Becoming better Muslims provides valuable archival and ethnographic contributions to three fields: the anthropology of Islam, the anthropology of ethics, and the history of Aceh, Indonesia. Throughout he insists on a complex approach to these fields, complicating, and occasionally refuting, some of the established assumptions undergirding each.

At the book’s core is Kloos’s argument that Acehnese Muslims seek to become better Muslims throughout the arc of a lifespan, within the broader context of kin, state, and social class. While this may entail a daily focus on embodied and minute practices on an individual level, more often it provides a longer perspective for Acehnese to experience religious engagement. This, Kloos suggests, then allows analysts to recognize something that the recent proliferation in analyses of Islamic piety have paid less attention to: failure. Further, it situates Aceh, a province that is often represented inside and outside of Indonesia as both isolated and exceptionally, essentially Islamist, in a more entangled history.

These are welcome insights. The past decade has seen the scholarship on Indonesian Islam addressing the increase in public forms of piety through political, economic, and ethical frames. Perhaps most prominent have been analyses arguing that religious self-improvement is a reaction to the New Order regime’s mix of authoritarian and religious control, often using the lens of neoliberalism. Although Kloos’s fundamental concern is with Acehnese Muslims’ commitment to life-long religious improvement, he never once uses the word ‘neoliberal’. This does not suggest that he finds political and economic factors irrelevant to his interlocutors’ struggles, but rather that they cannot explain everything.

Instead, Kloos frames his analysis through a concept of ‘religious personhood’, which is both individual and social. Religious personhood is a conscious and reflexive commitment to personal ethical improvement through active engagement with religious norms, as promulgated by either religious or state authorities. Consciousness is central to Kloos’s concept of religious agency, allowing him to elicit from his interlocutors commentary on their religious struggles, from piety, to sin, to ambivalence about how best to navigate life. This enables them to see their moral shortcomings ‘as conducive rather than detrimental to their personal religious development’ (p. 13). Kloos reintroduces agency to the anthropology of Islam as an important conceptual tool without denying the formative effect of powerful institutions and histories. He reminds readers that Acehnese Muslims themselves use concepts of agency to interpret their life events as sometimes choice and sometimes
fate. He powerfully asserts that normative Islam in fact increases the discursive space for individuals to act and think agentively, rather than the opposite (p. 167).

Aceh makes for an especially appealing site through which to see these tensions, for it is a place that is widely perceived domestically and abroad as overdetermined by religiosity and disaster. Indeed, the book’s first four chapters powerfully refute simplistic arguments that the rise of normative Islam, culminating in the implementation of a shari’a criminal code in 2006, is the result of separatist wars, the 2004 tsunami, or Acehnese fanaticism. Kloos details a counter-narrative in which Dutch colonial policies in the late nineteenth and early twentieth centuries fuelled the formation of a class of religious authorities who were invested in orthodox forms of Islam, and who were never in isolation from the broader world of the Indies or Islamic communities elsewhere.

These corrective accounts are a real contribution to the scholarship on Indonesian Islam, but they are most valuable when combined with the narratives that constitute the book’s final three chapters. These support Kloos’s claim that personal religious life is always part of life more broadly. Individual Acehnese situate their own movement towards more devout daily practices as uneven, influenced by their own temptations, their families, their social class, or their gender. The book’s examples reveal people who are not obsessed with religious perfection so much as they consider normative Islam a tool for coping with life’s vagaries. Sometimes it helps, sometimes it doesn’t, but it is a resource for resolving friction with kin, poverty, or just bad luck. Throughout, Kloos offers a glimpse into the lives of everyday Acehnese, beyond the regional and academic rhetoric that has privileged a narrow class of voices, and in the process presents Acehnese as familiar. They see life as a series of failures and successes, best navigated with an eye to the long view and with a patient spirit.

Unorthodox kin: Portuguese Marranos and the global search for belonging. xvi, 325 pp., bibliogr. Oakland: Univ. of California Press, 2017. £24.95 (paper)

The emerging hidden Jews of Portugal constitute a sensitive topic. There is not even agreement on what to call them: Crypto-Jews, New Christians, Bnei Anusim (Hebrew: descendants of the forced [converts]), Marranos, ‘A Nação’ (their own term), or, more recently, at least in the emblematic town of Belmonte, ‘Judeus’. In recent years, ‘Marrano’ has been rejected by many groups, sometimes even categorically forbidden, although, as Naomi Leite explains (pp. xvi-xvii), the term in Portuguese does not have the pejorative sense of swine as it does in Spanish, and indeed many community members prefer it. Still, Unorthodox kin’s title is itself somewhat ‘unorthodox’, which perhaps was part of the reason it was chosen.

Much of the literature on Portuguese Marranos has focused on those living in small towns and villages, rather than in the country’s two major cities, Lisbon and Oporto. To my knowledge, Leite’s is the first study to focus on these urban groups, and she does so admirably, combining solid fieldwork and research with a fluid, accessible writing style. She wisely concentrates on the communities with whom she did most of her fieldwork, with only passing mention of the more picturesque villages and small towns.

Unorthodox kin is at once the story of specific people and a community, of the history of a people and a country, and of the intricacies of recovering, acknowledging, and re-creating individual and group identity. Simultaneously, it is a story of spiritual life and daily practicalities, of intimacy and acknowledged tourism, a personal narrative and a finely tuned anthropological study. Leite began her fieldwork at the end of the twentieth century. Two decades had passed since the Carnation Revolution, the bloodless revolt of 25 April 1974, which ended the authoritarian Estado Novo regime
and established Portugal as a modern democratic state. Nearly two decades later, the Internet was just beginning to be widely available while Spain and, to a somewhat lesser extent, Portugal were establishing institutions and events around 1992’s five hundredth anniversary of the expulsion of the Jews from Spain and, five years later, from Portugal. Portuguese Crypto-Jews and others wondering about their roots were exploring them in ways which had been difficult during Salazar’s regime, and tourism, including Jewish tourism, was growing in both countries.

Leite perceptively explores the contradictions and paradoxes of the Marranos’ often vexed relationship with the established Portuguese Jewish community, as well as with curious, enthusiastic Jewish and non-Jewish tourists, visiting rabbis, North American Jewish community activists, non-Jewish neighbours, and their own developing identities. An unexpected aspect of the Marranos’ experience with modern ‘normative’ Judaism is their expressed preference for Ashkenazi melodies and customs, rather than the Sephardi identification which most would consider natural for Iberian Jewish descendants. Leite’s discussion of this (pp. 255-9) corroborates, in considerably more detail, my own findings from discussions with some members of the same community (see ‘Portuguese Crypto-Jews and constructed musical identities’, in Territoires musicaux mis en scène, eds M. Desroches, M-H. Fichette, C. Dauphin & G.E. Smith, 2011: 325-38). As Leite effectively puts it, ‘[M]any began to focus more on experiential affinity, empathy and acceptance as crucial elements of Jewish identification’ (p. 257) and ‘made their choice on the basis of love and nurturance, not in terms of blood and birth’ (p. 259). This feeling of rejection is connected to the tendency, which she also discusses, to view Portuguese Crypto-Jews almost as zoo creatures to be viewed and admired, and their decision to affiliate with Ashkenazi culture reflects, among other things, their self-positioning as part of the global, not just local, Jewish world, and in the present and future, not only the past.

Throughout the volume, Leite connects the experiences of this very specific community to larger questions of kinship, belonging, and related issues. Indeed, her carefully worded title encapsulates specificity and globality. On the local level, as many sensitive issues are discussed, both individuals and Marrano organizations are given pseudonyms. The reason for individual pseudonyms is clear enough, but the use of pseudonyms for organizations which can be quite easily found by, for example, Jewish travellers interested in alternative Sabbath services is a trifle puzzling. Inevitably, anyone who has spent time with the communities will easily recognize the institutions and many of the individual names, as indeed did I. This caused me some concern, but during a brief visit to Lisbon for a conference, community members invited me to a Friday night Sabbath service. Those present spoke of Unorthodox kin spontaneously, in positive terms, and to me this seemed even more important than the approbation of the author’s academic colleagues.

This book is a very interesting contribution to a conceptual issue: why is freedom so rarely a key word in anthropological analyses? It seems that whereas some think that freedom is not a legitimate object for anthropological study, others think it must be, with a few publications taking this latter. For example, the father of British anthropology, Malinowski, ended his career by writing Freedom and civilization (1944), but, as Kelly states in Freedom in practice (p. 166), almost no one has read or cited it. Malinowski’s book reflects a faith in the theoretical universality of culture, and his writing on the subject of freedom is a form of prescriptive, if not dogmatic, anthropology, as Pierre Legendre notes in his own writing (Sur la question dogmatique en Occident, 1999; God in the mirror, 2017). The idea of the impossibility of an anthropological analysis of freedom appears in Edmund Leach’s...
chapter ‘Law as a condition of freedom’ in David Bidney’s 1963 collection *The concept of freedom in anthropology*. Bidney, however, supports the possibility of analysing the concept because although different cultures articulate freedom differently, paradoxically it appears to be a cross-cultural universal.

In *Freedom in practice*, Kelly (chap. 8) gives at least three reasons for this neglect of freedom: the relativists’ suspicion; the Cold War, in which freedom was sometimes used as a mask for imperialism; and the uncertain status of freedom as presented in Foucault’s influential works. From its idealization to its labelling as an uninteresting local concept, freedom can only find a role in anthropology with much difficulty. That said, the authors in this book make an important contribution to the subject in their attempt to define what its role would be. While freedom may be a universal concept, the Western concept is not the proper semantic form of freedom’s universality. Moreover, the term’s plurality of meanings in different societies is not an argument for a relativistic attitude: only when we have specified precisely the different meanings of freedom – and its vocabulary and grammar – in different philosophies can we try to pinpoint what the commonalities might be. It also is strategic to pose an epistemological question: is freedom necessary to anthropological research? Finally there is also an ontological matter to consider: that of the link between the ideal of freedom and its reality in everyday life. Given this agenda, as Moises Lino e Silva and Huon Wardle note in their introduction to the volume, freedom and liberty should be associated with, at the least, terms such as autonomy and self-determination, in that freedom is a matter of normative claims.

Rapport (chap. 1) attempts to express freedom’s inscrutability: for him freedom is a state of being, part of the condition of human life; it is life in itself. Liberty, moreover, describes a social arrangement in which that free state of being is permitted, affording individuals security. Building on this, Pipirou’s chapter 4 on Grecanici associationism in southern Italy argues that ‘the aggressive battle for self-interest within a successful promotion of the public face of Grecanico culture and language was striking’ (p. 94), and yet the individual’s ‘aggressive search for self-interest’ does not result in a loss of their freedom to pursue public interests as well (p. 98).

Every essay in this book elaborates on the editors’ general aims, but I would like to highlight Gow’s chapter 6, which wrestles with the astonishing concept of voluntary slavery as a social function accepted and assumed by people. For us, this is precisely the opposite of freedom, but not for the Amazonian Piro. For them, it is a rational concept in that it includes, in contrast to our slavery, the concept of kinship affiliation. For the Piro, voluntary slavery is the lack of spatial freedom – ‘to stop where they please’ (p. 140) – and involves being collectively indebted to a boss who requires their labour and loyalty. Other noteworthy contributions are Mitsui’s (chap. 2) delineation of the unfree craftsman in Japanese culture; Wardle’s analysis of John Brown’s freedom and imposture (chap. 3); Austin-Broos on Aboriginal self-determination (chap. 5); and Moises Lino e Silva’s discussion of queer liberation in Brazil (chap. 7).

*Freedom in practice* is highly recommended for graduate students and researchers in anthropology, the history of ideas, and philosophy.

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Pakistan’s religious landscape has been marked in recent years not only by rising religious intolerance and spectacular violence but also by the increasing visibility of hijab-wearing women on
the streets of Lahore and other big cities. This timely book by a talented writer adds to an expanding literature which attempts to explain the growing Muslim religiosity of some sections of the Pakistani ‘middle class’. While only some 150 pages long, The new Pakistani middle class is beautifully written, with subtlety and sophistication, and it captures, first, some of the angst felt by the secular middle classes at how their nation is being viewed by the outside world as a religiously fanatic, terrorist, failing state. The significance of a Western ‘audience’ beyond the state for this well-travelled middle class is an important insight and, indeed, it seems that some of the religiosity found in middle-class circles today was imported into Pakistan by returning migrants from the West.

Ammara Maqsood begins with depictions of the upper/middle-class urban Lahoris whose cultural events seem to her to evince nostalgia for a bygone era. Her portrayal of this elite class, to which she admits belonging, and especially its progressive, liberal members, who have expanded into the newly built, affluent neighbourhoods of Lahore, while drawing on secondary literature, is paradoxically more vivid than the main subject of this extended essay: the so-called ‘new middle class’.

Seen as an ethnography of this ‘new’ middle class, the book is strangely lacking in thick description or in-depth analysis of members’ religious participation, essential to illuminating their felt dilemmas. Absent also is an engagement with other anthropological works on the same topic. The book’s focus is on the increasing prevalence of dars: religious lessons convened during the day mainly by and for women to read, translate, and interpret the Qur’an, hitherto read in Arabic on certain religious occasions but not understood. The stated aim of these gatherings is to enable direct access to the Qur’an as the ultimate and definitive word of God. Some dars are convened by religious streams or by Al-Huda, a women’s revivalist scripturalist movement inspired primarily by Jamaat-e-Islami; others are independently organised. Lessons are led by women who understand Arabic and they are held at homes or local centres. Many of the lessons encourage women to veil even in front of close affines, an obvious disruption of amicable, intimate, and extended family relationships. They also prohibit music, dance, joking, and ritual celebration as non-legitimate cultural accretions, rejecting also film and TV viewing, poetry readings, Sufi Qawwali performances, and, of course, the cocktail parties held in elite circles. The implication of these prohibitions is radically subversive of a whole taken-for-granted way of life, yet they are hardly considered by Mahmood. To appreciate their consequences in some depth we need to turn to Sadaf Ahmad’s Transforming faith (2009), on revivalism among urban Pakistani women, primarily in Islamabad, a book mentioned only cursorily by the author.

Who the new middle class are remains rather vague. Mahmood speaks of ‘distinction’, but the complexity of status, class, caste (zat, biradari), and occupational stratification in Pakistan might have been better analysed had she adopted Bourdieu’s full analytical model, distinguishing between three forms of ‘capital’: economic, cultural, and symbolic. The upper- and upper-middle-class strata in Lahore, many of them originating from India, are divided into the extremely affluent upper class, while the rest were/are of Ashraf (‘noble’) pedigree, including even the less wealthy. They are fluent in Urdu as well as English, highly knowledgeable about North Indian high culture, and include creative writers, poets, artists, or musicians, in many cases with leftist or progressive leanings. They are also densely networked (see K.A. Ali, Communism in Pakistan, 2015). As in Britain, schools (English-medium private), residence, education abroad, and occupation all define class status in fine detail.

Zat and pedigree count critically when it comes to marriage. Dars lessons, one can only assume, facilitate networking for the middle class as they move into new neighbourhoods, much as
book clubs do in the United Kingdom. However, a biradari, even when scattered, remains a bedrock of family and kin relations, and is critical in negotiating marriage. None of this is considered by Maqsood. Ignored also is a prior literature on Ashrafization, mainly in India, which highlighted the way newly affluent groups, especially of lower-caste origin, increase their visible religiosity as they collectively claim higher-caste origins (see, e.g., I. Ahmad, *Family, kinship and marriage among Muslims in India*, 1978). One would also have welcomed a consideration of how the author’s upper-middle-class origins were perceived by her subjects, and to what extent they affected the research.

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Trevor Marchand (ed.), *Craftwork as problem solving: ethnographic studies of design and making*, xviii, 267 pp., table, illus., bibliogrs. London: Routledge, 2018. £115.00 (cloth)

Routines are camouflaged complexities. They make prosaic practices often easy to overlook and very difficult to understand. Problem solving is such a practice, as is craftwork. Trevor Marchand takes on a considerable challenge in *Craftwork as problem solving*, which considers problem solving through craftwork. How to define the scope of such a book? What counts as problem solving, and what is considered craftwork?

Marchand’s introduction provides guidance. Problem solving is at the heart of learning and knowing, and craftwork is an ideal setting to witness this ‘art’ (p. 2). A helpful overview of the messy word ‘craft’ provides clarity without pinning it down. Craft is a polythetic category, making the search for defining features futile, according to Marchand. The closest to a definition is the notion that craft is a heuristic process, thinking with tools and materials. This encompassing view is reflected in the breadth of the chapters that make up this volume, which range from ‘typical’ craftwork with historical materials, such as glass blowing, ceramics, and textiles, to modern types of craftwork such as bicycle mechanics and videography. A noteworthy contribution is Crowder’s chapter 2 on craftsmanship with sentient media, namely horses. This broad range of contributions makes for a pleasurably varied read. However, a striking omission is a chapter on problem solving in a laboratory context, especially since Marchand recognizes Pamela Smith’s *The body of the artisan* (2006), in which craftwork is seen as the basis for scientific inquiry. This is a missed opportunity to explore how craftwork might still be embedded in modern science, but hidden from view.

The chapters – small ethnographic studies – are too short to present fundamental insights. Rather, they are a first exploration into relatively uncharted territory. The core strength of this volume lies in foregrounding of the voices of practitioners, which is without doubt an important addition to the field of craft studies. Clearly, craftspeople are not lost for words, calling into question the idea that skill is tacit and wordless. Every contribution provides valuable raw material in the form of participant observation or autobiographical notes on problem solving.

