

Minerva Access is the Institutional Repository of The University of Melbourne

Author/s:
Herzfeld, M

Title:
Edible identities: food as cultural heritage

Date:
2017-03

Citation:
Herzfeld, M. (2017). Edible identities: food as cultural heritage. JOURNAL OF THE ROYAL ANTHROPOLOGICAL INSTITUTE, 23 (1), pp.197-198. <https://doi.org/10.1111/1467-9655.12560>.

Persistent Link:
<https://hdl.handle.net/11343/292462>

]RUNNING HEADS:

]VERSO AND RECTO: BOOK AND FILM REVIEWS[

]t1[Book and film reviews

]ha1[Art, music, and creativity

]bref[HOCKING, BREE T. *The great reimagining: public art, urban space and the symbolic landscapes of a 'new' Northern Ireland*. xi, 232 pp., illus., bibliogr. Oxford, New York: Berghahn Books, 2015. £60.00 (cloth)

]rp[Often treated as ‘mere’ ornament, as all surface and no depth, public art (in both its institutional and non-institutional guises) has huge effects on our urban environments, not simply passively reflecting but actively creating wider social realities. Public art can communicate top-down edicts and incite grassroots insurgence, it can fashion and move us as citizens, reconstructing and reordering the body politic in both broad, sweeping statements and intimate, marginal movements. Exploring this relationship, that between ornament and social order, between physical and political structures, Hocking’s superb monograph strives to unpack this broad subject through focusing on its particular manifestation in post-Troubles Northern Ireland. Sensitive to the ability of public art to act as a truly transformative urban technology, in particular in such politically charged, post-conflict locales, Hocking’s engaging and intricate book thus shows us the ways public art can be engaged to create ‘new civic identities ... on a global stage’ as well as the means by which these ‘discourses, and the ideologies underpinning them, are contested and constrained’ (p. 3). She shows us both the Northern Irish ‘state’s vision for urban space’, its attempts to impose a particular ‘order onto civic landscapes’,

This is the author manuscript accepted for publication and has undergone full peer review but has not been through the copyediting, typesetting, pagination and proofreading process, which may lead to differences between this version and the [Version of Record](#). Please cite this article as [doi: 10.1111/ijmr.12552](#).

and the ways these visions are ‘curtailed or even upended in practice’ (p. 3); how even ‘the most controlled consumerist landscapes are open to counter-interpretation and re-appropriation’ (p. 190).

[rp1]Hocking approaches her task through an exploration of five public art initiatives undertaken since the Good Friday Agreement, a range of projects moving ‘from small-scale community projects to expensive city-centre contemporary art installations’ (p. 2). Rather than the famous sectarian murals explored by Neil Jarman, however (*Material conflicts: parades and visual displays in Northern Ireland*, 1997), the bottom-up works functioning ‘outside of the state’s imprimatur’ (p. 15), Hocking examines a range of artworks ‘explicitly commissioned or reconceptualized to inject a sense of civicness of “shared space” into landscapes undergoing significant transition’ (p. 18). Reviewing the various commissioning briefs and project documents, talking with the commissioners and artists who undertook them as well as with the locals whose life they surround, Hocking thus divulges the various ways the ‘state seeks to project itself onto a representational palimpsest that has been plagued by symbols of sectarianism and exclusion’ (p. 31), how it has attempted to reformulate the very idea of landscape through regenerative, ‘artistic’ means. She explores how the state has sought to win the peace in cultural terms, to transform society through a material as much as a political culture.

[rp1]Two clear issues emerge out of Hocking’s investigation, on the level both of the individual and of the city. The first, the creation of a consumer/touristic citizen in Northern Ireland, emerges directly through the application of what she usefully terms the ‘civic-identikit’. The civic-identikit is a clear symptom of the globally domineering (whilst academically lambasted) creative cities discourse, a situation in which public art and other urban development projects ‘harmonize symbolic forms across urban space whilst (ironically) aiming to distinguish place and bolder cultural or symbolic capital’ (p. 7). In the local scenario, then, as elsewhere around the globe, civic-identikit public art visually emerges in ‘largely abstract work overlaid with location-specific narratives or heritage references intended to add an element of local flavor or place identity to the work’ (p. 8).

What is key, however, is that these images ‘nearly always elide uncomfortable historical or social realities’, creating ‘consumable narratives for specific places denuded of their full complexity, ambiguity and contradiction’ (p. 8). This is a public art that hence art-washes its locales, camouflaging reality through its shiny steel abstractions. It is a public art of style not substance, with instrumental, economic, rather than aesthetic intentions at its core. Moreover, this civic-identikit public art serves both to occlude the past and to create a very particular future, being entirely ‘imbricated within global capital networks’, entirely embedded ‘in economic and spatial frameworks aimed at promoting tourism’ (p. 6). As Hocking argues, the ‘post-conflict spatial restructuring in Northern Ireland has promoted an idealized vision of citizen as consumer-tourist’ (p. 9), a surreal situation in which, ‘as part of a narrative of reconciliation, public art is called on to participate in peace or social work, whilst simultaneously attracting tourists and the globalized consumption of space’ (p. 186). Hocking’s civic-identikit thus creates a perverse public art in which processes ‘designed to promote peace are inseparably linked to processes to promote capital attraction’ (p. 186), in which the attempted resolution of past conflicts is employed to pave the way for a notion of development available only to the few.

[rp1[Carefully weaving together social theory and ethnographic actuality, effortlessly shifting gears between grand narratives and the quips and asides of her wide-ranging informants, Hocking’s *The great reimagining* acts not only as an excellent addition to academic work on public art, the creative city, and post-conflict resolution, but also as a perfect example of the unrivalled qualities that ethnographic research can provide. Whether taking as its focus the urban or the rural, the Global North or South, the ability of ethnography to both zoom in to the tightest of foci and pan out to the widest of angles gives it a unique ability to present us with the full picture, to depict, as in Hocking’s fine text, a world of many scales, a world in its unabridged state.

[rau[RAFAEL SCHACTER *University College London*

]bref[KHESHTI, ROSHANAK. *Modernity's ear: listening to race and gender in world music*. xx, 178 pp.,

Illus., bibliogr. New York: Univ. Press, 2015.

£17.99 (paper)

]rp[My mother was one of those parents who tried to calm her anxious son with the words, ‘Oh, honey, don’t worry, we’ll just play it by ear’. Frustrated by the implicit passivity in such phrases, I longed for inspiration to direct my muddled intentions. Roshanak Kheshti turns such common sense around. She argues that listening is agentic and fundamental in the semiotics of music. Her focus is the groovy, polemical genre of ‘world music’. In particular, she takes aim at Kinship Records, a fictitious name given to a recording company specializing in world music and where Kheshti was employed and conducted extensive fieldwork.

]rp1[*Modernity's ear* is a fresh and challenging deconstruction of the concept of the ‘culture industry’. The book is best suited for graduate students and professional academics in cultural studies, broadly speaking, who are keen on how contemporary scholars apply lofty, abstract ideas of dead, white men to the realities of a globalized world. Kheshti brings together Derrida, Freud, and Marx in innovative ways to expose world music, and its parallel partner of comparative muscology/ethnomusicology, as categories built on perception, knowledge, and control to profit ultimately off the Other.

]rp1[This is a story we have heard before. However, Kheshti goes beyond critiques of appropriation, authenticity, or exploitation by interpreting the WMCI (World Music Culture Industry) in terms of biopolitics, which is materialized through the ‘aural imagination’. The book’s chapters focus on processes of sexuality, racialization, and capitalization involved in the formation of the catchy musical genre. This is the sound that Kinship Records is looking for, the sound that affords a certain kind of identification, and the sound that ultimately Kheshti seeks to disrupt.

rp1[Kheshti lays the groundwork for her overall theory of musical semiotics by deftly showing that the early field recordings (e.g. pioneer ‘songcatcher’ Francis Densmore’s 1916 recording of Black Mountain Chief) were products of selective listening. Otherness was made legible in the name of folklore not just for the present but also for the future vis-à-vis the recorded product. The ‘business’ of listening and incorporation is not only a marketing strategy but also a complex process of identification, one that operates not through an accumulation of *significance* but through a liminality or *signifiance*, a term borrowed from Roland Barthes and Julia Kristeva.

rp1[We ‘lose ourselves’ in a sonic mix suggestive of the Malian *kora* or the Papua New Guinea rainforests and are magically elsewhere, a place of imagination facilitated by audiotechnology. Our pleasure derives from listening to the encounter involving an aesthetics of a controlled, deracialized (now legible) sonic otherness, which results in the structured feeling of cosmopolitanism. For Kheshti, WMCI profit and bourgeois cosmopolitanism necessarily involve an orientalism rooted in the colonial epistemologies of social Darwinism. ‘The titillating and taboo fantasy of miscegenation ... is sublimated through world music into the wish for hybridity, consumed in an effort to accomplish not only a pleasure rooted in desire for the other but ultimately in a narcissistic wish for fitness and adaptability of the self’ (p. 91).

rp1[In the 2004 film *The take*, Naomi Klein inserts a voiceover that accompanies a series of introductory flashes of her participation in anti-globalization protests: ‘But he had a good point. There’s only so much protesting can accomplish. At a certain point, you have to talk about what you are fighting for ...’. After five chapters of criticizing the sexualized and racialized aesthetics linked to the economics of fetishization that is central to the WMCI, the reader might rightly ask: ‘What are you [Kheshti] fighting for?’ In the epilogue, she replies with an alternative genealogy of sound recording and representation. Recuperating the method and style of Zora Neale Hurston, Kheshti suggests that we ‘cut’ against the fidelity of conventional song-catching and emphasize the noise and banter of encounters, thereby capturing the reality of aurality.

In my reading, *Modernity's ear* works most effectively from the perspective of the recorded product. In other settings (as briefly stated on p. 9), sonic semiotics based on reception theories, however agentic, become more problematic and, in my opinion, semiotic theories of intention gain more traction. In addition, the epilogue feels incomplete in substantial ways. What does it say about musicology and cultural studies when the authors most aligned with the Hurston paradigm of 'infidelity' and 'cut 'n' mix' (to borrow from Dick Hebdige) are in the business of representing rap, reggae, reggaeton, and punk? Is it possible to participate in musical capitalism with an ethical stance? Kheshti leaves us wondering. With that said, as illuminating figures of 'science' and 'fiction' such as Clifford Geertz and Ursula K. Le Guin have written, all knowledge is partial and situated. *Modernity's ear* is definitely a welcome contribution to music scholarship and cultural studies because it provides insights into an empirical case study and productively intervenes in debates on the politics and philosophy of sound, body, and power.

DEREK PARDUE Aarhus University

PANDIAN, ANAND (with a foreword by Walter Murch). *Reel world: an anthropology of creation*. xv, 339 pp.,

illus., bibliogr. Durham, N.C.: Duke Univ. Press, 2015. £18.99 (paper)

Reel world is a book propelled by two key questions. First, how is cinematic experience crafted in the Tamil film industry, and what can we learn from it about creation at large? Second, what forms of ethnographic writing can best convey these processes? To answer the first question, Pandian conducted participant observation with the production crews of dozens of Tamil films for a number of years. The book is divided into short chapters, each focusing on a specific experiential dimension of cinematic craft such as color, time, space, sound, or imagination (there are seventeen such cinematic themes). Pandian argues that the making of cinematic experience (and, by implication, creation in

general) takes place in a field of perpetual uncertainty generated by the fact that crew members, audiences, equipment, and the physical environment rarely function as expected. Filmmakers must constantly anticipate chance events and improvise within the limitations they impose, but also be open to, identify, and take advantage of the new possibilities they offer. Pandian's answer to the second question is that to properly convey the crafting of cinematic experience, the ethnographer must inhabit and become the locus of some of the same vicissitudes that saturate it. He describes in detail his frustrations and joys vis-à-vis the uncertainty that structures filmmaking as he tries to capture its emergent nature via fieldwork. He embeds in his ethnographic description his dreams, childhood memories, and family life, and uses experimental ethnographic writing such as montage, to convey what it means to inhabit this world of chance. These strategies result in one of the most detailed and evocative ethnographic descriptions of the modes of experience that structure a field of creative practice with which I am familiar.

[rp1]If the book is a *tour de force* of ethnographic description, however, its theoretical contribution to the study of creation leaves much to be desired. One of the key problems is that Pandian explains the act of creation via undertheorized tropes that have become reified in similar studies, which conceal much more than they reveal. Such reification pertains mainly to the idea that the world is a constantly changing bundle of qualities, and that filmmakers must be open to this flux. Typical statements include the following: '[O]n Vishnu's sets, new possibilities for action often seemed to erupt from the places themselves' (p. 143); '[T]his orientation involved a kind of attunement to the possibilities invested in things as they occurred, an ability to seize upon the potential borne by accidents as they erupted' (p. 144); 'The challenge lay in thinking with the vicissitudes of the sensible, in and among the things of the world, the flux of qualities and textures that carried its light' (p. 121); '[D]ancers' moves suddenly appear, gradually change, and gather in number by the hour' (p. 172). The problem with such statements is that they merely assert that creation is the result of 'diverse ways of participation in the flux of worldly life and embodied

experience' (p. 270). They do not provide us with a rigorous theory of this 'flux', of improvisation as a culturally specific way of responding to it, and of the emergent product of the two. One might argue that mystification is thereby transferred from the myth of the solitary genius artist to the world's 'becoming', 'eruption', and 'flux'; to the filmmaker's response to these features; and to the resulting 'creative transformation' (p. 139). One reason for this lingering mystification is that Pandian heavily relies on scholars such as Deleuze, Guattari, Bergson, and their contemporary offshoots, whose writings lack the specificity that can lift the anthropology of creation from much of its current vagueness, at the same time that he ignores strands of research such as semiotic and linguistic anthropological studies, one of whose classic and most developed foci has been the careful study of meaning as an emergent property of real-time communicative events that involve semiotic transactions between human and nonhuman agents. Coupled with the fact that Pandian seems to deliberately avoid complicating the theories he draws from (one rare exception is found in the book's very last endnote), the result often appears to be the reiteration of existing theoretical insights such as those found in Elizabeth Hallam and Tim Ingold's edited volume *Creativity and cultural improvisation* (2007). To become a viable theoretical field, the anthropology of creativity and creation will have to move beyond 'flux', 'potential', 'eruption', 'becoming', and 'being open' as explanations and unpack with greater care, by developing a more fine-grained analytical toolkit, the phenomena to which these reified tropes purport to refer.

[rauf] [EITAN WILF *The Hebrew University*

]bref [SCHACTER, RAFAEL. *Ornament and order: graffiti, street art and the parergon*. xxviii, 278 pp., illus., plates, bibliogr.

Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2014. £95.00 (cloth)

[rp]In recent years, graffiti and street art – long viewed as subversive urban elements – have been embraced by elite cultural institutions and government bureaucracies alike. The global art market now reliably signals its approval, with the works of luminaries such as Banksy fetching six-figure price tags, while public bodies from Northern Ireland to Malta have turned to graffiti's hip youth culture aesthetic as part of broader urban regeneration and outreach efforts. Given these developments, Rafael Schacter's *Ornament and order: graffiti, street art and the parergon* offers a welcome examination of 'Independent Public Art', that is, 'autonomously produced aesthetic production in the public sphere' (p. xix). The book explores the 'aesthetic and material relationships' (p. xxi) that define such illicit street practices, rigorously arguing for the existence of two 'distinct politico-aesthetic responses to the city itself' (p. xxvii).

[rp1]For Schacter, the symbolic expressions of the metropolis are anything but silent witnesses or mere window dressing. Rather, Independent Public Art, among which he classifies graffiti and street art, is conceived of 'as a system of communication *and* ... action' (p. xxviii, original emphasis). These artefacts serve as a form of Derridean *parergon*: that is, an ornament or frame that exists in relationship to another work, such as a building, neither wholly outside of nor part of the work in question. This aesthetic positionality, Schacter believes, imbues graffiti and street art with a broader social agency, allowing it to interrogate existing orders and regimes, while at the same time communicating alternate visions and political arrangements, and thus contributing to its status as a source of perennial anxiety.

[rp1]That said, not all of this art functions in the same way. And Schacter clearly delineates between what he sees as two key subsets of Independent Public Art. The first of these, 'consensual ornamentation' (think murals and wall drawings), aims to actively participate in the public sphere via 'harmonious' relationships and 'visual decipherability' (p. 47). In contrast, 'agonistic ornamentation', often represented by graffiti-style tagging, is defined by its 'combative modality of communication' (p. 48). Thus, while consensual ornamentation seeks to reach 'a form of understanding with the entire

city at large' (p. 63) through reasoned Habermasian discourse, its agonistic antipode furthers a Mouffian 'dissensual arena' (p. 100), where truth and power are continually contested.

[rp1]Schacter draws on a range of classic thinkers to make his case for situating graffiti and street art practices within an anthropological tradition that considers the social role of rituals, rites, performance, and ornament, as well as the political order(s) such symbolic acts and embellishments alternately critique and promote. But in a book that claims to address the dearth of ethnographic investigations into Independent Public Art practice, there's relatively little actual ethnography. Schacter carried out substantial fieldwork with the prominent Madrid art collective *Noviciado Nueve*, and was in the enviable position to provide a fly-on-the-wall account of the group's subterranean street activities. In light of this access, it is puzzling that only a handful of the author's highly engaging fieldnote-style accounts made it into an otherwise rather dense and theory-heavy book. Who are these individuals addicted to ritual 'as inscription' (p. 216, original emphasis)? Aside from episodic block quotes and a smattering of descriptions of tense nights out, we never really get to know them.

[rp1]More problematic, though, is the book's tendency to elevate its artist-subjects to something approaching urban sainthood; indeed, Schacter projects a patina of sacredness onto the aesthetic practices of his informants that comes across in a proclivity for sweeping pronouncements regarding their social commitment and civic virtue, underscoring the proven 'morality' (p. 231) of their practice, but mostly ignoring the wider world beyond these relatively insular aesthetic enclaves. Accordingly, the book would have benefited from a more critical contextual assessment of what the art has actually accomplished for the body politic (other than giving its practitioners an adrenalin rush and a platform that undoubtedly piques interest in their commercial and gallery work). Moreover, suggesting, as Schacter does, that these aesthetic interventions provide an antidote to the contemporary consumer-citizen stupor of the street is a tenuous proposition, given the degree to which this genre has been

appropriated for the aims of global capital, a dynamic that Schacter, in his obvious enthusiasm for his informants, appears unwilling to probe.

Like so much of the sanitized and easily interchangeable state- and corporate-sponsored official public art on our streets, the Independent Public Art celebrated here finds itself decorated with high-minded rhetoric and ideals. Whether it deserves such praise, however, remains unclear.

BREE T. HOCKING *The Open University*

Food and eating

BRULOTTE, RONDA L. & MICHAEL A. DI GIOVINE (eds). *Edible identities: food as cultural heritage*. xiii, 237 pp., illus., bibliogr.

Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2014. £70.00 (cloth)

Anthropologists (this reviewer is no exception) insist that food's relationship to identity is always in flux, yet in real life they often also seek authenticity – a bedrock concept they professionally like to deconstruct. *Edible identities* shows how the impact of UNESCO's intangible cultural heritage designation exposes the dynamics of this paradox by linking local culinary traditions to global forces and thereby celebrating newly globalized combinations of foodstuffs as traditional and local.

Even where UNESCO is not involved, the 'heritagization' of poor local foods can render them both expensive and locally unfamiliar. A rather expensive restaurant in Athens called Cucina Povera recently closed; one wonders whether it failed because only the wealthiest consumers would willingly, amid economic collapse, dispense precious cash for ostentatiously humble fare. Michael A. Di Giovine, adapting the work of A.F.C. Wallace, describes the emergence into translocal prominence of *cucina casareccia* – a more 'local' or idiomatic term for *cucina povera* – as a form of 'revitalization ritual'; the strategy works well for local celebrations of *terroir*, although it poses risks of

price inflation and perhaps explains, by default, why, exported abroad, it may not find anything to revitalize. Many of these authors demonstrate how *terroir*, the association of local place with taste and quality, is ideologically produced in response to global economic demand for the paradoxical fusion of adventurous exoticism and comforting familiarity, risking the erasure of what local people – as Psyche Williams-Forsyth argues for African American food traditions – understand as significant differences.

