 'them/us; state/community; organic/official; alternative/system; solidarity economics/capitalism'. At times this reader also felt that the focus on the community perspective could have been balanced with observations from outsiders who interact with San José de Apartadó. The emphasis on community members' perspectives, I suspect, emerges from the same ethical commitment to defend and give voice to the valiant resistance of the members of the peace community that motivated Burnyeat's solidarity work. Though the author goes to lengths to explain her positionality in the field, I think that the discussion could have been extended further to parse the prickly problem of navigating the call to activism versus a more detached ethnographic mode.

One of Burnyeat's key experts on cacao's exportation told her: 'We would like to have a network of consumers with a political conscience. That's the dream'. She was clearly moved by the statement: '[T]here can be no clearer message than this, about why "chocolate" and "politics" belong together' (p. 199). While the book centres on the politics of chocolate in the midst of Colombia's war, it is also about much more. *Chocolate, politics and peace-building* is an important rumination on one of the most high-profile community-based attempts to create peace in Colombia amidst structural forces that pull towards violence. Burnyeat's ethnography is as urgent as ever now that much of the country is living in a tattered peace, hounded by similar structural forces.

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Fleischer, Friederike. *Soup, love, and a helping hand: social relations and support in Guangzhou, China*. xvi, 178 pp., map, illus., tables, bibliogr. Oxford, New York: Berghahn Books, 2018. £78.00 (cloth)

This ethnography about social support in contemporary China explores how a group of *laobaixing* (common people) deal with, and get help when they encounter, unexpected events. Friederike Fleischer distinguishes the three forms of social support listed in the title, namely soup, love, and a helping hand, which provide the respective parts of this monograph.

The ethnographic site is Guangzhou, a South Chinese metropolitan city near Hong Kong, famous for its nutritious slow-cooked soups. Generally, a pot of this soup is so large that many people – usually family, neighbours, friends, or close others – can share it. Therefore, Fleischer argues that soup can be seen as a metaphor for traditional support in Guangzhou. Beginning with interesting descriptions of two extended families before and after the Reform, the first part of the book widely expands our outlook through its detailed ethnographic and historical contexts.

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Next, Fleischer defines love as devotion to God. Through their faith, believers come to respect and trust each other, and form a different community that is opposed to the wider society. An officially sanctioned church provides not only a community centre or place of worship but also social service and sometimes practical and financial support for these Christian converts.

In contrast to soup and love, a helping hand describes social support from strangers. More and more Chinese are engaged in volunteerism, especially after the Wenchuan earthquake in 2008, although civility is seen to be in crisis (cf. Y. Yunxiang, *Private life under socialism*, 2003). So volunteerism, along with philanthropy and charity, has become 'another important area in and through which contemporary social relations, ethics, and aspirations are renegotiated in the post-Mao period' (p. 112). However, an individual's effort may be stymied by official regulations or his or her personal burdens.

Social support is a key concept worthy of study because it serves as a window into the deep social transformations taking place in contemporary China. With the rapid growth in material wealth and the deepening differentiation between social classes, ordinary people have been thrown into turbulence with little institutional support. They have to make ends meet by themselves and often without adequate resources. As a result, traditionally important sources of social support, such as families, friends, neighbours, and work units (*danwei*), can no longer be taken for granted. Every single offer of support or request for help requires that a comprehensive calculation be undertaken by both parties; if there is a gap between expectations and the help offered, the relationship could collapse.

Some people can find no way out of their dilemmas, while others seek new sources of support by joining various interest groups or organizations – thus expanding their social support networks and potential resources. Of course, there are other types of social organizations that provide emotional (and sometimes instrumental) support: for example, dance or *Taijiquan* groups are mentioned but are not discussed in the book.

Since Chinese society is constantly changing, it is worth mentioning that more than a decade has passed since the author's fieldwork. The government has already constructed a national health service and is gradually introducing other social security systems to support poorer citizens. Through the development of the internet, some new channels also have been created. For example, when confronted by a catastrophe, more people are seeking help via crowdfunding platforms. Young people in particular seek out microcredit lenders rather than relying on personal relationships to pay for their immediate needs. Traditional relationships and primary attachments such as kinship are gradually transforming from being 'binding social capital' to 'bridging social capital' (see X. de Souza Briggs, 'Doing democracy up-close', *Journal of Planning Education and Research* **18**, 1998). Their function has changed from being all-encompassing to being specific, and from direct to indirect support, such as providing information, or explaining how to crowdfund.

Today, faced with weak welfare institutions in the postsocialist era and an increasingly precarious global economy, everybody has to consider his or her personal set of moral guidelines and ethical concerns. The diversification of substantive support, whether it be soup, love, or a helping hand, is creating a new sociality in China. Significantly, Fleischer demonstrates the entanglements of social support with ethics, individualization, relatedness, human feelings, face (*mianzi*), and so on, through which she explores various interesting processes and changes. That noted, *Soup, love, and a helping hand* is a very good introductory text for those who have never been to China, because it delineates contemporary forms of social support and the general context of this modern society.

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Levin, Morten & Davydd J. Greenwood. *Creating a new public university and reviving democracy: action research in higher education*. ix, 220 pp., figs, bibliogr. Oxford, New York: Berghahn Books, 2017. £99.00 (cloth)

Higher education appears to be an endangered species. Funding for public universities in the United States, for example, has been steadily slashed: over the last ten years, there has been a collective US$9 billion in cuts with commensurate increases in tuition. The vast majority of private institutions may be in even more precarious shape given their full reliance on tuition and on tiny endowments to buffer shortfalls – and they are starting to fold or merge. Additionally, the public is increasingly questioning higher education's value. This is a dismal state of affairs if you believe that one of the pillars of democratic society rests on a well-educated citizenry. It is this thesis that underpins *Creating a new public university*, which frames the problem through a social democratic

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approach that reasserts higher education as a public, rather than an individual/private, good.

Ronald Reagan's and Margaret Thatcher's ascendance in the early 1980s resulted in deeply institutionalized neoliberal policies and their application. The zeal to downsize government and privatize everything redefined public versus private goods, making public higher education something of an anachronism. If affordable public higher education was once the great equalizer that led to social mobility, it is now increasingly unaffordable, overly technocratic, and often leads to what David Graeber defines as *Bullshit jobs* (2018). Thus, as Morten Levin and Davydd J. Greenwood poignantly note, if education is now a commodity whose goal is skills training rather than freethinking and critical inquiry, then today's professionals are a rough corollary to a bygone industrial proletariat – both socialized to be docile subjects. Look no further than China for an excellent example of how this plays out.

The book is divided into three major sections. The first delineates the history of Western public higher education as a public good and the foundation for democracy along with a bracing critique of neoliberal ideology and practice. Additionally the authors explore diverse models of higher education and academic training. They conclude this section by discussing the very underpinning of the modern university: academic freedom and integrity. Recall that faculty own the curriculum, at least hypothetically, and through shared governance help guide the institution in its academic practices.

The second section, which focuses on organizational culture, structures, and practices, unveils how neoliberal administrative discourse and action 'steer' institutions towards a neo-Taylorist set of efficiencies, all the while encouraging and rewarding faculty who are academic entrepreneurs and whose work brings in funding for both the researcher and institution. Once university activities are monetized, all administrative strategy and tactical decision-making works towards short-term goals whether it is fundraising for the next building or getting researchers on the grant and invention treadmill.

Despite the first two sections' sobering analysis, the final section does not just argue for profound change in university culture, organization, and practice, but also outlines a way to achieve this transformation through action research. This is a kind of collaborative praxis wherein all relevant participants engage with the institution's problems through a highly distilled version of shared governance that goes well beyond just faculty and administration. Several critiques of this approach are offered. The most robust contends that action research may become mired in self-censorship if those lower in the institutional hierarchy challenge their superiors. However, Levin and Greenwood contend that because of the broad nature of these collaborative problem-solving networks, which are data collecting and data-driven, they are hard to derail by administrative fiat.

The authors conclude by underscoring the enfranchising benefits of such broad cross-institutional action research. Teams that would commonly not come together in collaborative efforts would be socialized within a democratic process and learn about the operation of the institution. Put another way, the people who form universities would begin to imagine themselves as part of a much larger system rather than simply being sunk into the silo within which they traditionally operate. Thus, the relationship between students, faculty, staff, and administrators would be radically altered, hierarchies would be flattened, and innovative collaboration would replace individualized competition. The neoliberal notion of meritocracy would be wholly upended to one of ongoing collaborative process.

Creating a new public university is a welcome addition to the anthropology of higher education, an area that has received scant attention from the discipline. It is noteworthy, though, that the Society for Applied Anthropology has a relatively new Anthropology of Higher Education Thematic Interest Group. In four short years, it has become the largest TIG in the association. There is clearly scholarly interest in higher education policy and analysis and anthropologists have significant contributions to make. This book is an important addition for anyone with interests in this area.

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Skinner, G. William; eds Stevan Harrell & William Lavely. *Rural China on the eve of revolution: Sichuan fieldnotes, 1949-1950*. xiv, 265 pp., maps, tables, illus. Seattle: Univ. of Washington Press, 2017. £25.99 (paper)

G. William Skinner (1925-2008) became the leading anthropologist of China, influencing all others through his mapping of marketing areas and central places. In September 1949, he embarked on his first fieldwork trip, for his Cornell University doctorate, in an area near Chengdu city. He knew it was likely that the area, along

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with rest of the mainland, would be subsumed by the Communist Party government, but hoped that he would be able to document the transition and continue with his observations of family life and marketing. In the end, a few months after his arrival, he was forced to abandon the project and start again on Chinese migrants in Bangkok. However, he had compiled copious well-written and typed notes, and amassed photographs, tables, and maps, all of which he sent to Cornell.

Stevan Harrell and William Lavely have edited the fieldnotes so that they and some of Skinner's pictures appear chronologically but are also sorted thematically. There are three main themes. One, the close observation of work and life in the farming family with which Skinner lived, is linked to a sample survey of other households in the same *bao* (unit of self-government responsible to the state). He had intended to test theories of personality and its formation in child-rearing, while simultaneously he noted the variations in the prices of everything; the way the produce on sale was made, measured, bought, and sold in the local market; and the way services were performed by itinerant practitioners, as well as how field labour was provided by tenants and the landless. Most of his many contacts were made through snowballing from one to the next in the market town's teahouses, where he met local leaders. These heads of the official units of self-government were all also leaders of the local branch of the Brothers Association, an open 'secret' society widespread in this part of China with its own organization that operated through physical force. Unfortunately the editors have omitted Skinner's detailed notes on its organization and rituals, and those of a more elite Confucian society.

