



Book Reviews

The following review was awarded Winner of the 2009 AES Sharon Stephens prize, along with *Counting the Dead: The Culture and Politics of Human Rights Activism in Colombia*, by Winifred Tate, which was reviewed in *AE* 35(2).

Lydia's Open Door: Inside Mexico's Most Modern Brothel. *Patty Kelly*. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2008. 270 pp.

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Lydia's Open Door begins with a cheerful anecdote about a surprise birthday party thrown for Kelly in the Zona Galáctica, the main site of her field research about the legal brothel industry in Tuxtla Gutiérrez, the capital city of Chiapas, Mexico. Yet this story does more than illuminate the caring and generous nature of her "subjects." Rather, her birthday party is symbolic of her entrenchment in the zone and her connection to the people there, which makes this remarkable book possible.

This book extends beyond readers interested in sex work to readers interested in understanding the political economy of Mexico. Kelly begins with a historical perspective by exploring the traditions of gendered and sexual practices throughout Mexico's history. Her analyses are punctuated by narratives that highlight the complexities of sex work, including history, politics, economics, relationships, remittances, standards of beauty, and stigma, creating a rich understanding of the local sex trade.

Of special interest is the history of Zona Galáctica, particularly in relation to the politics surrounding its foundation. Envisaged as a modern response to a perennial problem, the Galáctica was one of many compound zones set up since the 1940s. Like elsewhere in Mexico, the regulation of prostitution through health inspections, registration, and confinement provided public officials (and residents) a sense of control over a seemingly disorderly populace and helped to improve the public image of the city (see also Bliss

2001; Katsulis 2009). Although illicit prostitution continued to occur outside of these zones, the development and maintenance of the zones was in keeping with Progressive-era reforms advocated by the social hygiene movement of the late 19th and early 20th centuries. Founded on *ejido* (communally owned) land in 1992, the new zone was to have several things these earlier zones did not, namely a centralized administrative structure that facilitated municipal regulation. As noted by Kelly, "the benefits of the Galáctica for the city and state, then, relate less to revenue earned than to social hygiene and control of the poor and 'deviant,' providing a showcase for modern state power in the capital of one of Mexico's poorest states" (p. 48).

The establishment of Galáctica transformed the local sex industry into a public-private partnership between city officials and private landlords. The presence of private landlords on the property allowed the city to protect its reputation by providing some distance from daily operations, while still maintaining control over its administrative functions. Its placement outside the city, down a long dirt road, also helped the city to maintain this sense of social distance.

The use of *ejido* land was a contentious issue—as the *ejidatarios* (indigenous landholders, or *campesinos*) had provided the land with the proviso that it be used for the public good. The ensuing conflict "laid bare the competing interests and multiple levels of exploitation in the zone" (p. 107). Sex workers worried that the conflict would mean a loss of livelihood, possibly even violence, while landlords were angry that the city had failed to protect their interests. Business slowed. The conflict played out primarily through press conferences and public statements, sparking a broader public debate about prostitution and the public utility of the Galáctica. The specter of public disorder was used to popularize the idea of the zone as a critical containment strategy to protect the public good.

Kelly captures the monotony of the daily activities of the sex workers as they pass the time watching television, eating, talking, and occasionally providing sexual services for their clients. Through her descriptions of these sexual interactions, particularly in comparison to the sex workers' personal sexual interactions, the reader truly senses the laborious quality of sex work. Kelly also captures the economic desperation that many of the workers within the

zone feel as their lives become constant negotiations: with clients for services, with the government to provide condoms and safer working conditions, with their families who may or may not know their occupation. The workers of the zone deftly navigate these daily obstacles to provide for their families and ultimately survive.

Yet the zone is also a space where men and women perform and resist gendered and sexual cultural norms. Thus, Kelly's discussion of sex work in Tuxtla is enriched by her inclusion of transgender and male sex workers, and her example of the prostitution raids in Tuxtla are a vivid illustration of attempts to "purify" urban space. Kelly examines attempts (throughout history) to regulate sex work and, ultimately, regulate female sexuality. She considers the circumstances around which sex work was legalized in Tuxtla, explaining that Tuxtla prides itself on its urbanization and cleansing of the Spanish Colonial era. State-regulated sex work, then, represents a modern shift in consciousness, politics, and economics—an attempt by Tuxtla state officials to celebrate their own forward thinking. Nevertheless, Kelly reveals that legalization does not equate to legitimation and the stigma of sex work remains.

Although outside the scope of the current study, we look forward to future work that could provide a comparably rich perspective from those who work outside the zone. How do their lived experiences contrast with those in the zone? How and why are they excluded from the zone, or why do they choose not to work there? What are the consequences of these exclusions? An ethnographic profile of their experiences would offer a more comprehensive understanding of the social geography of the sex industry, perhaps revealing more of the (unintended) consequences of municipal regulations.

In summary, *Lydia's Open Door* is a very well-written ethnography that provides a concrete example of how neoliberalism has shaped the political economy of the Mexican sex industry. It is both readable and theoretically rich, and would compliment both advanced undergraduate and graduate seminars. This is an incredibly important book that will be of interest to scholars in anthropology, Latin American studies, and gender studies. The book should be considered essential reading for those interested in contemporary Mexican history and sexuality studies, as it provides a unique perspective on sex work in the modern era.