[rp1]What is ‘local’? For Greg de St Maurice, the definition of ‘Kyoto vegetables’ is ‘crafted and re-crafted in the present’ (p. 73). French chocolate and German bread, respectively treated here by Susan Terrio and Regina F. Bendix, became national treasures by achieving international recognition – French chocolate through an internal guild bureaucracy, German bread through a stage-by-stage engagement with UNESCO accreditation. These processes are inherently generative of contradiction. Sometimes, indeed, the ostensibly local seems to escape locality altogether. Like the ‘Thai falafel curry’ I encountered in a Lufthansa lounge in Germany, but with inflationary implications for the pricing of what had not been a popular meat among the local poor, the Thai llama curry described by Clare A. Sammells exemplifies globalized traditionalism. Locals respond to visitors’ assumptions – and also to their taboos: a serving of guinea pig, a more frequent food at the tables of the Bolivian poor, might disgust tourists who happily consume flock animals’ meat. Disgust may fuel exoticist fantasies: Miha Kozorog hilariously shows how outsiders understand allegedly hallucinogenic Slovenian ‘salamander brandy’ literally rather than as a metaphor for poor quality.

[rp1]Indeed, in some cultural ideologies, as Heather Paxson illuminatingly demonstrates for American cheese-making, innovation paradoxically represents the only viable path for the successful marketing of tradition – a point that seems directly related to Warren Belasco’s observation that the American capital’s very lack of cultural unity and rootedness, so antithetical to the ubiquitous concept of the *terroir*, may actually create an especially powerful sense of identification in a ‘sojourner’ nation: ‘The paths to *terroir* are twisted and ironic’ (p. 48). In a related vein, Erick Castellanos and

Sarah Bergstresser show that corn, served in Mexico as a symbol of regenerated life and anti-colonial resistance, symbolized innovation and aggressive entrepreneurialism in the United States, which adopted it and re-exported it in genetically modified variants.

These globalizing trajectories are unpredictable because they are filtered through local interpretation. When international tourism and trade exploit emblematic recognitions like UNESCO's designation of specific culinary traditions as 'intangible cultural heritage', locals respond, as Cristina Grasseni sagely observes, by treating the designations as 'political and economic resources' (p. 54) – refracting them, as her ethnography of Alpine cheese production demonstrates, through local factional divisions and thereby re-localizing them competitively. Carole Counihan explores a related dynamic: how do seeming contradictions – such as outsiders' involvement in local food production – affect the highly politicized arena of food activism? Much the same quandary stalks the market halls of Barcelona described by Josep-Maria Garcia-Fuentes, Manel Guardia Bassols, and Jose Luis Oyon Bañales: only by importing ingredients from ever further away can one produce authentic Catalan fare. Ronda L. Bulotte and Alvin Starkman similarly show how traditionalism erases its own historical traces in the competitive production of indigenous, 'pre-Hispanic' food.

Although not all contributors directly address the impact of UNESCO policy, the essays combine to give empirical substance to the critical analysis of the politics of gastronomic authenticity. Despite slipshod copy-editing, this carefully organized and cohesive volume offers a highly readable overview, food for thought, and some tasty surprises.

MICHAEL HERZFELD *Harvard University*

DOSSA, PARIN. *Afghanistan remembers: gendered narrations of violence and culinary practices*. xi, 178 pp., illus., bibliogr.

Toronto: Univ. Press, 2014, £15.99 (paper)

[rp[In this thoughtful, sensitive, and politically engaged ethnography, Parin Dossa explores the ways in which what she terms the ‘memory work’ of Afghan women living in Afghanistan and in a diaspora community in Canada can reveal the ‘impact of violence in the deeper recesses of life’. The latter phrase is central to her thesis, and is emphasized recurrently throughout the book. Dossa focuses on how, for her subjects, food acts as a medium through which memories of violence are revealed. By recounting and analysing the women’s often traumatic narratives relating to their experience of conflict in Afghanistan and of hardships of life in the diaspora, she demonstrates the ways in which food – through its absence or presence (and, crucially, memories thereof), procurement, preparation, serving, and consumption – takes on additional and often profound meanings: social, symbolic, spiritual, cultural, and political.

[rp1[Shortage of nutritious food is experienced both in Afghanistan and in Canada, the former due principally to poverty and insecurity, and the latter due to the economic constraints and discrimination associated with the women’s refugee status in the host country. The absence of food today is contrasted with times of plenty before the Afghan wars, serving as a powerful metaphor for the way Afghanistan and the lives of many of its population have been ‘destroyed’ by violence. Enforced dietary changes, such as a lack of meat and fruit and the inability to procure and prepare suitable Afghan cuisine in the diaspora, act as expressions of the ‘lifetime[s] of pain’ (p. 125) that the women have experienced. For Dossa, they act as a symbolic connection between ‘here’ and ‘there’. This is something that also stems from the geopolitical forces which have led to the women fleeing Afghanistan and seeking refuge in the West, a linkage of which Dossa’s subjects are very aware.

[rp1[Scarcity and the inability to procure suitable food have profound social effects in both locations, most significantly on the impact of fostering social relationships. ‘Not being able to afford meat undermines their ability to be part of an extended social world critical to their well-being’ (p. 103). As one of Dossa’s informants puts it: ‘We no longer get together the way we used to’ (p. 100).

This is felt most acutely on special occasions, such as the Eid festivals, Nouroz (Iranian New Year), and communal meals held for a returning *haji*.

The heart of the ethnography is contained in chapters 4 and 5. The title of the former is derived from an Afghan saying used by her informants, ‘the fire of the hearth is diminished but will not be extinguished’, and encapsulates the resilience of the women in the face of the extreme hardship of life in Afghanistan. Many of the women no longer have fully equipped kitchens, typically only ‘a low stool on the floor and a charcoal stove with only a few utensils’ (p. 95). Appetizing food is prepared with minimal ingredients, with the same ingredients being used to prepare different dishes on different days. Another ethnographic site is the vegetable patch, small areas of ground in the yards of houses, where food can be grown to be exchanged for other items. For Dossa, these areas represent a connection to Afghanistan’s agricultural heritage and an example of female resourcefulness, as well as a symbolic reminder of the country’s devastation. Chapter 5 deals with the ‘foodscapes’ of the diaspora, a term used to demonstrate the intimate connections between food, places, and people. In preparing the everyday meals of the home, in ensuring that children receive nutritious and culturally appropriate meals at school, and in social interactions in the queue at the food bank, Dossa shows how memory acts to reify foodscapes in the diaspora, breaking down boundaries between people and spaces, between the ‘here’ and ‘there’.

Although her informants were drawn from several different ethnic groups (Pashtun, Tajik, Hazara, and Baluch), Dossa plays down their ethnic identity, at the apparent request of the women themselves (p. 35). This is in order to highlight the universality of the gendered experiences of violence in Afghanistan, which an exploration of ethnic identity would presumably have detracted from. Whilst not wishing to criticize the author’s approach here, it does mean that there are several interesting glimpses of how ethnicity may have played quite a profound role in shaping these experiences, but these are not explored further. Passing comments are embedded in several testimonies, such as references to the ‘Hazara people’s war’ (p. 49) and to the Taliban’s targeting of

the Tajik community (p. 98), for example; it might have been better to have omitted these references altogether rather than have left them hanging.

Overall, this is an excellent book. Through her wide-ranging epistemological approach, Dossa has made a valuable contribution to the ethnographic corpus in the anthropologies of food, of violence and conflict, and of women. It will be of interest not only to scholars working in these fields, but also to anyone who has a more general fascination for the recent history of Afghanistan and the impact of violent conflict on the everyday lived experiences of its victims.

PAUL COLLINSON *Oxford Brookes University*

ELI, KARIN & STANLEY ULJASZEK (eds). *Obesity, eating disorders and the media*. 173 pp., tables, figs, bibliogr. Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2014. £60.00 (cloth)

Based on a conference bringing together experts from the United Kingdom, the United States, and Australia in 2011, this book examines how the media represent obesity and anorexia. Unlike most specialized books on eating disorders, its authors treat the two topics not as polar opposites – two extremes of disordered eating – but as complex interconnected processes. The papers focus on the media coverage of disordered eating, primarily in the United States and the United Kingdom. The editors set out the argument in an introductory essay, followed by four papers on ‘Rhetorics of abjection and alarm’, and five papers on ‘Representations of science and policy’.

Part one begins with an analysis by Anna Lavis of how the media cover pro-anorexia websites. Natalie Boero demonstrates how obesity is covered in the US media as a moral panic, coverage that often distracts from considerations of the social determinants of health, such as fast food culture and the socialization of meal patterns. The paper by Pino Donghi and Josephine Wennerholm

places eating disorders in the broader context of food advertising and the public concern with obesity in the 1970s. The moral tone reflects concerns with the aesthetics of packaging food and the body. Chapter 5, by Karin Eli and Anna Lavis, provides an analysis of the UK reality TV show *Supersize vs Superskinny*. This is easily the most disturbing chapter in the book, perhaps because the anorexic contestants are only used as a foil for the obese contestants. The authors show how obesity is linked to illness and poverty.

The papers in part two analyse media reports on research and public health policy related to eating disorders. Megan Warin and her co-authors examine women as causal agents transmitting obesity to their infants. The foetal origin hypothesis treats women's bodies as smoking guns, programming children for a lifetime of obesity. It is a challenge to discuss how womb environments influence adult diseases without blaming women. Chapter 7 compares media coverage of eating disorders in the United Kingdom with coverage in the United States. In both media markets, public perceptions differ from medical views of eating disorders. Authors Emily Shepherd and Clive Seale find UK coverage more pessimistic than that in the United States. Chapter 8 by Abigail Saguy and Rene Almeling demonstrates how science and the media in the United States construct obesity as a social problem. The chapter includes valuable observations about how press releases shape media coverage. Ironically, media coverage of eating disorders can lead to policy attention, whether or not the coverage is accurate. Stanley Ulijaszek analyses policy documents on obesity, putting the food corporations under scrutiny. Using episodic vs thematic framing of the issue in American print and TV media, Helene Shugart identifies inevitable fatalism as the overarching frame, and locates the causes in the everyday lives of the contemporary world, including the time crunch, constant stress and lack of sleep.

Readers might find the chapters somewhat repetitive. However, while the authors make broadly similar points, they do so in different ways, from different theoretical and disciplinary perspectives, and through specific empirical contexts. It is worth noting that a plurality of frameworks

can lead to public confusion and policy inaction based on the conclusion that the evidence is incomplete and that there is no consensus. The book might have benefited from a summary chapter comparing the US and UK media approaches to eating disorders, and teasing apart the relationship between under- and over-eating in more detail. Although there are many anthropologists among the contributors, they do not place eating disorders in a broad evolutionary or developmental theory. My recent book with Richard O'Connor, *From virtue to vice: negotiating anorexia* (2015), attempts this broader framing and might be a useful complement to these more focused contributions.

As with many other topics, such as breastfeeding, media coverage avoids discussing the political and economic context of eating disorders. The authors point out how critics pounce on any sign of tentativeness on the part of scientists as evidence that the science isn't sound. Yet this tentativeness is the nature of responsible science. Taken together, these papers raise the question of how authors can protect themselves against oversimplification by the media, while meeting their responsibility of making the public aware of research results. This excellent edited collection would be useful for those who struggle with responsible knowledge transfer in fields beyond eating disorders.

PENNY VAN ESTERIK *York University, Toronto*

KERNER, SUSANNE, CYNTHIA CHOU & MORTEN WARMIND (eds). *Commensality: from everyday food to feast*. xii, 277 pp., maps, illus., fig, bibliogr. London: Bloomsbury, 2015. £29.99 (paper)

Anthropologists have long known, as Mary Douglas wrote in the *Anthropologist's cookbook*, that 'food is not feed'. In this pioneering work published in 1977, anthropologists presented recipes collected during fieldwork in Europe, Africa, Asia, the Pacific, and the Americas, describing social context as well as culinary techniques, in order to show how food was what Mauss called a 'total

social fact', embodying and materializing economic, religious, political, legal, and all other aspects of society. Mixing descriptions of roast dog and of Bosnian coffee with telling comparisons and ethnographic *aperçus* – in one ethnic group in rural Indonesia, food was 'taken quickly – like the sexual act of a married couple' – the book showed how the social dynamics of food operate across time, place, and cultures, and also introduced the wider academic community to the importance of food in and as social analysis. In the forty years since this publication, the broad field known as 'food studies' has emerged, and anthropologists have watched as other disciplines engage in academic catch-up. Are current food studies to anthropological tastes, and have we lost or gained ground in progressing the subject? Arguments for both sides are to be seen in this collected volume.

[rp1[Few things are more substantial than food, but 'commensality' – the organizing theme of this volume and of the conference from which it arose – is among the most elusive of terms, a weasel word that implies much but delivers little. Vague and ambiguous, 'commensality' – which at its most basic means 'eating together' – suggests social relationships without defining or describing them in detail. For this reason it is not a word that anthropologists have tended to use, but it is one embraced by other disciplines, feeling it relieves them of having to enquire into the subject more deeply. Unsurprisingly, there are many contesting definitions of commensality – the introduction lists them all, a long menu – leaving contributors free to choose their own interpretation, inevitably mixing levels of analysis. And while food is a natural organizing theme, it does not play that role here. As the editors write at the outset: 'In a nutshell, commensality is the essence of food', something food ethnographers and anthropologists who see food as material culture would take issue with, preferring the proposition 'food is the essence of commensality'.

[rp1[After this beginning, the book's sixteen constituent chapters are organized into three parts: 'Everyday commensality', 'Special commensality', and 'The social and political aspects of commensality'. Within these categories, the editors state that the chapters support 'a holistic or multi-

faceted approach to the study of commensality' and bring 'a worldwide and historical scope to the study of human commensal behavior', ranging from a contemporary Andean community in Bolivia to the royal court of the Mesopotamian ruler Zimri Lim during the second millennium BCE. The contributors include archaeologists, prehistorians, sociologists, historians, anthropologists, and regional specialists. The objective of the volume, according to the editors, is to 'analyze commensality in all its forms' and to make the point that 'not all peoples in the world eat around a table or a common hearth – in fact, there are insurmountable variations of all kinds'. If we set aside the overwhelming impression that the wheel is being reinvented, do the contributors accomplish these aims?

The strength of this volume lies in the good archaeological and historical papers; Kerner's on 'How to hold on to your drink in the Chalcolithic' is particularly enjoyable. The influence of anthropology on the New History and the New Archaeology is strongly evident here, and that is a gain. However, for as long as academics hide behind 'commensality' uncritically, analysis will not go far beyond description, although even that is welcome when it is done well, as it is in several of the papers. Three in particular – Tan on 'Commensality and the organization of social relations', Chou on 'How chicken rice informs about identity', and Van Esterik on 'Commensal circles and the common pot' – advance understanding of the subject in anthropological terms. We need more studies like these. In recent years, the dark turn and the narrative of political and economic inequalities have eclipsed the cultural study of food within our discipline, to its detriment. Culture is not a luxury, especially in hard times. Perhaps the greatest loss is the coherence of the *Anthropologists' cookbook*. A full academic generation on from the rise of interdisciplinarity, we are still getting collections like this, good though it is, in which people from different fields encounter each other in what seems to be first-contact wonder and bemusement. Surely it is time for some truly integrated collaborative work on that great universal, food.

KAORI O'CONNOR *University College London*

Health, medicine, and care

FRIEDNER, MICHELE. *Valuing deaf worlds in urban India*. xiv, 196 pp., figs, bibliogr. London, New Brunswick, N.J.: Rutgers Univ. Press, 2015. £26.95 (paper)

When anthropologists have taken notice of disabled people at all, it has most often been to expose the ways in which they have been marginalized or made victims of ‘structural violence’ for having bodies that do not conform neatly to socioculturally defined norms. In the Indian context, that has often meant drawing attention to the connections between how bodies are judged and regionally specific ideologies, such as the Hindu notion of karma, or historically influential texts, from the epic *Mahabharata* to the Upanishads. What is so refreshing about this first monograph from Michele Friedner, then, is the way in which it breaks free from those frameworks of analysis to offer dazzlingly new perspectives on what it means to live as a deaf person in the globally connected city of Bangalore in the present moment.

Instead of relying on pre-existing disability theory, or even on the more innovative insights of medical anthropology, Friedner casts her theoretical net far wider to engage with anthropological discussions about value, sociality, contemporary kinship, and the local impact of globalization – and then to tease out the points of intersection between these academic themes and the concepts deployed by the middle-class, young adult deaf people she encountered in Bangalore. But there is more to this than an intellectual exercise, however productive that might be in refining our conceptual apparatus. It is important because, as it becomes clear from reading the book, the ways in which people live in contemporary India – and elsewhere in an increasingly interconnected world – cannot be explained away with references to essentialized ‘Indian’ cultural values.

As Friedner points out, in a liberalizing India, where jobs for life in the public sector are fast becoming a thing of the past and where increasing numbers of people rely on the private sector for their livelihoods and on the NGO industry for their welfare provision, different kinds of employment opportunities have arisen for disabled people. Deaf young adults – at least those living in India's major urban centres – are now sought after by employers as back-office data-entry operators, 'silent brewmasters' in cosmopolitan coffee shop chains, fast-food chefs in 'special' branches of Kentucky Fried Chicken, and even as evangelists with international missionary organizations. International disability legislation and social responsibility initiatives have also created niche opportunities for deaf people as teachers in sign language programmes or in special schools, or in NGOs providing vocational training to other disabled people.

Friedner is certainly no cheerleader for neoliberalism, allowing her deaf interlocutors space in the book to express the ambivalence they felt towards these new 'opportunities': low-paid, insecure, and, in many cases, of significantly more benefit to the organizations that offered them than to the deaf people who took advantage of them. At several junctures throughout the book, Friedner exposes the ways in which 'employers are able to extract multiple forms of social, moral, and economic value from these supposedly identical deaf workers' (p. 102). Disabled workers, for example, are often seen by employers as more stable than non-disabled workers, precisely because of the limits their bodies place on their mobility, and also because constituting them as part of the consumer pool enables them to become loyal customers of the company's products. What the book offers, however, is a more nuanced account than the many that already offer critical descriptions of the failures of contemporary capitalism and international development. Here, Friedner underscores the fact that – amid their ambivalence – those she worked with were also positively orientated towards the future, and that the shared identity which employers had learned to exploit at the same time enriched their own lives. 'My deaf friends', she writes, 'had a strong sense that deaf development was yet to come, unlike many normals who lamented the impossibility of development' (pp. 8-9.). It is

understanding the conundrums and contradictions thrown up by ‘deaf development’ – distinct from other kinds of social, political, and economic development, yet simultaneously interwoven with them – that forms the core arguments of the book. Friedner explores, ethnographically, how being deaf – and, by extension, being disabled more generally – might be understood as a source of value as much as a constraint to participation in the contemporary worlds of urban south India.

[p1]The first substantive chapter – after an engaging introduction that clearly delineates the book’s theoretical and ethnographic underpinnings – describes the often fraught relationships that *deafs* (the term they use to describe themselves) have with their hearing families, and their turn towards relationships with other deaf people, with whom they communicate using sign language. Another *deaf turn* – to use Friedner’s term for describing how her informants re-orientated themselves towards distinctly deaf ways of doing things – is towards Christian churches, as explored in chapter 2. Churches and fellowships are identified here as key sites for young deaf adults in Bangalore; places where they learn sign language and establish networks of support beyond their families. Vocational training centres, the focus of chapter 3, are another site for the development of deaf sociality, even when the skills formally learned in such locations are seldom useful for the kinds of jobs they might get subsequently. Chapter 4 shifts our attention to the kinds of jobs deaf people do get in Bangalore’s corporate sector, and focuses on the particular value deaf workers are seen to bring to a business. This is a theme further developed in the final substantive chapter, which explores deaf participation in multi-level marketing businesses, a growing phenomenon that ‘is directly related to possibilities and constraints emerging as a result of neoliberal changes in the Indian economy’ (p. 127). Few benefited financially from such schemes, but engagement with them as *deafs* – in the same way that they engaged with churches or vocational training centres – was productive of deaf sociality, ‘a source of multiple forms of social, moral, and economic value’ (p. 148).

