

Book and film reviews

Coping with change

BENTHALL, JONATHAN. *Islamic charities and Islamic humanism in troubled times*. x, 215 pp., figs, bibliogr. Manchester: Univ. Press, 2016. £75.00 (cloth)

This book, as the author notes, is a collection of seventeen previously published articles and book reviews with an original introduction and very brief afterword. Its value lies in bringing together a range of contributions on Islamic charities, which would be difficult to access, with what Jonathan Benthall labels 'Islamic humanism'. The articles in the first part examine Islamic charities worldwide, and in the Arab Gulf states, Britain, Indonesia, Mali, Palestine, and the United States, including the denial of a US visa to the Muslim scholar Tariq Ramadan because of donations he had made to a Palestinian charity.

The articles and reviews in the second part of *Islamic charities and Islamic humanism in troubled times* focus on the role of religious tolerance. Chapter 10 especially reviews several previous studies by historians and anthropologists. Benthall concludes that 'Islam has proved to be just as flexible as Christianity in accommodating popular forms of belief and practice' (p. 148), although it could equally well be said that Islam has been as intolerant of sects within it and other faiths as has Christianity and most other religions. The books reviewed include studies of religious persecution, America's war on terror, and the historical link between religion and violence. Among the individuals discussed are the Muslim scholar Yusuf al-Qaradawi, widely recognized as 'the most influential religious authority in the

Sunni Muslim world' (p. 181), the controversial Swiss/Egyptian scholar Tariq Ramadan, and the Shi'a Muslim anthropologist Akbar Ahmed. Benthall praises Ahmed's *The thistle and the drone* (2013) for breaking out of anthropology's 'sectarian enclave' (p. 176), which only treats spirituality at the margins. No mention is made of Ahmed's justification for an 'Islamic anthropology', or of the fact that the strength of cultural anthropology as a discipline is that it does not set out from an a priori religious starting point. The notion of tribal Islam is problematic for a discipline that views the term 'tribe' just as heuristically useless as 'primitive'. The expression, despite its attempt to counter the stereotypes of Islam as inherently violent, only makes Islam seem more aggressive and incapable of being modern.

One of the longer reviews discusses Michael Cook's *Ancient religions, modern politics* (2014), which is rightly considered 'masterly imaginative scholarship' (p. 157). Cook's book provides an historical survey of several religions, comparing Islam to Christianity, Hinduism, and Buddhism on the topics of jihad and reform. The review contrasts Cook's apolitical approach with Akeel Bilgrami's *Secularism, identity, and enchantment* (2014), which challenges Western scholars to confront 'the wrongs of the US government and its allies' (p. 162) just as they oppose Islamic absolutism. Benthall chides Cook for ignoring Edward Said's *Orientalism* (1979) and not having a 'touch of post-Saidian reflexivity' (p. 163). The suggestion is that Cook should identify his motives, given how his work could reverberate in the mass media and be used for political ends. However, Cook is not the Orient-bashing scholar depicted by Said and there is no need to justify the kind of sound historical scholarship he writes.

The afterword provides a single paragraph (p. 194) summing up the second part on Islamic humanism, but Benthall's book is more about Islamic humanitarianism than humanism. No reference is made in any of the articles to the history and importance of humanism in Islam, nor is the term found in the index. Foremost in the analysis of Islamic humanism is the late historian George Makdisi, whose *The rise of colleges* (1981) presents a compelling case for the impact of Islamic education on Europe. Makdisi notes how, for example, the Islamic model of a professor as having a licence to teach (*ijaza li-al-tadris*) became the *licentia docendi* in the Latin West. In an important article published in the *Journal of the American Oriental Society* (109: 2, 1989) entitled 'Scholasticism and humanism in classical Islam and the Christian West', Makdisi argued that the roots of both the European school guilds of the Middle Ages and the humanism of the Italian Renaissance lay in earlier Islamic teaching.

A discussion of Islamic humanism as both an educational and a philosophical practice would be as compelling as the modern concept of humanitarianism, which is generally associated with Western models of human rights and social reform as a basis for providing aid of various kinds. However, Islamic teaching has long had a major humanitarian focus given the inclusion of alms giving as one of the five pillars of the faith and the many ways in which charity was practised over the centuries. Despite the distrust some have of Islamic charities fronting terrorist activities, Benthall provides examples of the positive role of Islamic charitable work in a wide range of social contexts. The ongoing humanitarian crises involving Muslims in Yemen, Syria, and elsewhere make this book an important guide for evaluating future aid and charitable work.

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INHORN, MARCIA C. & NEFISSA NAGUIB (eds). *Reconceiving Muslim men: love and marriage, family and care in precarious times*. viii, 335 pp., illus., bibliogr. Oxford, New York: Berghahn Books, 2018. £99.00 (cloth)

This is an edited volume of ethnographic studies showing Muslim men as devoted husbands and loving fathers, something quite distinct from popular depictions of them as violent misogynists. Marcia Inhorn is well known for her work on male (in)fertility and both she and her fellow editor Nefissa Naguib have written on

Muslim masculinity. *Reconceiving Muslim men* is divided into three sections: love and marriage, family life and caring, and situations of conflict and displacement. Its fifteen studies focus on men from the Middle East, Afghanistan, Central, South and Southeast Asia, North and sub-Saharan Africa – some living at home, others in the Americas or Europe.

Part I encompasses five chapters focusing on marital relations in Lebanon, Cairo, Mumbai, Java, and among Pashtuns in Afghanistan. Contradicting notions of domineering and controlling Muslim husbands, these chapters explore marriage as emerging from emotionally meaningful partnerships, as opposed to older forms of arranged marriage where more consideration was given to the bride's relations with her in-laws than with her husband. Part II discusses men in caring roles, focusing not on those considered feminine but on providing and an overall concern for fellow human beings. This section depicts Muslim men as responsible and loving fathers and husbands desiring the best for their female as well as male family members. It shows how these men practise religious piety through looking after the welfare of others: for instance, Iraqi Kurds helping Yezidi refugees from ISIS (D.E. King, chap. 7) and better-situated South Asian immigrants in Spain treating less fortunate Muslim South Asians as relatives, offering support and guidance (G. Martín-Sáiz, chap. 10).

Part III shows Muslim men facing precarious situations with responsibility, endeavouring to do their best for the future of their families and communities. We see this in men whose livelihoods have been seriously damaged by land misappropriation in Tanzania (V.R. Kamat, chap. 12); a rebel 'general' in the Central African Republic's most abandoned region (L. Lombard, chap. 11); refugees stranded in Greece (T. Palivos, chap. 13); and Syrian fathers whose care for their families brought them to flee by the Arctic route via Russia into northern Norway rather than by the more dangerous Mediterranean route (Naguib, chap. 14). Lastly, Inhorn's chapter 15 describes the dilemmas of impoverished refugees with low sperm counts from communities where childlessness is socially unacceptable, but who cannot afford the expense of IVF services in the United States.

The book's strength lies in its ethnographic approach, which facilitates digging beneath the surface of claims of normative masculinity to view actual practices, along with desires and longings that differ significantly from Muslim men's stereotypical portrayals. This reveals the limitations of reading public discourse as

representing actual behaviour and attitudes since individuals interpret and engage with their societies' gender norms in terms of their own positionality, needs, and yearnings while nevertheless being constrained by the penalties they and their families might face as a result of perceptible deviance.

Several chapters – the introduction, chapters 4 (N.J. Smith-Hefner), 5 (G. Pathak), and 8 (A. Begim) – refer to Inhorn's concept of 'emergent masculinities' to depict men engaged in new kinds of gendered performances, demonstrating that 'real men' can still show love and caring. However, this concept implies neither a diminishing of the influence of religion nor its rejection. On the contrary, emergent masculinities are described in several chapters as associated with increased religiosity. Indeed, a deeper engagement with Islam at the expense of local norms is revealed as affording men closer and more emotionally meaningful relationships with their wives and children. This is demonstrated, for instance, in both A. Chioyenda's story of the Pashtun Baryalay (chap. 3) and N.J. Smith-Hefner's account of educated Javanese youths who embrace both Islam and newly emergent ways of being men who support their womenfolk's education, relate to them primarily with love, and largely eschew the image of a dominant Muslim patriarch.

Another important message arising from the book is the diversity of life experiences and situations faced by Muslim men from different parts of the world, along with a wide variety of ways of handling them. This reinforces the idea that Muslims do not form a monolithic group and should be viewed as at least as disparate as Christians in their everyday interpretations of religion and performances of masculinity. *Reconceiving Muslim men* makes a welcome addition to the growing body of literature on Muslim men, an excellent companion volume to the more theoretical discussions of masculinity, which largely focus on Western contexts, and a useful reminder of the need to differentiate between discourse and practice in exploring gender issues more broadly.

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PACHECO DE OLIVEIRA, JOÃO. *O nascimento do Brasil e outros ensaios: 'pacificação', regime tutelar e formação de alteridades*. 362 pp., maps, tables, illus., bibliogr. Rio de Janeiro: Contra Capa, 2016. R\$ 64.00 (paper)

João Pacheco de Oliveira is a senior researcher recognized as a leading figure in historical

anthropology and Brazilian ethnology. His agenda has aspired towards an understanding of indigenous life in Brazil, both based on the complexities of historical events and the struggles of Indigenous peoples with the nation-state. The volume *O nascimento do Brasil e outros ensaios* (*The birth of Brazil and other essays*) should be understood as a consolidation of Pacheco de Oliveira's life-long contributions.

The book's nine chapters, collected from different sources, do not follow a clear chronological order. The last one, 'Pacification and the military tutelary regime in the management of peoples and territories', makes an historical connection between previous centuries of Brazilian colonization and more current debates related to the violent police occupation of Rio de Janeiro's favelas. The connector used in this broad temporal analysis is the category of 'pacification', which the author contends is an administrative concept deployed by the state in order to control internal populations considered to be different from the norm. From the state's point of view, both Indigenous peoples and favela dwellers are 'deviants' in need of pacification. Nevertheless, this is not actually a peaceful process, since it involves the use of aggressive state police-military power, as the author observes.

The remaining eight chapters offer more general discussions that provide an historical revision of narratives related to the birth of Brazil as a nation, always challenging widespread understandings of Indigenous peoples as minor agents in the genesis of the country (chap. 1). In-depth historical data regarding the formation of the Amazon region are presented in chapters 3 and 4, along with an important reminder that what we currently recognize as one country was once divided into two Portuguese Americas: one was the colony known as Brazil, with its capital located in Salvador da Bahia, another was known as the colony of Maranhão e Grão-Pará, with its capital in the Amazonian city of Belém. Pacheco de Oliveira argues that the implications of this complex historical configuration in relation to the emergence of Brazil, and even to ethnological assumptions, are deeper than it is assumed.

Different 'alterity regimes' appear as key analytical concepts at many points throughout the book. In chapter 2, for example, Pacheco de Oliveira presents a detailed discussion of the regime known as 'indigenism', an approach with evolutionary connotations through which the state acquired the authority to manage a supposedly savage Amerindian population. Chapter 6 is focused on the origins of the

'tutulary regime' and in chapters 5, 7, and 8 we are introduced to new 'alterity regimes', which have in common the more active participation of Indigenous peoples in their own political representation. Chapter 5 is the most robust, providing an excellent introduction to the concept of indigenous ethnogenesis, taking seriously and theorizing the re-emergence of Indigenous groups previously considered decimated, a topic of utmost importance in current political debates, and full of theoretical potential for future anthropological discussion. One of the main strengths of *O nascimento do Brasil*, and of Pacheco de Oliveira's style of ethnology, is the constant emergence of themes that prove to be relevant for contemporary politics: from his analysis of territorialization and flux, connected to an investigation of the state, to issues of ethnicity and colonialism.

The preface and some chapters of the manuscript, however, promise more than they actually deliver. Chapter 4, for instance, does not build significantly on existing debates regarding the concept of frontier. More serious, perhaps, is the lack of ethnographic material derived from Pacheco de Oliveira's own fieldwork. Instead, the author relies heavily on the findings of other anthropologists: particularly on the work of researchers from the Federal University of Bahia (UFBA) and other institutions on questions related to 'ethnogenesis'; and, within his own department at Museu Nacional (UFRJ), on the work of the anthropologist Antônio Carlos de Souza Lima on pacification, for example.

For anthropologists who expect long-term and intimate research with a single group, Pacheco de Oliveira's volume may feel too broad. His way out of this potential critique has been to claim that he practises 'an historical anthropology'. Indeed, his approach towards historical multiplicities is valuable. Pacheco de Oliveira proves to be ambitious in proposing an alternative interpretation of Brazilian history, one in which Indigenous peoples are at the forefront of struggles that gave birth to the largest nation in Latin America.

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VATUK, SYLVIA. *Marriage and its discontents: women, Islam and the law in India*. xviii, 273 pp., tables, bibliogr. New Delhi: Women Unlimited, 2017. Rs. 650 (cloth)

This is a collection of eight essays previously published on religion, law, and marriage in India,

with a new introduction by the author. The collection is welcome, as it brings together some of Sylvia Vatuk's important interventions, highlighting the depth, nuance, and range of the research. She has chosen to present the essays, first published between 2001 and 2015, in chronological order of publication, which lends *Marriage and its discontents* pedagogical value and depth, as it demonstrates how a research project unfolds.

The greatest strength of the collection lies in the data Vatuk musters about women's experiences with Muslim Personal Law (MPL). With her characteristic frankness, the author writes that she turned her attention to MPL 'due to an increasing unease with the prevailing tendency of the popular ... literature, to account for most of the social disabilities under which Muslim women suffer by reference to the personal law regime by which they are governed' (p. vii). Vatuk set out to find out whether, in fact, the particular entailments of MPL – polygyny, unilateral divorce, and religion-specific maintenance laws – are the primary source of hardship for women. Each chapter moves beyond the information available in legal statutes, and High and Supreme Court judgments, to offer data about how Muslim women navigate lower civil courts and non-state *dar ul-qaza* (shari'a courts). Vatuk's analysis is based on an impressive range of sources, including interviews with judges and *qazis* (Islamic judges), litigants, lawyers, and activists; family and shari'a court case archives; observations of hearings; and newspapers. Most of the research was conducted in Chennai and Hyderabad, complemented by some data on Delhi.

The findings are striking, overturning numerous truisms about Muslim women's experiences of personal law. Vatuk finds, first, that Muslim women's experiences in civil courts differ little from those of women governed by other personal laws and, furthermore, that whether their cases are heard in civil or religious courts, the logic according to which their cases are heard is overwhelmingly paternalistic: 'legal discourse of "rights" ... transformed into a discourse of "welfare"' (p. 76). Secondly, her research shows that in spite of panic about unilateral male divorce (triple *talaq*), Muslim women frequently initiate divorce by *khul'* (which requires the husband's consent), exhibiting a willingness to exercise their rights. At the same time, and this is another hallmark of Vatuk's work, she does not draw triumphalist conclusions but shows that *khul'* is at once an important legal avenue for women and limited, as the divorcing husband must agree to

give the divorce and can sometimes push his wife into asking for *khul'* in order to escape the social approbation that accompanies a decision to divorce. Here, as the author notes, more ethnographic research about individual cases and about *qazis'* methods of adjudication would be a welcome complement to the detailed studies of court archives. A third finding that emerges from Vatuk's dogged research in lower courts and with lawyers and litigants is that MPL is being used in unexpected ways: for example, divorced Muslim women in Hyderabad are increasingly receiving maintenance payments from *wakf* boards, which oversee charitable endowments, under the Muslim Women (Protection of Rights on Divorce) Act (MWA), contesting the assumption that MWA has mainly disadvantaged Muslim divorcees. The overarching (though unstated) implication of these chapters is that signalling out the MPL as the chief source of hardship for Muslim women is but a red herring; rather, their struggles arise at least as much from patriarchal expectations of and for marriage and from class: that is, from relations of power that constrain Indian women regardless of religion.

The other theme in these essays is marriage. Three essays concern changing patterns of marriage and dowry and the expectations of spouses. Based on detailed genealogical research, Vatuk is able to detail the continuities and changes in Muslim marriage over decades. She finds that although methods of choosing spouses have changed over time, broad preference for close kin has not. Another chapter examines newspaper discourses about dowry, detailing a variety of Muslim critiques of the practice. Finally, an informative essay on Islamic feminism captures a variety of positions held by women who reinterpret the sources of Islam in order to help women secure the rights with which it endows them. Reforming MPL is central to these interventions. I wonder how best to judge Vatuk's focus on legal reform if, as the MPL chapters show, Muslim women are in fact confronted more by classism and patriarchy than by obstacles that inhere in MPL. That said, given its empirical richness and the questions it opens, *Marriage and its discontents* should be seen as an important contribution to the scholarship on religion, law, and marriage in India.

KATHERINE LEMONS *McGill University*

YANG, JIE. *Mental health in China: change, tradition, and therapeutic governance*. xii, 249 pp., map, bibliogr. Cambridge: Polity, 2018. £15.99 (paper)

China in recent decades has witnessed a sharp increase in demand for mental health services, a rapid expansion of treatment modalities, and a proliferation of psychological terms in popular culture. Jie Yang's book offers an accessible and highly engaging introductory exploration of this 'psychoboom'. In seven chapters moving between a discussion of psychiatric hospitals, self-help movements, indigenous psychology, and counselling outreach programmes, *Mental health in China* shows how psychologization and the attendant processes of individualization and medicalization actively shape contemporary Chinese society.

Yang convincingly argues that the Chinese state plays a central role in orchestrating the country's mental health interventions. Drawing on Foucauldian understandings of governmentality, affect theory, and recent medical and psychological anthropology research, she shows how mental health interventions in the new millennium share common goals of therapeutic governance, which include promoting market interests, legitimating the one-party rule, and striving to create a stable workforce. This art of governing is shaped by Chinese history in various ways: prominent mental health authors creatively deploy concepts from Buddhism, Taoism, and Chinese medicine in their writings, while practitioners develop interventions that are shaped by Maoist legacies of sociopolitical diagnosis and 'thought work'.

Drawing on WeChat discussions, newspaper reports, influential popular mental health publications, interviews, and observations from Yang's fieldwork, *Mental Health in China* attends to both providers' and patients' experiences. While Freud focused on neuroses tied to childhood sexuality and Oedipal conflicts, Fairburn diagnosed schizoid tendencies, and Kohut attended to widespread narcissistic injury, Yang here claims that anxiety linked to the country's rapid economic growth and inequality is fuelling the psychoboom (p. 204). The excellent chapter 2 – 'New Chinese mental health "illnesses"' – offers a compendium of recently emerging ailments in the People's Republic. Readers are introduced to smog blues, money hunger disease, unemployment complex syndrome, princess disease, country bumpkin syndrome, and empty-heart disease. Yang shows that these conditions – appearing in both popular and medical domains – can be understood as idioms of distress intimately connected to the country's market-orientated reforms.

The author's fieldwork, conducted in Beijing and Shandong province, provides material for

nanced explorations of how gender and class intersect to shape illness experiences and treatments. Therapeutic governance, she shows, affects men and women differently. For example, women's distress or suicide attempts tend to be attributed to personality problems while men's illnesses are often traced to socioeconomic problems. Mothers are expected to perform happiness to improve home life for their husbands and children (pp. 85-91), while men who experience a loss of passion in their work life are more likely to be diagnosed as 'plasticine people' (*xiangpiren*) suffering from suppressed anger (pp. 93-4). Across several chapters, Yang makes a compelling case that psychological interventions in China often deflect attention from the social and political aetiologies of patients' struggles. Accounts of a family moving from village to village to escape unwelcome attention to the father's mental illness (p. 108), and a young mother's attempts to creatively deploy a diagnosis of postpartum depression to hide her earlier history of schizophrenia (p. 112), offer vivid examples of how rural residents in particular can confront intense stigma.

The book also draws attention to diverging dynamics at work in different mental health settings. Doctors' efforts to supplement psychopharmacological interventions with more personalized forms of treatment, as discussed in chapter 5, echo a tension that Tanya Luhrmann (*Of two minds*, 2000) explored in her study of North American psychiatry. Meanwhile, government attempts to diagnose and treat 'officials' heartache' (*guan xinbing*) – depression and suicide amongst the country's party cadre – foregrounds the historically particular stresses faced by leaders in the Chinese Communist Party (p. 21).

One intriguing question raised by *Mental health in China* is how the popular imagination of mental health in China has undergone rapid changes. Amidst a proliferation of clinical interventions and professional advice, patients and practitioners alike come to understand their needs, responsibilities, and possibilities for healing in new ways. Patients increasingly bring their own ideas about talk therapy to their encounters with therapists. Practitioners, meanwhile, balance their passion for various psychological interventions (among many others, Kleinian psychoanalysis) with ongoing pressures to attend to aspects of therapeutic governance that Yang documents. In addition to offering astute observations and analyses of contemporary trends in mental health practices, these practitioners' sophisticated understanding of the psyche challenges implicit

metapsychological assumptions of anthropologists in potentially productive ways.

