JRAI Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute

Book reviews

Changing environments

KAUR, RAMINDER. *Kudankulam: the story of an Indo-Russian nuclear power plant*. 392 pp., map, illus., bibliogr. Oxford: Univ. Press, 2020. £42.99 (cloth)

The decades-long popular struggle against the building and operation of two Russian-built nuclear power reactors in southern Tamil Nadu may not be well known outside India and anti-nuclear activist circles. *Kudankulam*, the first full-length account of that extended struggle, seeks to change that. Raminder Kaur's book is an engaged and passionate ethnography based on long-term fieldwork that intertwines the life history of a new social movement with the fears, embodied dangers, and threats of nuclear radiation across multiple scales. This is a story of marginal peoples – women, fisherfolk, Dalits, activists, and small farmers are at its centre – and their efforts to preserve their communities and livelihoods against the brute force of the Indian state. It is also a story that ends in failure, at least from the standpoint of those seeking to shut down the reactors. In her account of this struggle, informed by an impressive range of theoretical readings, Kaur crafts a deeply troubling exposé of the micro-politics, and indeed necropolitics, of state power. The substantive limits of contemporary Indian democracy are on show here. What emerges is a subaltern public unable to find its place in either the nation's present or future, far worse off than when the nuclear project began.

Among the standout elements of this study are discussions of the nuclear township and its environs, representing the high-modern and 'neo-Brahmanic' discourse of 'vegetarian' nuclear scientists, set against vivid accounts of the spaces, lives, and social imaginaries of displaced and struggling Catholic and Dalit fishing communities. This juxtaposition, an unconscious reproduction of the colonial-era spatiality of Civil Lines and Native Lines, maps on to a Nehruvian vision of progress that still dominates the state's vision of a self-reliant technological modernity versus a self-identified Gandhian-inspired mass struggle in an ironic and tragic replay of the contradictory ideologies of India's founding fathers. The movement's repertoire of resistance deploys the full panoply of civil disobedience, from marches and street plays, to hunger strikes and spectacular human chains – often with women in the lead. Events seeking to raise public awareness and publicize the movement beyond the local are met with increasing levels of police violence, and the extensive use of sedition and emergency laws to stifle dissent, aided by mass media provocations that go so far as to try to entrap movement organizers in 'sting' operations that ostensibly prove their anti-national origins. Even as these formations confront each other in an increasing cycle of state violence, what never goes away is a palpable sense of elite incomprehension that marginal people in this out-of-the-way place dare question science, the state, and its definition of national interests.

We come to realize that the people may be socially and politically marginal, but they are far from powerless. Kaur is aware of the history of postcolonial social movements in India, from Chipko to Narmada, and offers Kudankulam as the latest in a tragic genealogy of popular sacrifice on the altar of top-down development

and growth. Informed by the spectres of the 2004 Indian Ocean tsunami and the 2011 Fukushima nuclear accident, the movement's victories include exposing the use of faulty and dangerous components in the reactor, documenting a wide range of existing health hazards, and the mobilization of a heterogeneous and international alliance that led to reputational and political costs for multiple regimes in New Delhi. Even these considerable achievements and the moral legitimacy they garnered were not, however, enough in the end; the stakes for the nuclear state were too high.

India's nuclear programme has, from the outset, promised far more than it ever delivered and spent much more than will ever be acknowledged. The true costs of nuclearity in India have always been hard to calculate, given impoverished metrics and problems of incommensurability. In this light, Kaur's key metaphor of 'criticality' does not appear sufficiently encompassing to address the wide range of concerns addressed in this study. Even so, *Kudankulam* is both an invaluable record of what it means to live with nuclear power across multiple material and symbolic registers and a powerful indictment of a feckless nuclear establishment. A worthy complement to Kaur's earlier cultural history, *Atomic Mumbai* (1995), this book is in dialogue with other landmark nuclear studies from below, including Gabrielle Hecht's *Being nuclear* (2012), Joseph Masco's *Nuclear borderlands* (2006), and Adriana Petryna's *Life exposed* (2002), among others. The volume is enlivened by a stunning array of photographs taken by Raminder Kaur herself and Amritharaj Stephen, but suffers from poor-quality copy-editing.

Itty Abraham *National University of Singapore*

Luque, Diana, Angelina Martínez-Yrízar, Alberto Búrquez, Gerardo López Cruz & Arthur D. Murphy. *Complejos bioculturales de Sonora pueblos y territorios indígenas*. 496 pp., maps, tables, illus., bibliogrs. Mexico: CIAD, CONACYT, 2016. 200 MXN (paper)

After 500 years of sustained discussions on indigenous affairs (*sensu amplo*) in the Americas, the subject has become much more complex due to the rightful recognition – not without hardship – of indigenous agency and rights. Presently, Indigenous peoples face yet another challenge: global environmental degradation, which directly threatens the social, cultural, and economic assets of these peoples. Sanguinely, Diana Luque, Angelina Martínez-Yrízar, Alberto Búrquez, Gerardo López Cruz, and Arthur Murphy consider that when implementing and invigorating indigenous ecological knowledge, it is Indigenous peoples themselves who can offer long-term solutions to general negative environmental impacts as well as to their own socioeconomic marginalization. In *Complejos bioculturales*, the authors discuss, firstly, how the dialogues between the biophysical and social sciences have given birth to a biocultural synthesis capable of demonstrating the vulnerabilities of seven indigenous communities native to the state of Sonora, Mexico – Cucapá, Guarijío, Mayo, Pápago, Pima, Seri, and Yaqui – in the face of environmental crises. Secondly, they argue that such a socio-environmental diagnosis can contribute towards effecting positive changes in global productive processes and enforce a territory-based human rights approach.

Chapter 2 addresses the much-discussed topic of indigenousness and territoriality in order to outline the historical trajectories that have defined indigenous communities in Sonora from pre-European contact to the twenty-first century. This chapter also serves as a background and complement to chapter 3, in which we see delineated the spatiotemporal dynamics that led to the formation of the dynamic and complex cultural, political, and administrative territories in which these significations have overlapped over time in complex and sometimes counterproductive ways.

Chapter 4 represents an attempt to estimate environmental impact in the territories occupied by each ethnic group. Its approach contemplates comparative measurements between agrarian lands in indigenous territories and adjacent non-indigenous spaces of similar characteristics. The 'uniqueness of each indigenous community' (p. 144) in terms of landscape transformation ratios and its temporalities, as highlighted by the authors, makes it difficult for naïve observers to interpret data with complete certainty, as low ratios of landscape transformation can be interpreted as indicating either a culturally preserved territory or a marginalized community, depending on the lenses brought by qualitative or quantitative approaches respectively.

The problematic nature of data interpretation can be ameliorated by bringing in larger batteries of variables, as shown throughout chapter 5. This

chapter presents different data series describing socio-environmental conflicts (i.e. conflicts over biological resource tenure endogenous land disputes, exogenous land grabbing, water conflicts, etc.) experienced by the indigenous communities of Sonora. Chapters 6, 7, and 8 combine different stressors that interact as acculturating agents. Chapter 6 is dedicated to evaluating the current state of local food systems' erosion and, indirectly, to measuring the closeness of and access to market-mediated foods for local communities. Chapter 7 analyses social and demographic data useful for contextualizing development, health, and education while also providing a template for chapter 8, in which linguistic erosion is discussed in the light of ecolinguistics. Nonetheless, the findings show no causal relationship between environmental degradation and linguistic erosion.

Chapter 9 presents an interesting alternative to 'business as usual'. By introducing 'biocultural productive units', the authors attempt to delineate a positive impact to the logics – and consequences – of capitalism by implementing an environmentally friendly, economically productive enterprise managed under the logics and premises of the commons. Finally, chapter 10 offers a comparative balance of the indicators used throughout the book and presents the many paradoxes at play when indigenous communities' local livelihoods and imaginaries forcibly confront economic development.

Complejos bioculturales is far from being a perfect book and, in fact, presents many problems. Firstly, it overuses misleading terms such as 'traditional' and 'ancestral', for which the authors provide no working definition. Secondly, the bibliographical referencing for the book (representing just 3.42 per cent of its length) does not sufficiently support its analysis of such a complex and urgent topic. Thirdly, it ignores the many discussions on political ecology that need to be in the volume and which the authors promised to consider in their introduction. Lastly, the overuse of rhetorical apparatuses (e.g. 'millenary laboratories', p. 306) tends to detract from the processual analysis of local knowledge formation. However, and despite its many shortcomings, this monograph offers one of the first systematic attempts to describe the problems presently haunting indigenous communities. It does so in ways that are theoretically intelligible while also suggesting solutions that are pragmatically attainable.

Nemer E. Narchi *El Colegio de Michoacán*

Olson, Valerie. *Into the extreme: US environmental systems and politics beyond Earth*. x, 290 pp., illus., bibliogr. Minneapolis: Univ. of Minnesota Press, 2018. £20.99 (paper)

The expansion of human life beyond the confines of our planet is one of the great stories of the past sixty years. However, anthropologists have shown only limited interest in the social, conceptual, and material ways in which culture is expressed in and through frameworks of life related to space exploration. There are a few recent contributions in this area, such as Debbora Battaglia's edited volume *ET culture* (2006) and Lisa Messeri's *Placing outer space* (2016), but the anthropology of space exploration remains a region to which few anthropologists have gone, despite the fact that it is now increasingly clear that members of the technocracy among some of the world's countries will be colonizing (a word often debated in the space exploration community) the moon and Mars in the near future.

Valerie Olson's monograph, based on several years of ethnographic fieldwork at NASA, is a welcome entry into this area of research and a sophisticated consideration of how NASA is both a reflection and contributor to the ways in which Americans, at least, have come to construct concepts of the environment and to extend its meaning well beyond the confines of our planet. In *Into the extreme*, Olson asks an important question: 'How do disparate things become technically associated as "systems" – and to what ends?' (p. 4). The book focuses on using NASA as an example of the ways in which systems are not objective features of social or natural environments but are socioculturally constructed and shaped as situated models that represent the world. This observation forms the basis for the argument that runs throughout the volume: that systems form a key epistemological and sociotechnical frame through which moderns have come to conceptualize their surroundings – their environments – whether those environments are constructed by techno-elites or are products of natural processes.

NASA represents something of an archetype for this way of seeing the world, because, according to Olson, virtually everything it does is organized around identifying and understanding systems and extending the scope of how we think about environments through the concept of systematicity, which she defines as a 'modern

ordering schema that relates different parts and makes those interrelations sensible as system both of and with other systems' (p. 37). As I understand it, Olson argues that this concept of systematicity underlies many modern cultural frames of interpretation and experience, and is evident at NASA not only in relation to the addressing of engineering problems but also in relation to the bodies of the astronauts, which are largely viewed as engineering problems, and to the political web within which NASA is embedded both nationally and internationally.

Another important aspect of Olson's argument is that via the systematization of the world, NASA is also engaged in a process of environmental expansionism. Through this process, scientists, engineers, administrators, and astronauts are engaged in moving the scope of what we think of as *the* environment well beyond our boundedness to Earth. Through the imagining of space exploration, the idea of the environment has come to include entirely artificial contexts (systems) such as the International Space Station, which itself forms a system that is embedded in and intertwined with the environment of space itself.

Olson has given anthropologists a well-researched ethnography with a nuanced argument that represents a superb launching pad for a robust anthropology of space exploration. It is an outstanding book and I have little in the way of criticism. Instead, I think the research points to some potentially new directions in thinking about topics like the anthropology of the body. It would have been interesting had Olson engaged with the literature in this area more directly as it relates to the concept of the body as a system embedded within systems (both technological and natural). However, that is not the book's aim and should not be taken as criticism; rather it is one of many questions that arose in my mind as I read Olson's engaging study. The work also raises an interesting question of how the ideas of systematicity and environmental expansionism might be rendered in other similar contexts such as the European Space Agency and the Japan Aerospace Exploration Agency.

In short, there is much to ponder in this excellent ethnography. *Into the extreme* is a fascinating exploration of a process of reimagining space as an ecosystem. It sheds new light on the ways in which segments of the human population are scaling and socially constructing outer space as a systematized place in which to live and work, as well as being a fine piece of scholarship and a welcome addition to the emerging literature on the anthropology of space exploration and the general field of science and technology studies.

John W. Traphagan *University of Texas at Austin*

Velásquez Runk, Julie. *Crafting Wounaan landscapes: identity, art, and environmental governance in Panama's Darién*. xxii, 313 pp., maps, tables, illus., bibliogr. Tucson: Univ. of Arizona Press, 2018. £58.50 (cloth)

There are not many monograph-length accounts of the Wounaan – an ethnic group introduced to Euro-American anthropology by the Swedish ethnologists Erland Nordenskiöld and S. Henry Wassén, and later by the less-known work of Donald Tayler and Elizabeth Kennedy. Most of these twentieth-century accounts concerned communities in Colombia, while there is much less ethnographic work about the Wounaan in Panama. In this respect, Julie Velásquez Runk's monograph *Crafting Wounaan landscapes* has filled a huge gap in the academic literature. The book confidently puts the Wounaan of Panama on the anthropological map, an accomplishment amplified by the invisibility of this particular ethnic group. This has been partly related to (a) the misleading use of the old-fashioned term 'Chocó', which refers to two ethnic groups, the Wounaan and the Emberá, and (b) the fact that the latter have a much larger population, which obscures the contributions of the Wounaan to indigenous politics.

Velásquez Runk does great work to set the record straight with regard to the above-mentioned invisibility. Her truly participatory and collaborative approach provides the Wounaan with a medium through which to redefine their history vis-à-vis the authority of academic work. The author's serious commitment to provide the Wounaan with a voice is served by her longitudinal and ethnographically sensitive approach. Her involvement with this ethnic group began long before her doctoral studies, and involved many years of work as conservation practitioner. The monograph reveals her dedicated participatory ethos. A section in the introductory chapter that explains the particular collaborative contribution of her work could serve as a model for participatory training.

The first two chapters of the book introduce Darién and the Wounaan from an historically informed spatiotemporal perspective. The author's goal is to deconstruct stereotypes of naturalness and wilderness and highlight the

political economy of underlying interconnections. She succeeds in all these respects and provides a solid account of the emerging Wounaan – or, more specifically, Panamanian-Wounaan – representational trajectory. This will undoubtedly serve as a foundation for future research and assist the Wounaan's self-representation. Yet this particular contribution encapsulates, in its authoritativeness, a small weakness. Individuals from other Panamanian ethnic groups would not precisely agree with specific parts of this historical narrative: for example, competing claims to ownership of particular cultural practices are shared by both the Wounaan and the Emberá; and the exact chronology of Wounaan migration to Panama is also contested. Here the author is constrained by the limits of collaborative research. Her commendable decision to allow her respondents to review her work has curbed her freedom to reflexively destabilize the singularity of her historical narrative (e.g. by adding some reflexive doubt on the version of ethnohistory narrated by the Wounaan). I think this limitation arises from the method.

Halfway through the ethnography, Velásquez Runk presents a brilliant chapter on river networks — building from her article 'Social and river networks for the trees: Wounaan's riverine rhizomic cosmos and arboreal conservation' (*American Anthropologist* **11: 4**, 2009) – that beautifully interweaves cosmological and environmental views in line with a Deleuzian rhizomic conceptualization. A subsequent chapter focuses on the political economy of indigenous art – for which the Wounaan are renowned – bringing, as with the chapter on river networks, the material closer to the symbolic. The final chapters are more evidently inspired by political ecology. We learn about the mosaic of land use and tenure in Darién; the relationship of the Wounaan with natural resources; and the chronosequence of less intensive cultivation in indigenous land plots. We are also provided with an opportunity to evaluate with the author the pros and cons of remote satellite imagery as a method of social research. The landscape of development governance is critically discussed with reference to NGO initiatives and government projects, and pays close attention to the invisibility of indigenous perspectives. Although some readers may find this part of the book less ethnographic, the topics discussed will address a broader community of scholars interested in the sociology and geography of Darién. The latter will find Velásquez-Runk's interdisciplinary perspective inspiring and her analytical reflections thought-provoking.

One of the many strengths of *Crafting Wounaan landscapes* is its strong sense of emplacement in time, space, and politics. The author's prose and collaborative commitment are straightforward, politically aware, and rooted in the twenty-first century. The ethnographic narrative is infused by interdisciplinary insights that will interest geographers and historians. The Wounaan emerge from the book unbounded from static, exotic conceptualizations. They are reconstituted instead as a modern-day people, entangled in an interconnected relationship between the local and the extra-local. Everyone interested in contemporary Darién – or seeking a model of collaborative research – should read this book.

Dimitrios Theodossopoulos *University of Kent*

Critical curation

Bogre, Michelle. *Documentary photography reconsidered: history, theory and practice.* 264 pp., illus., bibliogr. London: Bloomsbury, 2019. £34.99 (paper)

This volume is fundamentally a work about the tension between objectivity and subjectivity, in which the author explains that documentary photography is adapting to many simultaneous changes – including technology, social media, and distribution channels. Michelle Bogre is well placed to write on this topic: she is Professor Emeritus at the Parsons School of Design in New York, and her previous title was *Photography as activism* (2012).

Documentary photography reconsidered consists of five chapters and an appendix. Chapter 1, 'Reconsidering documentary photography', offers a comprehensive overview of these changes from historical, theoretical, and practical perspectives. The four subsequent chapters – 'Documentary photography and memory', 'The documentary photograph as evidence', 'The photographer as witness', and 'Narrative' – explore the nature of these adaptations. Written from the viewpoint of the photographer, the volume highlights the interfaces between photography and the humanities, to which Bogre brings a wealth of specific examples, illustrated in both prose and images. This book undoubtedly adds to the existing literature, heightening the awareness of researchers, whether they are using historical imagery or their own photographs. It would be exciting to see these arguments deepened in the future through a collaboration between Bogre, an anthropologist, a psychologist, and a sociologist.

In chapter 1, Bogre takes a largely historical viewpoint, challenging the objectivity of virtually all documentary images from the earliest days of the genre onwards. She points out that Fenton in 1855 rearranged cannonballs in his work on the Crimean War; Beato rearranged the bones of the dead after the massacre in Lucknow in 1858; and Gardner dragged the corpse of a sniper 40 yards for a more effective composition in 1863 during the American Civil War. While modern photographers distance themselves from these practices, they still occur. For example, while the World Press Photo Foundation has strict limits on the content of images in the rules of its competitions, they still allow some manipulation in camera and post-production. By taking a moment out of context, selecting images, and merely being present, the photographer affects the subject and introduces distortion in the viewer's mind. Awareness of such distortions is drummed into every undergraduate anthropologist. Nor is it new to informed contemporary photographers: the much-cited Roland Barthes observed in *Camera lucida* (1980) that photography may not lie about the existence of something, but it can (and does) shape its meaning.

In chapter 2, Bogre begins to explore the impact of these distortions. We depend on photographs to shape and maintain our memories of events and the associations we have made with them. Compounded by the speed and scale of new means of distribution, an image can go 'viral' and create a 'moment' in a nearly global collective memory within hours of it happening or being perceived to have happened. This discussion leads to an exploration of subjectivity, the deliberate provocation of a sense of memory, the use of images to provide a memory when one can't exist and to evoke repressed memories. For example, Tufkanjian's photo of the Obamas hugging at one point during the campaign trail was used by Barack's campaign to celebrate his re-election. Many people now associate the hug with election night.

Most people appreciate the power of Photoshop, and also that images in the news are often from unknown citizen journalists. They know that, for speed, editors source illustrations online. Nevertheless, the public have an unshakeable faith in the truth of an image. Bogre reviews the roots of this in chapter 3, and the impact of the early adoption of photography by the police to record crime scenes and produce portraits of the accused (a standardized 'mugshot' appeared in 1888).

While early war photographers presented its reality to domestic audiences, others have used the medium to highlight social injustice. Constructed to communicate a message, these were not simply documentary photographs. Chapter 4 examines the nature of the work of photographic activists: the depth of their research, long-term projects, funding, access challenges, and the ethics of representing the vulnerable. Bound less by constraints of accuracy and aesthetics, images are frequently accompanied by the written word. In her final chapter, Bogre extends this theme of the photographer as commentator on contemporary issues with examples of long-form storytelling: studies of the human condition from the eyes of both an activist and documentary photographer.

As a resource for students and academics, *Documentary photography reconsidered* is meticulously footnoted, referenced, indexed, and interspersed with examples. There are short sections throughout the volume entitled 'Focus on practice', which feature practising photographers' work accompanied by an interview, as well as challenging practical assignments. The detailed appendix lists photographers, Instagram accounts, agencies and collectives, YouTube channels, websites, magazines, grants, and festivals.