[rp1]That I finished the book wanting more is less a criticism than a call for further work on how disability is being reshaped in the contemporary world. How far, for example, do Friedner’s

findings apply beyond the worlds of the deaf to other categories of disabled people, and how well do they resonate with people beyond the cosmopolitan centres of cities like Bangalore? Also, how widespread is the ‘deaf turn’ to Christianity, and what are the implications of that in a nation gripped with Hindu nationalist fervour? These are certainly questions that the book has pushed me to start asking of my own ethnographic data, drawn from fieldwork with various categories of disabled people in more provincial settings across south India. I hope they will also be taken up by other ethnographers, Friedner among them, in subsequent work.

This book will in any case find readers in disability studies and among the small band of anthropologists working ethnographically on disability in a wide range of settings. It might even get picked up by South Asianists. But it also deserves to be read, I think, not just by medical anthropologists, but by anthropologists teaching and writing on the wider themes of value, sociality, globalization, neoliberalism, and urban anthropology. Written clearly in language accessible to the engaged undergraduate as well as more specialist scholars, the book would not be out of place on a very wide range of reading lists.

JAMES STAPLES *Brunel University London*

GAMMELTOFT, TINE M. *Haunting images: a cultural account of selective reproduction in Vietnam*. xiii, 315 pp., illus., table, bibliogr. Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 2014. £24.95 (paper)

‘What kind of person will I become, Tuyêt seemed to ask, if I decide to end the life of the child I expect?’ (p. 19).

Each word of this question is its own knot of threads. In her second book, *Haunting images*, Tine Gammeltoft carefully unravels some of these knots, if only momentarily. Becoming is always in process, after all, for anthropological subjects and

objects. It is Gammeltoft's exploration of the tension between the potentiality of being – acutely felt in pregnancy – and of being *already* – in a web of relations that involve the state, kin groups, biomedical experts, technologies – that I find extremely compelling in the book. Because *Haunting images* has been widely reviewed (and praised: it won the 2014 Senior Book Prize from the American Ethnological Society and the 2015 Eileen Basker Memorial Prize from the Society for Medical Anthropology), I take the opportunity here to spend time with Tuyet's question, a remarkable condensation of theoretical and representational concerns of *Haunting images*, and the book's implications for anthropological studies of medical imaging.

[rp1]But first, a brief description of the book's topics and methods. *Haunting images* is a study of ethical deliberation surrounding detection of foetal anomaly through prenatal ultrasound screening. It is based on nearly three years of research (September 2003–April 2006) with a team of ten Vietnamese physicians and social scientists, and enriched by Gammeltoft's prior research on family planning (see her *Women's bodies, Women's worries: health and family planning in a Vietnamese rural community*, 1999). Gammeltoft and colleagues observed in the 3D scanning room of Hanoi's Obstetrics and Gynaecology Hospital, interviewed women and families in their homes in Hanoi and surrounding Red River Delta, and analysed scientific and policy documents concerning population planning. *Haunting images* is a product of fieldwork practices that many would aspire to: long-term immersion in a region, and sustained collaboration in research and writing (Gammeltoft co-authored articles with members of the research team). Tuyet is one of thirty cases that form the core of the book.

[rp1]Now, to Tuyet's (and Gammeltoft's) question.

lep1[**What kind of person...** Kinds and qualities of multiple entities come to the fore in pregnancy. First, there is the foetus: is it 'normal', will the child born be capable of living a full and moral life? For Gammeltoft's interlocutors, a full and moral life is characterized by its productivities: being able to work, to care for parents and ancestors, to contribute to community and nation. Second, there are the parents. Will the mother and father, but most centrally the mother, be able to fulfil obligations to continue family lineages and help to grow a healthy and productive society? Also at stake is the kind of nation Vietnam is able to become. In official and popular discourse, the nation's vitality has been damaged by anti-imperialist and civil wars. The reproductive field is haunted materially and imaginarily by the transgenerational effects of exposure to dioxin (Agent Orange), a herbicide deployed by the US military during the war. The pressing question for Tuyet, though, is the kind of person forged in deciding to *end* a pregnancy.

lrp1[**... will I become ...** Deciding to end a life – in Vietnam, the foetus is a life, though not yet a person – is a critical moment where the burden of the decision, its uncertain futures, put the self at stake. A major intervention of the book is to argue for the importance of an anthropology of becoming (see also Gammeltoft's 'Potentiality and human temporality: haunting figures in Vietnamese pregnancy care', *Current Anthropology* 54: S7, 2013). And in a context where there is primacy on 'social belonging, collectivism, and mutual moral commitments' (p. 27), *becoming* is an issue of *belonging*. Women responded to information about foetal anomaly by using the crisis 'to reaffirm intimate relations' through consultation and communal decision-making (p. 234). These practices led Gammeltoft to Emmanuel Levinas, for his thinking about embodied human interconnections and responsibility to the other: 'Whether or not we accept this responsibility, it is there, imposed on us, haunting us, preceding our freedom' (p. 20). Becoming involves not only individual practices of freedom;

it also involves ‘passivity, vulnerability, and attachment’ (p. 141) to others, be they intimate kin, doctors, or an imagination of the nation. Gammeltoft outlines three modes of belonging: belonging as state discourse; belonging as practice in day-to-day life; and ‘belonging as loss’, involving denial, exclusion, and forgetting. Decision-making is a mode of subjectivation; subjectivation is for belonging.

[rp1][...if I **decide**... *Haunting images* elaborates a key insight of feminist studies (e.g Rayna Rapp, *Testing women, testing the fetus: the social impact of amniocentesis in America*, 1999), that new reproductive technologies force women to make difficult moral decisions about life and death, and the kinds of lives worth living. How to understand this deciding: who is involved, what is at stake, which conditions shape its possibility? Gammeltoft’s critique is that in ‘the West’, reproductive politics reflect particular notions of decision-making and freedom: decisions about testing and abortion are ultimately individual; freedom is the freedom to choose. Gammeltoft shows how others are involved in making reproductive decisions, and, importantly, how both the self and others are at stake. The story of Chlic in chapter 5 is one of many that illustrates how extended families participate in, if not lead, discussions of what to do. Doctors, as agents of both science and the state, are directive and rarely questioned. (It would be interesting to know if similar relations obtain in private clinics, where doctors’ embodiment of the state is less explicit.) Family planning is a political priority and abortion laws are liberal (p. 38). Thus, decisions following an anomalous scan must be understood in terms of intersecting hierarchies and collectivities, ones in which women are often subordinate, and their moral worth dependent upon bearing healthy children. Importantly, Gammeltoft shows how decisions about abortion are made not only *by* collectives, but *for* collectives: they are about welfare of family, community, and nation. Yet the moral burden of the decision with and for others is ultimately individual, resulting in ‘moral loneliness’ for many women (p. 223).

[rp1][...to **end the life**... Ultrasound screens for conditions whose ‘treatment’ is death; *Haunting images* is a study of pregnancy termination. But death is not final or singular

in any simple sense. Living in configurations of Dao, Buddhist, and Confucian cosmologies, most of Gammeltoft's subjects viewed abortion as killing a life form, but the being itself is not extinguished. As one of her informants said, 'We were lucky that the state had examined this fetus so that we could allow it to leave this world, to go somewhere else' (p. 200). In a context where ghosts and ancestors make claims on the living, the *kind* of death is consequential for the kind of entity it may create. There are good deaths and bad deaths, and late-term abortion for foetal anomaly is a bad death. It happens prematurely, away from home, often violently. But, Gammeltoft's participants ask, could it be justified? For a severely disabled child, in a context where disability equals suffering, going somewhere else is a release rather than an exile. Yet there is always the possibility that the foetus will haunt the living. The ghost as a prominent figure of anxiety, sadness, and deep moral ambivalence informs Gammeltoft's argument that belonging involves loss.

...of the child I expect? In Hanoi, reproduction is the nexus of belonging to family and state. Reproduction is expected. All of the pregnancies in the book are strongly desired. Yet a severely disabled child cannot participate in reciprocal exchanges that make up normative social belonging. For those confronted with an anomalous scan, the tension between the certainty of humanity and the uncertainty of personhood composed a moral dilemma: 'Is it right or wrong, women and their relatives asked, to take the life of a human being who is unlikely to ever become a full person?' (p. 183). Furthermore, congenital disability is seen to be a sign that someone in the family has lived immorally. The framework of 'childhood disability as moral tragedy' (p. 184) may be familiar to those inhabiting worlds where karma has explanatory force, where population policies prioritize 'quality' over quantity of children, or where economies do not support those unable to work. In my research in Cambodia, where there is similar moral, economic, and social stigma around disability,

talk about the quality of children was normal in conversation, but it was notably absent from state discourse (now, education films from the 1980s post-Khmer Rouge, Vietnamese-led reconstruction are riddled with talk about population quality, and improving the quality of pregnancy and babies born, as a national priority). *Haunting images* shows how a conception of disability as a tragedy of morality and personhood is overdetermined in Hanoi because of the present configuration of karmic cosmology, (post)socialist modernization, and absence of social programmes, yet Gammeltoft's careful contextualization makes the struggle, dismissal, and neglect none the less disturbing. Screening Kazuo Hara's *Goodbye CP*, a complex film about a disability rights movement in Japan, alongside the book was a strategy to open discussion of disability and personhood in my class.

How and why are images and *visualization* important to this story of becoming and belonging through selective reproduction? Even if ultrasound images themselves remained opaque or ambiguous to many women, imaging was expected to depict whether or not the foetus was 'normal', physically. The fact that most women, and doctors producing scans, emphasized the importance of seeing the face of the foetus follows the 'consistent cultural attention to the face' in Vietnam, and resonates with Levinas's writing on the face as the primary site of ethicality (p. 21). Gammeltoft describes how seeing the face is important at life's transitions because the face reveals a person's character and destiny: meeting face-to-face in betrothal arrangements, beholding the face of the deceased at funerals, displaying images of the face of the dead at tombstones, and now seeing the face of the child-to-be in prenatal ultrasound imaging. *Haunting images* illustrates how immersion in visual worlds, and attunement to the values attached to particular kinds of visualization, generates an incredibly rich understanding of imaging as social practice. Prenatal ultrasound, in

visualizing the face, is a technique for learning about the destiny of the child-to-be. What will it be? Will it belong?

[rp1[To echo Tuyet's question: what kinds of people do we become, as readers of this remarkable book, which is dense, insistent, devastating, and care-full? Undergraduates in my medical anthropology course valued how the book explained decision-making about abortion in Vietnam in a nuanced and humanistic way. In this West Coast US classroom, a third of the students were children of refugees from Vietnam, the majority learned next to nothing in high school about the US-Vietnam war, and all live within the highly polarized field of US reproductive politics and an increasingly vibrant disability rights movement. Given these complexities, the appeal of *Haunting images* is testament to Gammeltoft's sensitivity and skill as a writer. This is a most important book for those interested in reproduction, kinship, and subjectivity, and in war's material and symbolic hauntings of techno-medical practices.

]rau[JENNA GRANT *University of Washington*

]bref[GEISLER, P. WENZEL (ed.). *Para-states and medical science: making African global health*. 369 pp., illus., bibliogr. Durham, N.C.: Duke Univ. Press, 2015. £22.99 (paper)

]rp[In this edited volume, P. Wenzel Geissler brings together ethnographic and historical accounts to explore the shifting role of the nation-state in medical science in Africa. In the late colonial and early postcolonial era, medical science was envisioned as state-driven, with knowledge seamlessly translated into policy for the improvement of national health. Today's neoliberal healthcare landscape, by contrast, has been depicted as one of ailing health systems dotted with islands of high-end medical research and care run by transnationally funded non-state actors such as NGOs, public-private partnerships, and universities.

Against a dominant narrative of historical rupture, Geissler and contributors set out to show that ‘the state’s place in the biopolitical order has changed, not diminished’ (p. 9). To capture this change, Geissler introduces the term ‘para-state’ (p. 9) and, more specifically, ‘para-state science’ (p. 12) to refer to the marketization of certain state functions. Yet the prefix ‘para-’ means ‘beside, near, behind and from’ (p. 1), which Geissler employs to reveal the subtle ways the nation-state continues to assert influence in the making of African global health. This might be in the form of its routines, regulations, and employees; or as memories, hopes, and aspirations woven into research policy and practice. Indeed, Geissler suggests that the vision of the integration of national medical science and public health has proven surprisingly resilient.

The first chapter, by Nguyen, makes a case for the rupture in the African biopolitical order that the remaining chapters seek to unsettle. Drawing attention to clinical trials being conducted on HIV treatment as prevention, Nguyen describes a radically transformed healthcare landscape in which clinical trials constitute a more powerful form of social organization than the states that have retreated and made room for their incursion. He goes so far as to suggest that these trials ‘herald the birth of experimental societies’ (p. 47): entire populations governed from afar according to a logic of experimentality. The following chapter, by Manton, in contrast, suggests that the para-statal forms described by Nguyen might not be so novel. Using a historical account of leprosy research in late colonial Nigeria, he highlights the involvement of ‘a collage of non-state actors’ (p. 81), questioning the radical distinction between a past reality of integrated national medical science and today’s ‘stateless’ research enterprise.

Other chapters provide stronger arguments for the continued centrality of the state in African medical science. For example, Gerrets describes collaborative malaria research in Tanzania to show how global partnerships and the resources they drew on were appropriated by state actors to reassert authority and pursue visions of social good against the backdrop of extensive neoliberal reforms in the public sector. Beisel presents an even stronger example of para-statal malaria research

in the context of Ghanaian goldmines. Here state and corporate interests conspire (rather than the former being supplanted) to assert and legitimate control over citizens through a corporate responsibility programme. The position that Geissler develops in his own chapter on the question of rupture versus continuity is that it is a matter of perspective. Examining the relationship between a sub-Saharan national clinical research organization (NCRO) and its main funder, he shows that from one perspective it is an archetypal para-statal institute that is externally determined in all but name; but from another it has a 'profoundly national character' (p. 153). Rather than asserting any unequivocal description of the state of/in medical science, Geissler points to the 'coexistence of different pasts in the present, conflicting narratives of transformation and persistence in one place, positioning out own analytical timelines among others' (p. 144).

[rp1]This volume can be read as the latest development of a long-standing intellectual project of Geissler's, following on from *Evidence, ethos and experiment* (2011), which advocated a conceptual shift from the ethics to the *ethos* of medical research. That is, 'the problem of direction over that of particular choice, the openness of intention and anticipation over the closure of a right or wrong action' (p. 4). This reorientation brings in to view aspirations for development and modernity in which the African nation-state is a key frame of reference. Although the current volume has less purchase on questions of research ethics, it goes much further in showing how and why the nation-state retains importance in shaping transnational research despite the neoliberalism of Africa. With that said, I am concerned that in pushing back against a fashionable critique of global health, the capacity of the 'state' is sometimes overstated and overly romanticized, potentially at the expense of the critical potentials of para-states as a force for change. While *Evidence, ethos and experiment* offers a convincing case for the broadening of research ethics, I am less certain of the implications of the current work for meaningful change in research governance.

[rau]JUSTIN DIXON *Durham University*

]bref[GÖKNAR, MERVE DEMİRCİOĞLU. *Achieving procreation: childlessness and IVF in Turkey*. xiii, 201 pp., bibliogr. Oxford, New York: Berghahn Books, 2015. £50.00 (cloth)

]rp[In June 2016, President Erdoğan gave a widely reported speech in which he declared that a childless working woman was a ‘lacking’ and ‘half’ a person. This is just a recent example of a series of declarations in which Erdoğan and the members of the Justice and Development Party government have conflated womanhood with motherhood. Whereas this is not the first time this gender ideology has been employed in Turkey, the ‘pronatalist’ turn in the state policy and the demand for ‘at least three children’ in each nuclear family have been of crucial importance in terms of the promotion of the motherhood rhetoric. In this context, *Achieving procreation: childlessness and IVF in Turkey* is a timely contribution that deepens our understanding of the experience of infertility.

]rp[In her ethnography of women who are involuntarily childless in Turkey, the author aims to go beyond an examination of reproductive technology *per se*, and instead explores the very desire for children, which makes these women persist with treatment. To this end, she conducts the first part of her study in two IVF clinics in Istanbul, interviewing 133 women. The second part of the study takes place in two villages at three hours’ distance to Istanbul where Gökner engages in ethnographic fieldwork to trace the politics of childlessness. Embedding herself in the daily lives of these women, the author traces the ‘social experience of being infertile’ (p. 2). In doing so, she paves the way for a study that interweaves gender ideologies, kinship, religion, technology, sexuality, and procreation.

]rp[In the first chapter, challenging the ‘naturalness’ of the desire for having a child, the author employs anthropological focus to scrutinize ‘the fine line ... between desire and obligation’ (p. 28). Exploring the metaphor ‘tree without fruit’, she demonstrates the ways in which ‘people want and ... they are compelled to want’ to have children (p. 38). Whether it is through alleviating boredom or bringing joy, making women a full member of their social circles or offering freedom of mobility (going out with a child is more acceptable than going out by herself), an offspring is what

completes lives and identities. The second chapter draws our attention to the complex ways in which religious discourse affects these women's lives. The author elucidates how religious discourse can aggravate the experience of infertility through sanctifying motherhood. However, by looking at how women engage with the religious discourse, the author also reveals that these women invoke religion to challenge the gendered conventions that stigmatize them. The third chapter aims to complicate our understanding of patriarchy as the domination of women by men through providing a critical analysis of intra-gender relations. Gökner demonstrates that relationships with friends and kin can also emerge as arenas of power to be navigated, and infertile women frequently find themselves negotiating their place in their social networks.

One of the main themes in the book is Gökner's compelling argument about the 'gendered attitude toward procreation' (p. 168). In chapter 4, the author presents a variety of masculine ideologies, but then draws attention to one significant aspect of all of them, namely that 'procreation is the ultimate domain where maleness is performed' (p. 151). In procreation *in vivo* what ultimately matters is not the provision of sperm but rather the act of penetration and impregnation. Procreation *in vitro*, however, emerges as a domain where the performance of women takes precedence. In chapter 5, the author argues against a 'passive depiction of women in a masculine ART world' and delves into the ways in which women convince their husbands, initiate the treatment, persist with the treatment, and strive to 'achieve' the results they aim for. In doing so, they emerge as active actors, pursuing their desire despite the challenges. It should also be noted that the author is careful not to romanticize the perseverance of these women as she draws attention to the fact that they might be reproducing hegemonic ideologies and trapping themselves in the mandate of motherhood.

The book's main strengths come from its multi-sited methodology, which proves to be productive in understanding the embodied realities and moralities of these women. In weaving together her research in IVF clinics and in villages, the author goes beyond an argument about a reproductive technology and strengthens her analysis of the experience of infertility. Another

contribution of the book lies in its choice of 'places and persons'. As an anthropologist working on the politics of reproduction, I have been advised several times to conduct research in the east/southeast, based on the assumption of the 'high' Kurdish fertility or worse gender inequality in the region. The author convincingly argues against not only stereotyping the 'east' but also 'representing the east while excluding others in Turkey' (p. 14).

This book might have been even stronger if it had built upon a 'reproductive life histories' approach to provide more ethnographic information, context, and reflection. The absence of such insights is felt most when the author builds upon the vignettes from the interviews at the IVF clinics. In addition, this reader found it difficult to assess the time period in which the research was conducted. Lastly, while participant observation in the villages offers invaluable insight into the experiences of infertility, tracing the lives of urban women who were interviewed at the clinics could have helped to make an even stronger analysis.

These comments should not take away from the fact that the book provides an important contribution to the study of infertility in Turkey and elsewhere. It will be useful to undergraduate and graduate students of anthropology, and to the scholars of other disciplines concerned with Turkey, Middle East, gender, and medical technologies.