Jie Yang has written an excellent introductory text, a book impressive in its scope, readability, and clarity of argument. It provides a fascinating window onto recent developments of social life in China, while raising important questions about future directions of state interventions and mental health diagnosis and treatment.

NICHOLAS BARTLETT *Barnard College, Columbia University*

Creating heritage

FALSER, MICHAEL. *Angkor Wat: a transcultural history of heritage* (Vol. 1 & 2). 1150 pp., maps, illus., plates, bibliogr. Berlin, Boston: Walter de Gruyter GmbH, 2019. £157.00 (cloth)

These two volumes about Angkor Wat in Cambodia comprise a transcultural history of its 150 years as a heritage site, spanning from the French discovery of the Angkor monuments in the tropical jungle in 1860 to 2010. Michael Falser has spent a decade of research compiling *Angkor Wat: a transcultural history of heritage*, beginning with his first encounter with the 'real' Angkor Wat in 1999. The outcome comprises over a thousand pages presented in two volumes and is accompanied by hundreds of illustrations consisting of maps, posters, photos, and drawings. Falser's intensive research took place in France, Germany, Austria, Cambodia, Thailand, and Japan, where he visited archives, libraries, museums, archaeological sites, institutions, universities, and professionals from diverse disciplines.

Numerous manuscripts have been published on and around the Angkor monuments in general and Angkor Wat in particular, from the perspectives of the history of civilization, art, archaeology, architecture, cartography, religion, anthropology, sociology, conservation, tourism, and heritage studies. Among them, this book stands out: it both touches on nearly all the aforementioned disciplines and represents some of the most comprehensive research done on Angkor heritage. *Angkor Wat* also critically analyses how the rulers of post-independence Cambodia and foreign others have attempted to make use of the site for their own purposes. The valuation of Angkor Wat has shifted through time, depending on ideologies, agents, and individual players. These volumes elucidate how this, the largest religious monument in the world, has been appropriated to justify French colonialism

through the plastic casts presented at exhibitions in France, and further in museum displays, posters, books, and restoration/conservation discourses. Angkor Wat has also been the subject of Siamese nationalistic manipulation, and of India's recent attempt to build an expanded copy of it as the largest Hindu temple in the world.

Theoretically, Falser uses the term 'translation' to describe both the power relations in any kind of cultural contact, and the process(es) of exchange and transfer (translation as 'trans-cultural' practice, vol. 1, p. 39) that also take place. He goes on to describe what emerges from this translation as Foucauldian 'heterotopias' of heritage production. Falser translates Foucault's definition from the French to argue that 'heterotopias' are 'counter-sites' or 'effectively enacted utopias' in which all 'the real sites found within a culture were simultaneously represented, contested, and inverted' (vol. 1, p. 47). Falser contends that these 'heterotopias' can be seen in France, Siam, and Cambodia in a variety of ways.

The strength of these volumes lies in the fact that the author has tirelessly searched through extensive archival data, as well as relevant books and articles, in order to comprehensively analyse the transcultural history of Angkor Wat as a cultural heritage site. His highlighting of colonial documents that had been stored in the basements of their respective institutions, and effective use of illustrations, photos, maps, and drawings, no doubt will help many researchers. Equally, his writing in English is helpful to readers who are unfamiliar with French. It is, however, regrettable that not all the French has been translated into English. Additionally, his criticism of others' work on and around Angkor is sometimes biased and subjective. He criticizes them for not searching in UNESCO's archives, or for not thoroughly considering the behind-the-scenes process that brought Angkor to the World Heritage List between 1987 and 1993. If someone's research focus were on UNESCO, it might be important, but this is less significant for discussions of the management of Angkor as a World Heritage site after 1992. Moreover, if all researchers on Angkor or World Heritage sites had followed Falser's path, he would no longer be the first scholar to reveal all this material to the world.

Although, overall, the work is worthy, it does contain too many names, detailed historical accounts, and long quotations, which at times could confuse and, in my opinion, bore readers. Parts of volume 2, especially 'Angkor as UNESCO world heritage: the decisive years 1987-1993', could have been summarized, especially the

section on UNESCO's internal strife. After being designated as a World Heritage site, disputes over the 'heritage translation' of Angkor became more intense than formerly, especially among the 'local residents' of Angkor park and the Cambodian authorities. While this is not part of Falser's document- and object-focused research, many researchers have debated the subject, and more of their important discussions on the issues of heritage translation and contestation could have been included. That noted, *Angkor Wat: a transcultural history of heritage* should be considered an excellent reference for future and present researchers of Angkor, Cambodia, colonialism, art history, heritage politics, conservation, and tourism.

KEIKO MIURA *Waseda University*

KAPLAN, JONATHAN & FEDERICO PAREDES UMAÑA.
Water, cacao, and the early Maya of Chocolá.
xxviii, 494 pp., maps, figs, tables, illus.,
bibliogr. Gainesville: Univ. Press of Florida,
2018. \$125.00 (cloth)

Chocolá, with a hundred or more substantial platform mounds, is one of the largest sites in the piedmont overlooking the Pacific coastal plain of Guatemala. It was an early focus of archaeological interest within what is usually called the Southern Maya Area: Robert Burkitt's investigations early in the twentieth century probed its monumental architecture and located an elegant relief sculpture, apparently a royal portrait. Substantial investigations at Chocolá were not renewed until Jonathan Kaplan and Federico Paredes Umaña began work in 2003.

Though archaeology in Guatemala and adjacent parts of eastern Mesoamerica has focused on the city-states of the lowland Maya world, by the late twentieth century enough evidence had accumulated from the Southern Maya Area to indicate that its societies participated in a process of exuberant development that embraced all of eastern Mesoamerica between about 300 BCE and 200 CE. This cultural ferment, in which Chocolá was a key participant, spawned several political systems featuring monumental architecture, monumental political art, and writing systems. One of these was the first crystallization of the pattern that would typify lowland Maya civilization after about 250 CE.

In *Water, cacao, and the early Maya of Chocolá*, Kaplan and Paredes Umaña present data and interpretations based on three seasons of field

investigations at Chocolá. The book is meant for professional archaeologists working in the region and elsewhere in Mesoamerica as well as for non-specialists interested in the Maya. Chapter 1 provides a preview of the volume along with a synthesis of the region's history and prehistory as context for the archaeological investigations. Chapter 2 summarizes the natural environment and cultural ecology of the area, and Chapter 3 synthesizes Colonial and modern history and ethnohistory. Chapters 4-6 describe the archaeological fieldwork, ceramics, and stone monuments, respectively. Chapter 7 focuses on Chocolá's water management system and on the argument that it was a centre of cacao production and export. Chapter 8 recapitulates the data and interpretations. Five appendices describe botanical remains; the mapping of the site; sourcing Chocolá's obsidian using X-ray fluorescence; radiocarbon dates; and documentation of cacao consumption through detection of theobromine using liquid chromatography.

Non-specialists are unlikely to be interested in the detailed descriptions, but archaeologists will be left wanting more; none of the sections describing archaeological data has the degree of detail usual in a site report. Contextual information, especially the synthesis of regional history, is extensive, yet the text does not always situate Chocolá clearly in relation to general patterns that were widely shared in eastern Mesoamerica. Although Chocolá appears to have been occupied from about 800 BCE until 900 CE or later, the volume's focus is almost exclusively on the early florescence, especially water management and cacao production.

The archaeological evidence for water control indicates a drainage system, but Kaplan and Paredes Umaña hypothesize that these features were part of a larger system used to irrigate cacao groves. A large, low stone-faced platform on the fringe of the site core is identified as functioning in the administration of agricultural activities. The excavators speculate that it supported perishable buildings and that irrigation canals were located nearby. Given the importance of cacao in the region at the time of the Spanish invasion, the inference that Chocolá was engaged in intensive cacao production and exchange is perfectly plausible, but the only material evidence of pre-Columbian cacao is the chemical traces of theobromine in ten pottery fragments. This confirms cacao consumption, but not intense production. The volume's interpretations are plausible but they are not always clearly supported by data from the excavations.

Moreover, the text does not read smoothly in many places; odd wording and confusing constructions make its arguments hard to follow. This reader wished that the press had exercised a heavier editorial hand.

Commentary on the colonialist dimensions of archaeological investigations in Latin America and on the importance of finding appropriate collaborative modes of engaging with local communities are scattered throughout the volume. The authors note that local factions whose agendas were not compatible with archaeological investigation and aims at preservation ultimately prevented continuation of the research beyond the third season. Kaplan intends to publish separately an extended account of his experiences as project director.

The archaeological data in this volume will be useful to specialists, even though they will wish for more – but here it is important to remember that the field investigations ended prematurely. The syntheses of regional patterns and developments will be useful for non-specialists and they often provide circumstantial support for interpretations that aren't as grounded in field data as one might wish. In short, this volume is a welcome contribution to our understanding of a region whose societies were pivotal in key developmental processes in eastern Mesoamerica.

JOHN S. HENDERSON *Cornell University*

LAWRENCE-ZÚÑIGA, DENISE. *Protecting suburban America: gentrification, advocacy and the historic imaginary*. xi, 195 pp., illus., bibliogr. London: Bloomsbury, 2016. £85.00 (cloth)

Why do people buy and renovate old houses? Denise Lawrence-Zúñiga's study asks this question. She has produced a series of Craftsman house biographies of their social construction by owners who work to return the houses to their original state; and of the house as the medium through which people sculpt their social identities and practices. In theorizing material culture, Lawrence-Zúñiga considers the mutual constitution of social and physical environments, referencing Bourdieu's theory of habitus, as the engine that guides the production and reproduction of cultural forms. She builds on Clare Cooper's classic piece 'The house as symbol of self' (see J.J. Gieseking *et al.*, eds, *The people, place, and space reader*, 1974), which delineates this linkage and recognizes the symbolism of our practices, our lifestyles, and the houses we live in.

Protecting suburban America is less a psychological tract than a social analytic. Just as we create the house in accord with the domestic social order, so the house represents and reinforces that order – the house is an actor in the social system. Indeed, following Alfred Gell's argument for the agency of art (*Art and agency*, 1998), Lawrence-Zúñiga details how material objects, like houses, have secondary agency: they embody concepts, values, and so on, and also reproduce and legitimize them. A house's agency may gain power from its biography.

For preservation homeowners, recollections of home and family life may encourage the re-creation of the material qualities that reflect their childhood. Similarly, one may choose to create a new home through rehabilitating an old one. In any case, there is a concern with presenting an 'authentic' material representation of history. This ties into the system of ideas that supports institutionalized preservation activities, what the author calls secular cosmology: 'the material qualities of the built environment [that] are conceived as possessing agency' (p. 80).

Lawrence-Zúñiga focuses on five suburban foothill cities east of Los Angeles, an area originally developed by gentleman farmers for fruit orchards in the mid-1800s. When later migrants arrived, they moved into Victorian and Craftsman houses built on subdivided orchard lands. The early suburbanites were ethnically white – ethnic Chinese and Mexicans lived elsewhere. The book's focal question is what role aesthetic values play 'as they are embodied in public policies and aimed at controlling homeowner practices' (p. 1). How does the institutionalization of aesthetic preferences affect the suburb? In short, it sets out to understand 'the cultural logic and dynamics underlying the "preservation" of historic homes and neighborhoods' (p. 1).

In the United States, interest in historic preservation also began in the nineteenth century, although the National Historic Preservation Act (NHPA) only became law in 1966. This established at the federal level a system of institutions and techniques to protect architectural landmarks. Rather than simply creating museums, the NHPA broadened the categories of structures to be preserved, ushering in citizen participation and the creation of local organizations committed to this cause.

It is largely local residents' advocacy efforts that have led to historic preservation legislation. After the Second World War, many early twentieth-century buildings regarded as eyesores were razed in the name of urban renewal. In

southern California, such projects had disastrous effects for old neighbourhoods. First developers came in, demolishing historic structures and rebuilding. Alongside the developers were recently arrived, affluent, immigrant groups ready to rehabilitate older buildings, though according to a new aesthetic. This, preservation advocates complain, is as detrimental as demolition. The preservationist community, a largely symbolic one, is place-based, committed to protecting certain aesthetic and historic values. It is an exclusionary group – composed of elites who haven't left and hope to keep some people out, fearing their 'other' aesthetic values, and wealthy new immigrants (with 'other' taste), who hope to convert the locals to their style while legitimizing their own presence.

To understand how homeowners approached the renovation/preservation of their homes, Lawrence-Zúñiga asked them to describe the house; what they knew about its original construction and owners; their personal history with the house and its historicity; the improvements they made and their approach; their involvement in the neighbourhood and local organizations pledged to historic preservation. She takes us on an analytic tour of four cities – Riverside, Ontario, Monrovia, and Pasadena – indicating how each has succeeded or failed at creating a coherent preservationist community. She then describes the town of Alhambra's struggles with historic preservation challenges from new Chinese immigrants.

Protecting suburban America is beautifully written and crafted. It clearly and cogently explicates material culture and its significance in studies of social life. Individual stories of excitement and fanaticism in the southern California world of preservation are threaded throughout, putting flesh on the bones of the bungalow. Finally, Lawrence-Zúñiga demonstrates how preservation activity reflects both a community's character and the direction of social change within the five neighbourhoods.

DEBORAH PELLOW *Syracuse University*

Historical approaches

JEBENS, HOLGER (ed.). *Nicht alles verstehen: Wege und Umwege in der deutschen Ethnologie*. 399 pp., illus., bibliogr. Berlin: Reimer Verlag, 2019. €49.00 (paper)

This important collection originates in the practice of the journal *Paideuma* publishing an article-length autobiography written by an

established German anthropologist to front its annual issue. Holger Jeben's introduction describes how, as managing editor of *Paideuma*, he was inspired to do this by a similar practice on the part of the *Annual Review of Anthropology*. *Nicht alles verstehen* republishes eighteen of these essays, one in English (jointly by Ivo Strecker and Jean Lydall), the rest in German by Hans Fischer, Rüdiger Schott, Meinhard Schuster, Horst Nachtigall, Lothar Stein, Josef Franz Thiel, Hermann Jungraithmayr, Beatrix Heintze, Klaus E. Müller, Mark Münzel, Fritz W. Kramer, Gerhard Baer, Karl W. Wernhart, Christian Feest, Bernhard Streck, Volker Heesch, and Heike Behrend. No selection was made, and all the contributions published in the journal before 2019 are included (excluding, therefore, a later contribution by Brigitta Hauser-Schäublin). The useful and enlightening introduction by the editor synthesizes and comments on many of the key issues and experiences that emerge from these accounts.

It would be impossible to review all the entries here, and I have chosen not to do more than make passing comments on any of them, but some snippets of detail are both fascinating and strange. Thus, we learn that one did not necessarily have the right to decide one's own doctoral project, such as the hierarchical nature of German academic life, and that one could find oneself being co-opted into a post in an anthropological institution without one's knowledge. We also learn about more serious matters: how some of the family ascendants of these various figures, themselves born in the 1930s or 1940s, passively resisted Nazism, often at considerable cost to themselves (one such relative was executed); how resources were in woefully short supply after the Second World War, leading to many seminars being held in the tutor's own home or other novel venues; how German anthropologists of this generation often found they had Nazi-era or Nazi-sympathizing anthropologists teaching them, some of whom had been closely involved with the National Socialist regime; how the early post-war administration of teaching was often slack, with courses being made up on the hoof and not always being examined; and how German anthropology had to combat its own parochialism after the war, being relatively shielded for a long time from currents elsewhere in Anglo-Saxon or French anthropology. As someone who has been associated with German anthropology on and off for some thirty years, I can vividly remember, when first coming to the anthropology department of the Free University of Berlin in the

late 1980s, the struggles of a younger generation of anthropologists to embrace such currents and to use them both to reinvigorate German anthropology itself and to find it a place in what was becoming an increasingly international, or at least Americanized, discipline. I was therefore particularly interested in Heike Behrend's account of the department in the years before I arrived there myself in 1986.

This was also a period of occasional student unrest in universities over curricula and teaching methods, which did much to democratize Germany's educational system. Another change referred to frequently is the gradual but enormous expansion of everything in the post-war era, from departments to teachers of anthropology, from the array of courses on offer to the hordes of students taking them, and from the number of conferences to the flood of publications. As Hans Fischer's piece notes, quantity is not quality, although educational administrators might think so, and there is a sense that we have reached a stage in which publications that may never be read pile up and will soon be forgotten: publish *and* perish, perhaps?

No doubt there are some gaps here, but it would be invidious of me to suggest what they might be without knowing the circumstances whereby contributors were chosen and agreed, or declined, to contribute. At least women are represented, but only by three out of the nineteen contributors, no doubt a reflection of the state of German anthropology until recently rather than any editorial bias. For the most part, the accounts in *Nicht alles verstehen* stop at around 1990, if not before. What account retirees post-1990 will give of their careers remains to be seen, but it is sure to be different in many details from what we are given here.

The history of German anthropology is still a bit of a closed book to anthropologists outside the country. For those who are interested in that history and can read German, this collection will fill a lot of gaps, though from perspectives that are personal at least as much as academic.

ROBERT PARKIN *University of Oxford*

KRIGER, COLLEEN E. *Making money: life, death, and early modern trade on Africa's Guinea Coast*. xvi, 238 pp., maps, tables, illus., bibliogr. Athens: Ohio Univ. Press, 2018. £21.99 (paper)

Colleen E. Kriger is a respected scholar whose earlier works on cloth and iron became

'must-reads' for any historian of the Atlantic coast. In *Making money*, she presents a much more ambitious narrative covering the relationships between traders and local actors on the Guinean coast during the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. Painstakingly using data mostly gathered from the archives of the Royal African Company (RAC), she charts their activity along the Gambia river. The narrative is chronological and shows how each new moment in the history of this trade (whether in goods or in persons) was built upon previous cultural understandings and logics of exchange and reveals how processual 'making money' is.

The various values given to different objects at diverse moments are carefully analysed and some received notions are deconstructed: for example, that Africans were fooled by Western intruders who would exchange worthless objects for valuable ones. Kriger argues that it should not be the culturally chauvinistic scholar who gets to decide what is valuable, but rather the actors whose agency is inscribed in the logics of exchange and in very complex systems of currency that require some effort to decipher. To this end, her analysis goes beyond the binary of Europeans and Africans, bringing Indian, Arabic, and other agents into the making of this Atlantic trade. Its scrutiny of the conditions that made exchange possible is probably what makes this book, addressed to history scholars and students, a very useful tool for those of other disciplines.

I am very interested in the so-called 'landlord and stranger' relations on the Upper Guinea Coast (as this region is also known), patterns of hospitality, accommodation, and exchange that have been the subjects of deep scholarship by authors such as Bruce Mouser, Georges Brooks, and so on. *Making money* deepens our understanding of such patterns by showing through historical vignettes the personal decisions people had to make, and how mutable the system was: someone could be a stranger now and a landlord later, or vice versa. Some British traders married African women who eventually became important 'senhoras' (as they are called in Lusophone Africa), who managed to inscribe themselves within international networks of trade. The biographical descriptions and analysis of these women are one of the most successful aspects of Kriger's study, forming an important contribution to the study of the role of 'big women' in the Atlantic trade.

Moreover, this volume both presents material new to scholars in the region and develops innovative ways of thinking about the structural continuities between different kinds of trade in

West Africa and the Atlantic. Furthermore, it uses a very agreeable biographical methodology, which consists, as the subtitle of the book suggests, in bringing life and death to the reader's attention. Kriger achieves this by focusing on individual narratives, as noted above, following specific case studies of the men and women who were involved in trade networks. Together with this attention to the lived realities of the African coast, another aspect to be commended is her attention to the 'ancillary trade' surrounding the trafficking of slaves. While the slave trade has been copiously researched by other scholars, all the other forms of exchange that were taking place alongside it have received less attention. When the author does pay attention to the slave trade itself, she does so through brilliantly bringing to life some slave rebellions that have been previously understudied.

Historians will find in *Making money* a very rigorous study of archival material as well as an important reconstruction of the lives of the agents that 'made' the Upper Guinea Coast. Kriger does not, however, mystify 'agency', as there is indeed a lot of lack of freedom, accident, and serendipity in the text. She combines her central case study with an exemplary life-history approach. For anthropologists, the book can be extremely useful in giving historical depth to issues we normally study in a rather ahistorical ways, such as through the 'gift' vs 'commodity' contrast, or via the links between money and morality. Although Kriger does not enter into anthropological debates of any kind (why should she?), the material she offers can easily stand on its own. Read together with the works of authors who do explicitly bring anthropological concerns into these topics (e.g. the anthropological outlook on precolonial monetary exchange systems by Jane Guyer, the analysis of the distinction between 'thing' and 'person' in the slave trade by Igor Kopytoff or by Charles Piot, etc.), *Making money* not only offers fresh data and angles from which to think through these topics, but also provides food for thought in the debates about the epistemologies that underpin anthropology and history and their separation.