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Liquidated: An Ethnography of Wall Street. Karen Ho. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009. xiii + 374 pp.

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This is a big book: getting on for 150,000 words; an extension of ethnographic method to the center of finance capitalism; a grounded analysis of the neoliberal revolution; a moral and cultural critique of unprincipled self-enrichment; and all delivered when massive infusions of government funds have been diverted from public services to saving the banks, without as yet securing the world economy from catastrophe. After several decades when anthropologists at last overcame their inhibitions concerning the study of money, Karen Ho's book—*Time* interview and all—seems to mark a coming of age for the contemporary discipline.

This is a lot of baggage for a monograph based on a doctoral thesis, too much to be addressed appropriately in a short review. Should the focus be on the adequacy of her explanation for the economic crisis or on the limitations of her method? How to balance deserved praise with carping criticism? Ho has provided a canonical text for our era. She set out to do it from the start and she has succeeded. The rest of us can now chew over its significance for our own work.

The field research for this study took place during the long bull stock market of the 1990s, also known as the "dot com boom." Ho took leave from graduate school for a job at an investment bank. Whatever she learned indirectly there, she refused to make field notes. She was then sacked and, making a virtue of necessity, turned to full-time field research lasting almost a year and a half. This took the form of interviews with lower to mid-level employees of Wall Street banks while commuting from Brooklyn. The book appeared a decade later, allowing for a measure of hindsight and, presumably, continuing self-education by various means.

What holds the book together is a story that is both world-historical and personal. Ho lays out two visions of what corporate capitalism is for: a social rationale based on durable interests linking communities of workers to loyal customers and company towns (where share prices were ephemeral and secondary) and an emphasis on immediate returns to private property in the form of shares held by a few (where employees and clients are readily sacrificed at the altar of the stock market). Readers can understand this conflict as the transition from postwar "social democracy" to "neoliberalism" or as a history of class struggle, with the concessions made to ordinary citizens after two world wars and a depression being rolled back in the name of unrestricted private accumulation.

Ho doesn't go that far because she wants to maintain a methodological link to her fieldwork material. She offers some commentary on the relevant economic history, pointing, as causes of the rise of "shareholder value," to the mergers and acquisitions boom of the 1980s and the "downsizing" mania unleashed by the breakup of AT&T at the same time. Both trends were encouraged by investment banks who made large profits whatever the outcome. A good deal of her analysis concerns how the cohort of junior staffers she was once part of and studied reconcile the frequent failure of the banks' advice with their self-image of belonging to a successful aristocracy of the "smart."

One persistent item in this study of cognitive dissonance is the seeming paradox that, having unleashed chronic instability on corporate America, Wall Street subsequently imported it, with the result that young wannabe bankers convinced of their own collective *ü*berrationality were themselves subjected to extremely precarious employment conditions. The author does not hide what it felt like to be on the wrong end of downsizing herself, but she claims—and I believe her—that her own distaste for the system long predated this experience and, indeed, motivated her research from the beginning. It may be that the "revolving door" syndrome meant that temporary job loss on Wall Street in the boom years didn't have the same consequences as in Gary, Indiana. There is a lingering question too over how biased her sample was. Did it include enough of the big league players to provide effective answers to the questions she and we are most interested in?

Ho has some major theoretical fish to fry. Chief of these is her rejection of what she calls "abstraction" in favor of "embodied" description (evoking Bourdieu). She is also pretty skeptical about "global" discourses. In both endeavors she would be supported by leading figures of the American cultural anthropology of finance, such as Jane Guyer and Bill Maurer. She takes off into the rather marginal dispute between Michel Callon and Daniel Miller, citing also James Carrier on the perils of virtualism. This is all rather confusing. Anthropologists have always privileged the perspective of local people against more inclusive versions of social reality such as those peddled by the economists. The issue is how to get from one level to the other and back again.

This book is striking for its refusal to stick with the local actors' point of view, as most previous ethnographies of financial activities have. So making a big song and dance about staying grounded or "embodied" isn't the point. The main interest is in how Ho extrapolated from field research to the bold general conclusions she reached and whether these are justified. Nor is this process finished, since she is now evoking Marx (not mentioned in the book) and has gone public with recommendations on bankers' bonuses. So, once we have finished congratulating Ho on taking the ethnographic method to Wall Street, there are other ques-

tions to be answered concerning comparative history and various bodies of theoretical literature.

The intelligence of its author shines through *Liquidated*. It is, like any first book, work in progress, but work at a consistently high level and the writing is robust enough to match Ho's intellectual ambition. I found it rewarding to read and reflect on, a landmark in the burgeoning anthropology of money.

Tamil Oratory and the Dravidian Aesthetic: Democratic Practice in South India. Bernard Bate. New York: Columbia University Press, 2009. xxiv + 263 pp.

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The difficulties Bernard Bate faced in ethnographically studying Tamil political practice cannot be overstated. It is in the very nature of the phenomena he focused on (ironically called "public meetings") that those who stage these events are hostile to objective scrutiny, and in carrying out this work Bate frequently bumped up against powerful and dangerous individuals. While Bate was in the field another young Chicago researcher, working on a related topic, disappeared and was never heard from again. Bate records his own sense of anxiety and paranoia in the field without any trace of ethnographic machismo, merely noting, with some regret, that he never experienced the moment of acceptance by his fieldwork subjects all anthropologists hope for.