HATICE NILAY ERTEN *Yale University*

SNELL-ROOD, CLAIRE. *No one will let her live: women's struggle for well-being in a Delhi slum*. xx, 273 pp., illus., bibliogr.

Oakland: Univ. of California Press, 2015. £22.95 (paper)

'As long as I have my hands, I can keep eating. God gives everything. Why worry. There is no reason to be sad'. Such was the stoic response of Durga, a midwife in one of Delhi's slums, to the settlement in which she lived being demolished around her by the government. In recording her words

– and the countless stories of other economically poor women living precariously in such environments – Claire Snell-Rood tries in this book to juxtapose our more usual focus on the apparent misery of such lives with an exploration of the ways in which such women manage to foster ‘inner well-being’. Despite everything, she argues, these women survive and in some cases thrive – not because, as some might assume, they stand together in solidarity with the other women around them, but because they learn to navigate successfully through relationships about which they are at the same time ambivalent.

[rp1]The blurb on the back of the book identifies Snell-Rood as a behavioural scientist rather than an anthropologist *per se*, but her reflexive, ethnographic approach to the women she works with in Ghaziapuram certainly passes muster as a work of anthropology, and would be relevant to regional ethnography courses on South Asia as well as to modules on the anthropology of gender, medical anthropology, and development and marginal livelihoods. Methodologically, it also serves as a useful study in how to navigate between the language of NGOs – about community-based rehabilitation, empowerment, and so on – and the everyday language and understandings of the women she worked with. Given that NGOs and policy-makers are at least one of the audiences envisioned for this book – which culminates in a list of policy recommendations – this kind of translation is important.

[rp1]The first substantive chapter, after a scene-setting introduction, sets out how women assert their own strength in the midst of abuse and neglect, doing so because, for them, being a good person meant ‘living for others’. They remained with often violent, feckless husbands not because they knew no better, as policy-makers charged with ‘empowering’ such women might assume, but because through keeping the family together they attained spiritual merit and a positive sense of themselves as good wives and mothers. And by managing the tensions within the family they also laid the groundwork for a potentially better future. Chapter 2 – which turns to the relationships women built with those around them in the slums – debunks another myth of the policy-makers, namely that by standing together they are stronger than when they pursue their own, more individualistic, goals.

The reality, as Snell-Rood shows through a layering of different examples, is that the women always remained highly suspicious of all those they engaged with, even as they utilized their relationships in very practical ways in order to get by. There was a clear recognition amongst these women that they needed both to engage with others around them and, at the same time, to watch their own backs. The third chapter casts the net still wider, this time to capture, again through copious examples, the kinds of relationships women forged with the wider community – patrons, politicians, employers, and others with whom they engaged – to create a sense of ‘moral citizenship’. The fourth and final chapter turns back to the women themselves, and considers how they engaged with what had initially seemed like an unpromising environment to one of potential, where they could build homes and lives that reflected their self-worth. The conclusion offers a list of recommendations for policy-makers.

[rp1]Organizing the book as Snell-Rood has into four, rather lengthy chapters makes for an intensive read: chapters of more than double the length of a conventional journal article can be hard-going for those of us reared on the latter, even when the material is helpfully ordered into subsections. In addition, the strategy of gradually revealing the author’s perspective by piling on layer upon layer of examples, circling around and around a point rather than swooping in and nailing it, might be less convincing for some readers than the presentation of more focused arguments – particularly, I imagine, for the policy-makers she sets out to influence. The material presented is genuinely rewarding for those willing to invest the time and thought, but another round of editing might have been beneficial in order to present the arguments with sharper clarity for those with less patience. This is a difficulty, perhaps, inherent in trying to appeal to different audiences at the same time: the hard-edged, statistical, evidence-based data demanded by the government departments and others Snell-Rood wants to influence sits slightly awkwardly alongside the compelling written, more affecting reflections from the field. Trying to present an account that appears both scientific and emotionally appealing is a tough act to pull off.

Nevertheless, for those prepared to persevere, this book not only offers a powerful sense of what life in an urban Indian slum setting might be like, but also helps to us understand how and why it is so.

JAMES STAPLES *Brunel University London*

URETSKY, ELANAH. *Occupational hazards: sex, business, and HIV in post-Mao China*. xv, 262 pp., figs, illus, bibliogr. Stanford: Univ. Press, 2016, £25.95 (paper)

Occupational hazards is about the vulnerability to HIV infection of elite men in China: Communist Party officials who are also government bureaucrat-entrepreneurs and the male entrepreneurs with whom they conduct business.

Uretsky argues that masculinist social practices make these men more or less obliged to offer and accept particular forms of hospitality from potential business partners to grease government and business wheels. Such social exchange typically involves excessive wining and dining, but may also involve commercial sexual services.

As Uretsky notes (p. 7), the vulnerability of these men to HIV infection lies outside of standard public health definitions of AIDS-related 'risk'. Health campaigns to prevent the spread of HIV in China have followed international paradigms and focus on the individual behaviours of people classified as members of key and vulnerable populations. These populations include sex workers, men who have sex with men, people who inject drugs using non-sterile injecting equipment, and rural-to-urban migrant labourers. Government bureaucrat-entrepreneurs are not offered formal AIDS education and testing and treatment services by default.

Government bureaucrat-entrepreneurs are also unlikely to voluntarily present for HIV testing because a diagnosed infection may have a negative impact on their careers. The PRC's civil service recruitment criteria preclude people who have AIDS or a serious sexually transmitted infection (STI) from entering the civil service ('Gongwuyuan luyong tijian tongyong biao zhun', *Renshibu, Weishengbu*, 17 January 2005: Article 18). While government employees have annual health checks, these do not include STI and HIV testing. Engagement in 'improper' sexual relations can also result in demotion or loss of employment according to the Chinese Communist Party disciplinary regulations ('Zhonggong fabu zui yan dangji lie chu 6 lei fumian qingdan', *Xinhua*, 21 October 2015). The introduction of government-led anti-corruption campaigns in 2012, combined with the illegality of commercial sex, may further discourage such men from seeking testing and treatment services because the detection of an infection may bring to light their involvement in extramarital and commercial sex, thereby demonstrating their 'unsuitability' for government employment and Party membership.

Uretsky (pp. 8, 18) reveals the everyday experiences of some of these elite men using both an atypical 'studying up' approach to anthropological inquiry, and standard ethnographic narrative based on participant observation and an unspecified number of semi-structured interviews. Chapter 1 details the nature and uses of *yingchou* – rituals of social exchange that involve wining and dining, and commercial sex in the context of male business entertaining. Chapter 2 examines how elite masculinity is constructed in contemporary China. Chapters 3 and 4 outline China's so-called 'sexual revolution', and the nature of sexual scripts and sexual networks. Chapter 5 looks at the role such practices have played in the development of the HIV epidemic in Ruili, a small city in Yunnan Province near the Myanmar border. Chapter 6 examines how China's HIV epidemic is governed at the broader national and local level. The conclusion restates the key point of the book: the behaviours of these men are not individually motivated; they are 'occupational hazards' promoted by government

demands that they succeed in business, even as commercial sex and the use of public funds on lavish hospitality are condemned.

[rp1]The book is recommended to people working in the fields of anthropology, public policy, and health, and to anyone interested in China's informal government practices and sexual culture. It is a welcome addition to the growing body of literature on masculinity, AIDS, and changing sexual behaviours and attitudes in contemporary China (see, e.g., T. Hyde 2007, *Eating spring rice: the cultural politics of AIDS in southwest China*, 2007; E. Jeffreys and H.-Q. Yu, *Sex in China*, 2015; T. Zheng, 'Cool masculinity: male clients' sex consumption and business alliance in urban China's sex industry', *Journal of Contemporary China* 15: 46, 2006).

[rp1]The main limitation of the book, as Uretsky points out (p. 208), is its hypothetical nature. While usefully drawing attention to the male side of the demand for commercial sex, the book implies that all male government officials and entrepreneurs who travelled and socialized for work prior to 2012 regularly engaged in unprotected commercial sex as part of that work. But it is not possible to verify the claim that elite men are an unrecognized key to addressing China's evolving AIDS epidemic because there are no statistics that identify people infected with an STI or HIV on the basis of their political or economic status.

]bref[ELAINE JEFFREYS *University of Technology Sydney*

]bref[WOOL, ZOE H. *After war: the weight of life at Walter Reed*. xx, 244 pp., illus., bibliogr. Durham, N.C.: Duke Univ. Press, 2015. £16.99 (paper)

Wool's ethnography of severely injured American soldiers recuperating at Walter Reed Army Medical Hospital is, in a word, amazing. She takes the reader through the ups and downs of a handful of soldiers' stateside return to the pre-eminent convalescent hospital for wounded soldiers. Her overall goal is to put on display what is shaping these soldiers' preparation for reintegration into social life. She draws out the ordinariness of what is usually considered extraordinary in order to ascertain the social, political, and moral values within society that differentiate lives from one another. She takes up the ordinary across five themes: organization of the hospital; fragments comprising the present; the economy of patriotism; the inherent movement of those injured with post-traumatic stress disorder (PTSD); and intimate attachments with others.

Wool is at her best when she details the complexity of soldiers' lives. She makes a distinction between thin and thick enfleshments according to the depth of the webbed social relationships that either tightly or precariously connect soldiers to either static or ephemeral phenomena (after Elizabeth Povinelli's *Empire of love*, 2006). Through enfleshment, Wool is able to tease out patterns that produce puzzling relationships. She sketches out the tenuous links between a soldier's present and particular acts in the past, especially those acts that have brought the soldier to Walter Reed. The apparent thinness of the enfleshment of the present – as soldiers punctuate conversations with snippets of the past – hides the deep connections to the colleagues with whom the soldier served. The ongoing discussion of the uniqueness of the relationship between soldiers and the state is another relationship called into question. Wool shows that what appears as a thick enfleshment for the state is a thin enfleshment for the soldier. She points out that the soldiers understand themselves to be injured while doing their jobs, not as casualties of the war on terror, thus shifting the debate away from the confines of compensation for individual sacrifice. Within the relationship between the soldier and the state, the instability of injury – personally and through kinship – is juxtaposed against what unstable lives mean for the nation. Hospital policy is supposed to foster thick enfleshments by arranging care and treatment under the guise of achieving normalcy and ordinariness.

Yet the state relies on soldiers' injured bodies, and the relationships within which they are embedded, to fuel an economy of patriotism. In the process, the personal details of their lives are made public in order to keep the national war machine intact. Wool makes clear that these abstract and far-removed social relationships that firmly connect these soldiers' bodies to the state elide points of contact that would keep the soldiers' lives from shattering.

rp1[Wool's engagement with themes of movement in the home as a place of security and convalescence and in the negotiation of public space among soldiers with PTSD could have benefited from working with some of the spatial theory and feminist geography literature to think through space as a constitutive force in the unfolding of life. For example, the recognition that the reactions of soldiers with PTSD to being in public places post-deployment is more than just training could lead to the idea that place-based and spatialized environments are very much a part of the way one's personhood is constituted and could have served to texture what counts as ordinary shifting in various social settings. This type of argument could enhance Wool's overall project of understanding the sociality of specific settings through fleshy bodies. By acknowledging the interaction of experiences of instability of the mind and the unsteadiness of the body, the notions of *placelessness* and *spatiality*, for instance, could enrich ideas of how ordinariness gets constructed materially and discursively.

rp1[The post-war bodies of soldiers are a significant part of the story of war in the United States. Their exaltation as heroes deserving of purple hearts and in need of normalcy reinforces the jingoistic homilies of national discourses seeking assurance that the casualties are worth continuing the war. More urgent for the soldiers, as Wool so vividly shows, is the reworking of their masculinity in part through a rejection of the forced notions of athleticism and virility and the construction of durable and lasting intimate connections. She delicately but decisively demonstrates that suicide and violence are outcomes of the conflict soldiers encounter in their personal transformations. The 'deadlines of the military' (p. 193) are multiple, and Wool shows that challenges to the ordinary

have effects beyond that which can be controlled by the institutional processes of both destruction and recuperation, beyond the post-war body itself.

Has Wool succeeded in bringing out the fleshiness of these particular post-war bodies? Yes, indeed! Her work, though, only scratches the surface of what it is 'to apprehend the varying weights lives are made to bear and the work of bearing that weight' (p. 24) – a claim with which she, I'm sure, would agree.

PAMELA MOSS *University of Victoria*

Identity and alterity

BILLE, FRANCK. *Sinophobia: anxiety, violence, and the making of Mongolian identity*. 255 pp., illus., bibliogr.

Honolulu: Univ. of Hawai'i Press, 2015. £52.50 (cloth)

Franck Bille's monograph *Sinophobia: anxiety, violence, and the making of Mongolian Identity* is a captivating and timely volume that aims to explain a nationwide phenomenon: Mongolians' hatred and fear of China. If Mongolian people explain their upfront Sinophobic attitude as being biologically rooted, Bille uses a psychoanalytic framework to go beyond what people say and to elucidate the underpinnings of Mongolians' emotionally loaded relationship with China. Throughout *Sinophobia*, he assembles a rich body of evidence – from newspaper articles to hip-hop lyrics, from graffiti to rumours, from 'body techniques' to funeral practices – to bring a composite answer to the question: how can we explain people wilfully engaging in and heartily identifying with xenophobic sentiments against China?

[rp1[Chapter 1, 'Rumors, anxiety, violence', questions the origins of Sinophobic sentiments in the context of the isolation of Mongolia from its southern Asian neighbour throughout the socialist period (1921-90). Billé argues that it is precisely the lack of contact with China combined with a portrait of the Manchu Chinese as abusive oppressors that led to the construct of China as a threat. Rumours and gossip serve to bring this imaginary threat into existence and are also used to reaffirm Mongolian modern identity as being opposed to anything Chinese. Chapter 6, '*Communitas* and performativity', later highlights that the mostly verbal violence against China is less directed at the Chinese themselves than it is used as an instrument to assert Mongolian identity and to prevent any relation of Mongolians with Chinese. In chapter 2, 'Sinophobia and excess', Billé shows how China came to represent the antagonistic 'other', while Russia, being no less other, was taken as a model. As further explained in chapter 3, 'The spectral figure of the Chinese', Sinophobia and Occidentophilia stem from anxieties and aspirations inherited from the socialist project of turning Mongolians into modern subjects by expunging their Asianness. According to modern Mongolian views on identity, differences between Mongolians and Chinese are expressed in biological terms. These essentialized physical features (from body size to strength, from eye shape to skin and hair colour) and gender-specific attractiveness are, however, expressed through acquired body techniques. Thus, policing Mongolians' bodies to reaffirm and maintain their differences from Chinese bodies is a matter of nationalistic integrity. Chapter 4, 'Metaphors and immanent tensions', highlights how Mongolians today are torn between their identification as Western-inspired modern subjects and the idealization of the Mongolian countryside and nomadic lifestyle, seen as the epitome of Mongolianness but also associated with backwardness. Chapter 5, 'Corporeal revolutions', seeks to explain how Western medical practices and hygiene standards institutionalized during the socialist period came to be internalized as modern attributes demarcating Mongolians from other Asian people imagined as devalued others. The last chapter, 'Bodies at the margin', substantiates chapters 3 and 6 by showing the homogenizing effect of the Sinophobic hegemonic discourse. Billé demonstrates how xenophobic violence voiced against the Chinese mostly affects Mongolian individuals, namely women, who are at

odds with their function as producers of Mongolian heirs, and gay men, who do not comply with the Mongolian ideal of hypermasculinity.

rp1[Closing *Sinophobia*, the reader will undoubtedly be convinced by Bille's paramount argument that Mongolians' hatred for the Chinese is the consequence of the former's apparently puzzling unease about being identified as Asians. The author's demonstration that the insecure position of Mongolians on the East-West spectrum explains the potency of Sinophobic sentiments at once encompasses and goes far beyond Uradyn Erden Bulag's seminal work *Nationalism and hybridity in Mongolia* (1988). In fact, Bille shows that the rhetoric of purity and abhorrence of hybridity highlighted by Bulag applies to China/Asia only and is best understood when triangulated with another figure of 'the other', namely the Russian 'big brother' that Mongolians seek to emulate (p. 122). Besides this important contribution, *Sinophobia* is a rare example of English-language anthropological work that reviews and builds on the extensive body of regional scholarship written in French.

rp1[In my view, Bille's work is a model of comprehensive anthropological interpretation that eloquently interweaves historical and contemporary ethnographic data to demonstrate how the socialist past keeps framing Mongolians' self-perception and aspirations more than twenty years after the fall of the socialist regime. However, by applying a psychoanalytical framework to the collective production of identity, his description forgoes examining how individuals actually receive, communicate, diffuse, reject, or come to own the various public mediatizations of Sinophobia he describes. If *Sinophobia* is a must-read for anyone interested in contemporary Mongolia, it will also be of utmost interest to scholars and students seeking to understand xenophobia and the making of national identity beyond standard functionalist narratives.

rau[AUDE MICHELET *Laboratoire d'Ethnologie et Sociologie Comparative (LESC)*

]bref[NADER, LAURA (selected and with commentary by). *What the rest think of the West: since 600 AD*. xxviii, 444 pp., maps, bibliogr.

Oakland: Univ. of California Press, 2015. £27.95 (paper)

]rp[This engrossing collection of writings about Europe and the United States by writers from the Middle East, China, India, and Japan emerged from Laura Nader's teaching at Berkeley. Although each writer speaks for him- or herself, Nader's introductions to each piece gently steer the reader towards understanding what it contributes to promoting an inter-cultural and trans-historical dialogue in which the West's 'Others' are allowed to bite back, in words that were often not originally addressed to the audience that their translation into English opens up to them.

]rp1[Nader's project was partly a response to Edward Said's *Orientalism*, an excerpt from which is included, but her 'others' are illuminatingly heterogeneous. Another strength of the book is that although some commentators discuss ideological constructions of 'Western modernity', as illustrated by the thoughts of an Indian scholar on Eurocentric histories of modern science, Nader's selections decentre visions of world history focused on nineteenth-century colonial empires. The book begins with a critical account of the manners and customs of the Vikings ruling the Slavic Rus by an Islamic scholar-diplomat sent from Baghdad, and it is China that is 'West' to the earliest Japanese traveller included. Nader regularly flags up the contemporary relevance of writings about the past, such as the similarity between Napoleon's justification for invading Egypt and George W. Bush's for invading Iraq. Anyone who wonders why 'Crusaders' figure so prominently in Islamist discourse should read Amin Maalouf's synthesis of the testimony of Arab chroniclers of the Frankish invasions. Given the way things are going geopolitically, the book swims with the tide of history in redirecting Westocentric gazes towards Eurasia.

The accounts of these overseas visitors sometimes reflect their own ethnocentrisms and prejudices. Early Japanese visitors felt comfortable sharing US racial ideologies about Afro-Americans, despite the culture shock generated by other aspects of their diplomatic reception. Nader includes many commentaries that highlight the good as well as the bad in comparing Western societies with the writer's own, but there are also fascinating texts by people who, on closer immersion, became more disillusioned with the West and more appreciative of aspects of the societies that they had abandoned, such as the Turkish woman Zeyneb Hanoum. Hanoum also exemplifies writers whose work was produced in dialogue with Western friends. The Indian Abu Taleb, who praises English science but rivals Dickens in his critique of English law, responds critically to an English lady's insistence that Eastern women are oppressed. Possibilities for inter-cultural dialogue are central to the book's vision for anthropology. Nader includes exercises in critical comparative sociology by Chinese scholars such as Fei Xiaotong and LSE-trained Francis Hu, who made his career in the United States. The Chinese scholars hold up a mirror to the contradictions of market society and individualism, yet one of the most critical, Zhao Fusan, also insists that if the Chinese are to avoid slipping into the same traps, they should read critical Western thinkers.