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A few chapters stand out in which the contributors manage to push beyond description of their practices and abstract from it the contours of a theory of problem solving from a craft perspective. Gates (chap. 6) deliberately disrupts his furniture making by introducing complications. This ‘controlled’ experiment allows an extremely focused contemplation, leading to some remarkable observations: for instance, how tool diversity helps to address problems, but, equally, how specialization restricts affordances (p. 123).

In chapter 10, Gowlland describes the different discourses that developed around the respective specializations of glazers and potters in Taiwan, each with its own values. Problem solving happens in both and the activities do not differ substantially. However ‘the differences become substantial in discourses that entrench a dichotomous relation between the work of the hand and that of intellect’ (p. 193). Though there is a hierarchical relationship, Gowlland stresses that the dialogue between the two artisans is neither tense nor unequal (p. 194). There is a striking similarity here with the Western distinction between art (mind) and craft (hand).

Diodati’s chapter 12 builds from his observations as an architect working closely with both craftspeople and labourers on building sites, and through this he informs us of some important qualitative differences. The kind of specialized knowledge developed by modern labourers effectively restricts their problem-solving capabilities. Importantly, it also seems to dilute their sense of responsibility and they do not enjoy the same level of autonomy as craftspeople (p. 217). Another point to take away from this chapter is that the tension between an architect and craftsman is a productive challenge, rather than a managerial problem.

Dialogue is a recurring theme throughout the chapters, in the form of maker-material, maker-maker, or maker-consumer. All makers in this volume engage with problems in an open manner. They are positively challenged, and appreciative of the tension that is created between them and the material or people they work with. Problems and mistakes are starting points for learning.

This book will be of interest to researchers who recognize the importance of making as thinking. However, perhaps it is in the field of education policies where a thorough read would be most relevant. After all, if craft is so effective in developing a productive disposition to problem solving, does it not deserve a place in the curriculum?

Building on his ethnographic studies, ‘Changing fate’ by Helena Obendiek is a nuanced and well-written ethnography of how, and why, some students from rural Gansu, one of China’s poorest and least educated provinces, ended up at Lanzhou University, a fairly prestigious key Chinese university in Gansu, and Gansu Traditional Chinese Medical College, a more average university. Most previous studies of education and family life in rural Gansu province have focused on average students and families who struggled even to send their children to high school. This book, however, focuses on the rare but significant subset of rural Gansu families who...
managed to imbue their children with the motivation and social and financial support to attend fairly prestigious universities. Obendiek found that these families were characterized by the same stress on achievement and heavy parental investment that were common among families in less impoverished Chinese rural and urban areas, but also that her research participants from rural Gansu had to rely more on siblings and extended family resources to gain upward mobility. They also faced greater social, cultural, and financial obstacles after they entered university, and had greater obligations to financially reciprocate the support they had received from their families and community, and especially their parents, after they graduated.

Obendiek began her research in 2006 by interviewing twenty-six students, who were enrolled at Lanzhou University and were from rural Huining county, which, although impoverished and largely agricultural, was known as unusually capable of producing students who went on to higher education. Obendiek also surveyed 106 students from Huining at Lanzhou University and fifty-five Huining students at Gansu Traditional Chinese Medical College. Then, in 2007, she lived with the family of a Lanzhou University student in a village in rural Huining. She also conducted interviews with fifty-one college graduates from rural Huining family backgrounds. Her research provided rich, detailed ethnographic data that she skilfully weaves into her narratives of these college graduates’ experiences of upward mobility. She also draws on participant observation among their less successful family members, friends, and acquaintances to explain how and why the more successful students at the heart of her ethnography managed to attain upward mobility when most others around them did not.

Obendiek found that, despite the expectation that they were more likely to co-reside with sons rather than with daughters in old age, Huining students’ parents were eager for their daughters as well as their sons to attain higher education, both for immediate feelings of accomplishment and social honour, and to improve the likelihood of being comfortably provided for in old age. Aunts, uncles, and older siblings also invested in the education of nieces, nephews, and younger siblings, who were in turn expected to reciprocate once they attain the upward mobility that resulted from such an investment. Students who got into universities were sent off with farewell celebrations that sometimes involved the entire community, who were also expected to give money to help with the student’s educational expenses. Once enrolled in university, however, rural Huining pupils faced significant disadvantages in competition with their urban classmates, owing to their relative lack of cultural capital and to financial disadvantages; diligence in studying was the only advantage that they had over their urban counterparts. After graduation, these Huining students were greatly disadvantaged in the urban job market, since they lacked both urban residential registration and strong urban social networks. While they received some assistance from social networks consisting of other university graduates from their hometown, such networks were far weaker and smaller than the social networks enjoyed by long-term urban residents. University graduates also had the option of returning to Huining to serve in the county government, but this option often entailed accepting a salary and position that was much lower than that which university graduates had come to expect, even when they were comparing their own job options with the opportunities provided by the county government.
to earlier cohorts of university graduates.

"Changing fate" sheds light on experiences of education and upward mobility among students from one of China’s poorest rural regions, who are under-represented in the scholarship on Chinese pathways to university degrees. This book is thus very valuable for students and scholars who wish to gain a broader view of the possibilities and limitations of upward mobility in contemporary Chinese society.

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Renegade dreams: living through injury in gangland Chicago. xxii, 250 pp., bibliogr. Chicago: Univ. Press, 2014. £15.00 (paper)

Renegade dreams has been very well received, winning the C. Wright Mills Award while accruing honourable mentions for several other book prizes. It deftly unpacks the intersectionalities of urban life, race, gang violence, crime, policing, disability, and health, drawing on several traditions of Chicago anthropology and sociology in both method and ethnographic focus. It is also incredibly well written. I read it cover to cover not because I had to, but because I could not put it down. Twice the text brought tears to my eyes when reading passages purveying not literary sentimentalism but the deeper realities of renegade aspirations and injured lives.

Laurence Ralph’s commitment to the ‘real’ remains a constant throughout the book, and, like the theories he engages, it remains forcefully understated. Conceptually located in relation to the work of William Julius Wilson, John and Jean Comaroff, Sudhir Venkatesh, Loïc Wacquant, Philippe Bourgois, Vincent Brown, and Veena Das, the theory remains embedded within the ethnography, and is expanded in endnotes rather than dominating the text. Based on several years of fieldwork in ‘Eastwood’, a Chicago West Side neighbourhood with its notorious Divine Knights gang, the study reframes our understanding of ‘black ghetto life’ through the analytic of injury, providing a concrete focus on the disabilities caused by violence, a nuanced prism for reframing micro-macro relations, and a generative potentiality of social transformation through the resilient arts of ‘dreaming’ alternative futures.

Ralph’s initial paradigm shifts are bold and clear. Most inner city violence does not result in the deaths that dominate mainstream media, but rather in a broader range of injuries, from broken limbs and paralysed spines to the more mundane anxieties of parents and children navigating the violent vulnerabilities of everyday life: stray bullets, peer pressure, predatory police. Injury is not just the dominant condition of inner city black experience; it is an historically and culturally constituted condition, linking the labour relations of the Great Migration and the utopian goals of the Great Society to the decline in Midwestern manufacturing; the decommissioning of railroads (and the historically black Pullman Porter industry located in Chicago’s South and West Sides); as well as the rise of gang culture, with its automatic weapons, drugs, and aesthetics of self-fashioning.
Through this calibrated analytic of injury, Ralph challenges the reification of an ‘isolated’ inner city ghetto, reframing it within the broader political economies of heroin and cocaine production, racialized class formation, municipal investments, gentrification projects, and city policing; also drawing attention to the histories of black middle-class civic activism and respectability that the dominant discourses of the ghetto obscure. Even the most ruthless killers of the Divine Knights gang, we learn, inherited their organization from leading actors of neighbourhood reconstruction who worked for city block grants in the 1960s, when gang members were recognized as civil rights activists.

The chapters focus on distinct themes: local community responses to urban development initiatives that disempower the very people they purport to uplift; black lives in and out of ‘juvie’ (juvenile detention centres) and jail; the civil society organizations of churches, hospitals, and rehab programmes that form unlikely alliances with addicts and drug dealers; and the moral economies of the physically disabled, including those living with AIDS, who convert their injuries into forms of cultural capital and credibility used to heal communities. It is through the details that Ralph’s ethnography shines: explaining how the ‘fetish’ of gym shoes and the ranked codification of styles reveal fantasies of agency, orders of foot soldiers (and thus of gang administration), and layers of historical consciousness as ‘renegade footwear’; unpacking the semantics of the gang leader’s cane, formerly a symbol of gang eldership and unity, now an icon of injury and disability; and explicating discourses of ‘keeping it real’ associated with drug dealing and consumption. This last echoes a gangsta rap soundtrack in which the real and the fake are always mutually implicated in assessments of rumour, trust, dissimulation, and associated strategies of second-guessing, posing, disposing, and surviving – what Ralph calls ‘the chess game’ of getting by and getting ahead.

The picture that emerges from this study is not an isolated world of broken relationships, but a connected world of strength and resilience that remains systematically pathologized by mainstream scholarship and media. My only criticism is a desire for more material on the kinship, family, and household relations in which Ralph’s dramatis personae are located, especially given another important sub-argument in the text: that gangs do not compensate for ‘broken’ families, but incorporate them in patterns of alternating generations (grandparents and grandchildren; granduncles and grandnephews).

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After another intense, yet amazing, class in Capoeira Angola, our student conversation soon turned to the powerful personality of our teacher, Mestre Moraes. Seeking to shed some light on him, one initiate described how during the late 1970s in Rio de Janeiro, Moraes
would regularly attend street capoeira events (*rodas*). These *rodas* can be very dangerous places in which to *jogar* (play) capoeira, as real fights, with weapons, or assaults by multiple assailants are an actual risk. Moraes was known for showing up with just his pregnant wife and one student. As an Angoleiro, he would preface his participation by first drawing magical symbols on the ground, evoking protection, and then playing a loose swaying broken-rhythm game that struck other capoeristas as strange yet intimidating. At times facing aggressive, dangerous partners, Moraes would respond with a rarely seen technical skill and then leave without saying a word to anyone. Capoeristas would begin to whisper: ‘Be careful, he is a Mandingueiro from Bahia’. In other words, hailing from Bahia, he had access to secret African magical powers.

As foreign students, many of us took note of, thought about, witnessed, and were faced with Moraes’s power and were always left amazed, confused, and happy at our good fortune. In *Power in practice*, Sergio González Varela describes how he apprenticed himself to those teachers who had trained with Moraes in order to explore the idea of power from an initiate’s standpoint. As have so many students who had come before him, Varela asks: what is this power, and where does it originate? How does one access, cultivate, and test it? Finally, how can it inform anthropological ideas of power?

The book makes for easy reading with its themes unfolding and building off one another as Varela goes deeper into the art to explore the proficiency which Angoleiros seek. In this way, it has much in common with the accounts of apprenticeship written by other martial art scholars. The first chapters provide a basic social history of capoeira as it developed around Salvador from the 1930s to the present. In chapter 3 the author introduces the idea of the invulnerable body, or *corpo fechado*, suggesting that the facility to manifest a *corpo fechado* results from the ability of the master to call upon the power of the ancestors from whom he claims descent.
Chapter 4 takes us to the heart of the art, declaring that: ‘Mandinga is what makes and defines a *mestre*’ (p. 100). In other words, mandinga is quality that can be seen and felt in a *mestre*’s playing: ever smiling, nimble, and light as he confuses, overwhelms, and amazes those he faces in the *roda*. His mastery arises not through rational strategizing but through an inner-directed portal to another realm. Chapter 5 addresses the seemingly amorality of capoeira, where, always masking one’s true intent, the *mestre* balances a playful violence, or violent playfulness, in the *roda* with either the need for self-preservation or the teaching of a student about the dangers of a morally neutral, if not a downright hostile, world. This is a morality so different from the Manichaean ethics that many martial arts teachers espouse to parents of potential students today. Moraes was also always a stickler for playing the accompanying music perfectly. No beginner was allowed to play the three *berimbau* (musical bows) that lead the ensemble. As chapter 6 explains, it is felt that these musical instruments gain sentience in the right hands; their sounds and rhythms can teach and guide those who are willing to listen.

*Power in practice* builds upon and deepens Greg Downey’s interest in embodiment and learning (‘Listening to capoeira’, *Ethnomusicology* 46: 3, 2002), and J. Lowell Lewis’s semiotic analysis of capoeira (*Ring of liberation*, 1992). Varela takes the reader deep into capoeira masters’ cosmologies in order to explore the seemingly effortless ability of those who have mastered such concepts as mandinga, *corpo fechado*, and *axé* (cosmic energy). These are concepts that capoeira students hear about all the time, but rarely understand. With only 147 pages of text, this monograph’s brevity is its only weakness. A longer version would have provided the reader with a deeper, more vivid experience of Capoeira Angola in Bahia. However, the black-and-white photographs in each chapter allow the reader to identify the book’s main characters and see key aspects of capoeira. Not only of interest to practitioners of capoeira, this ethnography will also appeal to those interested in the concepts of power, alterity, ritual, and religion.

MICHAEL J. RYAN
*SUNY*

*Intersections*

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In The nature of the path: reading a West African road, the historian Marcus Filippello examines postcolonial history through the lens of the material and natural environments in which people dwell during the course of their daily lives. By focusing particularly on the cultural history of a regional road cutting across the forested valleys of Southeastern Benin, Filippello explores how the Yorùbá-speaking Òhọri communities residing alongside it negotiate their sense of identity through the road’s physical and metaphysical space. Based on more than one hundred interviews conducted in 2006, 2007, and 2011, and extensive archival research, the author retraces how these Òhọri groups narrate and construct their own history in relation to the road, which connects not only people and places but also the past and the present, and acts as a cosmological horizon for a better future.

In Filippello’s dense historical ethnography, the so-called Pobé-Ketu road – named after the regional Yorùbá towns it connects – emerges as a polysemic signifier that the local Òhọri groups experience as ‘physical space, palimpsest, and a metaphor’ (p. 137). As much as a connection to the adjacent Lapa valley, the road and the paths that have historically preceded it also constitute an imaginative resource through which the Òhọri articulate their relationship to their powerful Yorùbá neighbours, the Beninese state, and the wider world. The road, as a multi-layered material manifestation of successive and overlapping political cultures, functions, according to Filippello, as ‘a mnemonic device … on which Òhọri allegorically “record” their memories and perceptions of changing relationships with the natural and material worlds’ (p. 9).

People’s narratives about the shifting meaning of the road for the local community have come to constitute potent counter-hegemonic histories that sustain the Òhọri communities’ strong sense of autonomy and independence vis-à-vis their erstwhile slave-trading Yorùbá neighbours, the French colonial regime, and later the Beninese state. Filippello’s opening vignette illustrates the shifting moral valences of the road beautifully. In what is perhaps the most stirring rendition of Òhọri narrative in the book, he vividly describes the unforgiving nature of the enormous kapok trees that exhaust even the heavy machinery that the French contractors are employing to cut down the forest after President Kérékou’s Marxist government had awarded them the contract to repair and rebuild the road in 1982. Frustrated with the lack of progress, the French lead engineer ultimately orders one of the local workers to take down the trees directly with his bulldozer. As the local account has it, the worker and the bulldozer vanish immediately after the first trees fall and are never seen again. They had trespassed onto a sacred grove of the Òhọri-Ije homeland, the Igbo Akpa forest – a transgression entailing the disappearance of anyone not initiated into the local power structure.

For Filippello, this story ‘exemplified people’s relation to the Beninese state’ (p. 5): that is, cosmological resistance against the road was a form of political resistance against the Marxist regime, which the Òhọri perceived as oppressive in its attempts to circumscribe their political autonomy. As the author illustrates in impressive historical detail, this identification of the road with outside forces encroaching on their sacred spaces was, however, not uniform throughout time. As a means of accessing adjacent markets, the road’s materially and cosmologically productive dimensions are central tropes in Òhọri narratives. These elements cannot be understood through the simplistic terms of modernity and tradition, an opposition which continues to implicitly inform many approaches to African engagements with the outside world. As Filippello argues, the Pobé-Ketu road, like the many pathways that predated it, connects the Òhọri ancestral past to global history.
It is the primacy of Ohọri voice and perspectives, relayed in all their ambiguity, that makes The Nature of the path such an important contribution to the little-studied history of the border region between Benin and Nigeria. In sketching out how local histories are inscribed onto the Pobé-Ketu road, Filippello restores a sense of agency to Ohọri historiography. This is an achievement of considerable importance given that the colonial archive continues to function in many instances as the ultimate arbiter of truth, at the expense of the predominantly oral modes of historical transmission found throughout West Africa. In exploring how even the most mundane structures of our built environment are carriers of complex political histories, Filippello illustrates how important it is to extend the scope of what counts as an authoritative historical record to recognize the inherent historicity of material culture.

Ann Grodzins Gold’s larger body of work always has been deeply involved with these questions. As an ethnographer (in the sense of both fieldworker and author), one of Gold’s most enduring qualities is her ability to thoughtfully unsettle the otherwise grounded place of subject and object, and she continues that work in Shiptown: between rural and urban North India. At a time when the reflective turn in anthropology is often overlooked, Gold reminds us of its enduring importance, merging moving descriptions of people and their geographies with deep analyses of power and context.
Shiptown is a richly descriptive narrative of small town life in North India. Despite the discipline’s embrasure of the global and metropolitan as a way to showcase anthropology’s progressive relevance, this monograph is an important reminder that small, even provincial, towns are part of the contemporary landscape – critical nodes in the movement of ideas, things and people. If anthropology is to continue to insist that people’s everyday practices are important for understanding the ways we negotiate the mundane expectations and already existing structures of our lives, then Shiptown is an important contribution to an understanding of key relationships between the city and the countryside.