Skinner explored all the paths out from the local markets on foot and by bicycle. We see here his meticulous attention to and selection of salient details from the local area records, as well as direct observation. In later years, through his organization of an army of researchers, who worked on local records, these first observations and records came to form a changing map of marketing macro-regions and their cities, down to standard markets as they had developed throughout a thousand years to the present.

Skinner also carefully observed temples and their festivals. In particular, a whole chapter is devoted to the parade of the demon-controlling 'Master of the Eastern Peak'. The local Communist Commander had not objected to the procession, and although the temples' lands had been sold before they could be confiscated, their gods were still in place and rituals were still performed. The attention paid to religious displays and their management, to finances, divination, and beggars alike, is remarkable. Skinner noted how primary school was taught in the smaller temples, and in a few larger ancestral homes.

Of the transition to full Communist Party rule, Skinner was able to observe the first collection of grain, the first assemblies preparing for the redistribution of land via the class categorization of landowners and farmers, and the incorporation of the locally organized self-defence militia, supervised by the People's Liberation Army (PLA). The collection of grain, to feed the PLA's garrisons, despite being heralded as being unlike the Nationalist government's tax, was in fact more burdensome because it was demanded in addition to the already paid tax. The PLA soldiers charged with supervising the anthropologist's activities became hostile, making it difficult for his friends to continue to work with him, so he returned in May 1950 to his base in West China University to try to get further authorization. Despite support from the prominent anthropologist Li Anzhe, Skinner failed, but had to stay in the city until August because it had taken so long to get a permit to leave.

The editors are to be congratulated for their provision of brief explanatory introductions to chapters, and Chinese characters. These selected fieldnotes are wonderfully informative and a fascinating beginning to the magnificent works that Skinner would go on to write, and include some material, such as that on temples and festivals, that he himself did not pursue.

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Theory and method

Boyer, Pascal. *Minds make societies: how cognition explains the world humans create*. xii, 359 pp., illus., bibliogr. New Haven, Conn.: Yale Univ. Press, 2018. £25.00 (cloth)

Minds make societies provides a precious introduction to the main discoveries generated by cognitive and evolutionary approaches to anthropology in the last few decades. It also develops an original view of how social science should be done, based on two principles. First, because social institutions and cultural dynamics emerge from interactions between individual minds, any serious attempt at understanding societies must start with a study of cognitive mechanisms. Second, the very same cognitive mechanisms that allow us to interact with others

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generate intuitive judgements in doing so. These intuitions provide us with ready-made images of all things social: the nature of groups, the workings of power relations, the fairness of exchanges, and so on. Vivid and useful as they might be, the picture that they paint is optimized for convenience, not for accuracy.

The first task of social science, as Pascal Boyer sees it, is to put such intuitions in their proper place: the place where scientists put the phenomena they need to explain, not the place where they store their theoretical tools. The second task is to make apparent the cognitive mechanisms that generate such intuitions. Cognition, in short, is, in Boyer's view, like water to a fish: a thick, light-bending medium that merely appears transparent to a creature that knows nothing else. To study social phenomena seriously, we must learn to look at this medium from the outside.

While the book's introduction, conclusion, and chapter 6 elaborate this view of social science as an antidote to lay intuitions, five central chapters show the method at work through analysing specific issues: group antagonism; the diffusion of false information; the rise of organized, dogmatic religions in state societies; the uniqueness of human kinship systems; and our conflicted perception of market exchange. Each case is meant to illustrate the tension between our intuitive understanding of a social phenomenon and its real workings, a conflict that dissolves once the issue is cast in a cognitive and evolutionary light.

To take but one example, consider intergroup conflict. Social science offers many excellent descriptive accounts of ethnic conflicts, wars, and genocides, which Boyer does not claim to improve upon. Yet, he argues, when asked about the psychological roots of intergroup conflict, social scientists and psychologists alike tend to fall back upon an intuitive, but insufficient, theory. Humans (the hypothesis goes) are moved by an urge to follow, assist, and imitate members of their social group, with whom they identify through various cues. These perceptions, which tend to coalesce into negative stereotypes when encountering strangers, explain much of what there is to explain about violent conflict between groups: we treat people outside of our group differently because they seem different.

In a move that is rather typical for him, Boyer points out that such an account, which may usefully work as a description, cannot stand as an explanation. It takes for granted the very phenomena that need explaining. Why, Boyer asks, do we expect people to be sorted into groups to begin with? And why do we expect certain traits to serve as cues of group membership? Boyer's answers, drawn in large part from the work of John Tooby and Leda Cosmides ('Groups in mind: the coalitional roots of war and morality', in *Human morality and sociality: evolutionary and comparative perspectives*, ed. H. Høgh-Oleson, 2010), paint a picture of human co-operation as highly strategic and context-sensitive. Our minds constantly and unconsciously calculate the risks and opportunities associated with co-operation or conflict with various individuals, returning to our conscious awareness a series of intuitive judgements that we all too readily mistake for basic social realities.

This engaging introduction to evolutionary and cognitive anthropology is neither a systematic treatise nor a vindication. The spirit is one of exploration and challenge: a sketch of 'a new science' in the making (p. 31). Boyer does not attempt to defend the body of work already produced by either evolutionary psychology or the cognitive science of religion, two controversial fields where his work has been central. Some readers will be surprised to find that the book does not take stock of debates surrounding the view that 'minimally counter-intuitive' concepts are a key component of religious beliefs; or that controversial claims (e.g. the existence of an unconscious cheater-detection module) are endorsed uncritically. *Minds make societies* would best be used as a blueprint for future work, not as a textbook. Anthropologists, even when reluctant to endorse cognitive or evolutionary claims, may recognize in Boyer's ambition the discipline's basic creed: to ask big questions about social life, and answer them through systematic defamiliarization, uncovering complex structures beneath the seemingly obvious.

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KAPUŚCIŃSKI, RYSZARD; with an introduction by Neal Ascherson; trans. Antonia Lloyd-Jones. *The other*. 100 pp. London: Verso Books, 2018. £8.99 (paper)

Ryszard Kapuściński (1932-2007) was an internationally acclaimed Polish journalist and author, whose writings generated some controversy for their apparent blending of reportage and literature. This volume includes four lectures: the 'Viennese lectures' which were

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delivered in Vienna on 1-3 December 2004 at the Institut für die Wissenschaften vom Menschen; 'My Other', which was given at the International Writers' Symposium in Graz on 12 October 1990; 'The Other in the global village', which was delivered at the Father Józef Tischner Senior European School in Kraków on 30 September 2003; and 'Encountering the Other as the challenge of the twenty-first century', which was delivered on 1 October 2004, when Kapuściński was awarded an honorary doctorate at the Jagiellonian University in Kraków. The lectures pursue interlinked trajectories of reflection on Europe and its relations with Africa, the Americas, Asia, and the Middle East, as well as the question of the Other and the direction of social and cultural change. Over the course of the lectures, Kapuściński engages substantially with anthropology, particularly through the figure of Bronislaw Malinowski, and continental philosophy, through that of Emmanuel Lévinas. In this brief review, I will address these elements, before concluding with some short remarks about Kapuściński's representation of anthropology and Malinowski.

For Kapuściński, Enlightenment humanism – expressed initially through literature and travel writing – opened up new spaces in which the Other emerged not as an object of conquest or conversion, but as a human being. According to Kapuściński, anthropology and the 'philosophy of dialogue' (p. 68) as practised by the likes of Lévinas, emerged from this Enlightenment space (p. 27). His summary of the development of anthropology from the debates of evolutionists, diffusionists, and functionalists into a discipline defined by ethnography, with Malinowski as 'the creator of anthropological reportage' (p. 32), segues neatly into a discussion of Lévinas, and his foregrounding of the ethics of the encounter with the Other, a move which Kapuściński sees as building upon the fieldwork pioneered by Malinowski. Kapuściński adds that fieldwork 'is not only recommended for anthropologists, but is also a fundamental condition for the job of a reporter' (p. 31), a point which highlights potential points of contact between the two professions.

Kapuściński provides two perspectives on European history and experience: one, as we have seen, begins with the Enlightenment and moves on via the novel to anthropology and the philosophy of dialogue. The other focuses on social and cultural change, and the transition, as Kapuściński sees it, from mass to global society, a transition precipitated by decolonization and the end of the Cold War, as well as the advance and spread of new communication technologies. According to Kapuściński, mass society, particularly in its totalitarian forms, negated the individual: the subject was a member of a class, a race, or a nation. As such, our new multicultural-global society must embrace the spirit of dialogue found not just in the writings of Lévinas but also in those of the Polish Catholic theologian Józef Tischner, for whom the idea of dialogue was precisely conceived in opposition to mass and totalitarian social forms and in the recognition of the individual human being.

Importantly, Kapuściński understands that a defining feature of the new global and multicultural society is its emergence from 'various contradictory worlds, a composite creature of fluid, impermanent contours and features' (p. 33), and that it is 'hybrid and heterogeneous' (p. 89). This new society will, according to Kapuściński, require something of the spirit of Malinowski, Lévinas, and Tischner if it is not to succumb to the many enmities and challenges that beset it from all sides.

One reason to read this beautifully composed book is for its representation of anthropology and one of the discipline's most controversial figures, Malinowski. Kapuściński sees in anthropology, and fieldwork in particular, a deliberative methodology for dialogue and understanding the Other. Perhaps this is a rose-tinted view of the fieldwork encounter that does not adequately grasp its ongoing implication in asymmetries of power, race, and gender, but Kapuściński offers some useful points of departure for pursuing related questions about ethnography and literary craft, and for exploring anthropology and journalism as entangled professions. Finally, given the links made by Robert J. Thornton ('Imagine yourself set down . . . ', *Anthropology Today* **1: 5**, 1985) between Malinowski and one of Conrad's more disturbing creations, Kurtz, there is perhaps some irony in the fact that Kapuściński's final lecture closes with a quotation from Joseph Conrad (p. 92) that points to a common humanity binding together the dead, the living, and the unborn.

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Lean, Garth, Russell Staiff & Emma Waterton (eds). *Travel and representation*. **x**, 239 pp., illus., bibliogrs. Oxford, New York: Berghahn Books, 2017. £99.00 (cloth)

Travel and representation is the third volume in a 'loose' series (by the same editors) that analyses travel through a particular lens. While the

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previous books tackled how travel is connected to the imagination and to ideas of transformation, this one scrutinizes the coupling of travel and representation. Garth Lean, Russell Staiff, and Emma Waterton purposely leave the definition of both key concepts open, but this makes it more difficult for the reader to discover the connecting threads (if any) between the various contributions. In the introduction, however, the editors do identify six overarching themes that are recurrent in the ten chapters: the visual, the poetic, imagination, the post-representational, travel, and self/world making. Some contributors interpret travel as a mere proxy for tourism; others consider virtual and imaginative travel. Representation is taken mostly in the semiotic sense, although the political meaning is not entirely absent. As the editors acknowledge, '[T]ravel representations make worlds not on their own, but through becoming entwined in broader social and cultural process and phenomenon' (p. 13).