Other texts offer uncompromising critiques. The satirical cartoons of Algerian Khalil Bendib may provoke a smile, but it is likely to be wiped rapidly from the reader's face by Lebanese scholar Mayssoun Sukarieh's exploration of the elite production of ignorance in sustaining American Empire, based on ethnography within the 'belly of the beast' in Washington, five years after her summary deportation from JFK airport in 2001. The weight of anthropologist Akbar Ahmed's denunciation of Obama's passion for drones is increased by his role as diplomat and public intellectual, but other inspired choices of texts take us directly into the public domain, including Iranian President Mahmoud Ahmadinejad's letter to George W. Bush, which extends long-standing Middle Eastern critique of the hypocrisies of 'Western Christian Civilization', and a China News Agency indictment of the human rights record of the United States, also a response to hypocrisy. We

get still topical comments on the insanities of derivatives and executive pay from a US-trained Chinese financial expert, whilst British readers may find Indian critiques of British parliamentary democracy as stimulating as those focused on the vices of British colonial rule.

The book does not include 'Latin' America and the Caribbean, or Africa. The 'New Worlds' created by European colonization and the Atlantic slave trade raise issues that can be obscured by separating out the USA from the 'other Americas', whilst African societies were entangled in relations with other Old World civilizations, but Nader's book brilliantly succeeds in injecting the 'return gaze' of at least some kinds of "Others" into anthropology. It should be a core text for all our students.

JOHN GLEDHILL *University of Manchester*

PASIEKA, AGNIESZKA. *Hierarchy and pluralism: living religious difference in Catholic Poland*. 261 pp., maps, illus, bibliogr.

London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2015. £60.00 (cloth)

Several years ago, in a book review for this journal, Agnieszka Halemba commended Juraj Buzalka's monograph *Nation and religion: the politics of commemoration in South-East Poland* (2007). Buzalka had taken a sensitive, historiographical eye to a frequently frustrating topic: populism in Poland. Halemba's praise for *Nation and religion* was despite (not because of) the fact that she was initially weary of the book's subject matter. Of her initial thoughts on a book with an introduction that described the popularity of the conservative Kaczyński brothers, Halemba wrote: 'Here it comes again, I thought, a representation of Poland as nationalistic, xenophobic, and conservative-Catholic'.

Shored up by the recent rightwards turn in governmental politics, Poland is still frequently conceived as such. And so it is that the nuance provided by Agnieszka Pasieka's provocation in *Hierarchy and pluralism: living religious difference in Catholic Poland* is particularly

refreshing. ‘What’, the monograph asks, ‘if we take diversity rather than homogeneity as a starting point from which to think about religion in Poland?’

]rp1[Pasieka challenges monolithic depictions of Polish culture and society using two main apparatuses. First, she passionately adheres to the credence that ethnography is, in any time and place, an invaluable tool for probing what lies behind headlines and statistics, in this case the mundane occurrences through which people make their own religious and political affiliation happen, while also dealing with those of others. For example, while the book does provide rich historical context in order to discuss pressing questions about the apparent interwovenness of Roman Catholicism and ‘Polishness’, Pasieka makes clear her commitment to ‘show[ing] that pluralism is better explained if we examine how it is actually lived within a society that today is largely homogenous’ (p.2). The point, then, is not to dispute Catholicism’s hegemony in Poland but rather to theorize the under-explored stories of diversity coming to the fore in ‘everyday life’.

]rp1[Secondly, Pasieka chose an exceptionally interesting and perhaps unexpected fieldsite – or fieldsites – through which to pose these questions: three villages (and occasionally additional villages) in the Southern Polish Rozstaje district, close to the Polish-Slovakian border. Evocatively, Pasieka recounts how ‘Inhabitants of Rozstaje often say that they live in “a place where the devil says goodnight” (i.e., is in the middle of nowhere) and that nobody cares about’ (p.16). The choice of this rural setting counters the easily made assumption that there will be more diversity in urban and perhaps also relatively ‘upwardly mobile’ locales.

]rp1[Pasieka embarked on what sometimes sounds like particularly exhausting fieldwork, moving between the company of members of Rozstaje’s ‘seven religious communities’. In doing so, she makes interesting methodological arguments about where to locate religion. In a typically pitch-perfect section on beginnings of her fieldwork, she describes a realization that trimmed down her overflowing Sunday fieldwork schedule in which she went from church to church. This was less of a practical consideration than it was a realization that the meaning of religion – and religious pluralism

– in informants' lives needed to be explored in places that were not particularly marked out as sacred spaces. As such, some of the most vivid ethnography in *Hierarchy and pluralism* has been collected in spaces such as homes and schools. This exploration of where and how religion comes to be powerful outside of patently 'non-secular' spaces such as churches shifts the pressing question from (as is often posed in academic and mainstream media literatures) 'Why is Poland so Catholic?' to 'How is Catholicism felt in so many public and private domains?' This is a consequential line of inquiry. Attention has been paid elsewhere (and briefly in *Hierarchy and pluralism*), for example, to the power of the Roman Catholic Church to influence medical professionals' conduct in relation to reproductive rights.

[rp1]The book makes a generally unstated contribution to thought on kinship in Poland. It is to a large extent about relationships, and about the idioms that groups and individuals use to manoeuvre ideas about who is different from them and who is similar. Often these divisions are fluid and context-based and depend on what people want or need in given situations, as well as differing from generation to generation. This comes to the fore particularly strongly in the sections on concepts of 'neighbourliness': a thought-provoking idiom because it connotes mutual support and shared initiatives but not necessarily intimacy. It is through these day-to-day interactions too that pluralism is rendered ethnographically visible. This is why pluralism is, as Pasieka puts it, 'made'.

[rp1]*Hierarchy and pluralism* is a thoughtful and sensitive ethnography that will appeal to a number of different readerships. In addition to being very valuable to those interested in the anthropologies of Poland and of religion, it would be apt for courses teaching ethnographic methods, posing as it does such interesting questions about how the scale of a fieldsite relates to the research questions being explored. The book will invite cross-cultural comparison with other societies where, in the manner of Catholicism in Poland, the broad societal influence of religion is particularly 'normalized'.

[rau][SIOBHAN MAGEE *University of Groningen*

Sanjek, Roger (ed.). *Mutuality: anthropology's changing terms of engagement*. 374 pp., map, illus., bibliogr. Philadelphia: Univ. of Pennsylvania Press, 2015. £42.50 (cloth)

Anthropology has always been a profoundly personal undertaking, as is witnessed by tales told around conference hotel lobbies and bars, in classrooms and increasingly in board rooms, and by the regular publication of volumes testifying to the trials and tribulations of fieldwork. A reader of these confessions will readily note changes over time in how they are framed, from Bronislaw Malinowski's revelations in his 'diary' (1967) and Reo Fortune's account in *Sorcerers of Dobu* (1932) of how he threatened to report a reluctant Dobu informer to British authorities in order to gain his co-operation, to more contemporary revelatory accounts that tend to speak of intimate and less distanced encounters between fieldworkers and 'natives' now transformed into human beings. Roger Sanjek's *Mutuality: anthropology's changing terms of engagement* speaks directly to this transformation, elevating our tales from the field to the status of a formative value system that can be as vital to the development of an anthropologist as has been her or his formal training and indoctrination. Sanjek identifies this value system as *mutuality*.

The volume consists of sixteen chapters each written as a personal account of how the formation and course of relationships between the anthropologists and the communities in which they have worked has helped shape their professional development. All but one of the authors was trained in the United States. The volume ends with a thoughtful and personal conclusion written by Roger Sanjek.

The contributions to *Mutuality* are separated into four parts. The first, 'Orientations', speaks to some of the general characteristics of mutuality. Here, for example, a chapter by Garrick Bailey provides a history of relationships between anthropologists and Native American communities;

another by Yolanda Moses focuses on the discipline's long-standing relationship to concepts of 'race', culminating in the American Anthropological Association's widely recognized *RACE: Are We So Different?* project. The second section is titled 'Roots', and emphasizes ways in which the contributors' family and community backgrounds have helped shape their values and approaches to their work. Here, for example, Parminder Bhachu reports on the ways in which her family's participation in the 'Punjabi craft caste global diaspora' (p. 4) influenced her career choices. Other contributors discuss ways in which their anthropologies were formed in part by the experiences of their ancestors and parents.

The third section is titled 'Journeys'. Its emphasis is on how particular career choices have provided varied expressions of mutuality as well as posing different obstacles to achieving fruitful mutual relationships. This section provides fodder for a discussion of the ways in which the discipline has begun to be transformed by shifts in the employments and values of its practitioners. Roberto Alvarez concludes his chapter with a discussion of how his career has been positively influenced by his own experiences of marginality within the communities and places where he has worked. Alaka Wali provides insight into ways her current employment as a curator with the Field Museum of Natural History has broadly influenced her sense of the importance of truly collaborative inquiry. The final section of the volume is titled 'Publics' and is directed to the varied publics with whom anthropologists become engaged. Many of these chapters are focused on applications and provide insight into both the successes and the frustrations of seeking mutuality in contexts in which broader inequalities and cultural insensitivities persist.

One way in which *Mutuality* differs from most earlier collections of fieldwork tales is that many of the chapters describe the influences of mutual relationships over long periods of time in the contributors' careers, whereas the earlier genre tended to focus on single fieldwork encounters. Another pronounced difference lies in the nature of the 'fieldwork' experience itself, with an

emphasis here on applied and public anthropological practices and with several contributors engaged in careers or employment outside of academia.

Today's practitioners of anthropology are more diverse than in the past, in respect both to their ethnicity and to their work. These two conditions of our moment are well represented in this volume, and from the personal accounts of each chapter we might be justified in thinking that the emphasis on collaborative practices, advocacy, and efforts to recognize and balance inequalities between practitioners and those with whom they work has emerged in part from the great variety of experiences that have informed the intimate and individual worlds of the contributors to this volume.

ERVE CHAMBERS *University of Maryland*

Narrative, memory, and memoir

BEHAR, RUTH. *Traveling heavy: a memoir in between journeys*. xiv, 228 pp., illus. Durham, N.C.: Duke Univ. Press, 2013. £15.99 (cloth)

What is the difference between a memoir and a confession? I kept asking myself as I read *Traveling heavy*. What is the difference between self-characterization and self-display? How do we read an autobiographical work that figures, rhetorically, an anthropological perspective in its self-portrayal? And do we – do we not – read Behar's self-casting as a symptom of her background: a Cuban Jewish immigrant to the United States, part-Sephardic, part-Ashkenazi, from Cuba? Self-reference is always self-framing in both senses of framing.

Travelling heavy is an episodic memoir. It is divided into three parts: 'Family', 'The kindness of strangers', and 'Cuban goodbyes'. The first part focuses on Behar's family – in Cuba and America. She was four and a half when, after the revolution, her family left for Israel and eventually

settled in the States in a poor neighbourhood in Queens. The Sephardic side – considered of lower status by the Ashkenazi side – settled in an even poorer neighbourhood in Brooklyn. They lived primarily in the Cuban-Jewish community. Their Jewish heritage was a source of both identity and conflict. Behar describes the near break-up of the two families over the naming of her brother. Her Sephardic relatives were furious when he was named after his father's brother who had been killed by the Nazis. They had wanted to name him after a living relative, as was their custom; the Ashkenazi were appalled by the idea of naming a child after a living family member. Ultimately, a Sephardic rabbi intervened, and both sides of the family attended Behar's brother's *bris*. He ended up using a nickname. Behar suffered the humiliation of spending a year in a 'dumb class' in elementary school because she knew no English. Eventually, after a classic struggle with her father over continuing her studies, Behar went on to Wesleyan then to Princeton for her Ph.D. under the direction of James Fernandez, the only anthropologist, apart from one of her students, whom she names in her book.

[rp1]Part two opens with an at times amusing description of Behar's first fieldwork, in Spain, her trips to Poland in search of her family origins, and her attendance at a 'summit' in Béjar, Spain, of people from around the world named Behar or something like it. (It turns out that they are not necessarily related or even come from Béjar, but this does not seem to bother them that much.) It is in this section of her book that Behar establishes her self-proclaimed style of anthropology as if it was all her own. ('Among anthropologists it's a moral sin to write about oneself', p. 6.) She defines it against 'analytic' theory and focuses on story, more significantly on intimate details of everyday life, including those of the anthropologist, which, like T.S.Eliot's objective correlatives, evoke their emotional surround. But, unlike Eliot, who was always careful to rely on the sublimation of his own feelings, Behar overwhelms her correlatives with her own emotional responses and preoccupations. This is a pity, since she is a sensitive observer, and her *aperçus* do not need her sentimentalizing support.

]rp1[‘Cuban goodbyes’ reflects Behar’s torn relationship to Cuba. It is at once joyful and sad, observant and distressed, realistic and sentimental. She travels to Cuba whenever she can, identifying with those who could not leave and those who did or, more poignantly, are in the process of settling elsewhere. You feel their ambivalence, their fears, their aspirations and disappointments. You also feel Behar’s complex identification with them – her concern, her worry. She is less prepossessive than in her other relations, perhaps because their situation is closer to her own. But is it? Her Cubans friends have an unmediated relationship with their country that she cannot have. She left too young, deprived of memory. She is filled with nostalgia, but hers is for a world she never really experienced. However impassioned she is, neither ego nor imagination can ever fill the absence of memory. Critical self-reflection is required, irony perhaps, and the recognition that the greatest risk in writing about oneself is turning everyone else into pawns for self-enhancement. No mention is made of the millions of immigrants around the world – and those who are willing to risk their lives for that status.

]rau[VINCENT CRAPANZANO *CUNY Graduate Center*

]bref[MANNING, PAUL. *Love stories: language, private love, and public romance in Georgia*. xxxiii, 157 pp., maps, illus., bibliogr.

Toronto: Univ. Press, 2015. £18.99 (paper)

]rp[Georgians can become quite emotionally invested in their nation’s ethnographic heritage. The writer Zurab Karumidze found this out the hard way. His 2014 nomination to be Georgia’s ambassador to the United Kingdom collapsed after a parliament deputy from the district of Svaneti accused him of having insulted the people of that region in one of his novels, in which mention is made of a rather salacious folk ritual said to have once been practised in a Svanetian village. In his defence, Karumidze cited the distinguished Georgian historian from whom he obtained information about the ritual, but by then the damage had been done in the popular press, and the novelist’s

candidacy was withdrawn. The ‘love stories’ featured in Paul Manning’s new book are likewise drawn from a handful of descriptions from early Soviet or Tsarist times, were picked up by fiction writers, and piqued the prurient interest of the Georgian public.

Beginning in the 1880s and 1890s, a smattering of articles in scholarly journals as well as the mainstream press mentioned a distinctive type of non-marital relationship between young women and men in the northeastern Georgian mountain provinces of Khevsureti and Pshavi (roughly 100 km north of Tbilisi, as the crow flies). Early accounts of the relationship, called *sts’orproba* (literally, ‘relation between age-mates’) among the Khevsurs, and *ts’ats’loba* in Pshavi, emphasized its contrast with marriage — the couple must neither produce children, nor marry — and the outpourings of poetry that it inspired. Young couples are depicted spending the night together, engaging in affectionate petting (but only permitted above the waist, and with clothes on), and forming an emotional bond that might persist even after they are married off to other people. Should the female partner become pregnant, the couple risked banishment or possibly death at the hands of their relatives. Some sources mention *coitus interruptus* and attempts to induce abortion.

In 1925, the first study devoted specifically to *sts’orproba/ts’ats’loba* appeared in print, followed almost immediately by two fictional works featuring the practice. Mikheil Javakhishvili’s novella *White collar* focused on the sexual side of *sts’orproba*, whereas Grigol Robakidze’s *Engadi* emphasized the self-restraint and renunciation that it demanded. The tension between these two seemingly irreconcilable facets of the relationship made it an object of fascination for the Georgian public, a fascination that has long outlived *sts’orproba* itself.

There are, then, two stories to tell about *sts’orproba*: that of the relationship (which ceased to be practised sixty to eighty years ago), and another, no less interesting, about the circulation of the concept from ethnography to fiction to popular culture. In *Love stories*, Paul Manning attempts to tell both tales. Over the past decade or so, Manning has made a name for himself as a productive and insightful scholar in the borderlands of linguistic anthropology, print and communication studies,

branding theory, and semiotics. His Georgia-related publications include studies of beer advertisements, banquets, Tsarist-era journalism, political caricatures, and cityspaces.

[rp1[Manning's new book comprises seven chapters, plus introductory and concluding sections, and a glossary of Georgian terms. Chapters 1-5 describe how *sts'orproba* might have been practised over a century ago. This reconstruction draws for the most part on a posthumous monograph by the native ethnographer Natela Baliauri, which includes numerous imaginary dialogues between young Khevsurs, and samples of the poetry they exchanged. Manning believes, as I do, that Baliauri based these dialogues on her own experiences growing up in a remote village in the early twentieth century, when *sts'orproba* was still part of daily life. *Love stories* contains an abundance of translated examples; in the case of poetry, the Khevsur Georgian original is also provided (in transliteration). In addition to their informational and aesthetic value, the textual materials find use as pedagogical resources to illustrate concepts such as genre, sociability, and performativity. The remainder of *Love stories* is given over to the framing story of how *sts'orproba* was represented in the writings of highland intellectuals, such as the poet Vazha-Pshavela, and made its way through pre-war Soviet fiction to post-war cinema to the social media chat of Georgian teenagers sharing fantasies about love and sexuality. This, in my view, is the strongest part of the book, derived from Manning's impressive familiarity with the discursive worlds of the nineteenth- and twentieth-century Georgian intelligentsia and twenty-first-century Georgian popular culture.

[rp1[*Love stories* is included in the University of Toronto Press series of 'Ethnographies for the Classroom', aimed at undergraduate readers. In view of its atypical format, I would recommend this book as an accompaniment to classroom discussions of ethnography as writing, its production, circulation, and reception.

[rau[KEVIN TUITE Université de Montréal

]breff[Schack, JON. *A people of stories in the forest of myth: the Yukuna of Miritiparan*. 271 pp., maps, figs, illus., bibliogr. Oslo: Novus Press, 2013. NOK 295.00

The author analyses a set of narratives about the way life is acquired in the communal house (*maloca*) and the knowledge and wisdom of the latter's owner. Schackt affirms that 'cold societies', that is, 'societies without history' based solely on myths, are very rare. The Yukuna (self-denominated People of Stories), an indigenous people of the Colombian Amazon, see this narrative corpus as a heritage permitting people to contact their ancestors and to engage in present-day kinship relations. The *maloca* is the conduit between past and present. The Yukuna are part of the Northwest Amazon Arawakan matrix (chap. 2), which also includes several groups now extinct. Schackt then presents historical narratives from the first contact with the Portuguese and slave hunters to the mid-1980s, when he began his research. He witnessed the political tensions between indigenous leaders who rejected Catholic missionaries and others who benefited from them. This antagonism permeated his entire research as he was caught in local conflicts between rival *maloca* owners (chaps 2 and 3). He then expounds on life within the *maloca* and its relationship to the patri-sib social organization (chap. 4). This leads to the importance of the recent ancestors who have established the proper way of life within the *malocas*, the birth of the patri-sibs (chap. 5), their relationship to the primordial time of world creation, world organization, and its managing shamanic powers (chaps 6-8). The book ends with an analysis of kinship and narratives, emphasizing the connections between oral history and heritage (chaps 9-10).

Strikingly, the author explains the paradoxes in the transmission of this heritage. On the one hand, the ideal way to transmit narratives and exclusive knowledge is through the paternal line, following the hierarchy of patri-sib segments as older and younger brothers; this arrangement upholds the political and ritual privileges of *maloca* owners, especially those regarded as 'seniors'. On the other hand, the narratives affirm that historically it was the 'juniors' who were in charge of this heritage, or, surprisingly, the affines. In several

moments, parents-in-law passed on to their sons-in-law the custody of the heritage that defines Yukuna identity. Hence, groups with no *maloca* nor the right to build one have borrowed the Yukuna language, learned their narratives, and adopted their ancestors as their own. Regrettably, in limiting himself to the Yukuna and their immediate surroundings, the author fails to grasp the potential of his analysis to highlight some of the most important aspects of the regional ethnology. His arguments could go much further if he referred them to the historical formation and the *longue durée* character of the Northwest Amazon sociocultural system. For centuries, indigenous peoples speaking Arawakan, Eastern Tukanoan, Nadahup, Kakua-nukak, and Karib languages have interacted intensely and broadly shared similar social organization, ceremonies, and knowledge. Identities in flux, unstable local ethnic categories, and disputes for rights to ritual and political privileges may well result from the paradoxes so keenly perceived and explained by Schackt. The book could dialogue with and go deeper into the realm of Amazonian ethnology by engaging in the debates on the constitution of hierarchy in the regional systems where it occurs.