RAMON SARRÓ *University of Oxford*

LAMBEK, MICHAEL. *Island in the stream: an ethnographic history of Mayotte*. xxii, 334 pp., map, figs, illus., bibliogr. Toronto: Univ. Press, 2018. £36.95 (paper)

In this book, Michael Lambek recounts forty years (1975-2015) and eleven periods of fieldwork in

Mayotte. Written as an ethnographic history, *Island in the stream* does not simplify but paints a detailed picture of the East African Indian Ocean villages he calls Lombeni Be and Lombeni Kely. Using temporality as a means of perception and analytic framework, Lambek draws on the German historiographical concept of 'the contemporaneity of the non-contemporaneous' (p. 8) to describe the simultaneity of acts considered as traditional or modern in Mayotte. The potential of anthropology to highlight the pointlessness of providing a definitive distinction between tradition and modernity, or past and present, becomes extremely clear in this book, which beautifully delineates the spaces in which these concepts mutually appear, engage, and overlap.

Respecting his Malagasy-speaking Muslim Mahorais interlocutors' perspectives on 'history', Lambek documents the multi-temporal 'interpretive chronology of interpretations that inhabitants of Mayotte have made with respect to their lives in the course of living them' (p. 10). The thirteen chapters are organized into four parts that address life as it changed throughout the 1970s, 1990s, early 2000s, and the recent present. It begins where time in Mayotte began for Lambek, in 1975, with three newly written chapters that map out village life around the intersecting principles of citizenship, kinship, Islam, and ownership. In part two's chapters, he argues for the imperative importance and indispensability of understanding social reproduction and exchange cycles when analysing moments of personal transformation and community equilibrium during times of social change. Close observation of celebrations such as weddings here serves as a 'window on the changing nature of sociality and personhood' (p. 221). Lambek describes a gradual 'shift from a gift-based to a commodity-based society' (p. 115) in an era of improved material conditions but declining social relations. He links this to the eventual abandonment of ritual performances that once established and upheld equality and equivalence in Mayotte. In part three, these performances are particularly visible in his account of the changing relationship between Islam and spirit possession. In the final part, comprised of entirely new writing, Lambek returns to the theme of social reproduction and exchange by contextualizing contemporary celebratory practices.

Some of the most significant findings of this more-than-ethnography include Lambek's depiction of citizenship in Mayotte as a concept that encompasses more than the nation-state.

Instead he describes it as including being a citizen of global Islam, an identity which is established through involvement in the international community, and its responsibilities and privileges. He carefully analyses how in Mayotte coloniality has been defined in a 'postmodern way' (p. 171) through the island's decision to remain part of France – but 'not [be] like France' (p. 186, original emphasis) – without considering this association as a violation of local integrity. He offers another way of grasping the cosmopolitanism – as some have termed it – that strongly defines this particular region, referring to it as a logic 'of "both/and" rather than "either/or"' (p. 271), which includes being Mahorais alongside assertions of both French and Muslim identity. Lambek also demonstrates how the 'range of modes of being Muslim' (p. 262) in Mayotte has broadened since the 1970s, and how changing currents within Islam, rather than an increased orientation towards European 'modernity', put phenomena like spirit possession at stake.

Throughout the book, Lambek multiplies the singular ethnographic present by uniting the many presents he co-lived through in Mayotte and thereby masterfully captures 'something like the tone or tempo of change' (pp. xxvi-xxvii). Beyond the external changes he and his interlocutors observed, Lambek also acknowledges his own internal movement along the stream of time. His ethno-historical approach thereby establishes the anthropologist as an ever-changing mirror that reflects not only the lives that pass in front of it, but also that of the one holding it. While reading this book, it seemed to me that one helpful rule could be extracted from Lambek's ethnography: to aim to receive rather than to steal, and to ensure that the stories we pass on 'remain theirs' (p. 269).

Island in the stream is a superb meditation on what it means when ethnographers truly 'follow what excites people' (p. 83) and thereby manage to capture the unique sociality of a place. Humble, without presumptions, and with a kind attentiveness and empathy that echoes years of lived friendships, Lambek shows that the past indeed has disparate historical and moral horizons for different people. This creates a range of kaleidoscopic images that make conclusive answers impossible. By letting the stories speak for themselves, Lambek succeeds in making the reader not just understand but indeed feel that the past always has 'an improvisational quality like that of jazz' (p. 26). I highly recommend this book not only for teaching budding anthropologists about the range of meanings inherent in 'social change', but also as a useful

framework to follow for those who aim to fit a life of writing ethnography into a single volume.

FRANZISKA FAY *Goethe University*

NEWTON, ESTHER. *My butch career: a memoir*. x, 274 pp., illus., bibliogr. Durham, N.C.: Duke Univ. Press, 2018. £22.99 (cloth)

Those situated in LGBT studies are probably familiar with the work of cultural anthropologist Esther Newton, particularly with *Mother camp* (1972) and her intellectual autobiography *Margret Mead made me gay* (2000). Now she has published a memoir spanning her early childhood in the 1940s until the early 1980s, focusing on encounters, places, and periods of her life which shaped her identity. Growing up as a child who didn't feel like a girl but couldn't be a boy, she became an 'anti-girl, a girl refusenik, caught between genders' (p. 59). *My butch career* recalls these personal experiences, as well as relationships and friendships, the women's movement, and Newton's career in academia. It is a story of becoming, of growing into oneself as lesbian, academic, and of claiming an identity.

Growing up in the 1940s and 1950s between New York City and Palo Alto, Newton discovered her lesbianism in her teens even though living in a homophobic and hetero-coercive era (despite how liberal her mother and stepfather were). Having come out to herself and to a psychiatrist (who luckily asked: 'What's so bad about that?', p. 84), in early adulthood, the desire to be 'normal', to live an ordinary – hence heterosexual – life dominated her thoughts and actions.

Newton follows at first the classic structure of a memoir, starting with her parents' histories, then moving through the various stages of growing up and into oneself, including the various stages of coming out. She makes her way from the girl who couldn't be a boy; to visiting working-class dyke bars in her late teens and early twenties; to mixing with upper-middle-class academic, artistic, and privileged women; and studying anthropology at the then prestigious University of Chicago in the early 1960s. Thanks to the support of her mentor, David Schneider, she wrote her dissertation on female impersonators in the United States, entitled *Mother camp*. This pathbreaking and highly influential work hardly received attention at the time of its publication but provided the basis for her reputation in LGBT studies in the early 1980s. It profoundly shaped the work of scholars like Judith Butler and Gayle Rubin, and deeply

influenced queer theorists and anthropologists. Finally receiving scholarly recognition, joining the Anthropological Research Group on Homosexuality (ARGOH), and later co-founding the Society of Lesbian and Gay Anthropologists (SOLGA, now AQA) within the American Association of Anthropologists all marked a turning point in Newton's life. It is at this moment that the memoir concludes.

For me, *My butch career* is an arrival story: it tells about processes of identification and disidentification situated within a particular time and context, and culminating in owning and claiming a butch identity as much as an academic identity. The memoir astutely describes the social norms and forces that a life beyond heterosexuality reveals, the risks, doubts, and dangers it poses: the homophobic and patriarchal structures in society at large as well as in academia; the fear of being outed suddenly by somebody else; the danger of harming one's career if associated with the group one studies, particularly when it is a sexual minority group; the necessity of having male mentors; the fear that white heterosexual women in the women's movement would reject lesbians; the binaries that cannot easily be overcome as heterosexuality comes with privileges heterosexuals often were (and often still remain) unaware of; and finally the class(ed) divisions in the lesbian world.

Working-class bar dykes were the first who showed Newton, at the age of 19, how to be butch and how to have style. At that time, being butch, she writes, 'was the first identity that ever made sense out of my body's situation' (p. 92). Although a deeply personal story, the memoir uniquely explores, as Elizabeth Lapovsky Kennedy comments on the book's cover, 'women's desire as both personal and social'. It should be noted, though, that the memoir depicts an almost exclusively white world, the white women's movement, white academia, and white social networks, and thus particularly white issues.

Newton's is no scholarly memoir. Rather, by learning about her personal experiences, processes, and observations, the reader gets to know her as a personality and receives insights into an era. All anthropologists, students as well as educators, should read this because it calls attention to what has changed and shows the importance of LGBT/queer social movements and networks of non-normative communities, particularly for individuals and groups who reside outside what is recognized as the norm. The memoir also urges us to be (or become more) aware of what still needs to be done, particularly regarding a more inclusive academia. It

challenges the reader to rethink the idea that one is not a 'real anthropologist' when studying a group one belongs to or identifies with or if one does not do fieldwork in far remote places.

ANIKA KEINZ *Europa-Universität Viadrina*
Frankfurt/Oder

ROTH, CLAUDIA. *Urban dreams: transformations of family life in Burkina Faso*. x, 198 pp., maps, bibliogr. Oxford, New York: Berghahn Books, 2018. £85.00 (cloth)

Urban dreams is an anthology of essays by the Swiss anthropologist Claudia Roth (1955-2012). Accepting the fact that English has become the dominant language in the social sciences, the editors have translated a selection of ten of her papers, originally published in German, English, and French between 1995 and 2014. We can only hope that this excellent editorial work will help to disseminate this ongoing ethnography of low-income families residing in the central neighbourhoods of Bobo-Dioulasso, the second biggest city in Burkina Faso. Indeed, the growing fetishism around ethnography and fieldwork only just conceals the constantly diminishing time devoted to them. In a period of growing insecurities – due to terrorism, Burkina Faso has become largely inaccessible to researchers – and neoliberal trends in funding, ongoing ethnographies of this kind might become rare. Roth's work proves that, far from being a limitation, a stable social anchoring is an ideal vantage point for the observation of social change.

After a helpful biographical introduction written by Roth's former colleague Willemijn de Jong, part I offers pedagogical insight into the biases and opportunities inherent in the researcher's situated position. During her visits between 1989 and 2012, Roth usually resided in the same family compound. As a white woman 'with male characteristics' (p. 22) speaking Dioula, her everyday interactions with her co-residents and neighbours, both symbolic kin and research partners, opened a heuristic range of relational yet unequal roles: male/female, senior/junior, child/parent.

Varying in length and outcome, each chapter then independently follows and brings together various threads: urban anthropology, gender, family life, generational relationships, poverty, work, and social security, as they emerge through the hopes and dreams, conflicts and enterprises of Roth's network. Part II, 'Negotiating love and

marriage', includes three chapters (2-4), followed by four essays focusing on 'Elderly parents and their children: sharing or living poverty' (part III). The book's final two chapters (9-10) are devoted to 'Youth: dreams and hardships'.

Chapter 3 depicts how love and matrimony are reinterpreted and recombined over time, as men try to endorse the patriarchal and bourgeois model of the male provider and the devoted housewife, while women defend matrimony as a pragmatic exchange of goods and services embedded in a social hierarchy of gender. Old patterns of gender segregation, while excluding women from certain domains monopolized by men, limit patriarchal power by creating spaces not exempt from power relations but where the rules are not set by men, such as the 'inverted time' of the *sunguruya*, an authorized period of courtship and eroticism for young women, before marriage and its duties (chap. 2). Theoretically, free marriage and the market have now liberated the young from the power of the elders, which – husbands forget – applied to men and women alike. However, as Roth shows in chapters 5 to 7, growing unemployment has driven young people back onto depending on their ageing parents, in an 'inverted generational contract' (p. 95), which belies the common Burkinabe proverb that 'the donkey begets foals to rest his back'. The impoverishment Roth witnesses over two decades reconfigures the domestic economy, leaving wives overburdened by their husbands' inability to assume their role as providers. While some compensate for their wounded masculinity by fathering children outside of wedlock, others find refuge in peer sociability, tea, and dreams (chaps 9-10).

Tackling the trite notion of African solidarity, *Urban dreams* reminds us that families are not immutable institutions. They are maintained through continuous giving and taking, culturally shaped through a repertoire of relational roles, such as those of the eldest son as well as the sibling solidarity of *badenya* (chap. 8), which appear weakened in conditions of scarcity. The inability to participate in reciprocal cycles of gifts leaves the individual desolated, as apparent in the invisible impoverishment of the elderly (chap. 6).

Urban dreams is a fascinating and rich ethnographic contribution. Being a posthumous collection of articles, it doesn't culminate in far-reaching anthropological conclusions. However:

The process of understanding is not linear in nature but rather resembles a horizontal spiral; that which is alien can reappear on the

next loop looking different but also the same ... [T]he more familiar we become with a person or a topic, the more obvious it becomes how much of the strange and misunderstood still lies ahead of us (pp. 21-2).

As such, this book mirrors the process of research, where each reiteration can bring new answers, and each answer novel unknowns, which will hopefully be taken on by generations of researchers in the years to come. As this is a very accessible publication, it should inspire both aspirant ethnographers and seasoned researchers in West African studies, gender studies, and the anthropology of social solidarity and family life.

MURIEL CHAMPY *Aix-Marseille University – Institut des Mondes Africains*

SHEPHERD, JOHN ROBERT. *Footbinding as fashion: ethnicity, labor, and status in traditional China*. xx, 250 pp., maps, tables, illus., bibliogr. Seattle: Univ. of Washington Press, 2018. \$30.00 (paper)

This monograph addresses a phenomenon that has long intrigued and provoked both Chinese and Western observers. How does one explain the prevalence of a seemingly irrational, arbitrary custom that, until its decline in the early twentieth century, imposed enormous suffering upon generations of Chinese women? John Robert Shepherd argues that, once established, footbinding's persistence stemmed mainly from the powers of social convention and fashion, and, importantly, fear of humiliation. He arrives at this conclusion through a systematic consideration of competing hypotheses – among them suggestions to the effect that footbinding's prevalence was correlated with forms of women's participation in labour; that it served to mark ethnic identities; and that footbinding was an important medium of women's self-expression. In each case, Shepherd adduces persuasive evidence suggesting that such factors are insufficient to account for the practice.

Especially impressive is Shepherd's hybrid and agile methodology, combining historiography, anthropology, and statistics. *Footbinding as fashion* lucidly outlines the various cultural, sociological, and regional dimensions of the practice with reference to several case studies organized around quite variable sorts of data: historical commentaries from both Western and Chinese sources; the Taiwan census of 1905; the 1928 surveys from Hubei and Liaoning; and more recent ethnographic and historiographical efforts

to reconstruct early twentieth-century and late imperial practices. Shepherd provides useful historical context for footbinding's origins and spread, beginning in the Song dynasty, and its comparatively rapid demise during early and mid-twentieth-century reforms, but his primary aim is to illuminate the practice's purchase and persistence in those areas of China where it became hegemonic.

Drawing instructive comparisons from his case studies, Shepherd devises a series of ingenious tests/assessments of various explanations for footbinding proposed by other scholars. He is especially sceptical of functional interpretations: that is, explanations based on footbinding's allegedly beneficial effects. For example, responding to hypotheses that differing demands upon women's labour accounted for footbinding's presence or absence, Shepherd observes that:

Notions that footbinding was most intense where it was compatible with the work women did in agriculture or handicrafts are contradicted by the findings from Taiwan and Hebei that reveal no connection between footbinding and cropping patterns and textile handicrafts. Instead, footbinding was nearly universal in solidly Hoklo Taiwanese communities and in counties of Hebei, whatever their economics (p. 9).

Similarly, Shepherd disputes the notion that footbinding's *raison d'être* was to serve as a boundary-marking symbol of ethnic identity. His research reveals that Manchu women in North China presented a non-footbinding alternative to neighbouring Han women and (by the same token) that Hoklo women were less (rather than more) likely to give up footbinding in South China areas where Hakka women similarly comprised a non-footbinding example. He concludes that: 'The cases treating the Qing conquest, Hakka-influenced Hoklo, and banner-influenced North Chinese contradict assumptions that footbinding intensified as a way to mark ethnic differences between footbinding and non-binding groups' (p. 8).

Shepherd is similarly unpersuaded by romantic notions that construe footbinding as celebrating a domain of women's culture, arguing that 'most disliked the custom for its cruelty and the disabling that made their lives harder, and they experienced it as something that society imposed' (p. 166). Although recognizing that bound feet were thought attractive in late imperial China, Shepherd argues that this circumstance cannot

explain the practice: 'Why that should have been is less easily answered, other than to point out that what constitutes "beauty" is culturally and historically relative, changing from society to society and generation to generation' (p. 166).

Shepherd does not deny altogether the relevance of the various contending explanatory rubrics he surveys, but argues that, in the last analysis, overriding any of them was people's concern for maintaining social respectability, avoiding humiliation and ridicule, sustaining family status, and protecting the marriage prospects of daughters. Girls' feet were bound not in the hope of gaining status, but rather in fear of losing it. In sum, Shepherd makes a persuasive case for the centrality of social convention and fashion in sustaining the centuries-long practice of footbinding in China, and in the process he reveals the limitations associated with a litany of alternative interpretations. These achievements undeniably advance understanding of this enigmatic and (let us not deny) disturbing practice. Recognizing this substantial achievement is not to claim that *Footbinding as fashion* is likely to be the last word on the subject. Convention and fashion may explain its persistence, but as Shepherd acknowledges, the question as to why small bound feet came to define such a powerfully consequential social aesthetic remains enigmatic. Are objects of beauty entirely arbitrary and culturally relative, or can one imagine digging more deeply into this question?

P. STEVEN SANGREN *Cornell University*

STRATHERN, ALAN. *Unearthly powers: religious and political change in world history*. xvi, 391 pp., illus., bibliogr. Cambridge: Univ. Press, 2019. £22.99 (paper)

This ambitious book aims to give us a global history of religious and political change by making ample use of ethnographic evidence and anthropological theory. In a field that is dominated by economic and political history, it is exceptional in its focus on religion. However, it seems remarkable to me that Alan Strathern, who is an historian of precolonial Sri Lanka, has left India and China out of his story, although he occasionally refers to Hindu or Confucian examples. It is difficult to understand such a decision, especially if one considers that the Indic and Sinic worlds reach beyond India and China, and that the majority of the world's population lives in them. Nevertheless, as I opined as

Unearthly powers' perspective on world history may be, it has the advantage of clearing a lot of space for a wide range of ethnographic examples from Africa and Oceania. These examples are interspersed with what is known about the Sumerian, Inca, and other early empires.

Since my feeble attempts as an undergraduate to read parts of *The golden bough*, I have not come across a book that ranges so widely. For example, in order to make a point about the closeness of kings and deities, it takes the reader in one page from the Khmer in the thirteenth century CE via Yogyakarta in the twentieth century CE to the first ruler of Mesopotamia, around 2,000 years BCE. This breath-taking encyclopaedia of global facts, taken from all periods in human history, illustrates a number of theoretical positions that are partly derived from anthropology, but mainly from historical metaphysics.

The core theory on which the arguments in this book rest is that of the Axial Age, formulated in 1949 by the philosopher Karl Jaspers, adopted by sociologists like Shmuel Eisenstadt and Robert Bellah, and most recently promoted by the philosopher Charles Taylor. It postulates that around 500 BCE 'Axial Age breakthroughs' occurred in the great civilizations of Greece, Israel, Iran, India, and China, creating a shared framework of historical self-awareness. The argument is that in this period a new emphasis on 'transcendentalism' developed with concomitant notions of morality, renunciation, and immortality. Strathern has chosen to limit his use of this theory mainly to Christianity (a latecomer in terms of the Axial Age) and Theravada Buddhism. Transcendentalism is the opposite of Immanentism, which is characterized by animism, by an undifferentiated and insignificant notion of the afterlife, a communal, local, and unsystematized morality, while gods and other metapersons are defined by power rather than ethics. In short, what we have here is the nineteenth-century notion of 'a world religion' in so-called 'transcendentalist' societies against 'local religion' in 'immanentist' societies. Such an essentialist perspective has been challenged by comparative approaches that have examined historical interactions. Obviously, there is no stable, essential dyad of transcendentalism and immanentism, so Strathern takes great pains in warning the reader that in all the historical cases that he examines there is a different mix of the two. It is not clear to me, however, to what extent the opposition of these intertwined ideal types helps us to better understand global history. While Strathern seems to like the universalism of

evolutionary cognitive science, he is not much interested in questions of historical periodization, of differential modernity, and of global circulations of power, including imperialism.

Strathern's main interest is in the relationship between religion and power. He focuses on royal power and distinguishes between two forms of sacred kingship: the divinized king and the righteous king, representing an evolution from magic to morality. This is again a problematic division, but more troubling is the neglect of major struggles about sovereignty between religious and secular powerholders. In general, Strathern is very good on the various aspects of royal power, but much less so on the history of violence against religious opponents, a major aspect of sovereignty in world history. For instance, we learn much about the divinization of kings, but hardly anything about the expulsion of Muslims and Jews from Christian Spain, the massacre of Christians in Japan, or the European religious wars after the Reformation. In short, this reader found a weakness in *Unearthly powers'* analytical framework and neglect of significant parts of the global historical record. That said, the strength of this well-written book is its rich inclusion of the ethnographic record of societies that are neglected in global civilizational history, which should inspire readers to think more broadly about religion and political change.