Etymologically, a representation is a presentation of something, not by depicting it as-it-is, but by re-presenting or constructing it in a new form and/or context. Importantly, 'the conversion of perceptions of reality into systems of representation is subject to the governing structures that underpin the mode of mimesis, whether music, painting, written language, film or statistical measurement; in other words, the structuring of the way we represent' (Staiff, p. 102). The volume covers the following travel representations: film tourism (visits to film locations) and music tourism (visits to locations linked to the history of music); artistic travel photography and tourism snapshots; historical and contemporary travel writing; imaginative travel; diasporic or homeland tourism; and television advertisements using the trope of a road trip.

While most of the chapters entail quite detailed case studies of rather specific representations, the authors offer general insights that tell us something about the importance of representation for travel, broadly defined. For one, we should realize that 'there are now many new forms of travel, and each form holds its own poetics (and politics)' (Denise Doyle, p. 78). With the burgeoning of information and communication technologies across the globe, few will contest that 'the real and imagined are no longer strangers (or opposites)' and that 'the physical and the virtual have become more firmly entangled' (Doyle, p. 79). Some contributors propose novel conceptual tools. For instance, in trying to answer the question 'why certain journeys and geographies are seen as significant enough to record and convey difference, while others are not' (p. 136), Peter Day proposes the distinction between the 'disembodied journey', routine, automatic, and divested of significance, and the 'embodied journey', which creates narrative, in a spontaneous reaction to the environment.

Whereas *Travel and representation* is clearly interdisciplinary in nature, Benoît Dillet's chapter 4 on the reconstructed dialogue between traveller-explorer Louis Antoine Bougainville and philosophers Jean-Jacques Rousseau and Denis Diderot is worth singling out for an audience of anthropologists. As Dillet (a political scientist) writes in his conclusion, these three authors 'reflected on the finitude of knowledge and the modes of existence, anticipating modern forms of anthropological problematization' (p. 97). However, in contrast with other Enlightenment philosopher-travellers (e.g. Alexander von Humboldt), 'they lacked the empirical methods to gather data' (p. 96).

Anthropologists reading this edited volume will most likely miss a more critical approach that pays attention to politics and power and, thus, to inequality in travel representations. This point of view is present in some chapters, such as chapter 9 on diasporic tourism by Jillian Powers, but could have been more pronounced throughout the book. After all, no representational forms are neutral, because it is impossible to divorce them from the culture or society that produces them. Awareness of the constructed nature of representations, however, does not mean that we can do without them. This is particularly true in the context of travel, where representations of 'the Other' and 'the elsewhere' play a crucial role, as do processes of social or cultural (mis)translation.

In sum, *Travel and representation* is a well-written book that disentangles, through sound interdisciplinary scholarship, the multiple workings of travel representations, their effects on people, and their limits. While undergraduate students may get lost in the multitude of representations covered and the lack of a comprehensive frame or concluding chapter that nicely summarizes and discusses the various findings, this edited volume is definitely recommended reading for graduate students and scholars with an interest in how travel, including tourism, is represented and how both travel and its representations mutually influence each other.

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Messick, Brinkley. *Sharīʿa scripts: a historical anthropology*. ix, 519 pp., illus., bibliogr. New York: Columbia Univ. Press, 2018. £58.95 (cloth)

This book is an outstanding achievement that takes the historical and anthropological dimensions of sharīʿa practice seriously. Drawing on Bakhtin's seminal work on intertextuality, Brinkley Morris Messick offers us one of the very first studies of premodern sharīʿa in action. His research was situated within the Yemeni highlands in the town of Ibb, and covers a period stretching from the late nineteenth century to the 1962 revolution that installed the Arab Yemeni Republic. Focusing on texts, an 'unprecedented set of objects for a situated study of the historical sharīʿa as a textual tradition' (p. 8), Messick proposes an anthropological perspective in the sense that he always considers the viewpoint of the professionals from whom he received and discussed his material, and whose work he also observed and described.

In *Sharīʿa scripts*, texts are not only resources for writing Yemen's social history, but also mainly they are ends in and for themselves. Messick distinguishes between two major clusters: 'the library', that is, the perennial work of scholars that is associated with academic learning; and 'the archive', that is, the annual paperwork that is associated with judicial and legal practice. He observes that sharīʿa is textually partitioned between context-free, formal, anonymous, and technical texts, on the one hand, and context-engaged, particular, named, and linguistically stratified texts, on the other. This involves continual movement back and forth between the two.

However, rather than considering this textual tradition as a whole, Messick is keen to contextualize the forms of reasoning, the debated topics, and the instituted practices on which he focuses and which he contrasts with the codification and legislation of the nation-state's modern law. Moreover, he shows how archival texts are often modelled on library templates, while also serving as models for the production of such templates.

Sharīʿa scripts is also a tour de force ethnography of juristic reasoning. Through his fine-grained description of intertextual weaving, Messick emphasizes a major feature of premodern adjudication: as in pre-nineteenth-century English common law or any natural-law system, the jurist's role is conceived of not as rule-creating, but as rule-finding through mainly analogical deduction. This does not mean that the law remains static. On the contrary, among other legal textbooks, big collections of juristic advice (*fatwa*, pl. *fatawa*) constitute exemplary instances of interpretative law-making. Here again, Messick undertakes to flesh out the mechanisms through which library and archive interact; in other words, he documents empirically how singular facts and legal principles were co-produced. To this end, he adapts Wael Hallaq's technique of 'stripping' ('From *fatwās* to *furū*', *Islamic Law and Society* **1: 1**, 1994), adding a distinction between 'two moments' of this process: the first occurs at the time of the formulation of the question, which involves both the construction of facts and the reference to a legal category; the second takes place when formulating the advice, which involves a shift of genre from free-standing opinion to book entry. Messick also identifies two levels of stripping, one connected to advice-giving, the other to adjudication. While the former is focused on rules and aims at the production of doctrine, the latter concentrates on facts and the search for applicable rules. Of major importance is the demonstration that 'in active traditions of written law neither the library nor the archive stood alone. Dialogues between these broad categories of necessarily "complicit" texts were fundamental to local histories of the sharīʿa, and their divisions of discursive labor provided cohesion to particular textual formations' (p. 217).

Sharīʿa scripts can also be read as a manual in legal praxiology. Combining an inquiry into Yemeni legal texts and an anthropological understanding of their legal settings, Messick shows that, and how, an ethnography of legal practices might be conducted. The ways texts are composed can be explored and detailed, providing sufficient attention is given to the fact that all these texts participate in legal actions, are written for specific legal purposes, and therefore must be read as moves within a process: 'To study the lives of archival texts requires thinking beyond their dated points in time, not only to processes of composition but also to textual pasts and futures' (p. 220). Texts deserve to be studied in and for themselves, not for the sake of any self-contained hermeneutical game, but because they are integral parts and active agents in social practices – sharīʿa practices in our case. In that respect, one can only regret that Messick does not enter into deeper dialogue with the community of law-in-action scholars, who have both developed efficient tools for such an analysis and achieved interesting results that could have

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been compared with his (e.g. B. Dupret, *Adjudication in action*, 2011).

Baudouin Dupret *CNRS*

Paganopoulos, Michelangelo (ed.). *In-between fiction and non-fiction: reflections on the poetics of ethnography in literature and film*. viii, 230 pp., illus., bibliogrs. Newcastle-upon-Tyne: Cambridge Scholars Publishing, 2018. £64.99 (cloth)

Michelangelo Paganopoulos, in this edited anthology of writings from across the world, takes forward the discussion surrounding subjectivity, authorship, and the relationship of anthropology to history-in-the-making. The anthology's starting point is Kant's theorization of anthropology as an engagement with human nature and a concern with humanity's future. Such a conceptualization places anthropology between fiction and non-fiction and contributes 'towards the development of mutual understanding between nations and social classes, to achieve peace and equality according to the values of the Enlightenment' (p. 1). Paganopoulos then delineates the discipline's development to the turn of the twenty-first century, mapping the shift towards subjectivity. Thus, *In-between fiction and non-fiction* acts as a conversation between Kant's conceptualizing of anthropology and the discipline's current emphasis on subjectivity.

The collection consists of thirteen reflective essays organized around Kantian 'pragmatic anthropology' in relation to two themes: literature and film. The essays explore the relationship between authorship, readership, and spectatorship while exploring different ways of doing and writing anthropology.

The section on literature has chapters by Michelangelo Paganopoulos, Keith Hart, Prarthana Saikia, Carrie B. Clanton, John Hutnyk, Geetika Ranjan, and Melania Calestani. These authors examine anthropological writing, reflectivity, and the author's relationship with the 'other'/the focus of their study. For example, Hart, in his autobiographical chapter (chap. 2), reflects on both his journey as an anthropologist and writing practices in academia. To this end, he traces his relationship with Manchester, the city where he was born, and the Manchester School, and reflects on the body of work he has produced throughout the course of this academic journey. Hart argues for an alternative style of writing that combines personal anecdotes with theoretical analysis. In so doing, he comments on the discipline's insistence and reliance on 'fieldwork', and the social science method, which give little scope for writers' personal experience (p. 68). Clanton (chap. 4) furthers this in her work and considers the anthropologist's subjectivity by placing Freud in conversation with Derrida to examine the idea that ethnography is a collage, a 'chance meeting of self with some other in a strange land' (p. 93). She uses this to critique the uncanny relationship between the self (the ethnographer) dwelling in a strange land (the fieldsite) and the latter's representation in anthropological writing, while making a case for self-reflective political engagement within anthropological writing.

The second section includes chapters by Norbert M. Schmitz, Marta Kucza, Monica Heintz, Ishita Tiwary, Ira Sahasrabudhe, and Shubhangi Vaidya and focuses on film. For example, Schmitz's piece (chap. 7) examines the work of the anthropological film-maker Robert Gardner, analysing his aesthetics in combination with his films' meta-narratives. Through a close examination of Robert Gardner's *Forest of Bliss* (1986), Schmitz argues that 'the very depiction of reality and even more so, any experience of reality at all, is a construction long before their artificial enhancement in perception and communication of everyday life has taken place' (p. 148). He contends that rather than representing the world objectively, Gardner represents it from his own artistic position. In her piece, Tiwary (chap. 11) examines China's new digital technologies through Jia Zhang-Ke's films, placing them within the PRC's larger socioeconomic environment. Her analysis of Zhang-ke's work combines the process of film-making with the advent of movable cameras and explores the ordinary, quotidian lives of people in postsocialist China.