Gold tells us that she has two distinct but interconnected goals in writing: the first is to ‘offer descriptions of, and insights into, small-town life in provincial North India’, and the second to ‘contribute to an ever-growing body of literature on ethnographic practice’ (p. 1).

The book is divided into two parts. Part I begins and ends with nouns: legends, entries, colony, streets, and depths. Each chapter provides us with detailed descriptions focused on people as central to the making and remaking of meaning. How do people understand and share the mythic origins of Jahazpur (chap. 1)? How does one explain the name Shiptown given to a place on the edge of the desert and certainly landlocked? What do these shared narratives suggest about place and interpretation? As a walled town, Jahazpur is both ‘contained and permeable’ (p. 9), the walls and their entrances important points of ingress, egress, and story (chap. 2). What happens outside the walls? Can the ethnographer still write effectively about the interior if she lives outside (chap. 3)? In Jahazpur, religion often takes to the streets. How do these public spaces both divide and draw people together in celebration (chap. 4)? Finally, when ‘illegible’ populations play a central role in the narrative history of place, how might they be represented (chap. 5) and represent themselves?

Part II focuses our attention on process and action: questioning (‘landscapes’), teaching (‘hearts’), and talking (‘business’). Intimately concerned with the everyday and the
mundane, Gold often gets us there by talking about the extraordinary. Whether it is Bhairu Lal Tak who went on a hunger strike to save the always present river (chap. 6); the problems of being an anthropologist and a family member at the wedding of her Rajasthani family (chap. 7); or the unique stories of Shiptown’s market vendors, Gold notes the discrepancies. She does not show us a single monolithic town, or allow us to ask what Jahazpur is like. Instead we experience and imagine, through her prose, a polyvocal and non-linear landscape peopled with individuals who live in, and mediate, the shared structures and geographies of their lives.

Anthropology, always concerned with the larger culture, nevertheless is what it is because it is concerned with individuals and how they negotiate the worlds they live in. Shiptown is a valuable addition to an expanding body of knowledge on places in-between the village and metropole and the important role they play in the wider economy of people, things, and ideas. It is also an excellent way for students to ‘see’ anthropology and experience an ethnographic text in all its honesty and messiness.

ALICIA ORY DE NICOLA

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‘City of the future’ begins with Mateusz Laszczkowski retelling a joke about Astana that he has heard from a local friend. The joke evokes the stark contrast between the city’s striking skyline and the seeming emptiness of the surrounding steppes. At the book’s end, Laszczkowski describes a return trip to Astana, years later. His friend, who previously had maintained an ironic distance from the city, now eagerly shows off his modern, high-rise apartment. Thus this ethnography of Kazakhstan’s new capital (relocated in 1997) not only
evokes the complexity and dynamism of the city’s built environment, it also reveals shifts in residents’ attitudes and relationships to it.

Laszczkowski argues that social, spatial, and political relations continually make and remake one another. The city was already familiar with tropes of constructing modernity in an empty space from Soviet times, when the city – then called Akmolinsk – was renamed Tselinograd as part of the Virgin Lands’ (tselina) campaign. This theme reappeared when Kazakhstani President Nursultan Nazarbayev announced the capital’s move from Almaty to Tselinograd (which had, for a few years, been renamed Akmola). Massive architectural projects and demographic shifts have followed. Laszczkowski builds on work by Alima Bissenova, Catherine Alexander, Victor Buchli, and Natalie Koch, while offering new insight by engaging with a wide range of Astana residents of broadly lower- and middle-class status whom he encountered through different networks. He looks across generations at long-time residents and newcomers alike. He admits that a book about either non-Russian-speaking poor Kazakh rural migrants or urban elites would have looked very different, but argues that this ‘relativity of perspectives is … a feature of both city life and the ethnographic enterprise’ (p. 25). Since the book’s publication, the city has been renamed Nur-Sultan, after Kazakhstan’s first President. This change (in March 2019), and residents’ petitions against it, offers further evidence for Laszczkowski’s argument regarding the interdependence of space, politics, and social relations.

‘City of the future’ is organized into six chapters. Laszczkowski begins by examining the construction of spectacular new buildings on the new Left Bank, offering an overview of official discourse surrounding the city and its role as a modernizing force for the country as a whole. Chapter 2 examines the personal experiences of recent migrants to the city from other parts of Kazakhstan, revealing the mixture of aspiration to, and bitterness at exclusion from, the modernization and urbanization that the city seemed to offer. Chapter 3
focuses on long-time residents of the city and their expressions of nostalgia for Soviet-era Tselinograd. Chapter 4 examines the celebration of a public holiday in a public square, revealing tensions between old and new, rural and urban, Kazakh and non-Kazakh residents. Chapter 5 shifts from public space to the residential courtyard (dvor), common in Soviet-era apartment complexes, and the politics of its upkeep. The last chapter looks at Encounter, a team game for young adults that blends elements of virtual, on-line interaction with active engagement with the built environment, offering players a way to actively reimagine their environs. Laszczkowski argues that despite players’ insistence that the game is in no way political, it nonetheless, like other forms of play, offers novel engagements with, and imaginings of, the city and has the potential for political significance.

Laszczkowski employs diverse techniques for engaging with people and spaces, taking walks through Soviet-era courtyards with long-standing residents of the neighbourhood, who narrate the spaces’ histories and their own personal memories; examining the local politics of the courtyard within his own residence; and joining in as Encounter teams participate in playful reanimations of the city. This is perhaps the greatest contribution the book makes, encouraging urban anthropologists to experiment with methods for following people’s complex engagements with and through cities. However, this rich ethnography of citizens’ diverse engagements with the city could have more boldly thought through the implications of the theories employed throughout the monograph. For example, in chapter 6, Laszczkowski compares Encounter to surrealist art and cites Clifford’s comparison of ethnography to surrealism. Rather than pointing out similarities, what if he had then called upon anthropologists to approach fieldwork as a game of Encounter, pointing out the ways we, too, engage in reanimating new spaces with traces of the past?

‘City of the future’ offers a welcome addition to the anthropology of Central Asia. Written in an engaging and accessible style, it invites scholars to think about ethnographic
encounters with the built environment in new ways. Laszczkowski moves beyond the sci-fi skyline of Nur-Sultan’s Left Bank to reveal the less impressive buildings on the other side of the river, the nooks and crannies in-between, and the residents who make jokes about the modernization the city promises, even as they strive to become part of it.

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Azan on the moon: entangling modernity along Tajikistan's Pamir highway. xx, 216 pp., maps, illus., bibliogr. Pittsburgh: Univ. Press, 2017. £20.67 (paper)

How far and disconnected does a place need to be if it is to be considered as ‘remote’? What is the relationship between remoteness, infrastructure, and modernity? In what ways can modernity be produced and lived in remote locations? These questions are at the core of Till Mostowlansky’s Azan on the moon. He offers a thorough, fresh ethnographic examination of eastern Tajikistan’s Murghab district, as well as of the settlements along the Pamir Highway. Murghab is inhabited by Muslims Sunni and Shi’i Ismaili who communicate mainly in Kyrgyz and Russian, and more recently also in Tajik, and has a population of approximately 7,000. A high-altitude plateau with an average elevation of 4,000 metres above sea level, Murghab and its surrounding landscapes are regularly described by locals and travellers as resembling the moon’s surface. The phrase ‘Azan on the moon’ is used by the author to convey both the ongoing expressions of Muslim practice among those living along the Pamir Highway, and their experiences of life in the arid, rocky, and, indeed, remote place where they live. Yet, he reminds us, inhabiting ‘the moon’ also requires its dwellers’ close engagement with debates about science, technology, infrastructure, and modernity, as well as with historical and more recent projects of modernization and development.

Through arguing that modernity becomes ‘entangled’ with the people and projects along the Pamir Highway, Azan on the moon contributes to existing anthropological debates by showing the ways in which modernity ‘does not designate a particular chronological period or particular institutional forms’ (p. 26), and that remoteness and marginality are not conflicting sides of modernity. The ways in which entangled forms of modernity are shaped and experienced by local people along this stretch of the Pamir Highway are brilliantly elucidated through the book’s ethnographic passages. These include, for instance, people’s family histories and their reminiscences about diverse projects of Soviet infrastructure, including the conversion of Murghab into a vital hub for Moscow’s system of provisioning, and the construction of ‘the road’ itself (1931-74). The ethnography also focuses on the years after Tajikistan’s Independence, particularly with the end of the central provisioning from Moscow and its subsidies, and the civil war that severely affected this district between 1992
and 1997. Against the background of the war’s blockages and resulting food shortages, Murghab and its population were marginalized in different ways. In this respect, the author’s discussion of the role played by the movements of Islamic reform in Murghab (including the now banned Tablighi Jama’at with its local followers called *davaatchy*) is especially interesting. Different registers of modernity that interweave movements of Islamic reform, AKDN development programmes, and Soviet-built roads show how, for the local population, modernity is embraced as a multi-layered and unfinished project, and a way of life that many strive to inhabit and also perfect.

Although modernity is underpinned by past projects and visions of the future in which notions of progress are salient, the multiplicity of forms of embracing modernity in Murghab are not simply linear and teleological. Mostowlansky shows how in everyday sociality — including attending ceremonies for a town visit by Tajikistan’s President, registering a mosque as a place of worship, watching Russian TV programmes, and sharing a seat in a cramped jeep — processes of statecraft and modernity come together in unpredictable ways. More recently, the bilateral agreements for co-operation between Tajikistan and China have paved the way for the cumulative presence of Chinese projects in the country. At an historical, temporal, and geographical crossroads such as Murghab, Soviet, Muslim Ismaili, Tajik nationalist, and Chinese-driven modernity projects converge in unique and perplexing ways. Such entangled modernities, the author concludes, are implicated in the shaping of different ideas about the future, and of Murghab’s relation to remoteness and marginality.

There is scope in the rich ethnographic data provided in the book for theoretical reflection on the key concept of ‘marginality’. A more sustained discussion of the concept might have helped to better clarify the differences and points of connections between ‘marginality’ and ‘remoteness’. At points in the text, for example, it is not entirely clear whether both concepts are being used interchangeably or if Mostowlansky is interested in the distinction between them. These minor issues, however, do not reduce the quality of *Azan on the moon*, a book that promises to be of great relevance for years to come, especially for scholars interested in development studies, the anthropology of roads and infrastructure, and the increasingly prominent study of the effects of China’s Belt and Road Initiative.

*The patient multiple* is a fascinating and well-researched book that provides an insight into healthcare-seeking behaviour in Bhutan. Here, healthcare services have changed dramatically over recent decades, with the provision of free nationwide healthcare being a top priority for Bhutan’s leaders – particularly recently as part of the government’s famous Gross National Happiness strategy. The creation of a two-option state healthcare system, with
biomedical and traditional medicine offered side-by-side in hospitals and clinics, has been crucial. Additionally, non-institutionalized alternative practices remain common and, as becomes clear in the later chapters, sometimes contested. The author, Jonathan Taee, gained entree into a notoriously hard-to-access field site in order to fully explore an under-researched Bhutanese healthcare system. He uses patient narratives combined with a large number of interviews with lay Bhutanese and medical and healing practitioners to clearly depict the multiple facets of healthcare-seeking behaviour in Bhutan.

Following on from the discussion in Annemarie Mol’s *The body multiple* (2003), Taee’s key proposals are the notion of the ‘patient multiple’, in which ‘multifarious healths’ are ‘enacted through different practices, knowledges and phenomenological experiences of illness’ (p. 55); and that of the patient as a nexus of decision-making between diverse healthcare options. He argues that patient multiplicity emerges in response to the plural healing options available, with this multiplicity formalized through the Bhutanese state medical system. Thus in chapter 1 he describes the ‘cure multiple’, utilizing the case of a woman named Pema to illustrate the complexity of many narratives of illness and healing, where episodes are not seen or reported chronologically, and where plural understandings coexist and overlap. Indeed, such complex explanations are perhaps unsurprising in a sphere where diverse modes of knowledge coexist (cf. A. Provencher & W. Wagner, eds, ‘Special Issue: Cognitive Polyphasia’, *PSR* **21**:1, 2012).

Chapter 2 explores Bhutanese traditional medicine, now very much institutionalized by the state and available alongside biomedicine in hospitals and clinics. Taee builds on the notion of biological citizenship to suggest the notion of ‘bio-traditional citizenship’, asserting that traditional medicine services are ‘creating a new type of national patient identity’ (p. 70). However, whilst Bhutan’s state-sponsored two-medicine system offers patient choice, with alternative practices left out of this institutionalization and without a formal referral system, it becomes clear that patients may in fact be left adrift amidst a plethora of healing modalities, unsure whom to consult in the event of illness. In chapter 3, Taee uses two narratives to illustrate this process: that of Sonam and Tshomo and their new baby; and that of Dechen, a 3-year-old girl whose chronic pain was attributed to the vengeful actions of a local deity. Here we witness the paralysis of caregivers as they try to navigate multiple healing options, their uncertainty exacerbated by an absence of wider social support networks – one consequence of contemporary working patterns in Bhutan.

Chapter 4 explores Bhutan’s alternative practices, including shamanism, cutting and sucking, poison removal, and spirit possession. Here, Taee examines three different meanings of *ja né*, a disease category – one of which is treated through the unusual practice of genital sucking – to explore the changing practices of alternative healers. In contrast, chapter 5 focuses on biomedical pharmaceuticals, where patients’ changing expectations of
biomedicine’s expanding abilities to heal are set against the country’s relative lack of power in global pharmaceutical markets.

Taee argues that patients ‘find agentic meaningfulness in expressing or experiencing their illness through multiple patient subjectivities’ (p. 191), and the reader comes away with a detailed picture of some of the ways in which patients move within and between the different healing spheres in contemporary Bhutan. Given the dearth of literature on the topic so far, this work is an important contribution to the field. Yet questions remain about how best to serve patients: it is not clear from some of Taee’s patient narratives whether this multiplicity is advantageous to their health and/or well-being. Indeed, the cases described in chapter 3 illustrate how such multiplicity can lead to paralysing uncertainty for patients and their caregivers. Institutional doctors also frequently complain about patients’ consultation of alternative healers, leading to delays in seeking appropriate treatment, and it is not clear how patients’ and doctors’ needs might be reconciled. Addressing this, Taee suggests ‘arranging practice-plurality in such a way to ensure that patients move fluidly between treatments, gaining the health and mental benefits of this multiplicity without restricting access to vital care’ (p. 189). How this might play out in this diverse environment is perhaps a question for future research.

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Living in the Anthropocene

Using the metaphor of a compass, Latour argues for a 90-degree turn away from the long-established course by which human society moves from the local and premodern to the global and modern. We have been used to thinking of globalization as modernization: that is, that the movement towards an increasingly global scale of human interaction is synonymous with the flow of historical time. Once globalization became equated with the future, opposing it was not politically feasible. Now, however, it is becoming evident to increasing numbers of people that neither the nation-state nor the global offers us a bright future.

Latour compares the billionaires of the world with the first-class passengers on the Titanic: they know that disaster is imminent and have already secured spaces for themselves on the lifeboat. At the same time, they have invested fortunes in persuading people that climate change is a hoax. However, dreams of survival for the wealthy are utopian impossibilities – Latour calls their visions ‘Out-of-This-World’ (p. 34). Instead he wants us to move towards a fourth goal – neither local, global, nor Out-of-This-World – that he calls

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‘Terrestrial’ (p. 40). Here his vision ends in a question mark, as he consistently fails to tell us what this would mean. There may be a problem of translation between the French *terre* and English *soil*, but even so, Latour clearly advocates a renewed attachment to earth. However, he categorically struggles to elude the suspicion that he is simply grasping for security in the doomed, industrial world order that was founded by the rival nation across the channel.

To be sure, Latour’s efforts to dismantle the political categories of ‘left’ and ‘right’ cannot be dismissed as merely a strategy to avoid being categorized according to that typology. He correctly observes that this classification, invented during the French Revolution, is no longer useful if we want to understand ‘populist’ protests against the cosmopolitan elite who benefit from globalization. Both the right and the left have been ambivalent about the tension between the national and the global. Latour asks if there even existed a right and a left before the eighteenth century. At that time the concepts were used to distinguish people who wanted to change the social system from those who wanted to preserve it. If we apply the same definition today – and view globalization as *our* social system – it is not entirely clear who poses the main challenge to the system or who wants to maintain it.

Latour shows how three contemporary phenomena are connected: the deregulation of the market, increasing inequalities, and climate change denial. Since the 1980s, he notes, the ruling classes have realized that the world will not suffice for everybody’s affluence and have prioritized creating secure spaces for themselves. Donald Trump epitomizes this strategy. His electorate appears to have shared his assumption that economic growth and protectionism are compatible. On the other hand, even the opponents of protectionism at some level realize that the planet cannot indefinitely accommodate continued globalization. These contradictory messages are generating widespread unease. It is as if the ground is slipping away beneath our feet (p. 5), writes Latour. It is not just refugees and the formerly colonized who have lost their attachment to the earth, but even the former colonizers. However, people who want to safeguard their attachments and traditions are dismissed as nostalgic and regressive ‘populists’. Latour says that the ‘progressives’ have not understood what makes the ‘reactionaries’ want to hold on to their customs, but he emphasizes that the global has created a new and deformed local – a frequently ethnified political project that is just as polarizing and destructive as the globalization to which it is a reaction.