PETER VAN DER VEER *Max Planck Institute for the Study of Religious and Ethnic Diversity*

Living politics

CHANCE, KERRY RYAN. *Living politics in South Africa's urban shacklands*. xvi, 184 pp., illus., bibliogr. Chicago: Univ. Press, 2018. £22.50 (paper)

When thinking about poor people's politics, we would be mistaken to view them as inherently atomized, as in Marx's 'sack of potatoes' formulation, or else as an amorphous rabble easily manipulated from above. In *Living politics in South Africa's urban shacklands*, Kerry Ryan Chance makes clear that within a liberal democratic context, residents of shack settlements frequently collectively identify as 'the poor', cutting across lines of race, ethnicity, and nationality. This process of collective self-identification is what she defines as living politics, the central concept organizing her monograph. Rejecting preconceived notions of how poor people should organize, Chance develops the concept to capture how any oppositional political action is inextricable from a politics of everyday life; she

argues that politicization must be limited to struggles *for* survival and *against* state agents who criminalize any politics beyond the confines of political parties.

This ethnography explores how lived politics structured the collective self-identification of a shack dwellers' movement in Durban, South Africa. This social movement, Abahlali baseMjondolo (AbM), emerged in the wake of the implosion of the first wave of social movements critical of the post-apartheid government. In contrast to other movements, AbM represented itself at its inception in 2005 as more firmly grounded in popular politics and therefore more deliberative and democratic in its approach.

Chance carried out extensive fieldwork in AbM's flagship settlement, called Kennedy Road, as well as visiting sites in Durban, Cape Town, and Johannesburg. Each chapter is organized around what she calls an elemental form of material life: fire, water, air, and land. To be clear, she is not working in the tradition of new materialisms, attributing agency to these elements themselves. Rather, she treats them as 'dynamic social relations that are intertwined with power' (p. 16), representing each as a field of struggle, with collective identity at one pole and mutual fragmentation at the other. This is what she calls the 'double edge to the promise of infrastructure' (p. 39).

Chapter 1 analyses how fire is used to unite poor residents, ranging from organized illegal electricity reconnections to the burning of tyres in mass street protests. But fire also divides: burning tyres are used to kill perceived rivals, while reconnections and their attendant protests are used as pretexts to criminalize entire settlements. Chapter 2 turns to water. Under apartheid and after, residents whose water bills were in arrears collectively refused to pay, transforming 'citizens-in-waiting' into 'frustrated consumers' (p. 52). But this identity also militated against collective action, producing 'nonracial' consumers in accordance with the liberal contract model, 'cultivat[ing] desires for civic inclusion' (p. 47). Air is deployed metaphorically in chapter 3 to discuss practices of 'coughing out', speaking in Pentecostal tongues, and singing protest songs that unify the collectivity against the backdrop of Durban's poor air quality. Chapter 4 explains how residents communally occupy land and develop a 'thriving political and legal life' (p. 104) as they challenge the state in court for the right to stay put. This, too, has a double edge, and residents are often reduced to 'waiting for future inclusion' (p. 88) in government-provisioned formal housing projects, or, worse, in state-run

temporary encampments. The story of what Chance calls a pogrom against AbM leadership in Kennedy Road in September 2009 is told in chapter 5. She combines the various elements into different configurations of the story: how collective identity articulated through ethnicity produced a violent Zulu nationalism; how the formation of a popular police force amplified competing claims over territoriality; and how toilet provision before a local election did much the same.

Chance concludes with a short meditation on how living politics is often a politics of sacrifice. I found this chapter to be the least convincing, largely because it stands as a sort of afterthought instead of bringing together the various essays that comprise the book. The framing in terms of elements links the various chapters thematically, but it does not address the elephant in the room: where does the question of AbM as a social movement feature in Chance's analysis? To what extent do living politics require a certain organizational form? Why was a high-profile social movement selected for the analysis, as opposed to, say, studying more typical cases of poor people's politics? I also wondered about the conception of the state underlying Chance's narrative. Who are these 'state agents'? How do the various scales of the state apparatus matter, and do all state agents have identical aims? And how does her contribution relate to what is now a large body of work on infrastructure, housing, and cities after apartheid?

These questions aside, *Living politics in South Africa's urban shacklands* provides a rich account of the everyday struggles that both unite and divide poor communities, facilitating the development of a collective identity, on the one hand, but creating liberal subject-citizens, on the other. It will be of interest to scholars of social movements, urban informality, and subaltern politics in the Global South.

ZACHARY LEVENSON *University of North Carolina at Greensboro*

DAS, DEBOJYOTI. *The politics of swidden farming: environment and development in Eastern India*. xx, 252 pp., maps, figs, tables, illus., bibliogr. London, New York: Anthem Press, 2018. £70.00 (cloth)

Nagaland has a troubled and violent history. Under colonial rule, it was the victim of brutal 'civilizing missions' and punitive expeditions. In the post-independence era, it has persistently

been the object of no less oppressive forms of postcolonial state-making and 'national integration'. In Debojyoti Das's fine monograph, however, the people of Nagaland emerge as historical subjects in their own right as they navigate the conditions of possibility offered them by the 'complex colonial heritage' (p. 2) that continues to shape the current postcolonial conjuncture in profound ways. By casting the Yimchunger Naga tribal group that is at the core of his ethnography as historical subjects, Das brings to light the creative process of resistance, negotiation, and aspiration for improvement (p. 22) that defines social existence in contemporary Nagaland.

The politics of swidden farming narrates the long history of the Yimchunger Naga through the prism of *jhum*, or swidden agriculture. While *jhum* has historically been dismissed and derided by the powerful as an 'ignorant and savage-like' (p. 6) and ecologically destructive form of agriculture – derogatorily also labelled 'slash and burn' – Das brings to light how among the Yimchunger Naga it is in fact an evolving and dynamic practice shaped by complex historical, social, and political factors. As such, this monograph constitutes a valuable contribution to our knowledge of *longue durée* agrarian change in the highlands of northeastern India. The fact that it is richly illustrated and written in clear and jargon-free language adds to its appeal.

The book consists of eight chapters. The introductory chapter sets the stage by surveying current debates on swidden agriculture. Chapter 2 is a reflexive essay that dwells on the methodological and ethical implications of doing fieldwork in a context marred by 'everyday violence and suspicion' (p. 25). Chapters 3 and 4 analyse the history of Naga encounters with the colonial state based on secondary sources, while chapters 5 through 7 are more ethnographically informed. Here, Das's village-level ethnography brings to the fore the ways in which multiple regimes of access and control – tied to land and labour relations, Baptist missionary activities, and state development programmes – shape agrarian change in Yimchunger villages in complex ways. Chapter 8 summarizes the book. Across these eight chapters, scholars of long-term agrarian change will find much that is of interest. Indeed, it is a strength of the book that it operates with considerable historical depth and thus avoids a 'synchronic "history-free" detailed account' (p. 200) of Naga culture, even if it means that the first-hand ethnography enters the narrative relatively late. Das's command of historical detail is impressive, but there is a good deal of

repetition of historical and empirical facts and observations across chapters that could have been weeded out through firmer editing.

While this book is an important contribution to our knowledge of the dynamics of swidden agriculture in a globalized world, it is somewhat limited in its engagement with the more recent anthropological literature on land and agriculture from other contexts (the bibliography in fact contains only one entry that is newer than 2011). For example, Tanya Li's landmark monograph *Land's end* from 2014 is not cited, even if many of Das's ethnographic observations from Nagaland are eerily similar to Li's description of Sulawesi in Indonesia. And although Das cites James Scott's *The art of not being governed* (2009) in passing (p. 4), there is no engagement with the considerable body of work in and on the area called 'Zomia' that followed in the wake of Scott's book. Similarly, while Das mobilizes the concept of a 'frontier space' (p. 62) to analyse developments in both colonial and postcolonial Nagaland, the scholarly dialogue with the rapidly growing 'frontiers literature' within anthropology and human geography is also limited. In this sense, the book has an unrealized potential insofar as its connection to and relevance for these ongoing debates mostly remains implicit. These limitations notwithstanding, *The politics of swidden farming* is a solid piece of scholarship. It is impressively well researched and, as such, amply demonstrates the enduring relevance for scholars of agrarian change of combining rigorous historical work with long-term ethnographic fieldwork.

KENNETH BO NIELSEN *University of Oslo*

DRUMMOND, LEE. *Heading for the scene of the crash: the cultural analysis of America*. x, 187 pp., illus., bibliogr. Oxford, New York: Berghahn Books, 2018. £85.00 (cloth)

This volume is part of Berghahn's offbeat *Loose can(n)ons* series edited by Bruce Kapferer 'dedicated to . . . challenging . . . established (fashionable or fast conventionalizing) perspectives in the social sciences and their cultural milieux' by providing a 'space of contestation, even outrageous contestation . . . aimed at exposing academic and intellectual cant' (https://www.berghahnbooks.com/series/loose_cannons). This would appear to be a prescription for polemics if ever there was one, and it is a space in which Lee Drummond is clearly at home.

Heading for the scene of the crash seems to me to read more like a collection of long, rambling blog posts than a set of scholarly essays.

Drummond, a self-described independent scholar, has collected several old pieces of his writing, purporting to provide a 'hard-edged critical tool for the study of American society and culture' (p. 2), though what he understands as American society remains undefined. The book has four chapters. Chapter 1, the strongest in the book, ironically has the least to do with American culture: it addresses the Jonestown massacre, based on Drummond's field research in Guyana before and after the tragedy. Published originally in *Semiotica* in 1983, it is a scholarly article about the *Guyanese* response to Jonestown. Chapter 2 addresses the first four *Alien* films in relation to the US abortion debate. Chapter 3 addresses cycling superstar Lance Armstrong's doping disgrace. The final chapter, 'Shit happens', takes up a third of the book and concerns 9/11 and Drummond's quest for a 'Nietzschean anthropology'. Though the book was published in 2018, these chapters date from 1983 to the early 2000s; there is no evidence that Drummond has revised these essays. Nor does he contextualize historical events and personalities for younger readers: the Jonestown massacre, for example, occurred in 1978 – an eternity in today's American culture.

Cultural anthropology has moved on since the postmodern turn, and even if Drummond doesn't like its new direction, he ought to take account of it if he wants readers to take him seriously. Instead, he writes:

For the most part we [anthropologists] are still, in the well-worn phrase, the eccentric in pursuit of the exotic. If anything, I'm afraid quite a few anthropologists have gone in the other direction, accepting politically correct accounts of neoliberalism, globalization, climate change, gender, race, etc., which they should examine critically (pp. 1-2).

But, I wonder, who are these politically correct anthropologists, and to which accounts does he refer? Drummond never says; he identifies neither authors nor texts.

American culture also has moved on: for example, Drummond could have juxtaposed his discussion of *Alien* and abortion with the major changes that have reshaped the landscape of reproduction and sexuality in American culture over the last thirty years, but he appears to have nothing to say about these matters that might complicate his earlier analysis. He fails to acknowledge two later *Alien* films in which

reproduction is also a theme (*Prometheus*, 2012; *Alien: Covenant*, 2017), even if only to dismiss them as irrelevant to his original analysis. He does not mention the rise, fall, and rise again of Tiger Woods, a figure who could fruitfully be compared with Lance Armstrong, and who has already been the subject of anthropological analysis (O. Starn, *The passion of Tiger Woods*, 2011). The election and administration of Donald Trump, arguably a watershed moment in American cultural history, cries out for anthropological analysis, and Drummond's website contains a 60,000-word essay about Trump and fake news, but none of that material is included here. Indeed, this website itself is a product of the staggering transformation of American culture wrought by social media over the past twenty years, yet Drummond says nothing about these matters either. I wonder: why publish in 2018 an analysis of American culture that ignores all these developments?

And who are the Americans whom this book presumes to analyse? Who are the 'we' to whom Drummond regularly refers? All US citizens? Everyone who lives or works in the United States? Middle-class white Americans? People of colour? Teenagers? Elderly fans of popular culture? These essays offer no evidence that Drummond talked to any actual Americans or considered that different Americans might ascribe meaning differently to current events. For a cultural anthropologist to overgeneralize like this, citing no ethnographic research, is puzzling. Does providing evidence to back up one's arguments undermine his 'radical form of cultural critique', or is that actually the goal of writing 'outrageous contestation' (p. ii)? What is the purpose of this volume? Who is the intended reader? Beyond marking for future historians the extreme views of one anthropologist located outside the mainstream of the discipline, I found the contributions of this volume hard to see. Perhaps readers interested in the critique of large-scale American popular culture from its own periphery might benefit from an encounter with this book. And there are surely readers who enjoy polemics.

ROBERT H. LAVENDA *St Cloud State University*

HANN, CHRIS & JONATHAN PARRY (eds). *Industrial labor on the margins of capitalism: precarity, class, and the neoliberal subject*. xii, 372 pp., tables, illus., bibliogr. Oxford, New York: Berghahn Books, 2018. £100.00 (cloth)

Chris Hann and Jonathan Parry's edited volume is an intellectually important yet politically

depressing book. Based on fourteen case studies spanning industrial settings from Russia to Zambia and from Trinidad to the Philippines, it is introduced by Parry. It also contains Hann's preface and Michael Burawoy's afterword, both less concerned with the book's case studies than with bigger questions in the fields they address. Some of the key questions of *Industrial labor on the margins of capitalism* include the very pertinent: what are the main predicaments of the increasingly precarious industrial labour force in contexts both constitutive of and marginal to contemporary capitalism? The case studies consider the concept of precarity in order to address some of the introduction's main questions while tackling key issues in both political and economic anthropology.

Although the chapters are indicative of 'the global trend toward increasing precarity' (p. 14), the book is a worthy reminder that insecurity has dominated labour for most of human history. While reinforcing this point through detailed ethnographies, the collection's case studies also reveal how casual work could not be sustained were it not for its counterpart: the formation of a stable, secure working class. As Parry's introduction emphasizes, these concurrent processes of casualization and de-casualization produce opportunities for managerial control by polarizing the labour force.

Class and the production of a neoliberal subjectivity are the two concepts through which the authors address the otherwise fuzzy concept of precarity. Regardless of their adherence to (Makram-Ebeid, chap. 7) or rebuttal of (Sanchez, chap. 9) the main claim that casualization is increasing, all the ethnographies show that proletarian unity does not exist in their field sites. The simple class division between the bourgeoisie and the working class is further fragmented by complex divisions within the latter. Beyond the polarization of workers into 'permanent' and 'fixed term', labourers are split along the lines of nationality (Kesküla, chap. 2), ethnicity (Hoffmann, chap. 14), or even gender within one family (Kofti, chap. 4). Trade unions, when not completely rendered futile (Schober, chap. 8), often serve the interests of, if not permanent workers, then dominant ethnic groups, and are not able (or eager) to mobilize across dividing lines.

While exploring the production of neoliberal subjectivity, the editors and authors also refute any easy definition of neoliberalism. Following Philip Mirowski's maxim (*Never let a serious crisis go to waste*, 2014) that neoliberalism is not about the minimal state but about entrenchment in

micro-identities and practices within every form of life, these ethnographic case studies show the complex role neoliberal governance and discourse play on the ground. The simple argument that industrial labour is subject to neoliberal downsizing with the aim of profit-making is, as Parry notes, countered by evidence of its use as a disciplining tool, sometimes at the expense of profit-making rationales. Conversely, some chapters' data reveal a contradiction at the core of neoliberalist discourse. Within this disciplining regime, a worker's success is more likely to depend on kin, friends, caste networks, reciprocity, gift giving, mutual obligation, trust, or hierarchical deference than on the neoliberal mantras of 'individual skills', 'hard work', and 'entrepreneurial spirit'.

Yet an undertaking of this scope is at the same time a product of some of the very contradictions it addresses. Hann's preface traces the book's origin to the research project 'Industry and inequality in Eurasia' led by the two editors together with Catherine Alexander, which involved half of the authors as precarious researchers. Initially framed around Eurasia and labour in the heavy industries, this final version has added contributors, geographies, and industries. This expansion, it could be argued, has obscured the project's initial aims, its comparative framework, and the conversation between and contributions of the project participants. Parry's introduction sets the agenda of the book; so much so that, at times, it reads like a chapter based on his long-term Indian fieldwork that pre-empts the other authors' findings, and, at others, like a powerful agenda to which all chapters need to bring commensurable, neatly fitting pieces of evidence. This last becomes visible when he 'kindly' reproaches some of the authors for straying from the framework (pp. 25-6). Consequently, the effort at knowledge production appears somewhat asymmetrical, and individual chapters by early-career scholars remain subordinate to a powerful master frame. I wonder if a leaner volume or a special section with case studies from the original project would not have given more space and visibility to the researchers' own theoretical and political insights. *Industrial labor on the margins of capitalism* also opens, as an unintended outcome, questions of the divisions of labour and class in contemporary academia and allows us to reflect on the current regime that demands continuous publications and project proposals.

MARIYA IVANCHEVA *University of Liverpool*

KAUANUI, J. KĒHAULANI. *Paradoxes of Hawaiian sovereignty: land, sex, and the colonial politics of state nationalism*. xvii, 275 pp., illus., bibliogr. Durham, N.C.: Duke Univ. Press, 2018. £19.99 (paper)

This is an important and timely book in which J. Kēhaulani Kauanui makes an argument that goes well beyond the heated debates about the terms of 'sovereignty' for native Hawaiians. She adds to her cogent analysis of the competing positions – restore the Hawaiian Kingdom or accept the terms provided by the US Federal Government – a detailed retelling of Hawaiian history from the arrival of the missionaries to the present decade. Throughout, a reinterpretation of the meanings of 'indigeneity', 'colonialism', and 'sovereignty' challenges contemporary theoretical and activist positions.

Paradoxes of Hawaiian sovereignty is organized into five chapters: 'Contradictory sovereignty' (the introduction); 'Contested indigeneity'; 'Properties of land'; 'Gender, marriage, and coverture'; and "'Savage" sexualities'. Each chapter substantiates the author's central point that 'white American notions of property title, state sovereignty, and normative gender relations and sexuality become intimately imbricated in aspirations for Hawaiian liberation' (p. 3). A wide range of sources support and complicate the argument. Kauanui's reading of legal, administrative, and scholarly writings is exacting, and while she acknowledges her lack of fluency in Hawaiian, she offers original Hawaiian meanings at crucial junctures.

The book's thesis hinges on the concept of 'coloniality' or, interchangeably, 'settler colonialism'. The terms refer to the manifestations of power characteristic of a colonial relationship. Kauanui traces the evolution of such manifestations through the nineteenth century, perpetuated by native elites in collusion with *haole* (whites) in an effort to claim nation-state status. She argues that a persistent coloniality underlies support of the Akaka Bill (federally granted nation-to-nation status), of Kingdom restoration, and of the UN Declaration of Indigenous Rights. A close reading suggests that her strongest critique falls on Kingdom supporters, who fail to confront the hierarchical division between *ali'i* (chiefs) and *maka'āinana* (commoners); simplify the impact of capitalism and the privatization of land on Kanaka Maoli; and either downplay or reinstate a rigorous control of the body, that is, of sex and gender.

Control of the body brings colonial biopolitics into contemporary claims to Kingdom status.

First, Kauanui offers a history of pre-annexation Hawai'i that emphasizes the participation of *ali'i* in perpetuating a colonial-inflected regime; second, she problematizes the outcome of the mid-nineteenth-century 'propertization' of land, whose cultural impact is misunderstood by supporters of Federal recognition and by Kingdom supporters; third, she proposes a reinterpretation of the concept of 'indigeneity', removing its connotations of 'savage' and reframing it in terms of 'Hawaiian cultural logics' (p. 142). Such a reframing provides a model of sovereignty that escapes the limits of 'Western state models' (p. 50). This may be the most important take-away from *Paradoxes of Hawaiian sovereignty*: a significant theoretical move away from any 'reliance on juridical regimes of power' (p. 201). Kauanui concludes that true sovereignty rests on a resurgence of 'Hawaiian ontologies'.

Kauanui's assertion that sovereignty can be separated from the nation-state is optimistic. She shifts the focus to 'ethical projects centered on nonexploitative forms of sustainability and well-being' (p. 200), citing examples in grass-roots movements; in marshalled resistance to Western take-over of law and of land (publication came before the protests on Mauna Kea); and in revised understandings of the logics inherited from the past. At the same time, she is careful not to judge authenticity, but rather she traces the lineaments of those ontologies as they form a mode of sovereignty based on the 'fluidity, liminality, and the potential of transformation rather than on static, fixed ways of being' (p. 181). To locate sovereignty in cultural logics is an admirable goal – and Kauanui backs the goal up with descriptions of the traps into which previous rulers, elites, writers, activists, and administrators fell when they attempted to solidify the nation on the basis of a Western model.