All these authors seek, first, to examine the dialectical relationship between the idea of time as intelligible and sensuous. Secondly, they examine experiences of time across various dimensions, locations (geographical spaces), and media (texts and visual) in order to engage critically with reality as both objective and subjective. Through its analyses of time, *In-between fiction and non-fiction* makes an argument for collapsing the boundaries between objectivity and subjectivity and for representing the 'objective' world subjectively. Thirdly, it opens a discussion on an ethnographic writing that could dissolve the boundary between fiction and non-fiction and thus link the current moment of self-reflectivity with the Kantian proposition that anthropology is an engagement with human nature and humanity.

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Despite its arguably laudable attempt to collapse the conceptual distance between the detached and personal, the book slips into the use of the two as binary oppositions and fails to go beyond this dualism. The distance between the ethnographer and field continues to persist. Worthy as its endeavour is, the collection is unable to capture how fieldwork encounters and practices are informed by the researcher's positionality, especially in its analyses of film. Various chapters, however, do capture the ethnographer's experience, especially in the section on literature, although they fail to depict how 'the field' is changing/has changed.

DYUTI A *University of Sussex*

TURNER TERENCE; ed. Jane Fajans; with a foreword by David Graeber. *The fire of the jaguar*. xl, 254 pp., figs, tables, illus., bibliogr. Chicago: Hau Books, 2017. £26.50 (paper)

This posthumous book by the American anthropologist Terence S. Turner (1935-2015) was edited by his widow, the anthropologist Jane Fajans. Terry – as he was called by his colleagues and students – was renowned for his decades-long fieldwork among the Kayapó (Mebêngôkre) of Brazilian Amazonia, as well as for his political activism in defence of the environment and the rights of Indigenous people. His trajectory began in the 1960s, when he was part of the Harvard Central Brazil project supervised by David Maybury-Lewis, and spanned over fifty years of indefatigable intellectual and existential dedication to the Kayapó. During all this time, Terry was a prolific author, producing almost one hundred articles on the Kayapó, on themes such as social organization, ritual, politics, myth, corporality, the construction of the person, historical conscience, cosmology, and social change. Two defining characteristics of his anthropological output are that he never wrote complete books, preferring articles, and many of his texts took so long to be published that they circulated as manuscripts and typescript versions, which Terry constantly modified, without ever completing them for publication.

In *The fire of the jaguar*, Fajans has sought to give public access to some of Terry's work that was still stored in drawers. Simultaneously, she aims to keep his ideas alive, in the hope of both triggering new debates in Amerindian studies and influencing theoretical reflection in contemporary anthropology. However, the volume, comprising two parts, is not entirely composed of unpublished texts. Only part I, 'The fire of the jaguar: Kayapó myth of the origin of cooking fire', which gives the book its title, and 'Cosmology, objectification, and animism in indigenous Amazonia' in part II were never published. Two essays, 'The crisis of late structuralism' (*Tipití* **7: 1**, 2009) and 'Beauty and the beast' (Hau **7: 2**, 2017) have appeared previously.

The book's two parts, while somewhat unequal, are complementary. The first contains a long and detailed analysis of the Kayapó myth of the origin of fire, occupying almost two-thirds of the book (150 pages), and was written over thirty years ago. The second part gathers the more recent and shorter articles, written between 2008 and 2011. The logic that underscores the book's unity is made clear in David Graeber's foreword. First, it aims to highlight Turner's critical position in relation to Lévi-Strauss's structuralism. Second, it stresses his opposition to the post-structuralism inspired by the French literature, which has had a considerable influence in recent anthropology via the works of Philippe Descola and Eduardo Viveiros de Castro, among others. Against both, Terry proposes a theoretical and political alternative inspired by Marx and Piaget, which we might characterize as 'structural-constructivist'.

Indeed, the volume's first part can be read as Terry's attempt to provide an analysis of myths that offers an alternative to Lévi-Straussian structuralism as consecrated in the many volumes of the *Mythologiques* and their companion works, published between 1964 and 1991. Terry's analysis is anchored in a solid ethnographical knowledge and long-term experience of life with the Kayapó, the producers and narrators of the myth of the jaguar's fire. He seeks to answer a question that Lévi-Strauss had, in fact, always dodged: to wit, what do myths speak of? Or, in Terry's words: what is the relationship between the structure and the message of the myth? His answer to this is slightly disappointing. Refusing the comparative method in favour of an analysis which focuses on a single myth produces a narrow view, so that Terry is only able to see the myth as a sort of dialectical reflection of the production and reproduction of patterns of action and meaning. Thus, if Lévi-Strauss's structuralist method evokes an image of mirrors reflecting each other into infinity, without ever allowing us to know what the *object* of the reflection is, Terry's pre-structuralist or socio-constructivist method invokes a mirror reflecting an object that is excessively close, small, and limited.

The book's second part turns to the matter of cosmology, the body, and Kayapó conceptions of the relations between humans and nonhumans.

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This allows Terry to engage in a critique of the post-structuralist-inspired concepts of animism and Amerindian perspectivism. Here he offers some interesting considerations, recognizing that there is, after all, a Kayapó animism, but that it involves complex notions of animus and corporality, which conjure the Aristotelian notions of form (*eidos*) and matter (*hylé*). In general, my opinion is that this critique of the post-structuralists is more productive and allows us to situate Terry at the same level as these authors, whereas the attempt to outpace Lévi-Strauss comes up short. It is up to the readers to judge.

Cesar Gordon *Universidade Federal do Rio de Janeiro*

Wagner, Roy; with a new foreword by Tim Ingold. *The invention of culture* (2nd edition). xxxii, 168 pp. Chicago: Univ. Press, 2016. £19.00 (paper)

Roy Wagner's *Invention of culture* is both extremely stimulating and confusing. The fascination it provokes is doubtless the product of the theoretical whirlwind into which it plunges the reader. Published in 1975, supplemented by an introduction in 1981, it is now reissued with a new preface by Tim Ingold, who points out that it paved the way for several research trends that did not exist at the time of its publication. Wagner's critique of the objectification of other peoples' culture anticipates the 1980s controversy over ethnology's literary status and the illusion of its own objectivity, a criticism developed in *Writing culture* (J. Clifford & G.E. Marcus, eds, 1986).

Wagner insists on nature's constructed and artificial character, arguing against the idea that it has an existence *outside* culture: it is *a cultural construction*. This critique of positivism anticipates the emergence of science studies (cf. B. Latour & S. Woolgar, *Laboratory life*, 1979). Does Western reason have a monopoly on understanding the world? Wagner's answer is a resounding no, since other world-views in New Guinea, the Amazon, and elsewhere consider nature to be a *society* full of plant and animal spirits. Perspectivism à la Viveiros de Castro is in the making in Wagner's theory. Ingold adds that we see the anticipation of contemporary post-humanism in this book's conclusion. Here Wagner affirms that humans invent themselves constantly, through creating nature and culture, in a process of evolving relationships with things and people. Wagner's theoretical posterity is therefore rich, even as it poses a problem: there is only a thin line between the assertion that nature is an invention and that ultimately *it does not really exist*. When Wagner concludes his book by allowing the reader to believe or not in the existence of God, nature, or natural law (p. 159), we wonder if gravity is a matter of religious belief. Can we decide to escape it and fly? The invention of aeroplanes was certainly cultural, but they *are* subject to the law of gravity.

How to summarize Wagner's complex thesis? Ingold notes that the book is not part of any particular intellectual tradition and explicates through an original language. If Wagner's theoretical lexicon is new, without equivalent in the intellectual production of the early 1970s, then *The invention of culture* might be better understood if it is seen as a 'successor' to Hegel, Marx, and the Frankfurt school's dialectical philosophy, and thus opposed to Cartesian rationalism. Wagner himself refers to this, arguing that 'dialectic' should be understood in its original sense – that is, as 'a tension or dialogue-like alternation between two conceptions or viewpoints that are simultaneously contradictory and supportive of each other' (p. 52) – and opposed to the linear logic typical of rationalism.

For Wagner, invention and convention are indeed in a dialectical relationship: invention – that is, non-conventional action creating something new – can only take place in a symbolic space considered stable, innate, well known, and identified. Therefore one cannot think of the originality of human action without considering its opposite: the structure of collective rules. Conversely, these rules cannot be apprehended without deviating from them through creativity. For Wagner, any invention goes hand-in-hand with a 'counter-invention', which is the *source* of, yet irreducible to, the invention itself. Modern societies, through creating communities governed by cultural rules, counter-invent a world of natural facts and motivations. In other words, this world's 'reality', which we consider to be constraining, is the necessary product of invention, on which it relies: one is dialectically a production of the other.

What makes this book original is not only that it is philosophical but also that it is deeply grounded in anthropology's achievements, and particularly in Wagner's fieldwork experience among the Daribi of New Guinea. The process of invention and counter-invention typical of our culture is reversed among these people. Among the Daribi (and elsewhere), the human world is conceived of as innate and motivating: rules are prescribed by ancestors or spirits; they cannot be

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modified freely by individual creative action. Yet each person improvises, cunningly and constantly playing with and manipulating the rules, taming spiritual forces for their benefit, inventing themselves, through masks, cross-dressing, or changing their name in initiations, for example. This all happens in a 'given', collectively shared universe established by tradition in which rules are leitmotifs of improvisation and variation, more or less like jazz (p. 88). Although we might worry here about the reappearance of the great divide between 'Them' and 'Us', the highlighting of the difference between an individualistic and disenchanted universe, characteristic of the Euro-American middle class, and a world of subjective relations between humans, animals, plants, and spirits, typical of hunting, gathering, and simple agricultural societies, is a particularly stimulating – if simplistic – polarity.

The invention of culture therefore needs to be read, and not just once but several times for its arcana to be understood, as it is a paradoxically foundational and destabilizing anthropological masterpiece.

Erwan Dianteill *University of Paris*

Transcultural encounters

Ghodsee, Kristen. *Second world, second sex: socialist women's activism and global solidarity during the Cold War*. xviii, 306 pp., illus., bibliogr. Durham, N.C.: Duke Univ. Press, 2018. £20.99 (paper)

Socialism's collapse and liberal capitalism's triumph is the Cold War's generally accepted ideological outcome. The global struggle for women's rights is a key forgotten battlefield of that conflict. This struggle arguably reached its peak in the 1970s, the UN's 'Decade for Women', when three major UN conferences, held in Mexico City, Copenhagen, and Nairobi, provided the setting for a clash between competing ideologies relating to women's emancipation. Kristen Ghodsee has written a compelling anthropological account of that encounter, based on tenacious, multi-sited archival research, and sensitive yet rigorous ethnography.