Despite these astute observations, Latour’s deliberations seem to me to be deeply paradoxical. His disparagement of what he calls the ‘obscurantist elite’ could just as well be seen as self-criticism. No less puzzling is his relentless critique of modern science given his trust in climate change research. At one point (p. 77) he even seems to suggest that climate denial is science’s fault. Climate scepticism, he suggests, follows from not sharing his own understanding of agency. References to Karl Polanyi and the explicit critique of markets, economics, and capitalism are completely new ingredients in Latour’s thinking that are not easily integrated with the remainder of his world-view. Finally – and most centrally – his musings about an earthbound, non-globalized Europe sit uneasily with the reality of the asymmetric global resource flows on which the Global North’s affluence is founded.

RALF HORNBOG

This article is protected by copyright. All rights reserved.
Andrea Murray’s *Footprints in paradise* is a collection of fascinating accounts of entrepreneurial and interpretative practices performed by Okinawans who attempt to construct ‘nature’ in the context of ecotourism. It offers a provocative contemplation about the relationship between nature and humans through tourism, calling for more nuanced examinations of the roles and motivations of the stakeholders involved.

In her introduction, Murray argues that the existing anthropological studies of tourism tend to view ecotourism as, at best, a fantasy – one that is being played out by travellers from the Global North who are ‘rescuing’ nature in the Global South from anthropogenic destruction – or, at worst, a source of environmental degradation and exploitation. Through her examination of educationally orientated ecotourism in Okinawa, she problematizes these views, arguing that ecotourism-related activities ‘encourage Okinawans to view their proximate natural environments as unique and even healing’ and shape local Okinawans’ ‘sense of place and sense of self’ (p. 6).

Chapters 1 and 2 trace the modern history of Okinawa and its tourism, including what Murray calls the ‘vulnerabilization’ of the island’s natural environment, from Imperial Japan’s colonization and resulting monocultural sugarcane farming, to the devastating Battle of Okinawa in 1945, to the massive US military base expansion since the Second World War. She weaves this history with indigenous stories of habu snakes and mongooses, the latter of which were allegedly introduced by Japanese bureaucrats as a biological pesticide to prevent habu from damaging sugarcane. Mongooses ended up threatening Okinawa rail (Yambaru kuina) and other indigenous species in the island’s Kunigami (Yambaru) region. Murray proposes that these interspecies dynamics symbolize the popular perceptions of the island’s persisting vulnerability to external forces.

Chapters 3 to 5 provide ethnographic portrayals of Okinawan ecotours that Murray joined as a participant observer, such as dolphin therapy, forest therapy, whale watching, and coral polyp planting. Recounting her conversations with the experts, guides, and other participants, the author reveals her own sensations during these experiences, including her reaction to swimming with a dolphin in a therapy session, which seeks to help people with mental illness, and her thoughts while planting polyps on damaged coral reefs with a group of volunteer scuba divers. These chapters together demonstrate that tactile, affective, and embodied interactions with natural surroundings and animals such as seeing, walking, touching, listening, and smelling rather than mere touristic ‘gazing’ (Urry, *The tourist gaze*, 1990) help Okinawans rediscover and appreciate their familiar natural environment and their own sense of place and self.

This is an absorbing ethnography, but with a few shortcomings. First, the book does not address the important intersections between environmentalism and pacifism in Okinawa. While Murray discusses coral reef monitoring and whale watching, for instance, she doesn’t discuss the most controversial environmental issue in the Kunigami region, the construction of a US Marine Corps airbase in Henoko, Ōura Bay, known as a key habitat for dugong and...
large colonies of a rare blue coral. It is Murray’s prerogative not to examine the link between the Okinawan environmentalism and educational ecotourism sphere, and its antimilitary activism and educational peace tourism domain, but it is perplexing given that these activisms and tourisms are deeply interconnected in Okinawa. Second, ecotour participants’ perspectives are in short supply. Murray’s own reflections on the ecotour activities are fascinating, but I did not quite get a sense of what her fellow tour participants were feeling and gaining from their involvement. Finally, for all the monograph’s emphasis on the production of local Okinawan knowledge through ecotourism, the book cites very few Japanese-language publications by Okinawan scholars and activists, of which there are many. The author might have been concerned about the accessibility of Japanese-language materials to the readers, but it is odd that such insights are largely overlooked.

Despite these concerns, the book is valuable as it sheds light on a topic rarely covered by Western scholars. The slim volume is immensely accessible to a wide range of readers looking for an ecotourism study that is not fixated on the guest-host dichotomy or on the debates about the socioeconomic and environmental merit of ecotourism. The book’s heavy reliance on the author’s personal observations and introspections, seeking to ‘create a path through the “maze of self-interpretation”’ (p. 12), may come across as too impressionistic and disorienting, but by including various stakeholders in her study, Murray effectively demonstrates her central claims about Okinawan ecotourism’s embodied approaches to biophysical nature. Her book certainly is an important addition to the anthropology of tourism in general and ecotourism in particular.

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The editors of Arts of living on a damaged planet have assembled a curious volume that plays with conventions to craft a serious message: conditions have become so dangerous for so many that ‘the livability of the earth is at stake’ (Ghosts, p. 176), and more-than-human arts of living are needed to enable a reimagination of the basic facts of life and the ways we come to know them. An assortment of humanist scholars and natural scientists have written short essays that produce a set of prescient myths about the Anthropocene, which have been organized into two mini-volumes (each with its own pagination): Ghosts of the Anthropocene and Monsters of the Anthropocene. The reader is left with the sense that our planetary present is a place of extreme ruination, the extent of which we are barely aware, but acknowledging that terror may lead us to reimagine our way beyond this era into a radically different collective future.

It doesn’t matter which ‘book’ you read first. The essays on ghosts describe extinctions, forgetting, and shadows of the past appearing in (or as) unexpected places and times. This section’s authors ask readers to learn how to see spectres in the landscapes of everyday lives, ghosts that have been created through the business-as-usual practices of capital and supremacist science that push progress at the expense of life. They also prepare readers to experience the haunting of multispecies deaths still to come. They wonder, ‘how can we get back to the pasts we need to see the present more clearly?’ (Ghosts, p. 2). The essays on monsters centre on reimagining being(s) and becoming(s). They describe beings that appear monstrous by narrow Enlightenment conventions, organisms that
might hold the key to reconceptualizing the symbiotic relations of the world, including human material interdependencies with other beings and the collaborative forms of survival we must cultivate. They also detail the monsters that have been made through industrial-scale forms of degradation. These authors note ‘monsters ask us to consider the wonders and terrors of symbiotic entanglement in the Anthropocene’ (Monsters, p. 2).

Counter to recent criticism of the multispecies genre from those who accuse the work of lacking critical teeth, this text is explicitly political, and based on research that breaks practical and conceptual barriers between several fields. What critics often miss is that writing like this undoes entrenched hierarchies of Western colonialism and industrial capitalism, steeped as they are in individualism, anthropocentrism, and progress. These two mini-volumes explore what else the sciences are capable of reproducing. For example, one essay asks readers to rethink the typical imaginaries of conservation biology to move our focus beyond the unitary evolutionary category of species. Other compositions ask us to dismantle the disciplinary silos of the academy that perpetuate blindness towards the understanding of more-than-human entanglements. Still others provide examples for how we can relearn local histories to resituate the present and future in ‘spacetimemattering’ (Ghosts, p. 105) – a political act that cannot stay within the familiar bounds of technocratic solutions to conventionally described problems. Such recognition is a radical form of re-cognition.

Even if this collection’s essays will not be used to craft international climate policy, they are reasonably accessible versions of more extensive research, and thus they are excellent tools for those of us who believe teaching and learning are a major avenue for change in dangerous times. However, there is at least one lacuna in these mini-volumes that I hope more multispecies anthropologists and their allies will begin to address. If these essays focus on forms of complex human and nonhuman relationality, why are the complex histories of human relationality that link directly to such existing Anthropocene entanglements left predominantly underdeveloped? Stories told by those considered Other, or those whose immediate worlds were wrecked by colonial and industrial practices of extraction, erasure, and assimilation, are largely missing. If multispecies anthropologists can ally with natural scientists to craft better tools for reimagining, why not also ally with black feminists and decolonial native scholars? Who better to flesh out the full ramifications of living with ghosts and monsters? As Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing, Nils Bubandt, Elaine Gan, and Heather Anne Swanson know, the Anthropocene demands creative narratives, but if ‘practices of storytelling matter’ (Monsters, p. 8), then it also matters which voices tell stories. I have faith that a more intimate confluence between multispecies anthropology and scholars of structural inequality and critical cultural studies will yield even more powerful arts of living. I would happily pair that hypothetical volume with this one on my bookcase and in my classroom.

AMELIA MOORE
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We read Creating dialogues shortly after rereading Roxanne Dunbar-Ortiz’s An indigenous peoples’ history of the United States (2014) and Marc Dourojeanni’s Amazonía probable y deseable (2011) – both works would have lent themselves for comparison. Hopelessness and despair overwhelmed us, as much as a sense that bad politics, rather than ethics, decency, and justice, has prevailed in the construction of nation-states in the Americas, an ongoing history which has relentlessly meant a
genocidal attack on indigenous peoples. As documented in Hanne Veber and Pirjo Kristiina Virtanen’s edited volume, the terms of the discourse have changed over the centuries, but the outcomes seem to remain the same.

Creating dialogues’ eleven chapters are divided into three sections: ‘Indigenous perceptions of leadership’, ‘Changing styles of leadership in lowland South America’, and ‘Amazonian indigenous actors in state politics’. The book’s core theme of emerging forms of indigenous political participation is thus analysed through the lens of leadership and against the backdrop of traditionally learned decision-making practices. The editors note that the various chapters’ analyses are ‘located at a juncture between what is sometimes called the “ontological turn” in anthropology, decolonization, resistance studies, and the concerns with participatory democracy and the postcolonial state of early twenty-first-century liberal postmodernity’ (p. 5). Geographically, the compilation covers the countries of Brazil, French Guiana, and, most prominently, the Andes (Bolivia, Ecuador, and Peru).

The collection’s chapters reveal that across all regions there appears to be a lack (in some cases even the dismantlement) of environmental regulations and the absence of the state, to put it mildly. More often than not, the state is mainly responsible for the deforestation, dam construction, forced migration, and delivery of concessions to private companies in the Amazonian basin, without regulation, no matter what the colour of their governments may be. Moreover, consultation with indigenous peoples is currently almost always mediated through the gift of baskets of radios, solar panels, computers, or sometimes much-needed food and medicines – in short, the equivalent of the ‘beads and trinkets’ of the colonial era.

At the same time, the bribing and misguiding of indigenous leaders create factionalism and conflicts among their people and organizations, a trend that is encouraged by extractive companies and governments, which openly ignore and manipulate indigenous civil rights. The ‘public interest’ prevails, or as the former Peruvian President Alan García expressed it: indigenous peoples are treated as the perros del hortelano (the gardener’s dogs). In response, some strong groups (like the Wampis at the headwaters of the Marañón River and its tributaries) are playing the autonomous territorial card to defend their territory. They, and others, have learnt to distrust official rhetoric.

Thus, leadership among indigenous people has moved beyond managing order in a village or maintaining relationships with neighbouring communities, as seen in the anthropological monographs of the 1940s and 1950s. Today, as we learn from reading this book’s essays, indigenous leaders work with, within, and occasionally against the state’s objectives, occasionally against NGOs, religious groups, and large multinational corporations. Instead of ‘charismatic’ leaders today we find various modes of hierarchical social organization, sometimes based on a long-held (sometimes relearned) cultural matrix. Often, magico-religious knowledge – together with university training – has become the foundation of contemporary indigenous leaders’ authority and power, frequently resulting in their alienation from their communities. The many techniques of exercising power (evasion, adaptation, and co-operation) signpost shifting expressions of leadership – variously read as egalitarian, authoritarian, charismatic, hierarchical – and indicate how resilience is manifested in a learnt ability to oscillate between techniques. The outcomes of these learnt strategies, however, rarely benefit indigenous peoples. Despite any well-intentioned international oversight of corporate or governmental abuse, we see throughout the volume’s collaborations a documentation of recurring defeat at the hands of profit-greedy corporations and inefficient and deaf political structures (cf. J.M. Cooper & C. Hunefeldt, Amazonia: environment and the law, 2013).

An aspect of indigenous leadership that is particularly well targeted in the present volume is the many layers (locally, institutionally, nationally, regionally, and internationally) through which leadership is lived, expressed, adapted, and reformulated in what is a rapidly changing
environmental and political context. We highly recommend *Creating dialogues*, especially for those who want to be informed about what is happening in Amazonia right in front of us.

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Barbara Casciarri, Munzoul A.M. Assal, and François Ireton have set themselves an ambitious goal in this volume, namely capturing multidimensional change in Sudan and pushing beyond analyses of the country’s many conflicts that often dominate news reporting and academic scholarship. The volume’s introduction sets out the theoretical stakes and draws attention to the social processes of change occurring on various scales across Sudan; processes that often escape the notice of scholarship focused on narrating macro-events such as peace agreements. The main period covered by the book nonetheless still follows a macro-events-orientated periodization, identifying the 1989 Islamist takeover and the secession of South Sudan in 2011 as singular turning points. Productively, however, the sixteen subsequent chapters, which all draw on original research in different disciplines (anthropology, history, linguistics, international relations, etc.), privilege usually marginalized perspectives and themes: for instance, the local dynamics of land allocation near Khartoum (Assal, chap. 1) or emerging forms of urban neighbourliness (Arango, chap. 6).

The book is divided into four sections, each made up of four contributions. Section I, ‘Land issues and livelihoods in the capital region and rural areas’, offers a refreshing take on land issues by shifting attention from foreign land grabbing, which has recently gained much attention in Sudan, to local practices of land management in a setting of urban sprawl. For me, the cases assembled in section II, ‘Water resources at the core of local and global interactions’, worked best in capturing the multiple dimensions and scales of changing water management, ranging from the history of ‘Sudan’s hydropolitics’ (Verhoeven, chap. 5), to exchanges in the Khartoum neighbourhood of Deim (Arango, chap. 6), domestic water supply in North Kordofan, and pastoral water management in the central region (Makki, chap. 7). Casciarri’s chapter 8 may be my favourite in the whole collection. Based on her long-term fieldwork immersion in Sudan, she analyses and compares three pastoralist groups’ access rights to water sources. She finds that tribal identity is central to determining who has a right to water and is in charge of managing access, but having an access to water also reinforces this tribal identity: ‘[D]ynamically linked, water and tribe are mutually self-reinforcing’ (p. 155). Grounded within these links between identity and water, Casciarri warns that what may seem as mere technical adjustments in water supply can have far-reaching social impacts.
Section III, ‘New actors, new spaces and new imagination on conflicts’, covers topics as diverse as the settlement of economic migrants in Khartoum (de Geoffroy, chap. 11); oil exploration and the dilemmas for pastoralists on the border between Sudan and South Sudan (Saeed, chap. 10); activism around the Darfur crisis (Jumbert, chap. 12); and the role of Asian investors in Sudan (Panozzo, chap. 9). Section IV, ‘Reshaping languages, identities and ideologies’, focuses attention on the Islamization and Arabization of state institutions (Musso, chap. 13); particularly language policy in education and public offices (Abdelhay, Abu-Manga & Miller, chap. 14), and the resulting ethnolinguistic mobilization (Manfredi, chap. 15). The book ends with an epilogue on the political situation in Sudan since 1989 by Roland Marchal.

This collection brings together mainly Sudanese, Italian, and French scholarship on Sudan. It is part of a larger conversation that tries to develop new perspectives on the area and thereby challenges scholars to rethink the at times parochial field of Sudan studies (see, e.g., S. Calkins, E. Ille & R. Rottenburg, Emerging orders in the Sudans, 2015; the special issue on ‘Rethinking Sudan studies’, in Canadian Journal for African Studies 49: 1, 2015; or S. Hale & G. Kadoda, Networks of knowledge production in Sudan, 2017). The research for this book was mainly done during the six-year interim period (2005-11) after the comprehensive peace agreement between Khartoum and the SPLM/A was signed. This was a unique time of relative stability in recent Sudanese history that was filled with much hope for the recognition of the country’s sociocultural diversity.

Missing from this otherwise comprehensive volume is the ethnographic flesh – glimpses of lived experience in Sudan, everyday voices and perspectives. This omission, however, comes as no great surprise in view of the challenges and risks involved with doing long-term fieldwork in Sudan. Overall, this book will be of great interest to all those concerned with contemporary Sudan and vested in Sudanese studies. Furthermore, by covering much ground in the study of social change, it lays a foundation for future social studies of Sudan that hopefully will pick up the threads and look at what emerges amidst or beneath ceaseless crisis and conflict.

