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Book reviews

Archaeology, art, architecture

DE CUNZO, LU ANN & JOHN H. JAMESON
(eds). *Unlocking the past: celebrating historical archaeology in North America*. x, 255 pp., map, illus., bibliogr. Gainesville: Univ. Press of Florida, 2005. \$39.95 (cloth)

Historical archaeology tends naturally to be a public endeavour in the United States. Sites are often located in historic and populated areas within easy view of passersby. Equally often the excavations are conducted in advance of development that has already garnered public attention and any activity in the project area will attract curious onlookers. Even when working in less visible areas, there are few historical archaeologists who have not opened their sites to the public for tours or welcomed a few volunteers to expand a small crew. Despite this openness, the comment ‘Oh I didn’t know there was archaeology here – we’re too “young”’ is a common one. What is new in historical archaeology is a widespread, organized, and professional effort to provide comprehensive archaeological information to the public. In this book, the editors of *Unlocking the past* and the Society for Historical Archaeology bring together a diverse array of archaeologists to discuss their research and provoke discussions of the past and present.

The tone of the book is set in Lu Ann De Cunzo’s engaging and personal introduction, which defines historical archaeology by introducing some pioneers in the field while describing her own journey in becoming an archaeologist. Many of the following chapters continue this pattern of incorporating personal

experiences that explain a lifelong professional passion, whether it be a youthful addiction to documentaries on the raising of the *Titanic* or a suburban kid’s curiosity about rural farmsteads. As the authors reveal their personal stories, the readers are invited to come along on the journey and encouraged to seek their own insight.

In the course of the volume, readers explore a vast span of time from Viking explorations (William Fitzhugh) to the Second World War (Daniel Lenihan *et al.*). The book is divided into carefully selected topics: culture contact, explorations, archaeology in cities and rural areas, and the archaeology of conflict. Some chapters present new information on familiar historical topics such as the settlement of Jamestown (Andrew Edwards) or exploring the west for natural resources (R. Scott Baxter and Rebecca Allen). The chapter on the Battle of Little Big Horn (Richard A. Fox) not only shows how much new information archaeology can provide for our understanding of well-studied historical events, but also provides insight into how fieldwork is done.

Other chapters will hit a nerve or strike a familiar chord with readers. Lenihan *et al.*’s work on the USS *Arizona*, which sank during the attack on Pearl Harbor, addresses an event recent enough for some readers to have a close, if not a direct, connection or memory. Others, such as Leland Ferguson’s account of his pioneering work in African American archaeology and discussions of the exploration of Spanish missions and their residents (Jerald T. Milanich; Clark Spencer Larken), the Chinese experience in the nineteenth century in Los Angeles (Roberta Greenwood), and resistance movements at Maroon settlements in Florida (Terrance Weik) address issues of racism,

multiculturalism, and immigration that remain integral to the American experience.

While less potentially political, the chapters on rural sites, the archaeology of cities, and military history also play to the North American experience. The chapters on great cities, New York, Charleston, Quebec, West Oakland, and Alexandria, are interesting for refocusing the scale of research beyond the boundaries of a single site to the study of the city itself as a dynamic system. Similarly the examples of rural agrarian and industrial lifeways belie many myths of rural life illuminating the broad economic and social patterns and processes. In both the rural and urban examples the integration of the public as participants, advocates, and sources is notable for their contributions to the work.

In the final section the editors asked younger professionals to describe their thoughts on the future of archaeology. This is more a reminder to professional archaeologists of their responsibility to conserve and care for artefacts, to reach out to the general public, and to conduct fully inclusive research of all communities and populations. John Jameson's conclusion, however, returns to the original premise of the book and provides suggestions and encouragement for the general public to get involved.

This book is clearly written for a general audience. Many archaeologists will disagree with an approach or conclusion, or bristle at a subjective conclusion presented as fact. But the point of the book is to provoke discussion and bring the diversity of the profession to a diversity of audiences. In this it is quite successful. *Unlocking the past* illustrates the direct implications that an understanding of the past has for a modern audience and shows the power of historical archaeology in contributing to critical dialogues about the past and present.

ANN-ELIZA H. LEWIS *Massachusetts Historical Commission*

GRAY, JOHN. *Domestic mandala: architecture of lifeworlds in Nepal*. xiv, 163 pp., maps, tables, figs, illus., bibliogr. Aldershot: Ashgate, 2006. £45.00 (cloth)

Domestic mandala is a major theoretical and ethnographic treatise on the architecture, perception, usage, and imagining of space among high-caste Hindu Nepalese, written by one of the most eminent contemporary social anthropologists studying Nepal. Its publication is

one of those rare occasions in Nepalese studies where a truly extraordinary academic endeavour is published, filling genuine scholarly lacunae, shedding light on a highly significant subject in Nepalese studies.

Scholars have often approached South Asian Hindu architecture, and Nepalese architecture in particular, through the perspective of temple architecture. This topic, although fascinating, is of little relevance to the concerns of most contemporary people, their beliefs and life-worlds; rather, it follows ancient texts that are quite distant and opaque not only for ordinary people, but also for learned ones. What makes Gray's new book stand out amongst the extensive present literature is its focus on domestic architecture, on how people experience space, organize it, and relate to it. So far, with minor exceptions (mainly M. Gaborieau, 'The Indo-Nepalese house in central Nepal' and V. Bouillier, 'From the fountain to the fireplace', both in *Man and his house in the Himalayas* (ed.) G. Toffin, 1981; and G. Daryn, *Encompassing a fractal world*, 2006), high-caste Nepalese architecture and domestic use of space has, unfortunately, received only meagre scholarly attention. This gap, coupled with the growing anthropological focus on architecture and Gray's ability to bring these two disciplines neatly together in such a fascinating and stimulating manner, makes his contribution a highly timely and valuable one.

Gray's main argument is that through their everyday domestic practices and movements in space, as well as within the material and ritual construction of their houses, Kholagaun's Chhetris build mandalas and yantras into their domestic space. These in turn reflect and encapsulate people's lived experience and embody an indispensable tool with which they reveal the multifarious knowledge and the ultimate truth of the divine cosmos. Kholagaun Chhetris live their cosmology through domestic and ritual activities that engender and are governed by a domestic mandala; through people's actions within their mandalic domestic space, via their movement inwards and outwards and the accompanying spatial inclusions and exclusions, the enigma of the paradoxical Householder way of life is revealed, realized, and consolidated. Space, activities, and experience in social life, Gray further contends, are both internal and mutually constitutive.

Throughout, Gray brings into play several phenomenological ideas alongside other theories such as Bourdieu's theory of practice, which proves highly pertinent and helpful for

elucidating the true meaning of domestic space and its deep implications for Nepalese high castes in everyday life as well as in cosmology.

Domestic mandala is aptly brought to a conclusion by the introduction of an innovative and promising term: *architechnē*, influenced by Heidegger's (Greek derived) *technē*, which is about bringing forth concealed knowledge, the essence of truth, or the world's field of possibilities via human action. Thus everyday acts are *architechnē* acts in so far as they bring forth the truth about the cosmos in the form of domestic space. This term not only epitomizes Gray's highly rewarding intellectual journey throughout the book, but also clearly opens up fascinating channels for future theories and research.

Though the term 'fractal' is not mentioned explicitly in the book, Gray refers to numerous instances that demonstrate how the notion of fractal is not only present but also in fact fundamental to the perception of the cosmos in the small Hindu community of Kholagaun. An example is the way in which domestic architecture becomes a template for the desirable compatibility between person, action, and place within a house, which in turn reflects and reveals the characteristics of the concentric mandalic universe, where different domains of existence, micro and macro-cosmoses, replicate each other, are homologous, and mutually influential.

Gray brings to his book more than three decades of intimate experience and a vast knowledge of high-caste Nepalese life, and this is clearly expressed in both the depth and scope of this exceptional book. Those familiar with his work on Nepal and Scotland will undoubtedly recognize his thick ethnographic descriptions, lucid style of writing, broad intellectual perspective, and intriguing theoretical insights. Without doubt, *Domestic mandala* merits wide scholarly attention well beyond the circle of South Asian social anthropologists.

GIL DARYN *School of Oriental and African Studies*

SVAŠEK, MARUŠKA. *Anthropology, art and cultural production*. 264 pp., illus., bibliogr. London: Pluto Press, 2007. £17.99 (paper)

Anthropology, art and cultural production is an excellent introduction to the anthropology of art at the beginning of the twenty-first century. Svašek leaves aside past debates on the discipline, like the 'cross-cultural' nature of art,

with a strong affirmation that 'art' is a changing, historically specific discourse, and that it is therefore analytically wrong to construct it as an objective tool of analysis to compare artefact production in different societies' (p. 218). On the contrary, 'art' is the result of what Svašek has called a process of 'aesthetization', the recognition of these artefacts and images as 'art'. The idea that art is in the eye of the beholder has been accepted in the study of modern art at least since Duchamp, but it has taken anthropology quite a long time to recognize this. In this sense, Svašek has written one of the first introductions to the anthropology of art that takes on board a decidedly modern approach to art.

Svašek's insistence on 'process' is also a clear reflection of similar concerns in conceptual art, as well as the new anthropological literature that, from the late 1980s, has been interested in the social life of artworks: authors like Fred Myers, Christopher Steiner, or Nicholas Thomas (although some of these authors are quite under-represented in her narrative). Interestingly, Svašek focuses on the potential of artworks as intercultural objects, especially in chapter 8. The literature on the sociology of art is also central to her argument, and, using Bourdieu's theories, she takes a field approach to art as an institution.

The book provides an exhaustive history of the anthropology of art, as well as chapters on specific topics, from museums, to the commodification of fine art, making extensive use of sources and interesting ethnographic examples, and is to be recommended as an introduction to core questions in the anthropology of art. But it is less convincing when it proposes a general theory, what the author calls 'processual relativism'. This approach reflects the anthropological interest in the social life of things, as previously mentioned: the idea that the values of objects are transitive, depending on their social context. But this approach has been questioned from several perspectives. First, the question of *materiality*, which Svašek mentions but does not fully acknowledge: the resistance of objects to 'transit', to be exchanged and re-valued. Secondly, the question of *historicity*; where *process* is not exactly the same thing as *history*; a process is reversible, but history is not. The *historicity* of objects cannot easily be erased or reversed. Furthermore, this historicity often does not depend exclusively on the external values that are attributed to artworks, but on particular events of encounter in which the

materiality of the objects comes to the fore, and which cannot be reduced to the social values involved.

These points have been raised by a more recent literature in anthropology and visual cultures that is interested in the 'power' of objects and images, and its ambiguous relations and exchanges with bodies and persons. Svašek's approach is linked to a 'Duchampian' tradition in which the object is under total control by the artist (i.e. the ready-made), while this literature is perhaps taking as a starting-point a post-Duchampian, surrealist approach in which 'who controls whom' – the artist or the object – is not so clear. This point is quite clear in Svašek's approach to Gell's work. Svašek's claim to the use of Gell's approach to 'object agency' is a bit limited: she seems concerned only with the power of artworks to affect emotional states (pp. 12–13), what she defines, using a term noted above, as a process of 'aesthetization'. Gell's ideas about artwork as an index and distributed person can certainly lead us much beyond that. Perhaps Svašek did not need to engage with Gell at all: her 'processual relativism' could be based on the literature of the social life of things, which can be synthesized quite well with the sociology of art that, in fact, provides the structure of much of her argument.

Another point that is missing in the book is a more extensive engagement with contemporary art; but perhaps the anthropological engagement with contemporary art is far too recent to be fully acknowledged (yet). It is difficult to write a book that is at the same time a thorough introduction to a field and a significant theoretical contribution, especially when this field is in transformation. In this sense, Svašek's *Anthropology, art and cultural production* is quite an achievement.

ROGER SANSE *Goldsmiths College*

History, politics, law

ALI, N., V.S. KALRA & S. SAYYID (eds). *A postcolonial people: South Asians in Britain*. 436 pp., figs, tables, bibliogr. London: Hurst & Co. Publishers Ltd, 2006. £45.00 (cloth), £14.95 (paper)

A postcolonial people is one of the first edited volumes to focus specifically upon the histories, politics, and everyday experiences of British

South Asians. The book brings together sociological theory, thick historical description, and contemporary accounts to articulate the postcolonial location of British South Asians, who are referred to by the editors and most of the book's contributors as 'BrAsian'. I thoroughly enjoyed reading this book and have learned much from it. In this short review, I shall not attempt to provide a resume of all the chapters. Rather, I shall endeavour to draw out some of the book's themes that stand out for me.

One of the most innovative, creative, and ambitious aspects of the book is the editors' desire to develop new 'language games' with which to describe British South Asians. Advancing within this theoretical and methodological frame in the book's introduction, S. Sayyid (pp. 6–8) discusses the intellectual impetus for the deployment of the term 'BrAsian' to denote South Asian settlers to Britain, and their descendants. Underpinning the idea of BrAsian is the political necessity 'to replace the colonial *teleos* with a vision in which the distinction between West and non-West is no longer privileged' (p. 7, original emphasis). Sayyid thinks that this term is not the 'correct answer' to the matter of naming British Asian subjectivities because it is located within the colonial 'order of things'. However, he argues that currently there is no better alternative. It is in the face of the editors' ambition to find new ways of naming BrAsians that it is appropriate for the book to include a revised version of Tariq Modood's now famous essay on the politics of Blackness and South Asian identities. In his essay Modood provides a sophisticated and for some controversial analysis of the reasons why he thinks that the signifier 'Black' fails to capture and account for the complexities of BrAsians' identities.

Read collectively, the chapters exemplify the view that the 'postcolonial' does not simply signal a point in time that marked the collapse of European Empires; rather, postcolonialism is a conceptual way of thinking and articulating views of colonial practices in the present, as representations and nuances incorporated in notions of Western superiority and racial hierarchy. From this point of view, Barnor Hesse and S. Sayyid use the term 'coloniality' to analyse the manifestation of the colonial worldview in the present. The chapters that follow trace evidence of colonial notions of White British/English cultural superiority in the present and the history, complexity, and diversity of BrAsians' identities and strategies of resistance.

It is worth reflecting for a moment upon the ways in which the contributors disrupt any neat codification of BrAsian migration and settlement histories in the UK. In this vein, Humayun Ansari's chapter focuses upon colonial migration histories between 1857 and 1947, thus dispelling the popular myth that BrAsian migration to the UK occurred only after formal decolonization in 1947. Turning her attention to post-1947 settlement histories, Nasreen Ali's chapter critiques sociological models of migration that reduce the complexity of migration to 'push and pull' factors. Ali asserts that accounts of postcolonial people's migrations must emphasize the historical ruptures that facilitate 'chain migration' patterns.

Ali's critique of migration theory complements the contributors' collective rejection of scholarship and social policy that contributes to distorted representations of BrAsians as out of place in the West, and BrAsianness as exotic when juxtaposed to the often ethnically unmarked White British culture. For example, Fauzia Ahmad's chapter challenges anthropological studies that associate arranged marriages with forced marriages. Moreover, Claire Alexander and Avtar Brah, in their respective chapters, critique anthropological accounts that have supported the idea that BrAsians are 'torn between two cultures'. In other words, these scholars argue against the idea that BrAsians are positioned between their parents' Eastern values and the supposedly more forward-looking liberal values of the West. Turning to the world of BrAsian art, John Holt and Laura Turney take issue with the history of art and its mainstream institutionalization that has until recently interpreted BrAsian artists' work through a series of 'clichéd symbols of the Orient: sensual, erotic, symbolic and spiritual' (p. 332). Karl Atkin examines the maintenance and control of institutional racism in British health care. His focus is upon the processes that have the often unintended effect either of ignoring the cultural and religious requirements of BrAsians and/or of resulting in the stereotypical exaggeration of BrAsians' needs.

A theme that is crucial to the book is the multiplicity of ways in which BrAsians have become politicized and mobilized collectively against the state, the police, and the employer: for example, through participation in the trade union movement, BrAsian Muslims' politicization in the wake of the Rushdie affair, and the recent uprisings in English northern towns. In his chapter, John Hutnyk argues that histories of BrAsian activism in 'workplace and

neighbourhood organizations, trade unions ... socialist and communist party affiliation' need to be written in order to counteract depoliticized anthropological studies that focus on caste, kinship, and religion (p. 76).

A further theme running throughout the book is the recent criminalization of BrAsians in British society. Avtar Brah argues that this process of criminalization cannot be understood outside the new global imperialism associated with the so-called 'war on terror'. Advancing this aspect of the book, Virinder S. Kalra examines the criminalization of BrAsian Muslim men of Pakistani heritage. He draws upon official statistics on prison convictions and police 'stop and search' profiles to illuminate some of the ways in which these men face racial harassment in the criminal justice system. Kalra argues that BrAsian Muslims' experience of police racism resonates with that traditionally endured by African-Caribbean men.