Graham Wilson *The Ronin Institute and University of Oxford*

Davida, Dena, Véronique Hudon, Jane Gabriels & Marc Pronovost (eds). *Curating live arts: critical perspectives, essays, and conversations on theory and practice*. xxiv, 392 pp., illus., bibliogrs. Oxford, New York: Berghahn Books, 2018. £27.95 (paper)

Carolyn Christov-Bakargiev, the artistic director of 'Documenta X', defined the curator as the most emblematic worker of the cognitive age (see D. Balzer, *Curationism*, 2015, p. 3), an age based on the production of discourse, values, and relations. The omnipresent figure of the curator presents itself as a transdisciplinary mediator who occupies multiple roles: author, interpreter, communicator, administrator, impresario, and diplomat. Curators are not necessarily trained as such, while, paradoxically, curatorship courses proliferate. In these terms, the contemporary curator elaborates on the model of the contemporary conceptual artist, which is also polyvalent, deskilled, and anti-disciplinary by definition. However, in opposition to contemporary artists, curators

cannot embrace chance and process as method so explicitly; they have to provide the discourse that brings things together and have to make ends meet. In these terms, curators may indeed be the model for the workers of the cognitive age, as Christov-Bakargiev has said, workers who produce contents, discourses, and values because they are the ones who bear the responsibility of turning an art event into accountable value.

Curating live arts proposes to describe and analyse this figure within the live arts. The independent curator emerged mainly in the visual arts in the late twentieth century, thus the transposition of this role from the visual to the live arts is inevitably related to the transformations in this latter field throughout the last few decades: live art today is not only staged theatre but a whole range of practices, from performance to many kinds of art events that often mix and mingle with the visual arts. Tate Modern, in common with other institutions, now has senior a curator in performance art and has opened a new space, the Tanks, mainly dedicated to these interdisciplinary experiences.

Dena Davida, Véronique Hudon, Jane Gabriels, and Marc Pronovost's volume is the result of a long process of research, four years in which the editors gathered and indeed curated a panoply of voices from different backgrounds, latitudes, and perspectives, ranging from dance and theatre to the visual arts, performers, and theorists, while covering Europe, North America, Africa, Singapore, the Caribbean, the Philippines, and the Middle East. The formats of these thirty-eight contributions are also diverse, from short statements to academic articles, and follow a 'Prologue', a collective 'Introduction', and 'A note on curatorial spaces'; the volume ends with both an 'Epilogue' and a piece entitled 'The parable of the curator', which is accompanied by drawings. In the main text, the pieces are more historical, some more theoretical, and some are more descriptive of particular projects. The collection itself is divided into six parts: 'Historical framings', 'Ethical proposals', 'The artist-curators', 'Exhibitions as events', 'Artivism', and 'Institutional reinventions'. In spite of this structure, the perspectives of the different contributors do not aim at building a linear argument, nor are they driving in the same direction. The metaphor of the curated volume in fact works perfectly well in this case, if the work of the curator is to propose an assemblage of difference that is far from a straight narrative but is also far from being whimsical, as anthropologist Tarek Elhaik says (see T. Elhaik & G. Marcus, 'Curatorial designs in the poetics and politics of ethnography today: Act II', in R. Sansi, ed., *The anthropologist as curator*, 2020, p. 18) . The volume appears as an assemblage that is not immediately easy to approach, but precisely because of that, it is an extremely interesting polyphony that can illuminate our understanding of what we are talking about when we talk about curation today.

One interesting strain of arguments in *Curating live arts* is the comparison between the curator and artistic director. The artistic director in the live arts (in theatres in particular) would be a traditional figure that the curator appears to challenge in different ways. While the artistic director is a more institutional, and permanent, administrative figure, the curator appears as independent, ephemeral, and closer to artistic practice than to administration. This view of the curator as an avant-garde figure may raise suspicion in the field of the visual arts, where it has been widely questioned. For the visual arts, the curator appears as the domesticator of wild visual artists into some measurable value. Perhaps (and here I speculate in the vein of Howard Becker's 1982 *Art worlds* argument), the visual arts are historically more individualistic, while the 'live arts' have always required organizers, producers, and administrators; the advent of a curator importing rather more loose and free forms of practice from the visual arts may appear as a liberation. Yet this is just one of the particular arguments that we can identify in the book, which, as I said, presents a panoply of many different voices, making it an interesting read for anthropologists working in the arts.

Roger Sansi *Universitat de Barcelona*

Kay, Jon (ed.). *The expressive lives of elders: folklore, art and aging*. xii, 207 pp., illus., bibliogr. Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 2018. £31.00 (paper)

The seemingly unremarkable title of Jon Kay's lively and lucid edited volume may at first glance appear nothing special, yet when we stop to consider what it really means to have an 'expressive life' and what this may have to do with growing older, the real value of this book starts to open itself up in unexpected and exciting ways. Expressiveness is not only a way of appearing or representing oneself, but also a mode of transmission, ways of passing on, sharing, and leaving a lasting legacy. Expressive lives have a durational quality that exists not only in the material craftsmanship of a carved statue or

stitched quilt, but also in the indelible intimacy those objects have as materializations of embodied memories, emotional anchors, and the deeply personal yet shared human impulse to tell stories and make things. The ethnographically rich case studies that make up the ten chapters of *The expressive lives of elders*, complemented by 100 full-colour figures, brings this notion of expressive lives into vivid focus. Each case illustrates some of the myriad ways older people inhabit what Hufford (chap. 7), after Edith Cobb, calls the 'ecology of imagination' that initiates 'world-making projects' (p. 169; cf. E. Cobb, *The ecology of imagination in childhood*, 1977).

The book's contributors range in background from a Ph.D. student to a curator emeritus, evenly split between those holding academic posts and those working as state folklorists, or in various arts and heritage programmes. All of the chapters share a strong ethnographic and descriptive approach, most focusing on a particular individual or programme. This highlights the convention of those in folklore studies to work in close collaboration with particular individuals over their long careers. The decentring of the anthropologist's authority and claim to expertise is refreshing, and produces cases that are grounded in the ethnographic collaborators' co-discovery and connection.

The first four chapters all explore aspects of expressiveness as identity creation. This might be in the context of carrying on a family tradition (Higgins, chap. 1), providing spiritual care for others (Morales, chap. 2), or linking to ethnic heritage in the wake of cultural change and displacement (Carrillo, chap. 3; Atkinson, chap. 4). Each of these cases challenges notions that memory and tradition merely address the past, a reduction that tends to contribute to a general lack of anthropological interest in older people. Instead, each demonstrates how the vitality of tradition lies in its skilful adaptation to new environments, its affordances for inter- and intra-generational community building, and its potential for developing new identities as valued elders.

Chapters 5 through 7 continue many of these themes while turning towards the more domestic folk arts that figure especially prominently in the life courses of women. Rug-making (Lockwood, chap. 5), quilting (Luz & MacDowell, chap. 7), and growing and preserving food (Christensen, chap. 6) not only keep older people happy, healthy, and connected, but they also merge the economic and aesthetic values of thrift and generosity. These craftswomen are not merely staying active and healthy, as typically promoted in gerontological circles, but they are using their skills to teach and give to others. The importance of staying connected to others, of giving something back even as one becomes more dependent, takes on weight as one approaches the end of life. Luz and MacDowell even describe how quilts made by nursing home residents in one of their studies led to a simple but powerful new ritual of covering deceased residents as they are taken out of the building; some of the quilts were made by residents expressly for this purpose.

The final two chapters describe two folklife and creative ageing programmes. These chapters will interest not only those directly involved in developing meaningful activities for older people, such as public museums, but also researchers interested in integrating engagement and impact into their research projects. Geist's (chap. 10) 'Art for Life' programme struck me as especially impressive, not only because of the ways it choreographed (often literally) the co-operative production of large-scale folklore-inspired artworks, but also because it did so by including (not in spite of) older people living with more advanced frailty, disability, and cognitive impairments. While a strong scientific literature supports the transformative effects of music, performance, and visual art on older people's health, few studies have considered the role of elders in the co-creation of art.

With a few notable exceptions, social anthropology has been relatively late compared to folklore in acknowledging its reliance on the voices of older people. Perhaps our unexamined bias towards younger generations as initiators of cultural change, innovation, and resistance has pulled us away from appreciating the more enduring qualities of ordinary expressive life. *The expressive lives of elders* triumphantly demonstrates the value of engaging with older people not just as relics of the past, but as active participants in cultural expressiveness from which we all have much to learn.

Jason Danely *Oxford Brookes University*

Levent, Nina & Irina D. Mihalache (eds). *Food and museums*. xiv, 368 pp., illus., bibliogrs. London: Bloomsbury, 2018. £29.99 (paper)

This edited collection contains a set of twenty-eight original papers and transcribed interviews. Together they survey the ways in which food is exhibited or otherwise showcased by institutions worldwide. The volume, compiled by Nina Levent and Irina D. Mihalache, is mainly

for the benefit of museum professionals and covers an array of concerns. Contributors discuss, for example, exhibit rooms as multi-sensory spaces, the notion of cooking as art, and ties between exhibitors and food producers. There are chapters about food expos and festivals, museum restaurants, and how living museums portray foodways. Other topics include historical images of food and related activities, commensal experiences as creative events, and the science of flavours and food plating.

In their introduction, editors Levent and Mihalache describe the museum world as 'messy'. They assert that making sense of it requires historical and social contextualization as well as sensitivity to differences in perspective. They distinguish five perspectives, and they sort the contents of *Food and museums* accordingly. Part one contains papers offering various disciplinary viewpoints. These represent the fields of cultural anthropology, early childhood education, neuroscience, theatre, and cultural studies. The section ends with two interviews conducted by Levent. One is with Elena Arzak, the other with Ferran Adrià – both internationally famous chefs currently engaged in culinary experiments.

Part two of the volume focuses on collecting and exhibiting, using case studies based on work at the National Museum of American History, the Southern Food and Beverage Museum of New Orleans, and the American Museum of Natural History. They illuminate the origins of food-centred exhibits, trace programme developments, and describe ways in which various activities have been used to engage museum visitors.

Part three concentrates on engagement. Contributors examine how food-related topics have been addressed in such venues as outdoor museums, living museums, and historic sites – places often better suited to convey multi-faceted experiences than traditional exhibit halls. James Deutsch's chapter 12 addresses this theme through the history of the Smithsonian Folklife Festival and its cooking demonstrations. Scott Hill and Jacqui Newling of the Sydney Living Museum follow by outlining the principal features of the 'Eat Your History' programme developed for historical sites in New South Wales (chap. 14).

Part four looks at cooking and eating in museum restaurants. Mark Clintberg (chap. 16) engages the topic with a history of menus offered by the V&A Café inside London's Victoria and Albert Museum. An interview with Liz Driver in chapter 20 looks at the meals prepared in the active nineteenth-century kitchen of Toronto's Campbell House.

The final section of the book turns to artistic representations of food. Highlights include Judith Barter's (chap. 22) substantial account of how she addressed the history of American eating habits through period artworks, and Jim Drobnick's chapter 24 about connections among artists, alcohol, and museums.

Anthropologists who pick up *Food and museums* may be disappointed at first. Christy Shields-Argelès's chapter 2, 'Anthropology on the menu', leads off the first part of the book with little more than a literature review. Subsequent chapters barely mention anthropology. The collection after all is not concerned with previous achievements. Other than chapter 11 by Erin Betley and Eleanor Sterling about developing the idea of a food system at the American Museum of Natural History, science museums are scarcely credited in this book. Momentum these days has shifted towards new museums and new sections of old museums devoted entirely to food, mainly from the standpoints of the arts and humanities.

It is for this reason that *Food and museums* warrants anthropological attention. There is no question that Levent and Mihalache open doors to unorthodox ways of thinking about food in expositional settings. There is no telling what new ideas a peek inside those doors may inspire among museum anthropologists who trouble to have a look.

Robert Dirks *Illinois State University*

Urdea, Alexandra. *From storeroom to stage: Romanian attire and the politics of folklore*. x, 199 pp., illus., bibliogr. Oxford, New York: Berghahn Books, 2019. £99.00 (cloth)

In this ethnography of connections, Alexandra Urdea recounts her journey from London to her home, Romania, on the trail of a number of folklore objects from the Horniman Museum and Gardens' collection. The objects were presented to the Horniman in 1956 by the Museum of Folk Art in Bucharest, within the framework of Cold War cultural exchanges, leading to a visual propaganda event the following year, the 'Folk art in Romania' exhibition. Renewed interest in the collection, within a different curatorial approach aiming to convey the complex iterations of the objects' lives, occasioned the author's search in 2010 for the villages where they were made and the people who wore them.

The typical political agenda of such an endeavour is to challenge lingering colonial regimes of representation by recomposing suppressed subjectivities, practices, and histories.

In *From storeroom to stage*, however, the specific ethnographic 'native' is the 'peasant', the dubious protagonist of modernizing and modernist nation-building projects. As their way of life was being expunged by the call to build a new socialist society through employment in factories, building sites, and agricultural collectives, their homes, attire, tools, speech, and songs were repurposed through the means of museums, academic disciplines, and political discourse into a formalized construct of national identity. Urdea's search for the objects' sources leads her to investigate the movement of things between different regimes of value, in the fields of cultural production marked by the folk idiom.

The book is comprised of little stories and moving scenes, fragments of life carefully stitched together upon a sketchy yet delicate conceptual frame, which is introduced in chapter 1. They do not form a large social-historical canvas, but end by creating a thing of beauty – rather like the stunning embroidered clothes whose tracks are followed across Romania. The more background historical and political knowledge of the country over the last century the reader possesses, the deeper the folds of meaning the encounters, exchanges, and interactions related here will hold. We then meet the objects in chapter 2, through the identities provided by the museum's routines: accessioning, organizing, grouping, naming, describing, photographing, storing, tending, and arranging exhibitions. This is the space par excellence where peasant dress gets consecrated as folkloric art, national heritage, and authentic treasure.

Equipped with photos of a number of costumes and details of their provenance, the author starts off with the households where they were made and used. The narrative builds through the tactics of rediscovering anthropological truths in the field and probing established notions about a specific case. Clothes secure, reproduce, and subvert social status. They constitute identity by denoting kinship. They embody the past of their owners' memories of work, care, relations, and customs. This 'authenticity' makes them valuable both as commodities in a modern market of consecrated artistic objects and as inalienable goods that document genealogical ties, thus pointing to a large disjuncture in people's lives. Chapter 3 examines how authenticity plays out through interactions in the communities of the two villages visited, from demonstrating prowess in establishing the monetary value of a costume in economic transactions, to expressing disdain towards over-decorated or nylon clothes.

Chapter 4 reveals a disenchanted village reality instead of the idealized folkloric region when a stronger move to 'emplace' the objects in their context is made. In chapter 5, Urdea zooms in on the House of Culture, a strategic research site from which to see the state in action through observing the cultural politics of folklore, and the local adaptations to government injunctions. A lateral move in chapter 6 shows how public space reconfigures into highly ritualized and mediated forms within the walls of churches and in front of the cameras. Chapter 7 demands intensive reading, since it rushes through the tale of the last communist decade's grand national mobilization, the Song of Romania festival. In this space, folklore was formalized as a genre, and further distilled through a specialized televised programme, *Folkloric treasures*. This set the template for an array of thriving folk music private channels, following the advent of cable television in the aftermath of the regime change. Chapter 8 focuses on folklore stars, and the readjustments of value and authenticity brought by the way they wear folk costumes on and off stage.

While not easy to categorize, *From storeroom to stage* may well enter the supplementary reading lists of many undergraduate syllabi. Practising a peculiar form of native anthropology, it illustrates in a captivating way the discipline's craft: assembling the fieldsite; engaging with objects' material and sensuous characteristics; questioning and rewriting mainstream history through localized microhistories. It is also an interesting intervention into a complicated discussion on heritage.

Irina Culic *Babeş-Bolyai University*

Economies in action

Baral, Anna. *Bad guys, good life: an ethnography of morality and change in Kisekka market (Kampala, Uganda)*. 321 pp., maps, illus., bibliogr. Uppsala: Univ., 2018. 240 SEK (paper)

Anna Baral's ethnography offers a compelling insight into how informal workers of a notorious spare parts market in downtown Kampala live with and struggle against the common perception that they epitomize the moral deterioration of Ugandan society. They are often looked down upon as being young hooligans or bad guys (in Luganda, *bayaaye*). Kampala Capital City Authority (KCCA) has tried to govern them through the replacement of their makeshift market with an orderly shopping mall. In this

thorough and reflective book, Baral brings us closer to the *bayaaye* and their struggle for a good (moral) life in one of Kampala's harsher (work) environments. *Bad guys, good life* is based on relatively short but seemingly intensive research from June 2014 to January 2015.

The volume is divided into seven chapters plus an introduction and conclusion. In chapter 2, Baral describes the prevalence of discourse on moral crisis in Uganda with regard to open sexuality, gender diversity, and informal economic activity. The chapter shows how this crisis is articulated in spatial terms: parts of Kampala such as Kisekka are seen as hotspots of immorality. Baral analyses the relation between morality and spatiality as 'moral landscapes' that are important references in her informants' lives: the city, the state, and Buganda (a subnational kingdom in Uganda with Kampala as its capital). Chapter 3 invites the reader on a tour through Kampala's urban planning history and thereby sets the scene for the following chapters. Chapter 4 introduces the book's protagonists, their professions, and reactions to the outside perception of them as immoral. For these workers, hustling or working was a source of pride and morality; even cheating was accepted as a tool for social mobility.

In the next three chapters, Baral engages with the workers' moral projects or aspirations against the backdrop of the three moral landscapes. She describes their moral choices in their work and love lives as they aspire to self-worth and dignity and to being what they see as good men, worthy citizens, or good subjects. Chapter 5 looks at the scandals around the demolition of Kisekka market and the troubled relationship between Kisekka workers and the KCCA. It shows how the workers reacted to the underlying structural violence of the moralized cityscape. Chapter 6 deals with the workers' relationship with the state. Countering standard narratives, Baral argues that Kisekka is characterized not by riots and resistance but by attempts at 'getting by' and being recognized by the state as worthy citizens. Chapter 7 explores the third moral landscape by analysing how Baganda workers referenced moral values of their ethnic group and aspired to be perceived as good members of it. Chapter 8 engages with Baral's informants' concepts of masculinity and the ways they tried to fulfil diverging and even conflictive versions of what is seen as 'a true man' in the different moral landscapes.

The moral question epitomized by Kisekka market is a relevant topic in and beyond Uganda. The 'blatant replacement of political analysis with moral categories' (p. 283) is a global trend in politics. Baral argues that moral categories are not static and complicates the notion of 'bad guys' by showing that this is not a fixed identity but situational and dependent on a person's actions. Unfortunately, Baral only briefly engages with the wider implications of her research. Another limitation of *Bad guys, good life* is its exclusive focus on the Baganda. Baral argues for this focus as they form the majority in Kisekka. However, this makes the volume oblivious to the moral aspirations of workers from other ethnic groups. Excluding them on the basis of being a minority is not convincing in an ethnography that seeks to give voice to the marginalized. In this sense, the book inadvertently reproduces a discursive dominance of Baganda over Kampala that has often been decried by other ethnic groups.

Overall *Bad guys, good life* is a careful examination of the ambiguities, inconsistencies, and incompleteness of moral aspirations. The monograph's strength lies in its vivid description of Kisekka workers at an uncertain point in their lives characterized by the destruction of their market. It offers a view of Kampala from downtown that distinguishes itself from other representations of the city in the media, academia, or by authorities. This book is insightful and a pleasant read for anyone interested in morality, youth, or masculinity in Africa as well as African cities, and urban anthropology in general.

Annika Witte *(formerly) University of Göttingen*

Maurer, Bill, Smoki Musaraj & Ivan Small (eds). *Money at the margins: global perspectives on technology, financial inclusion, and design*. 321 pp., tables, figs, illus., bibliogrs. Oxford, New York: Berghahn Books, 2018. £99.00 (cloth)

This edited volume consists of thirteen ethnographic chapters that examine monetary technologies on the margins: sites, mostly in the Global South, where what Bill Maurer, Smoki Musaraj, and Ivan Small refer to as 'low finance' prevails. In so doing, the editors position the text against recent ethnographic work that has focused more on 'centers of global finance' and 'professional entrepreneurs/traders/bankers' (p. 4). In contrast, they contend that *Money at the margins* addresses 'the uses and meaning of money and finance beyond the bank and the trading room' (pp. 4-5). The result is an insightful collection that evokes the traditional ethnographic project of studying 'out of the way' places. Although the focus is on such sites, the essays do not address practices that diverge radically from exchange in the Global North and have been a staple of economic anthropology,

such as the kula or the potlatch. Rather, most chapters illustrate how those living on the margins use monetary forms that look strikingly familiar and, in most cases, deploy the fiat currency issued by the modern nation-state. They are readily fungible and, unlike cowrie shells or scarlet honeyeater feathers, can be converted into other currencies.