Ghodsee outlines how, throughout this key decade of the Cold War, women activists in the Global South forged strategic alliances with their counterparts in socialist Eastern Europe, enabling them to amplify their collective voices on the international stage. She anchors her narrative in a number of key interlocutors' oral testimonies: members of the national delegations from Bulgaria and Zambia, alongside US participants. She describes a growing solidarity between the communist and developing countries, which created a variety of ideological challenges for liberal feminists in the West, culminating in accusations that the very concept of feminism, as understood and practised by US activists, their allies and sponsors, was another form of cultural imperialism. Ghodsee recaptures the energy and enthusiasm that infused these socialist women's activism and argues that their contributions to the history of twentieth-century women's rights should no longer be ignored.

The agenda brought by women from Zambia and Bulgaria to the UN conferences was informed by a commitment to socialism, decolonization, and development. They saw women's priorities as coinciding with family, community, and nation-building imperatives. A record of progress and real achievement garlanded their platform. Bulgaria boasted some of the era's most progressive social policies, providing levels of maternity and childcare provision that the West could not match. Indeed, moves to establish such levels of provision had been actively vetoed by President Nixon in the previous decade. In contrast, Western delegations, particularly that of the United States, were strongly focused on an agenda of women's equality, and an ethic of self-actualization.

This US government-sanctioned version of feminism looked at women's issues in isolation from their larger social, political, or economic contexts; it was a feminism that focused on equality of opportunity within the existing economic structure, with an implicit or explicit acceptance of that structure as fundamentally just. In contrast, socialist and Third World activists took the position of 'intersectionality', namely that discussions of women's rights separately from other social injustices such as racism, imperialism, and colonialism were ultimately futile. Their argument was that the idea that women's so-called 'self-actualization' required them to be liberated from social obligations only reified a particular conception of women's emancipation. If self-actualization is about improving 'the quality of one's life, then women may decide that improving the material conditions of their families or communities or even states is an important part of their own sense of self-fulfilment' (p. 47). This assertion anticipates recent scholarship that opposes liberal feminist politics that are universalistic and insensitive to cultural variation in women's definitions of self-actualization. For example, in her study of Egyptian women, Saba

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Mahmood (*The politics of piety*, 2005) has argued that pious Islamic women find self-actualization through practising the affects and comportments necessary to embody the form of submission that they deem appropriate for women.

Ghodsee is not neutral: she inclines to the view that Western feminism has been co-opted by neoliberalism's economic project, with its fetishization of unfettered free markets, minimalist states, and dismantled social safety nets. Yet she is scrupulous in conceding the wider governmental shortcomings of both the socialist world and the developing Third World. The fact that the drive for women's rights in these polities was state-led was seized upon by some and used to demonstrate the superiority of an NGO-led feminism based on Western-inspired definitions of self-fulfilment or grassroots activism and to dismiss the achievements of women's state organizations in the Eastern bloc and the Global South as top-down policies and socialist propaganda.

The Cold War's end has seen the vision and achievements of the socialist women's activists marginalized, devalued, and almost forgotten, the neoliberal consensus quickly undoing in the East and South many of the rights which had been so dearly won. Ghodsee articulates a concern that powerful forces in the West still conspire to suppress or delegitimize histories that take state socialist women's activism seriously. Hegemonic neoliberal triumphalism has combined with the dismantling of critical state archives caused by the collapse of socialism to almost erase the record of this remarkable moment in women's struggles. Ghodsee's persistence and peerless scholarship have ensured that it will not be allowed to disappear from the mainstream narratives of feminism.

Dominic Martin *Yale University*

Mageo, Jeannette & Elfriede Hermann (eds). *Mimesis and Pacific transcultural encounters: making likenesses in time, trade, and ritual reconfigurations*. xiii, 278 pp., maps, illus., bibliogrs. Oxford, New York: Berghahn Books, 2017. £99.00 (cloth)

The concept of mimesis has deep roots. Plato and Aristotle, distrustful of any dramatic and poetic bending of truth, scrutinized the dubious effects of artistic imitation. Mimesis, ever since, has served as a theme in rhetoric and philosophy. By the twentieth century, it had spread into other fields of inquiry. Google's Ngram Viewer tracks mimesis's increasing popularity from occasional uses in the 1950s to an elevated peak in 1995, followed by a subsequent decline. As mimesis alludes to the relationship between the copied and the copyist, ethnographers also have found the term useful. In *Mimesis and Pacific transcultural encounters*, Jeannette Mageo and Elfriede Hermann offer an edited collection of transcultural mimetic examples from the Pacific, past and present. Its nine chapters present cases in which Islanders have 'imitated' strangers, alien explorers, occupying colonialists, cultural tourists, and more, inducing various sorts of social transformation. Mimesis better captures the relational mechanics of such transformations than do alternative, more impersonal terms such as diffusion, acculturation, culture contact, or hybridity.

Mageo offers an introductory typology of mimesis: 'incorporative' mimesis, in which people imitate others for a variety of their own reasons; 'emblemizing' mimesis, in which people copy aspects of themselves and their culture in order to differentiate themselves from impinging others – this is the basis for Melanesian *kastom*, Fa'a Samoa, and the like; and 'abject' mimesis, in which people imitate in order to become some other, even though such attempts often are frustrated and unsuccessful. Relations of inequality constrain possible mimeses, and copies, however exact, themselves can serve as novel originals. The volume's contributors refer to Mageo's typology, more or less, although the details of particular cases escape a simple framework. They also draw on earlier analyses of mimesis by Walter Benjamin, Homi Bhabha, Jacques Derrida, Michael Taussig, and René Girard.

Francesca Merlan (chap. 1) reports on the Bruny Island (Tasmania) imitations of the French explorer Nicolas Baudin and his crew, including mimicking their songs and dances. Mageo (chap. 2) describes transformations in Samoan hairstyle, dress, and bark cloth design sparked by imitating German colonialists' originals. Sarina Pearson (chap. 3) follows a team of Hopi and Navajo performers that Paramount Pictures sent to New Zealand to publicize its 1925 epic *The vanishing America* (retitled *The vanishing race*), and delineates the rich series of intercultural imitations among Indians, Maori, and Pakeha that the tour engendered. Joyce Hammond (chap. 4) attended touristic weddings in Tahiti (already a mimetic ritual), which offer an imitative concatenation of ersatz tattoos, suggestive dancing, island priests, and marriage 'licences'. Sergio Jarillo de la Torre (chap. 5) describes transformations in Trobriand Islands carvings wrought by artists' combinations

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of motifs from island 'tradition' with others they borrow from extraneous sources – including mermaids and dragons. Roger Lohmann's chapter 6 examines Asabano (Papua New Guinea) trade store failures of capitalist mimesis insofar as few of these succeed, given people's kin obligations, which frustrate profit-taking – all this was first documented in 1960s developmental literature. Elfriede Hermann (chap. 7) presents an ostentatious Banaba first birthday party from Rabi Island (Fiji) – another imitative ritual occasion – during which the celebrated cake-eating child was dressed in nine different costumes, accentuating her Banaban, Kiribati, Fijian, and Western connections. Laurence Carucci (chap. 8) follows Ujelang/Enewetak (Marshall Islands) migrants to Hawai'i's Big Island, where they construct box-like Christmas trees into which they pack and ignite phosphorus sulphide obtained from match-heads. These exploding trees mimic the thermonuclear devices once detonated over their homeland. Doug Dalton (chap. 9) describes Rawa's (Papua New Guinea) mimetic Christianity, which serves to dampen violence and cultivate village unity. Finally, Joshua Bell provides an 'Afterword' that finds in these cases useful examples of transformational mimesis's temporal and spatial scale, its materiality, and how to assess mimetic interpretations.

Islanders imitated outsiders but some of these copied in turn, as several authors note. Germans in Samoa cross-dressed, donning fern headdresses and fine mats. Overseas tourists in *pareu* pose as tattooed Tahitian lovers. Indigenous Americans wrapped themselves in Maori cloaks while Maori sported Plains Indian feathers. This sort of mimicry, recently, is much in the news, particularly in relation to the cultural appropriation of traditional clothing as costume or in the wearing of black/brownface. These examples confirm both the power and the dangers of mimesis, and how imitation that identifies or disidentifies must be assessed within its larger political context.

Anthropologists, as scholars and teachers, should welcome these analyses, as mimesis is at the core of our foundational ethnographic method, participant observation, and also is a popular strategy of hands-on, experiential learning within classrooms. As Bell concludes, 'mimesis is profoundly engaging anthropologically because of issues it raises about the nature of cross-culture engagement' (p. 267). Anthropologist see, anthropologist do.

Lamont Lindstrom *University of Tulsa*

Watanabe, Chika. *Becoming one: religion, development, and environmentalism in a Japanese NGO in Myanmar*. xvi, 239 pp., bibliogr. Honolulu: Univ. of Hawai'i Press, 2019. £68.00 (cloth)

Becoming one is an eloquent ethnography of Japanese development aid work in Myanmar. Building on fieldwork conducted in Japan and Myanmar, Chika Watanabe shows unexpected, striking links that connect contemporary development work, a Japanese new religion, and the politics of environmentalism. This is an interdisciplinary work that draws on social anthropology, history, and development and religious studies to trace the moral imagination of a Japanese NGO active in Myanmar. Watanabe examines the discourse and practice of what she calls the 'nonreligious' (being neither religious nor secular, p. 33) in Shinto environmentalism and its spiritualized 'muddy labor' of 'making persons' (p. 17) through training.

The book describes a form of development aid that defies the neoliberal, bureaucratic, and managerial paradigm of Euro-American NGO work. Watanabe's analysis of the Organization for Industrial, Spiritual, and Cultural Advancement (OISCA) moves between ethnographic detail and theoretical issues with great care. OISCA is one of Japan's oldest NGOs, whose founder, Yonosuke Nakano, also established Ananaikyō, a new religion based on Shinto. Senior OISCA staff are also Ananaikyō members. This interleaving of 'religion' and the purportedly secular or rather 'nonreligious' (*shūkyō ja nai*) nature of its overseas outreach branch, and the ambivalences and discursive strategies that sustain it, are the core problematic of the 'moral imaginary' that Watanabe studies.

OISCA stresses values such as discipline and 'Japaneseness'. It hires staff from rural rather than 'cosmopolitan' backgrounds, socializing them intensively through a militarized training process emphasizing harmony, collective living, and the cultivation of 'a feeling of becoming one' (p. 4), as well as participation in 'a shared Asianness' (p. 13) between Japanese and Burmese people. The boundaries between aid workers and beneficiaries can become blurred, as can those between spiritual and agricultural training. A supposedly private organization, OISCA has received an unusual degree of support from an also avowedly 'secular' Japanese state.

These ambivalences cause some uneasiness among the organization's non-Japanese trainees;

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for Watanabe personally, they were uncomfortably evocative of imperial Japan. She thus applies a methodology that draws on the concept and experience of 'discomfort', to draw out revealing elements of the interaction between OISCA and its trainee/beneficiaries, and between herself as an overseas-raised Japanese and OISCA's articulation of the 'moral imagination of becoming one' (p. 5).