[rp1]The book is the published version of a 1995 doctoral dissertation at Oslo University. It results from field research carried out in 1984-5. Most virtues and flaws are due to the time gap between fieldwork, dissertation writing, and publication. Although theoretically updated, the book leaves out most ethnographic production on Northwest Amazon in the last thirty years. Perhaps this renders the book somewhat timid and unaware of its potential to explain complex regional processes. The ethnographic present is the 1980s rather than the publication date, which, despite the author's precautions, is not devoid of problems. However, one of the book's virtues is to be an exceptional testimony prior to the 1991 Colombian Constitution that recognizes several indigenous rights. It presents Yukuna internal politics via conflicts between local political leaders. Challenged by the rights to have *malocas* or not, the anti-missionary leaders became their people's forerunners in the

defence of the rights later granted in the Constitution. Thus, the book also provides information about a political process that is still little known.

[Luis Cayón] *University of Brasilia*

[Severi, Carlo] (trans. Janet Lloyd; foreword David Graeber). *The chimera principle: an anthropology of memory and imagination*. xxxiv, 362 pp., figs, illus., bibliogr. Chicago: HAU Books, 2015. £17.50 (paper)

[Why should we call cultural milieux that make a constant and articulate use of images ‘oral’? Their visual records enable linguistic materials to be collectively remembered as part of the shared knowledge of a tradition.

[This is an ambitious book of historical ethnography that makes an argument concerning memory and practices of remembering in ‘non-Western’ ‘cultures’ whose orality has conventionally been suspected, in anthropology, as implying that things could not have been noted and recalled to the same extent as in literary contexts. For Severi, focusing on certain image-based documents of Sepik, Sioux, Apache, and Kuna origin (among others), pictorial representations can be seen to contain codifications akin to a formalistic language of ritualistic repetition: ‘[T]he pictogram seems to be the crystalized form of a particular type of utterance that possesses the symbolism peculiar to ritual singing’ (p. 331). Such images enabled culture members to record and recall complex events and genealogies: they are memory cues to texts. One can thus ‘produce memory without writing’ and ‘cultivate a memory of images [that] assume and preserve meaning in a durable and not vague way’ (p. 17).

[Two formal features characterize the codes that organize techniques for exercising a memory founded upon images: Severi calls them ‘salience’ and ‘order’. Salience mobilizes aspects

implicit in an image that is counter-intuitive, fantastical, and chimeral; order is the way in which images and names can be shaped into sequences. The features of salience and order together afford an elementary organization to mental representations. Severi sees his work as a

]rex/[first step toward a concept of cultural tradition founded no longer on the semiotic means (pure speech, either written or spoken) by which representations of knowledge are expressed, but instead upon the *simple but recurrent relations* that are established between different means of expression in a particular culture . . . By following up such an approach, an anthropology of memory can evolve toward an anthropology of the exercise of thought (p. 329, original emphasis).]/rex[

]rp1[Severi presents his argument in four empirical chapters plus an introduction and a conclusion. The first chapter revisits the work on social memory and imagery of the German-Jewish art historian and cultural theorist Abraham Moritz Warburg (1866-1929). The second chapter concentrates on a document known as the *Dakota Bible*, found in a Sioux village in the 1870s, to argue that Plains Indians demonstrated a strong unity of iconographic styles and graphic themes that conveyed certain central commonplace and shared epistemological notions: order was imposed on local knowledge that should be committed to collective memory. The third chapter reconsiders belief, not now from the perspective of the content of representations but, as with remembering, as something to do with the projection of images. The *act of believing* can be seen to establish an intense link between the believer and a representation; also to follow from the exercising of doubt, such as might be thrown up by the experience of pain. The key evidential exhibit here is the (Levi-Straussian) Kuna shaman whose ritualistic locution enables the woman amid the pain of a difficult childbirth to believe in the symbolic efficacy of a repetitive (parallelist) song. The fourth chapter re-examines the

situation of cultural conflict that led late nineteenth-century Apache to incorporate the Whites' figure of Jesus Christ. In a shamanistic context of ritual action that remains unchanged, Christ is metamorphosed into a chimera: a paradoxical double, both alive in ancient Israel and as a new messiah to the Apache; someone embodying their ancient ancestors and divine spirits as well as the antagonism of culture contact.

[rp1[There are at least two ways of constructing memories, Severi urges. The first is narrational: legends, myths, and stories based on linear sequences in established genres. The second, contrastively, is a song form, depending on an iconic formulation of knowledge: as in shamanistic ritual action that constructs complex images characterized by simultaneity and condensation of certain commonplaces that the tradition would transmit. But the images are also chimera: allusive, contradictory, unfinished, calling on the imagination of culture members to be collaboratively or dialogically exercised in ceremonial contexts for the purpose of together 'remembering' 'the culture'.

[rp1[Carlo Severi's book evidences much careful archival scholarship that would reconstrue earlier anthropological understandings of 'primitive art'; rather than representations of the world, here are objects of memory and imagination that provide a codification of mental space. The book calls for a comparative anthropology of iconographic traditions that work through the mnemonic use of images – understood as the 'non-Western memory arts' (p. 19).

[rau[NIGEL RAPPORT *University of St Andrews*

]ha1[Religion

]bref[COLEMAN, SIMON & ROSALIND I. J. HACKETT (eds) with an afterword by Joel Robbins. *The anthropology of global Pentecostalism and evangelicalism*. vii, 264 pp., bibliogr. New York: Univ. Press, 2015. £18.99 (paper)

The growth and visibility of Pentecostalism and evangelicalism (P/e) around the world have attracted the attention of an increasing number of anthropologists over the past fifteen years, making a distinctive contribution to the burgeoning subfield of the anthropology of Christianity. This edited volume joins others in the study of global Pentecostalism (e.g. A. Anderson, M. Bergunder, A.F. Droogers & C. van der Laan, eds, *Studying global Pentecostalism*, 2010) but is distinctive in bringing Pentecostalism and evangelicalism together in one volume, drawing out the significance of current and emerging themes from the study of both movements. While more anthropological attention has to date been focused on Pentecostal and charismatic Christianities, bringing these together with evangelicalism enables the volume to foreground the distinctive resonances between these movements, for example, as Joel Robbins notes in his afterword, their distinctive moral geographies, charting the world as shaped by a struggle between good and evil, and the ideas of spiritual warfare many believers draw on in articulating their own engagements in this struggle.

Coleman and Hackett's editorial introduction provides an excellent overview of the study of P/e, providing background histories, contexts, and definitions for Pentecostalism and evangelicalism, while also contextualizing research in these areas in relation to the anthropology of Christianity and the reasons for the growth of these interrelated fields. These reasons, the editors suggest, include the shift in gravity of Christianity towards Asia, Africa, and Latin America, anthropological reflexivity, and the collapse of distinctions between 'home' and 'field', which has resulted in Christianity in Euro-America becoming a growing field of study. At the same time, they argue, the anomalous character of P/e – inhabiting spaces between categories that were traditionally separated (local and global, self and other, familiar and foreign) – has made it an especially fruitful area of study, opening up productive theoretical lenses such as 'rupture', belief and conversion, materiality and media, and language and embodiment.

The editors situate the book as indicating a 'coming of age' of anthropological studies of P/e, and as not only providing both an analytical and a geographical map of the field of study but also suggesting new directions that could be followed. As such, each ethnographically rich chapter draws on and provides a useful overview of key themes that the study of P/e has opened up, while also offering fresh critiques and approaches. The book is divided into four sections, orientated around the main debates in the existing literature on P/e, but there are also number of wider themes that resonate across these sections. Several of the chapters engage with questions of personhood and demonstrate the ambiguity with which P/e engages with ideas of individualism and processes of individualization. In chapter 1, for example, Omri Elisha examines how men in an evangelical fellowship group in a megachurch in Knoxville, Tennessee, support each other in forming themselves as 'disciples' in areas of their lives such as trying to control diabetes. Elisha's analysis demonstrates how for these men, forming themselves and each other as evangelical subjects entails a 'living tension' between individuality and dividuality, between norms of self-determination and personal responsibility and relational practices that enable them to experience what he terms an 'unbuffered sense of self'. Tensions surrounding questions of agency are also explored by Kelly Chong in her chapter on the rituals and rhetoric of conversion among South Korean evangelical women, in which she argues that they can experience an image of an empowered self that is in conflict with hierarchical gender norms and leads them to believe that their 'egoism' and 'arrogance' are the cause of marital discord. Other chapters take up this theme of relationality and open up understanding of how Pentecostals and evangelicals experience and understand different scales of social relations. The chapters by Kevin Lewis O'Neill and Yannick Fer, for example, reveal different ways in which Pentecostals understand the relationship between self, community, and nation-state in, respectively, Polynesia and Guatemala, while Thomas Csordas's chapter argues that Catholic charismatics experience the global spread of their practices as a means of re-enchanting the world. Questions of uncertainties, shifting and unstable modes of conviction, and methods of discernment also emerge from several of the chapters. These questions are investigated particularly by Mathijs Pelkmans in his chapter on miracles and

experiences of existential and epistemological uncertainty in the lives of Pentecostals in Kyrgyzstan and by Martijn Oosterbaan in his chapter on gospel music and charisma in Rio de Janeiro. Kristine Krause's chapter is also attentive to the shifting registers and stutters of a diversifying Pentecostalism, as she explores how young Ghanaian migrants in London born into born-again families wrestle less with questions of conversion and rupture than with how to preserve a sense of their moral distinctiveness in the spaces they inhabit and the way this relates to the moral geographies they create of self, surroundings, and the world, through particular charismatic practices.

Overall, this edited collection makes a valuable contribution to the study of P/e, encouraging reflection on the distinctive debates and analytical lenses that have emerged both from the study of P/e and from the study of Christianity in relation to this. The ways in which the chapters synthesize existing debates and their vivid ethnography makes the book an especially useful resource for students. Yet it also points forward to new lines of inquiry opening up within this rapidly growing field that are of relevance for anthropology more broadly.

ANNA STRHAN *University of Kent*

HANDMAN, COURTNEY. *Critical Christianity: translation and denominational conflict in Papua New Guinea*. xiv, 307 pp., maps, tables, illus., bibliogr. Oakland: Univ. of California Press, 2015. £22.95 (paper)

The anthropology of Christianity has transitioned from attempts to establish its place in the discipline to a field of study with its own internal debates and contending points of view, and Handman's *Critical Christianity* is an ambitious entry into this arena that tackles schismatic conflict. Her work is based on village ethnography, but she casts her net wider than that, drawing extensively on mission archives, consulting theological literature, and always keeping relations between locals

and outsiders in view. The result is demanding and rewarding, offering a mix of ethnography and argument on nearly every page.

Jrp1[Papua New Guinea's Waria Valley hosts an 'alphabet soup' of churches, some with global affiliations, others mainly local. Such diversity sets the stage for Handman's argument, for this profusion arises as much from congregational splits as from outside proselytization. Shifting focus from conversion to schism, Handman traces changing Guhu-Samane church affiliations through the lens of language.

Jrp1[Language played an important role in church dynamics beginning with German Lutherans, who promoted Kâte as a regional lingua franca. They aimed to foster unity among Lutheran converts while simultaneously marking them off from other denominations, such as neighbouring Catholics. Here church language operated as an agent of consolidation while overriding linguistic and ethnic differences. After the Second World War, however, workers of the Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) embarked on a translation of the New Testament into Guhu-Samane.

Jrp1[Some Lutheran missionaries registered misgivings about this project, and Handman sees the seeds of schism in SIL's translation. SIL distributed the Guhu-Samane New Testament in 1975, when their main translator charged local people with looking after the 'fireplace' that his work established: they were to keep it ready for a 'spark' that was to come. This was also the year Papua New Guinea gained independence: change was in the air, and when a Holy Spirit revival swept the region two years later, the translator's words were taken to be prophetic. The vernacular translation was credited with bringing the Holy Spirit to the Guhu-Samane.

Jrp1[The New Life Church emerged, adopting the SIL version, and conducting services in Guhu-Samane accompanied by raucous group prayer and traditional drums. As a 'hot' spirit-orientated church, New Life broke with the Lutheran past, and its Holy Spirit revival went hand in hand with a new emphasis on the local in speech, church practices, and material forms.

Handman[New Life realized a vision of localized Christianity, but soon dissenters saw it as narrowly parochial: members avoided the cash economy, eschewed Bible training, and refused to register their church with the government. Convinced their faithfulness (and construction of an airstrip) would produce a utopia and make a local village the national capital, New Life adherents were soon labelled cargo cultists.

Handman[Disaffected members founded Reformed Gospel, banning drums, holding quieter ('cooler') services, and incorporating Tokpisin and English in church. Imagining a very different future, they envisaged the same village as the site of a foreign-supported bible school: a portal for knowledge to achieve the development that had eluded them since independence.

Handman[Much of the book's theoretical interest grows out of Handman's treatment of translation. SIL put a premium on anchoring translations in locally familiar idioms, minimizing the distance between source and target texts, and thus between the Gospel and tradition. New Life's embrace of SIL's translation stressed the local and cultural continuity (or authenticity) in the break from Lutheranism. These were precisely the emphases rejected by Reform Gospel, which sought a more cosmopolitan address to the world. Here language indexes different valuations of the local in Guhu-Samane struggles with modernity.

Handman[Handman is thorough and resourceful, and there is no doubt that closer attention to language ideology and church practices will bring new insights. But for me, at any rate, the more important part of her case is the attention she directs to the generative role of schism in church politics: the creation of collectivities through division rather than aggregation. In this she makes an important addition to the conversations Melanesianists and others are having about Pentecostal growth and secondary conversion. Seen this way, an increase in the number of churches or denominations does not mean that there is an increase in the number of believers. This feels oddly fitting: ethnographers from Bateson to Wagner or Harrison saw (sometimes exaggerated) differentiation as fundamental to traditional Melanesian sociality, and discovering similar processes in

Christian politics may give the idea of schismogenesis a new lease on life, albeit with a new genealogy.

[DAN JORGENSEN *University of Western Ontario*

[LI, LAN. *Popular religion in modern China: the new role of Nuo*. 296 pp., illus., bibliogr. Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2015. £70.00 (cloth)

[There have been surprisingly few ethnographic monographs devoted to the study of local, rural religious practices in post-Mao China. With rich ethnographic detail on the role of *nuo* practices in a Tujia minority village in the southwestern province of Guizhou, Li's study helps to fill this gap. Most valuable is the author's two decades of research experience at Shenxi village in Dejiang county. This enables Li to shed light on the significant changes that have occurred in the social and political status of popular religion particularly with the local and national government's recent interests in preserving and promoting 'intangible cultural heritage' (ICH), including the ritual expertise of local *nuo* masters and troupes.

[The book consists of an introduction (chap. 1), a conclusion, and six main chapters. Of these six, the first three (chaps 2-4) focus on a rich description of local village life, Tujia cosmology, and traditional *nuo* rituals. Li describes how Shenxi village is one of the poorest in China owing to its isolated location and rugged topography, which provides poor crop yields. Despite recent government programmes to provide basic health insurance, much health care is unaffordable and inaccessible to villagers, who often turn to *nuo* masters for help in divining cures for unexplained ailments and other misfortunes when other avenues of care have been exhausted. *Nuo* masters both divine the causes of misfortune and provide rituals to exorcize the evil spirits responsible. Rituals are often highly public affairs that bring the village community together. *Nuo* specialists also provide entertainment to both gods and people by engaging in dramatic performances where they wear masks and are believed to be transformed into gods, taking on their roles.

The subsequent three chapters (5-7) place *nuo* in a wider context by exploring its history from before the Han dynasty to recent developments in which the local state has worked to promote it as a form of ICH. Li depicts *nuo* practices as a remnant of China's political and religious culture from pre-Han times that survived by seeping into popular, local practices. In the modern period, the state targeted *nuo* as a form of harmful superstition; Maoist-era campaigns aimed to humiliate its specialists and end its practices. In the post-Mao period, however, the state began to see *nuo* as an aspect of China's culture worth preserving. Its interest increased further in the 2000s when the central government, responding to a UNESCO initiative, allocated funds for the identification and support of cultural practices that could qualify as ICH. Local officials in Dejiang county labored hard to qualify *nuo*, especially its local variety, as ICH to attract funding from the central government and money through tourism. In recent years, officials have encouraged performances for tourists of some of the more eye-catching *nuo* rituals and the manufacture and sale of *nuo* masks and other *nuo*-themed merchandise. Li is quick to note that these performances and products take *nuo* out of its cultural context as a form of healing and community cohesion. Moreover, *nuo* practices themselves were threatened with extinction for a time when young men passed up the chance to train as *nuo* masters in order to pursue money-making opportunities through migrant labour. Li observes, however, that the status of *nuo* has improved in recent years through strategies its practitioners themselves have developed independently from the state's tourist initiatives, such as charging higher fees for rituals. This has made it more economically feasible for young men to train as apprentices to masters and carry on the tradition.

Li's ethnography is mostly descriptive: in contrast to recently published studies of Chinese rural villages such as Ellen Oxfeld's examination of moral change in a Guangdong village (*Drink water, but remember the source*, 2010) or Adam Chau's exploration of ritual event productions in Shaanxi (*Miraculous response: doing popular religion in contemporary China*, 2006), there is little contribution to theory that might interest anthropologists working outside of China. Nevertheless, this book is an important contribution to the emerging literature on popular religious practices in China

and the complications of their survival under the present trend of state-sponsored commodification. It is also very well organized and highly readable, making it a possible choice for undergraduate students requiring an introduction to localized Chinese religious practices and the challenges that tourism and global economic development presents to their survival.

[rau[GARETH FISHER *Syracuse University*

]bref[OSBAND, NOAM. *Adelante*. 50 mins, colour. DVD. New York: Filmmakers Library, 2014. \$199.00

]rp[Set in Pennsylvania's Norristown, and revolving around the activities of the Catholic parish of St Patrick, *Adelante* rehearses the classical tropes of North American hybrid multiculturalism and of migrants' sense of split identities, of belonging and nostalgia. Indeed, the film captures what is probably one of the more blatant manifestations of these processes and experiences, as it focuses on the changing composition of the church's parishioners since its foundation. From an all-Irish community in the early nineteenth and up until the late twentieth century, it became a predominantly Mexican one in the early 2000s, after a period of dwindling numbers and reduced participation. The director charts those dynamics by following some of the parish activities, such as religious and cultural ceremonies, meetings and education projects; by interviewing the priest, Father Murphy (who is given central weight in the whole narrative), but also members of his family, as well as some parishioners of Irish and Mexican descent; and by following some of them at particularly significant moments. More specifically, Osband chooses to focus on the wedding preparations and on other aspects of the life of a young Mexican couple, María Juana and Hector, and of their three children. The film climaxes with their actual wedding ceremony in St Patrick's Church, which closes the documentary in the most stereotypical of happy endings, albeit tinged with a

hint of nostalgia for those left behind, in the homeland.

Thus, the interweaving of historical and personal narrative, masterfully managed by the director, gives a vivid sense of cyclical recurrences, of strife, hardship, and, finally, success or at least improvement, the coronation or progressive materialization of the American Dream. This is closely related to a process which might be characterized as one of 'integration', preserving a sense of cultural specificity but with significant elements of cross-contamination. Racial and class lines emerge at several points in the film, but always gesturing towards their progressive undoing: from the divisions between Irish, Italian, and Polish migrants of yesteryear, through the integration of African Americans into the parish and its school early on, to the more recent difficulties faced by Mexican newcomers, who, in the words of one of the film's characters, 'initially had to work twelve hours a day to earn thirty dollars'. Father Murphy, himself of Irish descent, mentions the discrimination that Latinos have to face both *vis-à-vis* (Anglo-)American society but also, in passing, from some Anglo members of the parish, who, however, are portrayed as generally welcoming, supportive, and open. The priest also comments on how many Mexicans 'work two or three jobs and don't have much spare time' to participate in the church's activities. The class divide between older and more recent migrants, Irish descendants and Mexicans, is made evident by the words of a woman of Irish ancestry, perhaps the most open character portrayed in the documentary, who reports being asked by the child of Mexican immigrants how many people live in her (very big) house. In the background, at different points in the film (from church prayers to meetings about wedding ceremonies), lurks the spectre of immigration laws and their effects of illegalization. Even more fleeting reference is made by one of the characters to gendered forms of segregation which occurred in the parish school, closed long ago, thus giving a sense in which these discriminations may belong to the past, and again pointing to

the centrality of forms of emancipatory hybridization which pervade the entire film.