A key intervention is the empirical conceptualization of 'low finance'. In contrast to high finance, this refers to 'economic transactions that take place mostly (though not entirely) outside of formal banking systems and official regulatory regimes, are mostly mediated by cash in soft currencies … and that often entail multiple financial platforms and mediums of payment and exchange' (p. 5). Thus, while the money described in the essay is often the currency regulated and issued by modern nation-states, the collection draws attention to sites where conventional banking institutions are not the main intermediaries.

Readers are granted insight into a range of new institutions that mediate money at the margins. These include some that will be quite familiar to economic anthropologists, such as Kenya's M-Pesa 'mobile money' or rotating credit associations in Nepal, India, and Mexico. However, some examples are quite striking, such as the lottery kiosks with point-of-sale terminals in Colombia that also offer banking services described by Echeverry and Herrán Cuartas (chap. 13). The notion of low finance nicely demarcates the collection, but the contrast between low and high finance is perhaps worthy of more extended consideration. Given that an entity such as Safaricom, the creator of M-Pesa, is a tremendously profitable corporation, uses modern accounting techniques, and has worked to spread M-Pesa transnationally, where does low finance end and high finance begin?

One of the volume's real strengths is its geographical breadth, in terms both of the cases analysed and of the authors' background. The studies are drawn from research conducted in twelve different countries on four continents: Africa, Asia, South America, and North America.

Money at the margins is grouped into four clusters of essays each addressing money and payments technologies from a different vantage point. These sections address questions of financial inclusion and exclusion, value and wealth, social relations, and the design and practice of payment technologies. Several chapters from each section were particularly engaging. Kiiti and Mutinda perceptively analyse the strengths and limitations of mobile money in extending financial inclusion to visually impaired Kenyan citizens (chap. 3). Drawing on classical anthropological work on spheres of exchange, Tankha's chapter 5 examines the 'chiastic' character of Cuba's dual currency system. Donovan's chapter 7, meanwhile, addresses the socio-technics of South African social grant schemes and offers ethnographic insights into James Ferguson's more abstract analysis of such programmes (*Give a man a fish*, 2015). Deeper understanding of basic income is provided by Gusto and Roque in their fascinating analysis of how geographically remote indigenous populations in the Philippines are enmeshed in cash grant schemes (chap. 11).

The collection offers a global perspective on the social practices of new monetary technologies, challenging how payment is often 'made invisible', as Maurer points out in the afterword. The compendium raises a set of questions concerning the political implications of new monetary technologies in the Global South. What new techniques of government are enabled through the introduction of payment technologies and the accelerated drive towards financial inclusion? What kinds of subjects are payment technologies and new monetary forms designed to elicit? How do efforts to elicit such subjects converge with state or market interests? Although these queries are largely outside the text's remit, the increasing threats to privacy and freedom precipitated by the profusion of big data, mobile technology, and the surveillance that they enable are increasingly fraught concerns in the liberal polities of the Global North. While cash is virtually anonymous and makes most transactions extremely difficult, if not impossible, to trace, digital money makes subjects and populations visible to the state and market actors in profoundly new ways. How might scholarship on money at the margins deepen our understanding of the unfolding regimes of government produced by the convergence of money and data?

Daromir Rudnyckyj *University of Victoria*

Murra, John V.; prepared by Freda Yancy Wolf & Heather Lechtman. *Reciprocity and redistribution in Andean civilizations: the 1969 Lewis Henry Morgan Lectures*. xxvi, 94 pp., maps, figs, tables, illus., bibliogr. Chicago: Hau Books, 2017. $40.00 (paper)

In April 1969, John V. Murra (1916-2006) presented four lectures in the Lewis Henry Morgan Lecture Series at the University of

Rochester. Using tapes and drafts in the Smithsonian Institution's National Anthropological Archives, the late Freda Yancy Wolf and Heather Lechtman prepared transcriptions of these talks, published for the first time in this volume, which includes Lechtman's helpful introductory essay, a glossary, and reproductions of a 1958 map by Joseph A. Tosi of Peru's ecological zones. Murra used the map to underscore the themes of ecology, agriculture, and land tenure explored in the lectures.

In the first lecture, Murra outlined the archipelago model of vertical control in the Andes. Based on research he began in the 1960s, he published his model more fully in 1972. Here he presented the basic principles concerning what he saw as continuity in systems of land tenure from pre-Hispanic times up to the present. Steeply mountainous terrain in the Andes makes it desirable for highland people to establish an archipelago of settlements in different ecological tiers (or *pisos ecológicos*), providing access to different economic means of subsistence at lower altitudes. As exemplification, Murra used two important studies he had previously published, employing sixteenth-century documentary sources recorded after the European invasion of the Andes. These are Colonial Period inspections made of Chupaychu people in the upper Marañon and Huallaga valleys and of Lupaqa people in the Lake Titicaca basin, both in Peru.

The second lecture focused on themes of reciprocity and redistribution. As a postgraduate student at the University of Chicago, Murra had been taught by A.R. Radcliffe-Brown and took a keen interest in African societies. This background provided him with a vision for exploring how goods might be produced and exchanged in the absence, in the pre-Hispanic Andes, of a general-purpose, money-like medium of exchange. Murra concentrated on the Inka state in his third lecture and how, with Inka expansion, the Cuzco-based authorities attempted to destroy local markets, marginalizing market exchanges between different ethnic groups. Using tersely worded records, he unravelled the workings of administrative mechanisms in the exertion of political authority. He employed an area of economic specialization developed by Chupaychu peoples, that of producing sandals, to illustrate what it was like to be a citizen with a regional identity in a much larger empire. Murra emphasized that what people contributed was their labour, not tribute per se.

In his fourth lecture, Murra examined structural changes in the Inka empire prior to the European invasion with the development of a class of 'chosen' women who, he explained, were like the women of Dahomey because they 'are taken out of the system, out of their normal kinship ties, deprived of their motherly and wifely roles, and put on a full-time basis for state purposes' (i.e. to brew maize beer for military use and to weave, p. 59). There were no standing armies; soldiers normally made military contributions between their agricultural tasks. The Inkas, however, developed a corps of bodyguards selected from Cañari in Ecuador, who, like the chosen women, seem to have constituted an exception to the general principle recognizing the rights and responsibilities of ethnic membership even though people might be sent on duties far from home. Murra signalled these two social institutions as 'innovations [involving] people who no longer work in their own community' (p. 61).

In other publications, Murra described vertical control from the highlands as an 'achievement' and an 'ideal'. He challenged archaeologists to look for evidence of pre-Inka highland settlement in coastal valleys. In her introductory essay, Lechtman cites examples of archaeological projects that have come to fruition since 1969. Not mentioned is the work of Mary Van Buren ('Rethinking the vertical archipelago', *American Anthropologist* **98: 1**, 1996), who demonstrated that the Lupaqa colony near Moquegua dates from no earlier than the Inka Period. Other archaeologists have found evidence attesting pre-Inka highland settlement in some coastal valleys for finite periods of duration, rather than as a culturally stable presence persisting through time, making Murra's claim for continuity somewhat elusive. The lectures tended to focus on Peru, but it should be noted that the Inka empire encompassed high-altitude and coastal lands from the far south of Colombia, in the north, to northwest Argentina and the centre of Chile in the south.

The transcriptions in the book bring to life the oral quality of the presentations and how Murra used illustrative materials in a period before the introduction of PowerPoint. They provide a vivid contribution to the interdisciplinary historiography of anthropology, archaeology, and history. The book is particularly useful for undergraduate students of these disciplines and will help future generations to reassess Murra's contribution to the study of political integration. More recent research findings elucidate the incompleteness of Inka imperial control over certain coastal communities, which retained their cultural distinctiveness into the Colonial Period, in addition to recognizing that highland societies

were characterized by pastoralisms (noting the plural), rather than the one pastoral model identified by Murra.

Penelope Dransart *University of Aberdeen*

Parry, Jonathan. *Classes of labour: work and life in a central Indian steel town*. xxx, 702 pp., maps, tables, figs, illus., bibliogr. London: Routledge, 2020. £140.00 (cloth)

Jonathan Parry has been studying India's Bhilai Steel Plant (BSP) since 1993. This book of just over 700 pages has four parts: 'Context', 'Work', 'Life', and 'Concluding'. Parts 1 and 4 taken together constitute a third of the whole, as do each of Parts 2 and 3. Part 1 introduces Parry's research site, the classes of labour and the building of BSP; it also considers modernity's dark side. Part 2 approaches class empirically, focusing on the labour elite and conditions for other BSP workers, private sector industry, and 'the informal sector'. Part 3 turns to caste and class in the neighbourhood, then to generational differences, marriage, and death. Part 4 compares Bhilai with other industrial towns and considers why communal and ethnic conflict is relatively low there.

India became independent in 1947, when steel production was an essential ingredient for state capitalism. The Indian and Soviet governments agreed to build an integrated plant capable of producing 1 million tonnes of steel in Madhya Pradesh. BSP was constructed on land compulsorily purchased from ninety-four villages in Madhya Pradesh, usually involving the displacement of their inhabitants, was built by outsiders, and mainly employed migrants. The first batch of steel came in 1959, rising to 2.5 million tonnes in 1967, 4 million in 1988, and 7.5 million in 2011. By the mid-1980s, BSP had 64,000 workers; it had only 28,500 three decades later. Parry asks if it has been a 'project of modernity' or 'a tragedy of development'? Probably both.

This epic work offers much material for reflection. First, unlike almost all anthropologists today, Parry situates his fieldwork firmly in the ideas that have driven India's history since independence. Second, while the founders of British social anthropology considered 'theory' to be central to ethnography, he takes this much further. We get up front an exhaustive discussion of theories concerning the working class. Perhaps this discussion would have been better placed after and not before the ethnography.

Third, the ethnographic present has no place here. Things have changed so much that, for any question, Parry has to reflect not only on historical movement at the local and national levels, but also on his own voyage over time. Thus, he was at first not allowed into the plant itself and found a home in villages nearby. Early awareness of a deep-set labour dualism shaped much that he did later. Finally, he has served here the last rites for the fieldworker as a lone ranger in a pith helmet. We usually pay lip service to informants, assistants, and family 'without whom', but this was a thoroughly collaborative venture. There is no false modesty about this. Parry's chief companion, Ajay, kept the show going through many absences, despite once being jailed as a subversive. His wife, Margaret Dickinson, a progressive film-maker, trained some disadvantaged local youths who later acted as field assistants.

Parry's persistence and flexibility are admirable, but there remains an imbalance in the theoretical attention he pays to BSP's two classes. There is no working-class unity here, only a deep cleavage between privileged plant employees and underprivileged contract and informal workers, many of them women. Yet 'the informal sector' and 'unorganized labour' do not make it to the book's index. How separate are the two social categories, and is their relationship immutable? This requires a different kind of comparison than one focused on industrial labour alone.

The monograph does highlight fluidity of movement between the lower middle and upper working classes. This challenges Marx and Engels' attempt to draw a firm line between the petty bourgeoisie and the factory proletariat, itself reflecting concern that their revolutionary class might be diverted by the 'dangerous class' (lumpenproletariat) with whom they often lived. Perhaps they also drew too firm a line between the sides here. Such fluidity is commonplace in Britain and many rich countries today. After 2008, capital in these countries paid off its debts with the state's free money and downsized labour forces, introducing the precarious 'gig economy' for many. We don't yet know if changes in class relations there since the 1980s are permanent or reversible. This book enables a much wider and more thoughtful comparison of these questions.

Parry has been faithful to the place and people he studied for so long and so well. He has also opened up a lens that makes the world we live in less opaque. *Classes of labour* is a magnificent achievement, especially for his honest reasoning, reflexivity, and packed reports from real life. It should be studied closely by Indianists,

anthropologists, historians, and social scientists world-wide. Its research is unlikely to be replicated as a model. It does, however, shed new light on the promise, achievements, and contradictions of the ethnographic tradition, offering many lessons for how it could move on.

Keith Hart *Goldsmiths, University of London*

Sánchez Hall, Alison. *All or none: cooperation and sustainability in Italy's Red Belt*. ix, 263 pp., tables, illus., bibliogr. Oxford, New York: Berghahn Books, 2018. £99.00 (cloth)

One of the oldest anthropological questions is what makes humans work together towards a common goal. Alison Sánchez Hall addresses this question in her book by looking at co-operatives of former landless peasants that run 'collective' farms in central Italy. Throughout the volume, she suggests that they represent a possible solution to humanity's current predicament of increasing inequality and environmental degradation, framing her analysis as an investigation into 'intentional cultural change' (p. xiv). *All or none* is based on data from the author's doctoral fieldwork carried out in 1972, and from a re-study in 2012. The perspective gained from the passing of time is one of the most interesting aspects of the analysis.

Chapter 1 comprises the theoretical introduction. It discusses anthropological debates on 'cooperation in complex societies' (p. 6) and their relevance to contemporary social problems. The chapter could have been more useful to readers had it not focused heavily on highlighting the continuing relevance of the work of Sánchez Hall's mentor from the 1970s, Charles J. Erasmus. Still, the discussion will be of interest to economic and political anthropologists working on alternatives to capitalism and grassroots projects.

Chapter 2 introduces Emilia Romagna, the region where the author did her fieldwork, exploring forty years of change there. This story has relevance beyond the confines of Italian studies, because it shows how co-operative economic formations that were created to provide employment for the poor ended up becoming major forces in a capitalist economy, occupying the top 0.2 per cent of Italian farms in terms of size.

Chapter 3 examines Italian left-wing politics throughout the twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. As with the previous chapter, this one has also a broader appeal, documenting the trajectory from communist/socialist political formations to social democratic ones, and then most recently to populist ones, which is found in several European societies. Chapters 4, 5, and 6 continue with what is essentially the book's 'ethnohistorical' thrust by detailing, from the Early Middle Ages up to the second post-war period, the changing relationship between land, people, and institutions in Emilia, and the impact this had on the local co-operative ethos.

Chapter 7 discusses one of the most crucial questions concerning workers' co-operatives as possible alternatives to capitalism: to what extent are they able to 'make work' – create employment – for members in the face of an exploitative market economy? This is the question that usually puts co-operation at the centre of public debates, especially after economic downturns such as in 2008. Sánchez Hall's analysis in this regard is balanced, explaining how the agency of landless peasants, along with Italy's post-war economic growth, allowed the creation of organizations that provided poor people with partial employment, and how this 'little' (i.e. part-time jobs) made all the difference between abject poverty and dignified survival. Beginning in the 1980s, however, the situation changed, with the number of co-operatives and that of their members decreasing considerably, so that today these organizations provide a higher standard of living but to a much smaller number of individuals, a situation that is perhaps best epitomized in the co-ops' reliance on migrant labourers who will likely never become members themselves. Chapter 8, the last substantive chapter, discusses another classic topic in the study of economic co-operation, that of self-management and of the motivations for collaboration (or lack thereof), with the author concluding that the co-operative spirit has now disappeared from the organizations in question.

In the 'Conclusion', Sánchez Hall again links *All or none*'s topic to a variety of current human problems, as she does in chapter 1, arguing for the exemplary political value of the Italian worker co-operatives. This is perhaps where I think the book's biggest weaknesses appear. First, the author argues that the co-ops represent an example of sustainable agriculture, linking this to the Slow Food movement. However, throughout the book, references to sustainability are mostly fleeting and the issue is not really engaged with (the same is true of organic agriculture and agroecology). This reader was not able to understand to what extent these very large farming co-ops are sustainable, except that they are 'unlike' North American farms, a statement that is repeated numerous times. Second,

considering everything that Sánchez Hall says about the co-ops' transformation into vertically integrated mainstream businesses, it seems that their value as social alternatives applies to the phenomenon in the 1970s, the time when she did her original fieldwork, rather than in the present. There is, therefore, something of a nostalgic simplification of the argument, which is partly explained by the lack of engagement with the now-substantial anthropological literature on alternative food initiatives, including in areas geographically, but also historically and socially, close to the author's field.

Giovanni Orlando *Independent Scholar*

Sumich, Jason. *The middle class in Mozambique: the state and the politics of transformation in Southern Africa*. xiv, 174 pp., maps, illus., bibliogr. Cambridge: Univ. Press, 2018. £75.00 (cloth)

Based on fieldwork in Maputo between 2002 and 2016, this book is – as Jason Sumich notes – 'the product of an extremely long gestation period' (p. x). It contextualizes the author's engagements with a segment of society which he calls Mozambique's middle class, though the book's focus is the urban middle class in Mozambique's capital. The study reaches out to a readership beyond those interested in the country. Firstly, it illustrates sociopolitical reality under the Mozambique Liberation Front (FRELIMO), a former liberation movement that has become the government. Such regimes are also present in Angola (since 1974), Zimbabwe (since 1980), Namibia (since 1990), and South Africa (since 1994). Their governance has increasingly been considered as evidence for the ways in which social emancipation has been curbed in the wake of so-called liberation. Secondly, it adds to the recent rediscovery of middle classes in African societies.

Sumich approaches the subject in a 'classic anthropological fashion … to explore the ways in which local understandings of what it means to be middle class can challenge prevailing general assumptions' (p. 3). He argues that power relationships shape the middle class in a much more nuanced way than the 'Africa Rising' narrative suggests. Concerning the origins, autonomy, social role, and relationships of this class, he asserts that its 'power and status tend to derive more from the ability to access resources rather than from direct control of the means of production' (p. 3). This is a rather common feature of middle classes elsewhere. What might be more specific – and much in line with social strata in Angola, and also to a certain extent in the other states in the region under former liberation movements – is the relevance of symbolic resources, structuring the we-they divide. As Sumich stresses, 'politics is not simply material; rather, it is a contest for control of the symbolic world and the appropriation of meaning', which structures 'power relations as the moral basis of the political order' (p. 4). It is a project of transformation closely related to a new heroic narrative and a patriotic history, creating bonds among members of what has come to be called the 'struggle generation' in exile and at home, and among their offspring. It nurtures a culture of entitlement based on inclusivity as much as exclusivity. However, despite the close links of the emerging middle-class stratum to the FRELIMO party state, over the years this affinity has shown wear and tear, as well as growing alienation. The grandstanding of the party has produced too many failures and the scale of self-enrichment and state capture put 'the very fabric of the nation at risk' (p. 5).

Following the concise summary of arguments presented in the introductory chapter, the monograph presents its case in historical order. Chapter 2 ('Origins') focuses on the late colonial period and traces the roots of the new elite, which emerged within the ranks of the hierarchical structures produced in the anticolonial struggle. Chapter 3 ('Ascendance, 1974-83') deals with the early postcolonial era, which gave birth to 'the new man', and offered upward social mobility for those considered loyal to the authoritarian project of transformation. Active identification with the new order secured access to privileges under the banner of egalitarianism. 'Collapse, 1983-92', Chapter 4, covers the decline during the civil war with RENAMO, with centrifugal tendencies opening space for non-party elitism: '[P]rivilege was increasingly based on a negation of everything the social revolution once stood for' (p. 96). The fifth chapter ('Democratisation, 1992-2004') summarizes the post-socialist reorientation and the end of the civil war. A new hybridity established formal democratic rules, turning the country into the donor community's blue-eyed boy. Civil liberties also allowed the elite to unashamedly display its accrued wealth based on access to state-controlled resources. Chapter 6 ('Decay, 2005-15') then summarizes the social decline caused by the economic downturn under a greed-driven political ruling class shamelessly operating criminal schemes and embezzling on a

hitherto unknown scale – much to the dismay of many in Maputo's middle class. 'Concluding thoughts, 2016' ends with a summary, which in part repeats what has been said several times before.

Sumich characterizes his middle-class interlocutors as an example of 'a complicated web of dependence, alienation, and ambivalence', with little love for FRELIMO but at the same time afraid that a future without the party could be even worse (p. 159). This again, despite much that is specific to the trajectory of post-Independence developments in Mozambique, resonates strongly with similar phenomena in the other countries already mentioned. Liberation movements as governments have quite a lot in common, despite all their differences. One of the merits of *The middle class in Mozambique* is that it underlines this.

Henning Melber *Nordic Africa Institute*

Faith and magic

Li, Geng. *Fate calculation experts: diviners seeking legitimation in contemporary China*. vi, 151 pp., bibliogr. Oxford, New York: Berghahn Books, 2019. £89.00 (cloth)

As one of the few book-length studies on Chinese contemporary divination, this work does justice to the importance of divination as a social phenomenon in the Chinese world. While raising a classic question – how to explain the ongoing popularity of Chinese divination despite the stigma of superstition – the chief merit of *Fate calculation experts* is that it delineates a precise scope to investigate the social and political legitimacy of divination, and the politics of producing meanings through divination. While detailing diviners' discourses and the actions that legitimate their occupation, the originality of Geng Li's work is its focus on the moral narratives around divination, which mirror larger sociopolitical transformations in Chinese society. Through studying diviners as a social group which attracts and produces judgement, she investigates diviners' relationship not only with the state, but also with other social actors, and culture at large. With its fluid style avoiding technical jargon, this monograph will appeal to specialists of Chinese religions as well as to anyone interested in understanding the dynamics of quotidian morality in China.