The book is not an easy read. Kauanui meticulously summarizes existing debates over sovereignty, indigeneity, and independence in scholarly literature as well as on the ground in Hawai'i. Those summaries will be valuable for native and non-native scholars of resistance to 'coloniality' in any part of the world, but hard going for a lay reader. Analogously, readers may be overwhelmed by Kauanui's detailed history of a century of policies that led to the dispossession of the Kanaka Maoli; her scrupulous analysis of the terms of land ownership; and her examination of the laws governing sex and gender. Yet a hard read is ultimately rewarding: Kauanui persuasively

presents the possibilities for achieving sovereignty beyond the terms of Western-style governance and outside the form of a nation-state. In a world of resurgent nationalism, *Paradoxes of Hawaiian sovereignty* offers a vital reinterpretation of the meaning of a sovereign people.

JUDITH SCHACHTER *Carnegie Mellon University*

LASZCZKOWSKI, MATEUSZ & MADELEINE REEVES (eds). *Affective states: entanglements, suspensions, suspicions*. x, 148 pp., bibliogr. Oxford, New York: Berghahn Books, 2018. £22.95 (paper)

Based on a special issue previously published in 2015 in *Social Analysis*, the editors have curated a collection of ethnographic essays that speak to the complex ways that affect, emotion, and feeling are integral to the project of state building and the daily operations of bureaucratic practices and political rule. Setting the scene, Mateusz Laszczkowski and Madeleine Reeves argue that 'affects and emotions are much more than epiphenomena of the political ... [they] are crucial in structuring political fields, imaginaries, subjects, and objects' (p. 3). Drawing from Ann Laura Stoler ('Affective states', in D. Nugent & J. Vincent, eds, *A companion to the anthropology of politics*, 2004), they use the term 'to cover a range of affects, feelings, and emotions for and about "the state" and its agents, and explore how those contribute to the state's emergence, transformation, endurance or erosion' (p. 2). This aims to contribute to anthropological theorizing in three ways: by understanding '[a]ffect ... as constitutive of the political itself' (p. 7); by bringing historical specificity into discussions of affect in political life; and by moving beyond dichotomies such as "'state" and "society", "power" and "resistance"' (p. 9). The book's seven chapters speak to these themes.

Annabel Pinker and Penny Harvey's chapter 1 analyses negotiations between various stakeholders in a proposed project to build a bypass in Peru, tracing how understandings of states and state processes are better comprehended as multiple, often non-rational, unstable, and emerging out of intersubjective processes of connection and communication. David Bozzini (chap. 2) examines how the punishment of military deserters' families came to be understood and interpreted both within Eritrea and by exiles. Conflicting information and hearsay illustrates how emotion – specifically fear – can uphold political institutions despite the desire of many to resist. Sarah Kendzior's chapter

3 also turns to spying, political power, and transparency through a focus on Uzbeki internet use. She clearly outlines the complex ways that paranoia circulates, inhibits protest, and can uphold the political status quo. Christiaan Beyers (chap. 4) explores the affective/emotional aspects of South African land claim forms, which are filled in by people who were forcibly removed from District Six in Cape Town. He argues that through the process of 'transitional justice' (p. 67), the state tries to refigure how it is understood by citizens, with mixed results. Hans Steinmüller (chap. 5), traces how the parent-child relationship has been politically mobilized and changed in China, with contemporary relations to the state characterized by 'mixed feelings' (p. 83).

The ways in which ordinary people made use of political networks in Salvador during and after the 2009 election is the focus of Ainhoa Montoya's chapter 6. Despite disillusionment, Salvadorans continue to consider the state as a 'legitimate interlocutor' (p. 103), illustrating how affective intensities suffuse and animate political participation through clientelist networks in and beyond particular political elections, shaping interactions with the state in particular ways. Madeline Reeves (chap. 7) focuses on how migrant labourers live within a state of legal indeterminacy in Russia, suggesting that they are 'living from the nerves' (p. 127). Highlighting not only the complex ambiguities inherent in achieving legal – or semi-legal – residence and recognition for migrant workers, she focuses on deportability and pays attention to the critical importance of informal relations, illustrating the ways that law and administrative practices operate through circulating feelings, emotions, and affects. In the afterword, beginning with the night of the Brexit vote results, the co-editors reflect on how affect is 'politically generative' (p. 138). Pointing to the complexities of engaging with affect, they nevertheless argue that highlighting and working with it gives us the capacity to 'challenge ideologies that abuse the human capacity to be moved' (p. 141).

Overall, *Affective states* is well written, fascinating, and importantly highlights the complex ways in which affect, emotion, and feeling are inherent within, critical to, and constitutive of states. Each chapter engages – to greater and lesser extent – both with different theorizations of how these affective states are transmitted and circulate, and with the broader framework outlined by the editors. The collection's varied approaches reflect the slippages – and issues – in the broader scholarship on affect, emotion, and feeling. However, given

that affect is an organizing principle of the edited volume, some of the contributors could have given a clearer sense of how they understood and were using these concepts. That noted, this is a highly interesting text that sheds light on the vital ways in which affective intensities, emotion, and feeling are at play in and constitutive of states and state practices in different areas. It will be of particular interest to political anthropologists, as well as scholars interested in ethnographically exploring the workings of affect, emotion, and feeling between micro and macro scales in state building.

EMMA E. COOK *Hokkaido University*

MOLLONA, MASSIMILIANO. *Brazilian steel town: machines, land, money and commoning in the making of the working class*. 319 pp., illus., bibliogr. Oxford, New York: Berghahn Books, 2020. £99.00 (cloth)

Making steel is important materially and economically, but also symbolically, for steel mills represent industrialization and economic strength. Steel is also a competitive industry, so that steel towns like Pittsburgh and Sheffield often become ex-steel towns. Massimiliano Mollona has written on one of these in his 2009 *Made in Sheffield*.

This book is about a different steel town, Volta Redonda, in southeastern Brazil, the home of Companhia Siderurgica Nacional (CSN). The steel plant in Volta Redonda was built in the 1940s, to help make Brazil more modern and no longer simply a primary producer. *Brazilian steel town* describes the changing context, orientation, organization, and operation since then – especially since the privatization of CSN in 1992.

The book pursues two, related goals. One is more empirical: to lay out those changes and to make sense of them. The other is more analytical: to relate those changes to the lives of people in Volta Redonda, both those who work for CSN and those who do not. This goal is the more analytical because Mollona addresses the question of class mobilization and action at a time when mass manufacturing seems to be disappearing and the idea of the working class has fallen out of favour in Brazil.

Mollona says that the political-economic context of the plant is a policy of 'extractivism', long characteristic of Brazil's politics. This rests on extensive commodity extraction, finance, and large-scale state infrastructure, and thus departs from the neoliberal orthodoxy of the Washington

Consensus. One important way that it does so is by blurring the boundary between state and market: the plant was built as a public investment and to serve several state purposes but was run by private management and finance.

Particularly since privatization, extractivism has played out in distinctive ways. One of them is through spreading the financialization of employment within the plant and in the municipality as a whole. This was encouraged by the mandatory, government-owned pension scheme. Pensions were run by the pertinent unions, many of which ended up looking more like investment managers than representatives of labour. In addition, after privatization, workers were able to convert their pension entitlements into shares of CSN and were encouraged to see themselves as petty investors rather than wage workers. Older workers, tending to identify with their work and the firm, were reluctant to do so, while newer workers tended to adopt that self-image.

Financialization of a different sort affected management. They seem to have come to view CSN less as an entity that makes steel and more as an embodiment of capital that makes money in the short term. So, for instance, they decided to get rid of long-term employees and instead relied on contract labour and outsourcing. Consequently, management lost the workers who knew how the machinery actually worked, which put them in a weak position when skilled contract and out-sourced labour began to organize to demand better pay and conditions.

The other goal that the book pursues is making sense of civic movements in the area since privatization, especially those that relate to class mobilization. There are a variety of these, ranging from fairly radical leftist groups to evangelical Christians, and they resist ready summary, though Mollona describes co-operative movements and activism by judges in labour tribunals in some detail. Underlying them, however, is what he calls 'commoning'. This is when groups of people with shared experiences, whether domestic workers, garbage pickers, or construction workers, begin informally to discuss their common situations and through that come to be more active politically. This differs from the old slogan 'in union there is strength', as it seems to rest on shared personal experience, rather than the more formal elements of work contracts and factory organization.

Mollona presents a detailed discussion of the changing situation of the people of Volta Redonda, workers at the plant, and CSN itself. At times, however, those descriptions may be a challenge for readers not familiar with Brazilian

politics and economy since the 1970s, as they confront unfamiliar abbreviations, names, and government policies. Equally, readers may want to know what difference the commoning and activism that Mollona describes actually make. As he relates it, the gains that activists occasionally achieve seem to be countered by changes in CSN and government policies: for instance, the successes of activist labour tribunal judges is met with legislation curtailing their influence.

Even so, for attentive readers, the book offers an interesting history of the intricate and antagonistic dance of capital, labour, and citizenry in this Brazilian steel town.

JAMES G. CARRIER *Indiana University*

The making mind

DUBOIS, ARNAUD, JEAN-BAPTISTE ECZET, ADELINE GRAND-CLÉMENT & CHARLOTTE RIBEYROL (eds). *Arcs-en-ciel et couleurs*. 301 pp., plates, illus., bibliogr. Paris: CNRS Éditions, 2018. €25.00 (paper)

In recent decades, numerous comparative studies on colour have been published. Whether they have been collective or individual works, compilations, syntheses, or original texts defending a certain position, many of these volumes appear to push a definitive stance on the anthropology of colour. *Arcs-en-ciel et couleurs*, on the other hand, is original because instead of seeking to close the debate, it opens up new reflections on colour. The way this has been achieved is as simple as it is ingenious. Instead of it being just another volume on the perception, semantics, or nomenclature of colour, Arnaud Dubois, Jean-Baptiste Eczet, Adeline Grand-Clément, and Charlotte Ribeyrol have gathered articles on rainbows to examine the way they are viewed in a variety of places and times.

This atmospheric phenomenon is known to every human society. The rainbow is an ideal example to use in cultural comparison because it constitutes for the post-Newton West a large-scale figuration of the refraction of light resulting in a spectrum of colour, and its natural condition seems to corroborate the thesis of the English physicist. Yet rainbows have not been regarded as grandiose and evanescent monuments to the physics of modern colour in all places and at all times, meaning that through their cross-cultural analysis we can address the classic theme of colour from an unprecedented and very productive standpoint.

This collection breaks this objective down into three distinct sections. The first section is for me the most interesting as it dives headfirst into the topic by describing cases of confrontation between rationality, knowledge, and diverse cultural experiences relating to the perception and explanation of rainbows. It is also the most anthropological, so it deserves a little more of the limited space I have available. This section could not start with a more suggestive essay than Dubois's, which chronicles the survey on rainbow colours by W.H.R. Rivers among the inhabitants of Murray Island in the Torres Strait, at the beginning of the twentieth century, marking the transition from nineteenth-century cabinet anthropology to contemporary fieldwork anthropology. That colour is one of the first topics studied by contemporary anthropology demonstrates the relevance of this phenomenon to the discipline and shows the underside of its configuration as a scientific discipline: between nature and culture, the subjective and the objective, sensation and cognition, colour is one of anthropology's decisive objects. This particularly interesting article on the history of anthropology is followed by two fascinating chapters: one on the confrontations between the perspective on rainbows in traditional Japan compared with those introduced by the Jesuit missions in the seventeenth century (Parmentier, chap. 2); and another essay on Ethiopia's Mursi pastoralists, for whom the universe of possible colours is made up of the different colours of their cattle's hides (Eczet, chap. 3). For physicists, the possible colours are those formed by rainbows, which then allow us to name the colours of animals, for instance. For the Mursi, however, all colour is found in animal hides, which in turn allows us to refer to the colours of the atmospheric phenomenon. This first section closes with an essay on the Victorian poetry of colours and rainbows, where a subjective and aestheticizing vision was opposed to the advancement of science with its industrial use of colour (Ribeyrol, chap. 4).

The second section consists of four chapters referring to historical cultures: the pre-Hispanic Nahua (Dupey Garcia, chap. 5), the ancient Egyptian (Donnat, chap. 6), the ancient Mesopotamian (Rendu Loisel & Verderame, chap. 7), and the ancient Greek (Grand-Clément, chap. 8), respectively. All these essays show, despite the historical and geographical distances between them, a common feature that the editors note in their introduction: in many cultures, colour does not appear defined as such and is almost always interspersed with other physical properties. This

provides more empirical refutations of the universalist theory of colour. It also necessarily implies a dissociation between chromatism and rainbows in many societies. The latter appears associated with the most diverse avatars (particularly snakes), and is seen more as a luminescence, or as a confusing cloud with divinatory powers, than as a semi-circular strip of colours.

The third, final section presents four reflections on the visual representation of rainbows in Western contexts as diverse as that of the Christian illustration of the Middle Ages (Jacquesson, chap. 9), nineteenth-century European painting (Korzilius, chap. 10), contemporary art in general (Manfrini, chap. 11), and Len Lye's cinema in particular (Turquier, chap. 12). These final essays confirm that even within the same continent, the perception of rainbows and their association with colour can be very diverse, and far removed from the scientific connotation which the Newtonian perspective of colour and rainbow inevitably introduced.

ALEXANDRE SURRALLÉS *Collège de France, EHESS, CNRS*

FORGE, ANTHONY; eds ALISON CLARK & NICHOLAS THOMAS. *Style and meaning: essays on the anthropology of art*. 302 pp., maps, illus., bibliogr. Leiden: Sidestone Press, 2017. €39.95 (paper)

The work of Anthony Forge is a cornerstone in the anthropology of art. Then again, we could ask: what is the anthropology of art? For Forge: 'The place of the arts in Anthropology has a curious history' (p. 25). Perhaps it does not even have a specific history; one could say that there is no single tradition of anthropology of art but rather that anthropologists have been interested in art now and then. To be a classic reference in this subject does not seem to amount to much, therefore. Yet here we have a volume both by and on Anthony Forge, an ethnographer from that bygone generation of British anthropology which was situated between structural functionalism and Marxism. The title *Style and meaning* also brings us back to terms and approaches that seem out of date at a moment when tough debates on decolonization push us in other directions. But one of the tasks of a review is to reveal that first impressions may be misleading. It is my contention that this book is of interest not only for niche 'anthropologists of art' but also for anyone interested in anthropology in general,

because it reveals a particular history that is also a general history of how we got where we are now.

Forge's work on the Abelam provided one of the main examples of what was termed 'Primitive Art' in the twentieth century and was an excellent illustration of the best qualities of classic British social anthropology: systematic, empirical, meticulous, and descriptive. *Style and meaning* includes a previously unpublished paper, and is lavishly illustrated with many images of excellent quality. However, this thick ethnography can be read and interpreted in different ways, its thick description is not surrounded by the theoretical apparatus that we have grown accustomed to in recent decades, for better or worse.

Moreover, this compilation of eleven of Forge's papers is accompanied by an excellent introduction by Nicholas Thomas, and a collection of essays on his work by contemporary anthropologists, some of whom worked with Forge, or in the same area: Lissant Bolton, Ludovic Coupaye, Brigitta Hauser-Schäublin, Christian Kaufmann, Howard Morphy, and Michael O'Hanlon. Morphy's chapter 14 argues that Forge's use of the term 'meaning' is imprecise. In fact, Forge used terms like meaning and communication, perhaps after Leach, rather loosely, shadowing much more radical insights, like the assertion that amongst the Abelam there is no line to be drawn between representational and abstract art, because there is no notion of representation as such. This point places Forge ahead of his time and close to contemporary non-representational theorists both in art and in anthropology. Perhaps precisely because this was an ethnographic insight that did not exactly fit an already formed theory, Forge was not in a position to develop it much further.

In his chapter 16, Coupaye in particular unfolds what the consequences of Forge's ethnography would be for contemporary anthropology. Forge clearly stated that Abelam painting was not a representation of something, but rather was about the relationship between things (p. 244). This non-representational, relational approach could be framed in structuralism writ large, but as Coupaye says, it is not until Marilyn Strathern focused on the concept of relationality that one could start understanding the consequences of Forge's insights as more than debates about style and meaning. In fact, Strathern and other anthropologists like Nancy Munn, who revolutionized not only Melanesian ethnography but also anthropology at large, were contributors to Forge's now classic – if problematically entitled – volume *Primitive art and society*. Coupaye also

reminds us that of course Alfred Gell was a student of Forge, and Gell's insistence on what art does instead of what it represents, on art's power and agency, can also be traced back to Forge's understanding of art as being not only a representation but also a source of power (see *Primitive art and society*, 1973, p. 31). Again, if we can read past the title, we will find that perhaps there is a history of anthropological and ethnographic ideas and theories where art, however we define it, does indeed have an important place, and that Forge made an important contribution to it, as the contributors to this volume show. This book will be a very important reference for students in the anthropology of art.

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INGOLD, TIM. *Anthropology and/as education*. xii, 94 pp., bibliogr. London: Routledge, 2018. £32.99 (paper)

Tim Ingold has authored at least a dozen books, some of them provocative extended essays such as *Lines* (2007) and several lately on the discipline of anthropology. In *Anthropology and/as education*, he looks again at the discipline, arguing that it ought to be like education – as he defines education in this volume.

In the first three of his four chapters, Ingold builds on John Dewey and others to argue that education is not the transmission of knowledge, for 'transmission . . . is not the way in which people ordinarily come to know what they do' (p. 2). Rather, 'education is really about attending to things, and to the world' (p. 2); it is 'the work of finding/making something in *common* with someone else' (p. 4), based on 'an *attentive* stretch whereby every participant casts their experience forward in ways that can answer to the experiences of others, and they likewise, so as to achieve a *correspondence* that goes beyond what any of them could have imagined at the outset' (p. 38, my emphasis). He dissects his key concepts – attention, 'commoning', to 'co-respond' – and argues that, in the context of schools and universities, education is about teacher and student searching and re-searching together in an open-ended process that will lead only to more questions, not findings.

Meanwhile, says Ingold, schools and universities often promote a different kind of education which is about finding definitive answers through systematic methods. I cannot tell whether Ingold thinks people actually learn

through this approach, which he calls 'strong' education, or whether he does not consider it real education at all. The kind of open-ended, inquiring, 'weak' education he espouses is not happening, he says, in universities currently or as market-focused reformers seek to transform them.

In the fourth and final chapter, Ingold turns at last to anthropology, arguing that education as attentiveness, 'commoning', and co-responsiveness is what happens – or at least what can and should happen – when anthropologists do fieldwork. We should do participant observation *with*, not 'on' or 'of', other people in the field, such that they learn with us and we learn with them. I think most ethnographers recognize that the people they work with are their teachers, but Ingold's notion that participants learn as well through the process, and learn *with* the ethnographer, is novel. I wish he had spelled out more concretely what he meant.

Ingold's guided meditation on education is stimulating. His argument is generally clear, although it depends on the particular definitions of his key concepts. As noted, much of the book equates 'education' with schools and universities, although Ingold begins by acknowledging societies without schools. His 'education' also seems to focus on big intellectual questions, even as he notes its moral aspects; he does not attend to mundane education such as learning how to care for one another in a family or learning how to be a citizen. Another particular definition is Ingold's use of the word 'ethnography' to mean the kind of fieldwork that is all about methods and methodologies, whereas many of us see 'ethnography' as he sees 'participant observation', a philosophy of research based on human relationships.

I am a bit puzzled by Ingold's dismissal of the work of Jean Lave and Barbara Rogoff on people learning together through guided participation, the only references from anthropology and education that he cites; their work is not really about one-way learning or simple imitation, as I think he implies. I also cringed at the pages in chapter 3 that borrow from Erin Manning to speculate without any evidence whatsoever that infants, people with autism, and unspecified indigenous 'animists' experience the world with the same 'lively openness of body' (p. 39), resurrecting hoary tropes about primitive mentalities.

Although I appreciate the volume's slimness, the price of brevity is a high level of abstraction. A few well-chosen, specific examples would have been helpful. In particular, I wonder what kind of

education Ingold has witnessed at his university? At my own US institutions, I have seen some anthropologists – and some education professors, physicists, and others – striving with students, however imperfectly, to prompt open-ended inquisitiveness and attentiveness to one another's experiences. Likewise, two or three examples illustrating learning with participants from Ingold's or others' fieldwork would have been instructive. That said, *Anthropology and/as education* offers a guided reflection on teaching and learning, integrating ideas from Dewey, Rancière, Biesta, and others that many readers will find worth exploring.

KATHRYN ANDERSON-LEVITT *University of Michigan–Dearborn*

SCODITTI, G.M.G. *Kitawa: the thinking hand and the making mind*. vi, 205 pp., illus., bibliogr. Canon Pyon, Heref.: Sean Kingston, 2017. £90.00 (cloth)

Inside the mind is a virtual hand, and a surface upon which to draw. This hand conducts experiments in design, testing out combinations and permutations of line and form, sketched upon the imaginary surface, until the solutions fall out. That is to say, the hand thinks. Only once the thinking hand has arrived at a solution – at a final form that brooks no hesitation – does the mind reveal the consequence of its deliberations to the outside world. At that point, the mental hand passes the baton to the bodily one, now placed in the service of the mind to execute the complete design in a material medium, whereupon it is finally revealed. If before, in the mind, it was the hand that thinks, now, in the world, it is the mind that makes.