[rp1]Cross-contamination is evident especially in relation to religious ceremonies, which the parish has adapted to its predominantly Mexican membership (celebrations for the Virgen de Guadalupe, blessings of children of different ages, re-enactments of the Gospel which involve the entire parish and get as far as parishioners' homes). But rituals of secular religion, and especially diasporic nationalist celebrations (Irish and Mexican), are also brought up as instances of hybridization, alongside Hector and Maria's progressive 'Americanization', in which, predictably, the celebrations of US independence are a central feature. Food, of course, also plays a paramount role.

[rp1]Osband's portrayal of this multicultural community is set in a celebratory tone, where progressive unity is achieved mainly thanks to the efforts of the priest and the Anglo parishioners who encompass and welcome Mexicans. In turn, the new migrants are recognized for their contribution in re-enlivening the church community and wider society thanks to their faith and hard labour. Whilst important, this perspective might downplay the subversive role of hybridization, pointed out by many postcolonial writers, which in turn derives from the subaltern position from which it is enacted. The film, therefore, is as interesting for what it leaves unrepresented as for what it brings to light. References to the Virgen de Guadalupe (an Indian deity re-signified through the Christian idiom and raised as the symbol of Mexican anti-colonial struggle), for example, recall past displacements, colonizations, and diasporas which have powerful correspondences in a present of institutionalized racism and segregation, but also embody resistance and defiance. These haunt the film in uncanny fashion. After all, the traumatic re-emergence of the past and its violent reverberations in the present are what makes *mezstisaje* and hybridity worth practising and celebrating as a form of creative, collective subversion.

IRENE PEANO *University of Bologna*

Theory and method

AMIT, VERED (ed.). *Thinking through sociality: an anthropological interrogation of key concepts*. 210 pp., bibliogr.

Oxford, New York: Berghahn Books, 2015. £55.00 (cloth)

This theoretically orientated edited volume proposes to examine sociality through six ‘mid-level concepts’: disjuncture, social field, social space, sociability, organization, and network. Each of the main chapters offers a useful inventory of earlier and current theorization of one of the concepts, and illustrates its utility through a short ethnographic example based on the author’s research. The chapters also explore how popular uses of the concepts and their real-world referents have developed historically and figure in contemporary discourse and social life. In these ways, the book forms an exemplarily coherent, attractively organized collection.

The book’s declared objective is to move away from totalizing meta or master concepts (culture, society, identity, etc.) to advance conceptual tools more apposite to the anthropological enterprise of making sense of localized social life in concrete ethnographic contexts. The chosen approach expressly caters to the constitutive anthropological preference for concepts that are good to think with. Mid-level concepts are deemed appropriate because they are specific enough to be contextually revealing and thickly descriptive, yet have sufficient reach and flexibility to enable use across different analytical domains and ethnographic contexts. The examined concepts are recognized as ambiguous and polythetic, which is perceived as an additional asset, enhancing their heuristic utility as measured through a capacity to open up inquiry.

Christina Toren’s observation that sociality cannot form a distinct analytical field since it is a fundamental condition of human life which pervades all its aspects is presented as a motive to break down the study of sociality into smaller components. Rather than a collection on sociality,

however, the book comes across as being more strictly about social form. It considers a set of social forms – templates or configurations of social life – some of which are mainly analytical (e.g. social space and disjuncture), and some of which are both analytical and empirical (network, organization), but the interest is mainly in these forms in their own right. Sociality in a stricter sense – modes of enacting interaction or relationships – is surprisingly little discussed, and there is little expected consideration of how the examined social forms affect sociality, or what kinds of sociality are associated with them.

[rp1[As a book about social form, *Thinking through sociality* above all stresses its contingency, how the examined forms reflect the processes and actions through which they are enacted, and how they contain a space for individual agency and interpretation. All contributions highlight the uncertainty and negotiated nature of social connections and their insusceptibility to being contained by social form. A principal theoretical inspiration for this orientation is the Manchester School of social anthropology.

[rp1[The first chapter, by Vered Amit, sets the tone for the chapters that follow by highlighting breaks and transitions in social connections and relationships. Amit advances disjuncture – in the sense of disassociation and disengagement – as an analytical starting-point, considering it not as an aberration, the lesser consort of connection or integration, but as an integral aspect of structure and everyday life, thus extending disjuncture beyond the exceptional and dramatic to ‘quotidian disjunctures’, routine and invisible comings and goings which, especially today, may be desired as much as continuity.

[rp1[In his chapter on social fields – organized domains of action of unequally positioned social agents competing over the same rewards – John Postill ‘disaggregates’ and ‘pluralizes’ the concept of the field. He proposes that social fields are diverse and complex, reducible neither to strategic games nor to habitual practises of reproduction, but forming ‘dynamic configurations of practices, games, and socialities’.

[rp1[Deborah Reed-Danahay understands the broader concept of social space – denoting relational spheres of interaction, affiliation, and so on – as essentially constituted through disjunction from physical space, yet centrally informed by spatial imagery and considerations of physical and geographic location. She highlights notions of thresholds, boundaries, and distance as central components of social space, and suggests that the concept is particularly useful in contemporary contexts of mobility and migration, where physical and social space diverge, but positioning none the less is shaped by experiences of emplacement as much as displacement.

[rp1[Sally Anderson's chapter on sociability differs from the others by directly considering a special type of sociality – sociable, non-instrumental intercourse – and how it relates to sociality in general. She critiques Simmel's arguably ethnocentric notion of sociability as an abstracted form and autonomous domain of playful, convivial exo-sociality, and argues that real-world sociability is contingent on ongoing social construction, and its form is contested and subject to reversibility, 'rife with the shadows of its constituting subtractions and reductions'. In so doing, Anderson expresses a general concern in the book with the limits of social form, and its active construction through social action.

[rp1[Gabriel Vargas-Cetina opens up the concept of organization by examining the distinct qualities and historical trajectories of three types of organizations – corporations, cooperatives, and associations (including social movements) – and describes a recent shift towards ephemeral, non-corporate associations. While not extensively discussing sociality, he emphasizes that human aggregations result from sociality.

[rp1[Vered Amit and Virginia Caputo's chapter on the network champions the Manchester School's actor-centred version of the concept – an open-ended personal order of connections including cross-institutional and indirect links – as a vital complement to reifying analytical and popular conceptions of the network as an institution or 'new global form', which people 'inhabit' rather than 'author'. Against reductive notions of networks as self-operating systems, the authors

stress that connections are continually ‘assembled’ (Latour) and ‘cut’ (Strathern), and highlight the crucial work of ‘actualization’ done by individual agents (neglected by Latour and Strathern).

A weakness of the book is that there is little systematic effort to think sociality through the concepts, and to link them together through dialogue. The introduction mainly presents the editor’s mid-level conceptual agenda and provides summaries of the chapters by the authors. Similar chapter summaries appear in Nigel Rapport’s concluding epilogue, which does offer some general conclusions about the condition of sociality – to do with its flexibility, uncertainty, and contingency – but mainly pursues a rather incongruent ‘meta-level’ synthesis inspired by Montaigne and Nietzsche, according to which ‘humanity manifests itself in individuality’. This does not, however, detract from the book’s merits in advancing conceptual tools for contemporary anthropology, and in providing a valuable source of overviews of the examined concepts and stimulating reading on how to think the configuration of social life.

KENNETH SILLANDER *University of Helsinki*

DALSGAARD, STEFFEN & MORTEN NIELSEN (eds) (afterword by George Marcus). *Time and the field*. vi, 160 pp., bibliogr.

Oxford, New York: Berghahn Books, 2015. £17.50 (paper)

To evoke a central issue addressed in *Time and the field*, it ‘took time’ (more than seven years) before it appeared as a book. It dates back to a 2009 workshop, papers from which were first published in 2013 as a Special Issue of the journal *Social Analysis* (57: 1). During that process, the chapters were reviewed and presumably rewritten more than once. Marilyn Strathern was a discussant

at the original workshop, and although she is not a contributor to this collection, her thought is very much present in it.

[rp1]In their introduction, the editors formulate an agenda for discussion. As their starting-point they take current concerns and conditions of ethnographic field research, which they see as ‘differing from those of the small-scale communities (stereo-)typically studied by anthropologists of yore’ (p. 2). Then, to mark the arena of debate, they offer critical observations on the ‘idealized time of the field’, changed ‘spatial tropes’ and ‘temporalities’, and give examples of ethnography which has overcome spatial tropes and succeeded in ‘temporalizing the field’.

[rp1]The papers that follow are said to approach the common theme from (notice a spatial trope sneaking up) ‘three different angles’: Antonia Walford and Steffen Dalsgaard take an ‘ontological perspective’ on the ethnographers’ and their ‘informants’ conceptions of time; a common focus on ‘different times’ clashing is found in the contributions by Anne Line Dalsgaard and Martin Demant Frederiksen, by Ton Otto, and by Peter A. Lutz; ‘timing and temporalities of fieldwork’ are addressed by Inger Sjorslev, Michael Whyte, and Morten Axel Pedersen and Morten Nielsen. Locations of their fieldwork include (following the list of authors) the Brazilian Amazon, Papua New Guinea, urban Brazil, Georgia, Uganda, Sweden, Mongolia, and Mozambique. Similarly varied are the topics of inquiry and the groups or communities of interlocutors among whom research was conducted. The afterword by George Marcus is not the expected summary or recapitulation of arguments and findings but an attempt to characterize, as it were, the mood created by temporalization of ‘the field’ in current anthropological practice. As stated in the subtitle of his contribution, he reflects on ‘ethnography between the virtue of patience and the anxiety of belatedness once coevalness is embraced’. Foremost among the causes of anxiety experienced by anthropologists eager to make their work count among those whom they study, among their peers, among experts outside their discipline, and in the media is the ‘time pressure’ that is rampant in neoliberal academe. To name but one of the symptoms (and my favourite example), when no longer books but only articles

(preferably team-authored) are made to count in ‘evaluations’ of ethnographers and projects, the often feared ‘end of anthropology’ becomes a realistic expectation.

[rp1]In the meantime, we keep working and try to meet the challenges of time and temporality. *Time and the field* is an impressive attempt to offer a theoretical frame for, and an inventory of, our efforts. It also has its flaws. The most serious one is the failure to acknowledge a decisive step our discipline took towards making time in the field a central issue in reflections on ethnography. It was taken when vague ‘participant observation’ was brought into focus in Dell Hymes's pioneering ‘Toward ethnographies of communication’ (*American Anthropologist* **66**: 6, 1964). His insight that communication occurs in ‘events’ helped to liberate language- centred anthropology from structuralism. Slightly later, the reception of phenomenology (Husserl, Schutz) and critical theory (Habermas) added scope and focus to the move taken by Hymes. That, and how time, works in the production and presentation of knowledge became the task of both working out the epistemology of fieldwork and criticizing a discourse which, by denying or ignoring the conditions of communicative research, put anthropology at risk of becoming a political ideology.

[rp1]The contributors to *Time and the field* are aware of this to some degree. Otto calls attention to time an ‘epistemological move of ethnographic fieldwork’ (p. 67), Sjorslev refers to Schutz when she speaks of the event as ‘action time’ (p. 108, n. 2), and Whyte invokes ‘intersubjectivity’ (p. 117), but most of them appear to be content with citing and sometimes briefly quoting – reflexively rather than reflectively – *Time and the other* (J. Fabian, 1983). As far as I can see, none of them takes a critical stance towards a theoretical shift in dealing with time advocated by the editors: from epistemology to ‘ontology’ (a move towards metaphysics that has recently become conspicuous in approaches to anthropology of religion). Has assuring ourselves of the reality of our work become more urgent than arguing for its legitimacy?

[rp1]Finally, an important development in our discipline seems to go unnoticed in *Time and the field* (except, if only obliquely, by Sjorslev and Whyte). This is an increasing awareness that, ‘as

time goes by', ethnography merges with historiography. Beyond 'collecting data', the practice of fieldwork then becomes one of documenting events and establishing publicly accessible archives that make it possible for ethnographers and their interlocutors to be in each other's present by sharing a common past.

The review of a book should end with a recommendation. Notwithstanding the critique I have voiced, *Time and the field* deserves to be read; above all by advanced students who are preparing for fieldwork.

JOHANNES FABIAN *University of Amsterdam*

GOLUB, ALEX, DANIEL ROSENBLATT & JOHN D. KELLY (eds). *A practice of anthropology: the thought and influence of Marshall Sahlins*. vi, 305 pp., maps, tables, figs, bibliogr. Montreal, Kingston: McGill-Queen's Univ. Press, 2016. £28.99 (paper)

Since this volume was first mooted in 2006, Marshall Sahlins' contribution to anthropology has continued apace. The open-ended tenor of these essays is a fitting tribute to a great scholar and a tireless advocate of anthropology – including advocacy among anthropologists, for they do not always appreciate the significance of their own conceptualizations. Culture, for instance. Diverse of Sahlins' colleagues now set out to assess that contribution. Not easy, the editors remark, since he has been at the centre of so many significant debates: 'economics, history, practice, evolution'. A formidably productive lifetime has also been transformative. Sahlins' constant reworking of central ideas upholds his own thesis that nothing is done for the final time.

But everything must be done as though it were, with the impetus of a position thoroughly argued. The positions these colleagues take on Sahlins' work serve him well. Prefaced movingly by Claude Lévi-Strauss on Sahlins' mastership of Polynesian studies, the volume closes with reflections

from a friend, Pacific historian Greg Denning, which refuse to conceal the differences between their practices. Between them, substantial chapters from working anthropologists reach across Sahlins' influence. Each endorsing the general or theoretical import of ethnographic-historical detail, each holds the reader's attention in its own terms as well as exemplifying, clarifying, criticizing modifying, extending – in the best sense critiquing – Sahlins' work. The editors' introduction situates his oeuvre with respect to its development over the years, an illuminating intellectual history that gives a good sense of why Sahlins should consistently warn about the enemies of culture.

[rp1]The chapters proceed as follows. Joel Robbins unpacks the implications of reading Sahlins under the sign not of history but of social change, where he is its 'foremost contemporary anthropological theorist'; the idea that actors risk their cultural categories through their practices offers a particular theory of culture that does not require assumptions of continuity. Indeed Robbins seizes the occasion to enquire how a cultural model of change could be possible, deliberately foregrounding aspects of Sahlins' modellings and criticizing others. The next chapter dazzles the reader with an artefact from a time when Samoan chiefs were warring over questions of customary precedence: a letter from the King of Samoa to the Queen of Great Britain. For Jocelyn Linnekin this exemplifies the structure of conjuncture, foreigners and indigenous peoples symbolically constructing their own and each other's conceptual models. The detailed information at her disposal allows her to emphasize creative appropriations on each side. Under conditions of relative information paucity, Webb Keane extends Sahlins' advocacy of the irreducibility of culture to a 'materialist semiotic'. He uses this to confront arguments in archaeology about choice (culture) and determinism (practical reason). One example concerns a Neolithic moment when faunal remains included domesticates while art celebrated hunted animals: neither category can have been untouched by the other. A materialist semiotic seeks out conjunctions without assuming specific causes or effects.

[rp1]Chapter 4 opens with anthropology's 'historical turn' in 1970s / 1980s, and Sahlins' insistence on the work of power and history in all cultures. The self-transformation of a colonial

through the imagination of order and disorder (Rome, Fiji) evinces not only the cultural dimensions of colonial power but also the 'powers' in culture. Martha Kaplan plays him off against the self-fashioning of a prime adversary, a Fijian lawgiver with the name of a biblical prophet. Serge Tcherkézoff addresses the sexual offers made to the first Europeans arriving in Tahiti and Samoa. He confirms Sahlins' pioneering findings elsewhere that Europeans were taken as envoys of the gods: the gesture was a transposition onto their encounters of a cosmological framework premised on ideas about extra-human sources of fecundity. Such insights are not confined to Polynesia. Manuela Carneiro da Cunha dwells on Sahlins' influence in Brazilian anthropology, and the aptness of his theoretical position on 'the indigenization of Western cosmologies and ... the reconfiguration of Western happenings into Indigenous event(s)' for Lowland South America. Appropriation and counter-appropriation seem ceaseless. Indigenous rituals were easily extirpated; popular Catholicism is now the established church's problem, as witnessed by the travelling statue of Our Lady of Aparecida and her enigmatic sources of power.

[rp1] Ann Fienup-Riordan turns to the phenomenon of 'culturalism', the political use of cultural distinctiveness, arguing with Sahlins against its easy dismissal as the invention of tradition: continuity of cultures rests in the very way they change. Public conversations over road-building in Alaska provide a means for local ends in the management of relations; Yu'pik elders seize their future thereby. But then there is the state itself: chapter 8 magnifies Sahlins' 'cultural properties of the political' through the fate of modern states. 'Finding structure in reality' is the means. Taking structure as invariably underlying, Jonathan Friedman offers a comprehensive analysis of current political shifts across Europe. Not content with defining the complex of changes behind the generation of racism, xenophobia, and nationalism as political concerns, he identifies a mechanism of transformation. Former left-right oppositions yield to a liberal (cosmopolitan, 'foreign rule internalized') centrist right with a sovereigntist/populist right on the margins: this is none other than a

structural shift from diametric to concentric dualism; concentric dualism after Sahlins' anatomy of the stranger-king.

rp1[No school or movement can be attributed to Sahlins, say the editors, but 'a certain practice of anthropology' can be. They have conveyed it admirably.

rau[MARILYN STRATHERN *University of Cambridge*

breff[GUBRIUM, ALINE, KRISTA HARPER & MARTY OTANEZ (eds). *Participatory visual and digital research in action*. 296 pp., maps, tables, illus., bibliogr. Walnut Creek, Calif.: Left Coast Press Inc., 2015. £22.99 (paper)

rp[*Participatory visual and digital research in action* is a fascinating read, and an invaluable resource for anyone working in action or participatory research who is interested in incorporating visual and/or digital methods into their practice. It will also be useful for anyone wanting to make their use of visual and digital methods more participatory.

rp1[The book is made up of six sections, each broadly representing different research methods: digital storytelling, photovoice, participatory action research (PAR) with film and video, participatory mapping and geographic information systems (GIS), participatory digital archives and museums, and participatory design ethnography. Not surprisingly, however, some of these methods overlap, and some practitioners adopt an intentionally mixed-methods approach. The book is also accompanied by a website, which showcases elements of some of the projects to which the authors refer.

rp1[*Participatory visual and digital research in action* grew out of a conference panel at the Society for Applied Anthropology, and its diversity reflects this origin. The practitioners are united by a shared egalitarian ethic inspired by the likes of emancipatory educationalist Paulo Freire and

anthropologist/filmmaker Jean Rouch. It fits into an established body of international development literature on communication for social change, as well a growing literature on visual methods in anthropology (e.g. Sarah Pink) and dociology (eg. Claudia Mitchell, Gillian Rose, Stephen Spencer, and Luc Pauwels).

[rp1]A key strength of this text is its honesty. The contributors do not romanticize their research journeys, or these particular methods, and are alert to the practical constraints they introduce. Darcy Alexandra notes, for example (on p. 43, referencing anthropologist Michael Jackson's *The politics of storytelling*, 2002), that there is nothing inherently transformative about storytelling. Authors talk about failures, about unintended consequences. Their reflections are grounded in specific empirical practice, but also integrate theoretical and ethical concerns. They point out that the ideal of participatory research is often very far from the reality of its practice, which involves a constant negotiation of power between the various stakeholders. They note that this negotiation is often further complicated by the use of these methods.