Relying on fieldwork conducted in her hometown in Northern China between 2011 and 2013, the author focuses on professional diviners who practise various forms of 'fate calculation' (*suanming*). After explaining the problematic status of divination throughout Chinese history (chap. 1), she provides a sociological classification of diviners according to their education, forms of business, and training (chap. 2), and describes the social motivations that lead clients to consult diviners (chap. 3).

At the volume's core, chapter 4 describes how diviners deliver moral teachings to their clients. This provides new insight on how the traditional conception of 'good fortune' in divination – defined by the external and relative criteria of material satisfaction (*fu*) and social recognition (*gui*) – matches ideas of success and life quality in contemporary China, which in turn are informed by relative status and wealth rather than by a search for self-development. Going against an understanding of mechanical divination as an amoral system of interpretation, Li argues that, even if diviners deal with their clients' individual interests, they emphasize the importance of relationships and encourage social behaviour instilled with Confucian and Buddhist ethics, making morality a source of their authority as experts and even a precondition of accuracy (*zhun*).

The following chapters provide a well-informed account of the intellectual and institutional categories used by diviners to legitimize their activities: scientism in the 1990s; traditional culture in the 2000s (chap. 5), together with psychological counselling (chap. 6) and academic professionalization (chap. 7); the categories of '*minjian*' (grassroots) and 'cultural heritage', briefly mentioned, complement the picture. Thus, diviners take advantage of the rise of cultural nationalism to gain political legitimacy and enter the field of 'national learning' (*guoxue*), which accentuates the intellectualization of their art while allowing lucrative activities.

Certification in psychotherapy is another way to get legal recognition, but this new field also suffers from a lack of standardization which fosters competition and confusion concerning diviners and counsellors. The disadvantages of psychological counsellors in comparison with diviners – that they provide standardized answers, behave like authority figures, and don't gain trust easily – confirm similar findings in Taiwan by Luo Chen-hsin ('Suanming yu xinli fudao' [Divination and psychological counselling], *Bentu xinlixue yanjiu* **2**, 1993). This is illustrated by a nice vignette describing the social encounter between

a successful diviner and a counsellor, in which the latter ended up losing the status competition.

Diviners' efforts towards institutionalization are framed within the broader context of China's changing moral landscape: their obsession with professional associations is an attempt to replace personal trust (where diviners' reputation spread through word of mouth and individuals' networks, or *guanxi*) with social trust, which regulates and secures interactions among strangers through public and official certification. However, the strict control of civil bodies and the ban on divination-related activities deprive them of licence and mandate, two important elements for professional formation according to Everett Hughes's analysis of the professionalism process (*The sociological eye: selected papers*, 1971).

Although these aspects are not addressed in *Fate calculation experts*, the lastest developments in the social and political status of divination in China can be placed alongside the long history of the *Yijing* as a source of scientific knowledge, as well as with previous attempts at standardization in the first half of the twentieth century. This work is essential for anyone interested in further research that might link the social and political status of divination to its cognitive dynamics, and that might explore how the pronounced social stratification of the profession (including constant denigration among diviners) and its lack of standardization can account both for diviners' difficulties in getting official recognition and for their ability to tell fortunes and speak to their clients' social diversity.

Stéphanie Homola *University of Erlangen-Nuremberg*

Suhr, Christian. *Descending with angels: Islamic exorcism and psychiatry: a film monograph*. xx, 219 pp., illus., bibliogr. Manchester: Univ. Press, 2019. £25.00 (paper)

This book is a fine example of an anthropological encounter and analysis of two distinct healing traditions and modalities set within a profound discussion of the notion of the 'invisible' partly through the lens of filmic and montage structures of representation. Christian Suhr has made a careful long-term study of Islamic jinn possession treatments and exorcisms by Imams in Aarhus, Denmark, while at the same time, and with the same neo-orthodox Islamic clients, studying and filming the outpatient psychotropic medical treatment they received. The accompanying film, easily accessible on Vimeo with a password given in *Descending with angels*, gives more than a visual flavour and 'colour' to the analysis as it allows the clients to self-describe their plights and situations. It also gives space for the psychiatric staff to share, contemplate, and critique their understandings of Islamic personhood, psychological illness, and psychotropic medicine, including their doubts about some of the prescribed medications. The emotional, philosophical, and professional performance of each of the two healing modalities is excellently represented in the film.

The core work of this book and film lies in addressing the issues of similarity and convergence between these two contemporary healing traditions and utilizing the notion of the 'invisible/unseen', *alam al-ghayb*, as a central trope. Allah is 'invisible' and unseen but also omnipresent and totally credible to the believer. Western psychotropic medicine is created to heal and integrate the disordered experiences of the self, but the essential reality, suffering, and causation of mental illness are also largely 'invisible' in practice.

This core of invisibility, of the unseen, in both approaches almost conjures up a mystical set of understandings, but the theoretical literature referred to is anthropologically and sociologically grounded in the main: Taussig, Deleuze, Freud, Hastrup, Kapferer, Merleau-Ponty figure prominently; Merleau-Ponty's notion of the invisible and the total imaginary underpins much of Suhr's thinking as well as being neatly illustrated near the book's end when Suhr evokes Borges's story of the Aleph. The cinema theory of Deleuze and Eisenstein and the conceptually disruptive effects of montage are used to illustrate how the notion of a powerful and free self is diminished, fractured, and even partly dissolved in both these healing modalities. The client/patient submits to the will of Allah and the troublesome invading jinn submits to that transcendental power. In psychotropic medicine, meanwhile, the biomedical agents are meant to re-establish what Suhr calls a 'healthy circuit of the mental processes in the brain'.

The various philosophical, therapeutic, filmic, and ethnographic narratives are folded together neatly throughout the book. Core notions and ideas, such as the nature of jinn within the Islamic universe, ego self-defences, the role and efficacy of belief, and trust in the healer, are effectively discussed and debated with ongoing reference to the film as well. Addictive behavioural patterns, as additional exemplars of Islamic ideas about jinn possession and psychotropic medicine, are not, however, discussed. A good discussion of

selfhood, alterity, and therapeutic reality is presented, and core issues such as the power of the placebo in such different therapies are not neglected. There is a full description of how psychotropic medicine can have significant harmful side-effects and of how Islamic exorcism also is not without considerable therapeutic danger. Of course, there are distinctive differences in these two therapeutic and philosophical approaches: Suhr shows how in the Islamic mental health perspective psychiatric conditions can be seen as an illness of the heart, and prayer is considered as of supreme efficacy for illnesses such as depression.

Overall, this book is a very timely contribution both to the practice and problems of contemporary cross-cultural mental health treatment, and to our understandings of Islamic possession and exorcism healing rituals. With the help of the accompanying film, a 'real picture' of jinn possession treatment is articulated alongside the problematic presentation of Western psychiatric practices. As such, this is a very important and insightful contribution that also leaves many questions unanswered. This well-researched monograph and accompanying film are useful for medical and social anthropologists, psychologists and religious studies scholars interested in the variegated approaches to mental health issues in Western psychiatry and Islamic healing.

Iain R. Edgar *Durham University*

Walker-Said, Charlotte. *Faith, power and family: Christianity and social change in French Cameroon*. xxii, 314 pp., maps, bibliogr. Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell & Brewer, 2018. £40.00 (cloth)

This monograph by Charlotte Walker-Said concentrates on one of the crucial periods in the history of colonial French Cameroon. The author chooses the years of the First World War (1914-18) and the subsequent interwar period as a case study in structural and political torment. Exploring the social change that occurred during these years, she focuses on religion as a significant part of this process.

Faith, power and family is divided into two parts (part I, '1914-1925', and part II, '1925-1939') and nine chapters. The author dwells on the impact of Christianity upon the social structures and the political and economic relations in French Cameroon. She concentrates on local Christianity, autochthonous catechists and church members, and looks at both Catholics and Protestants as an intrinsic part of the social process. Framed through 'Christian publics', a term that refers to 'new communitarian practices produced through religious means' (p. 27), the book approaches a variety of dimensions of social life and shows how the influence of Christianity was articulated at various levels of the colonial system. The focal point is the new understanding and performance of family relations as informed by a Christian worldview. Using the family as a narrative axis, Walker-Said depicts the new Christian imaginary as interfering with older power structures of authority: father, husband, chief and clan, lineage, and socio-religious framings such as that of a 'real man' or 'full man', for instance.

Through depicting the new family obligations, freedoms, and disconnections that occurred, Walker-Said paves the way for political and economic analyses. As delineated by her, the new loyalties, rooted in Christian ideas of belonging, were troublesome in respect to colonial management and its development plans, such as forced labour schemes and agriculture production. By closely examining male authority, conjugal intimacy, and masculinity, as reshaped by Christianity, the author intends to make a case for reading the political setting and economic arrangements of French colonialism as part of day-to-day experiences. However, her approach frames conjugality and family predominantly through men, rendering feminine agency and perspectives largely invisible.

To support her historical research, Walker-Said explored several archives in Yaoundé and Douala, and multiple archives in France, including those linked with Catholic and evangelical institutions. Hence her findings are to a large extent based on a variety of documents that are both personal (such as letters and memoirs) and institutional (journals and bulletins, or administrative and juridical documents). Moreover, she includes a few interviews that she conducted, which are intended to add information or to serve as explanations for her argument. Considering the methodology used, however, these seem less useful, as the author does not offer a consistent methodological approach either for the structure and method of such inquiries or for an oral historical approach in general.

Although Walker-Said offers an analysis built on rich sources, the book fails to provide insight into people's subjectivities, which would allow for an examination of social change from the perspective of both everyday experiences and the changing religious imaginaries. The practice of

confessing sins serves as a good example. Despite depicting it as rapidly acquired and carefully practised – and, according to the author, linked to a traditional worldview (pp. 88-90) – the issue of confession is not taken further through, for example, an exploration of the new practice's content, institutional framing, and wider social context. The same reflection applies to her analyses of intimacy and conjugality, where insights into the emotional, experiential, and performative texture of everyday life are often missing. Therefore, Walker-Said's analysis of Christianity as the principal mediator of social change seems incomplete. The monograph offers a structural and panoramic analysis rather than investigating the mutually embedded micro- and meso-level articulations of Christianity's impact upon the existing social structures. Thus, the issue of faith referred to in the title is approached as institutionalized rather than lived.

Faith, power and family is, however, a genuinely significant contribution to the historiography of French Cameroon and adds to the research on Christianity, family, masculinity and intimacy, power and the state, as well as colonialism. It is of significant value for anthropologists as a contextual source, yet the book calls for a further nuanced anthropologically sensitive historiography as well.

Natalia Zawiejska *Jagiellonian University*

Lives in conflict

Berhane-Selassie, Tsehai. *Ethiopian warriorhood: defence, land and society 1800-1941*. xxvi, 309 pp., maps, figs, illus., bibliogr. Rochester, N.Y.: James Currey, 2018. £60.00 (cloth)

This book on Ethiopian warriorhood concentrates on *chewa* warriors as a military institution of the Ethiopian Empire. *Chewa* warriors were often associated with Amhara culture. Since Tsehai Berhane-Selassie eschews ethnicity as a category, she argues in terms of an imperial institution, with local roots but with wide territorial implications for what Ethiopia and Ethiopians used to be and what they are. For the period between 1800 and 1941, the author constructs an ideal model, with the *chewa* as a communicative linchpin between people and the state, enabling a two-way-communication between a centralizing monarchy and the local peasant communities, who populated the *hager* – the basic village unit among Amhara peasants. For the aspiring *chewa*, training began with learning about the defence of the local, territorial *hager*, which then developed into a broader vision of Ethiopia as a society and territory at large. For the author, modern Ethiopia is based on this defensive regaining of 'lost territories', in which the *chewa* warriors were driven by their internal motives and values, and not by external collaborations with European colonialism.

The book starts with a tour de force overview of the history and principles of the *chewa* as an institution, using myth, early texts, local traditions, and scholarly assumptions about the emergence of these fighters. Warriors need an enemy. This section offers a structuralist perspective on the features of shifting definitions: who in the wider Ethiopian context was an insider (kin, friend, ally) and who an outsider (unrelated, stranger, foe)? Mythically, the *chewa* themselves were strangers until they developed into an institution at the imperial core. Chapter 2 deals with the long history of external threats to the Ethiopian Empire, which helped shape *chewa* warriors into a cohesive body, with administrative and military functions, especially in the borderlands of medieval Ethiopia. The particular Other of the *chewa* were the *dina*, an enemy from beyond the sphere of blood-money compensation (*guma*), and external to Northeast Africa. *Dina* included Turks, Egyptians, Europeans in general, or Italians. Chapter 3 deals with internal conflicts over communal lands between localized *chewa* and the state (*mengist*), resulting in shifting degrees of centralization, kingship, and warlord-like kingmakers, particularly during the eighteenth century and the 'era of the princes'. The *chewa*'*s* protective/administrative and (re)distributive capacities (taxation, feasting) with regard to land, when interacting with local peasant communities, appear as the central pole of both their localized power structures and their capacity to mediate with the state. Chapter 4 represents the nineteenth century as a period of revival for the *chewa* warriors in service to the Empire, with rewards in terms of land, titles, and status promotion, in a meritocratic process open to everyone.

Chapters 5 to 8 are the most original. These deal with motivational structures, symbols, and the institutionalized practices of local self-training for warriorhood and participation in local politics, which included: games for the young (men); hunting expeditions (*fanno*) for the emergent warriors; the implicit linkage made between hunting and knowledge of the local and the wider landscape considered as Ethiopia; and tactic periodic escapes into robbery and rebellion (*shifta*). Trophies for public display were taken from big game hunts or, in case of war, from the

dina. Central to the author's argument is the transformation of these trophies into a meritocratic status recognized by *chewa* chiefs and the community through redistributive feasting occasions (*gibir*). Here presentations of self-assertive poetry (*zeraf*, *fukera*) served as public testimonies of having reached full personhood and marriageable age. Men's aspirations were supported by women's expectations.

The last chapters deal with the role of the *chewa* during Ethiopia's defence at Adua in 1896 and during the Italian war against the country in 1935-41. The victory at Adua is seen as proof of the effectiveness of *chewa* informal training. The *chewa* ethos declined during modernization, especially because of the introduction of a salaried bureaucracy and army during the Italian occupation in the 1930s. While elements of the *chewa* ethos of responsibility towards Empire and people reappeared in the self-organized, patriotic resistance against the occupation, subsequently this became marginal, detached from local needs and aspirations, which the author deeply deplores.

Written by a staunch partisan of the Ethiopian Empire, *Ethiopian warriorhood* provides a data-rich historical ethnography of an imperial institution. From a scholarly perspective, it is a very useful book for students of the modern history and anthropology of the Horn of Africa, as well as of comparative studies on conflict, militarism, and empire. Moreover, the most recent re-emergence of *fanno* (see above) as the Amhara auxiliary militia of the Ethiopian Army in the scenario of the Tigrean war makes it of interest for anybody interested in the deeper motivational structures of contemporary Ethiopian conflict.

Thomas Zitelmann *Freie Universität Berlin*

Ellison, Susan Helen. *Domesticating democracy: the politics of conflict resolution in Bolivia*. xiv, 281 pp., illus., bibliogr. Durham, N.C.: Duke Univ. Press, 2018. £19.99 (paper)

Susan Helen Ellison's book elegantly elucidates the ways that Bolivian political conflicts move across and thereby newly draw together domestic, national, and transnational practices and institutions, binding integrated justice centres to the micro-concerns of marital counsellors, and the Bolivian justice system to broader international concerns with promoting democracy and good governance. Alternative Dispute Resolution (ADR) in Bolivia was originally funded by the United States Agency for International Development (USAID), when democracy-assistance programmes in the 1990s sought to assist President Gonzalo Sánchez de Lozada's government with managing El Alto's 'militant' labour/trade unions and neighbourhood associations. In 2013, Bolivia's Movimiento al Socialismo (MAS) party government expelled USAID, but European-funded conflict resolution projects continued through both Bolivian NGOs and bilateral aid to the government. *Domesticating democracy* takes this hyper-politicized milieu as its very object, tracing how international democracy programmes were translated into intimate experiences of governance and, in turn, how family and kin relations have become sites of political negotiation, turmoil, and friction about competing notions of appropriate behaviour, authority, and responsibility.

Ellison's argument centres on her elaboration of 'domestication' as a way to understand how ostensibly private domains (family life, couples therapy, domestic violence, custody arrangements) came to be folded into broader policies and conversations around what foreign observers took to be an overly aggressive political culture revolving around labour movements and direct action tactics. Additionally, she shows how fieldwork interlocutors themselves mobilized a concept of domestication, conceived as a problematic depoliticization of conflict, to challenge ADR interventions, which they equated with a pernicious kind of subjective transformation in accordance with new, increasingly pacifist ideals of citizenship and reasoned deliberation espoused by Evo Morales's MAS party. Rather than only condemn the depoliticization of conflict through ADR, Ellison's book offers a thoughtful account of how Bolivian conciliators understand these mechanisms of dispute resolution as ethically and politically productive. Given how ADR itself became a site of political contestation and critique, Ellison argues that these institutional efforts to domesticate democracy did not render populations docile or pliant but rather produced new, constructive citizens: agentive and autonomous subjects who were understood by conciliators to be able to make the nation's future.

Yet foregrounding the hegemony of ADR, Ellison cautions, risks overlooking the ways that its advocates and agents seek to enact informal dispute resolution as a sort of 'natural outgrowth of native traditions and more humanistic approaches to achieving justice' (p. 12). In

making this move, the volume grounds the problem of conflict resolution within the specificities of Bolivia's anti-imperialist, pro-indigenous reform climate, thereby raising questions about the transformations that institutional democracy programmes undergo in their often-tumultuous encounters with on-the-ground realities. In MAS-era Bolivia, conflict resolution techniques became the basis for new elaborations of 'entrepreneurial and counterinsurgent citizenship' (p. 19), ones that implored people to 'turn inward for the resolution of their problems rather than toward confrontation, and toward the negotiation table rather than street protest' (p. 23).

Ellison's account also demonstrates when and how these efforts fail: people refuse to be circumscribed by the 'communicative parameters' laid out by ADR; they stage talkbacks (*contestatorios*); they drag extended family members along when they shouldn't; and they introduce their own perspectives on responsibility that are often at odds with the ideals of entrepreneurial agency that the courts strive to produce. *Domesticating democracy* frames these contingencies and vulnerabilities not as natural outcomes of the schism between ideal and reality, but rather as purposive efforts by centre staff to make conflict mediation do certain kinds of work. Conciliation provided a mechanism for spatially delimiting social problems not only by re-articulating conflicts as matters that should be dealt with at the level of individual nuclear families or entrepreneurial selves but also, and in doing so, by articulating a new paragon of citizenship based on an ideal counterinsurgent subject who would take up his or her grievances about inequality or poverty not through protest or political mobilization but through the well-trodden institutional channels of conflict resolution.

Domesticating democracy gracefully elucidates the ways that pro-democracy humanitarian efforts, indigenous citizen-making projects, and competing ethical trajectories of responsibility and debt cohered in MAS-era Bolivia. It shows how the techniques and lending strategies that informal conciliators encouraged both 'comprise sociality and threaten to tear it apart' (p. 161), making people beholden to new kinds of institutional authority and debt relations, such as microfinance, at odds with ADR's own promises of unburdened agency and autonomous citizenship. Ellison's study will be indispensable for scholars and students interested in how pro-democracy initiatives get yoked to new economic sensibilities and lending practices, and how tactics meant to promote peace and financial independence come to weaken and destabilize extant care arrangements by which the urban poor have long negotiated precarity and contested racialized economic disparities.

Mareike Winchell *University of Chicago*

Johnson, Jessica. *In search of gender justice: rights and relationships in matrilineal Malawi*. xvi, 197 pp., maps, bibliogr. Cambridge: Univ. Press, 2018. £75.00 (cloth)

Jessica Johnson's book describes the complexities and intersections of gender justice and culture in the southern region of Malawi. Her ethnographic research challenges the assumption that women face a universal disadvantage before the law. Johnson recognizes that the lived reality in rural villages reflects the 'feminism of Africa', or complementarity, as characterized in Obioma Nnaemeka's work ('Bringing African women into the classroom: rethinking pedagogy and epistemology', in O. Oyěwùmí, ed., *African gender studies*, 2005). Johnson demonstrates that the concepts of African feminism are about power sharing and accommodation rather than the Euro-American view of feminism with its assumptions of conflict and struggle.

The author contributes fresh insights into the multidimensional experiences of gender and marital resolution processes within matrilineal family structures. Relationships with significant key informants during her two years in Chiradzulu district provided her with an insider's perspective of gendered justice encapsulated in matrilineal village culture where traditional and civil authority coexist. Here, Johnson not only shares specific disputes within the various legal settings where she resided, but she also includes rich insights into local daily life. Her work emphasizes the importance of gendered contestation that includes the historical and social forces that construct it.