Claire Alexander also questions the recent criminalization of BrAsian youths post 9/11 and the common perception that they pose a fundamental threat to British society. She traces the shift in the representation of BrAsian youth from 'passive victim' to 'aggressor'. Alexander reports that the image of BrAsians as 'fanatics' took hold after the Rushdie affair and was cemented by the 2001 uprisings. She contends that the media representation of the riots criminalized BrAsian men through associating them with drugs and gang activity. This portrait of BrAsian youth, Alexander suggests, facilitates a chain of stereotypical associations, inheriting the notion that Muslim cultures are inherently patriarchal (p. 268). It is in the face of these commonplace representations that she advocates that emphasis should be placed upon the formation of new BrAsian youth ethnicities manifest in Bhangra and Bollywood Dreams. These cultural formations highlight the 'syncretic and globalized nature of BrAsian identities and their role in challenging racism and racist stereotypes' (p. 270). These themes are examined further by Sanjay Sharma in his analysis of BrAsian popular music and Rachel Dwyer in her chapter on Hindi cinema in Britain.

A central feature of the book is the (con)fusion between White British and South Asian cultures. On the one hand, the reader is shown the futility of thinking of BrAsian cultural formations as the outcome of mixing distinct Eastern and Western parts. Rather, White Britishness and BrAsianness have no distinct or original moment of intercultural exchange and separation. Religious syncretism is also a theme

that recurs in some of the chapters. In this regard, Avtar Brah contends that for South Asians in East Africa, there was no sense of animosity between Hindus, Sikhs, and Muslims. Rather, people shared, celebrated, and participated in each other's religious celebrations. Arvind Mandair goes one stage further to suggest that before the Raj there were no religious distinctions between Hinduism, Islam, and Sikhism.

This book also provides an insight into the formation and realities of BrAsian ethnoscapes in cities, towns, and suburbs. In this vein, Seán McLoughlin scrutinizes the representation of Bradford within anthropological texts, travel writing, religious studies, and novels. In the course of so doing, his analysis reveals something about Bradford as a place and highlights the shifts within writers' representations of 'Brad-istan' from the 1970s to the present. Given the title of the book – *A postcolonial people* – the words of Khalil, a character in Mohammed Yunis Alam's recent novel set in Bradford, are particularly poignant. Khalil's nickname is 'Kilo', which refers to his profession as a local drugs dealer. When Kilo is accused by a policeman of 'killing your own people', his reaction is, 'My people? ... I had no people' (*Kilo*, 2002, p. 140).

In the introduction to *A postcolonial people* Sayyid argues that anyone who mistakes the title of this book for an encyclopaedia of knowledge about British South Asians will be sorely disappointed. It seems to me that the book achieves what it set out to accomplish. That is, it puts academics, students and policy makers on the right path towards developing new 'language games' that refuse to feed the Western White British appetite and desire for 'otherness'.

KATHARINE TYLER *University of Surrey*

AMOAH, MICHAEL. *Reconstructing the nation in Africa: the politics of nationalism in Ghana*. vii, 248 pp., bibliogr. London, New York: Tauris Academic Studies, 2007. £47.50 (cloth)

Michael Amoah's book examines national self-determination in multi-ethnic and heterogeneous states like Ghana. It highlights micro-behaviours that apparently influence voting patterns among diverse social categories, including sophisticated globalized urbanites. Amoah's work, which also attempts to establish the nature of the delicate balance between nationalism and patriotism, is very strongly

grounded theoretically. He devotes considerable attention to theoretical considerations, particularly in his extensive discussion in chapters 2 and 3, respectively, of the 'Invention of a doctrine' (pp. 9-50) and the Ghana hypothesis in the reconstruction of the traditions of origin of the micro-states (pp. 51-90).

Amoah applies appropriate theories as analytical tools, particularly in chapters 4 and 5, which enables him to lift the discourse on the construction of the modern nation-state in Africa to a high level. He argues persuasively that modern nationalism is, none the less, present in modern nations such as Ghana, even though such states have emerged from a collection of traditional micro-states without previously having exhibited evidence of the processes of nation-formation that characterized the emergence of European nations like England and France. He argues that within such nations, being products of the shifts and transformations of the colonial experience and the modernization process, anti-colonial nationalism became a legitimate and incontestable reason for bonding up national feelings among peoples inhabiting a geographical demarcation who now felt that they belonged together, at least for the purposes of breaking the colonial yoke (pp. 2; 28-9).

Amoah acknowledges the subtle complexities inherent in the multi-layered type of nationalism that has emerged in Africa by drawing on the concept of 'secondary nationalism' with reference to entities that he characterizes as 'pseudo, quasi and ephemeral identities'. These characteristics are spawned by socio-economic, political, religious, and ideological factors, considerations that interact with 'situational ethnicity' to surface on the mainstream nationalist arena (pp. 17-20). Amoah uses the case of the emergence of the National Liberation Movement (NLM) that erupted in Asante in the 1950s, principally as a response to what was considered to be unfair cocoa pricing policy (pp. 29-30). He infers that since this movement became the genesis of what had come to be known as the Danquah-Busia political tradition, from which the current ruling New Patriotic Party (NPP) has evolved, a continuum in these ideological concerns still influences the NPP's support base and their voting trends. In discussing the politics of nationalism in Ghana, Amoah infuses his arguments with interconnections between Ghana's past and its present. This is portrayed, for example, in his examination of voting trends in Ghana since the 1992 elections that ushered in the Fourth

Republic (pp. 123-37). Amoah demonstrates how the weight of history continues to direct the political barometer, which results in what he describes as the 'ethnic arithmetic in Ghanaian governments' (p. 70).

However, Amoah's attempt to review the ethno-genesis of the peoples of Ghana and the rationale for the adoption of the name 'Ghana' as replacement for the colonial designation 'Gold Coast' runs into serious difficulties. His discussion of the 'Genesis of the Ghana hypothesis' fails to take into consideration current Ghanaian historiography that seriously contests unitary origins for the peoples. Amoah's problem is a result of over-reliance principally on Eva Meyerowitz's interpretations and inferences (in *The sacred state of the Akan*, 1951; and *Akan traditions of origin*, 1952), which have been much criticized particularly by such archaeologists as J. Nehemia Levtzion ('The early states of the Western Sudan to 1500', in *History of West Africa*, vol. 1, 1971) and historians like Maxwell Owusu (*Uses and abuses of political power*, 1970). Amoah seems to ignore the considerable weight of oral traditions, perhaps overemphasizing certain arguments about the existence of ancient Ghana and the subsequent adoption of its name as a replacement for the colonial designation of the Gold Coast without adding much to the existing discourse (p. 53). It would possibly have been more helpful if he had availed himself of the new insights that emerged in such recent works as Ivor Wilks's *One nation, many histories: Ghana's past and present* (1996).

The most fascinating aspect of Amoah's work can be found in chapters 6 to 9, where he treats the 'nation-state project' and comments extensively on how the independent micro-states underwent transformation through the colonial experience and its associated legacy, such as ethnonational heterogeneity within a single jurisdiction. Amoah develops the theory that a major challenge for the project is the attempt to use the nation-state as an incubator through which homogeneity is introduced into the environment. This challenge surfaces as secessionism and irredentism, as it did in the late 1990s in the Volta Region, which shares an international border with the Republic of Togo, where security and political sensitivity requires considerable tact and diplomacy. Amoah carefully maps out the post-People's National Defence Council (PNDC) Ghanaian political landscape by examining the principal factors, such as religion, the different levels of ethnicity, provision of development projects, or lack of

them, while, underlying all, the hand of history remains, gently, gingerly, weaving its way into decision-making about voting.

WILHELMINA J. DONKOH *Kwame Nkrumah University of Science and Technology*

ANTOUN, RICHARD T. *Documenting transnational migration: Jordanian men working and studying in Europe, Asia and North America*. xii, 325 pp., map, figs, tables, bibliogr. Oxford, New York: Berghahn Books, 2005. £50.00 (cloth)

Despite waves of Arab migration to different parts of the world, experiences of migrants are rarely tackled in the literature on Arab diaspora. This book offers a thorough documentation of such experiences. The richness of Antoun's account confirms his long-term and extensive knowledge of the Jordanian villagers of Kufr-al-Ma, their socio-economic and historical backgrounds, and the intricacies of an Arab 'post-peasant society'.

Of particular interest in this book is the focus on an area generally neglected in the literature on migration, which tends to favour economic migrants. By contrast, Antoun looks at migration driven by the hope and purpose of higher education. He includes an analysis of the Jordanian Army as a vector for professional development and training abroad, not without alluding to the importance of class and status in accessing certain army ranks and possible subsequent opportunities of mobility.

The book raises the question of how reaching unified conclusions and generalizations regarding migrants within a single country or occupation is possible. It therefore sets out to examine the complex factors that account for how and why male migrants from the same village exhibit varying forms of coping and adaptation in a variety of host countries. Antoun argues that the degree of integration into new societies by migrants was shaped by host governmental policies *vis-à-vis* migrants with regard to citizenship and labour laws, neighbourhood interactions and the ease with which social relations were forged and courtship allowed, and the status of being 'Arab', which resulted in reactions ranging from awe in Pakistan, due to the association of Jordanians with the 'holy land', to discrimination in the United States immediately following the First Gulf War. These factors explain the 'counterintuitive conclusion' that the 'easiest integration' for Jordanians occurred in Greece, followed by the USA, Pakistan, and,

unexpectedly, Saudi Arabia, which was 'the most difficult' despite its presumed cultural similarities, such as language, religion, and tribal history.

Antoun shows how, despite geographical distance, Jordanian migrants retained strong bonds with their families in Jordan through frequent communication, visits, and plans to return. Moreover, following the anthropological trend that 'focus[es] on the family and household as the proper locus for an examination of the process of the reinterpretation of tradition from one generation to the next', he explores the significance of kinship ties (especially father/son relations) coupled with an Islamic religious ethos in determining how migrants negotiated attitudes regarding their new contexts. Family and religion acted as backdrop for the (re)interpretation of values about a variety of social issues related to both the home and host countries (marriage, birth control, abortion, Jordanian tribal law, television, the Gulf War) and the pursuit of 'secular professionalism' while maintaining an Arab/Muslim identity. His material, in this sense, supports trends in diaspora literature that focus on transnational continuities as opposed to ruptures, alienation, and displacement, but not without taking account of the multivocality of experiences in a single context.

The 'reinterpretation of tradition' is a key concept in Antoun's book, which he uses to critique the limitations of concepts used in the literature such as 'assimilation', 'acculturation', and 'integration'. While his in-depth data are remarkable in bringing forward the manner in which migrants negotiate their realities and the difficulty of dichotomizing 'tradition' and 'modernity' in a transnational world, his definition of modernity defeats this purpose. He defines modernity as the 'social, cultural, and psychological framework which facilitates the application of tested knowledge to all branches of production: the unhampered search for knowledge, a positive stance toward innovations, a fostering of social mobility, and an achievement ethic that channels reward to high performance ... [and] commitment to continuous self-improvement and programmed decision-making'. Modernity is associated with bureaucratization, professionalism, and 'the dominance of the modern nation-state, education as an elixir, and the values of individualism and cultural relativism'.

This definition raises more than one concern for the reader. Firstly, it captures the Western

experience of modernization and assumes that villagers of Kufr-al-Ma have lived in 'tradition', outside of this particular modernity. But Antoun tells us that tradition is itself 'constructed' and has always been reinterpreted in Kufr-al-Ma. Migrants who have adapted elements of this definition (programmed decision-making, professionalism, individualism, etc.) are assumed to have brought it from outside, through their experiences abroad. One wonders if Jordanians have not developed similar or even more 'untraditional attitudes' towards birth control, family planning, and social and political issues without having to leave their country.

Overall, this book provides very rich material on long-term experiences of Arab migrants abroad and contributes to the literature on migration and Arab diasporas.

MICHELLE OBEID *University of Manchester*

BRUBAKER, ROGERS, MARGIT FEISCHMIDT, JON FOX & LIANA GRANCEA. *Nationalist politics and everyday ethnicity in a Transylvanian town*. xxiii, 439 pp., maps, tables, plates, illus., bibliogr. Princeton: Univ. Press, 2007. £22.95 (cloth)

This co-authored interdisciplinary book based on field material that spans over ten years of rapid social, economic, and political transformations shows that giving to an empirical question the central place in research could determine plural approaches, create innovative methods, shake stubborn assumptions, and refine rigid or unrealistic theories. The book seeks to discover what stands behind the public confrontation of two antagonistic nationalist discourses, the Hungarian and the Romanian, in the multi-ethnic city of Cluj, Romania, a city with a Hungarian past and a Romanian present. Written by a political sciences theorist known for his theories of nationalism together with an ethnologist, a sociologist, and a conversation analyst, this book pleads indirectly for the importance of the ethnographic gaze for understanding what happens behind the public scene of nationalist confrontations. But this gaze should not be understood as the simple complementary 'view from below' that adds to the political scientists' 'view from above', the usual argument used by anthropologists to support the relevance of their field studies. By tackling ethnicity and nationalism both from a holistic and from an individualist perspective and approaching them by using a variety of methods, namely an extensive review of the

historical literature, participant observation, interviews, focus groups, and discourse analysis, this book captures the various meeting-points and complex articulations existing between 'groupist' nationalist discourses and institutions present in the public sphere and everyday pragmatic individual choices.

The Transylvanian town of Cluj, which is the locus and not the focus of this research, has been through several changes of hands between Hungary and Romania during the last 150 years, and its inhabitants, Hungarian and Romanian, were alternatively subjected to the nationalizing policies of these two countries during this period. The consequences of these alternative loyalties for the understanding of their own ethnicity and of ethnic differences by Romanians and Hungarians are not nowadays symmetrical, owing to the demographic balance (81.3 per cent Romanians and 18.7 per cent Hungarians; cf. 2002 census) and to the Hungarians' status of 'national minority'. In the Cluj public sphere, being Hungarian is a marked category, while being Romanian is unmarked. However, the existence of numerous Hungarian institutions, especially schools, associations, press, and also an ethnically based political party, the Democratic Alliance of Hungarians of Romania, ensures that there is a Hungarian sphere in the city where being Hungarian becomes unmarked. This Hungarian sphere, which would have the institutional means for reproducing itself perpetually, is not threatened primarily by the nationalizing policies of the Romanian state, but by the individual choices of ethnic Hungarians, notably by their intermarriages with Romanians and the necessity for integration within the Romanian labour market. The anti-groupist position of the authors of this book, which allows them to see ethnicity as a category, not as a group, encourages them to explore the thick description of some individual life trajectories, the various options and choices of ethnic Hungarians to adhere, in spirit, or not, to the Romanian citizenship they hold, a status often questioned by their political representatives. The indirect strategy used by the authors in the field is asking not about ethnicity, but about everything else concerning the lives of their respondents, which allows them to ponder the importance of ethnic identification in everyday life and generates a fresh view on Hungarian-Romanian daily relations commonly considered to be simply and 'naturally' conflicting.

This book is remarkable because of the comprehensive methodology of data collection

on which it is based and the richness of the data collected. It seems to mix several field approaches in a rather commonsensical, rather than in a theoretically integrated, way, but it could be perceived as generating a new theoretical model. Its efficient and engaging account of the complex Hungarian-Romanian relations in Transylvania supports the soundness of this model. We can only rejoice that through the writing of this book Rogers Brubaker reads anew the theories of nationalism to which he has contributed in the past with the aid of convincing field arguments.

MONICA HEINTZ *University of Paris X-Nanterre*

CATON, STEVEN. *Yemen chronicle: an anthropology of war and mediation*. 341 pp., maps. New York: Hill & Wang, 2005. \$26.00 (cloth)

This book, in the words of its author, is an 'ethno-memoir', which is a combination of diary entries, field notes, fragments of memory, and autobiographical recollections as a means of authorial self-construction. These are woven into an ethnographic account of a tribal conflict in a Yemeni village, in which poetry features as the principal means of conflict mediation. The author evokes Malinowski's *Diary* as the precursor to his ethno-memoir, which incorporates two types of narrative – diary and field notes – as a means of straddling the private and public facets of ethnographic writing. As he explains, 'In writing this ethno-memoir I have wanted to bring these two narratives in closer proximity to each other, hoping they will interact and produce something other and greater than either or both of them alone' (p. 135).