Despite or perhaps because of OISCA's origins in one of the 'new religions' that played a leading role during the pre-war era of Japanese militarism, and despite their mission to transform the world through spiritual cultivation (*seishin ikusei*), its members are at pains to stress its 'nonreligious' nature. As Watanabe notes, the concept of nonreligion has played an interesting role in Japan's inability to come to terms with its previous religious nationalism; and OISCA's ties – genealogical, institutional, and ideological – with Second World War militarism run deep. Yonosuke had been a follower of Ōmotokyō, a new religion that was a major force in the religious nationalist movements that shook Japan in the first half of the twentieth century.

In English-language scholarship, the claim that Shinto is 'not a religion' is often interpreted to mean that it is therefore 'secular'. Watanabe explores instead how her subjects negotiate strategic delineations and ambiguities between the religious and the secular. While she notes the political and historical contexts of OISCA's discourse and is discomfited by the militarism of its training regime, she does not seem as much struck by the utter familiarity of some of OISCA's ideas, by their politico-theological resonances and alliances past and present.

The propagation of a 'family-system', the sacralization of agriculture and of a universal *furusato* or 'homeplace' (*kyōdo* 郷土, synonym of *furusato*) are not unique to OISCA. They are canonical elements of Japanese state fascism as described by Masao Maruyama ('The ideology and dynamics of Japanese fascism', 1947, in his *Thought and behavior in modern Japanese politics*, 1969) and are concepts that remain important in twenty-first-century Japanese nationalism. From this perspective, the particularities of OISCA's sensibility pale alongside their significations and interactions with the broader discourse of Japan as a sacred national polity (*kokutai*).

Ananaikyō emerged during a pivotal moment in the early twentieth century, as part of the ferment of religio-political organizations that helped shape totalitarian Japan. The ideology formed then remains active through a network of filiations between religious and 'nonreligious' organizations, and ruling elites. Their participants preserve and draw on the religio-political imaginaire of that period to advance the cause of amending the Allied written post-war constitution so that Japan can be restored to what they consider to be its 'authentic form' as *kokutai*. Exploring the extent of these political and ideological connections might bring yet more discomfort; however, these are questions raised but not addressed by Watanabe's fine study. That said, I recommend *Becoming one* to all students and scholars of anthropology, development and religious studies, and Japanese studies.

Naoko Kumada *Bard College/Columbia University/Nanyang Technological University*

Zigon, Jarrett. *A war on people: drug user politics and a new ethics of community*. x, 196 pp., bibliogr. Oakland: Univ. of California Press, 2018. £27.00 (paper)

Recently, anthropological work within the current of the so-called 'ethical turn' has begun to examine political processes. This includes Sian Lazar's study of Argentine trade unionism, *The social life of politics* (2017), which employs Foucauldian notions of ethical subjectivation to describe practices of self-formation and how they link with political action. Jarrett Zigon's latest monograph makes an original contribution to this emerging body of scholarship through an ethnography of the international anti-drug war movement.

A war on people argues that through studying drug users' experiences and the forms of political practice involved in fighting the effects of the global war on drugs, it is possible to discover a way of doing politics and enacting social change which is capable of addressing contemporary forms of governmentality and global complexity while overcoming the limitations of left-reformism, revolutionary insurrectionism, and horizontalism. For Zigon, the global war on drugs is an example of a vastly complex global phenomenon which cannot be apprehended in its totality, is assembled from diffuse social and political processes, and which manifests itself locally in diverse ways. To apprehend such a phenomenon, Zigon suggests, it is necessary to adopt a style of ethnographic method and writing that he labels 'assemblic ethnography'. In its emphasis on tracing the continual assemblage of a phenomenon across different global scales in the course of ethnographic investigation, this is an approach that he claims is distinct from

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multi-sited ethnography, which prefiguratively identifies the sites through which flows and processes take place.

Nevertheless, *A war on people* primarily deals with three localized fieldsites and organizations. These are drug user unions in the cities of Vancouver, New York, and Copenhagen. While the war on drugs manifests itself differently between these sites and the precise strategies and practices of these organizations vary, Zigon argues that they are all engaged in combating the manner in which the drug war sets normative limits on people's ways of being in the world and produces an internal other in the form of the stigmatized figure of the 'addict'. Activists do this in part through finding ways of creatively disrupting people's preconceived notions of drug users and the drug war in order to open spaces for alternatives to it. Moreover, the anti-drug war movement is involved in building forms of non-exclusive community in which individuals are free to pursue diverse ways of being and acting, which cultivate an ethic of mutual care.

Some fascinating examples of this sort of community described in the ethnography include Vancouver's Downtown Eastside, where the drug users' union VANDU has helped found social enterprises that employ current drug users, built housing co-operatives, and established a community bank – which also holds opera performances and at one time sold crack pipes in its lobby – open to all who arrive. Zigon contends that these instances of 'worldbuilding' establish new sources of normativity and the potentiality to transform the wider society around them. This, he concludes, serves as an example of a way of doing politics which can address other contemporary issues and how anthropology might study the emergence of possible alternatives to our present social worlds.

For those interested in a theoretically complex and ambitious contribution to the anthropology of ethics and political anthropology, this book has much to offer. However, I wonder if some readers might be put off by the abundant use of Heideggerian phenomenological terminology as well as a less than entirely clear writing style. Moreover, it is unlikely that all will agree that Zigon has satisfactorily demonstrated some of the bold claims to theoretical and methodological novelty made in *A war on people*, such as his contention that his approach is fundamentally different from conventional multi-sited ethnography. Lastly, actual portraits of drug users, their biographies, and detailed accounts of the sites and organizations depicted in the book are limited and at times seem secondary to theoretical discussions of the drug war, human freedom, and community. While Zigon makes clear that *A war on people* is best not understood as a conventional ethnography and does provide a number of revealing characterizations and vignettes, I think that many readers will be left disappointed at an absence of detail which might further contextualize its argument and provide textured description to this theoretically dense work. That noted, I would recommend this book to researchers and students at all levels who are interested in the anthropology of ethics and in novel approaches to fieldwork methodology and political anthropology, as well as to anyone seeking ethnographic studies of the global war on drugs.

Matthew Doyle *University of Sussex*

Violence and inequality

Jauregui, Beatrice. *Provisional authority: police, order, and security in India*. ix, 205 pp., illus., bibliogr. Chicago: Univ. Press, 2016. £24.50 (paper)

There is nothing provisional about Beatrice Jauregui's *Provisional authority*. Her description and analysis of policing in India's northern and most populous state, Uttar Pradesh, will surely stand the test of time. It is one of the better, more thought-provoking of current police ethnographies, aiming, as Jauregui notes, to solve 'the puzzle of police authority and its relationship to social order, democratic politics, and security in postcolonial India' (p. 6). This conundrum is laid out and eventually solved over the book's 158 pages.

Chapter 1 introduces the research and its theoretical framework, which revolves around the question and definition of police authority. Chapter 2 highlights how many policing practices in India are widely perceived as involving corruption, brutality, and immorality. The Indian police often act in accordance with personal rather than professional regulations, and habitually demand bribes. On the other hand, there is also a general recognition that they are part of a society within which one must necessarily be somewhat devious to make ends meet. Jauregui unfolds this 'corruptible virtue', through the concept of *jugaad*, which she explains as being not merely a material but also a relational form of *bricolage*. Chapter 3 provides several examples of how Indian police rationalize shortcuts, fabrications, and extra-legal methods as necessary to secure the desired legal outcome.

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They see themselves not only as law enforcers but also as 'fixers of criminality'. They sometimes literally *bring* people, who they or a higher power have labelled 'real criminals', to justice while making sure that any lack of evidence does not stand in the way of justice being served.

Contrastingly, chapter 4 reveals the staggering number of deaths among frontline Indian officers, illustrating that Indian policing is indeed a makeshift business, and how this extends to the ways in which they are treated as mere replaceable resources. Contrary to popular belief, most officers do not die valiantly in the line of duty but 'simply' perish owing to their pitiable and illness-inducing work conditions. In chapter 5, the focus shifts from frontline officers to the managers, clearly demonstrating how police and policing are inherently entangled with politics and other forms of power in Uttar Pradesh. This chapter offers staggering figures and examples that demonstrate how supervisors are constantly relocated – often during elections and at the whim of the ruling party and candidates. Constant changes in management, Jauregui argues, may be politically opportune but are devastating for the police as they undermine any sense of job security, making any long-term systematizing or planning impossible.

Lastly, chapter 6 provides an overall analysis and answer to the question of how 'police authority' can be understood within the postcolonial Indian context. Jauregui here concludes that the Indian police's authority is fundamentally frail and insecure, or indeed 'provisional' – a provisionality not only endemic to Indian policing but also emblematic of the Indian state. Considering the theoretical implications, Jauregui notes that most discussions of police authority tend to revolve around Weber's discussion on the state's claim to the 'monopoly of the legitimate use of violence'. While such theories imply a contractual relation between the state and the general public, they also assume 'a bright line between the idea of "the state" and the rest of "society"' (p. 11). However, as Jauregui's ethnography more than illustrates, rather than being detached from society and people, the officers in Uttar Pradesh often find that their work takes place within constantly shifting politico-legal, sociocultural, and material circumstances. This is why much policing in India involves constant, arduous – yet sometimes inspired – negotiations of many of the cornerstones that are traditionally, at least through an Occidental lens, seen as foundational to policing. What Indian police officers might do, and whether this is seen as right or wrong, is often situational and relational rather than doctrinal – provisional more than based on a set of principles.

Overall, I found Jauregui's book convincing, inspiring, and a splendid read. I particularly enjoyed how her work is exemplary of what anthropologists bring to the table when studying police, namely a keen eye for the quotidian aspects of policing coupled with a holistic and humanizing approach. While not losing sight of police as a societal institution, *Provisional authority* excellently contextualizes police practices and perceptions within the fabric of everyday and political life, revealing Indian policing to be a precarious activity carried out by individuals who are unavoidably entwined within larger societal struggles.

There is only one minor critical comment that I will make. I occasionally found Jauregui's introduction of self-made concepts almost superfluous: for example, 'corruptible virtue' and 'orderly ethics'. While these concepts did pique my theoretical curiosity, I believe that the analysis could (also) have come a long way by relating the empirical data to the concept of 'police discretion' – a concept on which many books and papers have been written. This is a missed opportunity as Jauregui's work obviously makes a novel and, I believe, needed contribution to debates about how and why police choose to do what they do.