According to Giancarlo Scoditti, this is what happens when Nowau people – inhabitants of the Pacific island of Kitawa, famous in anthropological literature for their participation in the *kula* exchange circuit – design and carve the prow-boards for their ceremonial canoes. It is a picture that emerges from a dialogue, extending over five decades from the early 1970s to the present, between the author, schooled in the traditions of European art history, and the master-carvers of Kitawa whom he came to know so well. These carvers attribute to themselves almost God-like powers in their capacity to create something out of nothing. Intruding into the midst of the dialogue, however, is the objectivist philosophy of Karl Popper and his art-historical accomplice Ernst Gombrich. Both Popper and

Gombrich would have us believe that the mind, having no direct access to the world, can only guess at what is there. Every guess is in the nature of a hypothesis, to be tested against the evidence of the senses through an iterative process of error-correction. For Scoditti, this process is a mark of the human condition, and applies to Nowau people as to everyone else. It is a genuine universal. Yet Nowau carvers deny it, refusing to admit – at least in public – to any uncertainty whatever about the veracity of their design.

The result is a paradox. If it is a fact of all human thought that it proceeds by trial and error, how do the Nowau manage to uphold an ideology which asserts, to the contrary, that every novel design arises, complete, and perfectly formed, from nowhere? Scoditti's solution is that Nowau carvers do indeed test and correct yet do so behind the closed doors of the mind. From the start we are obliged to accept the premise at the heart of the Popper-Gombrich paradigm, by which everything attributable to the practising artist or artisan – including eye and hand, and a surface on which to work – has its interior homuncular counterpart. Operating within the space of the mind, equipped with virtual eye and hand, the homunculus works the surface of imagination. But then, in what mind is the final form revealed? Is there a second mind within the first? The paradigm, it seems, can only be sustained at the cost of an infinite regress.

From this major paradox, Scoditti spins out a host of minor ones. Reading *Kitawa*, it soon becomes abundantly clear that he loves such enigmas. But it is doubtful whether they exist anywhere but in his own imagination. It is he, and not the Nowau carver, who insists a priori on the complete and unassailable excision of the human mind from external nature. By assuming that all the work of design has been done in advance, in the mind, Scoditti contrives to reduce the act of making to mere transference, as though the design slid off the mind and onto the wood. All the work with hammer and chisel, by which the form is actually realized in the wooden prow-board, is eclipsed. Indeed, Scoditti is adamant that the truth of the prow-board lies in the mental image, and that the carving is little more than a material accessory that serves the purpose, in a non-literate culture, of communicating the image to others.

Of one master-carver, Towitara Buyoyu, Scoditti observes that he carves his figures into the virtual space of his mind, even as he carves them in wood. It is, he says, 'completely mental work' (p. 21). Like any craftsman, Buyoyu thinks as he works. But is this really the work of a mind,

as Scoditti would have it, in total solitude? Does it not spill out, by way of the arms, fingers, and the tool they hold, into the material? Buyoyu and his pupils were not much impressed by the sketches with which Scoditti filled his notebooks. Tentative and provisional, they lacked the authority of the final form. When Scoditti asked the carvers to draw their prow-board designs on paper with pencils and crayons – a medium with which they were unfamiliar – they did not sketch but drew as they would carve, with the assurance that comes from a mastery of design. Nevertheless, precisely because drawing strays over a surface rather than cutting into it, and is therefore correctable, for Nowau carvers the drawn design lacks the authority of its carved equivalent.

Kitawa is, in turns, beautiful, tantalizing, and peculiar. It is beautiful for the sumptuous, polychrome reproductions that comprise its greater part. They include drawings made by master-carvers, as well as drawings by Scoditti himself, and two series of interpretative drawings by his collaborators, architect Alverado Scoditti and artist Giulia Napoleone. It is tantalizing because we are given virtually no clues to help us make sense of these drawings. It is peculiar, above all, on account of the author's extraordinary style of writing. This is not so much careless as obsessive, as every sentence picks up, in its innumerable clauses and subclauses, all that has been said before, while advancing by only miniscule steps, if at all. Lengthy footnotes – more than a hundred for fifty pages of text – provide an equally repetitive refrain. There is no introduction or conclusion. This makes for a text that is all but unreadable. Anyone wanting to know what it is about could start with the summary blurb on the back cover. But perhaps it would be more advisable to approach the book as a work of art in itself, which draws us, its readers and viewers, into its own mystery.

TIM INGOLD *University of Aberdeen*

Migration and belonging

de HASQUE, JEAN-FRÉDÉRIC & CLARA LECADÉ (eds).

Après les camps: traces, mémoires et mutations des camps de réfugiés. 249 pp., illus., DVD, bibliogr. Louvain-la-Neuve: Academia-L'Harmattan, 2019. €26.00 (paper)

The French anthropologist Michel Agier has argued that despite the differences between types of camp, they share certain qualities in varying degrees. They are spaces 'off limits', frequently omitted from maps – though some have become

like permanent favelas; they are subjected to special rules that negate or suspend the principle of normal citizenship; and they house people who cannot be integrated in their surroundings. In 2014, when the collection of ethnographic studies *Un monde des camps* was published (co-edited with Clara Lecadet), he estimated that there were about 1,000 camps for displaced people worldwide, with at least 6 million occupants; some 450 such settlements were administered by international or national agencies.

Jean-Frédéric de Hasque and Clara Lecadet's edited *Après les camps* has the originality of combining, in ten case studies, this anthropological approach with attention to the concept of *lieux de mémoire* popularized by the historian Pierre Nora. Chapter 2, for instance, describes the Mémorial du Camp de Rivesaltes, in the Pyrénées-Orientales department of France, which was active between 1939 and 2007 – used successively to accommodate refugees fleeing Francoist Spain; Jews who were transferred in 1942 via Drancy to their deaths in Auschwitz; German and Italian prisoners of war between 1944 and 1948; Algerian separatists in 1962; *Harkis* after the Algerian war; Guinean and Vietnamese ex-soldiers after the end of the French colonial empire; and (post 1986) Spanish nationals detained after entering France illegally. Nicolas Lebourg and Abderahmen Moumen criticize the official history of the site for creating a hierarchy of memories whereby some of the trajectories of exile are forgotten and rendered invisible.

Chapter 3, by Glenda Santana de Andrade, analyses a particularly fragile case, the Shatila refugee camp in Lebanon. A small memorial in a former mosque in Shatila, recognizing the victims of the fratricidal 'war of the camps' (1985-7), can be entered only by special permission. Just outside the camp itself is one of the few tranquil spaces in this overcrowded neighbourhood, a garden cemetery commemorating victims of the Sabra and Shatila massacre in 1982 – the killing of hundreds of Palestinians by the Phalange militia in sight of Israeli soldiers. By contrast with the evocation of the past in Rivesaltes, 'here it is a question of a living memory, in the course of its construction, by the same people who suffered from the massacres and remain today detained in the Palestinian refugee camps in Lebanon' (p. 17, my translation).

Other 'sites of memory' are conspicuous by their absence. Garth Benneyworth (chap. 1, written in English) has made use of archival and archaeological methods, under the auspices of

the McGregor Museum in Kimberley, to 'reconstruct' two Native Refugee Camps. These were established by the British military command during the Anglo-Boer War (1899-1902) to accommodate black African civilians, many of them displaced from rural settlements as a result of a scorched earth policy. The evidence suggests that these settlements served as racially segregated forced labour camps. Excavated objects such as corrugated iron and British regimental military buttons have been preserved, and it is planned that they will form part of an exhibition together with photographs taken at the time.

The Second World War resulted in massive forced migration and the setting up in Europe of innumerable camps for Displaced Persons. The UN High Commissioner for Refugees (UNHCR), which was founded in 1950, embarked at the end of that decade on a programme to close the last of these camps, seen as disfiguring the new post-war Europe. But camps of a similar kind then became established in former colonies. Chapter 6 is accompanied by a DVD of a documentary film by Jean-Frédéric de Hasque about a camp at Agamé, Benin, set up for Togolese refugees from post-electoral violence in 2005 and finally demolished in 2013. The film shows how a camp can become an anchorage, both personal and collective, for people otherwise destined to spend their lives adrift. 'As well as doubling their original exile, the end of the camp also meant for many without refugee status the loss of all hope of gaining it and so benefiting from programmes for relocation in a third country' (pp. 19-20, my translation).

Other chapters bring the discussion up to date with coverage of informal encampments occupied by asylum seekers in Paris and Calais, subject to sudden destruction and obliteration. This is an important collection which, with a more careful editorial introduction, would merit translation for an Anglophone readership, except that, tragically, it will need updating to record devastating effects of COVID-19 in Middle Eastern and other refugee camps.

JONATHAN BENTHALL *University College London*

KILLIAS, OLIVIA. *Follow the maid: domestic worker migration in and from Indonesia*. x, 239 pp., maps, illus., bibliogr. Copenhagen: NIAS Press, 2018. £19.99 (paper)

This is a detailed ethnographic study that describes the 'making' of Indonesian migrant

domestic work. It captures how domestic workers are constructed by the state, the recruiter, the agency, the employer, and their community as it traces their migration trajectory from their village of origin to their city of destination. *Follow the maid* specifically focuses on Indonesian migrant domestic workers from the high sending region of Kalemah, Java, who migrate to Malaysia. It offers a unique perspective by providing a multi-sited approach to migrant domestic work when Olivia Killias chooses to 'follow the maid' as she goes through the various steps of the migration process, many of which are state-mandated, such as attendance at an agency-run training camp. Overall, this book provides a holistic description of the migratory experience of domestic workers, with its most significant contributions being its insights into the experiences of prospective migrant domestic workers in training camps as well as a focus on both the image of migrant domestic workers and the relationship that they have with their natal villages.

While Killias insists that her theoretical contribution is the consideration of the frictions embedded in the care chain (or the frictions embedded in women's migration into domestic work), it is better described as a multi-scalar examination of the disciplining of migrant domestic workers. Thus, her contribution lies in the successful extension of the discussion in Nicole Constable's *Born out of place* (2014) regarding the disciplining of migrant domestic workers in Hong Kong with its consideration of various stakeholders that extend beyond the agency and the employer. *Follow the maid* considers not just the sending but also the receiving contexts of migration.

How do various stakeholders 'make' domestic workers? First, according to Killias, the state of Indonesia in its mandatory pre-departure briefing focuses on their disciplining into 'legal' and 'subservient' workers who are repeatedly schooled into finishing their contract regardless of labour conditions. Facilitating this process is the use of Islam, as previously observed by Rachel Silvey, in evoking the values of 'self-control, responsibility and entrepreneurship' (quoted on p. 44).

Second, in relation to their village, migration extends domestic workers' labour market participation in the tea fields as it allows the mostly women migrants to escape the confines of village life without threatening gender regimes. Indeed, migration allows them to fulfil their

gendered responsibility to build a house near their mother's residence, fulfilling the village's principle of uxorilocal residence. Further maintaining gender regimes is the mediation of their migration by male brokers, whose role as middlemen is to protect migrant domestic workers and uphold notions of female piety.

Third, migrant domestic workers are then disciplined into subservience at training camps that cut them off from the outside world. The camp in and of itself is an institution often housed in a former hospital or school. Communication with those outside is usually limited to a few visiting hours during the weekend and a few minutes of access every day within the two-hour window during which they can use the facilities' public phones. Killias provides a rich and fascinating description of the making of maids in the camp, including the erasure of any feminine attributes, the inculcation of morals, and the teaching of deference.

Finally, she attempts to describe the labour of domestic workers once in Malaysia, but limited access to employers, who Killias admits were defensive and reluctant to participate in interviews, compromises the richness of her discussion. Underscored by Killias is the status of domestic workers' legal indenture in Malaysia, where they are tied to a sole employer as a live-in worker. Maids negotiate this by staying legal or circumventing the confines of legality and achieving greater control of their labour by choosing illegality. While 'illegal' domestic workers are not constrained to one household, this status could lead to incarceration and deportation.

Follow the maid extends the literature on migrant domestic work as its rich description of their outmigration from Indonesia captures how this movement is a gender and class disciplining process. While empirically rich, the study is somewhat theoretically thin. Examining the schooling endured by these domestic workers at the hands of brokers, agents, and the state would have theoretically enriched this study by extending studies of women and nationalism as well as current discussions on the use of women as a symbol of national identity. Moreover, foregrounding the constitution of gender, and the many contradictions inherent in the disciplining processes of Indonesian domestic workers, would have advanced current theorizations of gender in migration.

RHACEL SALAZAR PARREÑAS *University of Southern California*

NAPOLITANO, VALENTINA. *Migrant hearts and the Atlantic return: transnationalism and the Roman Catholic Church*. xiv, 233 pp., illus., bibliogr. New York: Fordham Univ. Press, 2016. £18.99 (paper)

This study of migrants' religiosity offers a unique window through which to approach contemporary globalization. Missionary networks, religious mobility, diaspora, pilgrimage, and the circulation of material religion or the transnational training of religious specialists are all phenomena that require academics to focus on the intersection of mobility and religion. *Migrant hearts and the Atlantic return* is an exceptional ethnography that delves into all of these themes through its exploration of the spiritual and romantic lives of Catholic Latin American workers in Rome. Valentina Napolitano's work is mainly focused on the experiences of female migrants doing domestic and elderly care work, but the narratives of her informants are given depth by the stories of many others – priests, nuns, boyfriends, and husbands – who affectively shape their itinerant lives.

With the exception of the pathbreaking work of scholars like Thomas Tweed (*Crossing and dwelling*, 2008), Manuel Vasquez (*More than belief*, 2011), or Thomas Csordas (*Transnational transcendence*, 2009), the dialogue between mobility and religion has been monopolized by two alternative arguments: religion as a means for migrants to connect to the home, or religion as a shared identity that gives visibility to a migrant community in a host nation. These arguments are not absent from Napolitano's work, as migrants in Rome rely on Catholic organizations to search for employment, housing, or love, and also seek participation in religious communities to reinforce notions of identity. However, Napolitano's main contribution is to transcend these arguments to show how religion allows migrants to creatively refashion their itineraries away from their home countries. The book therefore offers an original argument that bypasses instrumentalist views of religion amongst migrants and shows how migrant piety in Italy does much more than renew ties to the home.

The other important contribution of Napolitano's work is to rethink critically the colonial narrative of a unidirectional flow of Catholicism that radiates from a Roman centre towards a global periphery. *Migrant hearts* proposes that transnational migration from Latin America to Italy can be viewed as a return of a Catholicism that ventured out of Europe to the Americas five centuries earlier, and now returns,

not tired but rejuvenated by the piety and devotion of young Latin American migrants. This return, however, is not wholeheartedly welcomed by an Italian Catholicism that perceives it as a raw or uncontrolled form of religiosity that needs to be tamed and paternalistically guided (chap. 2).

The ethnography relies heavily on the author's knowledge of Italian politics and on her earlier work on Catholic devotions in Mexico. These biographical notes contribute to the sophisticated narrative that emerges, where the life histories of her informants and the profile of the organizations that she studies are embedded in complex theological, political, and historical tensions. Although the complexity of these histories contributes to understanding the aspirations and anxieties of her interlocutors, at times they can obscure the ethnographic detail that colours these migrants' lives and that makes this book an especially interesting read.

Napolitano offers an insightful description of Mexican Catholicism and its conflictive relationship with both European colonialism and the secular institutions of the nation-state. This becomes the underpinning on which she builds a critical discussion of the influential role of the Legionaries of Christ in contemporary Italy (chap. 3), and the devotion to the Virgin of Guadalupe by Mexican migrants (chap. 5). Similarly, her account of the haphazard legislation on migration that has been improvised by subsequent Italian governments since the 1990s, and the influence of the Catholic Church on national politics (chap. 1), helps the reader understand not only the changing legal framework that alternately protects and exposes migrant workers, but also the variegated relationships that they sustain with Italian employers, families, clergy, husbands, lovers, and friends.

The analysis of the experiences of migrants from South America (Ecuador and Peru) in Italy lacks the richness of Valentino's engagement with Mexican migrants; however, this is somewhat of an advantage for the reader interested in the intersection of religion and migration, as the ethnographic work provides fascinating details about how migrants struggle to give new meaning to their lives in Italy without the long historical and theological detours found in other sections. Chapter 4 is a wonderful example of how religion is not merely a way to connect to the home country, but the only opportunity men have to reaffirm their masculinity in a place dominated by feminized domestic labour and care work for elderly people.

Overall, *Migrant hearts* successfully brings the fields of migration and religion into conversation,

offering an original ethnographic approach to a migratory flow that is interesting precisely because it lacks the mediatic appeal of other high-profile cases of transnationalism. Napolitano's work eloquently captures the way in which migrants make of distance from the home country an opportunity to explore new romantic and spiritual paths, and thus give new meaning to their experience of migration.

BERNARDO BROWN *International Christian University*

Theory and method

FASSIN, DIDIER. *Life: a critical user's manual*. xiv, 159 pp., bibliogr. Cambridge: Polity, 2018. £15.99 (paper)

Life, based on the Adorno Lectures that Didier Fassin delivered at Goethe University, is an ambitious synthesis of moral philosophy and anthropological fieldwork, based on the question of how we can understand existence as both matter and experience, and as both biology and biography. Throughout the book, Fassin examines the questions: 'What value do we attach to human life as an abstract concept? And how do we evaluate human lives as concrete realities?' (p. 3).

In his initial chapter, 'Forms of life', Fassin analyses the ideas of Wittgenstein, Canguilhem, and Agamben in their attempts to explicate the 'tension between the biological structure common to all human beings and the singular subjective existence of each of them' (p. 23). He then turns to his fieldwork among Syrian refugees in Calais and undocumented Zimbabweans in Johannesburg: they share 'a common form of life ... of wandering strangers' who have left their home countries because of physical danger but who in their new countries remain in social and legal limbo (p. 40). He writes of how precariousness is a universal existential condition, but also that it is the particular condition of forced nomads facing countries' contradictory policies alternating between assistance and rejection, aid and detention, indifference and brutality.

The book's next chapter, 'Ethics of life', examines the philosophical tension between those who see ethical lives as defined by principles external to individuals and those who see them as produced through internal processes of self-realization. Here Fassin explores Foucault's late writings on the self-contained moral subject, and then turns to the French treatment of refugees. From the 1970s onwards, the door was increasingly slammed on them, with a single

exception: those who needed medical treatment, which by the late 1990s was often the only viable way to be allowed into France rather than through being politically persecuted in one's home country. Fassin also examines AIDS treatment in South Africa, and the conflict between activists, for whom 'each life counts', and public health experts, for whom the equality of the treatment of all lives is key. These ethnographic vignettes illustrate the conflict between physical existence and social and political contexts in evaluating human lives; in these examples, the biological prevails over the political as the locus of judgement.

In his third substantive chapter on the 'Politics of life', Fassin considers biopolitics, and the arguments of Fehér, Heller, and Agamben concerning this Foucauldian concept. He makes a clear distinction between biopolitics and the politics of life in dealing with humanitarian problems, with the former concerned with technological and epidemiological solutions, and the latter with the valuation and hierarchy of lives. In economic calculations, such as payments upon death, the value of human life is bluntly and explicitly set forth, as Fassin shows in several evocative examples. He provides ethnographic depictions of inequality's embodiment – a young undocumented Moroccan in France and an AIDS sufferer in South Africa – and concludes by discussing 'the profound tension between the ethics and the politics of life, between the affirmation of the value of life as supreme good and the inequality of the worth of lives in the real world' (p. 116). He explores in his brief concluding chapter how the 'politics of life are always politics of inequality' (p. 120).

It is worth noting that many of us who do anthropology in complex non-Western societies have looked askance at the reliance of so much recent anthropological work on Western philosophy. There are other philosophical traditions – those of China, Japan, India, and the Islamic world, among other regions – that are not generally mentioned; instead it is the European philosophical tradition that is invoked, from Aristotle to Agamben. These philosophers, of course, have great value, but nonetheless this anthropological reliance on Western philosophy seems profoundly ethnocentric, as if to say 'real thought is Western, and our interlocutors in far-flung places are merely grist for our Western thought mill', a latter-day echo of Lewis Henry Morgan and Edward Burnett Tylor. Fassin is guilty of this. However, to his credit, his synthesis of philosophical discussion and ethnographic examples does not seem supererogatory but

earned. I was prepared to dislike this book but found myself deeply moved by its discussion. Aside from those who seek answers to the basic questions it investigates, *Life* might also prove valuable for those who seek an example of how to link philosophy and ethnography in a way that is not obfuscating but intellectually honest and clear.