The end result is two-fold. Firstly, it is a confessional tale that recounts his experiences as fieldworker in Yemen between 1979 and 1981, which led to the ethnography *Peaks of Yemen I summoned*, published in 1990, and complemented by an account of a revisit twenty years later in 2001 to put the finishing touches to the present book. However, the resemblances with Malinowski's journal entries are few, such as the cryptic confession of sexual attraction to an informant (p. 161), and the intimacy about his despondency over a dead-end relationship to 'X' (p. 154). Here, the contrasts dominate: there is no vituperation against the natives. Indeed, in contrast to Malinowski's immaculately white Western attire (see book cover of his *Diary*) as a symbol of his virulent denial of cultural commonality with his native hosts, Caton

seemed obsessed with what he called 'cultural impersonations' in the form of sartorial solidarity with his Yemeni hosts. He insisted on wearing the various garments and accessories of tribesmen, as a kind of vestmental *déguisement* in pursuit of a rapport that never materialized. In effect, this earned him the contempt of the contingent of foreign Arab teachers in the village school who dressed in Western garb, while the approbation of a few Yemeni friends did not allay the suspicion of some of his local hosts as to his being an American spy, which ultimately landed him in a Yemeni jail.

Secondly, and more importantly, this ethno-memoir offers an holistic ethnographic contextualization of the communal functions of tribal poetry. The previous book was a rather technical recension on the structural properties with merely illustrative ethnographic exemplifications of the socio-political functions of tribal poetic genres, while this book is a narrative excursion into a communal conflict engendered by the event that provides the book's storyline, namely the elopement of two tribal girls with, or their abduction by, a *sada* boy. This event led to a protracted inter-tribal mediation process that enabled the author to describe the socio-cultural embeddedness of the composition and performance of poetry as an integral part of tribal conflict mediation. In shifting the emphasis from poetic performance as a means to constructing the individual identity of the ideal tribesman in his previous ethnography, to that of poetry as an indispensable tool of conflict mediation in this book, the author seems to perform an apt interpretative revision, given that the latter interpretation has more resonance with the local conception of poetry as a means of commenting on, and proposing a solution to, inter-tribal conflicts and national political problems – in addition to its entertainment function within major rituals in tribal communities. In this light, James Clifford's observation that Malinowski's *Diary* and his *Argonauts* constitute a 'single expanded text' seems apropos to Caton's case.

In sum, the text offers an interesting strategy on how to recycle surplus fieldwork material that could not fit into a thematically exclusive dissertation, or how to transcend the private/public dichotomy constraining the protocols of published ethnography. The least satisfactory aspect of the book is the absence of analytical substance to justify the sub-title 'An anthropology of war and mediation' as well as that of fulfilling the author's hope that the book would inspire a different form of engagement –

ethnographic and political – between the US and the Middle East in the post 9/11 era, which are the presumed purposes of the epilogue. The author's few insights about the perennial 'problem of violence in tribal Arab society' do not go beyond affirming his tribal interlocutors' own explanations: namely the seemingly premeditated ineffectiveness of modern Yemeni institutions of government. These, he argues, are merely formal structures underpinning the performance of the symbolic rituals of rule on behalf of an unjust state that thrives on the competitive nature of tribes, and the strategic recourse either to benign neglect or to active fomentation of tribal factional feuding in the hope of encouraging their self-destruction, or at least of containing their political power within regional fiefdoms. As such, Caton's ethno-memoir does not have 'lessons to impart' regarding the mending of fences between the West and the Middle East, but seems merely to recommend philanthropic gestures from foreign fieldworker toward local informants as a means of palliating the intrinsic asymmetry of ethnographic research because of the unequal exchange between ethnographers and research subjects.

SERGE D. ELIE *CEFAS*, *University of Sussex*

DE NEVE, GEERT & HENRIKE DONNER (eds).

The meaning of the local: politics of place in urban India. xi, 238 pp., maps, tables, figs, illus., bibliogr. London, New York: Routledge, 2006. £75.00 (cloth)

This volume contains ten essays, including an editorial introduction. It describes the multi-faceted connections between urban localities and the processes of globalization. By focusing on social, spatial, and historical associations between peoples and places, contributors to the volume examine the meaning of locality in a variety of empirical urban contexts, including both metropolitan and small towns in India. They explore the ways in which social and political relations are spatially and historically contingent. Through detailed ethnographies they demonstrate how urban space is increasingly interconnected while local boundaries and group-based identities are reconstructed and often consolidated through the use of traditional idioms and localized practices.

In methodological terms, the volume privileges neighbourhoods as a window through which to study politics, culture, and change in

urban India. Indeed, neighbourhoods could be the ideal sites by which to capture the concrete localized processes through which globalization exists in non-metropolitan urban contexts. The volume succeeds in defining urban places as the object of research *per se*: how they reveal shifting notions of the local, of culture and of identity, and how the social life of neighbourhoods is always affected by wider influences such as political and religious movements, state policies, economic transformations, and citywide social and cultural change.

Four contributors focus on spatial politics and tactics that shape the worlds of the urban poor and the working classes. Two case studies from Tamil Nadu (Geert De Neve and Hugo Gorringe) offer valuable insights into strategic use of space to negotiate changing caste and class relationships. Interestingly, consolidation of affinities of caste and neighbourhood is taking place at a time when globalization leads to fluid and hybrid urban space. For instance, Vanniyars of Bhavani are not necessarily creating a more heterogeneous urban space but are engaged in reinforcing clear boundaries, as for the upwardly mobile Dalit groups in search of a new identity. Likewise, the newly acquired social positions of Dalit municipal employees in Madurai become inscribed in urban space in the form of wall-paintings, posters, graffiti, and flagpoles. These insignia also serve to announce their affiliation with the Dalit Panthers movement.

Indranil Chakrabarti presents an analysis of neighbourhood organizations in two slums of Kolkata to assess the role of activism in ensuring better access to basic services. Mattison Mines scrutinizes wider political influences and historical formations on the contemporary urban landscape in relation to merchant traders of Madras city – Beeri Chettiars and the Komatis. These two communities have constructed their neighbourhood in different ways. These reflect their contrasting integration into south Indian society as well as their respective relationship with the English East India Company.

Roger Jeffery, Patricia Jeffery, and Craig Jeffrey explore an education environment that has emerged in Bijnor, a small town in Uttar Pradesh. The authors chart the contours of what has been labelled as provincial modernity and its exclusions. Henrike Donner looks at gendered spatial practices among middle-class inhabitants of a heterogeneous neighbourhood of Central Calcutta. Donner's focus is on women's views and experiences of the urban locality, and also on class-based notions of respectability and

communal histories. Kathinka Froystad unravels expressions of class and gender in public places and in new spaces of consumption in Kanpur, Uttar Pradesh.

Penny Vera-Sanso details the impact of wider ideologies and discourses on the formation and reconstruction of particular localities in Tamil Nadu, in particular the gradual taming of an anti-Hindi and anti-North Indian Dravidian discourse and the attendant shifts in the constitutive bases of a common Tamil identity. Edward Simpson considers the politics and rituals of neighbourhood reconstruction in the town of Bhuj after the Gujarat earthquake of 2001. His essay reveals the Hindu nationalist imagery and the revival of myths and memories of the Hindu kingdom of Kachch in the state enterprise of reconstruction.

While enriching the growing body of scholarship on space and place, the volume steers clear of the seemingly unending place-based versus global flows debate. Its thick ethnography sheds new light on the role that place plays in the relationship between culture and power. Readers have a sense of how the history of the Indian state as well as changing economic and social relations have shaped the history of urban space in India. Not only do regional ideologies permeate the neighbourhood and mould the interactions among its residents, but also ongoing struggles about access to resources, the politics of difference, and contested social relations are played out through specific spatial practices.

MANISH K. THAKUR *Goa University*

GOOD, ANTHONY. *Anthropology and expertise in the asylum courts*. xxv, 299 pp., tables, bibliogr. Abingdon, New York: Routledge-Cavendish, 2007. £27.99 (paper)

An increasing number of anthropologists are being asked to write so-called 'expert witness reports' for immigration and asylum cases. Those who accept the request are often left feeling confused and bewildered by the ways in which their evidence is treated by lawyers and the courts. The nuances and complexities of which we are so proud are often trampled rough-shod by the legal process. Anthony Good's book on anthropology and expertise in asylum courts is therefore very timely. At one level Good's book offers a practical guide to the way that anthropologists are treated by lawyers and judges at asylum hearings. At another level, the book is a nuanced exploration of the nature

of legal practice. Both of these aspects are much needed. Good's arguments are based on a mixture of ethnographic analysis of the asylum process, analysis of the meanings and implications of particular key cases, and his own extensive experience as an expert witness writing reports on Sri Lanka. He begins the book with an overview of anthropology in the courts and of the current asylum system, before moving on to an analysis of the key legal concepts involved in asylum claims from the perspective of what he calls 'comparative social science'. The bulk of the book is, however, made up of a fine-grained analysis of the process through which evidence, and expert evidence in particular, is produced and assessed in asylum cases.

Central to Good's argument is a comparison between anthropology and law as distinct forms of knowledge. Amongst many other contrasts, Good argues that anthropologists are primarily descriptive whereas lawyers are primarily prescriptive; lawyers study abstract principles to solve specific cases, whereas anthropologists study particular cases in order to construct abstract models; and lawyers reason syllogistically, whereas anthropologists reason analogically and dialectically. Good is careful not to overplay this distinction and is aware of the similarities as well as the differences between the two forms of practice. Perhaps the most important contrast, and the one that has led to the greatest confusion between anthropologists and lawyers, is that between their relative attitudes to fact and truth. Lawyers take the notion of fact as philosophically unproblematic and are primarily concerned with determining what general principles these facts call into play. Anthropologists are much more cautious about facts, and are always aware and at pains to point out the contested meanings on the ground. Lawyers want 'yes' or 'no' answers to their questions, while anthropologists are notoriously reluctant to give them. The difference between these two approaches is primarily one of practical orientation. When judges talk about the 'facts' of the case, they are not making some metaphysical claim, but merely trying to reach a decision on the case at hand. Legal notions of fact 'collapse probabilities into certainties and get on with the task at hand', namely solving the case. Anthropologists have to make no final decision, and are therefore much happier to give 'perhaps' or 'it depends' types of answers. For a judge, 'it depends' will simply not get the job done.

The book is testament to the power of treating judges as an object of anthropological

analysis. Judicial statements are as shot through with multiple meaning as any other. They have to be understood and unpacked in a nuanced and sensitive manner which pays attention to the form in which they are given and the intentions with which they are made. All too often lawyers and judges are treated as transparent and their utterances and writings taken at face value. However, once we understand that lawyers are concerned with a notion of fact and truth that is different to that perceived by anthropologists, one that is, above all, practically grounded on the task at hand, many of the normal anthropological critiques of legal process become redundant. The claim that legal practices distort and reify complex social phenomena is not telling lawyers something that they do not already know. The specific contribution of the anthropological critique of law therefore needs to be rethought. Good's book provides a useful starting-point. As such, it is an empirically rich and thoroughly argued call for anthropological modesty in its engagement with law, but at the same time also shows the value of a distinctly ethnographic contribution to the study of legal processes.

TOBIAS KELLY *University of Edinburgh*

KWON, HEONIK. *After the massacre: commemoration and consolation in Ha My and My Lai*. xii, 217 pp., map, bibliogr. London, Berkeley: Univ. California Press, 2006. £12.95 (paper)

Once in a while a book takes up a seemingly well-known subject and recasts it in an entirely new light. Dr. Heonik Kwon, Korean scholar and lecturer in social anthropology at the University of Edinburgh, has done just that. As the American-South Korean massacre of civilians in My Lai and its environs in central Vietnam in 1968 created an international outcry and has continued to serve as a flashpoint in a wider national debate over 'Vietnam' in the United States, Heonik Kwon shifts our gaze to the Vietnamese side to consider how the villagers surviving the massacre have gone about recovering their lost ones to this very day.

However, Heonik Kwon takes us much further. If most scholarship on 'war and memory' has tended to focus on how the state has gone about incorporating the 'fallen soldiers', to borrow George Mosse's term, into a heroic pantheon designed to legitimate their sacrifice for the national community, Heonik Kwon goes 'down below' on the Vietnamese side to understand how the living deal with the

loss of *civilians* in ways not always approved by the state or provided for by the religious rituals of Vietnamese ancestor worship. Massacres, such as those of My Lai and Ha My, are particularly problematic. On the one hand, the state is unwilling to incorporate these tragic, mass deaths into a national pantheon reserved for individual, heroic combatants. On the other hand, because of the particularly violent nature of the massacres (the recovery and/or identification of the body is impossible), ancestor worship is unable to reintegrate the souls and memories of these 'grievous deaths' with the lives of their surviving families and local communities:

Death in the Ha My and My Lai massacres was too tragic to permit the victims to enter the place of heroes, and too violent for them to be admitted to the 'positive space' of ancestors, but it was nevertheless too real to the village to be relegated to the invisible margins of hero worship or to the negative background of ancestor worship (p. 182).

The souls of the 'mass dead' could not be left to roam; a way had to be found to bring them back home.

As Shaun Malarney has brilliantly shown in *Culture, ritual and revolution in Vietnam* (2002), when the state and its atheistic hero cult prove unable to address powerful existential needs of a socio-religious type bubbling up from below, villagers come up with their own solutions. Local Vietnamese made their moves as the political constraints of the Cold War disappeared and new economic conditions emerged in Vietnam during the 1990s. Bodies, and rituals designed to recover them, began to move as well.

By taking up the delicate question of civilian massacre and 'grievous death', Heonik Kwon moves us into the realm of the villagers and their attempts to transform inadequate religious and state rituals in order to bring their lost loved ones back home for good. Ghosts, the ghosts of the dead, come to life in Kwon's often moving prose. They were always 'there'; they are alive – as much a part of the social order of southern central Vietnam as are the living. But real though they are, the problematic nature of their deaths places them outside of time. The pressing question – to boil down Kwon's sophisticated argument to one of its main ingredients – is how do the families and the ghosts of their loved ones – the living *and* the dead – come together

to put an end to their sorrow? Ritual, or rather the *cultural* refashioning of ritual by the living and the dead, is, Heonik Kwon argues, the way leading home. In a series of beautifully crafted chapters and sensitive prose, Kwon shows us how the two 'sides' meet – the living and the dead, 'good death' and 'bad death', *chet duong* and *chet nha*. In so doing, Kwon concludes, 'they may bring home from the street an idea of justice and may awaken people at home, living or dead, to the idea that all human death – "good death" or "bad death" and from "this side" or "that side" – has the inalienable right to be grieved and consoled' (p. 183). The villagers achieved this ambidextrous, cultural feat.

This original study of 'war and memory' is grounded in years of fieldwork in the My Lai and Ha My areas, where the author conducted scores of clearly sensitive interviews, read the Vietnamese press, and even snooped around local provincial archives. Kwon knows the area and connected with many of those appearing in his story. He masters the language and has taken the time to understand the local culture (as his discussion of religious words unique to southern central Vietnam reveals). That Kwon was able to negotiate with local state authorities suspicious of those working on *just such* sensitive existential questions (the state's failure to account for the dead) is a credit to this researcher's interpersonal skills. His use of theory is outstanding, moving fluidly from Benedict Anderson to Pierre Bourdieu to build his big ideas; but his acute knowledge of Vietnamese and of Vietnam adds a whole new dimension to this book.

Indeed, if we have learned much about the cultural and social impact of the 'Great War' on European societies from the highly original work of George Mosse, Jay Winter, and others, Kwon has moved us squarely into the non-Western world and 'down below'. He builds on their work by showing how the violence of modern war made itself felt much more profoundly in the 'Third World' during the second half of the twentieth century. Whereas George Mosse used the destruction of the First World War to structure *Fallen soldiers* (1991), for Kwon it's the Cold War that caused the extensive killing of civilians 'down below' in the non-Western world, as the massacres of My Lai and Ha My demonstrate so terribly.

It may not be an accident that one of Kwon's inspirations and the subject of his current research is E.P. Thompson (p. 211, note 1). However, I don't think it's just a shared concern for the people 'from below' or the 'moral economy' that explains Kwon's interest in the

author of the *The making of the English working class*. Kwon shares Thompson's critique of the Cold War. And this may well explain why Kwon dedicates the first (implicitly) and the last chapter (explicitly) to the Cold War and links it to his wider discussion of bringing together the living and the dead in central Vietnam. Kwon is honest about this. In his preface, he explains that he wrote this book in order to connect with a people who had suffered terribly, while his own country, South Korea, and people benefited from the Cold War. That South Korean troops were involved in the My Lai and Ha My massacres only reinforces the connection for Kwon. He tells us of the verses he sang as a schoolboy in favour of the Korean troops fighting communism in Vietnam. He even received a prize for best anticommunist song. While one can easily agree with Kwon that the Cold War had devastating effects on civilians in the non-Western world, his attempt to go wide theoretically about the Cold War and the My Lai-Ha My massacres (especially in chapter 8) leaves one a bit unsatisfied. Scattered references to Cold War historiography and the need to rethink international history 'on high' are never sufficiently developed to merit such an important place in a book so brilliantly focused on what is happening down below.