David Sausdal *University of Copenhagen*

Kilcullen, David; with a foreword by Professor Sir Hew Strachan. *The accidental guerrilla: fighting small wars in the midst of a big one (reprint)*. xxx, 346 pp., maps, figs, illus., bibliogr. London: C. Hurst & Co., 2017. £20.00 (cloth)

The United States has been in continual warfare since 9/11 in the Middle East and beyond, largely fighting anti-American insurgencies. American security elites are 'woke' to the need to win these conflicts. Unsurprisingly, glitterati status is attached both to those good at fighting the wars, and to those good at telling the fighters how to fight. General David Petraeus exemplifies the first category; Lieutenant Colonel David Kilcullen the second. Contributing to the Lieutenant Colonel's celebrity status is the fact that he is a prolific author, and *The accidental guerrilla* is perhaps his finest book. It offers an understanding of the wars the Americans are fighting, and more importantly, from the perspective of security elites, it tells them how to win them.

David Kilcullen is an Australian who fought in certain of his country's 1990s Pacific

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'peace-keeping' operations. At a time when geopolitical heavyweights announced that international wars were *deja passé*, he became a guru for the new model of 'small wars': hybrid affairs predominantly involving guerrilla insurgencies. He is a combat vet; but he also claims to be an ethnologist, and ethnologists are useful dinner-party conversationalists. They titillate guests with exotic knowledge about native ontologies and, in Kilcullen's case, about how to beat the natives at their guerrilla games. Paradoxically, he is a person who does not know what he is talking about precisely because he knows what he is talking about; because of this paradox, his book turns out to be more than military shoptalk about killing bad guys. This paradox raises questions about the very nature of being in the current conjuncture.

The accidental guerrilla has a preface, prologue, five substantive chapters, and a conclusion. The preface is largely an autobiography of the Lieutenant Colonel's entire career, while the prologue adds yet more autobiography focusing on the warrior-ethnographer conducting fieldwork in Indonesia; trying to show readers how deft he is at prying information out of young, (possibly) insurgent informants. The five substantive chapters get down to work. Chapter 1 provides a 'conceptual framework' for the 'current pattern of conflict' (p. xviii) in the contemporary world. This 'framework' (pp. 35-9) is based upon a medical metaphor that explicates contemporary wars as the result of the natives becoming infected with an 'accidental guerrilla syndrome' (AGS). The syndrome progresses through four stages. The first is 'infection', which begins with the establishment of a safe haven amongst a native population by a transnational terrorist group (like al Qa'ida or Da'esh). This leads to 'contagion', which involves the diffusion of the transnational terrorists' ideology and violence throughout the native population. Contagion results in 'intervention' by 'outside' forces (the US military) to combat the transnational terrorists and, in so doing, disrupt the region. Intervention produces 'rejection', whereby the natives ally with the terrorist group to reject the interventionists, sparking a full-scale insurgency. The AGS is a description, not an explanation, of what happens. Nor is it clear that it describes what happens in all insurgency cases. Further, there is nothing 'accidental' about the guerrillas whom US forces face.

Chapter 2 starts with a bang-bang combat vignette set during the Afghanistan War and chapter 3 follows with another, this time starring the warrior-ethnographer himself in Iraq. Chapter 4 continues this theme: 'In the dim red glow of the crowded C130 transport aircraft, my soldiers' faces were guarded and withdrawn' (p. 186). Most of the text in these three chapters offers evidence supportive of the Lieutenant Colonel's AGS view – others (e.g. S.P. Reyna, *Deadly contradictions*, 2016) dispute Kilcullen's interpretation. Based upon the findings of these chapters, chapter 5 offers Kilcullen's recommendations of ten 'best practices' for winning the wars infected with AGS (pp. 265-9). Counterterrorism tactics are discouraged, along with a call for 'National Discussion' and a conference. In chapter 6, he calls for 'New Paradigms', offers 'Five Practical Steps', and concludes by recommending it is important to find 'new, breakthrough ideas' (p. 301) – all redundant.

Let's explore what the Lieutenant Colonel isn't woke about even though he *directly* sees it. Kilcullen explains that a guerrilla fights 'us' because 'we are in his space' (p. xiv). 'Us' are the US armed forces, who are 'aliens – imperial stormtroopers, with our Darth Vader sunglasses and grotesque and cowardly body armor' (p. 136). Kilcullen, warrior-ethnographer, has observed it, but isn't woke to his observations. The guerrillas are no accident. They are fighting 'imperial stormtroopers', who have invaded their 'space'. Let's be clear: the United States *is* an empire.

In brief, David Kilcullen can't see the forest for the trees. He sees the everyday life of insurgencies, but never once does he indicate that he knows that the insurgencies are one of the things that empires provoke. The opportunity cost for him of knowing all about fighting insurgencies is not knowing that these insurgencies are part-and-parcel of empires. This reality is something old and something new. The old is that the world remains a place of competing empires. The new is that these empires are competing in a time of climate change, and increasing warring and warming will terminate the experiment that is life on earth.

Stephen P. Reyna *Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology*

Kistler, S. Ashley (ed.). *Faces of resistance: Maya heroes, power, and identity*. xiv, 256 pp., map, illus., bibliogr. Tuscaloosa: Univ. of Alabama Press, 2018. £56.95 (cloth)

The individual and the collective are at odds in this thought-provoking volume of essays. The authors aim to fill in the silences and gaps of

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'official histories' and to bring 'hidden transcripts' to the fore (p. 3) by reviving 'prominent indigenous figures ... [who] help define indigenous agency by embodying the core values of indigenous life' (pp. 5-6): from colonial-era warriors to twentieth-century activists and community leaders. This said, S. Ashley Kistler as editor and some of the contributors also profoundly mistrust the category of 'hero', which many Maya consider irrelevant or, worse, a foreign imposition.

The first chapters focus on four Maya men who faced Spanish invasion in the sixteenth century in what is today Guatemala. The famous K'iche' leader Tekun Umam casts a long shadow over the entire volume. Judith Maxwell and Ixnal Ambrocia Cuma Chávez's chapter 1 reviews the documentary evidence for Tekun Umam's existence; the legends, dances, and literary works that recount his fatal confrontation with Spanish conquistador Pedro de Alvarado; and his perverse appropriation by the Guatemalan state – immediately prior to a brutal counterinsurgency war against the Maya from the 1970s to the 1990s – as an ideal warrior who defended the nation.

W. George Lovell and Christopher Lutz (chap. 2) offer an alternative set of conquest-era Maya heroes in Kaqchikel leaders Cahí Imox and Belehé Qat, who briefly allied with the Spanish before leading a war against the invaders. These iconic K'iche' and Kaqchikel figures came from only two of the twenty-one Mayan-language groups that have survived to the present day in Guatemala, and cannot fully represent the variety of experiences of conquest and colonization in the region. Kistler's chapter 3 on sixteenth-century Q'eqchi' leader Aj Poop B'atz thus charts how the people of Chamelco today celebrate their local hero as a way to 'confront the absence of the Q'eqchi' community in national historical discourse' (p. 77).

The following three chapters discuss heroic men from the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Allan Christenson (chap. 4) explains how Guatemalan Tz'utujil leader Mapla's Sojuel continues to visit and advise the community he served circa 1900, as a revered ancestral spirit or *nawal*. Stephanie Litka (chap. 5) sees globalized tourism creating opportunities to assert cultural autonomy and power through history-telling in Yucatán. Fernando Armstrong-Fumero (chap. 6) explores the paradox of contemporary Yucatec Maya appreciating Felipe Carrillo Puerto, a mestizo outsider and socialist activist in the 1910s and 1920s, while criticizing the latter's local Maya counterparts.

Women dominate the book's last half. David Carey (chap. 7) details the complicated mix of resistance and collaboration practised by Germana Catu and other Maya midwives in the mid-twentieth century, and the power they wielded within their communities. Betsy Konefal (chap. 8) highlights women leaders who fought for Indigenous human rights during Guatemala's counterinsurgency war of the 1970s to 1990s: from Q'eqchi' peasant leader Mamá Maquín, to Indigenous pageant queens, to activists and politicians like Rigoberta Menchú Tum, Otilia Lux de Cotí, and Rosalina Tuyuc. These essays raise the question of whether Maya female leadership developed in new ways in the twentieth century, or whether it is a deeper phenomenon absent from historical records.

The Maya heroines and heroes of the final chapters are treated as emblematic rather than unique, and as savvy and determined cultural negotiators. Abigail Adams's chapter 9 recounts the biography of Q'eqchi' scholar and pan-Maya activist Antonio Pop Cal 'for the historical record', but also charts the 'multiple waves of Maya activism' in which Pop Cal participated as one individual among many (p. 187). The mostly female Maya market vendors in Antigua Guatemala tell Walter Little (chap. 11) that 'we're all heroes' committing everyday acts of resistance. They forcefully reject Tekun Umam, seeing him as a victim and a fool. Survival itself is heroic, and too much emphasis on the individual can bring harm to the community. This echoes the common charge against Armstrong-Fumero's Yucatec Maya socialists from chapter 6: that they translated their political power into systemic state-sponsored violence for personal gain. Conversely, Aj Poop B'atz is valued by the Chamelcos today not because he resisted Spanish rule, but because he 'mediated two conflicting worlds to preserve indigenous practice' (p. 77); while Carey's traditional midwives were simultaneously rejected by but also collaborated with non-Maya doctors in order to care for their mostly Maya patients.

Kistler's introduction usefully elucidates these contradictions between individual heroism and collective survival without attempting to resolve them. The inclusion of chapters from both sides of the Mexico-Guatemala border is more problematic. While chapters about Yucatán are welcome, no explanation is given as to why this Mexican state was included but Chiapas (or, for that matter, Belize or Honduras) was not. The omission of any reference to the Zapatista rebellion is especially surprising given the volume's theme. One hopes that future work will

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more directly consider what difference the nation-state makes to Maya historical memories of heroism and resistance. The individual chapters of this volume would be excellent for undergraduate classroom use in a wide variety of contexts, including history, anthropology, and public health. Taken as a whole, they represent some of the finest work in the Anglophone academy especially on Guatemalan history from a Maya point of view.

Laura Matthew *Marquette University*

Porter, Holly. *After rape: violence, justice, and social harmony in Uganda*. xii, 255 pp., figs, illus., bibliogr. Cambridge: Univ. Press, 2017. £75.00 (cloth)

Holly Porter's book is a beautifully written, nuanced analysis of love, sex, violence, and social belonging. It begins with two compelling stories to give voice and agency to the people whom this monograph is about. She returns to these stories throughout the volume, unpacking the complexity of these stories and demonstrating the significance of both social context and cultural understanding. The stories are about rape and, as such, require sensitivity in their retelling. Porter provides rich detail of how individuals and communities address rape cases. She situates her analysis in the broader feminist scholarship on rights, rape, and violence.