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Amy Cox Hall, Framing a lost city: science, photography, and the making of Machu Picchu, xvii, 267 pp., illus., bibliogr. Austin: Univ. of Texas Press, 2017. £24.99 (paper)

Framing a lost city considers the role of photography in constructing the ancient site of Machu Picchu in Peru as a national and global icon, as an imaginaire of a glorious Inca past for Peru, and as an archaeological wonderland for global consumption and a UNESCO heritage site. It does this through the prism of an exhaustive study of the famous Yale expeditions in 1911, 1912, and 1914/15 under the direction of William Bingham. Analytically, Amy Cox Hall aims to use photographs, made and circulated by Bingham and his colleagues, as the central actants in the negotiation of the expedition’s values and in its dissemination, since Machu Picchu burst upon the public imagination through the expedition’s relationship with National Geographic, whose carefully crafted special issue In the wonderland of Peru (1913) fixed the image and concept of the site in the popular imaginary.
Subsequently reproduced and circulated globally, the photographs established Machu Picchu as a ‘lost civilization’, a land of mystery and archaeological riches.

The book embeds the expedition, its assumptions and practices, in a wide range of different views, from indigenous claims to the popular press. Chapters consider the excursion’s planning; the networks of both scientific and financial influence as well as patronage; cross-cultural relationships; the aesthetics of ‘discovery’; the tensions and negotiations of ownership and evaluation of cultural heritage; the expedition’s scientific racialization of local Quechua-speakers; and tensions with local constructions of a Peruvian national past. While the Yale expeditions dominate the narrative, Hall also explores the construction of Peruvian national identities, especially in local scientific, governmental, and intellectual circles. This latter discourse of identity, aided by the circulation of photographs, constructed a historical distinctiveness rooted within the ‘soil’ of lost and glorious pre-conquest achievements celebrated through Peru’s indigenismo movement. In this Hall lucidly demonstrates the blurring between the scientific and popular, between universal and local claims to value and ownership within a dynamic modernity. These are huge topics and their address is both the strength and the weakness of this volume, in that they are fully acknowledged but can seldom be satisfactorily explored. While a strength here is the demonstration of the play of images across multiple constructions of the meaning and significance of Machu Picchu, the pressing demands of the larger questions sometimes allow the photography to slip out of the analytical frame, and for the argument to lose focus.

The detailed archival work that forms the basis of Hall’s account is exhaustive and admirable, and this archival complexity is narrated with great clarity. This alone makes Framing a lost city a substantial contribution to the literature. The reader is presented with a complex network of sources through which the shifting values of the expedition pulse: particularly in considering its publication practices and its negotiations with the Peruvian government about the removal of archaeological finds. However, given this archival tour de force, the analysis seems a little prosaic. One cannot quibble with it as such, but it lacks the dynamic edge that such archival riches promise. It reads like a book that was a long time coming. The positioning literature suffers from excessive name-ticking, rather than arguments being absorbed into a holistic argument: opinion and theory too often become evidence. The framing literature has quite a conservative, even old-fashioned, feel to it given the new, and highly nuanced, work in historical and visual ethnographies we have seen in recent years. For instance, I was surprised to find no reference, either empirically or methodologically, to Eric Mueggler’s The paper road (2011), surely a very comparable exercise in critical, archivally rich expedition ethnography; nor was there mention of much of the recent work, on the one hand, of the photographically illustrated popular press and intermediality and, on the other hand, of photography in science. The argument would also have benefited from a more robust positioning in debates about nation building and national heritage. The interesting chapter on Yale and Bingham’s ongoing negotiations about export rights for archaeological finds, the rights of the national museum, and ultimately the claims of the assumptions of universal science against local national agendas, which have rumbled on into this century, lacks contemporary analytical punch. Nevertheless, despite these frustrations, the book’s strength, as noted, lies in its detailed archival work, the analytical centrality of photography, and a sense of intermedial practice that constituted the expedition and its public performances. It also makes intelligent attempts to bring multiple visual imaginaries – scientific, popular, local, and indigenous – to the understanding of the expedition and the emerging meaning of Machu Picchu in the early twentieth century.

Elizabeth Edwards
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Now Peru is mine is an experimental testimonial biography composed by Manuel Llamojha Mitma, a peasant leader who fought for the land rights of his community (Concepción, located in Ayacucho), and Jaymie Heilman, an anthropologist who has written extensively about land struggles in the Andean highlands of Peru. It joins a growing number of collaborative endeavours between anthropologists and their interlocutors that successfully temper power imbalances and passivity. The narrative tacks between Llamojha’s recounted life memories and experiences from the 1940s through the first decade of 2000, as solicited by Heilman, together with Llamojha’s diaries, newspaper articles, family memories, historical and anthropological accounts, and Llamojha’s interview with the CVR (the Truth and Reconciliation Commission of Peru), which was established to ferret out ‘truths’ with respect to what happened during the brutal years of Peru’s civil war between 1980 and 1992.

Such an unusual combination of sources creates challenges for the authors as they strive to craft a chronicle that retains the spirit of Llamojha’s written and oral communications and also sketches sufficiently the sociopolitical and historical context in which his life unfolded. While difficult to achieve, Heilman and Llamojha have done quite a good job in conveying the specific and the general without falling into a (false) tightly linear chronology or a life history. In light of other life histories of Andean political leaders that I have read, I was struck by the abrupt shifts and gaps that periodically interrupted the narrative’s flow. I see these as a product of maintaining the balance between Llamojha’s voice, Heilman’s analysis, and the dialogue between the two that inflects and shapes the book’s structure. The most problematic aspect of this balancing act is that the authors often allude to a party, leader, or events many pages before these are fully explained.

As described in the text, Llamojha stood out from other cs because of the typewriter he carried on his back all over the Peruvian highlands; his risk-taking; his travels to China, Cuba, and Russia; his voracious curiosity about history and the world; and, most of all, his persona as a trickster. Initially, he wanted to join the priesthood because he did not like manual labour. However, although he was literate and knew Latin, he was rejected because of his lack of a ‘higher education’ — shorthand for the stigma associated with his race and class. He met with a similar reception when he tried to become a soldier. Yet he continued to harbour naïve dreams of overturning the hacienda system and putting an end to abuses against campesinos by creating an army of the people and even by becoming Peru’s President.

Eventually, Llamojha came to understand the lie of the land, partly because of the abuses of hacendados in his own district. His guiding star was his literacy, which led to his increasingly knowledgeable grasp of the law and his skill in wielding it as a weapon; he carried the Peruvian constitution with him everywhere. Thus he unstintingly fought for peasants’ land rights; came to know many of the most important twentieth-century leftist leaders and organizers, becoming immersed in the internecine struggles among Peru’s leftist parties; and eventually became the President of the CCP (Peasant Confederation of Peru).

Subsequently, he suffered the consequences of his knowledge and activism. He was jailed and tortured multiple times; was an absent father; and his family endured terrible hardships, including his son’s disappearance. Concepción was the site of the second major action the Shining Path took following the burning of ballot boxes in Chuschi. Because of his reputation and activities, Llamojha was accused of being a member of the organization (which he denied), causing further horrors for him and his family.

Llamojha was no saint. Although Heilman has enormous respect for him, regarding him as a friend and a key figure in Peru’s history, he harbours no romantic illusions about him. One of the more puzzling aspects of this ‘story’ – or intertwined stories – is that because Llamojha was a trickster, one cannot necessarily take at face value how involved or not he was with the Shining Path,
or what the causes of the conflicts he had with other political parties or leaders actually were. While Llamohja was a man of great humility, he also fervently wanted the recipients of his life story to admire his ingenuity and generosity towards others. He died at age 95, frustrated by the exigencies of ageing and still tormented by his son’s disappearance, but glad that his participation in Peru’s recent history was receiving recognition. This book makes significant contributions to a deeper and more nuanced understanding of peasant struggles and indigenous political activism in the Peruvian Andean highlands.

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The intellectual legacy of Victor and Edith Turner. xvi, 113 pp., bibliogr. Lanham, Md.: Lexington Books, 2018. £54.95 (cloth)

The anthropologist Edith Turner died in 2016 at the age of 95. All the contributors to the The intellectual legacy of Victor and Edith Turner knew her, and the collection arose through a desire to honour her. It is therefore far more about Edie than her husband, Victor Turner (1920-83). In fact, none of the volumes on his work, such as Kathleen M. Ashley’s collection Victor Turner and the construction of cultural criticism (1990), Bobby C. Alexander’s Victor Turner revisited (1991), or Graham St John’s collection Victor Turner and contemporary cultural performance (2008), are even cited.

The volume has seven chapters, which lean more towards reflective essays than research articles. Roy Wagner’s chapter 6 is a mere three pages long, cites only two sources (one a poem), and puts forward the claim that liminality and energy are interchangeable. He also testifies to Edie’s abilities as a spiritual healer: ‘I sat and watched while she literally pulled the pain out of my left heel as though it were an inanimate object!’ (p. 88).

‘Talking about the weather: radical critical empathy and the reality of communitas’ (chap. 1) is by the Turners’ son, the anthropologist Rory Turner. Turner’s launching point is his mother’s advice for socially intimidated anthropologists in the field: ‘If you aren’t sure how to get things going, it’s always a good idea to talk about the weather’ (p. 4) – he does not observe how very British this is. This takes a deeper turn as he reflects on our need to talk about the weather in a time of climate change. Turner then commends ‘radical critical empathy’, defined as ‘the ability for a person to so deeply connect to another that they see themselves and others sharing a world together and are interested in mutual well-being’ (pp. 6-7). This is indeed radical empathy, but I would have been grateful if he would have explored what is intended by the qualifier ‘critical’.

The Turners were accused of ignoring the sinister possibilities of the phenomena they investigated, but Marjorie M. Snipes’s chapter 2 offers a corrective in which she acknowledges communitas’s dark side. Her case study is Donald Trump and his supporters. Snipes insightfully observes how they have attempted to extend the communitas that arose during the campaign into the administration. People never took down their campaign signs; never stopped wearing their campaign hats; while Trump continues to hold events akin to campaign rallies.

Stephen D. Glazier’s chapter 3 argues that the Turners ‘advocated discernment of religion as an alternative to dissection’ (p. 35). In a pleasing theological appropriation reminiscent of some of Vic’s own essays, Glazier draws upon Jonathan Edwards’s Distinguishing marks of a work of
the spirit of God (1744) as a parallel model. Xinyan Peng takes inspiration from Edie’s referring to Claire, a prominent figure in her ethnography, The hands feel it (1996), not as an informant, but as her friend (chap. 4). Peng considers what this might mean in her own Shanghai fieldwork in a workplace where it is regarded as a truism that you cannot be friends with your colleagues. Frank A. Salamone’s chapter 5 is ‘Jazz pilgrimage’. He begins by delineating the communitas that fans sometimes find at destinations such as the Bix Beiderbecke festival in Davenport, Iowa. The chapter is interesting, but Salamone seems to give up on the theme of pilgrimage; perhaps it becomes a metaphor for the journey of various musical forms to the destination that is jazz, but, if so, even that connection is left implicit.

The final chapter is ‘The elderly process: Edith Turner’s last fieldsite’. Here, Edie has essentially become the informant, but as she so generously did throughout her career, she is credited as one of the authors along with Dionisios Kavadias and Charlotte Dawson. Edie’s hearing and verbal abilities had so declined by 2014 that she was more an observer than a participant in her own classroom. Nevertheless, she was devastated when the University of Virginia did not renew her contract. The department, however, funded a research assistant to digitalize and analyse the daily notes she wrote as she struggled with dementia: ‘Edie compulsively observed the date, time, and weather’ (p. 99). This project was initially dubbed ‘The elderly process’ half in jest (playing off Vic’s The ritual process, 1969), but Edie was delighted with the whole thing. The intellectual legacy of Victor and Edith Turner was a good idea as well, and ‘The elderly process’ is the kindest tribute to Edie that her anthropologist admirers could have possibly devised.

The gods of anthropology have reserved a special torment for the ethnographer who returns. In Living without the dead, Piers Vitebsky powerfully and poignantly explores the deconstruction and eventual extinction of a shamanistic culture of Central India whose unique richness he has cherished and described for nearly fifty years. The Sora, an aboriginal ‘tribal’ group he first encountered in the early 1970s in the dense highland jungle of Orissa state, lived precariously, in debt bondage to neighbouring Christian and Hindu interests. Their cosmology and spiritual life revolved around a complex emotional and physical relationship with their dead kin. This relationship and the attachments and commitments that flowed from it were the province of a spectacular shamanic tradition. Vitebsky immersed himself in this living tradition during his early fieldwork, recording, analysing, explaining, participating, and almost, in effect, proselytizing it back to the Sora themselves.

Returning at intervals of about ten years, he found that the seed of Baptist Christianity that he first had encountered as a peripheral and inconsequential background element, and which ironically he himself may have, albeit inadvertently, helped to introduce and fertilize, had taken root, flourishing over time to a point where it has all but extinguished and erased the shamans and the memory of their world. Vitebsky agonizes as to why and how, across less than two generations, a people can abandon the utterly distinctive beliefs that have constituted their identity, which seemed to him to perfectly match their innermost feelings.
The essence of the shamanic cult, which Vitebsky chronicles in comprehensive, almost loving, detail, is that the shamans mediated between the Sora and their – recent and not so recent – dead loved ones, carrying messages, sharing intimacies, quarrelling, gossiping, expiating, and sometimes representing sonums, the bewildering array of forces and spiritual and physical agencies which inhabited and coloured the Sora’s animist universe. These dialogues with the dead enabled the living to comprehend their world in all of its harshness, to structure their social, sexual, and economic relations, and to manage their grief in the face of death. Vitebsky references Freud’s *Mourning and melancholia* (1917) as displaying astonishing resonance with Sora thinking. Freud’s mapping of the process of gradual withdrawal from attachment, which characterizes ‘normal’ mourning and avoids the pathological failure of this healing process which results in melancholia, is replicated in the ebb and flow of the intensity of the Sora shamanic engagement as the recently deceased start to fade from the memory of the living.

The rich animist spiritual life of the Sora entailed a cruel and negative economic concomitant, which saw them effectively sharecropping on behalf of rapacious outsiders in order to accommodate the necessities of their religious and funerary practices, particularly the purchase of buffalos for sacrifice. Vitebsky does not stint in his descriptions of the environmental harshness and poverty endured by the Sora late into the twentieth century.

Behind the granular detail of Vitenbsky’s exquisite ethnographic description and exegesis, we are aware of the encroaching panorama of emerging Indian nation building and modernity – not even the vastness of the jungle is impenetrable. Canadian Baptist missionaries active in wider Orissa had limited and sporadic contact with the Sora at the point of Vitebsky’s first engagement with them. The early missionaries were initially tolerant of what they blandly regarded as Sora ‘culture’ as opposed to religion. Just as Joel Robbins describes the Urapmin of New Guinea as being ‘troubled’ (*Becoming sinners*, 2004: 314), endeavouring to reconcile the competing cultural systems they faced when they embraced Christianity and finding themselves in a perpetual state of ‘sin’ (2004: 245-6), so younger Sora attending mainstream schools progressively felt humiliated by their lack of political agency, and sought to move beyond the victimhood of their parents, proactively evangelizing themselves into Christianity and out of the old shamanistic ways.

Vitebsky quotes a hymn of celebration (p. 200) composed by a young Baptist convert celebrating the rupture that has liberated his peers from a condition they regarded as slavery, showing them a way out of the wretchedness of feudal exploitation by exposing the old religion as complicit in that wretchedness. Yet he bitterly laments the passing of that old religion of the shamans, so distinct and heady in its flavour. Some of Vitebsky’s most intense accounts of its rituals have an almost erotic fervour (p. 42). He concludes with an appeal for an ‘endangered’ status to be considered for religions at risk of extinction. Their loss diminishes us all, not only anthropologists; although all anthropologists cannot but reflect on the disciplinary dilemmas thrown up by radical cultural change and loss in our ‘runaway world’. All anthropologists, therefore, should read this dazzling book.

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**Media and modern life**


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While research articles and edited volumes have addressed different facets of digital death practices, *Death and digital media* takes up the task of providing an aerial view. For those who are unfamiliar with the literature in the field, this volume contributes an excellent summary of important work in digital death studies from a multi-sited and interdisciplinary perspective. Co-authors Michael Arnold, Martin Gibbs, Tamara Kohn, James Meese, and Bjorn Nansen put forth a theoretical framework for making sense of mediated death, raising several key themes in their introduction: personhood, relationality, materiality, and temporality. They also approach digital death globally, covering cultural phenomena in the United States, Australia, and the United Kingdom. Spanning a range of ethnographic examples, geographical locations, and historical time periods, their book accounts for the vast scope of digital death.

The volume is organized chronologically, as well as thematically. Chapter 2 situates contemporary digital practices in longer histories of mourning and technology, especially paying attention to the growth of the death industry in the Western world. The commercialization of death rituals is tied to changes in public mourning and commemoration. In this historical overview, the authors move from eighteenth-century obituaries to the rise of mass-mediated mourning rituals, including nineteenth-century post-mortem photographs and Spiritualist practices linked to the development of photography and telegraphy in addition to communicating with the dead via telephone or radio. Their history of mediated death emphasizes other changing cultural conditions regarding the mortuary care of the dead, noting how the medicalization of death sparked the commercial funeral industry. Rather than families preparing the dead at home, mortuary rituals and funerals entered the public sphere.

Chapter 3 examines the early history of web memorialization, beginning with virtual graveyards. As a testament to the book’s focus on materiality, the authors often relate physical grave markers and material mourning rituals to their digital counterparts, comparing granite and marble headstones with on-line cemeteries, and noting how virtual graves allow for new kinds of persistence as well as ephemerality, multimedia inscriptions, and more networked forms of grief. Chapter 4 discusses the relationship between death and social media, focusing on a few case studies to highlight the new issues around platforms’ policies and changing mourning rituals. They point to the ways that social media mourning practices ‘entangle the vernacular with the institutional’ (p. 73). Again, they position on-line practices in relation to funerary rites, touching on the phenomenon of ‘funeral selfies’, self-portraits taken at funeral or memorial services and posted to platforms like Instagram.