That said, Heonik Kwon has done us all an inestimable service, whether historians or anthropologists, Vietnamese or not, by reminding us in *After the massacre* that death and life are equally real and co-exist intimately with each other in Vietnam, as in other cultures. And as someone who shares Kwon's interest for studying the impact of modern war on the 'Third World' during the Cold War and in a time of decolonization (the two intersected in particularly violent ways), I cannot help but wonder when we will have equally sophisticated and original studies of the Algerian or Indochinese cases. What is sure is that his path-breaking work will help us find our way.

CHRISTOPHER GOSCHA *Université du Québec à Montréal*

LANGFUR, HAL. *The forbidden lands: colonial identity, frontier violence, and the persistence of Brazil's Eastern Indians 1750-1830*. xv, 408 pp., maps, tables, figs, illus., bibliogr. Palo Alto, Calif.: Stanford Univ. Press, 2006. \$65.00 (cloth)

This book is part of a sophisticated and challenging movement that seeks to ask new

questions of Brazil's Amerindian histories, led by Brazilian historians and anthropologists wishing to understand systematically the role Amerindians played in the making of the social, cultural, political, and territorial identity of Brazil. A central element of this new approach is the combination of insights from ethnographic accounts and archival records. In particular this involves a close (re)reading of primary sources (and long hours spent trawling through them). Previously it was assumed that the archive gave no indication as to the native's point of view. Now scholars, developing a social history framework, have gone to sources written by those people at the sharp edge of colonial life (i.e. living with or fighting Amerindians), rather than easily accessible (and read, for the script is clearer) higher-level documentation. This methodological shift is producing a series of theoretically and ethnographically original offerings to which this book makes a strong contribution.

Minas Gerais is a well-known area in the history of Brazil because of its rich mineral deposits and as the location of a significant nativist uprising against Portuguese colonial rule in 1789. Almost completely unknown is the story of the diverse Amerindian societies (principally the Botocudo) in the region and how their histories were interlocked with the continuing search for precious stones and metals and the uprising. To cite the initial example by Langfur: increased numbers of troops were brought into the region before the rebellion on the pretext of pacifying the Indians. In fact, the soldiers were deployed to break up the plot (though later would be used to attack Amerindians). In other words, colonial policy and practice towards Amerindians in Minas Gerais cannot be separated from the transatlantic world of commerce and the political structures of empire. The story at the centre of this book is the transformation of the territory occupied by the semi-nomadic Botocudo from being off-limits to frontier exploitation in the mid-eighteenth century to its incorporation as an agricultural and mining region under the control of newly independent Brazil in the 1830s. Langfur's argument is that even though the Botocudo suffered many losses and their lands, they nevertheless confronted the colonial regime, pursued their own interests, and influenced policy and its implementation. There was an exchange of violent perspectives, in which both sides became embroiled and to which they had ultimately to adapt. The control exercised by administrators was never total and the

confrontations continued proving the Botocudo and their allies remained an active presence.

The significance of this book is to reveal the intertwined histories of Brazil's eastern Indians and the fate of the Portuguese empire. At the heart of the argument is the way in which commercial transatlantic pressures opened up the inland frontier from the east. The forbidden Indian lands policy of the Lisbon-based overseas council had been used to prevent contraband metals, stones, and goods circulating outside official routes. With the promise of more revenue from migrants and colonists, local policy secretly allowed the territory to be invaded and settled. Over time the Crown recognized the value of the colonization and declared war against the Botocudo in 1808. The frontier, then, was not a meeting-point or a free space but a constructed environment, consisting of a range of diverse interests. Colonizing efforts were led by poor settlers sometimes of Afro-Brazilian descent, and followed by entrepreneurial farmers wanting more land, or miners who got lucky. Working with few resources, these frontier settlers operated not in a vacuum but according to cultural and social values. However, there was a levelling out of colonial hierarchies for the establishment of colonial society in the wilderness was the problem – democratic, serendipitous, and multi-directional.

This book's success is to have reinvigorated studies of 'the frontier' more generally. It demands that the intense and conflictual interactions between indigenous people and settlers be attended to with ethnographic sensibility. The study is meticulously supported with evidence and clearly written. Scholars of Latin American and Caribbean studies will find much of comparative interest here, such as the transatlantic context and the significance of Afro-Brazilians in frontier conquest. Anthropologists will find the ethnohistorical information valuable and will be stimulated by the notion of a cultural exchange of violence between various actors.

MARK HARRIS *University of St Andrews*

LOOMBA, ANIA, SUVIR KAUL, MATTI BUNZL, ANTOINETTE BURTON & JED ESTY (eds). *Postcolonial studies and beyond*. x, 499 pp., figs, illus., bibliogr. London, Durham, N.C.: Duke Univ. Press, 2005. £67.00 (cloth), £16.95 (paper)

There have been so many readers and collections of essays in postcolonial studies published recently that it is with a degree of

w(e)ariness that one approaches another such publication. Thankfully, although this collection does consider the current state of postcolonial studies, it does not go through the tiresome catalogue of pros and cons of the term 'postcolonial', nor does it insist too strenuously that the field is in crisis. Instead, as the editors argue in their thoughtful introduction, these essays collectively suggest ways that the parameters of the field might continue to be contested to widen the possibilities for comparative work across disciplinary, national, temporal, and ideological boundaries. There are twenty essays in total, including the substantial introduction, with contributors drawn from a wide range of disciplinary locations: English, anthropology, cultural studies, history, political science, and religious studies. Although the essays take as their focus a wide range of instances of the postcolonial, key questions and issues recur: Can postcolonial studies respond more flexibly and swiftly to the complex, sometimes contradictory, realities of a rapidly changing, increasingly globalized world? Is it possible to avoid the glib assumption of a 'world without borders' while still retaining the ideal of a progressive transnationalism? What kinds of insights can anti-colonial and nationalist perspectives continue to offer to an understanding of the postcolonial world? Can the field be made to resonate more powerfully with the detailed local realities of specific material cultures in distinct postcolonial locations? And, finally, can postcolonial scholarship imbue its textual and cultural analyses with a more rigorous understanding of the political and economic structures which frame, and to some extent determine, postcolonial cultures?

These are all pertinent questions and the essays go some way towards providing answers. Peter Hulme argues for a longer historical perspective on the postcolonial to avoid the tendency to 'thump into the back-stop of 1492'. Ali Behdad offers such a perspective, suggesting that the tendency for globalization to be perceived as a 'new' phenomenon elides the ways that it builds on intricate global connections that predate 1492, as well as obscuring instructive comparisons between older imperialisms and contemporary US imperial ambitions. Vilashini Cooppan takes a slightly different tack and argues that, given the loud buzz of globalization discourses, postcolonial scholars must write both *within* and *against* globalization if they are to intervene productively. Timothy Brennan urges

postcolonial studies 'to join the economic conversation', arguing for attention to be paid to the economics of culture as well as to the 'image function' of the periphery in the interests of global capital.

Other essays focus on particular postcolonial locations to explore specific instances of the intersection of the postcolonial and the global. South Africa provides the focus in three essays: Jean Comaroff charts the ironies of a shift away from history as an academic subject towards an idea of history 'as popular revolution, as media spectacle, as national pageant, as intellectual property, as recovered memory, [and] as therapy'. Kelwyn Sole looks at the complex interplay of lived experience and macro-political structures in post-apartheid poetry, and Laura Chrisman argues for the recognition of the complexity of national affiliations as a vital component of an internationalism that might challenge multinational capitalism. James Ferguson suggests placing Africa more centrally within postcolonial studies to highlight the exclusions and abjection characteristic of global structures. Frederick Cooper also takes Africa as example, urging a shift away from what he calls the 'story plucking', 'leapfrogging legacies', and 'time flattening' of postcolonial abstractions and a return to more situated, detailed knowledge-production.

Florencia Mallon argues that Latin America provides productive connections between older and more recent colonial histories, as well as offering models of indigenous resistance movements. In Tani Barlow's essay, China provides a more complicated and relevant 'semicolonial' location. Rebecca Stein's excellent discussion of newspaper coverage of Palestinian attacks on cafés in Israeli cities teases out the metonymic function of the café in Israel's quest to position itself as a modern European entity in the new global order. Nivedita Menon's equally nuanced essay explores the intersection of terms more usually presented as binary oppositions (global/local; modern/traditional; the 'burqua and beauty parlor' of her essay title) and argues for a more flexible, feminist postcolonial politics in order to respond to rapidly changing global and postcolonial realities.

Although David Scott questions the continuing relevance of both the 'how' and 'what' of the field, most essays in *Postcolonial studies and beyond* imply that the postcolonial continues to be a productive category, and the essays demonstrate this in interesting and

occasionally unexpected ways. The editors suggest that globalization has prompted postcolonial studies to be more attentive to global economic and political structures – and that this is a timely and productive development. But given the highly gendered and sexualized terms in which the so-called 'global war on terror' is currently represented, it is surprising that postcolonial queer interventions make only fleeting appearances and that feminist work is not presented as *central* to the revision of the postcolonial. Finally, although many of the essays offer explicit critiques of US imperialism and of the metropolitan emphasis in postcolonial studies, disappointingly few of the contributors are located outside of the United States. These quibbles aside, this is a substantial and thoughtful collection of essays, suggesting many provocative and productive strands still to be mined *within* the postcolonial and hinting at a few strands that might lie beyond.

DENISE DECAIRES-NARAIN *University of Sussex*

MALLON, FLORENCIA E. *Courage tastes of blood: the Mapuche community of Nicolás Ailío and the Chilean state, 1906-2001*. 344 pp., fig, maps, illus., bibliogr. Durham, N.C.: Duke Univ. Press, 2005. \$79.95 (cloth), \$22.95 (paper)

Courage tastes of blood is an account of the relations between the indigenous Mapuche community of Nicolás Ailío and the Chilean state over the course of the twentieth century. Combining both archival research and oral histories recorded over nine years of involvement with the community, historian Florencia Mallon pieces together a narrative that reflects both the experiences of individuals and the broader discourses of national politics. The book opens with a dramatic account of the appropriation by Mapuche and non-Mapuche peasants of a local ranch during the period of Agrarian Reform. From this pivotal moment in 1970 when all seemed possible, the narrative moves both backwards and forwards. Backwards to the founding of the community by Nicolás Ailío in the aftermath of Mapuche military defeat, to the ensuing usurpation of land by ruthless ranchers, and to the bitter and humiliating poverty endured as a growing population made the shortage of land even more desperate. The book then moves forwards to the torture and imprisonment faced by many community members during Pinochet's dictatorship, to the reversal of the gains of the Agrarian Reform, the arrival of democracy, and the false optimism

raised by the Indigenous Law of 1993. The narrative ends with the community of Nicolás Ailío split in two, half having moved to new lands far away in the Andean foothills awarded to them by government subsidy, the other half remaining on their original land by the Pacific coast.

In a powerful concluding chapter, Mallon draws connections between this local micro-history of a small community and the macro-history of Mapuche relations with the Chilean state. She argues that, with the possible exception of the Popular Unity government of Allende, the strategy of the Chilean state towards Mapuche people has remained essentially the same from military defeat in 1883 to the present. This strategy has been 'Janus-faced': on the one hand, seeking a paternalistic role as protector of Mapuche land and people, while, on the other, ruthlessly employing the state apparatus in support of entrepreneurial landowners. Mallon is careful to point out the creativity and resilience of Mapuche communities in adapting to the various legal and political frameworks imposed upon them, a creativity which has allowed them to survive to the present.

One of the great strengths of this book is that it is dialogical in both scope and nature. Mallon wrote the book at the request of the community and various drafts were read and commented upon before publication by those whose stories feature. Perhaps most impressively, Mallon manages to create a readable and cohesive narrative while allowing the various contradictions and differences between people's accounts to remain. Yet while both the voices of individual Mapuche people and the broader national discourses of the Chilean state are skilfully intertwined and opposed, the absence from the discussion of anything approximating what could be called Mapuche 'culture' is both striking and surprising. Where specifically Mapuche practices are mentioned, they are usually classed as 'customs' rather than as a set of understandings about social relations and about the world in general. Given that Mallon herself acknowledges the importance of kinship, territory, and indigenous social networks, the absence of an exploration of these from a Mapuche perspective constitutes a problematic omission. Nor does Mallon entertain the possibility that historical narratives themselves are culturally specific constructions. It is perhaps predictable for an anthropologist to lament a historian's lack of engagement with anthropological literature, but given that the

book is primarily about the construction of historical memory among indigenous people, it is a shame that the many wide-ranging debates in anthropology about the nature of indigenous historical memory in South America are not mentioned at all.

It is, however, perhaps only fair to judge a book by what it is rather than by what it is not. And what *Courage tastes of blood* is a thoroughly researched, detailed, and at times incredibly moving account of the struggles faced by a Mapuche community in the face of the Chilean state. This book will be of great value not only to those interested in the recent history of indigenous peoples in Latin America, but also to anyone concerned with the inevitable contradictions, challenges, and paradoxes involved in transforming individual memories into a collective history. Perhaps more than anything else, the book stands as a testament to the proud people of Nicolás Ailío, who surely know better than most why courage tastes of blood.

MAGNUS COURSE *University of Edinburgh*

ROY, SRIRUPA. *Beyond belief: India and the politics of postcolonial nationalism*. xiii, 248 pp., illus., bibliogr. London, Durham, N.C.: Duke Univ. Press, 2007. £53.00 (cloth), £13.99 (paper)

Srirupa Roy, who teaches political science at Amherst, is here concerned with what happened to Indian nationalism 'after midnight' – midnight, 14 August 1947 when India achieved independence. Her premise is that 'iteration' matters more than 'credibility'. State forms must 'elicit recognition rather than inspire passion'. Compliance may conceal deep cynicism, but while people behave *as if* they accept them, the dominant power structures are perpetuated. '[I]t is their familiarity or pervasiveness rather than their persuasiveness that engenders public recognition', and that makes the state 'the authoritative representative of the nation'. Hence her title. Roy aims to go 'beyond belief'; beyond understandings of the nation-state that require us to know citizens' minds. Her main proposition is that the durability of the Indian state is constructed through a stress on the diversity of the nation, of which the state becomes the legitimate arbiter. In reality, however, only certain kinds of diversity – regional rather than religious differences, for example – are publicly acknowledged. By representing the state in this way, the (fragmented) nation and its (backward) citizens

become the problem. So intractable is it that the state must acknowledge its own limitations. Roy works these themes through in relation to four critical sites of state discourse and practice.

The first is the Films Division of India, which was set up in 1948 and turned out around eight thousand movies over the next fifty years, making it the largest producer of documentaries in the world. They had a massive captive audience. Cinemas were required to exhibit them. What they celebrated was the diversity of the nation and what they put on display was the developmental state in action. Next comes a chapter on Republic Day parades, which portray the state as the unifier of a diverse nation and protector of minorities; and a chapter on science and technology. Of their social organization, or of the agendas of scientists, we learn little. Roy's preoccupation is with what the political elite had to say about their broad objectives and the obstacles to them. Here the nation is constructed in terms of its developmental needs, the impediments to which are a lack of scientific 'expertise' (an insufficiency of trained specialists) and of scientific 'temper' (an insufficiency in the mentality of the 'masses'). By nurturing the first, the state will address the 'needs' of the nation; but on account of the second, it can never succeed – suggesting that 'the charge of state failure was a state-produced discourse'.

The planned townships attached to the mega public sector steel plants that were constructed in the late 1950s and 1960s are Roy's fourth strategic site. In the Nehruvian dream, steel production had a special place. Located in 'backward' regions, the new plants and their townships were nation-building projects, as much about creating a new kind of citizen in a new kind of society as about forging steel. In Roy's account, however, this 'exemplary national "dreamworld"' of the late 1950s would within fifteen years be seen as *the* 'exemplary national catastrophe', an icon of everything wrong with India. The townships became enclaves cut off from the surrounding countryside, to which they failed to spread their relative prosperity and to whose misfortune they possibly contributed. Afflicted by crime, corruption, labour unrest, and lack of municipal services, they were socially and economically increasingly polarized. The ethnic, caste, and communal antagonisms that were produced were notoriously illustrated by the protracted anti-Muslim pogrom that blighted Rourkela in 1964.