Political oratory in modern Tamil Nadu is delivered in *centamil* ("pure" or "classical" Tamil), a highly literary style that only a select few are capable of speaking but that is deeply valued at both a primary, nonreflective level Bate calls "the aesthetic," as well as in the explicit normative discourse of Tamil culture. Bate's study is animated by the paradox that this language of distinction par excellence (Bourdieu 1984) only came to dominate political practice in the ostensibly egalitarian context of democratic electioneering, and under the auspices of an avowedly populist Dravidian movement. Bate unpacks this paradox in a series of ethnographic chapters that combine close reading of political speeches with a riveting and theoretically nuanced account of the meetings in which they occur, and of other semiotically rich contexts—newspaper ads and Tamil Nadu's ubiquitous political posters—that partake of a logic he identifies as central to modern Tamil politics.

Among Bate's most fruitful and original theoretical moves is to integrate into his textual analysis concepts drawn from *Nannul*, a medieval Tamil grammatical treatise. Bate focuses on *Nannul's* analysis of tropes, which provides an alternative to the Western, metaphorcentric model of figural language. In elucidating this alternative tropic

system, he makes a unique contribution to the anthropology of poetic action, as well as to our understanding of language ideology. For as Bate shows, *Nannul's* tropic system is consciously drawn on by orators and is thus itself a component part of their speech acts—acts directed primarily at creating relationships of “hierarchical intimacy” with figures of power. The form of these relationships, moreover, is shown to mirror those between bhakti poets and gods, and between court poets and kings of yore—poets whose literary output provides the primary material *Nannul's* unique tropic system was itself designed to make sense of. Bate's recourse to native theory is thus doubly justified.

Bate does not argue for an “unmediated continuity between precolonial courtly practices” and those of contemporary politics (pp. 145–146). His point is rather to understand how prior cultural forms are selectively authorized and transformed by deployment in fundamentally new contexts. In doing so Bate's work serves, as he himself stresses, to illustrate a fairly well-known point about the modernity of tradition (p. 186). By framing his contribution thus, Bate does scant justice to the originality and importance of the book he has written. I have mentioned already Bate's use of *Nannul*. Of equal or greater significance is his account of the political festivals within which political speeches are made. Called “public meetings,” these are in reality a takeover of public space by partisans of one or another political party, with the express aim of overwhelming and semiotically dominating the opposition and hegemonizing ordinary citizens. Quite apart from their effect on outsiders, party meetings serve simultaneously as a theater of intraparty competition, in which subordinate leaders vie for the attention of higher-ups with ever more elaborate praise (in the manner described above) and gifts in cash and kind—including the larger-than-life stage set of the event itself. Successful supplicants are in turn rewarded with lucrative posts. Here Bate identifies a previously unknown aspect of intraparty organization and finance, and a key political-economic motor of the Dravidian movement's oft-noted descent into an imagistic politics of adulation at the expense of any coherent ideology or constructive program.

Yet what of the ordinary voters, mostly poor, who comprise the audience for these events? Do they in fact accept politicians as the kinglike figures these events portray them as? At no point does Bate make such a claim, and my own research suggests they are every bit as disenchanting with contemporary Tamil politics as Bate's more educated informants (ch. 7). The audience's role is simply to show up, and in so doing to be incorporated into the spectacle itself—as an index of mass support that may or may not be genuine. Thus, parties routinely bribe the poor to attend, often with alcohol. Another major draw is the very hugeness of it all; as one of Bate's informants notes, the showiness (*ātamparam*) of political meetings is required to draw a crowd. Given the importance of “the people” in democratic

politics, Bate could perhaps have made more of the fact that orators do not merely praise higher-ups but also ordinary voters—who under systems of electoral representation are at once the legitimators of government and collectively excluded from any share in it (Dunn 2005; Manin 1997). Attention to this feature of representative government might have usefully complemented Bate's more explicit framework, in which the paradoxical combination of egalitarian and hierarchical aspects in Dravidian political practice are conceptualized in terms of premodern and modern elements.

Bate's book makes a signal contribution to the anthropology of poetic action, democracy, and political spectacle. It should be read, not only by anthropologists working in these areas but also by political theorists interested in understanding actually existing democracy in the non-Western world. It is also an extraordinarily fine ethnography, with many chapters suitable for assigning to undergraduates as an example of the power and significance of the genre.

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New Languages of the State: Indigenous Resurgence and the Politics of Knowledge in Bolivia. *Bret Gustafson*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009. 331 pp.