Digital death practices have also emerged in on-line worlds such as Second Life and in digital games such as World of Warcraft as players build memorials to dead players or even hold funerals in these virtual spaces. Such tributes can become ways of animating the dead. Building on chapter 4’s discussion of how individuals negotiate over the manner in which the dead should be remembered, chapter 5 details how death practices in digital games or worlds can become sites of disruption and conflict. Chapter 6 returns to the funeral industry itself, showing how death professionals are incorporating new media into their repertoires. The authors’ findings are based on fieldwork at the International Cemetery, Cremation and Funeral Association convention. This chapter portrays an industry that is grappling with technological and cultural shifts, as green burials and less costly options grow in popularity. As such, funeral directors embrace technologies including virtual reality, QR codes, and mobile media to make their services more attractive to customers. This chapter is especially fresh and reveals how useful it is to combine studies of digital death with analyses of capitalism, innovation, and industry. At the book’s end, the authors look towards the future of digital death practices, referencing some new technologies such as post-mortem chatbots that hope to emulate the communication patterns of the dead. Finally, in her afterword, Elizabeth Hallam
emphasizes the ways ‘the social, the material, and the digital are now interrelated, if not fused, in
death practices that propel the dead across novel memorial trajectories’ (p. 154).

Death and digital media is highly accessible and will appeal to a wide range of readers. Since it is well organized and succinct, it would be useful for undergraduate teaching. The book also has the potential to reach non-academic audiences because many people are personally familiar with digital death practices. Members of the funeral industry and those involved with hospice care and grief counselling should also read this book to understand how their professions can better incorporate digital death and mourning rituals.

Tamara Kneese
University of San Francisco

Paid is a wide-ranging, often obscure, but consistently intriguing review of the ephemera (material and psychological) generated by the force we have come to call money. Consisting of twenty essays, the collection examines the physical manifestations of commerce, the cultural significance and often eventual obsolescence of these objects, and the social and economic meaning with which they are invested by humans. Emerging from a conference convened by Bill Maurer and Lana Swartz for ‘two days of discussion of transactional things’ (p. xxi), the book is impressive for the sheer diversity and range of objects it considers. The attendees included specialists from fields as diverse as archaeology, computer science, and payment experts from the Federal Reserve, in addition to industry figures who were present at the technological birth of the networks that were to evolve into Visa and Mastercard.

Following the symposium, the attendees and other writers were invited to submit short pieces discussing the items of their particular passion, the tokens and trinkets each writer viewed as significant, or just downright curious. The resulting volume’s stated aim is to pose ‘new questions about what money is, how the act of payment takes place, and whether it is time for a reconsideration of value itself’ (p. xviii). Thus, Maurer and Swartz have gathered together an inquiring and well-curated mix of discussions around artefacts ranging from stones and shells to dongles and Dogecoin. Their uniting concern in this work is to reflect upon the social history of each tool or totem from the past, and to note the human behaviours and attitudes that recur across distant centuries and disparate cultures. Each chapter also features a selection of striking images to support the text.

As also implied in the ‘other things’ of the title, Maurer and Swartz acknowledge that this volume surveys history’s miscellany according to the interests of its various contributors, as much as it seeks to definitively answer how humans conceptualize or symbolize value. As is noted in the introduction: ‘This book is a catalogue for a museum exhibition that never happened’ (p. xv). From dentalium shells, used in trading, measured via tattoo lines on a chieftain’s arm, binding communities together with reverence for tradition, to today’s convenient and anonymous mobile payment technologies, the question of value is seen to shift and evolve according to scientific and historical contexts.
The editors emphasize in the introduction that ‘money of account, recorded in transactional records, long predated the minting of coin’ (p. xvi), and our world of cards and chips and magnetic strips (and abidingly, for the foreseeable future across much of the planet, cash) is but the latest iteration in the ancient human practice of imbuing abstract physical objects with a value that can be trusted, revered, feared, or suspected in equal turn. The technological, the social, the political, the personal, and the sometimes quasi-mystical nature of this value is reflected in these objects over millennia, as is society’s collective and capricious sense of from where this value derives.

Some of the book’s chapters aspire to be less philosophical and instead present brief social and technological histories of the objects with which they are concerned. From Stearns’s authoritative delineation of the magnetic strip and chip-and-PIN development in chapter 4, to Maurer’s discussion in chapter 10 of the power and mystique of signatures (both analogue and digital), Paid is admirable for the range of cultural artefacts it considers. The modern or, sometimes hauntingly, the very recently obsolete exist alongside curios from antiquity. These pages carry within them something of the whistling echo of our own transience, our changing grasp of that which we consider to be valuable. It is perhaps fitting that the final piece in this collection is Finn Brunton’s essay on silver, in which the ‘precious metal’ commodity is juxtaposed and considered against the emerging possibilities and complexities of encryption technology, such as Bitcoin.

This wide-ranging book charts the evolution of the transactional as governed by the exigencies of the market, the acceleration of technological change, and the crucial requirements of convenience and security. However, the mechanisms of payment are also considered in regard to the personal and social resonance with which different cultures invest that which jingles pleasantly in their pockets, flickers with transient efficiency across the screens of their phones, or lies inked upon their flesh, indelible as community. Paid earns its place as an artefact itself worthy of reference and contemplation.

University of Wollongong

There is an account in chapter 3 of Pál Nyíri’s Reporting for China in which a couple of Chinese correspondents reflect on their reporting of the Egyptian revolution of 2011. They explain how, while their Western colleagues saw the story as a failed transition to democracy, Chinese journalists saw the story as the collapse of a great country after the ousting of the strong authority that had held it together. The point of these reflections is that both American and Chinese journalists can struggle to work professionally, and report honestly and accurately, while telling their audiences quite different ‘truths’, which are rooted in the very different political, economic, and historical contexts that make their reportage meaningful.

This volume’s essential argument is thus contained in the second half of the title: ‘how Chinese correspondents work with the world’. Chinese journalists work with and within global mediascapes in an effort to produce a ‘Chinese voice’. This concept has a dual
meaning, encompassing the need to find and frame news that will be of interest to audiences back in China, while establishing a Chinese news perspective that is different from the perspective of the Western media that currently dominates international news coverage.

A crucial theme of the book, then, is how to take journalists’ agency seriously in a state in which journalists and news bloggers are imprisoned, and a vast state political machine structures access to information. The Chinese journalists with whom Nyíri spoke bristle at their reduction to any of the familiar stereotypes: willing party ideologues, cynical party hacks, or courageous warriors for truth. Chinese reportage seeks to promote national cohesion, support national self-interest, and offers a Chinese voice on global affairs, but what journalists see as being of “national interest” is not always what the state considers relevant.

The broader context of Reporting for China is the expansion over the past decade of foreign correspondents in Chinese media, both in the private and the Party-sponsored central domains. As the Chinese begin to enter into the wider world in their millions, they grow increasingly curious about that world, and China’s place in it. As a result, while North American and Western European international coverage is diminishing owing to falling advertising revenue and consumer access to free digital news, Chinese foreign bureaus are increasing in number, particularly in the state-subsidized central media sector.

However, the goal of creating new international networks of correspondents is not only driven by a Chinese desire to know more about a world with which China is increasingly interconnected: there is also a strong emphasis on writing in English and getting the Chinese perspective ‘out there’ to the wider world, with Africa in particular as a staging ground for China’s media products. Nyíri’s correspondents describe how they learnt to stop following the lead of Western media when deciding what events were important, thus allowing them to create a Chinese perspective, and, ultimately, a Chinese voice in and about the news.

Reporting for China is based on ethnographic interviews with more than seventy foreign correspondents, stringers, and foreign desk editors in North America, Europe, the Middle East, and Africa, as well as China. Nyíri built relationships with some of these through repeated visits, and additional conversations by telephone and e-mail. He also relied on texts, including both news stories and blog posts, and microblogging on WeChat. If the impossibility of a newsroom-centred ethnography of the Chinese media means there must be a lack of thick description, it is a lack of which Nyíri is conscious.

One of the text’s disappointments is its failure to link its analysis to the larger literature in the anthropology of news and journalism. There is little effort to connect the challenges facing these correspondents with others similarly engaged in reporting news stories within authoritarian nationalist projects (e.g. T.C. Wolf, Governing Soviet journalism, 2005; N. Roudakova, Losing Pravda, 2017). That said, this book is an interesting contribution to the growing comparative study of the ways in which journalists seek to be good professionals, writing factually within the particular contexts of political power and economic incentives, in ways that provide symbolic tools for readers to interpret, and connect them to, the wider world beyond themselves. Highly readable, this book could be very successful in an undergraduate course as a catalyst for discussions about contested meanings of truth, ‘bias’, and power that move beyond any simplistic assumptions about censorship in autocratic states.
Within anthropological endeavours to understand ageing populations, the impact of digital technologies is quite a recent concern. This volume, *Aging and the digital life course*, which sets out to ‘reveal and unravel the complexities surrounding the emergent technologies and socio-technical practices encountered within the later life course’ (p. viii), will be an important milestone in this quest. Both editors, David Prendergast and Chiara Garattini, are experienced anthropologists who have conducted long-term fieldwork in related fields, but also have experience in working with industry. The earlier ‘Intel global ageing experience’ project in which the editors were engaged as ethnographers funded by the Intel company provides them with a broad understanding of global ageing and information and communication technologies (ICTs). As such, the overall tone of the book is both academic and practical in a positive way.

The contributors to this volume have diverse research backgrounds – from anthropology to gerontology, from education to ergonomics, and from healthcare to digital music. The introduction invites readers to think critically about the very concepts of ageing and technology. While acknowledging the potential of technology to support older people in living healthier, longer, and happier lives, the book avoids assigning values to technologies as either good or bad, and avoids homogenizing older people into simple categories of ICT usage or as passive recipients of technology. Fully aware of the problems of both utopian and dystopian views which share a deterministic view of ICTs, this book sets to ‘consider technologies as part of the broader social, economic and cultural landscape’ (p. 11). These reflections upon the relationship between ageing and the use of technologies enables the whole volume to contribute to a wider debate – in and outside academia – about the consequences of technology becoming deeply embedded in daily life.

Specifically, the chapters are grouped into three sections: ‘Connection, networks and interactions’; ‘Health and wellbeing’; and ‘Life course transitions’. A wide range of subjects are considered, including social media, companion robots, chronic disease management, caregiving, gaming, migration, and data inheritance, all viewed through the lens of critical social science. Stafford in chapter 1 explores political engagement and civic participation in age-friendly communities, highlighting the significance of the inclusiveness of ICTs. We see how older people become active users of social media which are mostly designed for younger people. Singh in chapter 3 discusses in what ways constant contact media (CCM) facilitate a feeling of connectedness and may support independent living and social inclusion. In chapter 5, following a similar concern about maintaining social connectedness for those of an older age, Wherton and colleagues provide an overview of co-design projects which reduce the cultural gap between young ICTs’ designers and older users by including them in the design process. Astell’s chapter 7 eloquently illustrates the challenges and possibilities of creating technology to help people to live well with dementia. Moncur in chapter 13 establishes an intricate triangular relationship between physical life, social life, and digital life in order to scrutinize the consequences of a continued digital life after physical death. Through such studies, this book critically explores what positive ageing might look like in the future if sensitively supported and empowered by ICTs.

Anthropologists might wish for a more balanced global comparative perspective. This collection provides a generally Western-centric outlook on issues of global ageing. Also, given the challenge of integrating such a large and diverse amount of information within a single volume, the editors...
themselves admit that this ‘is only the start of a much larger and very important conversation about what we need to consider when designing technologies across the landscape of the later life course’ (p. 2). Indeed, one can envision a future for this field in which entire books are written based on each of this volume’s sections.

All in all, Aging and the digital life course is a well-evidenced and well-documented set of case studies which successfully provide the reader with a wide variety of perspectives on the initial consequences of new digital technologies for ageing populations. Thus it serves as a very valuable reference for scholars, industry professionals, policy-makers, as well as more general readers who are concerned about the consequences of digital innovations for ageing in the future.

Xinyuan Wang
UCL

Modernity’s mirrors

Fazioli, K. Patrick. The mirror of the medieval: an anthropology of the Western historical imagination. x, 195 pp., maps, figs, tables, illus., bibliogr. Oxford, New York: Berghahn Books, 2017. £78.00 (cloth)

In this remarkable book, K. Patrick Fazioli performs an adroit and long-overdue unmasking. He shows that rejection of an older anthropology’s colonial geography, which divided the world into civilized and savage, did not entail a corresponding debunking of the historicist sinness of self-styled ‘moderns’. The ‘medieval’ thus remains everything that is ‘not us’, a hiatus in the timeline of social evolution. The mirror of the medieval shows how anthropologists, archaeologists, and historians have together perpetuated a model of otherness that allows a seemingly banished prejudice to return under a new and historicist guise, one greatly favoured by the Western media, and one that prevented anthropologists from seeing seeds of their own thinking in medieval modes of inquiry. The Other is thus medieval, whether as a bogey or as a romantic dream-figure; this duality reinstates the dual representation of the savage as both noble and depraved. The ‘Dark Ages’ supposedly disrupted historical time and cultural space alike – a potent metaphor for the West’s modern foes and the threat they pose to its comfortable self-satisfaction.

Fazioli’s opening gambit is deceptively modest and local: to show that presenting the Slavic world as hopelessly mired in medieval ignorance and brutality served as an ideological justification of German expansionism throughout the twentieth century and beyond (and is paralleled by pan-Germanist attempts to hijack the history of Greece, a point that would have reinforced Fazioli’s thesis); it also provoked a reciprocal ethnogenetic imaginary, the ‘Venetic theory’. The areas of Slavic dominance were actually not lacking in cultural sophistication, and indeed arguably extended the life of classical Roman influence. Again, we could ask, what of Byzantium’s relations with ancient and modern Greece?

Archaeologists’ bounded, reified, and static model of ‘culture’ reinforced this sense of absolute rupture while proving nothing about ethnicity, language, or any of the rest of what some scholars today call intangible heritage. When we replace this simplistic image of

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culture and the speculative identifications of alleged ethnicity in the very opaque material archaeological record with the more flexible and less question-begging concept of ‘communities of practice’, as Fazioli proposes, the alleged breaks in cultural persistence suddenly give way to some surprising continuities.

Folklorists have long known that Christian religious leaders continued the use of sites sacred to pre-Christian deities; archaeologists are familiar with the phenomenon of architectural fragments, known as spolia and often representing earlier religious symbols or portraits, which later generations incorporated into the architecture of Christian places of worship. In similar vein, we now find that the careful analysis of ordinary artefacts from various sites demonstrates a much more pervasive pattern of cultural persistence and even elaboration, in terms of technical mastery and design, and a far more varied or ‘heterogeneous’ (p. 146) temporality, than had hitherto been recognized. This perspectival shift belies the conventional premise of an age that simply sundered apart the single grand road to modern civilization. The archaeological evidence, Fazioli suggests, does not support scenarios of total, rude rupture. Something analogous to religious syncretism can be identified, in varying degrees according to site and stratum, in the record of artefact production. This detritus of past habitus says little about ‘culture’ or ‘ethnicity’, but it does allow us to track the transmission of technical knowledge across the grain of previously entrenched assumptions.

In his admirable desire to sail between ‘the Scylla of social constructivism and the Charybdis of naïve positivism’ (p. 24), Fazioli attributes agency to material objects, whereas I would prefer to say that they conserve for intelligent observers interconnected traces of real-time practice. Fazioli’s turn to psychoanalysis at the book’s end, when he attributes the combined adulation and scornful denigration of the Middle Ages to the psychoanalytic phenomenon of ‘splitting’, also seems unnecessary. The binary perception of the savage as both noble and depraved has been politically expedient, serving colonialists’ assumption of the right to evaluate and thereby control their subjects. Today’s similarly bifurcated attitude to the Middle Ages allows the heirs of colonialism to treat the period both as a time of rampant and heroic masculinity – a large part of its appeal to German nationalist romanticism – and as a time of brute ignorance. Do we really need psychoanalysis to tell us that adulation and loathing are often not far apart? Fazioli’s spirited critique of the politics of scholarly ignorance is the real core of his compelling thesis, and one that has enormous resonance for those who are concerned with the persistence of racist rhetoric in Western political life today.

MICHAEL HERZFELD
Harvard University

Historians of Japanese science have sought to understand why the Japanese embraced Darwinism so quickly and enthusiastically in the late nineteenth century. They have pointed to the relative lack of understanding of modern biology, which lessened opposition, and also note the relative absence of Christianity. G. Clinton Godart, in what is the first book-length
English-language treatment of the religious reception of evolutionary theory in Japan, tells a story that differs from the usual narrative. He argues that Darwinism was not passively accepted and that it played an active and at times controversial role in helping to shape modern Japanese thought. Those who accepted it sought to reconcile their beliefs with evolutionary theory. Others saw the idea of a mindless ‘struggle for survival’ as incompatible with their view of Japan’s place in the world.