Political science is another country, and there are a number of aspects of this book that may puzzle the foreigner. What, for example, justifies the selection of the Films Division and Republic Day parades – rather than, say, the Planning Commission, the army, or the school system – as particularly privileged sites for understanding Indian nationalism 'after midnight'? What kind of cognitive theory informs the claim that we can get 'beyond belief' by focusing on 'iteration' as the key mechanism that makes the state 'authoritative'? How can it become so unless some of the time some of the people believe what is 'iterated'? And surely it is insufficient to locate its authoritativeness in 'discourse' alone, to the exclusion of the power and patronage it commands? Moreover, the discourse that Roy identifies sometimes seems distortedly homogenized, as in, for example, the steel towns. Durgapur was certainly known for union 'intransigence' and Rourkela infamous for communal violence; but Bhilai remained relatively free of both. No matter, one might say, since Roy is concerned with elite constructions to which reality is irrelevant. There is, however, a whole shelf of quasi-official publications on Bhilai that portray it as Nehru's paradise on earth. They are discourse too, and what they suggest is that Roy's composite version is decidedly one-sided, cobbled together from highly selected sources that sometimes bear a questionable relationship to the world they purport to describe. Given an enormous increase in agricultural productivity and a significant increment to life expectancy, for example, it is far from self-evident that Bhilai had a negligible, or even negative, impact on the villages around. Nor is it clear that as the number of steel plant employees grew to bloated proportions, the real value of its workers' wages declined, creating a widening gap with white-collar workers and managers. In fact, clerical staff *are* workers on exactly the same salary scales as shop-floor labour; and in fact (due to state subsidies) the wages of workers steadily improved as the workforce grew most rapidly. But Roy seems not to be particularly concerned with such 'on the ground' realities. It is the constructions of some rather hazily identified political class that interest her, and for those who want an idea of what actually went on, this restricted account of their discourse seems rather thin gruel.

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VITI, FABIO (ed.). *Guerra e violenza in Africa Occidentale*. 302 pp., maps, tables, illus., bibliogr. Milan: FrancoAngeli, 2004. €25.00 (paper)

War, violence, power: on this crucial triad of prominent concepts Fabio Viti, editor and author, has collected six essays, written by anthropologists (Michel Izard, Giuseppina Russo, Armando Cutolo, Stefano Boni) and one historian (Pierluigi Valsecchi) on social and political dynamics between the eighteenth and twentieth centuries in West Africa.

War appears as a cultural engine of political cohesion, and, in many cases, *the* constitutive source of common identities for states and expanding chieftainships within that vast region. At the same time, military systems and agencies provided the paradigm of the territorial order (the armed alignments of the troops and their scales of hierarchy frequently supply the general map of the political space), as well as the unexhausted fertilizer of the symbolic production of a warfare ideology and suzerainty. As a dominant monopoly of violence, according to the accredited axioms of Weberian theories, the state implements and nurtures itself, in terms of hegemony-plus-imposition, by producing and diffusing its peculiar good: the force of arms and its coactive transcendence. Some basic premises are explicitly stated by the introductory remarks, the most relevant of which could be summarized as follows: neither the warfare system, nor its policies and technology could be treated as anti-social institutions. Systems of violence, strength-orientated skills, and related professional strategies appear to be fully included within the core of social identity; it creates the society, as well as the social actors; it masters interaction and reciprocal (fighting) recognition; it produces demographic integration and dominance, as well as enlarged descent networks: '[I]n war societies find a specific mode of interaction and reciprocal recognition, which transcends the parallel attempt of denial of the enemy's humanity' (p. 17).

Viti's essay on pre-colonial war and violence among the Baule ('Guerra e violenza nel Baule fino alla conquista coloniale') can be seen as a paradigmatic case of a historical approach to such a field in the anthropology of war. The Baule state, or micro-states (*nvle*), were, on the one hand, a sort of sub-product of Akan diasporas which took place after the migration of some remnants of the Asante schism during the eighteenth century. On the other hand, they

create their own political identity and expansive power by means of an integrated process of demographic and belligerent colonization. As a form of 'weak power' (neither despotically centred, nor incorporated as an hierarchical framework of vertical functions and groups), the Baule state carries out its enterprise of assimilation and integration not only from the conqueror to the local population, but also the reverse: the Akan immigrants activated a process of reciprocal assimilation, so that the war 'was more assimilatory than destructive' (p. 125), and military specialization appeared as a calculated industry of political efficacy and socially diffused competence. More than a 'warrior state', it was a society of fragmented fighting companionships.

In his writing dedicated to the Nzema and other Akan groups (Gold Coast and Ivory Coast), Pierluigi Valsecchi emphasizes 'the violence of power' as a structural property inherent to the cultural pattern of the pre-colonial states in West Africa. 'States that practised forms of organized violence, different from those we ascribed to our western tradition (war, crimes repression, order defense), having as victims their own subjects' (p. 86). The ritual dimension of state violence plays a crucial role. As a sacrificial authority, as well as a symbolic sovereignty, the personified power, the king or the chief, demands a tribute of ritual murders.

A specific relationship links the pre-colonial state, as a 'warrior state', and its intrinsic predisposition to build up an ordered system of social coalescence. Armando Cutolo's chapter on strength and creativity ('Creatività della forza e fecondità dell'ordine'), dedicated to the Anno society on the northern part of the Ivory Coast, emphasizes the strict reciprocal functionality between civil and military organization in the Anno *nvile*. As a social unity, not less than a political domain and structured space, the *nvile* is (was) conceived as a 'world' (*men*), a structured system of life, and an inclusive cosmos of vital networks and 'hierarchized space' (Amselle). In this kind of world, its creative energy and expansive property needed to be made and constantly re-made by means of a peculiar 'work' of coordinated systems of violence. This historical and symbolic culture of violence would appear to lend itself to a collective perception of the communal self as viewed through a shared narrative, which is reflected in the saying: 'War was our job'.

The same level of inquiry, if not the same issues, could be recognized in Giuseppina Russo's pages on Mali (the Kignam village was a

centre of chieftainship, derived from the Segou kingdom, the so-called 'Fafadugu', which flourished during the last decades of nineteenth century). Once more, the 'war job', in this case the 'war art', and 'arms practice' appear to cover a function of identity and historical valorization. Additional and powerful traits enter the scene: a religious ideal of reference, if not a mystic doctrine of hegemony in the name of God. The Islamic state and the religious 'way of war' appear to be in themselves a source of political expression: *barika*, a concept denoting at the same time a positive energy of well-being, God's blessing, victorious strength, and political supremacy, creates an original texture. Royalty, dependence, ('voluntary or not': p. 65), and conversion to Islam belong to the same process of state reinforcement; nevertheless, 'paganism' and its connected practices are tolerated, if not integrated by the dominant hierarchy as a participant element of acculturation to the discipline of the state, where 'the ability in arms redeems a new identity'.

Violence, conflict (mainly, intra-social conflict), disorder, and aggression are the preferred themes of discussion in Stefano Boni's contribution to Sefwi ethnography (Ghana). Violence as collective phenomenon is perceived here as a form of communication; 'public affirmations, symbolic performances' (p. 258), in short, as cultural aspects of the integrative social system. Listed in the ethnographic review are cases of protests and revenge, ritual crimes, and others that are interpreted in terms of 'shared symbols' and 'meaningful metaphors'. Symbolic language and dynamics of crisis and conflict management illuminate the juridical and political side of social violence. Torture, humiliation, and economic damage appear to be mobilized when the relations of subordination and coherence to the roles appear unbalanced or compromised. Once more, the role of violent reactions 'as a resource' for 'creating, keeping, and losing subordination ties' (p. 270) is stressed as an effective agency, a systemic ingredient in social empowerment, where actors in the context of social conflict are able to exploit or interpret a spectrum of shared roles of cruel or aggressive self-affirmation. They became subjective carriers in a dynamic of revenge, respect, and authority. As a 'creative force' or 'constituent' of social relations (p. 272), the social use of strength builds up obedience, subordination, and social solidarity at the same time as personhood and communal loyalty.

Preceded by Michel Izard's synthetic review of different concepts of war (local/colonial,

resistance ...) the five essays by Italian anthropologists may be considered as living witness of a long genealogy in African studies (starting from Nzema missions directed by Vinigi Grottanelli in the 1950s and 1960s). Today's approach to ethno-history demonstrates an interest in themes of 'individuality' and 'dependence', in the modern emergence of citizenship's space in civil consciousness and its limits, and, even more, a local sense of the state. Intra-social violence, no less than inter-societal, demand to be treated as topics of anthropological pertinence: not only as products, but also as the producers of culture.

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Medical anthropology

BACIGALUPO, ANA MARIELLA. *Shamans of the Foye tree: gender, power, and healing among Chilean Mapuche*. 336 pp., illus., bibliogr. Austin: Univ. Texas Press, 2007. \$55.00 (cloth), \$24.95 (paper)

Shamans of the Foye tree is the first ethnographic account of the Mapuche to appear in English for several decades. Its combination of intimately observed ethnographic detail and innovative theoretical speculation sets the bar high for studies to come, and will undoubtedly add to anthropologists' growing interest in one of the most numerous, but least documented, indigenous peoples of the Americas. The book focuses on the gendered healing practices of Mapuche shamans, *machi*, and the plethora of contradictory discourses that surround them. At its heart is the story of how different *machi* utilize distinct strategies as they negotiate and manipulate the various demands of their communities, their patients, various political movements, and the spirits themselves, while at the same time dealing with the largely negative stereotypes of *machi* present in the mainstream Chilean consciousness.

The first half of the book deals with the healing practices of both male and female *machi*. Different chapters treat Mapuche cosmology and religion, witchcraft and illness, and various shamanic rituals. The importance of gender becomes clear as we realize that both male and female *machi* must take on both female and male roles in order to obtain the knowledge necessary for healing. In some contexts they

seek to seduce the spirits which will possess them in trance and reveal their knowledge; in other contexts, they seek to embody the male and female, old and young aspects of the quadripartite Mapuche deity Ngünechen. It is the relation between, on the one hand, this co-gendered identity of *machi* occurring in ritual and, on the other, their everyday gender identity that forms the central enigma at the heart of Bacigalupo's work. The second half of the book deals with the various discourses surrounding *machi's* co-gendered status from the sixteenth century to the present. To the early Spanish chroniclers, *machi* appeared as perverse witches in league with the Devil, an attitude that has continued through to the present, as *machi* are frequently characterized as homosexual witches in mainstream Chilean discourses, discourses which have frequently been appropriated by Mapuche themselves. Two fascinating chapters deal in detail with the specific individual strategies employed by three male and three female *machi* to manipulate these national stereotypes, while at the same time retaining sufficient ambiguity to be viewed as authentic in the eyes of their patients. Throughout the ethnography, Bacigalupo is careful to present the idiosyncrasies of individual *machi* and the diversity of opinions surrounding their practices. She is also careful in presenting her own role in the lives of the various *machi* with whom she has worked over many years, and does not shy away from addressing the difficulties of the political economy of representation in this marginalized segment of a marginalized people.

When reading a book in which the central issue is itself the manipulation of ambiguity, it is perhaps inevitable that parts of the analysis themselves appear rather ambiguous. To my mind, 'colonialism' possibly occupied too great a part in some of the explanations offered. I suspect that the ambiguity of *machi*, both morally and in terms of gender, is as much a part of the internal logic of Mapuche cosmology as it is the result of mainstream Chilean discourse, and to describe the Mapuche pantheon of malignant beings as 'colonial spirits' is certainly something of an oversimplification. I would also add that although the theoretical discussions of gender and power are both comparative and innovative in scope, there is little comparative discussion of the nature of Amerindian shamanism itself. This is a shame as, for example, *machi's* claim that gender is like 'clothing' that they put on and take off to seduce spirits strikes many resonances with the new approaches to shamanism and

cosmology developed in Brazilian, British, and French anthropology. Yet, given the wealth of material on offer, and the largely convincing theoretical framework in which the material is presented, these are small qualms.

Shamans of the Foye tree impressed me greatly, both for its ethnographic scope and for its theoretical incisiveness. It will be essential reading for anyone interested in the intersection of gender, spirituality, and power. Its exploration of the dialectic between ritual and everyday gender identity, and its relations to hegemonic discourses, constitutes a major step forward in the theorizing of gender. I would also strongly recommend the book to anthropologists working with indigenous peoples in other areas of South America, for whom the descriptions of Mapuche cosmology and sociality contained within will appear both strange yet somehow familiar.

MAGNUS COURSE *University of Edinburgh*

TEUNIS, NIELS & GILBERT HERDT (eds). *Sexual inequalities and social justice*. xvi, 264 pp., figs, bibliogr. London, Berkeley: Univ. California Press, 2007. £13.95 (paper)

The intersection between theory and practice, academia and activism has in recent years become an increasingly pressing concern as social movements, political struggles, and battles against various forms of exclusion and inequality challenge academia to engage beyond armchair intellectualism and attend to 'research that matters' (p. xiii). The central question that informs the provocative and compelling essays in this volume is how research can make a real contribution to the struggle for social justice, whether it be based on homophobia, sexism, ageism, racism, or other structural inequalities.

The primary thematic focus is on how the intersection between sexuality, social inequality and the struggle for social change can be used in order to investigate and question the use of academic research, research methodology and ethics, and the politics of academic engagement. The analysis of social inequality here provides a lens for comprehending the reproduction of sexual inequality, sexual ill-health, and the absence of sexual rights for members of marginalized groups. Sexuality and gender emerge not as individual traits or primarily scientific or medical concerns, but as social phenomena infused with specific cultural meaning and the structural, political effects of exclusion that require careful participatory

analysis in order to be fully understood, challenged, and changed. Excellent contributions in Richard Parker's 'Foreword' and editors Niels Teunis and Gilbert Herdt's 'Introduction' situate sexuality research historically and socio-culturally, and provide a useful context and framework for the case studies that follow.

The ten ethnography-rich – mainly US-based – essays are grouped into three thematic sections. Part one concerns sexual coercion and sexual stigma. Two introductory essays explore Latino gay men's vulnerability towards sexual risk-taking, and thereby heightened exposure to HIV infection. Childhood abuse is shown to influence adult sexual risk-taking, exacerbated by Latino culture's anti-gay norms. Diaz's essay on HIV/AIDS stigma within the gay community and risk behaviour among Latino gays considers why individual intentions to stay safe divert from actual sexual behaviour that includes frequent unsafe sexual practices and a stigmatizing 'othering' of HIV-positives. A chapter on sex education in a North Carolina middle school and the politics of girls' access to empowering sexual knowledge in the age of abstinence-based, 'knowledge equals danger' approach to sex education in the US, together with one on Korean comfort women's experience of post-war stigma, inability to conceive and hence be denied full female personhood, further point to the complex interrelationship between structural poverty, ethnicity, gender, and sexuality in establishing a vulnerability that increases the potential for sexual abuse, ill-health, and stigma.

The four essays in part two consider the pursuit of sexual pleasure. They highlight subjective agency and individual counter-strategies in meeting normative and oppressive structural powers, whether they be: science-based HIV prevention programmes that ignore local cultural logics; the sexual conservatism of the Catholic Church facing Mexican women; mainstream gay movements seeking 'respectability' by adopting heteronormative lifestyles; or society's inability to regard disabled people as sexual beings. Ethnographically rich, analytically probing, and genuinely committed to finding solutions to pervasive structural inequalities, these essays – especially Carrington's insightful essay on how gay men's Circuit dance parties provide relief, pleasure, and community, and Shuttleworth's analysis of sexual well-being and access, gender nonconformity and disability among men with cerebral palsy – demonstrate ways to study and interpret these complex intersections of

disadvantage, difference, and positive real-life strategies to challenge structural oppression.

Part three discusses sexual inequality and sociality from an age-based perspective. De Vries and Hoctel explore intersections of age, sexuality, and inequality by considering friendship networks among older gays and lesbians that differ qualitatively from comparable relationships between straights, in that they make up for the lack of normative kin ties and create persistent ties of emotional support in the face of an oppressive society.

The final chapter discusses adolescent lesbian, gay, and bisexual sexuality and non-normative gender, and the organizational empowerment capacity of this generation through the example of gay-straight alliances (GSAs) among youth in California high schools. Sexual orientation and gender nonconformity in schools are areas where diversity education and equality measures are needed, and the new social movement of GSAs provide a locus for and resources towards empowerment, tolerance, and agency that in turn facilitate structural change and social justice.

Sexual inequalities and social justice is highly recommended for its ambitious interdisciplinary, analytic, and politically engaged premise, and for the authors' sophisticated and mature approach to their – often sensitive – topics and analysis. Although not exclusively an anthropological publication, anthropologists interested in applied, real-world relevant research, and in sophisticated gender and sexuality approaches, should find the detailed considerations of positioning, ethics, and integration of intense participatory-based research data with social and political analysis inspiring and thought-provoking.