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This important and original book explores issues related to education politics and indigenous resurgence and movements in Bolivia as a window to analyze larger themes related to the transformation of the state. It focuses on two bilingual intercultural education (Educación Intercultural Bilingüe, EIB) projects, one initiated in the Chaco region in southeastern Bolivia in 1989, and the second on the state project that was implemented in public elementary schools in indigenous regions of Bolivia in the 1990s. While the study centers on the Guarani experience in the Chaco region, the author places it within a much wider geographical space, historical context, and field of force. As he states, “Methodologically to deal with state reform and indigenous resurgence while engaging the history of coloniality and nation building calls for a multiscale processual

ethnography focused on articulations across time and space" (p. 20). This broad perspective is not new in anthropology because multisited and historical ethnography has characterized the work of numerous anthropologists for quite some time, yet what is original about Gustafson's work is that it encompasses two distinct regions and areas of research, which most specialists have tended to treat separately—the western highlands and the eastern lowlands—bringing them together within a common analytical framework. Through this wide lens, the author undertakes an ambitious and complex ethnography of three related areas of research: neoliberal governmentality and state reform; indigenous movements and interculturalism; and indigenous knowledge and schooling.

At the center of his analysis stands the key notion of "articulation" understood both as pivot and process of shifting alliances or linkages established among diverse social groups, institutions, NGOs, state officials, and churches. A focus on these alliances, which are often contingent and ephemeral, moves the analysis away from the *maniquean* and essentialist descriptions of indigenous societies and cultures that permeate some current public discourse and academic literature. In contrast, throughout the book Gustafson reminds us that indigenous peoples do not share homogenous identities and interests. Further, he attends to the contested nature of social relations and strategies within, and between indigenous villages, regions, and movements, as well as within the articulated networks that bring them together with other social actors, to reveal the complexities associated with schooling and divergent understandings of intercultural bilingual education. Importantly, he also demonstrates that the issues at stake are far more significant than those simply related to schooling; rather, the struggle is over inequality, authority, citizenship rights, as well as over epistemic alterity. In sum, as its title indicates, the book is about contestations over the very nature of the state, the politics of knowledge, and collective efforts to dismantle the coloniality of power.

Organized in three parts, *New Languages of the State* consists of seven chapters separated by six interludes that serve as reflexive introductions to the chapters that follow, and a substantial introduction with an insightful theoretical discussion on the three thematic areas mentioned above, which are also of current anthropological concern. Part 1, entitled "Resurgent Knowledge," focuses on the Guarani and their territory, a frontier area with weak ties to the state and barely influenced by major episodes in Bolivian history. Yet it was in this region where an EIB project was first implemented in 1989, almost in tandem with the organization of the Assembly of the Guarani People. By analyzing this project and the role Guarani activists played in it, producing textbooks as new sources of knowledge, regulating teachers, and negotiating with teachers' union leaders, he shows how they began to take on "state like practices" (p. 91).

As its title indicates, part 2, "Transnational Articulations," moves the focus of analysis and research from Guarani territory and localized articulations to the city of La Paz and much wider articulatory networks. The chapters in this section (4 and 5) analyze how an EIB project that sought to respond, however imperfectly, to indigenous demands for intercultural bilingual education was taken over by the state and imbued with the "language of neoliberal governmentality." Gustafson bases his analysis on the concept of "articulation" to show how structural adjustments policies and neoliberal policies shifted the balance of forces and gave rise to new articulatory networks, involving new and diverse social groups and sectors. He also explores the relation between articulatory networks and educational projects in Bolivia to argue against rigid and simplistic notions of hegemonic domination, resistance, and accommodation, and for the necessity to pay attention to "the fissures and instabilities of state power." In this respect, he shows quite eloquently that despite the goals set by the official education reform, namely, to impose new managerial technologies, at the same time it provided an "articulatory platform" from where the Guarani could reposition themselves vis-à-vis dominant society beyond the school. The third part of the book, "Return to Struggle," is both a general conclusion and a forward-looking discussion of the militant resurgence of indigenous and popular movements that brought Evo Morales to power in 2005, giving rise to new articulatory networks and shifting the geopolitics of knowledge into new directions. In formulating one of his final questions, the author asks again the one he posed at the beginning of his study. He wanted to know whether education reform could address issues related to economic inequality and the coloniality of power. While he couldn't give a positive answer to this question regarding the state EIB project, he leaves open the possibility that a new educational reform might succeed.

New Languages of the State is an excellent and engaging piece of scholarly work, based on long-term ethnographic and historical research in three diverse areas of enquiry, which the author articulates into a complex study of the state, education reform, and indigenous movements. It should appeal to scholars interested in these themes in Latin America and in other regions of the world.

Islamic Spectrum in Java. *Timothy Daniels.* Surrey, UK: Ashgate, 2009. xviii + 191 pp.

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Ever since the pioneering research of Robert Jay, Clifford Geertz, and Hildred Geertz in the 1950s, the anthropological study of Islam in Java has focused on the

sociocultural “streams” (Ind., *aliran*) into which Java’s Muslim community is divided. The most basic opposition researchers have highlighted has been that separating madrasa-oriented normative Muslims, known as *santri*, from the Javo-Islamic syncretists referred to as *abangan*. Within the normative Muslim community, scholars further distinguished between reformist Muslims committed to a purified and modernized profession of the faith and traditionalists adhering to classical varieties of Islamic learning, mysticism, and sociability.