Darwin, dharma, and the divine is a timely contribution to the larger literature on the encounter between science and religion. Although Godart acknowledges that evolution was for the most part accepted in Japan, it was not without controversy. He foregrounds the religious controversies that arose and helps us see various episodes as part of a much larger story. For example, he explains how the arrival of evolutionary theory in Meiji Japan (1868-1912) occurred around the same time as the return of Christianity, setting the scene for some tensions in the relationship between the two. We learn, in chapter 1, how the American zoologist Edward S. Morse introduced Darwinism in opposition to Christianity and how the Japanese biologists who followed him continued what Godart sees as a ‘campaign against Christianity using evolutionary theory’ (p. 31). In contrast, the Protestant Christian missionary and biologist John Thomas Gulick sought to make natural selection more compatible with Christian teachings. His ideas were influential among Japanese Christian thinkers. In this way, the author provides us with a more nuanced and balanced understanding of the reception of evolutionary theory than has hitherto been presented.

Chapter 2 examines the relations between science and religion in terms of the clash between evolutionary theory and nationalistic State Shintō. A useful example is the debate between individuals such as the social Darwinist Katō Hiroyuki and the philosopher Inoue Tetsujirō regarding the meaning of the Russo-Japanese War (1904-5). Katō saw it in terms of the struggle for survival, whereas Inoue attributed Japan’s victory to moral superiority and stronger will power (p. 65).

The chapters that follow explore how religious thinkers viewed evolutionary theory. Chapter 3 looks at the Buddhist reception of evolutionary theory – not only how Buddhists approached evolution but also how evolution influenced modern Buddhist thought. Some Buddhists, such as Inoue Enryō, used evolutionary theory as a weapon against Christianity, arguing that it was more compatible with Buddhism. Godart examines also the work of the biologists Minakata Kumagusu and Oka Asajirō, both of whom were influenced by Buddhist ideas.

In chapter 4, we turn our attention to how evolutionary theory was taken up by leftist thinkers such as the anarchist Ōsugi Sakae and socialist Kita Ikki. New theories of evolution inspired by Pyotr Kropotkin and Henry Bergson helped Japanese to envision modernization and the future in a way that did not sit well with state-supported beliefs about the divine origins of their country and the myth of an unbroken imperial line dating back to Emperor Jinmu. This appropriation by the left of evolution met with a religious backlash from Shintō ideologues such as the anti-Darwinist philosopher Kihira Tadayoshi (see chap. 5). Godart helps us to view this response in the context of a reaction against Western-inspired notions of progress and modernity that culminated in a debate in Kyoto in 1942.
Chapter 6 helpfully places the post-war thought of biologist Imanishi Kinji, who rejected natural selection and drew on Buddhist ideas and the philosophy of Nishida Kitarō to arrive at a theory of evolution not based on competition. Godart sees Imanishi’s ideas as part of the legacy of the earlier wartime debate about overcoming Western-inspired modernity. These insights provide us with an invaluable window into the history of modern Japanese thought. Godart’s book will interest not only historians and philosophers, but also anthropologists keen to better understand the interaction between indigenous belief systems and foreign ideas.

MORRIS LOW

University of Queensland

WEAVER-ZERCHER, DAVID L. Martyrs mirror: a social history. xvii, 414 pp., illus., bibliogr. Baltimore, Md: Johns Hopkins Univ. Press, 2016. £37.00 (cloth)

In his attempt to understand what Thieleman van Braght’s book Martyrs mirror is, how it came to be, and why and how, after over 350 years, it remains in print, David L. Weaver-Zercher has produced a compelling exploration of the history of western Anabaptism. In Martyrs mirror: a social history, he argues that, from its first publication in 1660, van Braght’s lengthy and bloody tome has functioned as a measure of Christian faithfulness. It has also, Weaver-Zercher shows, served to emphasize elements of Anabaptist belief, advanced particular Anabaptist factions, and converted new populations.

In the first section, ‘The prehistory and production of the bloody theater’, Weaver-Zercher explores the origins of the Anabaptist movement in the Protestant Reformation. In his analysis of how persecution came to shape the Anabaptist notion that a godly life often meant torture and death, he helps readers understand why van Braght, a seventeenth-century Dutch Mennonite enjoying safety and prosperity, drew on a history of persecution ranging from biblical times to his own to restore what he saw as a drifting church. According to the author, van Braght did not just reprint earlier martyr stories, he drew on new sources and reworked others to provide examples of faith, expound particular Anabaptist ideals, and establish the Anabaptists and their Mennonite descendants as Christ’s church in a sinful world. Martyrs mirror, Weaver-Zercher argues, was a means of reinforcing Mennonite practice for generations at risk of assimilation in peaceful times.

In the second section, ‘Van Braght’s martyrology through the years’, Weaver-Zercher analyses multiple editions and translations of Martyrs mirror, from the 1685 edition illustrated with Jan Luyken’s amazingly detailed etchings; to the first North American edition, published in German by the Ephrata community in 1748-9; to North American editions published in the nineteenth and twentieth centuries in both English and German. He uses the publication history of the book in North America to chart both the shift in power and influence from European to American churches and the growing division between traditional, separatist churches and progressive, assimilationist ones. He contrasts the audiences for English and German editions, looks at the diverse goals of publishers and those who funded them, and demonstrates how the nineteenth-century editions helped define church practice.
By the beginning of the twentieth century, the divisions between traditional Old Order and conservative Mennonites and Amish and their more progressive co-religionists were obvious and growing. In the third section, ‘Contemporary approaches to Martyrs mirror’, Weaver-Zercher surveys the tensions roiling the Mennonite world and explores how different groups used the tome to achieve goals specific to their communities. Particularly fascinating is chapter 11, in which he analyses how Dirk Willems, who turned back to rescue his pursuer from drowning and so was captured and burned at the stake, has come to symbolize Mennonite faith even as his act is interpreted differently across the spectrum of Anabaptist life. Finally, Weaver-Zercher interrogates the meaning of Martyrs mirror for future generations.

The history of Martyrs mirror is a chronicle of social unrest in the Anabaptist world, and Weaver-Zercher offers compelling examples of how different editions have argued particular views of Christianity and church practice. It is less clear from his work how well the different editions have served the goals of their respective publishers. Although he supplies anecdotal evidence from readers influenced by the martyrs’ stories, he provides little analysis of how representative his informants are. Would the ultra-conservative Swartzentruber Amish find the same meaning and importance in Martyrs mirror as the more progressive Old Order Amish he interviewed in Pinecraft, Florida?

Also relatively unexplored is how van Braght’s Martyrs mirror reflected the social understandings and behavioural norms of his time and reinforced these for subsequent generations. For example, although the book offers many stories of women who died for their faith, Weaver-Zercher does not analyse van Braght’s treatment of women martyrs as a group nor does he consider whether their actions are presented differently from those of men. Consequently, this work sheds little light on whether tales of female martyrdom have served different goals in different editions, or whether female and male Mennonites might draw different lessons from them.

However, those are questions for further research. Weaver-Zercher’s Martyrs mirror is an invaluable, engaging work, a painstakingly researched resource that is accessible to general readers. The book will fascinate scholars of book history; anthropologists, particularly those interested in religious narratives and their relationship to contemporary religious practice; social and religious historians; and anyone interested in their Anabaptist past.

Karen M. Johnson-Weiner
SUNY

Practice and theory

Paul A. Erickson and Liam D. Murphy’s A history of anthropological theory gives students a chronological overview of anthropology’s guiding concepts. Paul A. Erickson and Liam D. Murphy’s writing is clear and accessible, aimed at the advanced undergraduate, and it focuses on work produced in the United States, Britain, and France. Its many student-friendly features include a timeline, in-margin definitions of key terms, and...
extensive bibliography, and a list of study questions. Given that the text is in its fifth edition, it clearly meets the needs of readers.

The main text is divided into four parts. The early history of anthropological theory (part one) begins in antiquity, working through the Enlightenment, to advances made by late nineteenth-century luminaries including Darwin, Freud, Durkheim, Weber, and Saussure. The second part describes the early twentieth-century formation of anthropology as a discrete field, focusing on American cultural anthropology, French structuralism, and British social anthropology. These are huge steps taken in a mere hundred pages, but they give an effective overview of anthropology’s emergence.

The second half describes the later twentieth century (part three) and the early twenty-first century (part four). This second half, at ninety pages, is admirably brief but also tells too complicated a story to effectively condense. Since anthropology grew from a handful of scholars on the academy’s fringe to thousands of practitioners around the globe, comprehensiveness suffers. For example, anthropological developments outside Euro-America receive just a brief mention towards the volume’s end. Histories of anthropology in Japan, Australia, South Africa, and India (to name a few) are frustrating omissions.

Such frustrations come from the challenge of delineating a domain of anthropological theory. The book’s admirable conclusion wrestles with the present absence of theoretical consensus in the field (pp. 200-2). It would be intriguing to consider the discordant quality of anthropological theorizing throughout the book. For example the cultural neo-evolutionism developed by White, Steward, Service, and Sahlins in the 1960s gets thorough coverage in part three, but this ‘Michigan school’ of anthropological theorizing (p. 115) was no longer taught at Michigan in the 1990s. How do we account for the rapid appearance and disappearance of a hypothesis within the discipline? What is it about anthropological theory that can be so ephemeral?

Might it be that anthropological theorizing takes so much energy from outside the discipline? The last half of part three covers the powerful influence of feminism, Marxism, postcolonialism, and figures who range from Said to Feyerabend, Foucault, and Bourdieu. Most of these thinkers are not anthropologists, of course, but they reshaped anthropology. Indeed the first text I encountered in my graduate program was Said’s Orientalism (1978). Isn’t this a key strength of anthropology, a discipline that reaches across disciplinary boundaries?

Thus the book indirectly raises the question ‘what does one need to know to be an anthropologist?’ In their conclusion, the authors argue for the continuing relevance of the US four-field approach. A lost cause? More useful, however, is their plea that anthropologists be in ‘dialogue with the ancestors’ (p. 197). If anthropology’s resistance to routinization is a strength, this tendency to ignore the discipline’s past is a weakness. The question, of course, is with which ancestors to engage, which raises the additional question of which anthropological dead ends might still have life, and what they might serve as examples of.

In brief, this textbook sparks a longing for a more anthropological account of anthropological theory. The chronology used here is a ready framework: one damn thing after another. Ironically, the authors lament the ‘trapeze method’ of teaching in which theorists ‘swing’ above the ground (p. 204). Too often such accounts lose contingency and context. For example:
should an anthropological approach be more sceptical of national borders? To their credit, the authors do raise questions of language and translation (p. 184). More attention could also go to the site of anthropological theorizing, the research university. How did the last century, marked by war and the end of empire, structure ideas, concepts, and influence? How did the golden era of state support for US higher education from 1940 to 1975 produce a ‘fattened anthropology’, and how do academic austerity and the rise of the ‘entrepreneurial scholar’ shape recent key developments in the discipline?

A history of anthropological theory is and accessible and concise yet thorough introduction to guiding concepts in the discipline. The volume poses many productive questions and leaves readers wishing for more contingency, difference, and argument. Reading this text is testament both to anthropology’s inherent strangeness amid the social sciences and the persistent challenges of examining the human condition.

Thomas Williamson
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Tim Ingold’s Anthropology: why it matters is a book whose title immediately raises great hopes. I, too, am deeply convinced that, in our world today, anthropology is more necessary than ever. Like Ingold, I deplore the fact that few of us bring our experience and our desire to change things to bear on the problems preoccupying our contemporaries. Ingold does this. The first words of his book, “How should we live?”, ask a basic question that does not belong merely to anthropology but also to philosophy, and more particularly to theology. The stakes are therefore high.

The book is part of the Polity ‘Why it matters’ series designed to inspire a new generation of students. Ingold says that he formulated his position, following a “watershed” moment in 1988, when he realized clearly that the biological and the cultural sides of people cannot be separated and opposed, but that “[h]umans, in short, are biosocial beings” (p. 101, original emphasis). It also dawned on him not only that social relations exist between people, but also that ‘they get inside you and make you the being you are. And they get inside the other as well’ (p. 103), a partial inexactitude originally formulated by Marx and later borrowed by Bourdieu. Why inexact: because from the very beginning, a social relationship exists both between people and inside the people involved. This led Ingold to two conclusions. The first is that ‘everything [he] had argued until then seemed irredeemably wrong’ (pp. 94-5), and the second is that a new dawn was breaking for anthropology, which would take part in constructing another way of living. This future anthropology could then have ‘the potential to transform lives’ (p. 117). I will now examine these two points, which are deserving of scrutiny.

To show that what he had learnt before 1988 was ‘wrong’, Ingold conducts a critical examination of the history of anthropology from its origins to the present day. At a forced march he successively summarizes functionalism, structuralism, cultural ecology, and sociobiology, with a few allusions to modernity and postmodernity (p. 93). The overview contains some very fine passages, for instance his critique of the limits of Barth’s transactionalism and of cultural ecology. In passing he criticizes the ‘essentialist’ theses on the identity of peoples or individuals, but this has become a familiar refrain among anthropologists. His critique of sociobiology, developed by E.O. Wilson to explain the origin of kinship relations among humans and of altruism, is excellent. We also find
stunning formulations, such as when he writes that ‘the very excision of humanity from nature, … had been a hallmark of the Western tradition of thought from classical times’ (p. 54). I would argue that this split with nature had effects that are still with us, in the form of massive urbanization and industrialization.

The analysis of religions and mythical thinking does not seem to be one of the book’s strong points if we are to follow the comments on Irving Hallowell’s astonishment when, wanting to clarify a grammatical point, he asked his friend and informant, the Ojibwa chief William Berens, if ‘all the stones we see about us are alive’, and received the reply: ‘No! But some are’ (p. 17). What is surprising in Hallowell’s amazement, and in Ingold’s following discussion (pp. 17-20), is that neither one appears to see that this is a question of belief, or imagination, although the latter is touched on in the following discussion (p. 21). To believe is to exercise the power of the imagination, which, at all times and in all societies, can breach the bounds of the visible and the possible to engender, in the mind first of all, other worlds that will or will not exist one day. In short, without imagination there would be no religion.

Eventually we come to Ingold’s project to invent with others a new future that would at the same time be a new way for anthropologists to practise anthropology and a new future for the discipline itself. His argument consists of answering three questions: Why this project? How can it be put into practice? And with whom?

Why? Because today’s world weighs down millions of people with its negative aspects, a world in which the capitalist system has become the first world-system in the history of humankind – Ingold mentions this in passing on pages 4-8. So what’s to be done and how? Ingold’s answer is that we need ‘to ask questions of others and of the world, and to wait upon their answers’ (p. 130). I find this problematic. We all know from experience that talking with others is never enough to know them or for them to know us. This is why anthropologists’ work cannot be reduced to conversations. Not only do ethnographers need to constantly work to decentre themselves, but they also need to observe on the basis of participation in the lives of others. This requires much time, but the more we learn with others, the more we understand, and the better we come to know them and to act with them if they want to.

While participant observation is discussed, Ingold concludes (p. 17) that it is important because it can shift our position from that of knowing (epistemology) to one of being (ontology). He asserts: ‘My kind of anthropology is not in the business of “knowledge production” at all … For objective knowledge is not what we are after. What we seek, and hope to gain, is wisdom’ (pp. 8–9). The issue is no longer to act with others upon our world with the aim of reducing injustice, inequality, and oppression; it is to work with others to achieve a form of enlightenment so we may continue to live in our world. Achieving this is thus the best way ‘to build a world with room for everyone’ (p. 131). However, we do not seem to be given any clue as to how we might act with others to make a better world.

Upon closing this book I was both disappointed and frustrated. The new future for all and the new future promised to anthropology turn out, for this reader, to be merely something that Ingold wants for himself, with an added utopia for everyone. We are nevertheless grateful to the author for his determination to get anthropologists and anthropology out of the ivory towers of academe so that more can commit themselves to what is needed for the world we live and work in to become less difficult for those – the immense numbers of those – who daily suffer the painful consequences of its reproduction.
As a faculty member in the School of Conflict Management, Peacebuilding and Development and administrator of a Ph.D. programme in International Conflict Management, I view Mike McGovern’s second book, *A socialist peace?*, as a welcome, worthy, and engaging addition to the field of peace and conflict studies. The subtitle alludes to Johan Galtung’s idea of negative peace, or the absence of violence, as opposed to positive peace, which is a more restorative (and transformative) outcome to conflict within society. McGovern both proposes and then questions this idea of a socialist peace for West African Guinea, even in its negative form, because his twenty-five years of experience indicate that although the country was somehow able to stave off war, violence still seeped across its borders. Furthermore, the socialist legacy had waned by 2007 given continued political discord. The next question, and maybe the next book, then, might be to ask: was this interlude for Guinea long enough to skip over the postcolonial malaise that often triggered full-blown warfare in many other African countries?

As a country case study, Guinea seems to contradict long-held conflict theories. As the author notes: “All the macro structural factors correlating with the onset of civil war – including especially low median income, the resource curse, competing interethnic blocs, and the neighborhood effect – were in place” (p. 136). Structurally Guinea shared these roots of conflict with its neighbours Liberia and Sierra Leone, both of whom eventually succumbed to war. In this case, “[w]hat was far more unusual in Guinea were the thousands of small decisions that added up to choosing not to go to war” (p. 127). The people of Guinea, according to McGovern, had an agency, a language, a way of arguing, that was borrowed and modified from the past and provided the disparate communities with a way to communicate so that they would be heard even in times of strife and entrenchment. As a researcher identifying these linguistic breadcrumbs – especially when interlocutors choose not to do something – in real time, during heightened tension and fear especially around outsiders, seems an impossible task, yet one that he was able to achieve.