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Religion and myth

ENGELKE, MATTHEW. *A problem of presence: beyond scripture in an African church*. xv, 304 pp., map, illus., bibliogr. London, Berkeley: Univ. California Press, 2007. £13.95 (paper)

There have been increasing calls in recent years for the development of an anthropology of Christianity in which anthropologists 'who study Christian societies formulate common problems' (J. Robbins, 'Continuity thinking and the

problem of Christian culture', *Current Anthropology* 48, 2007: 5). While no unanimity exists among scholars with regard to the achievability of a comprehensive definition of Christianity, it is becoming clear from the emerging body of research that Christian discourses and practices can fruitfully be examined with an eye to a set of dualisms (such as immanence/transcendence and immediacy/eternity) which reflect the idea of a fundamental and yet paradoxical gap between human beings and the Christian Divinity. Broadly speaking, two different modes of dealing with this gap can be discerned. In one mode, an attempt has been made to reconcile dualisms by, for example, emphasizing, as in Mormonism, that *no* 'opposition between this world and the next world – the material and the spiritual' exists (F. Cannell, 'The Christianity of anthropology', *JRAI* 11, 2005: 338; cf. T.G. Kirsch, *Spirits and letters*, forthcoming). The other mode in dealing with Christian dualisms consists of privileging one pole of the duality over the other.

In this book, using the latter mode, Engelke presents the case of a church in Zimbabwe, the Masowe weChishanu Church, whose members are committed to the 'enactment of an immaterial faith' and for whom materiality is the prominent obstacle in making contact with God. As Engelke demonstrates, this approach even affects the way in which weChishanu apostolics refer to the Bible. Calling themselves 'the Christians who don't read the Bible', they dismiss the Scripture – due to its material qualities – as unnecessary, and instead strive for attaining a materially unmediated ('live and direct') relationship with God.

Therefore, according to Engelke, the weChishanu apostolics' defiance of the Bible not only represents a critique of the role of the Bible in (colonial) regimes of subjection, but also has 'extrapolitical motivations' that are rooted in ideas about 'the terror of the text' (J. Fabian, *Time and the work of anthropology*, 1991) and a fundamental paradox in Christian thought, namely the 'simultaneous presence and absence of God'. Drawing on work by Africanists, anthropologists, historians, philosophers, and theologians, Engelke consequently embeds his examination of the weChishanu apostolics in a comparative discussion of the 'problem of presence', which unfolds at the intersection between religiosity, language/meaning, and materiality and finds expression in distinct 'semiotic ideologies' (cf. W. Keane, 'Semiotics and the social analysis of material things', *Language and Communication* 23, 2003).

In the first chapter of his book Engelke introduces a set of 'semiotic ideologies' when dealing with prominent practitioners of Christianity in Africa, such as Robert Moffat, Isaiah Shembe, and Desmond Tutu, whose respective approaches to the 'problem of presence' in relation to the Bible (as sign and thing) largely contrast with the approach of the weChishanu apostolics. The following three chapters and the last chapter of the book are devoted to discussions of how the weChishanu apostolics' project of immateriality has developed historically and of the tensions and controversies that arise in its context. Among other things, the commitment to 'live and direct faith' is examined with reference to the experience of (un)certainly in the process of conversion to Christianity, to problems concerning religious authority, institutionalization, and mediumship, to how religious principles are put into practice, and to the way Masowe weChishanu apostolics relate to the material substances used in the church for curing the sick. Lastly, the fifth and the sixth chapters are based on the observation that language is a 'key medium through which the problem of presence is both articulated and apprehended', and concentrate on the weChishanu apostolics' use of 'live and direct language' in the form of sermons and songs.

Many chapters consist of portraits and descriptions of face-to-face encounters with religious practitioners, which makes the book a vivid reading experience. A further strong point is Engelke's way of interweaving the in-depth examination of empirical material with theoretical discussions. I have the impression, however, that the Masowe weChishanu apostolics' phrase 'live and direct' – which alludes to radio broadcasting and is given a central place in how Engelke unfolds his line of argument – is overused in the book and not always employed in a consistent manner. For example, he states that people are committed to a 'live and direct *faith*', but also that there prevails a 'live and direct *approach*' and a 'live and direct *ideal*'; moreover, it is said that the Holy Spirit has 'live and direct *influences*', and that there exist 'live and direct *semiotics*' as well as a 'live and direct *style of a sermon*'. It appears to me that by employing this phrase with such varied meanings, different empirical dimensions and levels of analysis are fused together which could have been examined more fruitfully if treated separately. In sum, none the less, Engelke's book not only is an insightful inquiry into a fascinating ethnographic case but also

contributes significantly to more general anthropological discussions about how religious practitioners try to challenge paradoxical constellations in Christian thought.

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STEWART, PAMELA J. & ANDREW STRATHERN (eds). *Contesting rituals: Islam and practices of identity-making*. xx, 239 pp., illus., bibliogr. Durham, N.C.: Carolina Academic Press, 2005. \$30.00 (paper)

This edited volume is another contribution to a growing literature devoted to contemporary Muslim communities. The collection aims to bring more attention to ritual practices of Islam (over ideological tenets), and its primary interests, and what the title refers to, are the contested place of Sufi Islam (within reformist Islamic traditions) and the often contradictory religious roles attributed to women.

The short introduction by Stewart and Strathern relies heavily on Lawrence's *Shattering the myth* (1998). While the general public may still believe that Islam is a singular or monolithic religion, this myth was shattered long ago in the social sciences and Islamic studies, the book's target audiences. One sentence in particular, significantly out of place in the volume, is about 'not ignoring or denying the violent potentials present in many fundamentalist religious regimes that ... identify others as "the evil enemies"' (p. xv). Instead, the introduction should have focused on situating this work in the larger and more recent literature on Islam and ritual, and contextualizing the chapters through a definition of Sufi Islam which explains its 'contested' position against both reformist Islam and Shi'a Islam, which one of the chapters addresses.

The shortcomings of the introduction are due to Stewart and Strathern's long career publishing on (mostly un-Islamic) Melanesia, Europe, and Asia. Their interest in Islamic ritual stems from the perspective of expressive genres, emplacement, embodiment, and identity constructions. This collection is part of their *Ritual Studies Monograph Series*.

The seven chapters, however, rich in geographic, thematic, and disciplinary diversities, speak for themselves. Selections from the fields of history, anthropology, sociology, religious studies, women's studies, and social ecology discuss rituals in India, Indonesia, Niger, Mali, Nigeria, the United States, Kazakhstan, and Iraq. Thus the volume provides a refreshing mix

of descriptive case studies in both prominent, well-studied Muslim areas and 'out of the way places'. A glossary would have been a helpful addition, given the abundance of terms in different languages.

Pemberton begins the collection with a discussion of how women can function as *pirs*, Sufi spiritual guides in the South Asian shrine setting, despite notions in Islamic law explaining the contrary. This chapter is nicely set against several others (although not in this order): Rasmussen writes on the transformation of gendered spaces within Tuareg practices of *albaraka*, blessing powers traditionally associated with elderly male chiefs, which protect against threats from outsiders to West Africa; Hutson illustrates the contribution of twentieth-century Kano Tijaniyya women who obtained and maintained their roles as *muqaddama*, spiritual representatives authorized to initiate and supervise members of a Sufi order, a communal practice formerly denied to women in northern Nigeria; Takim examines Shi'i rituals of *ziyara*, visiting the shrines of the imams, in contrast to Sufi practices (such as those described by Pemberton), thereby delineating sectarian boundaries. Takim's chapter, which mentions only the shrine in Kerbala, Iraq, could use a background section on the location of other shrines and the importance of Shi'i imams.

The other chapters deal less explicitly with Sufism. Gade provides a fascinating account of the motivation of Indonesians to recite the Qur'an in competition, part of the global 'Islamic awakening' movement of the 1990s. Roberts depicts a unique example of the intersection of Soviet, Muslim, and capitalist ideologies through ritualized performances (such as toasts) of the Uyghur on the Kazakhstan-China border to celebrate nationalism despite their statelessness.

The weakest essay is by Mazumdar and Mazumdar on rituals in the American immigrant Muslim home. Compared to the rich description in other chapters, their mere listing of various religious traditions provides no insight and is not grounded within the demographics of immigrants and Muslims in the United States, the role of women (which the chapter claims to explore), or differences between Sunni and Shi'i practices. The concept of 'domestic' or 'home-based' religion is poorly defined and serves only to create an artificial separation between the public and private lives of Muslims. Furthermore, their concluding caveat 'contests' the relevance of these rituals in a sense contrary to the contribution of the volume as a whole, in

stating that 'not all Muslims engage in all the acts and activities described' (p. 140).

Overall, the wide range of Islamic rituals is successfully portrayed as having a human side (in contrast to Western media stereotypes of the dangers of prayer and suicide bombings). The reader comes away with an awareness of the complexities of being Muslim in today's world of globalization, mass migration, changing gender roles, and continuing ethno-nationalist struggles.

MARA A. LEICHTMAN *Michigan State University*

WADLEY, SUSAN SNOW. *Raja Nal and the goddess: the North Indian epic Dhola in performance*. xiii, 242 pp., tables, illus., bibliogr. Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 2004. \$49.95 (cloth), \$22.95 (paper)

Susan Wadley's monograph describes the individualistic performances of the *Dhola* in the Braj region, western Uttar Pradesh, an area of research that has occupied her for thirty years. It is a painstaking translation of the narratives of Raja Nal by two seasoned performers, Ram Swarup Dhimar and Matol Singh Gujar. The *Dhola* is often accompanied by different melodic strains such as *barahmasis* (number of months) and *doha* (proverbs).

As the famous ballad comes to life, with its whirling performance and theatrical exegesis, the rendition of familiar anecdotes and *dohas* ignites audience participation. The audience remains engaged as the tale of the handsome Raja Nal and his marriage to the beautiful Dumentī unfolds, following the vicissitudes of his life from being a deeply admired ruler, through the tragic loss of his kingdom, his sudden downfall, followed by the physical disfigurement caused by leprosy, and subsequent oblivion as he wanders abandoned near the crematorium. The end is nigh, when quite suddenly he is embraced by providence, saved by his wife Dumentī's love and watchful vigil. When he appears to her, she sees through his disfigurement caused by disease and abandons all ceremony to rescue him. He is cured by her tender affection, compassion, and fidelity, regaining his health, vitality, and kingdom.

Wadley recognizes that the *Dhola* has powerful moral and psychological connotations. However, there are several shortcomings in her interpretation. Manifestations of caste allegiances and hierarchy become expressions of defiance by lower-caste performers, who seek to challenge

'Hindu' domination. For the lower castes, 'an affirmation of divine moral authority must be balanced by an affirmation of caste identities and loyalties'. Thus, to her, 'the oral epic *Dhola* portrays a world of many castes, kings, magicians, as well as of husbands and wives who quarrel and engage in complex relationships'.

But the *Dhola* or *Dholak* is not just about caste; indeed it is a satire on the human condition, a Karmic journey that every individual must undertake in order to attain salvation. Such knowledge appears to have a practical side, for it not only serves to embody and interpret values, such as those of ideal womanhood manifest in Dumentī, but also instructs how to proceed in life, how to participate, and how to overcome adverse circumstances.

The tale of Nal in this context brings to light the eternal truths of existence, asserting that they are the ultimate authority of the wisdom of life and the key to fulfilment on many levels. The prescription contained therein is a dharmic way of life, based on a Karmic spiritual ethic. The destiny of the human being is never final and irreducible, for there is always a need to annul and transcend the human condition by speaking not only of freedom and deliverance, but also of creation. As Eliade has astutely grasped, in the subcontinent, cyclical readings of time are interwoven, recurring, but rarely overlapping.

Literal translations can overlook subliminal, metaphorical truths. For example, the *Dhola* performers are inspired by using sexual imagery, male/female relationships, while the divine interventions of Goddess Durga are pitted against Kali. Wadley interprets this as a contest between Durga the benign warrior and Kali the demon slayer, a potent and destructive enterprise. However, as local understandings go, this 'contest' is never between two aspects of divinity, but represents traits in the human character, either to demonstrate benevolence or to express uncontrollable rage.

A rather obvious shortcoming is Wadley's interpretation of caste, which seems to preclude time and, indeed, any historical understanding. She gives prominence to colonial historians such as Ibbetson and Quanungo who wrote in the 1950s, but she has overlooked recent ethnographic contributions on caste, such as Inden's work. In addition, her dating of the *dhola* tradition as being only two hundred years old overlooks the fact that the *dhola* has been the principal musical instrument dating back as far as the Indus and, certainly, early Rgvedic civilizations. The countless narratives of Raja Nal

are taken from the Epics and continue to be performed at festivals, fairs, and weddings and other celebrations.

Recognizing the extent to which mythologies and topography overlap in shaping the landscape in the Indian subcontinent is critical to understanding the importance of the mythical gods that influence daily life. They inhabit living deities or powers, suffusing the land and homes, while life, shaped by multiple cultural forms, continuously inscribes the land with the prolixity of Indo-Islamic aetiologies that span millennia. Thus the diverse profusion of that which is perceived as divine manifestation is played through multiple 'keys' and manifests itself as the natural component of the divine, whether personal, local, regional, or national.

KUSUM GOPAL *London School of Economics and Political Science*

Social anthropology

BUCKLAND, THERESA JILL (ed.). *Dancing from past to present: nation, culture, identities*. xii, 245 pp., maps, illus., bibliogr. Madison: Univ. Wisconsin Press, 2007. \$55.00 (cloth), \$24.95 (paper)

This book presents a collection of ethnographies which offer a diachronic perspective in order to interpret present cultural meanings in dance; how the past is represented in the present, and how dance practices are used by people to remember and recollect memories. There are eight case studies on dance practices in the city of Skopje (in the Former Yugoslavia), and in Tonga, New Mexico, India, Korea, Java, and England. All authors discuss issues of present and past in dance practices, and dance is seen as embodied cultural practice. The essential element examined is the development of dance practices within selective historical, political, and socio-economic conditions.

Lynn Maners examines performances of folk dance in Former Yugoslavia as creating a symbolic socio-cultural memory with regard to representations of nationalism and the formation of the nation-state and the construction of national memory. This social memory through public performances interprets the past, explains the present conditions and how the present should be, and projects a future (p. 79). Elsie Ivancich Dunin looks at dance practices, which she documented in 1967, among the Roms living

in Skopje. She interprets the social and ritual contexts of dancing and she recorded the public celebration of St Georges's Day in Skopje. She highlights the socio-political changes among the Roms and the development of *Čoček* solo dancing as representation of Rom identity (p. 188). She also questions the uses of technology and how they reflect upon the past. Theresa Jill Buckland illustrates English Morris dance, and the large 'revival' that has restored it from a local cultural practice to a national (re)formation. She stresses that whereas 'previously it had been valued as an indicator of Tradition, now it seemed to be a testimony of maintaining youth and fitness' (p. 220). She denotes the development of a 'southern' and 'northern' identity with regard to locality.

Deidre Sklar describes an annual ritual fiesta of Our Lady of Guadalupe in Tortugas. She notes the movement as a matter of the pleasures of kinaesthetic sensation (p. 106), the somatic aspects of dancing, and she interprets religion in Tortugas as a reflection of somatic meanings. She stresses that the people in Tortugas did not discuss the meaning of the dance, but they talked about the technicalities of performances: step and music. Using qualitative analysis, she refers to the different ways of practices of dance between men and women, and she notes how the dance worked as a mnemonic, as a process of remembering. Judy Van Zile uses movement analysis to study selected iconographic representations, court images, of Korean dances. She delineates the margin between history and ethnography in researching dances of Korea (p. 154) by interpreting the historical records, and how the past contributes to the present. Janet O'Shea investigates in India the *bharata natyam* (or Bharatanatyam) dancers, and she looks at the different choreographic strategies, how the dance was formed, its past, and provides a space for coping with the politics of representation. She highlights that twentieth-century *bharata natyam* challenged boundaries between the disciplines of history, ethnography, and cultural studies (p. 145), and she argues that the dance relies upon the choreographic practices of the past. The dance is seen as the embodiment of music in a visual form, a ceremony, as an act of devotion. O'Shea stresses the developments of the dance and of various influences over the centuries.