The lexicon of Chichewa terms given provides the reader with the words used for justice or human rights, traditional and civil authority, and matrilineal family structures. Throughout the book, Johnson addresses how women interpret or understand these words and the language of justice they represent. *Ufulu*, for example, is the Chichewa word for freedom, which became synonymous with human rights. Johnson provides several case studies that demonstrate the complexity of the relational issues of justice

embedded within *ufulu*. She observes that the relationships and the interactions of wives, co-wives, nieces, husbands, and ankhoswe (marriage guardians) often determined the outcomes of disputes.

Employing the term 'justice' rather than that of 'women's rights' or the dichotomy of equality or difference, Johnson builds on the works of Max Gluckman (especially *Judicial process among the Barotse of Northern Rhodesia (Zambia)*, 1973 [1955]), and more recently Kamari Maxine Clarke and Mark Goodale's edited *Mirrors of justice* (2010). Justice represents a resolution that comprises the morality of the 'good life', relational personhood, and the new broader ideas of *ufulu*, or freedom, as desired by Malawian women in this southern region. Resolutions of disputes cited in the monograph suggest that a more flexible system exists where decisions do not exclusively support male interests.

Johnson's work does not neglect the impact of colonialism, the dictatorship of Banda, or the emerging democracy of the 1990s, all of which have shaped marital relationships and the struggle for justice within various social institutions. However, her work also includes the under-represented view of postcolonial, matrilineal societies. Johnson found that extended matrilineal family relationships foster and recognize women's authority. Complementary gender roles create a unique interdependence that women wanted.

An important inclusion in *In search of gender justice* is the social stigma of HIV/AIDS as well as the changes brought about through the recent availability of anti-retroviral medication (ARVs). The Chichewa word *kutsala*, 'to leave behind', includes the meaning of 'breaking the matrilineal ties' for women stigmatized by their HIV/AIDS status. However, with greater access to ARVs, Johnson learned that 'women began to embrace the courage to hope, seek justice for their land inheritance, and a recognition of their legitimacy to be custodians of their gardens' (p. 161). Women were asking the question of relationships, 'will this help me?'

In the matrilineal villages, the author finds a greater acceptance of female heads of households as well as of single women, resulting in some women's willingness to delay entering into their first marriage or subsequent marital relationships. Her research supports the anthropological argument that 'divorce is more common in populations with matrilineal descent systems contributing to women's empowerment' (G. Reniers, 'Divorce and remarriage in rural Malawi', *Demographic Research* **S1**, 2003, p. 198).

In search of gender justice provides a rich description of gendered disputes within traditional and civil authority settings together with the cultural practices that shape justice discourse and resolution outcomes. It contributes to the emerging body of literature on African feminism, especially within matrilineal societies. While narrow in its focus of case studies within local legal systems, it broadens the understanding of gender justice within a matrilineal cultural context that should not be overlooked. I highly recommend this book for anthropologists or sociologists interested in matrilineal societies, African feminism, or the relationships of traditional and civil legal systems.

Carol Minton-Ryan *California Baptist University*

Monterescu, Daniel & Haim Hazan. *Twilight nationalism: politics of existence at life's end*. xiv, 270 pp., illus., bibliogr. Stanford: Univ. Press, 2018. £19.99 (paper)

A city's history is best told by the people who live in it: urban elders who have seen and experienced the upheavals and historic moments others can only read about. Such subjective history becomes accessible in this book through biographical narratives that show not only how people give cities meaning, but also how the city comes to define people and their identity. *Twilight nationalism* tells the binational oral history of the contested space of Jaffa, the once proud and iconic Palestinian port city that has been annexed and overshadowed by neighbouring Tel Aviv.

When Jewish settlers declared Israel as a state in 1948, the war against Arab states displaced 750,000 Palestinians, saw the destruction of hundreds of villages, and emptied urban centres of their indigenous residents. Jaffa saw 95 per cent of its Palestinian residents exiled. The nationalist inventory attached to this linear history serves some of the city's Jewish and Palestinian elders as a reference point, and yet their stories reveal the complexity and contradictions that define their relationship with this urban space and its people.

One elder portrayed in Daniel Monterescu and Haim Hazan's book is Fakhri Jday, a member of the old educated Palestinian elite. His story points at the paradoxes of being a Palestinian nationalist and an Israeli citizen, between demands for the restoration of Palestine's stolen land and the normative life of a citizen 'who pays taxes to the state responsible for the ruin of his people' (p. 29). Although he was seen as both his generation's 'spiritual father' and a spokesperson

for Jaffa's Palestinian community, the late Jday became isolated from his own community and detached from the challenges of the present. Nationalism and history served as a romanticized anchor for a tormented person lost in the confusing currents of a rough and challenging sea.

In its ten chapters, *Twilight nationalism* offers complex narratives that are contextualized well with the authors' analysis. The stories were collected between 2003 and 2006, meaning that most of the elders portrayed have now passed away. This makes it an important contribution to preserving the oral history of Israel/Palestine. The book is divided into three parts titled 'Sunset', 'Dusk', and 'Nightfall'.

'Sunset' features portraits of three male figures who are rooted in nationalism but grapple with the experience of betrayal and failure by their communities. In 'Dusk', we read about the three Hakim sisters: Nadia, Fadia, and Ranin. Their father was one of the founders of Jaffa's political nationalism, and this lasting legacy influences their positioning in relation to the city as a space. Facing a quickly changing landscape outside the walls around their villa, 'their home becomes a bastion, a refuge from the spirit of the times' (p. 92).

In 'Nightfall', we meet Moshe (Mussa) Hermosa, an Arab Jew who grew up in the outskirts of Jaffa in the 1920s. Although living in North Tel Aviv, he indulges in an orientalized relationship with leisurely Jaffa: he sits in an Arab café, smokes a hookah, listens to music, discusses current affairs, and feels that the city enables him to preserve his cultural Arabism without relinquishing the ethnic-Jewish component of his identity. Yet he rejects national identification and constructs a narrative of Arab honour, romanticizing 'idyllic relations between his Palestinian associates and himself' (p. 183). Hermosa renounces any affinity with Northern Tel Aviv, saying, 'I have nothing to do with them. I live like an Arab'.

As the authors explain in the conclusion, Hermosa's story indicates a 'dissolution of nationalism as a coherent cultural ethos and ideological manifesto' (p. 224). Some readers might disagree with this analysis, given the centrality of nationalism in the life stories of most of the elders – be it as a source of identification, confusion, or alterity. Another insight presented in the conclusion is that the categories of gender, class, and age seem more significant than nationalism (either Jewish or Palestinian) in shaping the life stories of elderly Jews and Arabs. This is true in the way the characters present themselves, although it is also evident, as the authors themselves acknowledge, that the biographies of Palestinians and Jewish Israelis must be read against the backdrop of the political and economic inequalities that determine the two communities' position within the state.

On all accounts, *Twilight nationalism* offers a fascinating range of portraits and historical narratives that shed light on a generation's experience in one of Israel/Palestine's most complex mixed urban spaces. An epilogue finally brings in Jaffa's young generation, who are politically aware and promote urban life but face a challenging present: 'How does one live in a zombie city?' (p. 234). The authors nevertheless place hope in this new generation, who may challenge both Palestinian and Zionist narratives and reclaim a new voice from the binational city.

Andreas Hackl *University of Edinburgh*

Musa, Suad M.E. *Hawks and doves in Sudan's armed conflict: Al-Hakkamat Baggara women of Darfur*. 220 pp., maps, figs, tables, illus., bibliogr. Rochester, N.Y.: James Currey, 2018. £60.00 (cloth)

In 2003-4, the large Darfur region of western Sudan – which is the size of France – became the location for the worst humanitarian crisis in the world. It is estimated that more than 200,000 people were killed and nearly 2 million were displaced, amounting to one in three Darfurians. In the international media, the war in Darfur was partly described as a conflict between Arabs and non-Arabs, mainly about access to land; partly as a war between the government in Khartoum and its Arab militias (as proxies), on the one hand, and rebel movements, on the other hand. In fact, these types of conflicts were increasingly interrelated. Local inter-community conflicts had been on the rise in Darfur since the 1980s, particularly between farmers and herders. Cyclical droughts during the 1970s, 1980s, and 1990s forced herders, who were mostly Arabs, to encroach on lands of mostly non-Arab farmers. In 1987-9, a wide-ranging conflict started between the sedentary Fur and a broad coalition of both cattle- and camel-herding Arab tribes. It was during these conflicts that the term 'Janjaweed' initially appeared, to describe armed horsemen organized as Arab militia groups seeking access to land.

When the first rebel groups, the Sudan Liberation Army (SLA) and the Justice and Equality Movement (JEM), emerged in 2003, widespread inter-community violence had already

spread across Darfur, much of it exacerbated by the government's divisive policies, including manipulation of land issues and administrative boundaries. The two groups made claims that aimed to transcend ethnic cleavages with demands for a more equitable distribution of power and wealth. Their base was mostly non-Arab, mainly Zaghawa and Fur. In response to their early military success, Khartoum mobilized militias from local Arab populations. The ensuing violence destroyed numerous non-Arab villages. It also drove non-Arab civilians to join the armed opposition.

While there is a large literature on the Darfur conflict, as far as women are mentioned, they are mainly portrayed as mere victims. This applies particularly to non-Arab women, who were often subject to sexual violation. The exclusion of women from peace and reconciliation processes has also received little attention. Suad Musa's book tells another story, about the role of Baggara women as 'hawks' during armed conflict, encouraging their tribesmen to fight for the honour and dignity of their tribes.

The Baggara Arabs are semi-nomadic cattle herders. They make up the largest tribal conglomeration in South Darfur. They were recruited by the Sudan government to fight the insurgency in South Sudan until a peace agreement was concluded in 2005, and their militias played a major role in the atrocities in Darfur. Al-Hakkamat is a category of women among the Baggara who are gifted with poetic skills and recognized as folk poets. They are of vital importance during conflict, exhorting tribesmen and transforming their communities into a ready platform for fighting. In some cases, they may fuel simple disputes and turn them into inflammatory situations through provocative and arousing song. In so doing, they challenge the gender-subordinating practices that typically obstruct females in the public domain.

Suad Musa argues that the Hakkamat have played a negative role in most tribal conflicts in Darfur since the 1970s. They were also used by the government to exhort their Baggara fellow tribesmen to fight the insurgency in South Sudan. When war broke out in Darfur, the Hakkamat embraced the government's racial interpretation of political movements and became a voice of ethnic mobilization for violence and aggression.

According to the author, the Hakkamat women have emerged as powerful political actors among the Baggara. Unfortunately, their voices have not yet been 'empowered in order to cement a genuine call for peace and social reintegration' (p. 164). They were, however, exploited at times by the former Islamic government to advocate peace when the regime in Khartoum saw the need for this. Under different circumstances, they could therefore become 'doves' and make a positive contribution to non-violence and peace.

Hawks and doves in Sudan's armed conflict is an important work, not because of its contribution to any particular theory, but mainly for its detailed and rich empirical analysis of the roles women may play as hawks (and potential doves) in tribal conflicts, and how their sociopolitical position may be exploited by authoritarian governments fighting to maintain and strengthen their own power. The book deserves to be read not only by academics, but also by policy-makers and others who recognize that the complexities of conflicts must be disentangled in order to promote peace and reconciliation in places like Darfur.

Gunnar M. Sørbø *Chr. Michelsen Institute, Bergen*

Wright, Fiona. *The Israeli radical left: an ethics of complicity*. xii, 192 pp., illus., bibliogr. Philadelphia: Univ. of Pennsylvania Press, 2018. £58.00 (cloth)

This book deals with Jewish Israeli radical left-wing activists. Its main argument is that while opposing state policies, these activists find themselves in complicity with the state. *The Israeli radical left* is the first full ethnographic account of the Israeli radical left, and it is a contribution to the flourishing field of political anthropology, and specifically the anthropology of activism. It is carefully written and Fiona Wright pays attention to its place in the political debate over Israel/Palestine (see her introduction, 'A note on language').

The research on which the book is based took place in Tel Aviv-Jaffa between November 2009 and May 2011, with the researcher spending her fieldwork time doing participant observation among radical left-wing Jewish Israeli activists of different groups going to meetings, participating in protests, and joining them in their 'time off'. Wright also learned Hebrew at an *ulpan* (Hebrew school) for six months. The author's excellent command of Hebrew, and of Jewish and Zionist history, adds additional value to this ethnography.

Among the Israeli public, radical left-wing activists are also called 'extreme leftists', while they are essentially characterized as non-Zionists. They endure hostility and abuse, being called 'traitors', and sometimes they are even met with violence. NGOs that expose state violence or advocate Palestinians' rights have been subject to

public campaign against their work. While sympathetic to the aim of Israeli radical leftists and admiring their dedication to their subversive and challenging cause, Wright uses the term 'complicity' to mark the ethical and political grey zones in which they act. Her aim is to reveal the 'complexity and ambivalence' (p. 9) of their activism, and to explore the impurity of the Israeli radical left's ethical and political relations. The idiom of complicity comes to complicate a simple reading of Jewish Israeli radical left activism as heroic. The author does this by drawing on Levinas's thinking on ethics.

Wright refers a few times in the book to apartheid South Africa (e.g. to Vincent Crapanzano's *Waiting*, 1985). However, this comparison is misleading, because apartheid rule was a minority rule over a majority, while the Jewish Israelis constitute the majority in Israel/Palestine. What is similar is the privileged status of the leftist activists in Israel/Palestine, being part of the Jewish majority.

In the first chapter, Wright explores the 'theatrics of complicity' (p. 37), pointing to the theatrical aspect of protest activities in Israel/Palestine. She describes how Jewish Israeli protesters stage confrontations with the military (IDF) and state authorities. The co-operation and solidarity with Palestinians only form the background of these intra-Israeli acts. The second chapter explores expressions of love and mourning as solidarity and political affect. Left-wing activists present the Jewish-Israeli public with a challenging and disturbing political alternative by 'loving Arabs' or mourning for/with them. Israeli activists, Wright claims, transform Palestinians' deaths into a 'political statement … [directed] toward their government and military authorities' (p. 67).

Chapter 3 deals with human rights activists and humanitarianism, with the example of PHRI (Physicians for Human Rights Israel). Such activism sought to 'challenge a politics in which the refugees had become the subject of violence and rhetorics of exclusion from the Israeli polity' (p. 89). This rhetoric is exemplified by the term 'infiltrators' (*mistanenim* in Hebrew), used especially for refugees and migrant workers from African countries. The mission of aiding refugees has a special impact for (European) Jews in Israel, with their history of persecution, expulsion, and exile, and it is also somewhat more successful than promoting the Palestinian cause, as refugees in Israel are not seen as an 'enemy'. In this chapter, Wright suggests the term 'ethicopolitics' to convey the combination and entanglement of ethics and politics (p. 95).

Chapter 4 describes the Tel Aviv activists of the *Ir LeKulanu* (City for All of Us) municipal party. The chapter deals with the difficult situation in southern Tel Aviv, where most refugees in Israel live today. Here we are met with two groups who are 'wounded' or in need of help: the refugees and the citizens of impoverished southern Tel Aviv. This situation is the cause for heated debates among activists about which lines of action to take. Chapter 5 considers 'exilic ethics', the sense of not being at home in one's home. It discusses Jewish Israeli radical leftist activists' thoughts of leaving Israel, and the dilemmas it provokes. Their dilemmas revolve around how to respond ethically to the situation in Israel/Palestine. The decision to leave Israel is yet another ethical choice the Israeli activists make.

In sum, *The Israeli radical left* offers an insightful study of Israel/Palestine, with a focus on Jewish Israeli left-wing activists and the ethical dilemmas they face. This is recommended reading to whoever is interested in human rights groups and activists.

Yarden Enav *The Open University and Levinsky College*

Movement

Burke, Paul. *An Australian Indigenous diaspora: Warlpiri matriarchs and the refashioning of tradition*. x, 237 pp., maps, fig., illus., bibliogr. Oxford, New York: Berghahn Books, 2018. £85.00 (cloth)

In recent decades, there have been newly intensified pressures on Aboriginal people from small, remote areas of Australia to move to larger regional centres and further afield to access improved life opportunities. *An Australian Indigenous diaspora* offers a perspective on the broader historical and social contexts in which departures occur, with a focus on the Warlpiri, the largest Central Australian Aboriginal community. Paul Burke's inquiry is specifically concerned with the experience of women he describes as Warlpiri matriarchs. He looks to understand the suite of forces at work in their decisions to leave home and what sustains them at a distance.

A long and variegated history of mobility has shaped contemporary Warlpiri demography. Burke estimates that approximately 56 per cent of Warlpiri live on or near Warlpiri territory, with the remaining more than 2,000 people residing elsewhere, in small desert settlements, larger regional towns, and interstate cities. His book is structured to follow the stages of diasporic

experience: (1) original displacement from the homeland; (2) dealing with uncertain welcome in a foreign location; and (3) reconfiguring the relationship to the homeland. The narrative moves between two registers: the author's summation of larger cultural matters via relevant literature; and more fine-grained descriptions of individual women's circumstances. The latter material has been gathered predominantly via interviews. What the monograph lacks in ethnographic immersion it makes up for in attentiveness to diverse situations.

The story of Warlpiri displacement is multi-layered and complex. The strands of this history to which Burke gives greatest attention are the emergence of a generation of bold 'bicultural adepts' in the distinctive political circumstances of the 1970s and 1980s; the unhappy and violent domestic relations that were the impetus for women to leave; their assertions of personal autonomy; and their navigation of the resulting tension between the demands of kin and the possibilities of enhanced autonomy. There are multiple factors at play for those who resist the appeal to take up 'the drinking life', such as the influence of non-Aboriginal partners, diasporic 'pioneers', new-found friends and supporters, or the organizing frame of Christianity.

The work is at its strongest and most intriguing in its exploration of particular women's adventurousness and their navigation of intercultural relationships. Life away from the intensity of desert sociality presents a need to extend relationships and responsibilities outwards. Some women are masterful code switchers. Burke observes the careful moderation of the demands they make of new friends in response to the willingness or ability of a friend to give. Manoeuvring between the different modes of life and ways of relating in the desert and urbanized places is extremely challenging. What ultimately knits continuities across place and time is the 'career' trajectories of those who leave: they are not motivated by job opportunities, but rather by work in intensive caregiving, primarily to kin.

In setting up his analysis Burke critiques the work of Diane Bell, whose influential *Daughters of the Dreaming* (2002) documents the efflorescence of women's ceremonial life following their subordination under assimilationist governmental policy. He reads this history differently; assimilation gave rise to a generation of remarkably capable and bold bi-culturalists. He contends that precolonial Aboriginal society, not life under assimilation, was the setting of Aboriginal women's subordination. Elements of oppressive 'traditional' authority are what they seek to escape. I think that Burke's dismissal of Bell's ethnography as 'a product of an earlier era of feminist anthropology' (p. 41), which aimed at redeeming women's position, would be more compelling if he gave equal consideration to the social conditions of his own line of analysis, including the negative characterization of 'traditional culture'. Just as Bell's project was shaped by the zeitgeist of self-determination and 1970s feminism, Burke's attention four decades later to mobile matriarchs can hardly be disconnected from a broad cultural mood that champions neoliberal individualism.

Do the diverse experiences of displacement explored here – from, at one end of the spectrum, those who ultimately return home, to those who settle elsewhere, to those who are 'lost' – add up to a coherently theorized diaspora? Diaspora is the framing concept for this inquiry but by the book's end the term has assumed a descriptive purpose, indicating spatial distance from the 'homeland', rather than a distinctively orientated social assemblage. The overlapping networks, diverse social trajectories, 'relatively weak forms of pan-Warlpiri solidarity', estrangements, and 'home and away politics' (pp. 119-20) described here conjure well the complex fault lines of displacement, but do not offer a new conceptualization of diaspora. Burke is careful to note that elements of the 'experiments' he observes at a distance are also occurring within Warlpiri country. His contribution to an understanding of Warlpiri interculturalism is to make visible some of the conditions and contradictory forces of displaced life.

Melinda Hinkson *Deakin University*

Chan, Carol. *In sickness and in wealth: migration, gendered morality, and Central Java*. xvi, 215 pp., bibliogr. Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 2018. £27.99 (paper)

This monograph exposes how the risks and gains of migratory experiences are framed in gendered moral discourses in migrant-origin villages in Central Java. Carol Chan's original ethnographic narratives, which allow room for women's own voices, form a significant and thus far largely under-represented perspective in migration studies.