It is the contemporary contours of this pluralized religious landscape on which Timothy Daniels sets his sight in this study of varieties of Islam in Java. Daniels conducted research in the south-central Javanese court city of Yogyakarta for 11 months in 2003–04, at a time when Indonesia was in the early stages of a rocky transition from the authoritarian Suharto regime (1966–98). In addition to reassessing varieties of Javanese Islam, then, Daniels used his Yogyakarta residence to observe Muslim engagements with the ideas and practices of democracy and civil society. These are topics with which a small army of researchers has grappled in recent years. What distinguishes Daniels’s investigation is that he has a good grounding in Islamic studies, and, all the more uniquely, is an African American Muslim married to a Javanese Muslim. Daniels’s reflections on his own subject position in the field (where he “found prejudice and racism to be widespread,” p. 11), and his critical assessment of American government policies on Islam give this ethnography an added and welcome measure of hermeneutic reflexivity.

After a short introduction in which the author lays out his project’s background and aims, the book chapters move through the varied landscapes of Yogyakarta Islam. Chapter 1 examines Yogyakarta as a bastion of Javanese tradition, a center for higher education, and one of Indonesia’s most popular tourist destinations, with all that entails for cultural commodification. Although he pays careful attention to traditional rituals, Daniels has an interest in cognitive anthropology as well as religion. In this and later chapters, then, and much to his credit, Daniels offers insight into the “varying degrees of commitment and conviction in religious knowledge” (p. 29). Chapter 2 provides Daniels’s core conclusions as regards the varieties of Javanese Islam. Daniels argues convincingly that Clifford Geertz exaggerated Hindu-Buddhist elements in Java’s syncretic Islamic tradition. Daniels also shows that other analysts have gone too far in portraying even the most florid expressions of non-Islamic ritual as Sufi.

Chapter 3 uses “the plurality of healers” (p. 55) in contemporary Yogyakarta to provide another perspective on the varieties of Javanese Islam. As other analysts have reported, Daniels finds that healers from syncretic backgrounds are today trying to dissociate themselves from

the more blatantly un-Islamic aspects of their role, but continue to draw on private traditions of knowledge of a strikingly un-Islamic nature. In chapter 4, Daniels adopts a dramaturgical perspective to look at the controversy surrounding a female pop singer who in 2003 captured national attention after the broadcast of her erotic dance known revealingly enough as “the drill.” Daniels deftly summarizes the firestorm the performance provoked in Muslim circles but points out that the new dance genre reflected a complex localization of Western and Asian aesthetic influences.

Chapter 5 provides an assessment of the efforts of Indonesia’s largest Muslim reformist organization, the Muhammadiyah, to develop a new and less condemnatory policy toward indigenous Javanese traditions, all as part of an effort to block more blatantly un-Islamic cultural flows from the West. Here again one has the impression that Daniels’s identity as a Muslim works to his favor, sensitizing him to questions of sexual ethics that Western liberals might characterize as provincial. Chapter 6 provides an ethnographic history of a student theater of a broadly progressive cast. Chapter 7 draws on Victor Turner and social movement theory to look at a popular political art form developed by a respected Yogyakarta Muslim artist, Emha Ainun Nadjib. Daniels captures well this blurred genre’s fusion of Islamic mysticism with locally articulated affirmations of equality, pluralism, and social justice.

Daniels spent just under a year in a dizzyingly complex city in the throes of political change; by any measure, his ethnographic achievement is impressive. The only missteps in this far-ranging account occur when Daniels attempts to scale up from his Yogyakarta stage to national politics. Daniels repeatedly mischaracterizes Indonesia’s national charter, the Pancasila, as “secularist,” which it most certainly is not. He also makes the startling claim that one of the greatest threats to the post-Suharto democratic transition has been rise of “radical abangan” (i.e., nominal Muslims opposed to the normative profession of Islam) working in alliance with old regime secularists in the armed forces. This argument overlooks the now abundant research, the best of it by courageous Muslim scholars, demonstrating that in the years prior to and after the fall of the Suharto regime an antidemocratic wing in the armed forces made common cause, not with reactionary secularists but, rather, with radical Salafists convinced that the democracy movement was a Zionist and Christian plot intended to weaken Muslim Indonesia. Committed as he is to a laudably egalitarian and antineoliberal understanding of political reform, Daniels also challenges “Western imperial” (p. 7) models of civil society and liberal democracy. But the critique is applied in so heavy-handed a manner as to include Western and Indonesian Muslim analysts who took pains to emphasize that the variety of democracy to which

most Indonesians subscribe is electoral and constitutionalist but not premised on a liberal–secularist privatization of religion.

Notwithstanding these stumbles on the difficult ladder of political generalization, Daniels has provided us with a timely and original study of politics and piety in an important part of Java. This work is also an unusually rich example of reflexive ethnography, one that will be of great interest to anthropologists of religion and politics well beyond the Indonesian archipelago.

Mitzvah Girls: Bringing Up the Next Generation of Hasidic Jews in Brooklyn. *Ayala Fader*. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009. xvii + 260 pp., references, index.

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Ayala Fader has written a very competent ethnography about Bobover Hasidic women and girls in Brooklyn, which is a likely candidate for inclusion in an undergraduate anthropology course. My recommendation carries some ambivalence toward all ethnographies, *Mitzvah Girls* included, which seem to generalize more than historicize, and whose frequent present tense grammar leans toward an overall portrait of stability and consensus.