Felicia Hughes-Freeland indicates the historical claims and present practices of the performance tradition of Yogyakarta, a province of Indonesia in the island of Java. She explores the interpretative processes that produced the

performance repertoire and its mythologies in the sultan's court (p. 54). She argues that modern Indonesian culture is a response to a perceived modernization that calls on the ideology of the traditional to act as panacea to the negative face of change (p. 55), and she refers to women's dance that requires the exclusion of eroticism, flirtatiousness, and coyness (p. 69). She notices that the modern gendering and genres of dance are the result of change and innovation, and not the reappearance of fixed past practices (p. 70). Adrienne Kaepler refers to dances and oratory as the most important art form in Tonga. She examines the *lakalaka* group dance in four historical 'moments', where performers are standing still and make gestures only with their arms, in order to understand the transformation of the dance genre, now known as *lakalaka*. She describes the historic moment when *lakalaka* was transformed from *heliaki* (the Tongan concept and aesthetic principle of 'not going straight'; indirectness) in performance to a biographical 'history' (p. 43).

This book offers rich ethnographic material by means of varying approaches used by each author in conducting field research. Researchers and students will benefit from this collection if they compare the different studies on the discourse of the importance of dance practices in (re)forming cultural and national identities, in representation of past 'images' in present conditions, and by the transformations, generated by other processes, which locate 'reality' and 'authenticity'.

CHRISTOS KARAGIANNIDIS *University of Sussex*

FRANKLIN, SARAH. *Dolly mixtures: the remaking of genealogy*. x, 253 pp., illus., bibliogr. London, Durham, N.C.: Duke Univ. Press, 2007. \$79.95 (cloth), \$22.95 (paper)

In this lively book Franklin has managed to overcome the apparent sticking-point of much work on animals by anthropologists. She is clearly interested in sheep: her exhaustive documentation of their production is fascinating. She is also one of the few contributors to this area who manages so effortlessly to make her work relevant to some of the most pressing anthropological questions of the moment. Franklin does not preserve the apparent separation of animal lives from those of humans that is a hallmark of modernity. Rather, she is alert to the ways in which human and animal lives are, and have always been, imbricated:

they are *biocultural* (p. 3). By closely examining a particular event, the cloning of Dolly the sheep, she is able to submit to fine-grained, historical analysis the topic of biotechnology – which often appears as an unmarked, homogeneous category. By placing the cloning of Dolly in historical perspective, she encourages us to reject simplistic renderings of global scientific innovation as a singular process and to look instead for continuities and departures that relate to particular animals and people in specific times and places. This enables her to relate the symbolic significance of Dolly, and the existential questions her creation raised among commentators, to issues of political economy, nationalism, and imperialism.

The book opens with a powerful summary of the argument that in order to understand what kind of starting-point Dolly offers us for thinking about our relationship to the idea of biology, we must place her in world-historical context. The first chapter describes her production as blending on a number of different levels: of technologies, high and low tech (the box that produced an environment in which a 'requickening of her reconstructed cellular origins' might take place was apparently handmade), transgenesis and cross-breeding (Dolly was produced from mammary cells taken from a Finn Dorset ewe and Scottish Blackface donor egg cells), farm and laboratory, public and private ('pure science' crossed with venture capital). Dolly also fuses the mundane and the exceptional. She is, after all, a mere sheep (with apologies to fanciers everywhere). The next two chapters explore her origins and the impact of her ancestors on global political events, first by examining her status as a 'very British sheep' (p. 117) and then by describing the importance of the settling of sheep for the growth of the British Empire, particularly in Australia. According to Franklin, the depiction of breeder entrepreneur and 'founding father of Australian nationhood' Captain John Macarthur on a two dollar note alongside a sheep is a graphic illustration of the influence of both on Australian frontier mythology. The death of Dolly and of nameless numerous other sheep through scabby mouth disease, foot and mouth, and the demands of the meat industry are described in the final chapter.

Although on the face of it a book about the cloning of a sheep may not seem obviously traditionally anthropological, the questions raised in this book are perennial, a reflection of Franklin's continuing interest in kinship and reproduction. As Franklin herself acknowledges

at the beginning of the book, the rendering of Dolly as enabled by and enabling structures that can be described as genealogies is an implicit rejection of various post-social alternatives, including assemblages, multiples, inhumans, and the like. Her four-square historical and social approach is grounded and thorough, and records flows not just of information, but also of people and animals ('Colony') and wealth ('Money'). In this sense, her book is almost unfashionably concerned with the concrete and quantitative, despite the fact that Dolly has been used to suggest the disorderly, novel, and unprecedented by lesser commentators. Traditional anthropologists might be surprised. Those with absolutely no enthusiasm for sheep will still find much to enjoy in this book. It is essential that we understand Dolly's place in the world, the technology that made her possible, and the commercial incentives that encouraged her production. She is, after all, a 'twentieth-century icon', and in this book we find a suggestive and refreshing approach that looks not at the ethical, public health, or legal implications of her coming into being, but rather at the possibilities she presents for thinking about life itself.

REBECCA CASSIDY *Goldsmiths College*

GOLDSTEIN, DANIEL M. *The spectacular city: violence and performance in urban Bolivia*. xiii, 274 pp., maps, illus., bibliogr. London, Durham, N.C.: Duke Univ. Press, 2004. £61.00 (cloth), £15.50 (paper)

The spectacular city is a path-breaking ethnography of Andean Bolivia focused on urban change, migration, violence, public spectacle, and indigeneity. Based in the barrio of Pagador in the city of Cochabamba, the book examines parallels between cultural performance and vigilante violence. The former is the annual festival of San Miguel; the latter the 'lynchings' (usually by beating or burning) of suspected criminals. Both, Goldstein argues, express claims for inclusion, citizenship, and visibility made by urban inhabitants deemed racially and socially 'outside' the proper city. These spectacles reveal the disjuncture between rapid rural-urban migration and weak or non-existent public services and political representation in growing cities. The disjuncture is attributed, Goldstein argues, to the effects of neoliberal reform and the withdrawal of the state from public welfare. These contradictions between the rhetoric of liberal democracy and rising gaps of social,

racial, spatial, and economic inequality are explored through a well-crafted ethnographic portrait.

The book begins with a discussion of urban fieldwork challenges. In Pagador, relations with outsiders who represent officialdom in some form are met with distrust. Fieldworkers, like tax-collectors, census-takers, and the state itself, fall into an ambiguous category as both potentially useful resource and harmful threat. The methodological discussion is enlightening, yet the analytical insight threads throughout the book: marginalized locals do not just 'resist' nor 'comply with' the state, but manoeuvre between desires for state attention and attempts to defend extra-legal spaces of autonomy. Chapters 2 and 3 offer a historical and ethnographic portrait of the barrio as a socio-political unit riven by internal factions yet concerned with cultivating an outward image of unified community. An excellent discussion of relations between municipal authorities, reformist NGOs, and factions of barrio leadership illustrates the politics of development in Bolivia. Chapter 4 dissects the festival of San Miguel through interpretations of its political, economic, and discursive effects in relation to the production of 'community'. The festival in question imitates the more famous Carnival of Oruro, deemed national patrimony. Dancing in San Miguel, it is argued, thus localizes the nation to say 'we are citizens too'. Chapter 5 turns to the more brutal side of spectacle. Lynchings are examined through competing interpretative lenses; most productively, their gendered dimensions as seen in the unexpected role played by women. If dancing claims citizenship through folklore, lynchings critique the state and take it to task, as 'spectacular vehicle[s] for the communication of demands and an instrument to attract the attention of an audience that has otherwise ignored them' (p. 214). The author concludes that both cultural forms appropriate state claims to sovereignty. As a result there has been increased state attention to crime, by way of the organization of neighbourhood security brigades, as well as increased 'sociopolitical inclusion', though it is not clear in what form (p. 212).

Goldstein's work is path-breaking because of the connections drawn between folklore (long-studied in Andeanist anthropology) and urban violence (under-studied in most of Latin America, save Brazil). The book opens new ground in discussions of urban indigeneities, long restricted to studies of rural tradition. The work also contributes to the study of the violent

underside of modernity in contexts of racial and economic marginality.

Though suggesting that neoliberalism caused urban violence, the book provides a critique that goes beyond denunciation and can be read as a portrait of more open-ended potential politicizations of cultural practice. Given the limits of corporatist forms of representation in the context of rapid migration, new urbanites staged displays against marginality due to factors that predate the rise of neoliberalism. Neoliberalism sought to transform the direction of folkloric and violent spectacle, but may not have caused it. Urban planners, barrio leaders, and NGO activists who promoted the language of community engaged in a self-help rhetoric compatible with the cultural thrust of neoliberal governmentality even as it claimed to resist its effects. 'Neighborhood security brigades', for instance, do not suggest achievement of state services, but echo the neoliberal turn. Like the distrusting ambiguity shown towards outsiders, evolving modes of collective cultural practice can articulate with a neoliberalist stance (we will do it ourselves) or demands for state welfare (give us what we have rights to), but are something more complex than neoliberalism's 'effect'.

The rich contributions of *The spectacular city* will appeal to specialists of development, violence, state formation, indigeneity, and Latin America, and the book is suitable for both undergraduate and graduate training.
BRET GUSTAFSON *Washington University in St Louis*

HORSTMANN, ALEXANDER & REED L. WADLEY (eds). *Centering the margin: agency and narrative in Southeast Asian borderlands*. viii, 238 pp., maps, tables, illus., bibliogr. Oxford, New York: Berghahn Books, 2006. £45.00 (cloth)

This timely collection on the experiences of Southeast Asian 'border people' is self-consciously animated by the spirit of Edmund Leach, aiming as it does to highlight 'the reconceptualization of communities at the border through movement and identification' (p. 2). Based on a panel at the 2003 International Convention for Asian Scholars (ICAS) in Singapore, the book brings together Asian, European, and North American scholars. It contains nine ethnographic chapters on a broad range of societies in both mainland and island Southeast Asia. The book begins with an introduction by the editors, in which they argue that many 'single-country' studies of ethnic

minorities in Southeast Asia ignore both practices of border-crossing and a concomitant 'transnationalization of social space' (p. 5) in this notoriously diverse region. The editors conclude their introduction by stressing the importance of paying attention to the 'cultural complexity of the borderland communities themselves' (p. 19) rather than (as has more frequently been the case) the cultural politics of Southeast Asian nation-states.

Many of the chapters that follow exemplify this approach. We meet Thai Buddhist monks who criss-cross the border zone of China, Thailand, Laos, and Burma, bringing with them floppy disks with ancient Thai scripts and Thai music tapes that, in Sara Davis's wonderful phrase, mount 'a sort of small-scale insurgency against Chinese karaoke' (p. 100). By contrast with such subversive travel, Cynthia Chou describes how the Orang Suku Laut are increasingly experiencing the shrinking of their previously expansive Malay maritime world, as state borders gain in prominence in the newly created 'Growth Triangle zone'. Like several contributors to the volume, Chou stresses the gendered nature of the border, exposing the fallaciousness of the notion of a 'borderless world' to the region's most disadvantaged people. For, whilst Orang Suku Laut men may be granted documents to allow them to cross the border from Indonesia to Singapore, women and children find themselves grounded by state policies that consider fishing to be an exclusively male activity.

The final section, on 'political economy', is the strongest of the book. Alexander Horstmann describes dual citizenship and border-crossing amongst 'enclave populations' (p. 173) on the Thai-Malaysian border, highlighting both the liberating and constraining aspects of such practices. Marc Askew discusses the Southern Thai borderland, and its unique role as a place both of magico-religious potency and sexual desire for Sino-Malaysian and Singaporean visitors. Askew's chapter is particularly noteworthy for the nuanced way in which he refuses to separate pilgrimage and (sex) tourism, showing instead how sacred sites and profane activities are accommodated within the same trip. Finally, Matthew Amster provides a historically informed account of Kelabit perspectives on the Malaysian-Indonesian border. Like the chapters by Horstmann and Sprenger, Amster shows the significance of marriage migration in maintaining cross-border relationships. In conclusion, Amster stresses the role of borders in 'generating unique

economies' that in turn become 'incentives for additional mobility' (p. 224).

The book is at its weakest when attempting to stretch the concept of the border to apply to 'internal border zones'. Thus, despite William Cummings's interesting account of a 'would-be center' through a focus on Makassarese oral history 'books-that-are-not-read' (p. 57), his chapter seems out of place next to others that focus on border *crossings*. An additional criticism would be the lack of detailed maps in many of the chapters – a real disadvantage in a book dealing with such a diverse range of geographical settings and movements. However, in general, this is an excellent collection that should be read by all scholars of Southeast Asia, and that should provoke more thought and research on the people whose lives and practices continue to connect Southeast Asian nation-states.

CATHERINE ALLERTON *London School of Economics and Political Science*

KAPSTEIN, MATTHEW T. *The Tibetans*. xviii, 360 pp., maps, illus., bibliogr. Oxford, Malden, Mass.: Blackwell Publishing, 2006. £25.00 (cloth)

Every twenty years or so, someone produces a general introductory text on Tibetan history and culture. In the 1960s, this was Snellgrove and Richardson's *A cultural history of Tibet* (1968); in the early 1990s, Geoffrey Samuel's *Civilized shamans – Buddhism in Tibetan societies* (1993). These are both excellent works, but with drawbacks: the first is often idiosyncratic and much of its historical data has been superseded; the latter, whilst an essential reference work for all Tibetologists, is too weighty a tome for all but the more dedicated undergraduates. With *The Tibetans*, Matthew Kapstein – one of the most respected scholars of medieval Tibetan religiosity – has succeeded in producing something in between: an authoritative but accessible work of erudition, well-designed for the undergraduate market.

That said, there are certain limits to the work – both methodologically and substantively – that are worth paying heed to. Like the two works above (particularly Samuel's), it is dominated by cultural – and therefore a religious – history, and is structured in those terms: this is an increasingly necessary parameter of almost all serious works on Tibet. This is convenient because Kapstein is fundamentally a historical-textual scholar, specializing in Tibet's

imperial and medieval past, and he is clearly most comfortable here, with many new translations of religious and historical texts in support of his general portrait. There is, however, little in the way of *ethnographic* richness to the work, and readers seeking an introductory anthropological text will therefore be disappointed, but as a gateway to understanding much of the wider historical *context* of individual ethnographic accounts, this is a very solid piece of work.

Substantively, the work remains one dominated by themes, material, and conclusions from Central Tibet (U-Tsang) and Lhasa, and is written from a somewhat statist and centralized perspective. In the chapter on Tibetan society, for example, Kapstein depends heavily on Melvyn Goldstein's (admittedly excellent) 1970s works on the administrative, taxation, and marriage systems of pre-1950 Central Tibet, and Rebecca Redwood French's *The golden yoke* (1991). There's nothing wrong with this, of course (although it is a little surprising, given the author's general interest in Eastern Tibet), except that it does not exactly cover what most writers would refer to as 'ethnographic Tibet'. It is particularly weak, however, on the very considerable quantity of ethnographic work done on Himalayan communities, and thus lacks the systematic sense of heterogeneity discussed at considerable length in Geoffrey Samuel's lengthier, and harder, tome.

Overall then, a well-written, useful, but avowedly introductory work.

MARTIN MILLS *University of Aberdeen*

NYÍRI, PÁL. *Scenic spots: Chinese tourism, the state, and cultural authority*. xii, 134 pp., illus., bibliogr. London, Seattle: Univ. Washington Press, 2006. \$40.00 (cloth)

In *Scenic spots*, Pál Nyíri provides a highly readable overview of the emergence of commercial tourism in China's reform era. As the title of the book indicates, Nyíri focuses on the formation of 'scenic spots' (*jingdian*), 'bounded and controlled zones' of consumption, where 'development' and 'commodification' are thought to go hand in hand. Nyíri argues that 'just as there is no single form of modernity, there can be multiple forms of mass tourism' (p. 95), and sets out to show that the Chinese case is distinguished by the dominant role the Chinese state plays in 'defining tourism itineraries' (p. 69) and determining 'the meaning of the landscape' (p. 75).

The book is organized into four chapters. Chapter 1 outlines the policy decisions that allowed for the growth of Chinese domestic tourism in the 1990s and tracks the development of tourism industry publications. This chapter introduces the concept of 'scenic spots', tracing the history of the term back to elite travellers in centuries past, who would inscribe rocks and cliffs with a kind of 'scholarly graffiti' (p. 7) and write poems about sites they had visited. These inscriptions and poems later came to be collected in local administrative gazetteers. With the start of China's reform era in 1978, the state began to develop a canon of three types of scenic spots – traditional, revolutionary, and reform-era. These national scenic spots have been promoted not only in tourism publications, but also on calendars and stamps (and, one might add, paper currency). Nyíri might have further developed this interesting point about the relationship between representations of place and nationhood.