GORDON MATHEWS *The Chinese University of Hong Kong*

FISCHER, MICHAEL M.J. *Anthropology in the meantime: experimental ethnography, theory, and method for the twenty-first century*. 452 pp., illus., bibliogr. Durham, N.C.: Duke Univ. Press, 2018. £23.99 (paper)

'The future can be scary when thought about as sudden mutational change on a large scale, but not scary perhaps *with time*' (p. 325, author's emphasis). Reading Michael Fischer's collection of essays on the role of future anthropologies in the midst of the COVID-19 pandemic only further pointed out the relevance of emerging ethnographic practices in our understanding of this moment in history and the rapid changes taking place in our world society as it technologically evolves 'from the Anthropocene into an emergent new "Aquacene"' (p. 306). The title refers to *Anthropology in the meantime* as the time of 'constant experimentation' (p. 300) through which ethnographies emerge on collaborative interdisciplinary plateaus, 'in the wake of the future' (p. 3). The author alludes to the ethnographic field as a 'third space', referring to the formative time and space in-between great events and grounded truths, in which '*the shift in prepositions "of" and "if" to those of "for" and "with"*' reflexively takes place (p. 8, author's emphasis).

This timely collection of essays, which were written between 2014 and 2017, gives an insight into Fischer's latest play with experimental ethnographies and their emerging relations with theory and method. It follows the author's pivotal work on the dynamics of 'culture' in anthropology, going back to *Anthropology as a cultural critique* (1986, with George Marcus) and followed by his *Anthropological futures* (2009) and his more recent contributions to the anthropology of science, technology, and society (STS). The overall focus of the book follows the opening of the ethnographic scope beyond the 'Malinowskian *mise-en-scène*' in George Marcus's classic terms ('Ethnography in/of the world

system', *Annual Review of Anthropology* 24, 1995). Fischer's interest expands from the arts to bioethics, into policy-making and corporate life, moving through a series of fragmented chunks of 'emergent forms of life' in which the anthropological vocation acts as an 'interlocutor crisscrossing and revisiting presuppositions and assumptions and ways of doing things' (p. 13).

Starting from 1986, which the author sees as the reference year for the birth of cultural anthropology as a critique, Fischer's chapters gradually unfold towards the future via grounded ethnographies and second readings of films and fiction, evolving from the 'contemporary' to a series of utopian and dystopian scenarios that carry their own eco-ethical awareness and reflections of the past. This journey includes a variety of texts, places, and experimental writing styles (essays, fieldwork notes, cantos, zen exercises, filmic sketches, a dialogic play, anthro-topographies of cosmopolitan cities), all set within a wider 'conversation': that is, in a dialectical meditative composition with each other. The references include classic anthropology, psychoanalysis, Kantian pragmatic anthropology, contemporary ethnographies, and dissertations on the anthropology of science, interwoven with fictional texts, life stories, myths, paintings, films, anime, and musical and art installations collected from across Asia. The author's aim is to show how such living 'pieces of the world interact' (p. 3) as they emerge through a series of world issues and networks, ranging from health inequality and bioethics in India, to state oppression and resistance in China and Iran, to threats such as global warming and urban pollution, apocalyptic nuclear disasters and pandemics. The author counters these by highlighting positivist potentialities in the Kantian spirit of anthropology paved by biotechnological and biomechanical innovations as envisioned in science fiction or ambitious projects such as the colonization of Mars.

The author's final message takes a cue from Buddhist philosophy, offering a much-needed beam of hope in this time of world health crisis and social upheaval. It is a message coming all the way from Fukushima, Japan: 'The best way to overcome disaster is to accept disasters happen' (author citing Koyu Abe, p. 325). This can only take place through collaboration and solidarity. It can only occur through our adaptation to new technologies that will inevitably redefine our contact with and conduct in the world. This is the third space in which ethnography emerges as an active agent of change. With a strongly ethical belief in human determination, self-awareness,

and a new understanding of humanity as it evolves through the biotechnological changes taking place both inside and outside our bodies, Fischer argues that: 'Anthropology in the meantime will be a critical tool for responsive robustness both for when things go wrong and to make things go right more often' (p. 327). This wonderful and well-researched collection of essays on third ethnographic spaces offers a pragmatic vision for anthropology in the Kantian spirit of the formation of a world society. A must read indeed in times of rapid change.

MICHELANGELO PAGANOPOULOS *Global Inquiries and Social Theory Research Group, Faculty of Social Sciences and Humanities, Ton Duc Thang University*

GILLIGAN, IAN. *Climate, clothing, and agriculture in prehistory: linking evidence, causes, and effects*. xx, 326 pp., maps, tables, figs, illus., bibliogr. Cambridge: Univ. Press, 2018. £25.99 (paper)

This attractive book gives stimulating food for thought. I recommend it to all students of archaeology, anthropology, and human evolution. Ian Gilligan provides undergraduates, graduate students, and their university teachers with a most rewarding and refreshing read. It is fluent, well illustrated, and well documented with seventy-seven pages of notes and references, followed by an excellent comprehensive index. *Chapeau!*

I must declare an interest here. Ian attended my lectures at the University of Sydney. We both had qualified in medicine, followed by psychology and anthropology in his case, physiology and prehistoric archaeology in mine. Thirty years ago we planned writing a book together. He has persevered with well-deserved success, which I congratulate heartily. My attention, alas, was diverted from our proposed project following the serendipitous discovery of two important Palaeolithic sites in southeastern Spain. It was indeed a delightful surprise to receive this book.

The physiological argument that Gilligan puts forward in *Climate, clothing, and agriculture in prehistory* about the development of fitted clothing by Upper Palaeolithic people is undoubtedly sound, as it would have favoured their survival in the harsh ice-age environment of the last glacial maximum around 22,000 years ago. I am less convinced by his conjecture of a significant psycho-social difference between Middle and Upper Palaeolithic attitudes to clothing, because this fails to provide Palaeolithic

archaeologists with a firm basis on which to formulate a working hypothesis about its likelihood, one which is capable of withstanding rigorous testing within the substantive material record of western Eurasia's Middle and Upper Palaeolithic eras. That said, the appealing novelty of this volume is that Ian has expanded his consideration of the development of prehistoric clothing, relating it with intriguing insight to different hunter-gatherer behaviours that plausibly underpinned the eventual domestication of plants and animals in many parts of the world at different times in different places. He challenges much received wisdom in prehistoric archaeology that usually gives pride of place, when interpreting agricultural origins, to the development of ways of obtaining the food needed to satisfy settled communities, which may even have been expanding. He argues that requirements for clothing may well have been no less urgent. Because he deals with the matter on a global scale, I think his argument will interest teachers and students of archaeology, anthropology, and human evolution in many parts of the world, and it will certainly stimulate lively discussion.

Nevertheless, there are drawbacks to the raising of empirically based physiological (or other biological) considerations to the level of formal methodological arguments for establishing boundary conditions for aspects of the evolution of extinct human species and their technical achievements. Substantive archaeological dating in Eurasia hardly gives overwhelming empirical support to Gilligan's view that Neanderthals, skimpily clad in unsuitably loose garments, retreated southwards to warmer climes during the rigours of the last ice age. At latitudes above 50° N, they were present during extremely harsh ice-age conditions ca. 40,000 BP at the Neanderthal Feldhofer site in Germany. In Romania, they were present and interbreeding with modern humans at some time between 42,000 and 37,000 BP. Neanderthals were able to roam widely above 51° N, whether in the Altai mountains (Okladinov Cave) or North Wales (Bontnewydd Cave, lying above 53° N). Nor is there evidence that their genetic 'Denisovan' cousins wore fitted clothing at Denisova Cave in the Altai or at Baishiya Cave at 3,280 m above sea level on the Tibetan plateau. Gilligan's belief that after 40,000 BP climatically challenged Neanderthals were reduced to living on the mild southern Iberian coast is based on questionably late dates from Gibraltar and age determinations that have been shown to be underestimates at

other sites, such as Boquete de Zafarraya near Málaga.

Without doubt, Neanderthals and their forebears were well established in western Europe from the mid-Middle Pleistocene onwards, and in Spain their roots can be traced back to at least 400,000 years ago; they were, of course, present throughout Europe and western and central Asia (perhaps even in China), and have left genetic traces in modern Europeans. Wearing clothes inappropriate for bitterly cold conditions may not have been the most significant factor that contributed to their eventual disappearance from the Pleistocene record. I nevertheless strongly recommend *Climate, clothing, and agriculture in prehistory* as a stimulating and challenging book to be read by all who are interested in human evolution and Palaeolithic archaeology.

MICHAEL WALKER *Murcia University*

JANEJA, MANPREET K. & ANDREAS BANDAK.

Ethnographies of waiting: doubt, hope and uncertainty. xv, 212 pp., illus., bibliogr.

London: Bloomsbury, 2018. £120.00 (cloth)

Tick, tock, tick, tock, the sound of a clock. For those of us who remember hand-wound watches and grandfather clocks, ticks and tocks may evoke the soundscape of waiting, listening to the passing of time. Craig Jeffrey, in his short foreword to this fine book, notes that the tick and tock connote different temporal qualities, from meaningful to dead time. We may wait in dread or anticipation, patiently or exasperatedly, sitting on green chairs in a waiting room, as depicted on the cover of Manpreet K. Janeja and Andreas Bandak's timely edited volume.

Ethnographies of waiting is organized into an introduction and seven chapters that are based on ethnographic fieldwork in different locations around the globe, from a creationist theme park featuring a live-sized Noah's Ark in Kentucky to smoke- and potentially fistfight-filled flats in Tbilisi, Georgia. In the excellent introduction, the editors discuss waiting from anthropological and philosophical perspectives. 'Waiting must be conceptualized both as a figure in its own right as well as a trigger for various forms of social energies' (p. 1), Bandak and Janeja suggest, calling for the analysis of the interplay between the *politics* and *poetics* of waiting. In setting the scene for the case studies in the volume, they reflect on modernities and temporalities; the social energies of hope, doubt, and uncertainty;

control; and waiting as a method in ethnographic fieldwork.

The following chapters all present thought-provoking analyses of different practices and perceptions of waiting and temporal engagement. Not surprisingly, perhaps, religion is a central theme. In the first chapter, Simon Coleman examines religious presence through questions of attendance and attention, boredom, male circumcision, and impatience, focusing on Jewish and evangelical services and identities. Whereas the enactment of Jewish services does not require constant re-creation, Coleman claims, evangelicalism demands presence through intense praying and worshipping. The two latter issues are central in Bruno Reinhardt's chapter 4 on Pentecostalism in Ghana. Reflecting upon the nature of prayer vis-à-vis reciprocity, Reinhardt takes us through a night of prayer on Atwea Mountain in the company of a Ghanaian street preacher and a Pentecost prophetess, exploring more or less patient modes of waiting for God, from pure worship to '*warfare prayers*' (p. 129, italics in the original). James S. Bielo (chap. 5) further explores the ramifications of waiting for God's will, in this case in the construction of a creationist theme park in Kentucky, the Ark Encounter. Or, more accurately, he examines the Ark Encounter team waiting for funding while he is waiting for his fieldwork access to be terminated. Both happen eventually.

The tension between passive and active waiting is another red thread. Jarrett Zigon reflects on the temporalities of hope and hopelessness in post-Soviet Moscow (chap. 2), touching upon Christian models of hoping and waiting in times of moral breakdown. He emphasizes the importance of fidelity, perseverance, and agency in the stories of striving Muscovites in situations where 'hope is born out of the conditions of struggle' (p. 76). This position resonates with Synnøve Bendixsen and Thomas Hylland Eriksen's chapter 3 on a demonstration organized by Palestinian asylum seekers in Oslo. Contrasting the clash of temporalities between fast-paced neoliberal Norwegian society and the protracted limbo that asylum seekers face while waiting for residence permits, the authors problematize notions of passive hope.

This contrasts with post-revolutionary Georgia, where Martin Demant Frederiksen hung out with a group of nihilists who chatted in disengaged ways and got into random fights (chap. 6). Inspired by Beckett and Sartre, Frederiksen discusses their temporal disposition in a situation where they are certain that nothing will change in the future, in contrast to the *telos*

in waiting for something, be it good or bad, and the uncertainty that engenders hope. The book's last chapter by Anne Allison changes the focus to the growing Japanese industry of 'deathcare' and emerging practices of necro-sociality. Buying assistance to avoid a bad and cluttered death when living – and dying – alone, the emphasis is on being 'active not waiting' (p. 183) – being more present rather than hoping. In the afterword, Ghassan Hage reflects upon the 'complex "entanglement of waiting(s)"' (p. 204) and asks if we can wait non-nostalgically today.

Ethnographies of waiting is a valuable contribution to the growing literature on ethnographic perspectives of temporal phenomena: uncertainty, hope, waiting, future-making. Finalizing this review in November 2020, a time of extreme uncertainty, when countries across the world have shut down their public institutions and closed their borders to contain the coronavirus, I find that the scholarship on these issues is more opportune than ever.

NAUJA KLEIST *Danish Institute for International Studies*

LIVINGSTON, JULIE. *Self-devouring growth: a planetary parable as told from southern Africa*. xiv, 160 pp., illus., bibliogr. Durham, N.C.: Duke Univ. Press, 2019. £20.99 (paper)

A timely, sweeping treatise, Julie Livingston's *Self-devouring growth* offers 'a cancerous model' (p. 5) for understanding the effects of consumption-driven development. The author revisits Botswana – with its much-vaunted success in state-led development, and its worsening climate emergencies – as a parable for the planet, contending that its growth has undermined the collective well-being it was meant to achieve, while threatening environmental catastrophe.

Livingston focuses on rain/water, cattle/beef, and roads/movement – crucial symbolic objects, systems of distribution, and priorities for development in Botswana. With her trademark mix of historic and ethnographic sensibilities, she explores both how rainmaking once ordered the politics and ethics of a multispecies social world, and the consequence of forgetting those arts in favour of technological fixes: devastating, frequent drought. She charts the commoditization of cattle into beef, the transformation of the cow as a key interspecies familiar and 'total social fact' (p. 39) into food for export. She also details the paradox of Botswana's road-building success: crucial to the country's

public health infrastructure and drought relief initiatives, roads consume non-renewable resources insatiably, and are often lethal to the rapidly increasing number of people who drive them.

Livingston's accounts can be overstated: while an increasing alienation in 'bovine-human sociality' (p. 52) is certainly afoot, for example, the symbolic ethic and aesthetic of cattle is far from lost in Botswana, persisting alongside their commodification. But her examples demonstrate convincingly how consumerist growth, meant to create *boitumelo* (collective self-agreement and happiness), instead creates suffering, illness, and death.

But what is the 'self' being devoured by this growth? Livingston describes the dynamic more than the term, but self-devouring growth seems to be a cancer of the global, more-than-human, social body. The unnerving phrase resonates in a region where 'being eaten' indexes loss of agency; the imperative to '*grow or die; grow or be eaten*' (p. 5, italics in the original) is, arguably, the imperative of Tswana personhood. However, Livingston's phrase also glosses over sharp differences in who or what devours, and is devoured. In Setswana, eating others requires and conveys power and/or wealth; those at greatest risk of 'being eaten' are those with desirable resources or relations who cannot protect them. It is mainly white ranchers who drive the commoditization of beef, at the expense of smallholding Batswana; likewise, it is the aspirations of better-off, urban-dwelling Batswana that drive changes in diet and desire. Livingston recognizes self-devouring growth as a story of inequality; but in attempting to make a case for our shared risk, she elides the ways in which we are eating each other.

Livingston is a lucid writer and posing Botswana as a planetary parable is effective – but discomfiting, too. Parables are a form of metaphor, and Livingston draws some striking comparisons with California, Norway, and Japan. Nonetheless, bar a few illuminating exceptions – like the appearance in Botswana of Veolia, the engineering firm that poisoned the water in Flint, Michigan – the book avoids tracing connections. This choice lets readers, especially those from the Global North, off the hook: we can compare ourselves with Botswana, but escape the historic, ongoing ways our appetites are implicated in – or have caused – Botswana's dilemmas. Rain, cattle, and roads are all, as Livingston notes, not just resources but relationships. If answers to the climate crisis require rainmaking on a planetary scale (p. 127) – reanimating historical and moral

relationships among people, their landscapes, and more-than-human co-residents — drawing the reader into those relationships matters.

Parables also offer a blueprint for ethical behaviour. But while it sounds a clear warning, *Self-devouring growth* shies away from speculating on the moral of Botswana's story. Livingston leaves us with the dilemma that has long confounded models of degrowth, slow growth, and 'green growth', an unanswerable question: 'How is one to argue for less when not nearly everyone yet has enough?' (p. 127). Her final nod to rainmaking implies that the answer may be to create more for everyone – though that is the logic that underpins consumerist growth, too. Drawing inequality, and selfhood, into the frame suggests that one Tswana answer might instead be to redistribute resources from those who have to those who don't – a goal also evident, if imperfectly sought, in Tswana relationships with rain, cattle, and roads.

A compelling read, *Self-devouring growth* situates climate change at the heart of anthropological debates from development to ethics, and personhood to public health. It contributes a novel account from southern Africa to thinking on the more-than-human and the Anthropocene, with inspiration for students of the economics and history of growth. Perhaps no book could answer the urgent conundrums this one raises; it is left to the reader to diagnose their own cancerous tendencies and innovate a cure.

KOREEN M. REECE *University of Edinburgh*

MARTIN, RICHARD JOSEPH & DIETER HALLER (eds). *Sex: ethnographic encounters*. xxiv, 204 pp., bibliogr. London: Bloomsbury, 2018. £24.99 (paper)

Reflections on sexuality in ethnographic work are still recent in anthropology. Despite the controversy that Malinowski's diary (*A diary in the strict sense of the term*, 1967) generated about the ethnographer's sexuality in the field, it was not until the 1990s that anthropologists opened the debate about how sexual and gender issues stand at the intersection between the ethnographer and ethnographic work. Since then, interest in sexuality has been increasing in the discipline, both as an object of study in different social and cultural contexts, and as an inherent element of ethnographic work.

The edited volume *Sex: ethnographic encounters* constitutes one of those new contributions that openly and decidedly focuses

the debate on sexuality in fieldwork. It compiles a total of thirteen ethnographic chapters plus a preface by John Borneman, as series editor, an introduction by the editors, and a final chapter by William L. Leap which, as an epilogue, briefly reviews the book and regrets, quite rightly in my view, the lack of any analyses of virtual spaces. Nevertheless, this volume explores different countries across all continents, such as Brazil, South Africa, Israel, and Singapore, providing a global dimension. The chapters vary, focusing broadly on examples ranging from BDSM to religious practices, HIV, sex work, and multiple relationships, among other topics. Throughout the chapters, the issue of identity is crucial and is explored through classic categories such as heterosexual, gay, lesbian, bisexual, and also through queer identities, as well as including forms of sexual interactions that do not operate within Western binary logics. In addition, other social categories such as Roma, refugees, neo-pagans, Jains, or Jews are discussed in relation to sexuality in the field. The diversity of geographies, practices, identities, and contexts presented in this edited volume is especially suggestive of the complex nexus between sexuality and ethnography.

In their introduction, editors Dieter Haller and Richard Joseph Martin review the current research on sex and fieldwork and note that 'while the silence about "sex" has been broken, the "taboo" on writing ethnography on sex from the standpoint of an observing *participant* in many ways persists' (p. xix, original emphasis). Following this consideration, all of the authors of the volume 'expose themselves – warts, private pleasures, misunderstandings, and all – in the thick of it' (p. xiii), as pointed out by Borneman. These authors, from different perspectives and analyses of their own fieldwork, show that sexuality plays a fundamental role in the ethnographic encounter. In fact, Sebastian Mohr (chap. 2) notes that it is impossible to separate bodily experiences from fieldwork. Richard Joseph Martin (chap. 5) also reports on this difficulty through an analysis of the clothing worn by anthropologists while in the field and how this affects particular contexts, as is the case with his experience with BDSM ethnographic work. Adlina Maulod (chap. 7) also supports this idea through a reflection on queer performance, which, according to her, shapes identities as well.

Ethical issues are especially relevant here. For instance, Diana Budur's chapter 6 reflects on the ethical limitations of accessing information during her work while also maintaining a relationship with a key informant. Other ethical debates are

presented in chapter 9 by Hans Reihling, who saw himself as 'unintentionally reinforcing the stereotypical image of a dangerous female other' (p. 123) within the framework of urban South Africa. In his chapter 1, Timothy M. Hall proposes some reflections on the subject of ethics, offering an especially interesting analysis of the institutional review board. In his case study of fieldwork with refugees in Greece, Heath Cabot (chap. 3) approaches the ethical debate through an analysis of the power relations in which sexuality can become involved. All this shows how important ethics are, especially in respect to fieldwork on sex. Sexual relations in the fieldwork are the book's most recurrent topic, appearing in most of its fourteen chapters. In this sense, Hall assures us that this raises concern at three levels: epistemologically, methodologically, and ethically. Mitchell also delves into sexual relations during fieldwork through his research on sex workers in Brazil.