At its core, *Mitzvah Girls* is about reproduction of a way of thinking as Fader examines attitudes, values, and behaviors intentionally taught by Hasidic women (mothers and teachers) and self-consciously internalized by the younger generation of daughters (who will grow up to be mothers and teachers). Cumulatively and collectively, everyday acts of speaking, dressing, eating, and praying structure meaning within this insular community although an emphasis on conformity does not presume homogeneity or preclude recognizing individual agency. Agency, in fact, is precisely the point and Fader repeatedly reminds her readers that girls are carefully taught to channel their autonomy toward fulfilling communitarian responsibilities to families, other Jews, and God. This is a world in which authority maps out a gendered hierarchy (mothers and teachers, fathers and male religious leaders) to whom varying degrees of submission is expected.

Early on, Fader allies her analytic approach with Talal Asad's reproach against binary social scientific categories that presume and therefore prescribe a juxtaposition between secular and religious, traditional and modern. Rather than identify Hasidic groups by the overdetermined term *fundamentalist*, Fader adopts the word *nonliberal* from Saba Mahmood and then discretely, although repeatedly, underlines the point that "nonliberal reli-

gious communities" do comprehend and, therefore—or nevertheless—reject assumptions associated with liberalism including vague notions of democracy, tolerance, inclusion, and egalitarianism. Fader focuses on the Bobover of Boro Park and periodically underlines specific points of distinction from two main Hassidic groups in New York, the Lubavitch Chabad (whose proselytizing arm reaches out, in particular, to secular Jews seeking spiritual renewal) and the austere anti-Zionist Satmar Hasidim who are, respectively, located in Crown Heights and Southside Williamsburg. It should be noted that Fader inconsistently adds the qualifier "Bobov," which easily reinforces (rather than constantly challenges) a perspective that "Hasidic" communities are uniform and generic rather than particular (Bobov Hasidic) although one might argue that distinctions are more important within the ultraorthodox context and have less relevance for outsiders. Much more troubling is the cumulative way in which "Jewish" also slips into a generic synonym for Hasidic Jews and for Yiddish. It is therefore much too easy for readers with little knowledge about Jews and Jewish communities in general, and Jewish diversity in particular, to come away from this book without even noticing the very few parenthetical references made to Sephardic Jews (only one of which is noted in the index), the absence of any mention of Ladino (Judeo-Spanish, parallel to Yiddish is a language among Jewish communities exiled from Spain and includes some Aramaic, Hebrew, Arabic, and Turkish), or the complete silence over Arab Jews (Jews from North Africa and the Middle East) who do not merit even an endnote. Lack of any reference to Jews of the East is not at all trivial although its significance will be lost for readers whose only or primary introduction to ultraorthodox Jews is through the prism of representations that focus exclusively on Ashkenazi Jews. It is particularly troubling in terms of the prejudice and racism intentionally cultivated within Hasidic circles in general (noting here egregious examples of Ashkenazi Hasidic schools in Israel that formally and officially refuse to enroll Sephardic and Ethiopian children).

Mitzvah Girls is divided into seven chapters, introducing nonliberal Hasidic notions of the self then demonstrating with examples various ways in which Yiddish and English are intentionally deployed as bilingual tools for mediating different social arena (e.g., men and women, Jews and Gentiles, hierarchies of piety) and corollary ways of thinking. In the second half of the book, Fader shifts attention to body, mind, and modesty and corollary concerns about sexuality, knowledge, and consumption. The primary focus of the ethnography is "the everyday projects of Hasidic women and girls as they strive to redefine what constitutes a moral society" (p. 3) and with this purpose she promises an exploration of the political dimensions of the

socialization of morality, concluding in the coda that “I have tried to understand the projects that Hasidic women work toward as they raise their children to continue on as the faithful” (p. 219).

Mitzvah Girls merits particular attention as a reminder that questions of representation necessarily remain pertinent if provocative—negotiations and compromises lie behind the descriptions, anecdotes, and analyses between the anthropologist and the community over what and how to observe, interact, interview, and narrate. On the last pages of her book, Fader identifies a significant distinction between “an engaged anthropology” in which research and advocacy are complementary, and “an ethnical anthropology” in which competing interpretive frameworks of anthropologist and the represented complicate the dilemma of representation. It is unfortunate that the topic of authorial and authority questions regarding loyalties, responsibilities, and interventions appear so late in the coda rather than more generously throughout the text. Here faculty preparing syllabi might include an erudite complementary reading about dialogical principles, an inherent ethnographic challenge, raised ever so insightfully by Helan Page (1988).

When all is said and done, the Bobover Hasidic community turns out to be quite racist, arrogant, and opportunistic. Their American-born nostalgia for a horse-and-carriage *shtetl* is an offensive romanticization of the pre-Holocaust ghettos in which Jews lived under a system of Eastern European apartheid. The internal class hierarchy reflects itself in bourgeois aesthetic sensibilities, lifestyle choices that include high-end couture whose modest style belies their price tags, and lavish celebrations rationalized as entitlement and distinction. Some readers may be more interested in Bobover Hasidic notions of self and other, feminism and femininity, marriage and family, childhood education and transitions from adolescence into adulthood, and the evolution of an aesthetic that privileges a rather Aryan ideal of blonde beauty. Fader does not offer any critique from a Jewish position—as she identifies her own positionality—although she brings her ethnography to a close by noting the dilemmas raised as an insider-outsider. In the end, therefore, I was most disappointed by the absence of any comment on Jewish values that resonate with Rabbi Hillel, whose ethic of reciprocity is permanently encapsulated in the important adage, “that which is hateful to you, do not do to others. That is the whole Torah; the rest is commentary.”