McGovern’s longitudinal ethnographic work in West Africa, especially the forest region of Guinea, afforded him the necessary access and understanding to build the case for socialist peace. One of the things anthropologists do is simply to hang around until something really significant takes place. During such high-stakes moments of crisis, the norms and expectations people have been operating with often become articulated’. He continues: “In the most productive instances of crisis, these norms are debated before one’s eyes in real time and thus hint at major structural contradictions and shifts that may be at work’ (p. 137). McGovern notes that the information during these periods of unrest is often contradictory and fragmentary with tremendous variation across small distances. Trying to piece together these fragments into a narrative that makes sense under duress, when the
proximity of conflict and violence threatens to overwhelm the researcher, is a tremendous achievement, especially when the resulting analysis and conclusions hold up almost a decade later.

As an ethnographer working just across the border in Guinea-Bissau, what I find most appealing about McGovern’s argument is the potential similarities to developments there and, I am sure, in other post-socialist countries. According to him, ‘Even failed promises may yield better outcomes in times of severe social stress than no promises at all’ (p. 4). This awareness is built out of an orientation to the future – in other words, things may be bad now, but if we come together, we can overcome our colonial yoke (see Sékou Touré’s famous 25 August 1958 speech renouncing French colonization). In Guinea-Bissau it was the agronomist and revolutionary Amilcar Cabral who introduced a socialist ethos, only to be assassinated on 20 January 1973 in Conakry just months before the country achieved independence from Portugal. Cabral’s socialist peace, while more short lived than that of Guinea, often leads journalists and academics alike to marvel at the country’s quick return to calm after a coup d’état or military putsch, and at its ability to integrate strangers and maintain an amicable ethnically plural society. What McGovern’s book demonstrates is that ‘socialist states were effective in shaping citizens’ attitudes toward the future’ (p. 14). What results is a ‘socialist’ peace in the form of a weakening, yet resilient, status quo. How long this unsteady state can maintain an absence of war is yet to be seen.

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Taking risks, edited by Julie Shayne, is a powerfully written volume that brings together fourteen scholar-activists who collectively build around three themes, which also serve as the main sections of the volume: ‘Texts, stories, and activism’, ‘Performed stories and social justice’, and ‘Activist stories from the grassroots’. The ten chapters are accompanied by Margaret Randall’s foreword, an introduction, a creative writing piece, conclusion, and afterword. Not only does the volume include a variety of interdisciplinary, transdisciplinary, and activist-scholar perspectives, it also represents a variety of work that takes place across the Americas with diasporic peoples and exiled communities, as well as in transnational and borderland areas. To represent plural voices, the volume features authors who are at various stages of their academic, or activist, careers and whose work ranges across different social movements, disciplinary spaces, and forms of creative expression (art, theatre, poetry, etc.).

The volume’s aim is threefold. First, Shayne seeks to bring together pieces that are theoretically and methodologically grounded in one or all of the following: social justice, feminism, and activist scholarship. The second of its goals is to delineate new directions in transnational work and feminist methodologies, especially those centred on qualitative storytelling. Third, the volume seeks to disrupt the silences around the institutional and structural constraints of doing this type of research, activism, or any permutation of the two. Thus the collection aspires to disrupt the divide...
that is commonly seen between activism and scholarship, while, through engaging with Sandra Harding’s concept of ‘strong objectivity’ (p. 14), injecting constructivist paradigms, precisely around working with the experiences and knowledges of marginalized groups, as a valid foundation from which to epistemologically ground research-activism.

As an interdisciplinary edited work, Taking risks is not targeted solely at the field of anthropology, although there is much theoretically, methodologically, and pedagogically that anthropologists would garner from this volume. Theoretically, the book focuses on power as a central analytic. For example, Garcia’s (chap. 6) analysis of three spaces of community media in Venezuela complicates Derrida’s observation of the interconnections between power and the archives. Garcia explores the new types of public spheres that emerge and are redefining who can create, access, and disseminate an archive in contemporary Venezuela. Villalón (chap. 9) expertly explores power through highlighting the interpersonal and structural violence that constrains immigrants as they seek to make decisions about families, homes, and jobs. Through examples such as these, the collection addresses how inclusivity and exclusivity operate on different scales and in what way certain types of power are mobilized or constrained.

Importantly, Taking risks also highlights methodological barriers and in doing so draws attention to the normative institutional practices that legitimizes certain types of knowledge and devalues others, such as research positionality, tacit knowledge, and lived experience. The volume has several pieces which highlight these tensions, such as Fleites-Lear’s (chap. 4) reflections on doing research in Cuba and how her positionality as a Cuban-American placed her in an undetermined borderland. Shayne (chap. 3) emphasizes the critical role her personal and professional ties played while collecting oral histories from Chilean exiles and Latina feminists in Vancouver. Chapter 1 by Rodríguez emphasises doing ‘justice’ to ‘stories’ and serves as an example from which students, scholars, and practitioners will benefit. In this way, the book also seeks to complicate the notion of who counts as a storyteller or story collector and what are the responsibilities, privileges, and obligations that accompany working with, and receiving, this knowledge and its subsequent dissemination.

Finally, the authors’ personal journeys are often instructive and revelatory. Marko (chap. 5) discusses the creation of the ‘medellin mi hogar’ (p. 122) archive in Colombia and the way in which she and her collaborators involved Duke undergraduates in the project. Marin (chap. 7) highlights the important role that ethnotheatre can play in academic contexts, student lives, and, most importantly, the lives of those impacted by the ongoing femicide troubling Ciudad Juárez, the focus of her activism.

Briefly put, this edited volume would be relevant for anthropology courses in ethnography, activist research, and feminist methodologies and could be placed in conversation with emerging bodies of work from the ontological turn, decolonizing anthropology, and collaborative anthropology. There are many methodological synergies as well as differences that would be constructive to tease out. Theoretically, a lively engagement between this volume’s considerations of power at an institutional, structural, and interpersonal level and practice theory would continue to advance our understandings about how, and in what way, power operates in transdisciplinary contexts and activist scholarship.

Laura Zanotti
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The flight of the condor is a 30-minute documentary film made by Valdimar T. Hafstein, Professor of Folklore, Ethnology and Museum Studies at the University of Iceland, and former Chair of Iceland’s National Commission for UNESCO, and Áslaug Einarsdóttir, a filmmaker, anthropologist, and Executive Director of Girls Rock! Iceland. Its title coincides with that of the acclaimed 1982 BBC documentary written and produced by Michael Andrews, which portrays the beauty and isolation of the condor’s landscape. Hafstein and Einarsdóttir’s film is freely available at http://flightofthecondorfilm.com/ and has subtitles in Spanish, French, English, Italian, Icelandic, and Mandarin Chinese. Presented by Hafstein, the film is a companion to his monograph Making intangible heritage: El condor pasa and other stories from UNESCO (2018).

The film begins with Hafstein stating his credentials and recounting one of his favourite stories: a folk story told at UN meetings and during coffee breaks. The narrative revolves around a letter sent by the Ministry of Foreign Affairs and Religion of Bolivia to UNESCO in 1973, expressing concerns about the appropriation and commercialization of traditional melodies by foreigners, and urging UNESCO to define folklore by international law as national property and heritage. This letter is seen as the mythical birth of the 2003 Convention for the Safeguarding of the Intangible Cultural Heritage.

The film goes on to examine both the myth and numerous versions of the melody ‘El cóndor pasa’, composed as part of a zarzuela (operetta) in 1913 by Peruvian composer and ethnomusicologist Daniel Alomía Robles (1871–1942), who collected hundreds of tunes in Peru, Bolivia, and Ecuador. The controversy around Simon and Garfunkel’s version – which did not credit Alomía Robles and earned large royalties – is viewed as a story of colonial expropriation and exploitation of the music of poor countries by US musicians, and it is central to the folk narrative surrounding the Bolivian letter to UNESCO, Hafstein tells us. However, the link between Simon and Garfunkel’s version and the 2003 Convention appears to be more than just a tale from UN meetings and coffee breaks: there exists a draft pre-evaluation entitled ‘Recommendation on the safeguarding of traditional culture and folklore’ (1989), prepared by Mr Marc Denhez, 26 March 1997, for UNESCO, which makes this connection explicit (see: S. Sharkin 2001 at http://www.folklife.si.edu/resources/Unesco/sherkin.htm). The question of the tune’s origin and authorship also has more layers of complexity. Alomía Robles based ‘El cóndor pasa’ on ‘Soy la paloma que el nido perdió’, a traditional tune in huayno, a genre also found in Bolivia. Hafstein makes us wonder: ‘Whose music is it? Is it Alomía Robles’s? Or did he merely arrange an indigenous musical piece that he had collected?’

The film subsequently adds political context to the 1973 letter to UNESCO, explaining that it was sent during the dictatorship of General Hugo Bánzzer (1971–8), which severely repressed indigenous populations and opponents, and appropriated indigenous cultural heritage, turning it into a spectacle. Viewers are told that other dictators of the time shared with Bánzzer a zeal for displays of folkloric expressions and that the appropriation of
indigenous song and dance provided Latin American dictators with an aura of popular support. Regarding this last point, invoking Pinochet – as the film does – is not totally accurate, given that his regime discouraged and often banned indigenous music and instruments, particularly from the Andes. The conclusion of the film is an emphatic question that sums up the paradox of cultural safeguarding: ‘When is protection not a means of dispossession?’

This documentary film is a gripping, entertaining, masterly crafted, and fascinating piece suited for teaching in ethnomusicology, anthropology, and heritage studies. One wonders, though, if a longer running time would have allowed some highly complex ideas to be unpacked in more detail, as well as the possibility of including views from other people (e.g. musicians, music producers, and music scholars). One would have also wished to have seen Hafstein on-site in some of the key places discussed in the documentary. These details aside, The flight of the condor is a wonderful, beautiful documentary that will undoubtedly spark the curiosity of many.

Katia Chornik
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Tigers of a different stripe: performing gender in Dominican music is a delightful and masterful book because ethnomusicologist Sydney Hutchinson is a ‘tiger’ herself – not in the sense of a trickster, but rather because she is feisty, self-confident, and assertive. In her research, she bravely plunges into the unknown, as when mastering the accordion for the folk merengue típico, a musical genre typical of the northern interior region of the Dominican Republic which has become emblematic of national identity. In this book, she has built upon her dissertation research on merengue típico in Santiago de los Caballeros, the Dominican second city, and New York to focus here on women performers and dimensions of gender in performance.

Using sources in ethnomusicology, anthropology, philosophy, gender studies, and other disciplines, Sydney Hutchinson interprets her subject, enhanced by personal anecdotes and the meticulous analysis of audiovisual recordings as a form of oral document, to weave an amazingly complex tapestry. In one sense this is not an anthropological text, yet it is that and more, as all sources are tapped in order to understand a sociocultural phenomenon. Specifically, this book offers sketches of three performers of merengue típico: one female (Fefita la Grande), one male (Tatico Henríquez), and one androgynous (Rita Indiana), framed by a chapter which applies perspectives of gender and women’s studies to merengue, bachata, and reggaetón (other genres of Dominican contemporary commercial music).

The author also offers three appendices: ‘A’, on other Dominican musical genres, traditional and commercial, to frame the merengue típico; ‘B’, on musical transcriptions and analysis of an accordion passage played by Fefita la Grande compared to the same by a male

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musician; and ‘C’, an analysis of a video-recorded performance by Fefita. Here and in chapter 5, Hutchinson uses a schematic presentation of performance analysis that she has developed, using the categories of text, movement/gesture, and interpretation, which could serve as a model for other scholars. This is followed by an extensive bibliography and a thematic index, and is illustrated by twenty photographs, seven other figures, and six tables.

Hutchinson’s style flows naturally, exuding energy and enjoyment. Her chapter titles are creative: for example, ‘Listening sideways’ or ‘Dispatch from an imaginary island’. She also provides a clear organizational framework, and, throughout the text, she carefully cross-references the topics presented. A significant strength is the author’s historical-musicological perspective, showing that this book represents but a slice in time of a continually evolving genre. The author taps her expertise in musical transcription (e.g. appendix B) and, throughout, provides meticulous verbal descriptions of musical performance; this greatly enhances her book in comparison to works on popular music by social scientists.

The weaknesses of Tigers of a different stripe include the incomplete contextualization of merengue típico within other genres of Dominican traditional music. There are errors in the definitions of palos (long-drum ensembles), cocolos’s (Anglophone island immigrants’) street theatre, the pripri social-dance, and so forth. In addition, Dominican traditional music is misconstrued as male-dominated, ignoring the non-liturgical salve of the provinces of the east and particularly Monte Plata, Santo Domingo, and San Cristóbal, which are characterized by polyrhythmic ensembles of mainly women performers of the pandero hand drum. Another observation is that the persona of the assertive woman (the so-called tigera) is actually not so unusual in the country’s Afro-Caribbean regions of the south, the coast, and the northwestern border with Haiti. However, it is unusual in the northern interior – the area of the author’s experience – which is culturally Hispanic-Caribbean. Fefita la Grande is in fact from La Línea, that is, the northern border; it is unsurprising that she is feisty.

Furthermore, some terms are not defined when introduced. A glossary would have been very useful for musical and other terms such as: pambiche, vallenato, pripri, salves, congos, maco, galoyas, chivos sin ley, comparón, chifles, concón, vèvè. The Spanish-language text could also have been better copy-edited. There are errors in translation (including cognates) and spelling, a lack of consistency in format of song texts with regard to upper- and lower-case letters, and in the use of phonetic, costumbrista transcription versus standard Spanish. Nowadays, American academic presses, given financial restraints, put an excessive burden upon the author, and thus weaken their publications. Finally, in Dominican usage, tíguere is not really synonymous with tiger. Certainly the Santo Domingo baseball team, Los Tigres del Licey, would not like being called tígueres: that is, cheeky delinquents. Nonetheless, as a gimmick to present this book, the concept of tiger provides an attractive title.

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For her doctoral research, Annelies Kusters set out to be a "deaf anthropologist researching deaf people’s life-worlds" (pp. 3-4, emphasis in text). Although there has been an increase within recent years, there is a dearth of literature within deaf studies from non-Western settings. Kusters argues that she is ideally suited to address this shortage based on her nine months of field research in Adamorobe, Ghana, a community known for its large deaf population. One of the goals of *Deaf space in Adamorobe* is to illustrate "the significance of sociocultural and historical context with regard to deaf people’s place in societies" (p. 220). Throughout the book, but especially in the first two chapters, Kusters provides substantial, accurate, and clear detail regarding Akan society. This serves as an important backdrop in order to understand how the deaf population fits into Adamorobe society. Kusters also provides historical information about the community and surrounding area, particularly detailing how deaf people have interacted with institutions such as the education system and NGOs since Ghana’s independence.

As evidenced by the title, Kusters’s main focus in the book is the concept of deaf space. This is a space in which deaf people engage in deaf sociality: that is to say, while deaf people regularly occupy the same spaces as hearing people, they also seek each other out to engage in deaf-only interactions. She argues that people do not seek out deaf spaces because of any negative experiences in hearing spaces, but rather that ‘deaf spaces are produced . . . because deaf people share their embodiment, their first language, their way of being’ (p. 20, emphasis in text). Kusters explains that deaf spaces are not rigid and can occur in any place for any amount of time. She provides many excerpts from her fieldnotes to demonstrate what deaf space interactions look like. Unfortunately, I was unconvinced by her argument for the theoretical value of the concept of deaf spaces or, indeed, that such spaces are fundamentally unique.

Kusters maintains that she wanted to write a book that would be easily accessible to anyone interested in deaf studies and therefore has intentionally left out much theoretical discussion in this text. While writing anthropological works with the intent of engaging wider audiences is admirable, her lack of engagement with anthropological theory and reference to other ethnographic studies in non-Western settings made this text read more like an interesting memoir about her experiences living in a Ghanan village than an ethnography. She very briefly mentions the concept of habitus twice in the book: once in the introduction and once in the conclusion. A richer engagement with this concept would have greatly improved her arguments regarding the deaf spaces created in Adamorobe.

Towards the end of her book, Kusters discusses the influence NGOs and foreign aid have had on the lives of deaf people in this community. In the 1960s, a deaf African-American pastor, the Reverend Andrew Foster, built schools for deaf students in Ghana and other African countries. He also provided deaf people with food aid and charitable donations. Such types of aid peaked in the 1980s and have been dwindling since, but still exist. Kusters describes several US churches that donate to Adamorobe families, as well as detailing how deaf people from Accra occasionally visit the village bearing gifts. This would have been an ideal opportunity to engage with theories and ethnographies on aid and development practices in Africa, making this book a much stronger anthropological work. Ethical issues also arise late in the book. In chapter 8, Kusters admits to procuring grants on behalf of deaf community members so that they could start small business enterprises. Some might consider this a blatant conflict of interest, and while I admire her honesty and admission that upon reflection it was probably inadvisable to distribute these grants, I can’t help but wonder the impact this had on her research overall.

These points aside, *Deaf space* provides good foundational information on Akan society and could be useful for someone going to the southern part of Ghana for the first time. Additionally,
anyone interested in the lived experiences of deaf people in a village setting would find Kusters’s lengthy and thick description interesting. However, because it succeeds in its aim to be a generalist book, it does not quite qualify as a strong example of a deaf studies ethnography.

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Title:
Review of The mirror of the medieval: an anthropology of the Western historical imagination, Fazioli, K. Patrick.

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2019-09-01

Citation:

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