In short, *Sex: ethnographic encounters* shows once again that sex is a cultural fact that anthropologists cannot avoid during their fieldwork or when writing their monographs. This book undoubtedly broadens the debate, but in no way concludes or closes it, since some consensus is still needed on the limits, opportunities, and impact of sexuality in the field as well as on informants' and anthropologists' lives and their specific contexts.

JOSE ANTONIO LANGARITA *University of Girona*

MIELI, MARIO; foreword by Tim Dean; introduction by Massimo Prearo. *Towards a gay communism: elements of homosexual critique*. xxxviii, 269 pp., bibliogr. London: Pluto Press, 2018. £18.99 (paper)

Mario Mieli (1952-83) published *Towards a gay communism* with editor Giulio Einaudi in 1977, originally titled *Elementi di critica omosessuale*. David Fernbach translated and published an abridged version under the revised title *Homosexuality and liberation: elements of a homosexual critique* (1980). In this new English edition, Evan Calder Williams has translated the sections of the book not included in Fernbach's version, while providing a reconstruction of bibliographical citations and in-depth annotations. With these additions to the text, Williams has done an excellent job explaining the often obscure, and ample, historical references in the original, and has provided some clarity for the

untranslatable wordplay typical of Mieli's exuberant style.

In 1972, Mario Mieli co-founded Italy's first gay liberation group, FUORI! (Fronte Unitario Omosessuale Rivoluzionario/United Homosexual Revolutionary Front), an acronym that recalls the American and British movements, and which in English could be translated as: COME OUT! By 1974, a majority of the members of the collective turned their attention to parliamentary politics, a political strategy that Mieli ardently opposed. Through the practice of consciousness-raising, Mieli and others made the choice to split with FUORI! in order to develop alternative political avenues. Mieli was committed to a Marxist vision of total societal transformation, which included the elimination of capitalism and the creation of 'true communism'. This was the impetus for his writing *Towards a gay communism*, which is a unique, and widely overlooked, instance of Italian Marxist writing from that period. Interestingly, Mieli's Marxist analysis is closer to the social theory of the Frankfurt School, incorporating psychoanalytic language in order to expand his ideas beyond the issue of class alone. *Towards a gay communism* represents the most rigorous attempt to articulate the history, aims, and theories which drove the praxis of the 'revolutionary' wing of the Italian gay liberation movement during the late 1970s.

The dizzying amount of material covered in the text combined with its plurality of style is due, in part, to its beginnings as Mieli's university thesis and is exemplary of the value of performance in his activism. Each of its six chapters develops a series of central themes or questions (i.e. the pathologization of homosexuality in post-war Italy; the history of the 'anti-homosexual taboo'; the sexually repressive mechanisms of late-stage capitalism; a theory of homosexuality as endowed with revolutionary potential, especially with regard to totally transforming the social) oscillating between historical and theoretical analyses alongside Mieli's examination of his own personal experience. The result is a devastatingly sharp critique of the relation between capitalist social logics and the material consequences that such logics engender.

The strength of Mieli's writing is the polemical force of his universalizing message: 'All are latent queens' (p. 6). Here Mieli makes the absurd point, following a reading of Freud, that all heterosexuals are gay, but, following this, all homosexuals are heterosexual, all women are men, and all men are women. Key to this formulation is *potentiality*: we have it in us to be

women and men, but the regulatory systems of late capitalism have worked to repress our polymorphous erotic desires and alternative gender expressions. The gay critical project Mieli proposes is to provoke us to seek out those excised parts of ourselves; to bring to consciousness what he refers to as our ubiquitous 'transsexuality'.

This new translation includes a foreword by Tim Dean, an introduction by Massimo Prearo, and a preface by Evan Calder Williams. These pieces situate the text in its historical moment of social and political crisis, establish its position in the history of queer critique, and highlight its theoretical and political value for us today. Since Foucault's famous repudiation of the 'repressive hypothesis', Mieli's reliance on repression may seem somewhat naïve; however, the event of this translation offers an opportunity to revisit those early gay liberation texts whose arguments rely on the concept of repression.

Williams reminds us that Mieli's book is being released into a cultural and political climate rife with new forms of hyper-masculinized conservatism and white supremacy. To illustrate the stakes of Mieli's arguments, he invokes the words of Mieli's contemporary Guy Hocquenghem: "[S]ociety" is paranoid: it suffers from an interpretative delusion which leads it to discover all around it the signs of a homosexual conspiracy that prevents it from functioning properly' (*Homosexual desire*, 1993, p. 55). *Towards a gay communism* is a direct response to homophobic paranoia, and counter-intuitively confirms the paranoiacs' worst nightmares. Such enthusiastic counter-intuition was politically calculated by Mieli and is worth the rigorous consideration of scholars (be they historians, anthropologists, sociologists, or literary critics), students, and activists alike who are interested in the antagonistic energies and tactics of 1970s social movements.

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World-making

DIGGINS, JENNIFER. *Coastal Sierra Leone: materiality and the unseen in maritime West Africa*. xii, 234 pp., illus., bibliogr. Cambridge: Univ. Press, 2018. £75.00 (cloth)

In *Coastal Sierra Leone*, Jennifer Diggins departs from the rich extant literature on Sierra Leone's land-based cultural worlds by examining the social worlds of the coastal fishing industry from the perspective of residents of Tissana, a large

port town on the country's southern coast. She begins by highlighting the importance of establishing an ethnographic perspective on the livelihoods and social worlds of thousands of people who make their living in the seas – a strangely noteworthy absence in the otherwise rich ethnography of Sierra Leone. Diggins argues that the coastal region is seen by Sierra Leoneans as a space of 'freedom' from the economic and social ties that bind people inland, which is why it attracts migrants from around the country who seek to extract themselves from exploitative patron-client relationships. However, she contends, one similarly cannot survive on the coast without negotiating the ambivalence of these ties of obligation, as the materiality of those relationships also dominates life on the coast. In addition, these obligations are increasingly under strain – simultaneously as they become more necessary – as illegal international trawling and global climate change transform this once rich and prosperous fishing ground into a relative wasteland of scarce fish and widespread poverty.

This monograph is an excellent case study of a port town, with the chapters comprising 'interrelated empirical studies' (p. 27) rather than a single argument. Diggins organizes the book thematically, highlighting gender, the family, the seascape, and the occult, the importance of materiality in relationships, and the complexities of gender within those relationships. Even though men go to sea and women stay on land, no one gender holds all the power in the economy or in the home, while the unseen world of God and the occult, known through witches and blessings, binds people together in complex ties of obligation.

The two most outstanding aspects of *Coastal Sierra Leone* are Diggins's focus on seascapes as vital sites for studying globalization, movement, trade, and change, and her ability to tie Sierra Leone's long history of slavery, both internal and external, to people's exceedingly complicated relationships of indebtedness to, dependence on, and exploitation of each other. Several chapters are important additions not just to Sierra Leone studies, but to the wider literature on economies of movement, risk, and flux. These include chapter 2 on seascapes as places of ethnographic inquiry; chapter 4 on the 'sirens' that haunt the islands along the coast and keep men moving around; and chapter 6 on occult beliefs that infuse the fishing industry and its gendered economy. Throughout all the chapters, Diggins skilfully discusses the complicated history of internal and external slaving in Sierra Leone, and how the relationships that emerged within

communities of internal slaving in particular can help readers understand the simultaneous burden and importance of relationships of extreme and ongoing indebtedness, as well as people 'voting with their feet' and escaping exploitation inland for the ostensible freedom of the seas.

Throughout, Diggins links the lives of Tissana's fisherfolk and traders to the larger literature on materiality and the world of the 'unseen' in Sierra Leone, from family obligations, to witchcraft, to the supernatural skills of many fishermen. In these respects, it should be considered a new classic in Sierra Leone ethnography.

I have only a single critique. It would seem important to at least note that in the 'freedom' and strain of the fishing world, Sierra Leone's coast is known as a portal from which migrants launch perilous journeys in search of a better life; that the fluidity of life at sea extends to many young men trying to reach Morocco and then Europe by boat. Especially considering the centrality of the fishing industry crashing due to climate change and illegal trawlers filling demand in the European market, Diggins could have provided a glimpse of whether and how Tissana serves as a point of departure from this world of poverty and indebtedness, and further links it to global trends. However, there is no mention of whether Tissana serves this purpose, whether the young migrants are eventually frustrated in their attempts to make a living from the sea, and whether boat owners, similarly impoverished, take advantage of this. Though this may comprise a different literature entirely, the richness of Diggins's portrait of this fluid and dynamic environment is dulled slightly by the absence of this window into the rest of the world.

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ESCOBAR, ARTURO. *Designs for the pluriverse: radical interdependence, autonomy, and the making of worlds*. xxi, 290 pp., bibliogr. Durham, N.C.: Duke Univ. Press, 2018. £20.99 (paper)

This is an important, timely book that critically reviews the field of design and its origin in a particular kind of society with a view to assess design's potential to contribute to radical social change. *Designs for the pluriverse* is grounded in a fundamental critique of 'patriarchal Western capitalist modernity' (p. ix), which is creating global crises, and espouses the conviction that there is an alternative, captured by the concept of the pluriverse: 'a world where many worlds fit' (from a statement by the Zapatistas, p. xvi). From such a perspective, people are able to live with

the existence of different cultural 'worlds' that are both autonomous and radically interdependent without seeking to eradicate this difference through projects of political and economic dominance. Arturo Escobar's ultimate ambition is nothing less than to change an entire way of life and thus a particular way of world-making.

The book is built up systematically to substantiate its argument and vision, covering a broad field of studies and practices. The first section is called 'Design for the real world' and includes two chapters. In the first, Escobar discusses recent trends in the design field that focus on design as user-centred, situated, interactive, collaborative, and participatory with an emphasis on human experience and lifeworlds, rather than on objects, technological development, and the market. The second chapter deals with approaches to what the author calls cultural studies of design. This includes the emergent field of design anthropology and other articulations of the interaction between anthropology and design, looking at how they can complement and enrich each other. Additionally, Escobar addresses the field of development and, importantly, he sums up the ontological turn. The concept of political ontology particularly stands out as a perspective to which Escobar subscribes (with Blaser, de la Cadena, and others), one which concentrates on the interrelations between worlds, including conflicts that derive from the clash of different ontologies.

The second section, 'The ontological reorientation of design', also consists of two chapters, the first of which develops a cultural critique of Western modernity and its Cartesian dualist notion of cognition as the representation of a pre-existing world by a pre-given mind. In contrast, the author refers to an alternative theory, developed by the Chilean neurobiologists Humberto Maturana and Francisco Varela, in which cognition is understood as embodied action that brings forth both a subject and its world (see *Autopoiesis and cognition*, 1980). In the next chapter, Escobar develops an outline of what he calls ontological design, which leans heavily on Winograd and Flores's *Understanding computers and cognition* (1986), a major effort to integrate phenomenology, hermeneutics, cognition, and computer design. Design always in fact has ontological consequences because objects, tools, services, and so on, bring about particular ways of being, knowing, and doing. However, in ontological design, questions are asked not only about what can be made, but also about what humans can do and can be.

In the final section, Escobar zooms in on designing for the pluriverse. First, in chapter 5, he discusses several approaches to 'design for transitions', including the call for a complete reinvention of the human (see T. Berry, *The great work*, 1999) and the post-development concept of *buen vivir* ('good living'). Importantly, he also refers to Manzini's work on social innovation: *Design, when everybody designs* (2015). In the last chapter, Escobar lays out his vision on 'autonomous design', which is based on his work with Afro-Colombians and Colombian peasant communities; the practices of the Zapatistas in Mexico, and other groups in Latin America; as well as Maturana and Varela's theory about life, autopoiesis, and cognition (see also their *The tree of knowledge*, 1987). In his view, there need not be a contradiction between autonomy and radical interdependence, if autonomy is understood within the context of and with respect for the pluriverse and not in the modernist sense of self-sufficiency.

Escobar's book brings together a wealth of relevant perspectives, initiatives, and references and is essential reading for all those interested in design and its potential for transition movements and the struggle of marginalized communities. Unavoidably in a work of this scope, a number of fundamental questions are touched upon but remain underdeveloped. For example, what are the limits of human design agency if real transitions are characterized as not designed but 'emergent'? What is the relationship between and mutual contribution of trained designers and communities in which everyone is a designer? How exactly do we know if a new design is 'effective' and therefore for the greater good? Answering these questions requires further research, because only learning by doing brings forward new worlds. I find Escobar's passionate call for an alternative design practice both appealing and rather optimistic. I am more pessimistic concerning the limitations posed to autonomous design by the intricate and technologically exacerbated global interdependencies and power imbalances, but I hope I will be proven wrong.

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KONDO, DORINNE. *Worldmaking: race, performance, and the work of creativity*. xiv, 359 pp., illus., bibliogr. Durham, N.C.: Duke Univ. Press, 2018. £21.99 (paper)

In 1997, Richard Dyer published a highly regarded book on the simultaneous invisibility

and hypervisibility of whiteness in the showbusiness of the Global North. More than twenty years later, Dorinne Kondo argues that the assumption of a post-racial era is colour- and power-blind and explores the potential of reparative creativity in performances that challenge 'the unbearable whiteness of mainstream theatre' (p. 196).

The contents announce an overture and three acts intercut by three entr'actes. *Worldmaking* also is inspired by cinematic montage: Kondo often contrasts theoretical reflections, emotional outbursts, texts by others, and field notes. Her text is intentionally fragmentary and sometimes – concerning her remarks on post-racial ideologies – repetitive, but it seems that she deliberately disregards the dramaturgical advice that 'less is more'. Drawing on Donna Haraway's reflections on situated knowledge, she argues from the partial perspective of a Japanese American confronted with racialized violence.

Act I presents the theoretical framework and the field of research: Judith Butler's concept of performativity is pertinent because Kondo considers the performative potential of theatre to de-essentialize and denaturalize race. Her well-informed account of how neoliberalism affects theatres in the United States is disturbing: it results in an impoverishment of the artists – people of colour are most exposed to precarity. Kondo shrewdly observes that academics often consider casting practices within the frame of the politics of representation, indeed a relevant topic, but they are also a labour issue.

Act II is undoubtedly the book's most compelling section. Kondo takes us to a Broadway performance of *Twilight, Los Angeles 1992* written by the African American actor Anna Deavere Smith. The one-woman play is an exploration of the violence that erupted in Los Angeles in 1992 after a mostly white jury acquitted police officers who had beaten Rodney King. Kondo was involved in this production as a dramaturge. Supertitles would present the names of the people, who were directly involved in the incidents and were portrayed by Smith, then a supertitle would announce 'Dorinne Kondo, Scholar/Anthropologist' and Smith would quote Kondo's observation on 'the social geography of Los Angeles' (p. 98) – here the public would laugh. Participant observation became a reciprocal process in this artistic collaboration that Kondo analyses with rigorous self-reflexivity.

Smith's collaborative research included more than two hundred interviews. She, Kondo, and three other dramaturges who 'were different in terms of race' (p. 125) reflected on who should

be interviewed by whom. For example, Kondo doubted whether she should interview the Korean American business owners concerned by the riots, given that Korea had been colonized by Japan. The crucial question was how a solo performance could do justice to the complex interracial conflict. Kondo accused Smith of not being true to multiracial Los Angeles when she decided not to enact a Latinx and a Japanese American. Kondo felt indebted to her community; Smith felt obligated to theatre's affordances. Later, both agreed that they had inadvertently enacted a race war before a silent white public who watched the quarrel.

Kondo often mentions Bertolt Brecht's epic theatre, but Smith's approach is rather that of documentarist theatre. It bears more analogies with the research of Erwin Piscator, Peter Weiss, and contemporary theatre artists, who use protocols, interviews, and other documents. References to these approaches would have been insightful regarding the intersection of artistic and anthropological research that Kondo explores.

Act III presents another strand of Kondo's research: she participated in playwriting classes and eventually became a playwright herself. She considers her artistic research as reparative creativity, since it allowed her to work through the affective violence she experienced as an Asian American. In this vein, she positions her play *Seamless* as a culmination at the end of the book. It is what in theatre is ironically referred to as a 'well-made play' (p. 219): a drama with a hero's journey, a conflict, and an arc – a conventional form Kondo views critically throughout her book. Paradoxically, Smith's play reveals much more about the relevance of artistic approaches for anthropological research than the play written by the anthropologist. However, such contradictions are rather exciting, because they incite further reflection.

Apart from Victor Turner's collaboration with Richard Schechner, anthropologists have rarely worked with theatre artists; only recently have scholars such as Caroline Gatt followed this path. In contrast to other anthropologists practising participant observation, Kondo was not waiting for something to happen – working as a dramatist, she was often responsible for making things happen. Kondo's *Worldmaking* explores how artistic approaches might add to anthropological research and offers a multi-layered ethnography of US theatre. This book is also insightful for theatre practitioners and could be used for teaching undergraduates.

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MITCHELL, SEAN T. *Constellations of inequality: space, race and utopia in Brazil*. xiv, 255 pp., illus., bibliogr. Chicago: Univ. Press, 2017. £22.50 (paper)

'Even at its most abstract and universal, the utopia of space depends on terrestrial location' (p. 185). These words provide a concise idea of this book for those of us who approach it with an interest in space in the so-called Global South. This thoughtful ethnography is certainly about terrestrial location. More specifically, it is about inequality and race – as lived, imagined, and turned into forms of political consciousness – around a uniquely complex site: a spaceport built in the 1980s in the municipality of Alcântara in Brazil's northeast.

Constellations of inequality is the result of Sean T. Mitchell's ethnographic engagement with the region from 2001 until 2014, although the core fieldwork took place between 2004 and 2005. This impressive immersion allows him to trace crucial transformations in what Gilberto Freyre called the 'equilibrium of antagonisms' (quoted on p. 9) that characterizes Brazil. During all this time, Mitchell was never authorized to visit the actual spaceport. This fact reveals why his focus is on the projections that surround it and how this affects those kept away from its premises and promises. The spaceport is an object of allure or threat depending on whether the standpoint is that of the state, private companies, or villagers. Mitchell's gaze particularly grasps the intricacies of these positions and he sharply delineates the various conflicts that arise. There is ethnographic virtuosity in conveying that none of the actors embody unitary identities while, simultaneously, each suspects the others' interests, treating them as fixed.

The book's interventions in scholarly debates are clearest in chapters 3, 4, and 6, which were originally papers, and could have been outlined more straightforwardly in the introduction. At his most analytical, Mitchell proposes two concepts in relation to inequality to characterize its structures of legitimation and utopias of redress. These are 'complementary hierarchy', which describes the relations of unequal reciprocity between the rich/white and poor/black; and 'mimetic convergence', which is an imaginary about the end of inequality via the erasure of difference by enrichment/whitening. While most of the book's rich material eludes Mitchell's effort to grasp it through these categories, they do facilitate the depiction of a fundamental shift: the move away from relations of patronage between

the powerful and the subordinate, and the reframing of the categories of political mobilization from class to race.

Starting with the military dictatorship that ruled Brazil between 1964 and 1985, and under different political regimes afterwards, Mitchell portrays various Brazilian governments' ambitions to become a 'world power' by having a space programme. However, the very significance of such a plan is problematic given the internal divisions among those managing it, and the fractures between its nationalist military and civil commercially orientated sides.

The spaceport itself tells a story of unfulfilment: it has not had a successful launch to date, and an explosion in 2003 killed twenty-one technicians on site. Its construction began in 1982 and entailed the forced relocation of 1,500 villagers to *agrovilas* built by the Air Force with recruited local labour. This process doomed them to poverty, a situation that continues in contrast with those who, fearing the fate of the relocated, remained on the coast, living off the land, and resisting the spaceport's expansion. The key to resistance here is their identity as *quilombolas* (descendants of communities who escaped slavery) as they have had a constitutionally sanctioned inalienable right to their land since 1988. Thus, after decades of aiming to detach themselves from the 'legacies of slavery' (p. 31),

activists in the 1990s began to see themselves as black and politicized this identity. One of the most fascinating moments in the book involves Mitchell reflecting on his own status as part of a team of anthropologists sent to assess and 'determine the veracity of claims to *quilombola* identity and delimit the boundaries of *quilombo* communities' (p. 106). This episode is treated as part of a broader and very relevant concern with how different actors assert technical and institutionally certified expertise over the site.

Constellations are, by definition, perspectival as imaginary arrangements of stars into shapes according to varying viewpoints. The spaceport in *Constellations of inequality* was a window of opportunity for some locals, a fundamental threat to collective livelihood for others, a profit-making machine for private companies, and a symbol of national status for the state and its military. In all these arrangements, varying forms of inequality are the stellar dots that make up the constellations. Joining the scholarship on Brazil and inequality, Mitchell's book is also a valuable contribution to the expanding anthropology of space and a timely reminder that the futures that space invokes in different parts of the world exist within very concrete social realities and in the experiences of those who dream, suffer, and resist.

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