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Women and Islamic Revival in a West African Town.
Adeline Masquelier. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009. 343 pp.

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In *Women and Islamic Revival in a West African Town*, Adeline Masquelier continues her longstanding research into the Nigerien town of Dogondoutchi, tracing the recent influence of Islamic movements on women’s lives. She focuses on two movements in particular, the Izala and the Awaliyya, both of which have altered the sociopolitical landscape in this Nigerien community. As in other parts of the Muslim world, the position of women is key to how Izala and Awaliyya adherents define *propriety*. Women are variously presented in sermons and other public discourse as examples of corruption, excess, virtues, or proper religious observance. Masquelier explores how contested issues such as seclusion, veiling, and women in public space are central to community self-definition. Attentive to the question of women’s agency, Masquelier does an excellent job of showing how women themselves select or reject various religious practices based on pragmatic concerns.

Islam came relatively recently to this region, and Masquelier offers a thorough history of its dissemination, from colonial times to the present. Fearful of organized Islamic movements, the French supported local fetishistic practices in an attempt to weaken Islamic influence but actually pursued bureaucratic policies that fostered the spread of the religion. In the 1970s, conversion to Islam intensified with the global oil crisis and national efforts to foster ties with the Arab world. Until recently, however, Islam coexisted with other practices such as Sufism and spirit possession. Since the 1990s, reform movements have been intent on removing such heretical practices while improving people’s basic knowledge of Islam. Central to Masquelier’s analysis is the question of the political-economic conditions that have made these movements appealing. The Izala emphasis on frugality, for example, has held particular sway with young men, who face negative economic prospects and find comfort and reason in the vision of a just Islamic order. Other Dogondoutchi residents, however, were critical of what they saw as Izala austerity and a denial that non-Izala Muslims could also be sufficiently pious. Masquelier shows how communal religious disputes shifted from questions such as the relationship among humans and spirits to debates over the correctness of Islamic practice.

As with so many reformist movements that claim a return to an “authentic” Islam of the past, modeled on the supposed example of the Prophet, the Izala decried the influence of Sufism and its engagement with music, spirits, and dancing. When the charismatic Sufi preacher Malam

Awal appeared on the scene in 1997, however, he brought back the engagement with spirits while also proclaiming himself as a producer of miracles and the one true source for correct Islamic observance. Like the Izala, he preached frugality, and education for women, but at the same time advocated for their seclusion. The majority of his followers were women, yet, contradictorily, in his sermons, he constantly threatened them with eternal punishment for their inadequacies in such areas as obedience to their husbands. For this reason, as well as for women's sense that Malam Awal himself was corrupt and did not live up to what he preached, the Awaliyya movement ultimately lost most of its adherents.

Maquelier's exploration of the Izala and Awaliyya movements' impacts on women's lives is fascinating, and her ethnography is particularly compelling in the later chapters, where she discusses the complex meanings of veiling and seclusion in Dogondoutchi and the influence of Malam Awal. Her focus on the contexts and changes in women's veiling practices adds new insights to the topic of the veil, which has been written about so often that it would seem there is nothing new to say. Similarly, by describing the rise and fall of Malam Awal, she shows how competing religious movements influence both religious practice and women's lives. Ultimately, women's agency is most evident in the ethical choices they make about comportment, sociability, and familial obligation.

While Masquelier presents a very detailed portrait of the Dogondoutchi community, more ethnographic vignettes could have illustrated the choices individual women make in constructing a religious identity. The author could have elaborated more on some of the rich ethnographic moments she relates, such as when a single mother, known for wearing suggestive clothing, decides one day to buy a veil from a neighbor so that she will get more respect. Extended biographies of particular individuals would also serve to exemplify broader tensions in the community, such as the woman who longs to attend Pentecostal services yet is shamed into maintaining a stricter Islamic observance by her husband.

This timely book offers a welcome contribution to the literature on Islam and gender in West Africa. Islamic movements in the region have often been misunderstood by outside observers bent on separating a supposed orthodoxy from local belief and practice, a binarism that *Women and Islamic Revival in a West African Town* is careful to avoid. The understanding of how Islamic movements alter social relations in a particular community is one of the many strengths of this book. Masquelier's rich contextualization of the interplay among religious movements, as well as her explanations for their appeal to believers in different social, political, and economic circumstances, make this an indispensable book for scholars of contemporary West Africa. *Women and Islamic Revival in a West African Town* is a sub-

stantial addition to the anthropology of Islam in its careful examination of the historical and cultural specificity of Islamic experiences.

Embodying Culture: Pregnancy in Japan and Israel. Tsipy Ivry. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2010. 298 pp.