[rp1]Another strength of the book is the diversity of practice it represents – from digital storytelling with refugees, asylum seekers, and undocumented migrants in Ireland, to ‘counter-mapping’ at the University of Arizona to investigate geographical barriers to the ease of movement on campus for those with a disability, to designing an app for first-year anthropology students in Baltimore.

[rp1]Some ideas and discussions that I found particularly interesting were the use of visual/digital methods to build collective solidarity; the importance of methodological flexibility or rather the willingness to adapt methods to suit one's participants; the idea of strategic or ‘political listening’, of ‘embodied expertise, of the scholar as ‘bricoleur’; and the concept of ‘material deliberation’, where artefacts become ‘prompts for public engagement’. I found Catherine Besteman's tale of repurposing her fieldwork photographs after twenty years, to establish a Somali photography archive in Maine, particularly moving.

I suspect that the multitude of voices contained in this book could make it tricky to navigate for complete beginners in this field, who might prefer a single narrative voice, or a more linear, or systematic, overview, but such a rich mixture of thought-provoking reflection, together with the descriptions of concrete projects, will be hard to find elsewhere.

TESSA LEWIN *Institute of Development Studies*.

HINE, CHRISTINE. *Ethnography for the internet: embedded, embodied and everyday*. viii, 221 pp., figs, bibliogr. London: Bloomsbury, 2015. £22.99 (paper)

How might one ‘do’ ethnography online? Hine argues that the growth of the internet poses an intrinsic challenge for ethnographers, and ethnographic methods accordingly require a series of ‘creative adaptations’ in order to remain applicable and effective when used for studying online environments. In this volume, Hine proposes several such internet-specific customizations of the ethnographic method, while acknowledging that ethnography’s inherently adaptive nature means that each researcher will, anyway, have to find appropriate methods for his or her own research. In this sense, Hine’s book is not a prescriptive manual, but rather an invitation to consider novel approaches for conducting ethnography of online spaces and practices.

Chapter 2 asserts that developing appropriate ethnographic methods for online spaces first requires acknowledging the contemporary internet as being ‘embedded’, ‘embodied’, and ‘everyday’ (which Hine terms the ‘E³ internet’). Hine argues the internet is *embedded* by being dispersed through multiple social domains and contexts; *embodied* in the sense that ‘going online’ is no longer an isolated experience but rather a continuation of other forms of being in the world; and

everyday in that its use has become so mundane that people often fail to perceive how its infrastructures might limit certain choices. In describing the E³ internet, Hine provides a particularly useful review of historical transformations in academic and broader discourses regarding the internet.

]rp1[Hine proceeds to share her own ethnographic strategies and frameworks tailored to the E³ internet. She builds on discussions of multi-sited ethnography to argue for a very broad conceptualization of what constitutes a fieldsite. She advocates that ethnographers should actively use – in a form of participant observation – the platforms they are researching. She also calls for a range of data collection methods such as email interviews, questionnaires, and other forms of automated analysis. Notably, Hine argues for an auto-ethnographic approach to ethnography for the internet, claiming that accounts should acknowledge the way that the embodied ethnographer immerses him- or herself within a particular online environment.

]rp1[Hine's auto-ethnographic slant defines the following three chapters, where she details her explorations of different online fieldsites, including the challenges encountered throughout the process and how she tried to overcome particular obstacles. Each chapter details a specific case study which focuses on a loosely bound online community or platform. Some, such as a local area Freecycle group (chap. 4) and the scientific community discussing taxonomy online (chap. 5), are more clearly defined than the final example, which is essentially a broader 'slow search' (p. 168) of the internet for mentions relating to the UK television series *Antiques Roadshow* (chap. 6). Hine's auto-ethnography means that descriptions are weighted towards her own experience, rather than that of other users (although this may also partially result from her aim to critically meditate on the efficacy of such methods). Usefully, each case study also includes a series of 'points for reflection', making these chapters particularly handy for in-class discussion.

]rp1[A limitation of these detailed case studies is that they are all predominantly focused on the United Kingdom. While this is understandable, given that Hine's own research has mainly been

conducted in Britain, readers may wish to complement this volume with other studies that have sought to understand aspects of internet use both in radically different cultural contexts, and through more ‘grounded’ long-term ethnography conducted within defined physical locales (for example, see D. Miller *et al.*, *How the world changed social media*, 2016).

Hine’s work may also act as a useful counterpoint within current anthropological debates over the boundaries and nature of ethnography. Recently, it has been argued that the term ‘ethnography’ has become so overused in anthropology and other disciplines that it has lost much of its original meaning (T. Ingold, ‘That’s enough about ethnography!’, *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory* 4: 1, 2014.). Hine’s approach certainly embraces the ongoing expansion of ethnography’s remit, suggesting the possibility of forms of ethnography which may consist of only brief ‘pop-up’ ethnographic moments (p. 193), or that take place without necessarily meeting (or even clearly defining) one’s research subjects. Such approaches, made in response to the realities of communication practices amongst many contemporary populations, are certainly worth considering as these discussions progress.

In conclusion, Hine provides an engaging and accessible volume, which serves as a practical guide for graduate students and researchers intending to conduct internet-based research. In addition to stimulating reflection on appropriate methods for digital domains, the volume also provokes important discussion as to the possible nature of ethnography in the contemporary world.

TOM McDONALD *University of Hong Kong*

HVIDING, EDVARD & CATO BERG (eds). *The ethnographic experiment: A.M. Hocart and W.H.R. Rivers in Island Melanesia, 1908*. 320 pp., maps, figs, tables, illus., bibliogr. Oxford, New York: Berghahn Books, 2014. £75.00 (cloth)

[rp]This multidisciplinary edited volume is a welcome re-evaluation of William Rivers' and Arthur Hocart's pioneering fieldwork in 1908 in the Western Solomon Islands and the former's comparative work in Island Melanesia. Led by Rivers, famed psychologist and anthropologist, and supported by the Percy Sladen Memorial Trust, the expedition's main goal was to extend his 'genealogical method' and investigate the presumed evolutionary transition from mother-right to father-right forms of social organization. The expedition also compiled ethnographic information on a broad range of topics, including physical anthropology, subsistence activities, exchange, warfare, magic, and religion.

[rp]The editors critically highlight the importance of the expedition's work within the history of anthropology, arguing that the 'ethnographic experiment' undertaken in 1908 was an influential example of early participant observation that had a differential but profound impact on Rivers' and Hocart's later work. In the first chapter, Christine Dureau highlights the polemics of revisionist approaches to such academic forefathers, whose work now seems tainted by colonialism and antiquated theories. She persuasively argues for nuanced re-evaluations and the open-ended importance of the material that was generated, reflexively noting the irresolvable contradictions experienced by contemporary Islanders, who continue to acknowledge and respect pre-Christian ancestors as 'good sinners'.

[rp]The contributors explore the relative value and often the tension between the intensive fieldwork advocated by Rivers and his reliance on survey ethnography within a colonial setting. Largely dependent on pidgin and translators, Rivers and Hocart spent four months on Simbo and one month on Vella Lavella, in a period sandwiched between Rivers' far-flung survey work aboard the missionary vessel *The Southern Cross*. Focused on investigating pre-colonial beliefs and practices, their research was conducted during a period of rapid transition. Methodist missionaries, who arrived in Rovina Lagoon in 1902, had been steadily establishing themselves throughout the region. Punitive actions by Royal Navy gunboats had recently destroyed ocean-going war canoes and effectively stopped inter-island warfare, headhunting, and attacks on European traders and settlers.

[rp1[Many Islanders on Simbo and Vella Lavella appear to have been willing informants, readily providing details about aspects of social life that were undergoing profound transformations. Hviding and Berg forcibly argue that the ‘initiative was simultaneously ethnographic and indigenous’, with local realities imposing ‘radically different understandings on the ethnographers’ (p. 4). Hviding gives due credit to Hocart’s exceptional skill as an ethnographer, asserting that apparent contradictions within his extensive fieldnotes and later publications confirm the diversity of complex inter-island relationships within a dynamic archipelagic society.

[rp1[Rivers’ methodology is generally acknowledged for its production of detailed and accurate records of kinship terminology and genealogies. Within the Western Solomons, an open-ended and bilateral kinship is at the core of a long history of inter-island exchanges. Yet, as Berg clearly demonstrates, Rivers never came to grips with affines and descent groups. Ironically, given his concern with mother-right societies, he missed *toutou* (matrilineal descent groups), foundational to chieftainship on Vella Lavella. Knut Rio and Annelin Eriksen attribute Rivers’ failure to understand kinship in Ambrym to Eurocentric assumptions about evolution and the division between nature and culture, which obscured gendered, complementary, and alternating social forms.

[rp1[Several contributors are critical of Rivers’ later emphasis on psychological factors as an explanation for depopulation in Melanesia, presented in essays published in 1922, which were strongly influenced by his innovative work on shell shock during the First World War. Tim Bayliss-Smith’s graphic re-analysis of vital statistics for Simbo and Vella Lavella demonstrates a combination of moderate mortality and low fertility, the results of periodically introduced epidemics and of widespread sexual disease rather than the breakdown of parental, especially maternal, instincts under the traumatic impact of colonialization. The ethnographic data collected in 1908, which contain almost no information about or from women, do not support Rivers’ ‘wild speculation’. Yet Judith Bennett, who provides a concise historical overview of complex interrelationships between colonial history and changing medical and anthropological paradigms and practices, highlights the impact of

Rivers' influential argument on the expansion of colonial anthropology in the 1920s and notes that much recent work demonstrates bio-physiosocial connections between psychological stressors and disease.

The final chapter, by Tim Thomas, provides an overview of the little-known collections originating from the Percy Sladen Trust Expedition, including over 300 photographs and 400 artefacts from the Western Solomons now at the Museum of Archaeology and Anthropology in Cambridge. Although most of the people photographed are named and many of the objects, such as shell valuables, are accompanied by detailed information, Rivers' emphasis on 'social facts' and the lack of associated publications have resulted in their general neglect. Thomas highlights their potential for future research. Photographs and objects can reveal biographical histories, and the practice of recording both the place of manufacture and place of collection for traded objects provides a map of regional relationships.

The theoretical conclusions of the expedition's work, especially those based on Rivers' patchy ethnography on *The Southern Cross* and advanced in *The history of Melanesian society* (1912), are judged largely unconvincing. As noted by Thorgeir Kolshus, the flaws in Rivers' project caution against the tendency to pursue high-flying theoretical ambitions without a solid empirical foundation. Yet the contributors' re-examination of original field data, contextualized within anthropological history and informed by their own fieldwork in the region, demonstrates the far-reaching and continuing significance of the information generated for researchers as well as Islanders in the Western Solomons.

ANITA HERLE *University of Cambridge*

JACKSON, MICHAEL & ALBERT PIETTE (eds). *What is existential anthropology?* vi, 248 pp., illus., bibliogr.

Oxford, New York: Berghahn Books, 2015. £60.00 (cloth)

Michael Jackson and Albert Piette's *What is existential anthropology?* is an important addition to current theoretical debates in anthropology about the human condition. Its main challenge is to justify theoretically and empirically an existential anthropology. In an informative introduction the editors offer their different perspectives on existential anthropology, providing a critique of Durkheimian sociology, Bourdieu's work, Garfinkel's ethnomethodology, Goffman's analysis of social life, and finally the 'ontological turn' in anthropology.

It seems that the editors are professing rather than practising an existential anthropology (see Lambek's chapter). Their idea of 'methodological suspension of theoretical concepts' seems somehow problematic. How can one separate concepts from experience? However, they point out that '[e]xistential anthropology is less a repudiation of any one way of explaining human behavior – academic, scientific, religious, humanist – than a reminder that life is irreducible to the terms with which we seek to grasp it'.

The quality of contributions is consistently high and the writing style diverse. Devaka Premawardhana explores themes of rupture and discontinuity in reference to existential anthropology, problematizing the reported growth of Pentecostal Christianity and the increasing population movements from rural to urban spaces, using ethnographic examples from northern Mozambique.

Michael Lambek revisits and redescribes his work as existential anthropology. He focuses on the tension between 'both/and' and 'either/or' modes of identity, belonging, or practice and points out how central it is for existing in the world. For him, it is a way to think

about its irreducibility. Lambek chooses methodological pluralism over mutual exclusion to describe the relations among models or theories of human life as characteristic of human existence.

[rp1[Mattijs van de Port perceives existential anthropology not as a description of the stories people live, or the description of being, but rather the description of the tensions that ‘the gap between life and its cultural representations generate, and the imaginative and performative work to which these tensions give rise’. Using examples such as spirit possession, love-making, and the act of reading Bruno Latour in Brazil, he asks how his Bahian friends manage to cross the limits without going mad.

[rp1[Hans Lucht discusses human smuggling networks that guide West African migrants across the Sahara desert to Lybia. Ethnographic narrative reveals how the ‘connection men’ in these networks struggle to regain a momentum in life by offering themselves as experts on the migration journey. Their desire to find a life worth living remains undiminished despite the catastrophes they encounter.

[rp1[Sonia Silva is concerned with mobile individuals who experience stillness and physically immobilized individuals who experience movement. The life story of her main character, Samuzala, a trader, migrant, refugee, and amputee, highlights those moments when one takes control by acting with one’s feet.

[rp1[Michael Jackson engages with the existential themes of contingency and crisis, discussing the ways in which personal traits and dilemmas are preserved and transformed over several generations of his former field assistant and friend Noah Bokary Marah and his legacy. Jackson asks how it is that despite events that cannot be fully controlled or understood, human beings connect with others, thus ‘rendering life worth living rather than alien and absurd’.

Albert Piette defines the goals of his existential anthropology: to observe, follow, describe, and compare individuals in a succession of moments and situations and analyse experiential moments and presences. This focus on the individual rather than cultures, societies, groups, and activities leads him to call for an anthropology *tout court* and not a social or cultural anthropology. He attends to presence-absence, the mixture of activity and passivity of human beings, and what he calls the ‘minor mode of reality’, illustrated by examples of religious believing. Then he searches for a genealogy of the ‘universal characteristic of *Homo sapiens*’.

Finally, Laurent Denizeau discusses the editors’ bodies of work, offering an understanding of existential anthropology as a literary, non-fictional description of living. For Denizeau, existential anthropology is based less on theoretical foundations than on an epistemological project and posture that describes ‘moments of being’.

The book sits comfortably among recent peers, namely *The ground between: anthropologists engage philosophy* (2014; which is co-edited by Jackson with Veena Das and Arthur Kleinman, 2014) and *Phenomenology in anthropology* (2015; which is edited by Kalpana Ram and Michael Houston, and to which Jackson provides an afterword). While the former broadly engages with philosophy, the latter more specifically addresses phenomenology. This present volume provides a strong challenge to recent trends and ‘turns’, and broadens the debate about the aims and future of anthropology.

THEODORE KONKOURIS *Queen’s University Belfast*

MYHRE, KNUT CHRISTIAN. *Cutting and connecting: ‘Afrinesian’ perspectives on networks, relationality, and exchange*. vi, 162 pp., illus., bibliogr Oxford, New York: Berghahn Books, 2016. £17.50 (paper)

][rp[Were this review to have a title, I would call it ‘The *gout* of the ragout’, for reasons whose tastefulness will become apparent. *Cutting and connecting: ‘Afrinesian’ perspectives on networks, relationality, and exchange* (hereafter *C&C*), edited by Knut Myhre, resulted from a workshop held in March 2010 at the Nordic Africa Institute. Workshop books can be a bit of a stew, and Myhre is to be congratulated for skilfully editing these papers into a tasty feast. Think of the author’s articles as different dishes for readers’ appreciation. Below I distinguish the agreeable, from the not, in these dishes.

][rp1[One of the things that happened to social anthropology after the 1960s was Marilyn Strathern, who sparked a New Melanesian Ethnography, and in so doing brilliantly re-conceptualized the nature of the social – out went structure and function; in came networks (presumably acquired during Manchester days), sociality, relationality, and the dividual. *C&C*’s topic is the application of a Strathernian social ontology to contemporary African contexts. In her 1996 ‘Cutting the network’ *JRAI* article (2: 3), she emphasized, in Myhre’s words, the importance of recognizing that ‘[c]utting is the corollary of connecting’ (p. 2): that is, that when networks are cut, this actualizes specific socialities. This generalization – and it is a generalization, which may, or may not, be true – guides *C&C*’s different contributors, who seek to analyse cutting and connecting as they operate among the African peoples.

][rp1[Consider the different contributions. There is an introduction by Myhre that presents the recipe for the various dishes in the volume, and an afterword by Adam Reed, digesting what has been presented for readers’ delectation. Isak Neihaus explores Kuru in New Guinea and AIDS in South Africa, arguing that in the South African case ‘witchcraft accusations “cut” social networks and impose boundaries’ (p. 38). Niklas Hultin, working in the Gambia, who is concerned less with cutting and more with sociality, examines the effect of legal opacity upon sociality, concluding ‘that opacity leads to a particular form of interruption or forestalling of relatedness and sociality, while information sharing suggests a relatedness with the world’ (p. 54). Tone Sommerfelt, also studying the Gambia,

seeks to ‘rethink’ the classic topic of ‘marriage exchange in Africanist anthropology’ by analysing ‘the procurement and redistribution of bridal trousseaus’ (p. 59). In doing so she introduces a concept of ‘fading’ as a complement to Strathern’s cutting. Daivi Rodima-Taylor moves the ethnography to East Africa, where she discusses cutting as it pertains to women’s self-help groups among the Kuria of Tanzania. Richard Vokes considers peoples in the East Africa Great Lakes region, concluding that ‘it is through the very acts of cutting that people, in a sense, come to define the relationships that are relevant to them’ (p. 105). Knut Myhre takes cutting from the realm of abstract metaphor to the actuality of butchering among Tanzanian Chagga-speakers, and claims to have ‘shown that the objective of animal killings is ... the taking apart of the animal’s bodies in order to cut, reveal, and extended the social relationships that dwelling enfold within it’ (p. 128). The text’s final article is by Harri Englund and Thomas Yarrow. It differs from the others in that no specific ethnographic case is analysed. Rather, as its title indicates, it pursues ‘the place of theory’ by reclaiming ‘the reflexivity of the New Melanesian Ethnography’ (p. 134), thereby advancing the ability to compare and theorize. I am unaware of any advancement.

[rp1]In general, C&C’s different ethnographic analyses are insightful and suggestive of further research. They leave a sweet taste. However, I do not believe a word they say. The problem is that none of the contributions take validation seriously. I do (see my ‘The jeweler’s loupe: validation’, *Anthropological Theory* **16: 2-3**, 2016). Each essay contains statements that make claims on social reality, and if these are to be accepted there need to be observations bearing upon whether what occurs in reality is what is claimed to occur. This is validation. For example, the most general claim on reality made in the text is: ‘Cutting is the corollary of connecting’. The contributors tend to justify their positions by asserting, ‘My people say this and this. I saw that and that’. This is not validation. It is the fallacy of ‘saying it is so makes it so’. For cutting to be shown to be a corollary of connecting, there needs to be systematic validation. Analyses need to specify: (1) from whom their observations came; (2) whether these persons were representative; (3) what specific observations

supported the statement; (4) how many of these observations there were there; (5) whether there were observations that did not support the statement; and (6) how many of these were there. In the absence of such information, it is unclear whether the authors' claims are, or are not, supported. Such a treatment of validation leaves a bad taste.

Finally, six of *C&C*'s nine contributors either hold, or have held, positions at Cambridge and Oxford; or they received a doctorate from one of these institutions. Nobody Melanesian or African appears to have anything to do with *C&C*. It is an elitist production by validation dilettantes, which, again, leaves a very bad taste. So what is the *gout* of the ragout? Sweet and sour! Of course, sweet and sour cuisine is interesting. Buy *C&C*. Study it. Judge whether you believe this review to be in bad taste.

[STEPHEN REYNA *Max Planck Institute of Social Anthropology/University of Manchester*]