An estimated 6 million Indonesians currently work overseas, many of them women who work as live-in domestic workers in Asia and the Middle East. Evidence of physical, mental, and financial risks has resulted in ambiguous views on

transnational labour migration among Indonesians. On the political level, such reports led to temporary moratoriums being issued for certain countries (e.g. Saudi Arabia) and work sectors (unskilled labour). Nevertheless, many women from Indonesia's rural areas continue to seek economic gain abroad through official and unofficial channels. Why and how people in Indonesia's rural areas develop and sustain their faith in gains from labour migration is the central question of *In sickness and in wealth.* To unravel this question, Chan conducted ethnographic research in three migrant-origin villages in Central Java. Her findings are presented both through migrants' personal stories and through more general discourses about gender and morality heard within the villages, which Chan sensitively weaves into an analytical discussion and which relate to cutting-edge migration research. Reflexive insertions create transparency about the author's subjective positionality and the dynamics in research relationships. Giving key phrases from interviews in the original Indonesian fosters an understanding of emic views and nuanced meanings that can be lost in translations.

This holistic research approach, which included not only migrants but also their peers, kin, and brokers, reveals that transnational labour migration and (im)mobility are embedded in migrants' home networks. The concept of 'gendered moralities' emerged as the central prism through which villagers evaluate migratory experiences and outcomes, both those that are presumably positive, such as material gain, and those that are negative, like sickness, abuse, and failure. In such gendered moral discourses, economic success and failure are linked to what is perceived as good moral behaviour. Failure is often related to a migrant's individual conduct, including physical appearance, sexuality, and religiosity, and to fate (*nasib*) rather than structural factors. Chan identifies shame (*malu*) and faith as central tropes in these moral discourses and argues that they sustain precarious labour migration. In addition to discourses in the villages, she analyses media discourses and political rhetoric, exposing how discourses in people's everyday lives and in the national public are intertwined.

Chan's long-term residence in migrant-origin villages enabled the identification of emic views of 'former' and 'failed' migrants (who in fact never left the country and who would be classified as non-migrants in most conventional studies on migration). Her highlighting of the role of 'failed migrants' in local discourses on migration is an intriguing contribution to the general understanding of the category of 'migrant' as a fluid one. Furthermore, Chan relates the contemporary discourses on migration to broader social changes, especially the increasing Islamization of Indonesian society. Ideas of what is morally appropriate reveal changes within Indonesia's diverse religious landscape. Based on these insights, Chan concludes that transnational migration from and return to Central Java are 'actively shaped and sustained by multiscalar gendered and moral discourses about bodies, labour, and finance' (p. 177).

Regarding the individualization of migratory risks and gains, the book's discussion would have profited from including comparative insights on people's awareness of the structures of exploitation, such as work on civil society movements among Filipina and Indonesian labour migrants (e.g. C. Kessler & S. Rother, *Democratization through migration?*, 2016; S. Rother, 'Indonesian migrant domestic workers in transnational political spaces', *Ethnic and Migration Studies* **43: 6**, 2017). An anthropological perspective like Chan's significantly contributes to a deeper understanding of why civil society activism and unionism are stronger among Filipina migrant workers than they are among Indonesian migrant workers. Furthermore, a deeper look into the specific neoliberal context of Islamization (as, for instance, is exemplified in Daromir Rudnyckyj's works, e.g. *Spiritual economies*, 2010, or 'Islamizing finance', *Anthropology Today* **32: 6**, 2016) would enrich the understanding of the moral individualization of success and failure in migration, which does not have the same weight in other instances of social inequality like factory work, as Chan rightfully mentions in her thought-provoking outlook for future research.

Overall, *In sickness and in wealth* is a valuable read, advancing the understanding of transnational labour migration and contemporary Indonesian society through first-hand insights from migrant-origin villages, an engaging narrative, and comprehensive analytical discussions.

Mirjam Lücking *The Hebrew University of Jerusalem*

Lems, Annika. *Being-here: placemaking in a world of movement*. x, 240 pp., illus., bibliogr. Oxford, New York: Berghahn Books, 2018. £85.00 (cloth)

In this book, Annika Lems presents and discusses the life stories of two Somalis who left their home

country shortly before or at the beginning of the civil war. They had embarked on an uncertain journey that brought them to Australia, where they established a permanent base. Her interlocutors, Omar Farah Dhollawa and Halima Mohamed, have told her about their lives and have shared their thoughts about different periods with her. *Being-here* is interspersed with photos that her third field subject, Mohamed Ibrahim, made on a trip to Somalia during her research. Against this backdrop, the author pursues her 'real' research interest in the processes of displacement, emplacement, and storytelling.

Lems argues that human beings are always situated in places: that is, in a physical environment with a corresponding social life. Being involved in activities, having experiences, and building social relationships – all this evolves into a complex web of relationships between people and places. Furthermore, the author finds that it is typical of the human condition to constantly want to rebuild one's life. When her field subjects arrived at new places along their trajectory, they strove for emplacement, exploring the new places they lived in, seeking integration into the social matrix, and trying to turn them into their 'home'. A feeling of being at home develops, so the author concludes, if people succeed in building a stable life in a new location. If their aspirations in life cannot be fulfilled, however, they will usually move on to a new place.

In *Being-here*, Lems allows the reader to witness many aspects of her field subjects' attempts to build their lives in a new location. In doing this, she devotes special attention to the enduring relationships that her interlocutors have to their places of origin. I will illustrate this with a few examples, even though they do not do justice to the author's sensitive and detailed account. Halima's former experiences of family life, for instance, provide a model for her attempts to build a new home in Australia. Similarly, Halima's faith allows her to develop a sense of 'being at home' under the 'all-encompassing reach of God' (p. 156), independent of where she lives. At the same time, however, the decline of Somali society remains a constant painful experience for the field subjects. Both Omar and Halima were even unable to find the right words to describe the decline of Somali society and the distressful experiences which they had confronted. Moreover, their relationships to both their new home and their place of origin allowed them to transcend the narrower confines of their lives in Australia. They were thus committed to contributing to the welfare of Somali communities in Australia and Somalia.

Lems also devotes some attention to the topic of storytelling. She is, for example, fascinated by Halima's ability to acquire mental resilience in difficult life situations from a story she heard as a child. Storytelling consequently reveals itself as existentially important in *Being-here*.

In short, this volume supplements more structural approaches in the study of migrants by looking at a specific aspect of migrants' inner lives. Although the migrants in the study had travelled to many different parts of the world, they remained connected to these places in their minds, reworking their relationships to them, and they continued to play a role in their present lives. At the same time, they continue to seek a home. Lems succeeds in turning our attention to this aspect of migrant life and fleshing it out. In this reviewer's opinion, this is a great achievement.

While Lems is mainly interested in places, Omar and Halima focus on explaining how they became who they are. If the reader abstracts from the idea of 'place', they might thus come to find that Lems is describing her protagonists' *Erfahrungsweg* (a life-long experience, see C. Taylor, *The language animal*, 2016) that takes them to different locations where they learn their lessons and slowly grow into the beings they are. I suggest that analysing this process would have provided an equally fruitful perspective for anthropological analysis. As a final remark, the author mainly works with a language-based methodology to analyse her field subjects' experiences, and I believe that she could have produced a more comprehensive account if she had participated more actively in the lives of her field subjects and the Somali community. I recommend this book to readers interested in migration, diaspora studies, and existential anthropology.

Jan Patrick Heiss *University of Zurich*

MacCarthy, Michelle. *Making the modern primitive: cultural tourism in the Trobriand Islands*. xii, 270 pp., map, illus., bibliogr. Honolulu: Univ. of Hawai'i Press, 2016. £68.00 (cloth)

This book is a stimulating contribution to the anthropological study of tourism, providing both an ethnographic description and an analytical examination of the intercultural tourist encounter

as it unfolds in the Trobriand Islands – a place that retains a special aura in anthropology. Michelle MacCarthy presents dense, rich ethnographic data, renewing some of the most debated issues in tourism studies. Contrary to various recent assertions, she demonstrates that constructed authenticity remains a significant topic for cultural tourists. Examining not only the expectations of tourists, but also how Trobriand Islanders respond to the demand for an authentic and 'primitive' alterity, she unveils the ways the concept is still played out on the island of Kiriwina, in the Trobriands, and provides ethnographic examples of the criteria used by the tourists to distinguish between what is 'authentic' and what is perceived as 'inauthentic'. In doing so, she demonstrates how constructed authenticity is simultaneously a moving, porous, and yet meaningful concept for both tourists and Trobriand islanders. By examining both tourists' and Trobrianders' understanding and manipulations of this concept, *Making the modern primitive* goes a step beyond most theoretical debates about authenticity, which mainly focus on the tourist experience, and engages more broadly in an analysis of both hosts' and guests' conceptualizations about culture, tradition, and primitivism, as well as the role of these conceptualizations in representing cultural Others.

Although the author explores some classical topics from the anthropological study of tourism – dance performances and cultural festivals, material culture commoditization, tourist photography – the way in which she does this by considering these aspects as various sites for the intercultural production of the understandings and manipulations of the concept of authenticity and the metanarratives of primitivism is of particular interest. Herein lies, in my opinion, the book's main interest, its consideration of the intercultural (which is seen as both an analytical tool and subject of inquiry), and how any achievement of self-identification and presentation and interpretations of otherness are always the result of a co-production. While this kind of consideration is not new in itself, the originality of MacCarthy's ethnography is to provide a detailed, systematic description of the articulation of this co-production within the specific categories of the production/consumption of touristic experiences (performance and festivals, village stays, and material culture) and particular sites of interaction (tourist photography and cash transactions). Tourism thus appears as an interesting and particularly relevant way to question the intercultural encounter as well as other concepts fundamental to anthropology: culture, tradition, authenticity. In this respect, the book also demonstrates how thinking through and with tourism can still make a valuable contribution to the discipline.

Another significant contribution of *Making the modern primitive* is the manner in which it approaches cultural tourist products as 'singularities' as a way to renew theoretical debates about the nature of gifts and commodities. For tourists, the material objects they buy represent 'a "relationship" with the cultural other, and a tangible and enduring link to a personal, ephemeral, and embodied experience' (p. 141). The notion of experience – which is what the tourists are after – is significant here, as it is what renders these kinds of objects unique, inalienable, not replicable, and what makes them a special type of commodity. This observation also applies to dance performances, as well as to what the author calls 'unperformances' – the village visits or touring of the 'everyday life' – which cannot be appropriated by the tourists, but which still involve cash transactions (p. 110).

Emplacing notions of meaning and value at the centre of the analysis, the author also explores the circumstances of an object's particular exchange biography. In tracing the trajectories of objects, she unveils the ambiguities and volatility of their significance and values, and invites us to reconsider the distinction between art, artefact, and commodity. As she reminds us, '[O]bjects may move from art to artifact to commodity and back again, and even inhabit all three categories simultaneously' (p. 164). As a result, '[D]istinctions between art, artifact, and souvenir are rarely fixed and always hold the potential for reevaluation' (p. 164).

Finally, another interesting aspect of this volume is the way tourism intersects with the history of anthropology in the Trobriands and the author's own position. Her first contacts with Trobriand islanders as well as her analysis of her relationships with both tourists and Trobrianders are interrogated with regard to the influential figure of Malinowski, whose importance for the anthropologist and the participants in the research can be felt throughout the book. By illuminating important concepts, as well as fundamental aspects of the intercultural encounter in such a unique setting, *Making the modern primitive* provides an important

contribution to both tourism studies and the development of anthropology.

Céline Travési *Aix-Marseille University, CNRS, EHESS, CREDO UMR 7308*

Steinberg, Jonah. *A garland of bones: child runaways in India*. xiv, 337 pp., illus., bibliogr. New Haven: Yale Univ. Press, 2019. £45.00 (cloth)

Jonah Steinberg's book is a mesmerizing and visceral account of the experiences of Indian street children. Focused on the lives and deaths of a handful of child runaways in Delhi known as *kangool* or bone children (from a Sanskrit phrase meaning 'garland of bones'), this evocative and brilliantly written ethnography contextualizes their experiences across time and space, exploring and uncovering the influences that shape and, in some cases, break them. From the railways, which hold the promise of both autonomy and deadly danger, to Bollywood, which broadens the children's horizons while offering impossible dreams, and on to the colonial and postcolonial legacies which continue to constrain and mould them in ways they cannot imagine, the influences and impacts on these children's lives are carefully and skilfully uncovered.

Street children occupy a particular space in anthropological accounts as both anomalous and ambiguous. They are 'children out of place', hidden but simultaneously visible, provoking fear and anxiety and providing an uncomfortable reminder of poverty and exclusion. They contest the coddled innocence of idealized contemporary childhoods and challenge the distinction between a safe, protected home and the dangerous streets outside. Previous work on street children has suggested that, particularly in South America, being on the street does not necessarily indicate a rupture with home and that there is often close contact and a strong and continuing bond between parents and their children, wherever they live. Here, however, home life in rural villages appears to offer little respite, and many of the children's stories in *A garland of bones* tell of conflict and violence in the home, and the gradual loosening of ties until the relationships between the urban street and the rural village become tenuous. Yet running away at a young age is not simply an individual agentic and rational response to conflict but is informed by wider cultural and historical influences from films such as Danny Boyle's *Slumdog millionaire* (2008), as well as the religious traditions of wandering *sadhus*, and reach further back to colonial discourses about street urchins.

These layers and complexities are reflected in the book's writing, which, at times, is lyrical and poetic, at others academic and detached, and sometimes angry and despairing. Steinberg himself is never a detached observer, and his reflexivity is one of the volume's greatest strengths. Equally impressive is his emphasis on collaboration: he is generous in his acknowledgement of his research assistant, Khushboo Jain, who is a vivid presence throughout, and perhaps most compelling of all are the long quotations from the children themselves. These have a vibrancy and immediacy which is highly engaging: they are convoluted, disorganized, sometimes hard to follow and seldom linear, but rarely have the messy complexities and realities of children's lives – and indeed fieldwork – been so well captured. I found chapter 4, 'Death and the urchin', almost unbearable to read but also impossible to put down. Based on the horrific death of an unknown runaway hit by a moving train as he tried to board, the chapter develops into a profound reflection on the ultimate unknowability of these children's lives while showing how, in death, their identities become solidified by the bureaucratic accounts of NGO and police reports.

Steinberg acknowledges the work done in the anthropology of childhood, but *A garland of bones* is less concerned with questions about what constitutes childhood and is more interested in documenting the intimate histories of children and the reverberations of the recent and less recent past. Violence is endemic and death ever-present, and these children's lives are precarious yet, as Steinberg shows so effectively, precious and worthwhile. More than an ethnography on children's lives and experiences, therefore, this book is also a profound reflection on the role of the anthropologist when confronted with suffering and abuse. Steinberg acknowledges the dangers of being the anthropological hero who gives these children a voice while foregrounding his own feelings, and yet he cannot and will not gloss over their suffering. He instead frames his book through the lens of everyday violence and everyday resistance, drawing on the work of Paul Farmer, Nancy Scheper-Hughes, and James Scott to produce a complex and multi-layered ethnography which never loses sight of the individuals at its heart but which also fully situates their lives within the wider postcolonial histories of the Indian poor. This is a stunning account of the child runaways

of India which will stay with the reader for a long time.

Heather Montgomery *The Open University*

Tuckett, Anna. *Rules, paper, status: migrants and precarious bureaucracy in contemporary Italy*. xiv, 178 pp., illus., bibliogr. Stanford: Univ. Press, 2018. £19.99 (paper)

This fascinating book takes the reader into the folds of Italy's 'documentation regime', following the migrants that must navigate it to secure and maintain legal status. It lays bare the ambiguities and contradictions forged by immigration policies that are at once heavily restrictive and flexible, shaping a grey area within which migrants, their bureaucratic advisers, and the public officials tasked with interpreting the rules together mould and interpret the law. The frequent unavoidability of rule-bending in Italy is widely acknowledged by scholars, yet the dynamics and constraints of those negotiations, the 'rules of rule-bending', are rarely dissected. Anna Tuckett's work maps a terrain of shifting legislation and its inconsistent implementation, where amnesties and opaque regulations open avenues for migrants to camouflage complex employment and family situations behind fictitious but official paperwork.

Rules, paper, status makes a crucial contribution to the field of informality studies by tracing the illegal practices that are often essential to acquiring legal status in Italy and by underlining how precarious and temporary such legality may be. It also adds to discussions of migrants' agentive meaning-making and affective experiences by focusing on the social and cultural resources they mobilize to exploit legal loopholes. The author argues convincingly that the intricate knowledge of Italian cultural norms required to successfully manoeuvre around regulatory obstacles constitutes a form of 'cultural citizenship'. Although this rarely translates into a full recognition of rights and formal citizenship – and is fraught with anxiety and insecurity – it nevertheless fosters solidarity networks and possibilities for 'self-fashioning'.

Tuckett's ethnography vividly conveys the emotional tensions and confusion that permeate everyday bureaucratic encounters between migrants and the state. It travels between her primary fieldsite – a trade union-run advice centre for migrants – the police offices where applications are rejected or permits issued, and other locations where legal identities take shape. A variegated picture emerges in chapter 1 of the volunteers and staff at the advice centre and their creative strategies to make migrants' life stories and documentary entanglements conform to the system's regulatory rigidities. This requires encyclopaedic knowledge of law and an arsenal of informal skills to mediate with a bureaucracy that lacks transparency and accountability. Migrants soon learn through these encounters that strict adherence to the law is often counterproductive; that the rules to be followed in practice are very different from those on paper. Yet the law's elasticity cannot be equally exploited by all, as chapters 2 and 3 illustrate. Successful navigation depends on each migrant's cultural, social, and economic capital, and their ability to grasp the unspoken norms for manoeuvring correctly. Given that these assets can determine an application's outcomes and, with that, access to healthcare and other basic rights, a more theoretical discussion of the power dynamics described would have been helpful in explaining the everyday political economies of these informal negotiations. This might also have shone further light on one of the study's many intriguing findings: that cultural dexterity can be a liability – sometimes causing bureaucratic missteps that catapult migrants into illegality – while the law's exclusionary idiosyncrasies simultaneously provide opportunities for others to gain social mobility and prestige by becoming brokers in the documentation business, as chapter 4 reveals.

The analysis never loses sight of the structural reality of an immigration regime that conceives of migrants as temporary and marginal, producing obstacles not only to acquiring legal stability and citizenship but also to their recognition as cultural insiders. The penultimate chapter stresses the paradoxical status of many members of the second generation. Culturally fully integrated actors who are challenging outdated perceptions of migration and what constitutes Italian-ness, they are nevertheless often at risk of losing all their rights once they reach adulthood. The multiple disconnections between legal, economic, and cultural participation or exclusion sensitively detailed throughout the study underlie the desire of many migrants to move onwards to countries with greater prospects for durable inclusion. The last chapter highlights the disappointment, sense of failure even, felt by many who remain in Italy. The conclusion contextualizes these findings within the globalized marketplace of migration, pointing also to the political utilities of the system's contradictions. Tuckett underlines that competing interests are thereby reconciled: a wide range of workers essential to the Italian economy can enter, stay illegally, and periodically

regularize, while the 'border spectacles' that convey strong migration control to the public are sustained and the system's continuous production of illegality is obscured. *Rules, paper, status* thus provides a rich and nuanced exploration of the precarities and inequalities engendered by Italy's bureaucracy and a much-needed unpacking of its informal governance of migration.

Isabella Clough Marinaro *John Cabot University*

Vindrola-Padros, Cecilia, Ginger A. Johnson & Anne E. Pfister (eds). *Healthcare in motion: (im)mobilities in health service delivery and access*. viii, 232 pp., tables, figs, illus., bibliogrs. Oxford, New York: Berghahn Books, 2018. £99.00 (cloth)

Edited by Cecilia Vindrola-Padros, Ginger A. Johnson, and Anne E. Pfister, this collection constitutes an important contribution to the study of (im)mobility in healthcare. The mobilities of patients, healthcare professionals, and services, as well as cases in which such mobilities are precluded, critically influence the configurations of therapeutic contexts. The impact of (im)mobilities on healthcare and the ways in which they can intersect with gender, class, migratory status, and (dis)ability are explored over ten chapters. The introductions to the three parts include questions for further reflection, making *Healthcare in motion* particularly useful for didactic purposes.

About half of the individual contributions use ethnographic methods, while some (most of the book's third part) present the development of specific healthcare programmes, and other contributions (Lipovec Čebron & Pistotnik, chap. 3; Plotnikova, chap. 6) focus on policy analysis. The first part of the book focuses on the migrant condition and health-related mobilities. Castañeda (chap. 1) uses the concept of 'stuckedness' to explore the relationships of 'mixed-status families' with the healthcare system: that is, families living on the US-Mexico border whose members have different statuses in relation to citizenship and documents. Limits to mobility derived from legal obstacles and a lack of resources are partially balanced by the mobility of treatments, such as drugs and informal providers, across the border. Kline's chapter 2 on undocumented migrants in Atlanta analyses how migration policies limit even the simpler forms of micro-mobility, such as driving to see a doctor or walking in the neighbourhood. Lipovec Čebron and Pistotnik in chapter 3 explore how the transition to capitalism and the European integration process have excluded migrants unprotected by EU legal status from healthcare.