The research conducted for *After rape* was extensive: 187 in-depth interviews were completed in two villages where seventy-six women indicated they had experienced sexual violence. Some women had been raped on more than one occasion, constituting a total of ninety-four different instances. Porter's research is also remarkable for the nature of participant observation she employed and its length, spanning a period of nearly fifteen years. Her study began with visits to Uganda in 2005, followed by structured research conducted between 2009 and 2011, and ongoing return trips during the book's preparation. The author learned Luo, the local language, so she could more fully grasp and represent the stories she heard. Also, while her research methodology is solid and extensive, Porter remains humble in her reflections on her positionality as a white, 'American foreigner' and how that might have contributed to the power relations that she tried to mitigate through ongoing interactions with her interlocutors, particularly through seeking feedback on her interpretation of their stories.

Despite the large sample and extensive research, Porter takes great care to present the voices of the study participants and to demonstrate their agency. Their unique and diverse situations and experiences are at the heart of the analysis – an analysis of wrongdoing that is both understood and challenged through the theoretical lenses of structure/agency and social belonging. The overlapping and competing tensions between structure and agency are examined through women's stories of navigating the reality and constraints of patriarchy, while using their agency to cope with inequality in power relations, and, often, to assert power in less-understood ways that include silence. In doing so, she avoids essentializing the experiences of rape and sexual violence in Acholi communities.

This complexity is elaborated within the context of understanding rape outside the binary of men and women, or victim and perpetrator. Comprehending this complexity requires a knowledge of the cultural realities, norms, and expectations of life in these Ugandan communities. Porter's research uncovers how rape takes on different meanings in different contexts and how those meanings and contexts shape perspectives and resolutions within the community. Her analysis builds on the common metaphors, definitions, and understandings of Acholi love and of the meaning and purpose of sex, as well as on the socially constituted and culturally embedded experiences she documents.

Despite the details of the stories provided, Porter's presentation of material does not contribute to voyeurism or the consumption of others' misfortunes. She relays these stories for the purpose of uncovering the dynamics leading up to, during, and after rape. She positions the analysis of these wrongdoings within the context of Acholi people's understandings of right and wrong, noting that 'justice in the aftermath of crime or wrongdoing is less a question of moral or legal culpability and more of restoring damaged social harmony' (p. 221). Beyond the stories is a thoughtful reflection and careful analysis of these experiences in relation to concepts of social harmony.

Holly Porter's *After rape* is an important contribution to the study of individual versus collective rights. Her examination of cultural norms is central to her understanding of sexual and gender-based violence, and her insights reinforce the significance of cultural norms and customary practices in particular contexts. Porter's ethnography offers a rich qualitative contribution to empirical literature. This book is a

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much-needed and valuable addition to the 'forensic research' on sexual violence and rape and must be read by anyone working in cross-cultural contexts, and especially by those who are working in the areas of gender equality, sexual rights, and community development.

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Qureshi, Kaveri. *Marital breakdown among British Asians: conjugality, legal pluralism and new kinship*. xviii, 324 pp., figs, illus., bibliogr. Basingstoke: Palgrave Macmillan, 2018. £99.99 (cloth)

Marital breakdown among British Asians opens with Selma, a divorced, UK-born Pakistani solicitor, claiming that the 'typical immigrant working-class families' with whom she deals have 'taken to divorce like a duck to water' (p. 1). Selma's choice of words may be contentious, as Kaveri Qureshi writes, but her observations correspond to the available statistics that indeed indicate a dramatic rise in marital breakdown among British Pakistani Muslims. Individualization theorists have understood this as a form of 'catching up' with the rest of UK society, while others have analysed women's decision to divorce as an actual Hobson's choice. In this important contribution, Qureshi moves beyond stereotypical analyses of British Asian families as stuck in time, and of British Asian women as either victims or heroines, offering an authoritative account of marital breakdown and divorce among British Pakistanis that attends to gender dynamics within marriages, families, and communities as they intersect with dynamics of class, race, and immigration.

To do so, Qureshi draws on extensive fieldwork among British Pakistanis in East London (2005-7), Peterborough (2011), and both cities (2012-14), resulting in interviews with fifty-one women and twenty-three men, as well as a long-term engagement with twenty-nine participants. Acknowledging the difficulties of interpreting accounts of marital breakdown and divorce, Qureshi proposes to analyse them as 'narratives' through which divorcees actively reconfigure their post-break-up relationships. She also interprets her material in a more realist way to make it speak to public and academic debates on conjugality, legal pluralism, and new kinship.

Talking about their divorces, most divorcees mention as the main reasons for conflict a lack of love, intimacy, and sexual satisfaction, as well as men's inability to live up to their role as providers. In such cases, both men and women sought support from their natal families, who often shaped the nature of the conflict: for example, by encouraging them to stay or leave their marriage, or by allowing/not allowing them to return to their natal home. Qureshi goes on to caution against conceptualizing such family mediation, often cited as traditional, as a form of law, arguing that this perspective provides no new insights and may render the concept of law meaningless. She does describe sharī'a and state law as inherently plural but emphasizes that they do not stand on an equal footing, with state law appearing more authoritative and powerful.

Post-divorce, shared parenting was the norm, but mothers were much more likely to become the resident parent. Pushed into their role as mothers, women maintained and developed intimate relations with their children, natal families, and friends. In contrast, divorced men often remained socially isolated, and were less likely to remarry. The male bloodline remained important, shaping relations between parents and their stepchildren, and between half-brothers and sisters. These post-divorce family dynamics only partially fit with an understanding of recombinant families as 'families of choice' as elaborated by the new-kinship literature.

Marital breakdown among British Asians concludes with Qureshi's assertion that rising divorce rates among British Pakistanis indeed reflect changing family dynamics and gender norms, with notions of individual choice and conjugal love gaining in prominence. Concurrently, women and men aspired to and upheld traditional gender roles and expected the active involvement of their natal families in their marital life. It would therefore be wrong to take rising divorce rates as evidence for women's emancipation. Inspired by Saba Mahmood, Qureshi instead suggests that women's capacity to self-sacrifice and compromise is a form of agency. 'It is not necessarily more agential to leave an unhappy marriage than to stay in one, and as analysts, if not as activists, we should be mindful not to uphold one choice over another', Qureshi concludes on the book's final page (p. 309). The point is well taken, and carries an important political message within the British context, even if interpreting women's ability to self-sacrifice as agency may also gloss over their actual oppression, whether in the United Kingdom, Pakistan, or elsewhere. However, by concluding in this way, the author also appears to reduce her study to one of British Pakistanis, whereas she could have made it a study of social change in the United Kingdom more broadly.

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Nevertheless, *Marital breakdown among British Asians* stands as an important contribution which will be of interest to researchers, professionals, and activists working on the politics of immigration, family life, and gender in the United Kingdom and beyond.

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Sanabria, Emilia. *Plastic bodies: sex hormones and menstrual suppression in Brazil*. xi, 252 pp., table, illus., bibliogr. Durham, N.C.: Duke Univ. Press, 2016. £20.99 (paper)

In *Plastic bodies*, Emilia Sanabria skilfully explores the intertwinement of menstruation management and sex hormones use in the city of Salvador de Bahia, Brazil. She shows how these phenomena reverberate far beyond individuals, rippling through social classes and social relationships, ideas of race, educational status, state and private healthcare systems, politics, economies, and experiences, as well as shaping understandings of pain, discomfort, and personal hygiene. Starting from a description of menstrual suppression observed in Salvador, this meticulously structured ethnography cuts through the neoliberal notions of choice, forces of pharmaceutical marketing, and shockingly flexible interpretations of evidence-based medicine in Bahia to talk about understandings of bodies as malleable, or plastic. Rather than being a trait that allows the use of bodies to achieve personal aspirations, this plasticity is something to be managed through continuous observations of one's body and appropriate work on it to achieve desired goals, expressed through categories of sexual desire, emotional balance, and/or beauty, among others.

The details of the multi-sited fieldwork beautifully parallel and reflect the complexity and mobility of the issue at hand. Sanabria spends time in all sorts of spaces, from houses to public and private health clinics, conferences, pharmacies, and drug manufacturers, and speaks to people from across a variety of social classes and professions, exploring their motivations and goals around both managing menstruation and sex hormones use. From this, she constructs an intricate network of tensions and frictions that must be constantly negotiated in pursuit of the desired, self-enhanced body.

Sanabria also investigates how the use of sex hormones in Salvador has become relatively divorced from its contraceptive function. She dutifully explores this angle, which helps to display rather curious discourses around what is considered to be 'natural' when it comes to monthly menstruation (cf. chap. 2). While many of these claims can be attributed to 'paleofantasies' that fetishize an idea of the primitive (p. 101), Sanabria does not give in to a simple interpretation. Instead, she convincingly argues that Bahian women experience an irresolvable tension between the practicality of being able to suppress menstruation and the fact that withholding menstrual blood is frequently perceived as dangerous to health, which in turn leads to suspending the suppression.

The book's second part carefully follows the paths of sex hormones use, exposing their biopolitical significance, in addition to discussing how people forge the meanings of using such hormones for themselves – to increase the libido, enhance female qualities, or regulate emotions. Despite the great social inequalities characterizing Brazilian healthcare provision, the unregulated overmedication that is so characteristic of biomedicine in the nation (and most of Latin America) finds its way to all social classes, fuelled by neoliberal discourses of choice and local ideas of self-enhancement. Sanabria carefully points out that forms of citizenship are linked to forms of healthcare that people can afford and/or access. While private clinics attend to patients' autonomy and choice, state-run clinics focus on limiting excessive fertility, framing this as 'the individual's moral responsibility to a wider collectivity' (p. 132). For the urban poor, the use of sex hormones in the form of contraceptives is associated with private healthcare and can symbolize class ascension (p. 131).

What sets Sanabria's work apart is, on the one hand, the logical multiplicity of participants and sites described, and, on the other, her skilful deployment of the complexity of women's reproductive physiology through the fact of menstruation, which women are taught to effectively manage and expertly conceal. Menstruation might rarely make headlines, but it occupies a meaningful portion of most women's time, attention, and thoughts at least for a few decades of their lives. This ethnography affords it the time, space, and attention that are commensurate with menstruation's significance, without either glorifying or demonizing female biology.

If there is a flaw in the work, it would be that it fails to unpick the notion of 'menstrual blood'. Granted, there are consistent hints in both the ethnographic descriptions and analysis that suggest that it is perceived as somehow different from the blood circulating in the veins. Nonetheless, there is not much explicit fleshing

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out of this particular topic, in contrast to its specialist discussion of various types of sex hormones used for hormonal contraceptives.

Convincingly argued and engaging, *Plastic bodies* is an ethnography that would work well in a variety of both undergraduate and postgraduate courses in anthropology, exploring reproduction, medicine, the body, gender, science and technology studies, health policies and inequalities, or in courses focusing on Latin America or Brazil specifically.

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