Chapter 2 provides Nyíri's personal, lively, often humorous travel narrative of his visit to three sites in Sichuan province: Mount Emei, the Jiuzhaigou nature reserve, and the old frontier town of Songpan. He notes while the first two sites have been developed as scenic spots for Chinese tourists, the town of Songpan usually sees only foreign backpackers, having been marked as an 'off the beaten track' spot by the Lonely Planet guide. Anthropologists will wish that Nyíri had dwelt longer in each of the three sites and provided more ethnography, particularly in Jiuzhaigou – how have the interactions between Han tourists, Han migrant service workers, and Tibetan and Qiang villagers shaped the reserve as a site? – and Songpan – how has the place been defined by interactions between officials, entrepreneurs, townspeople, and backpackers?

Chapter 3 is the heart of the book. Here the author provides an engaging comparative discussion of European and Russian/Soviet tourism with the Chinese case. He argues that unlike the European tradition of the 'romantic, exploratory and self-bettering discourse of travel' (p. 58) and unlike the Russian tradition of travel for health, Chinese 'mass tourism emerged ... as part of a state-led promotion of a service sector' (p. 70). For Nyíri, the state is paramount in shaping tourism as a kind of 'indoctrination' of hegemonic representation where 'each stage has only one performance' (pp. 80-1). While Nyíri correctly identifies the 'state-market matrix', he overestimates this matrix as all-powerful: it 'dominates these landscapes ... and simply does

not allow the production of dissent' (p. 98). Surprisingly, he did not observe any ironic play or satirical commentary by Chinese tourists that I and others have described elsewhere. Over the last five years a rich, cynical Chinese backpacker literature has also provided sharp-witted commentary on official scenic spots. In addition, tourism-related real estate development in China has been hotly, sometimes violently, contested.

Chapter 4 introduces readers to the new and fascinating world of mainland Chinese mass tourists abroad, who, the World Tourism Organization predicts, will number 100 million by the year 2020, the most from any country. Nyíri asks: 'How do [these] tourists deal with the far less canonized meanings of sites they encounter outside of China? How will sources of authority be established over the interpretation of those sites?' (p. 104), and argues that the Chinese state 'will attempt to assert its cultural authority over foreign landscapes' (p. 108) as it does in China. Perhaps; but one expects that there will be a complex play of political, economic, and cultural actors and forces. I look forward to his future research on the topic.

Despite some limitations, I would certainly recommend *Scenic spots* as an introduction to contemporary tourism in China. It also points the way for future research on Chinese tourism at home and abroad.

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VILAÇA, APARECIDA. *Quem somos nós: os Wari' encontram os brancos*. 607 pp., maps, figs, tables, illus., bibliogr. Rio de Janeiro: Editora UFRJ, 2006. \$85.00 (paper)

Vilaça's ethnography explores the issue of Indian-White relations, specifically centred on the process of contact and pacification of the Wari', an Amerindian society living in the state of Rondônia, Brazil. She examines thoroughly the reasons that led different Wari sub-groups to reject or accept pacification during the expansion of the economic frontier. Why did the Wari' reject Whites' amicable intentions early in the twentieth century but then approach them in the 1960s? Why have they chosen, since then, to substitute a pattern of traditional territorial occupation for living alongside Whites around governmental posts even when they still consider them enemies? Vilaça's account answers these questions in a remarkably vivid fashion and profits from the rare possibility of knowing both the Wari' and Whites

(missionaries, government agents) who participated in several pacification efforts.

This is a brilliant ethnography of contact that draws on the symbolic classification efforts involved in incorporating the novelty of Whites and the events they trigger (flow of goods, disease, violence, labour) into Wari' society so as better to comprehend key cultural criteria of its constitution. What constitutes a person, a spirit, an animal; who and what makes kin kin; who and what makes enemies enemies; what are the conditions for a life worth living? These issues come into sharper focus in the examination of contact, an approach that has already proven its theoretical potential, for example, in Albert's work with the Yanomami, 'La fumée du métal' (*L'Homme* 106-7, 1988). Numerous instances of the mutual misunderstandings that sustain Indian-White relations also make this an ethnography of 'equivocation' between peoples whose conventional attitude towards difference is one of opposition.

The book combines general anthropological discussions with Amazonianist debates. Two themes are woven through the ethnographic account. The first considers the issue of myth and history following Sahlins's analysis of Captain Cook's encounter with Hawaiian society. Wari' people narrate their encounter with Whites in terms that resound with mythical episodes, not because they confuse myth with history, but rather, Vilaça argues, because historical events are seen as a repetition of mythical ones since they are structurally similar. Myth and social life are mutually implicated and in conjunction with history, which is why their charter function for incorporating novelty does not yield a mechanical reaction to external factors. Vilaça skilfully examines the articulation of Wari' cultural convention – like the role of relations with exteriority (other Wari' sub-groups, affines, enemies) for constitution of the Wari' person and local groups – and surrounding social environment – like the increasing intensity of Whites' massacres of Wari' people seeking to guarantee the conditions for different economic activities – to explain the diverse responses of the Wari' to pacification.

The second theme is closer to Amazonia. It develops the issue of Wari' relationship to difference, combining a study of Wari' myth in conversation with Lévi-Strauss's analysis of the myth of twins in *The story of Lynx* with an analysis of the transformations and structural equivalences between the most salient categories of others: affines, enemies, the dead and Whites, this time in conversation with

Viveiros de Castro's synthesis of Amerindian kinship and theory of perspectivism (*A inconstância da alma selvagem*, 2002). Vilaça shows that social categories such as 'co-residents', 'foreigners', and 'enemies' are relational and reversible positions. Who 'counts' as kin, foreigner, or enemy is historically contingent, yet the structural relationship between these positions remains. Lévi-Strauss's notion of 'perpetual disequilibrium' is fundamental to understanding the Wari' sense of personhood and their choices relative to living with Whites. A person is an entity who is eminently subject to becoming prey to animals or enemies, entities who hold a different perspective on the world. Wari' experience this Other/enemy perspective in shamanism, hunting, and warfare. The more recent process of 'becoming White' (a Wari' expression) by living next to them, eating their foods, and wearing clothes is a necessary experience of difference that, in analogous form to shamanism, allows Wari' to experience otherness in order to continue being human/Wari'. Nowadays, the archetypal affines and enemies are Whites, even if no marriage alliance is established and a warring relationship has ceased. It is perhaps on this topic of the contemporary relations with Whites that the reader is left in want of a more detailed description of 'living with the enemy', a suitable complement to Vilaça's examination of the recent past.

If the resonance of Vilaça's account with the circumstances of other Amazonian peoples (e.g. Yanomami, Parakana, ancient Tupi, Achuar) makes this a must for Amazonianist anthropologists, her engagement with broader anthropological issues widens the range of an interested audience well beyond Amazonia. Peter Rivière commented some fifteen years ago that some of the best Amazonian anthropology was being produced in Portuguese by the Brazilian academy. Vilaça's book confirms the currency of Rivière's appreciation.

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WOLF, RICHARD K. *The black cow's footprint: time, space, and music in the lives of the Kotas of South India*. xv, 313 pp., maps, figs, illus., musical notation, CD, bibliogr. Chicago: Univ. Illinois Press, 2006. £54.00 (cloth)

Richard Kent Wolf asks the most fundamental questions we can ask about any small

community – and the Kotas number only about 1,500. How is it that they have continued through the centuries? How have they changed? And in the face of changes going on all around them, how have they assured the integration of their own society in South India? Why have they not amalgamated in any way with the immediately adjacent Todas or Badagas? For several centuries now Kotas have been in close contact with Toda pastoralists, Kurumba sorcerers, British planters, Badaga millet and tea farmers, German missionaries, and recently Canadian hydroelectric engineers, and yet the culture Wolf found in their seven villages has retained its integrity and distinctiveness. Musical performance is a key part of the process.

The author is a reputed ethnomusicologist at Harvard University; one with a thorough command of Indian social anthropology, of the Kota and neighbouring Tamil languages, and of the best fieldwork techniques. The result of his research is that he presents us with one of the most detailed accounts of musical performance in any small Indian community; and is able to site it functionally within the social contexts of daily life and ritual activities. There are technically difficult sections in the book that only musical theorists will fully appreciate. However, they are not many; and, on the other hand, Wolf's presentation of the key role of dance and musical performance in the Kota ceremonial cycle and especially at funerals is something that is completely accessible to any anthropologist who reads it.

While far-reaching changes in Kota religion and ritual performance occurred early in the twentieth century, one is still struck by the apparent continuity in these cultural topics, as attested by David G. Mandelbaum's fieldnotes written around 1937; for Wolf has worked through these closely in the Bancroft Library in Berkeley and used them to great effect in his book to supplement and sometimes contrast with his own close observations. (Mandelbaum himself published relatively little about the Kotas as a result of his 1937 work in precisely the same village, Kolmel, where most of Wolf's participant observation took place.)

The black cow's footprint of the title relates to the foundation myth in which a black cow indicated with her hoof where each of the seven villages should be located, thus anchoring the community in the Nilgiri Hills. Anchoring is an important concept for Wolf, relating the people to their annual calendar, their environment, and even to the rhythm of a musical performance. It allows the Kotas to sense confidently 'where

they are' and hence 'who they are' in the Nilgiri scheme of things.

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Theory

GOODY, JACK. *Capitalism and modernity: the great debate*. vii, 200 pp., bibliogr. Cambridge, Malden, Mass.: Polity Press, 2004. £50.00 (cloth), £14.99 (paper)

This book is a timely contribution to solving the enigma the West seems to be confronted with in the current processes of globalization: why is it that the East takes up with so much ease the leading economic role that the West claims to have naturally occupied in human history? It is also part of a debate that Jack Goody sustained throughout his life-long comparative research on family structures, the development of writing cultures, and the impact of technology on social structure, with fellow social scientists (Giddens, Wallerstein, Weber, Marx) and historians (Pirenne, Landes, Braudel, White) engaged with the question of why there was Western dominance and when did the Western advantage in industrial development and economic growth begin. Goody challenges assumptions about long-term European supremacy of a 'cultural' kind based on Western individualism, rationality, and personal freedom. Instead he insists on the interchange of goods, services, and ideas through extensive networks of merchant bourgeois in the urban centres throughout Eurasia. His book inscribes itself in the recent trend of revisions of world history by Western authors (Blaut, Frank, Pomeranz) and their Eastern counterparts (Lee and Wang, Parthasarathi), all of whom reject the thesis that nineteenth-century industrialization was the product of a dynamic Europe versus a technologically stagnant Asia. He critically discusses, however, what he terms the 'One-Worldism' of Blaut and Frank, insisting that Africa south of the Sahara was and is largely different from Eurasia, owing to the absence of the wheel and plough and to the patterns of marriage and property transmission that accompany shifting hoe agriculture (p. 69). Focusing on Eurasia, he does not examine the particular place of South and Central America since the sixteenth century as a turntable and node of communication between the East and

the West that Serge Gurzinski described in *Les quatre parties du monde* (also published in 2004).

Goody rejects a certain number of dichotomies that inspired writers in the social sciences who tried to account for the advantage of the West. The general thrust of his argument is against drawing too sharp a contrast between East and West in those features of social organization that could relate to the onset of capitalism, modernization, and industrialization (p. 102). Instead of accepting the great divide between modernity and tradition, Goody maintains, countering Giddens, that 'previous societies were not structured in a fashion that demanded unquestioning obedience to tradition', nor had there been 'a quantum jump to modernity, cutting off "traditional" habits' (p. 11). He sees human societies as consisting 'of chains of interlocking generations that both transmit and innovate' and human cultures as consisting 'of chains of interlocking communications' (p. 12). He rejects the dichotomy defining the West as a place where human agency is exercised on the individual level and the East as one where it is organized on the collective level. He claims that this vision continues to influence contemporary historians and demographers when they explain the roots of Western modernity. Goody maintains that individualism is not the reserve of the West and that collective elements are also part and parcel of Western culture. Individual choice exists in both Eastern and Western decision-making within 'opportunity structure defined to a large degree by collective institutions, interests and ideologies' (p. 96).

Technological progress that led to industrialization in the West beginning in the last quarter of the eighteenth century is due more to 'technological dialogue' or 'an inventive exchange' between East and West than to a supposed cultural advantage of the West. Goody demonstrates how foundry techniques, the use of paper and water mills were transferred slowly from East to West. European factory production of porcelain existed previously in China and may have influenced the way in which European factory systems were organized. Silk-throwing machines that came to Britain in the early eighteenth century and were patented there had come from Italy, by way of the Islamic world (p. 149). When centres of industrial production expanded in Europe, a process of de-development took place in the East where centres of production of fine cloth collapsed. This nineteenth-century European advantage was, however, only temporary partly due to the

military power exercised by the West that allowed it to establish for a time its own conditions of trade and restricted market conditions. It did not preclude shifts in leadership in industrial production and commerce as they currently take place with the massive transfer of industrial production to the East.

This little book of only 200 pages including notes and bibliography leaves the reader sometimes hungry for more detail. It has to be read in the context of Goody's life-long *oeuvre*, which provides ample illustration for the argument developed here.

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WILLIAMS, VERNON J. *The social sciences and theories of race*. 151 pp., bibliogr. Chicago: Univ. Illinois Press, 2006. £12.99 (paper)

Williams has written a well-executed and informative collection of essays that comprise this his third book. He utilizes a variety of sources and methods to bolster his critical analysis of a simple yet profound question: why did and do people in North America believe and value the bundle of essentialist theories embedded in the volatile idea of race? Williams is primarily concerned with the way theories of race and theories of culture have been routinely deployed to demonstrate the putatively inherent, inherited, or acquired inferiority of African Americans in the United States from the late nineteenth to the early twenty-first centuries. Focusing on the early twentieth century, Williams concludes that 'most people react in terms of what they perceive to be true, and often no amount of discreditation – however "artful" or "scientific" – of their myths can change' deep-seated ideas (p. 120). Williams punctuates this claim by citing George M. Fredrickson, who notes that 'the persistence of racial essentialist theory stems, in short, from people's delusions' (p. 120).

Although Williams's conclusion is accurate, it is not particularly satisfying. However, the way he approaches the question as a serious historian of science, ideas, and mythology is smart, informative, and very satisfying. The majority of chapters are biographical vignettes of influential anthropologists, sociologists, and 'race men' who played pivotal roles in the genealogy of scientific debates on race. Williams is not satisfied with just offering potted biographies and underscoring each man's major contribution. He painstakingly documents how

each of his subject's ideas about race evolved and changed over time, often in response to the changing conditions of race and racism. Williams never limits himself in his efforts to delineate, or in his words 'adumbrate', the influence of people, progress, and politics on the views of these scholars. He explains how he wanted to 'ignore the boundaries separating cultural history, biography, autobiography, social history, and intellectual history in order to provide the reader with evidence to support' his analysis of change over time (p. 4). As a result, Williams has produced a fast-paced and focused history of the way a handful of men contributed to major twists and turns of the seemingly intractable problem of race, which for far too long was viewed simply as 'the Negro problem'.

Although some of his subjects are the usual suspects – for example, Franz Boas and Booker T. Washington – most are not. He introduces Monroe Work and George Washington Ellis to historians of anthropology while he introduces Ulysses G. Weatherly to scholars of African American studies – it is a seamless interdisciplinary analysis of particular North American scholars' contribution, resistance, and maintenance of that persistent and intractable social category.

The book is much more than a collection of biographical sketches because Williams weighs into the historiography of anthropology – devoting an entire chapter to it and boldly taking on the likes of Nancy L. Stepan and Herbert Lewis by challenging their view that the impetus for change in the behavioural and social sciences was internal, as opposed to external, while questioning the way each eschews a serious consideration of the subaltern traditions within the history of ideas. Offering more than critique, Williams extends and develops his

compelling argument that 'cataclysmic social structural changes were necessary preconditions for the initial triumph of antiracist thinking in the newly emerging American behavioral sciences' (p. 10). He reviews the literature of the past thirty years on race in anthropology and carefully dissects and bisects it, outlining the stakes, politics, and approaches of the small group of scholars who consistently write about the history of anthropology and race. This chapter emphasizes his compelling discussions of Franz Boas, Monroe Work, George Washington Ellis, Ulysses G. Weatherly, and Booker T. Washington. For those, he offers new perspectives and fresh insights, and for the unusual suspects, he underscores how scholarly communities, and not just individuals, shape and shift paradigms.

The most important contribution Williams makes is the way he painstakingly mines, or, better yet, archaeologically excavates, the most salient contributions of some of the lesser known figures in the history of sociology and anthropology, and, like an archaeologist, he pays particular attention to social and material contexts and subtle changes over time.

Perhaps the most edifying aspect of this careful history is the way Williams demonstrates how regular folk, not just the historic luminaries, made a difference. As scholars who are simply committed to teaching students and writing prose that enables people better to understand the world in which we live, we can find solace in the fact that while not famous, we, too, might be making lasting and meaningful contributions to the discourse and the discipline that, like William's book, is situated at the confluence of anthropology, sociology, and African American studies.

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