This collection also tests and pushes the limits of mobility as a concept. Beyond distances travelled and borders crossed, mobility can be considered in terms of the passage from one emotional status to another. This development is explored in the book's second part, which focuses on the 'internal mobility of the participants through their narratives that connect memory and experience with meaning and personal agency' (p. 74). Pfister and Vindrola-Padros (chap. 4) explore the mobilities of families with deaf children in Mexico and how they navigate the healthcare system. Here, mobility includes attaining medical treatment and/or sign language education and is characterized by parents changing their attitude towards their children's deafness. After being seen as a disability at the start, deafness is redefined as a complex identity involving the whole family. Speier's chapter 5 examines the experiences of Czech women who have chosen to become egg donors and the economic, cultural, and social mobilities linked to the practice. Her analysis shows how the decision to participate in the (remunerated) donation of eggs is seen as a way to improve the donor's economic condition, drawing attention to the intersection of economic and reproductive precarities. Finally, Plotnikova (chap. 6) analyses the governance of healthcare workers' international mobility, highlighting the historical development of a contrast between the need to limit the 'brain drain' from the Global South – which justifies limits to international mobility – and workers' freedom of movement.

The volume's third part presents a number of programmes designed to improve healthcare access. In some cases, these are designed for larger populations in contexts with relatively limited healthcare resources. Srinivas and Paphitis's chapter 8 describes the use of health trains providing essential medical assistance in rural South Africa, and the production of informative materials for use in these contexts. Briskin and Gallo (chap. 10) delineate the promotion of maternal health through a mobile app in Myanmar. In other cases, the focus is on programmes for specific marginalized groups. Engelman (chap. 7) presents the promotion of HIV/AIDS-related healthcare in the Kenyan deaf community, where there is a limited recognition of deaf culture. Edmiston's chapter 9 presents a peer navigation programme for transgender patients in the rural Southern United States; in an area with limited transgender-friendly services,

the programme seeks to make mainstream healthcare safer and more accessible.

Healthcare in motion aims to illustrate the concrete development in an emergent research field that looks at health-related (im)mobilities, fostering an understanding of how patients, professionals, and information circulate, as well as considering limitations to such mobilities. Together, the contributions aim to build both a theoretically coherent understanding of different phenomena influencing contemporary biomedicine and its intersection with (im)mobility, as well as of the legal statuses and the social and material conditions influencing the capacity to move. The scholarly interest of the individual chapters and the broader theoretical framework proposed by the editors make it a useful reference text for (im)mobility and health researchers.

Cinzia Greco *University of Manchester*

Narrative imaginings

Feldman, Leah. *On the threshold of Eurasia: revolutionary poetics in the Caucasus*. xvi, 276 pp., illus., bibliogr. Ithaca, N.Y.: Cornell Univ. Press, 2018. £48.00 (cloth)

What are the roles of literature and poetics during revolutionary eras, at the borderlands of the major empires of the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries? M.M. Bakhtin coined the term 'chronotope', literally meaning time-space, as a means of analysing 'the connectedness of temporal and spatial relationships' in his essay 'Forms of time and of the chronotope in the novel' (*The dialogic imagination*, 1981, p. 84). Leah Feldman makes intensive use of this concept to examine poetry, drama, and art written and performed by Russian, Azeri, and Turkic Muslim intellectuals, primarily in the revolutionary era of 1905 to the late 1920s. The aim of *On the threshold of Eurasia* is to illustrate how cultural concepts came to crisscross the Caucasus region and how the exchange of ideas, styles, genres, and aesthetics evolved while moving between the artists, poets, and writers of the Russian, Ottoman, and Persian Empires. This is a book about the agency of poetics, exploring how it can shape a world region, signify a periphery, and mark a temporal space.

The volume begins with Feldman's introduction to chronotope, adding to it the concepts of threshold, revolution, heterology, heterodoxy, and translation, and situating them within literary, historical, and postcolonial theories. The paradox she foregrounds is between a 'deterministic discourse of imperial identity' and a 'flourishing of variation and hybridity' (p. 4) during the late Russian Empire and early Soviet state. Through exploring this tension, the monograph aims to examine how these imperial and anti-imperial discourses interacted and shaped some of the key literary works of Russian and Soviet modernity.

There follow two parts: 'Heterodoxy and imperial returns' and 'Heterology and utopian futures'. Each is divided into two chapters in which Feldman takes up a Russian and an Azeri or Turkic Muslim author/artist (such as Gogol and Memmedquluzade, Pushkin, Lermontov and Axundov, Bogdanov and Huseyn Cavid, Mayakovsky and Nazım Hikmet) and analyses how they interacted – reading, translating, sharing space, ideas, genres, and work – modifying one another's oeuvre while also imbricating it with the temporal, political, and aesthetic genres of Eurasia. The postscript returns to the Azeri poet Refili (with whom the book also starts), exploring how his poems can be read as ending an experimental era of aesthetic dialogue, symbolizing a 'closure of the imaginary window onto the East' (p. 214), as well as consolidating a Soviet Azerbaijani identity discourse and literary style.

Although firmly situated in comparative literature, Feldman's book nevertheless offers a rich discussion of cultural politics, geopolitical strategies, and the anthropology of revolutions, and a critical reading of Slavistics and Oriental studies. It demonstrates how translation can function as a strategy for spreading a political message; hence Lenin's emphasis on the importance of using translation in order to get people to understand the Soviet project and thus legitimizing Soviet conquest. Translation, however, also played a role in downplaying local realities (as in Baku, Azerbaijan) and could be a source of alternative and subversive interpretations – sometimes carrying a dominant political message, while at other times creating or pushing forward new ones, as in the case of futurist or avant-garde artists in revolutionary Baku. The poets Feldman looks at were seen as prophets or revolutionaries of their times and geography: they could transverse or invert symbols and meanings, rendering Eurasia legible beyond singular readings of it, while also accommodating profoundly diverse religions, objects, rituals, and linguistic styles.

Feldman has written an ambitious book which navigates wide-ranging debates in linguistics, semiotics, Islamic and Christian Orthodox

philosophy, literary and cultural studies, as well as history and anthropology. It is also a demanding and at times difficult read with rich references and numerous excursions into neighbouring fields, charting the work of French, Russian, Persian, Ottoman, American, and modern Turkish authors, while also unravelling the arguments and contributions of different departments and schools of Oriental studies. It is equally an important and beautiful book, reminding anthropologists how 'the word' and aesthetic ideas can help people fathom the unknown on an historical and geopolitical threshold, demonstrating how conceptual tools from poetics and critical translation studies can help us better understand an area long taken to be a marginal region, full of conflict, and utter linguistic and cultural complexity. Feldman delivers a nuanced but sophisticated and consistent analysis by highlighting the works of mostly unknown Turkic and Muslim authors, making visible the acts of literary exchange and temporal sites (chronotopes) of entanglement. *On the threshold of Eurasia* is an exciting reminder to all social and cultural anthropologists about how poetics can be read and understood as a heuristic device not only in a Bakhtinian but also in a Maussian sense, for conceiving the human, imagining society and social change.

Lale Yalçin-Heckmann *Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology, Halle/Saale*

Galbraith, Patrick W. *Otaku and the struggle for imagination in Japan*. x, 325 pp., illus., bibliogr. Durham, N.C.: Duke Univ. Press, 2019. £22.99 (paper)

Drawing readers in with an evocative advertisement of a man interacting with a holographic character, Galbraith introduces us to male fans of *bishōjo* (cute girl character) and to a tension that remains throughout the book: that of how otaku (male/straight/Japanese) who are into *bishōjo* manga/anime have come to be understood as 'weird' or perverted vis-à-vis 'normal' otaku. Fans themselves, however, make a clear distinction between the 'two-dimensional' (manga/anime) and 'three-dimensional' (human) worlds and are, Galbraith argues, creating 'in-between spaces' that can disrupt and challenge hegemonic norms of gender and the adult life-course.

The first three chapters of *Otaku and the struggle for imagination* focus primarily on discourses related to otaku. Chapter 1 provides a sociohistorical contextualization of the development of *shōjo* manga and the emergence of male fans, who are often linked to discourses of the Lolita complex (*lolicon*). Galbraith argues that, contrary to Western conceptualizations, *lolicon* is understood as a desire for cuteness and two-dimensional relationships with fictional characters. Drawing on queer theory, he suggests that *shōjo* manga is a space of liberation and salvation which allows fans to reconsider their masculinities and critically explore gender structures. Chapter 2 turns to changing discourses about otaku since the 1980s, wherein otaku were initially understood as socially immature failed men attracted to cute girl characters. In the late 1980s, however, an alternative reading of these fans as potential paedophiles/predators emerged in the media. Fans, meanwhile, understand their desire to be directed towards two-dimensional manga characters rather than humans, and Galbraith argues we should take this seriously and explore these imagined 'new realities'. Chapter 3 does this by analysing discourses of *moe* – understood as an affective response to fictional characters – and its significance to fans and critics. Galbraith traces how fictional characters became part of everyday life through an analysis of work by Tezuka Osamu, Miyazaki Hayao, and Takahashi Rumiko, as well as through considering fans' responses to this work.

Chapter 4 moves us from analysis of discourses to that of a place: Akihabara. Exploring how Akihabara organically developed, Galbraith traces the 'contested imaginaries' of the place: from its development as an otaku space of performance, to how it has been mobilized as part of soft power 'Cool Japan' campaigns. He documents the increasing community tensions and the concurrent policing of 'weird' otaku within this space. Galbraith deftly illustrates the complexities, strains, policing, and resistance in attempts to 'normalize and nationalize' a particular type of otaku in Akihabara. In chapter 5, we are taken inside Akihabara maid cafés. These are fantasy '2.5-dimensional' in-between spaces where characters (2D) and humans (3D) interact, and in which the normative demands of masculinity are eliminated and alternative ways of being, and having relationships, are imagined. One of the strengths of this chapter is the engagement with not just male regulars but also some female maids who create and perform these characters, giving us a sense of how some female fans engage with otaku spaces.

Through an analysis of domestic and international exhibitions of *bishōjo* work, the

conclusion explores the 'dynamics of imagining and creating "Japan" in relation to "otaku"' (p. 230). Building on Stuart Hall's influential work 'Notes on deconstructing "the popular"' (in J. Storey, ed., *Cultural theory and popular culture: a reader*), Galbraith argues that 'national-popular culture is best understood as "a battlefield"' (Hall 1998: 451), where lines of alliance and cleavage are drawn' (p. 231). He queries what gets elevated to national-popular culture, how it is elevated and understood, and how it becomes visible as popular culture. Whilst a historical process, Galbraith illustrates how it is also ongoing, dynamic, and raises questions of hegemony. Policy-makers, bureaucrats, journalists, and academics 'normalize and nationalize' (p. 259) what is considered to be Japanese popular culture, and he calls on academics to consider how their work, actions, and biases are part of this process.

Otaku and the struggle for imagination is a meticulously researched book. It draws on multiple sources and discourses, and it ranges across sites and time periods. At times, however, such an abundance of detail makes it difficult to follow. Furthermore, given the centrality of imagination and imaginaries, a more in-depth engagement with the body of work on imagination beyond Appadurai (e.g. Crapanzano's *Imaginative horizons*, 2004; Geertz's *Found in translation*, 1977; Sneath, Holbraad & Pedersen's *Technologies of the imagination*, 2009; and Taylor's *Modern social imaginaries*, 2004) would have been productive. That being said, this book contributes a wealth of sociohistorically contextualized detail about otaku who are interested in *shōjo* and *bishōjo* manga and is a strong contribution to the field of Japanese popular culture. I see this book as appealing to those interested in popular culture, media, and soft power.

Emma E. Cook *Hokkaido University*

Girke, Felix. *The wheel of autonomy: rhetoric and ethnicity in the Omo Valley*. x, 296 pp., maps, illus., bibliogr. Oxford, New York: Berghahn Books, 2018. £100.00 (cloth)

This excellent book reveals how ethnography and interpretative social theory can be profitably combined in an era when both 'genres' have been criticized for years, especially when authors try to do both in one book. The ethnographic part is about the Kara people, a small agro-pastoral people in Southwest Ethiopia, and it is linked to the emerging paradigm of 'rhetoric culture theory'. Felix Girke's ethnography focuses on this population of about 1,400 individuals and their way of life, situated between more powerful neighbouring groups with whom they have to constantly negotiate and be on guard. The wheel of autonomy metaphor in the title refers to the 'circular motion of how the desire for autonomy creates conditions of agency, which again is used to achieve distinction' (pp. 18-19). This is not bad as a heuristic device, but there remains some ambiguity about 'autonomy' and whether it should be understood as primarily socio-psychological, cultural, or ethnic.

The wheel of autonomy's basic question is: how are the Kara able to maintain cohesiveness and survive amidst powerful others (or, as the introduction's title puts it: 'How do they do it?'), and specifically considers their alleged and self-consciously expressed 'cleverness/smartness' (in Kara: *paxalmamo*). It is, indeed, an ethnographic question or riddle, but here it is theoretically answered with recourse to an approach based on the idea that rhetoric, as an ensemble of persuasive and figurative strategies in (verbal and other) interactions, creates culture, but is also founded *on* culture. Rhetoric analysis as such has not yet been extensively used in the study of ethnicity. F.G. Bailey's work is a notable exception and has influenced Girke, but he does not cite that author's fascinating 1993 monograph *The civility of indifference*.

The introduction and the more theoretical first chapter embed this rhetorical approach well in the literature, with the author underlining that rhetoric was also his *methodological* tool, through which to observe the strategies used by Kara in their dealings with others. The Kara core cultural concept of *ädamo*, or 'behaviour in the mode of kinship' (p. 6 and *passim*) – i.e. group identity or solidarity – gets due attention as the framework of their cultural rhetoric. It is what the Kara seem to cultivate and maintain in a conscious manner in their relations vis-à-vis other groups and to claim autonomy. Chapters 3 to 7 elaborate the 'ethnic' positioning and self-fashioning of the Kara vis-à-vis other groups in great detail (specifically the intriguing relation with the marginalized Moguji people), and relate this to modes of livelihood, social organization, power relations, and cultural prestige hierarchies exercised by the groups in the 'cultural neighborhood' of the South Omo region (pp. 148f.).

The ethnographic material is well presented and Girke's field experience descriptions show that he was deeply embedded in Kara society; the book is often dense and indeed full of

ethnographic minutiae. Still, the material is selective and closely tied to the development of his argument on rhetoric. This is understandable, but we sometimes lack information on deeper aspects of the Kara's sociopolitical organization. There is also relatively little on material interests and struggles, said to be important among Kara and between Kara and others, as motivating or informing certain rhetorical strategies. Occasionally, there are some heavy-going theoretical and interpretative passages, but the monograph does provide an important demonstration of what a rhetorical approach to ethnicity and social relations can yield.

This finely crafted book on a remarkable people is a welcome addition to Ethiopian studies, ethnic studies, and African social anthropology, and of theoretical interest to social scientists who want to know more about rhetoric theory as relevant in a 'non-Western' setting. It should also interest state policy-makers working in this region, but they likely will not read it due to the prescribed 'development'-orientated agendas of federal and regional government authorities and developers towards so-called 'backward' groups like the Kara and their neighbours. *The wheel of autonomy* well delineates the Kara's political-economic conditions and addresses future challenges in chapters 8 and 9. The Kara are aware of the looming issues and respond to the state and its developmental discourse with 'irony'. This issue of political interference and state policy and the impact on local societies and group relations is crucial and will likely be a major subject of future research, as it affects the possibilities of the Kara in maintaining their 'cleverness' in the midst of others.

Jon Abbink *University of Leiden*

Heuser, Eric Anton. *Friendship in Java: narratives of relatedness and culture politics in postcolonial Indonesia*. 221 pp., bibliogr. Berlin: regiospectra Verlag, 2018. €28.90 (paper)

Noting that friendship is a rather recent interest in anthropology and that Indonesian ethnography is largely mute on this topic, this monograph attempts to discern 'emic friendship types' in Java (p. 17). Eric Anton Heuser argues that friendship relations are versatile and function as 'extended quasi-kin ties' (p. 147) in the Javanese context of bilateral kinship, especially in situations where established social forms of community give way to 'globalization processes' (p. 189) and 'the tertiary work sector' (p. 115). In particular, the author focuses on the cultural concepts and values that characterize relations of family (*keluarga*) and friendship (*teman*), respectively. A core argument is that the characteristics of family relations carry over, so that *teman* relations are not of the pure or virtuous Aristotelian kind, but imbued with obligations of exchange linked to the provision of social security. However, younger interlocutors tend towards more emotionally based forms of friendship, valuing personal choice and sympathy.

Friendship in Java's first chapter provides an account of what the author dubs 'friendship in a nutshell' (p. 35), chapter 2 covers methodology, while chapter 3 is a rather lengthy discussion of Javanese culture. We encounter the author's ethnographic material only halfway through the book, in chapter 4 on friendship, and chapter 5 on family. Finally, the conclusion offers a short summary and 'suggestions for further research'.

The lack of friendship studies in Java certainly justifies Heuser's efforts, and he illuminates cultural distinctions of importance in Javanese sociality, in particular a polarity within the friendship category itself, between *teman* friends and *sahabat* friends. When used contrastively, the first resemble 'acquaintances' in English, the latter 'true friends'; and these categories are qualified further through adjectives pertaining to degrees of closeness and trust. The author shows that both forms of friendship are, typically, gender exclusive and that, while *teman* may grow into *sahabat* relations in all age groups, sentimental attitudes entail a stronger emphasis on *sahabat* among younger generations.

One can, however, take issue with Heuser's general approach. Notably, the analysis seems over-determined by the discussions in the introductory part of the book. The author's 'nutshell' approach – essentially framing friendship in terms of reciprocity, care, and trust – appears to constrain his view of relationality. He demonstrates how informants accentuate these dimensions in verbal statements, but largely fails to provide phenomenological substantiation of their import. Given the rich ethnographic analyses of intersubjective qualities in Javanese life, this lack seems rather conspicuous. There is no discussion of the relational imbrications of status and power (see W. Keeler, *Javanese shadow plays, Javanese selves*, 1987), *rasa* (intuitive consciousness; see P. Stange, *The logic of rasa in Java*, 1984), *aneh* (strangeness; see J. Siegel, *Solo in the New Order*, 1986), witchcraft (N. Herriman, *Witch-hunt and conspiracy*, 2016), or gender- and labour-specific relational qualities (e.g. S. Brenner,

The domestication of desire, 1998; J. Newberry, *Back door Java*, 2015). One would assume that these are critical concerns in friendship formations in Java.

Instead, we enter the ethnographic scene through a 'holistic' view based on rather essentialized accounts of Javanese culture. Relational qualities are evoked as normative determinants, rather than as operative premises in interactive engagements. The approach is thus thoroughly idealist and doubly removed from practical reality. Analysis deals with concepts and values rather than social praxis (actual friendships), and concepts and values as they are voiced in interview situations, not in situated discourses.

Moreover, Heuser's approach is 'holistic' also in that he explicitly collapses Java and Indonesia into a single analytical unit. This conceptual leap is justified by what is known as 'javanization': that is, attempts by Indonesian authorities to forge nationality on the basis of Javanese cultural precepts. Here, the author cuts from attempt to outcome, arguing that postcolonial Indonesia is shot through with Javanese values. While Javanese influence in Indonesia is undeniable, this conflation of highly disparate sociological scales is, in my view, unwarranted. Heuser also largely avoids addressing other forms of social differentiation in terms of, for example, kinship system, class, educational background, and religion.

Nevertheless, granted that *Friendship in Java* reports on idealized and experientially 'thin' notions of friendship, and among rather non-specific Indonesians, the volume does provide food for thought. To some extent, Heuser fulfils his ambition to account for a friendship *typology*, and the cultural categories he uncovers may, indeed, have experiential bearings on co-operation, intimacy, care, trust, respect, security, and other dimensions of real-life friendships. These findings do invite suggestions for further research.

Eldar Bråten *University of Bergen*

Ringel, Felix. *Back to the postindustrial future: an ethnography of Germany's fastest-shrinking city*. xvi, 219 pp., illus., bibliogr. Oxford, New York: Berghahn Books, 2018. £99.00 (cloth)

Felix Ringel's book explores the state of Hoyerswerda, a German city in eastern Saxony that was once the epitome of socialist industrial modernism but that after 1989 has been steadily losing its population (from 70,000 in the early 1980s to 35,000 in 2008) as state support has dried up and the city's coal mining industry has confronted the realities of global capitalist competition. It focuses on the way the city's inhabitants have been dealing with, confronting, and struggling to imagine the city's future. Based on his fieldwork in 2009, Ringel analyses the temporal logics people deploy, the way they 'reason about their past' (p. 65), in order to make sense of their supposedly futureless home.

The moments Ringel chooses to present in *Back to the postindustrial future* are compelling. We are confronted with Neo-Nazis disrupting public gatherings, Holocaust Remembrance Day events in a local school, and emotional exchanges between architects and city planners of different generations, educated in different regimes, and trained in different intellectual traditions, about the meaning of modernism, the fate of the GDR, and the best way to rescue Hoyerswerda. We also hear the musings and passionate arguments of students, musicians, anarchists, and artists. Ringel includes a number of interesting photographs as well, some of which portray places referred to in the text, some of which are records of residents' commentary on their lives, including public art and graffiti.

As to style, I would argue that for reasons of space Ringel chooses to present a series of ethnographically informed *readings*, rather than full-blown ethnographic investigations. The contents of every chapter move back and forth between minute attention to a handful of anthropologists' and philosophers' theorizations of time, futurity, the nature of the present, and so on, and his descriptions of encounters and conversations with some of the city's residents. Additionally, and fortunately (in my view), he also presents several fascinating accounts of public events where Hoyerswerda's future was the explicit subject of discussion, and his analysis of the intense debate and argument that ensued are among the most powerful passages in the text. The fact that Ringel gives equal weight and effort to his readings of theory, including statements that proclaim his agreement or disagreement with writers such as Durkheim, Guyer, or Gell, versus his own readings of the complex reality of the city's then present, gives the book at times a certain choppy feel. My own view is that passages dedicated to topics like general evaluations of postmodernism get in the way of, rather than facilitate, efforts to understand the situations of his informants on the ground, but readers interested in the anthropology of the future will find here informed, sophisticated readings of important writers.

Having chosen to write the book this way, it is not surprising that Ringel comes to no clear, forceful conclusion. The overall impression we gain is that in Hoyerswerda people from different family, class, and educational backgrounds, as well as different generations, deal as best they can with the often contradictory messages they encounter about their city's future. Each person mobilizes the temporal logics he or she has learned from different authorized institutions – such as the GDR state, post-1989 'united' Germany, dissident art and culture, anarchist theory, postsocialist promises of neoliberal utopia, and the 'never again' culture of historical memory in Germany – to make sense of the events and possibilities that come into view. Public life is conspicuous for its dissonant stagings of these different forms of temporal reasoning.

While Ringel does a compelling and thorough job of elucidating and describing the temporal reasoning of his informants, more attention to the governmental, financial, bureaucratic, and public health decisions made to shape the city's built environment would have helped. One wonders, for example, about the views of other sectors of the city's population, and about the city's relationship to wider German, European, and global discussions about urban shrinkage, and new forms of economic organization. Fortunately, *Back to the postindustrial future* is rich enough to leave us curious about the broader shaping of life in Hoyerswerda, about the tourism and sustainability projects promoted by different organizations in the city and region, about the complex discourses of experts and academics on development, and about the ways that an ordinary life continues alongside, and within, these longer-term trends. I would recommend this book to anyone interested in the predicament of German society in the former DDR. Its combination of vivid details and human sympathy make it engrossing reading.

Thomas Wolfe *University of Minnesota*

Theory and method

Bendix, Regina F. *Culture and value: tourism, heritage, and property*. vii, 279 pp., bibliogrs. Bloomington: Indiana Univ. Press, 2018. £33.00 (paper)

In this book, Regina Bendix unspools a decades-long analysis of how cultural representations that are designated as 'heritage' are incorporated into tourist economies and designated as cultural property. Using Swiss, Austrian, and German case studies, the volume includes 'articles, essays and conference papers' (p. 8) presented or published over the course of three decades and organized in sections titled 'Tourism', 'Heritage', and 'Cultural property'. As a retrospective, *Culture and value* illustrates three shifts in 'scholarly attention and attitude toward value regimes involving culture, folklore or tradition' (p. 1). The twelve substantive chapters map these overlapping trends in cultural analysis: 'from a negative, even outraged witnessing of marketed, ideologically deployed and adulterated expressive forms in nation-building and commerce', to an openness to 'examining cultural representations as opportunities to uphold identities in increasingly diverse, globalized worlds', and finally an acceptance of and even advocacy for 'efforts to claim ownership of culture as property' (p. 1).

The first section, 'Tourism', is stridently folkloristic with chapters that interrogate concepts of storytelling, landscape and travel, the exploration of encounter, and the 'role narration takes in mediating tourist offerings and in turning into a tourist attraction itself' (p. 19). Chapter 1 documents the 'invention' of the *Unspunnenfest* cultural festival, held in Interlaken, Switzerland, to show the fraught social consequences of the town's touristic incorporation while also describing local actors' agency in 'creating and experiencing cultural expressions that they themselves savor' (p. 19). Chapters 2 and 3 transition into the ethnographic implications of this materialization of folk culture and the work of bringing folktales and culture alive. Chapter 4 focuses on the tension between narrative freedom and commodification, specifically reflecting on what Bendix terms the 'aura of the touristic experience' (p. 20) or the allure of touristic encounter, which is both centred and unsettled by narration, and which is also so easily available for commodification.

The chapters in 'Heritage' focus on 'heritage practices, drawing attention to language use [and] the kinds of semantics facilitated through them, and the governance emerging as a result thereof' (p. 9). Chapter 5 assesses the semantic traction and slippage between the terms 'heredity', 'hybridity', and 'heritage' as they appear in a set of Austrian examples from the Habsburg era. Alternately, Bendix situates heritage between politics and economics in chapter 6, highlighting, among other things, the generative, ethnographically nuanced practice of mobilizing culture as heritage for commercial gain. Chapter 7 elaborates on how a preservationist heritage discourse, coupled with

legislation and oversight by state and extra-state bodies like UNESCO, has contributed to the increased flattening of cultural (heritage) diversity. Crafting distinctions between valuation, valorization, and commoditization in chapter 8, Bendix draws on Swiss case studies to show her interlocutors' inability to maintain the 'separation of economic values from other values' when practising and staging their culture, thus neutralizing the knee-jerk dismissal of capitalist income generation in the practice of cultural life (p. 172).

Section 3's chapters interrogate issues of rights, ownership, and valorization via analyses of the legal and economic rationales that inform the processes of heritage claim-making. Through an examination of cultural aesthetics – including folk art and expressive cultural practices-turned-cultural resources – chapter 9 illuminates folkloristics and anthropology's contribution to both the packaging and branding of cultural forms, and their circulation within the European context. The attempt of the German bakers' guild to secure a World Cultural Heritage designation is the subject of chapter 10 as a further dynamic examination of cultural preservation. Turning to the World Intellectual Property Organization, chapter 11 interrogates how the organization's 'uses of components of culture could come to be' (p. 238), detailing a rich, alternate genealogy that tracks culture's movement from the commons into an arena of international negotiation. Chapter 12 concludes *Culture and value* with an analysis of how financial 'mechanisms of selecting and supporting cultural practises are affected by the [dominant] heritage regime' (p. 255).

This collection wonderfully illustrates how heritage triangulates disciplinary, economic, and political power, as it teases out fine, dynamic, conceptual interchanges from a pithy set of Northern European case studies. It also deepens the concept of heritage by unpacking its semantic adjacencies and breaks. While aimed at folklorists and anthropologists, as a history of heritage and tourism in Europe, it offers much for historians, sociologists, and cultural studies scholars as well. Although percolating with a generative disciplinary uncertainty, this book carries a political flourish that makes it timely. Bendix shows how scholars have contributed to 'marking folklore, tradition, cultural expression, and heritage [as] usable categories' (p. 10) available for folk rebranding, but also fascist identitarian resistance. Indeed, in times of calls to address racism and its colonial roots, rising right-wing populism, and 'the rebirth of fascism … analyzing the ways in which culture and folklore are marked to denigrate' seems all the more pressing (p. 11). It is a necessary, striking reminder of the importance of critical reflexivity and political awareness in times of uncertain disciplinary and social change.

Duane Jethro *University of Cape Town*

Jones, Graham M. *Magic's reason: an anthropology of analogy*. x, 208 pp., bibliogr. Chicago: Univ. Press, 2018. £19.00 (paper)

Like a set of Chinese linking rings, *Magic's reason* invites readers to unpack an important intellectual puzzle of modern thought, namely how the anthropology of magic and the art of entertainment magic have mutually shaped what counts as 'reason'. As Graham M. Jones shows in this marvellous book, anthropologists have a long history of separating their study of magic from the performances of illusionists; yet comparing the ethnographer's and the entertainer's magic is anthropologically profitable and should not be dismissed out of hand.

With a brief nod to his ethnographic fieldwork among French illusionists, who call themselves *magicos*, Jones sets out to offer up a predominantly historical approach to the influence of early anthropologists and their *magico* peers upon anthropological thinking about magic, rationality, and (dis)enchantment. Throughout this lively and accessible book, Jones presents vibrant studies of magic-making from the nineteenth century to the present, which, he admits, only became his focus of inquiry when he took seriously his research partners' own 'interest in analogizing the modern magic they perform with primitive magic as known to them mostly via ethnographic representations' (p. 141). Jones shows that illusionists and anthropologists hold in common an intellectual heritage built upon the analogies they have jointly crafted between so-called 'primitive' magic, which (at least ostensibly) accomplishes genuinely extraordinary feats, and 'modern' magic, which invites spectators to uncover the techniques for clever tricks. He furthermore suggests that the primitive/modern dyad was conceptualized and popularized by an even fuller cast, which includes Euro-American *magicos* (self-styled as rational and reflexive illusionists); members of the Spiritualist movement, who presented their séances as genuine magical contact with spirits; Algerian 'Isawa entertainment magicians, whose feats of bodily mortification in European performance contexts were either rejected as illusionary tricks

or accepted as genuine magic enabled by spirits or the devil; novel acts such as those of the Davenport Brothers, who blended the techniques of illusionists and Spiritualists in order to capitalize upon the uncertainty surrounding which, if any, acts could showcase genuine magic; early anthropologists, who were uncomfortable that their studies of primitive magic from across the globe might resonate with the beliefs of their peers in Spiritualist encounters, thus upsetting the social evolutionary assumption that enlightened Euro-American rationalists are at the pinnacle of the world's civilizations; and, finally, audiences and members of the general public, who eagerly consumed the works of these rival performers, magicians, and scholars. According to Jones, each of these players mobilized 'a representational feedback loop linking the entertainment industry and anthropological scholarship in parallel efforts to define magic' (p. 7).

What *Magic's reason* adds to the familiar picture of early anthropology's influence upon contemporary studies of magic is a model of concept-building grounded in recursive dialectics. Jones proposes that anthropological distinctions between primitive and modern, rational or irrational, enchanted versus disenchanted, and so forth, operate in ways that pit any given analogy against its disanalogy 'for the purposes of contrastive comparison' (pp. 55-6). Offering diagrams that illustrate how contrastive comparisons climb an 'analogical ladder' (p. 128), Jones suggests that anthropological theories are always initially rooted in concepts – or 'prefigurations' in Fitz John Porter Poole's sense of the term – such that they do not arise from an ethnographic case per se (p. 130). Starting with the proverbial concept, then, Jones moves the reader stepwise up his analogical ladder to the proverbial ethnographic case, from which he suggests that another novel concept is sourced. This ladder-like ascent (perhaps unwittingly) echoes the upward movement that readers, primed by Jones's historical and ethnographic findings, will likely equate with social evolutionism. However, Jones wants to go further by suggesting that analogical ladders are the products of an 'ethnohistorically reflexive theoretical development' (p. 144) that ineluctably feeds past histories of concepts – shaped as they are by illusionists, other performers, anthropologists, and their audiences – into current theory-making processes. There appears to be a dash of chaos theory in this mix of anthropology, although Jones does not invoke the term.

To my eye, Jones's model of theory-making would be most aptly presented not as a stepwise ladder, but in the form of a spiral, which would more closely capture the 'dynamic of interillumination' (p. 159) that anthropologists, their research partners, and audiences have co-produced through recursive assemblages of concepts and ethnography. More engagement with the anthropology of ontology would have been valuable too. Still, this excellent book is a must-have read for specialists of magic and entrance-level undergraduates alike with an interest in the history and ongoing metamorphosis of one of anthropology's classic concepts.

Katherine Swancutt *King's College London*

Kohler, Timothy A. & Michael E. Smith (eds). *Ten thousand years of inequality: the archaeology of wealth differences*. x, 337 pp., maps, figs, tables, bibliogrs. Tucson: Univ. of Arizona Press, 2018. £43.50 (paper)

At a time when economic inequality is a frequent subject of headlines, this edited volume seeks to extend the study of wealth inequality deep into prehistory through the use of archaeological proxy measures. Editors Timothy A. Kohler and Michael E. Smith are less concerned with differences in sociopolitical power or prestige than with inequality defined in terms of material wealth, or 'anything that has value for a household' (p. 21). In the helpful second chapter, Peterson and Drennan introduce the Lorenz curve, which graphically depicts a resource's distribution across a population, and the Gini coefficient, a statistical index that summarizes the curve. They rightly emphasize that interpreting Gini coefficients calculated from archaeological variables such as grave goods, household assemblages, or house sizes requires careful consideration of sample selection and archaeological context: in many cases, Gini coefficients may reflect economic specialization or heterarchical social differentiation rather than wealth inequality. Oka *et al.* (chap. 3) propose a composite inequality index, or a geometric mean of Ginis calculated from different proxies. Collapsing many Ginis in this way seems self-defeating to me – if a site had highly differentiated grave goods but similar house sizes, archaeologists would hardly want to obscure this interesting pattern.

Chapters 4 through 10 are case studies that apply the methods outlined in the previous chapters. Though all chapters calculate Gini coefficients from size of domestic architecture, several contributions consider multiple archaeological proxies, with interesting results. In the Formative Prehispanic Oaxaca Valley, for example, low house size Ginis contrast with high Ginis for the distribution of obsidian, mica, and jade, suggesting that different cultural logics governed house size and portable wealth (Feinman *et al.*, chap. 10). Several chapters interpret Ginis in tandem with local historical developments. Prentiss *et al.* (chap. 4) investigate the relationship between Ginis and co-operation as gauged by shared storage pits at the Bridge River site in British Columbia. Other contributions track the intersection of inequality and violence (Kohler & Ellyson, chap. 5) or demographic growth (Pailes, chap. 6) among communities in the American Southwest. On the Eurasian side, Bogaard *et al.* (chap. 8) combine archaeobotanical and isotopic proxies for agricultural intensity with Ginis for living and storage space from north Mesopotamia and southwest Germany, arguing that land-limited, extensive agricultural regimes lead to greater inequality than labour-limited, intensive regimes. Many chapters carefully tailor their approaches to available evidence. Stone's study of southern Mesopotamia (chap. 9) uses cuneiform tablets to translate grave goods into shekels of silver. Betzenhauser's contribution on Mississippian architecture (chap. 7) demonstrates that Ginis fluctuate significantly depending on how a 'house' is defined and suggests that similar house sizes may reflect architectural standardization rather than low inequality.

The volume's conclusion synthesizes house size Gini coefficients from previous work to argue that wealth inequality in New World agrarian societies was lower than in their Old World counterparts over the past several millennia. The authors (Kohler *et al.*) propose that this discrepancy is due to the presence of large domesticated animals in the Old World after 8000 BCE, which permitted agricultural extensification and generated larger surpluses, widening the gap between rich and poor. Some Ginis used in this analysis are based on worryingly small sample sizes. One wonders whether it is responsible to calculate a Gini coefficient from two households from PPNA Jerf el Ahmar in Mesopotamia, or to compare this value to one calculated from more than 4,000 households from the Classic Maya city of Caracol (Table 11.1). Possibilities carefully considered in earlier chapters – that house size might reflect family size, topographical constraints, or ideological statements about identity, rather than wealth, or that the sample on which Ginis are based can greatly affect the resulting value – are seemingly dismissed in this final chapter. This creates a tension between the nuanced and contextualized case studies at the collection's core and the sweeping conclusions at its end.

This volume clearly demonstrates that Gini coefficients can serve as a helpful interpretative tool, especially when used with acknowledgement of their limitations. They are perhaps most useful when employed to shed light on multiple axes of differentiation within a given sample or to explore diachronic change in the same region. Though contributors position themselves as the archaeological counterparts of sociologists of inequality such as Marx and Veblen (Kohler *et al.*, p. 314), this reviewer is sceptical that the study of the material conditions of foraging or early agrarian communities can contribute much at present to an understanding of inequality under modern capitalism. Much of the book, however, will be thought-provoking and intellectually exciting for archaeologists interested in inequality.

Grace Erny *Stanford University*

McGranahan, Carole & John F. Collins (eds). *Ethnographies of US empire*. xii, 548 pp., illus., bibliogr. Durham, N.C.: Duke Univ. Press, 2018. £92.00 (cloth)

This book seeks to understand the US empire in *pointilliste* style, by means of twenty-two short ethnographic observations, to which is added an interview with Ann Laura Stoler, whose influential theoretical work is cited by the editors and many of the contributors. *Ethnographies of US empire* has a clear argument: the empire is real, despite attempts to deny this, and the costs that this has or that have been imposed on others can be found everywhere. In this, Carole McGranahan and John F. Collins as editors seek to assemble disciplinary approaches and subject matters that often lose focus when split apart. Further, their observations are designed to renew anthropology, to take it away from traditional subject matter – and at times to suggest that its purview has been limited by being far too close to American power. Overall, the collection is a success.

The compilation has six sections. The first, 'Settlement, sentiment, sovereignty', makes

convincing arguments about legacies of distrust (Dennison, chap. 1), the ability of immigrants to outvote aboriginal demands in Hawai'i (Kēhaulani-Kauanui, chap. 2), and the limitations of truth and reconciliation programmes (Simpson, chap. 3). 'Colonialism by any other name', section II, concentrates on Puerto Rico, Samoa, and the Philippines. Garriga-López's chapter 4 describes drug addiction in Puerto Rico as the result of a loss of culture; Rosario's chapter 5 analyses a special form of resistance in the face of privatization of coastal land as dogged but without illusion. Uperesa's chapter 6 on Samoa and Padios's chapter 7 on the Philippines describe the ways in which particular forms of self-identity are created, in football and in call centres, respectively, designed to appeal to American audiences – albeit, in each case not without a good deal of self-awareness of the pragmatic instrumentality involved.

Section III, 'Temporality, proximity, dispersion', is particularly impressive. Da Cunha's detailed historical study of a Maroon community in Suriname (chap. 8) describes the way it reacted to an American multinational company, and then changed its character once it left. Han's extraordinary chapter 9 on Christian South Korean missionaries shows their desire to take up the burden of US empire. Then Kwon, in chapter 10, argues that the Cold War, properly understood, includes the effect of American interventions on local populations, some of whom were skilful enough to have family members on both sides of the conflict. Finally, as Birth notes in chapter 11, the establishment of standards of world time comes from the United States, albeit this seems to happen without any forceful actions on its own part.

'Military promises' (section IV), which space limitations do not allow me to examine in depth here, takes on the obvious topic of military affairs: the system of military bases is described, but with full awareness that local interests can play some part in their acceptance, whilst decisions to leave the army are recounted once the reality of war is found to be so different from its purported glory.

Section V considers 'Residue, rumors, remnants'. Kim's description of the residue of landmines in the DMZ between the two Koreas (chap. 15) is followed by McGranahan's subtle description of US-Tibet relations – at once based on genuine sympathy but still such as to provide the great power with intelligence. Chapters 17 and 18, by Bryan and Mitchell, respectively, are on the abandoned Miskito people of Nicaragua and the attempt of Brazil to establish its own spaceport, including interesting reflections on the emergence of conspiratorial thought – US power is so immense that this can lead to fantasies about its purposive intent when none existed.

Section VI, '9/11, the war on terror, and the return of empire', begins with an account of divisions amongst Muslim youth in California, some seeking to reform the country, others thinking this impossible given its imperial pretensions (Maira, chap. 19). Kwon's sobering account in chapter 20 is of the deportations of immigrants from Cambodia once they have been convicted of very minor crimes. Collins's interesting account of New Jersey deer hunters (chap. 21) makes suggestive but slightly tenuous connections with empire; in contrast, Li's description of the ability of the United States to shuffle purported terrorists around the world in some circle of carceral hell (chap. 22) is both brilliant and sustained.

Though the ethnographies succeed in showing the microsociological costs of empire, the macrosociology of empire that it suggests is often open to question. The financial costs of American foreign policy are not, as one author suggests, large: as a percentage of GDP, military expenditure is, in historical terms, very low. Nor should the driver of empire automatically be taken to be capitalism. Finally, it is as well to remember that the United States is so large that it does not depend on global trade. It could and may yet decide, under a future nationalist/populist leadership, to retreat from the world.

John. A. Hall *McGill University*