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Tsipy Ivry deftly reinvents rather than revives cross cultural comparison in *Embodying Culture: Pregnancy in Japan and Israel*, by making comparison an explicit "inspiring analytic resource" (p. 22), in which findings in one culture sparked questions for the other that might not otherwise have been raised. While the choice of cultures depended partly on the anthropologist's life circumstances, Ivry offers further reason for comparison: both are officially pronatalist nations with subsidized healthcare and both medicalize pregnancy. The extensive fieldwork entailed interviews in various parts of each country with 50 obstetrician-gynecologists and 47 lower- to upper-middle-class mothers; observations of ultrasound and amniocentesis procedures; attendance at birth education classes and medical-commercial pregnancy events in Israel; and reading of pregnancy guides.

Ivry reasonably argues that anthropology has focused so much on new reproductive technologies as to make them the "ultimate perspective from which to theorize the meaning of pregnancy" (p. 5), leaving behind lived experience. She asks: "What is it in cultural theories of pregnancy . . . that gives power to biomedical technologies, and how is this power given?" (p. 13). Her fieldwork aim was to examine how parallel medical practices surrounding pregnancy in different contexts "convey a diversity of meanings [and] construct different forms of agency" (pp. 17–18). In each society, Ivry found a shared understanding of pregnancy between health professionals and women and limited resistance or alternative practice. She identified two local understandings of pregnancy: the one framing the "maternal environment" as having primary responsibility for fetal health (Japan), the other (Israel) a "fatalistic theory that explains fetal health through genes and chromosomes that are independent of the pregnant woman's willpower" (p. 11).

The author contextualizes pregnancy within shifting national population priorities and presents fieldwork with ob-gyns and women in each society. While Israel's pronatalist policy is evidenced in subsidized fertility treatment, free prenatal care, and childbirth and subsidized childcare, Ivry maintains there are eugenic undertones, evidenced by

concern with disability going far beyond the genetic risk. A program to prevent abnormality (dating from 1978 with efforts to prevent Tay Sachs disease) has broadened to cover prenatal tests. Abortion policy is liberal (with a high percent of abortions in the third trimester). Certainly the most unforgettable part of the chapter on Israeli ob-gyns was the anthropologist's account of an "ultrasonic horror picture show" (p. 51), in which the lecturer focuses on deformed fetuses without regard for potential risk or severity of defect. Ivry argues that such ghastly shows—whose mission ostensibly is to make prenatal screening and diagnostic testing an imperative—"illustrate a meaningful social script of reproductive misfortune" and "frighten and perpetuate anxiety" (p. 60). Ivry points out the irony of ob-gyns calling clients "hysterical" when they themselves produce and enact hysteria. In this context every pregnancy becomes a "high risk gamble" (p. 49) in which the fetus "comes to represent danger itself, [the] one that women and ultimately society should defend themselves against" (p. 59). For Israeli women, Ivry argues, pregnancy is "tentative" because the fetal status is held conditional until birth and "trivialized" in society and through biomedicine. She also argues that workplace accommodation of pregnant women is deficient, and male partners make light of the difficulties of pregnancy in birth education classes. Finally, women's own role in gestation becomes unimportant owing to the weight accorded genetic risk. Given anxieties provoked over abnormality, Israeli women ignore the phenomenology of the experience.

Although favoring eugenics in its nation building, with the aging of its population Japan became explicitly pronatalist. In Japan prenatal care subsidies are low and delivery expenses are not covered, while disability rights are championed and abortion is not available for eugenic purposes. The key concern of Japanese ob-gyns is not fetal deformity—indeed, doctors are reticent about amniocentesis—but, rather, to prevent miscarriage, gestational diabetes, macrosomia, premature birth, difficult delivery, cesareans, and neonatal mortality (Japan has the lowest neonatal mortality rates in the world). Doctors focus on the pregnant woman's physical health, especially maternal weight gain, and on women's mental health out of concern for the fetal environment. All this accords with current public health recommendations, but there is a catch. According to Ivry, in Japan women shoulder individual responsibility because how they care for their bodies is deemed crucial for fetal health and childbirth. Ivry sees Japan as strongly medicalized, not through technology but, instead, through surveillance of the maternal environment entailing numerous prenatal visits, practical restrictions, and self-monitoring practices (notably daily diet records). Moreover, pregnant women commonly believe they are burdens on coworkers and quit to engage in intensive, "docile" premothering. Their "meticulous style of nur-

turing their (unborn) babies" (p. 183) includes bonding with the fetus.

This is a powerful ethnography, gaining analytical depth and clarity through its focus on two contexts where modes of power and authority in each differently constitute the pregnant subjects, with implications for women's agency. The anthropologist's continuously perceptive observations attest to the high quality of fieldwork in each society. Her critical accounts of birth education and pregnancy events are particularly thought provoking. In this ambitious project, there had to be a trade-off somewhere: although there is much fine contextualization of pregnancy, the ethnography does not include extended tracking of how individual women contended with biomedicine throughout pregnancy. I would have welcomed further elaboration of the view that the possibility of resistance, as well as extent, was limited among Japanese and Israeli women. Regarding the approach, Ivry's assertion that asking parallel questions at each field site means not "privileging the perspective of either culture under investigation" (p. 15) was also provocative. Such observations rekindle worthwhile debates central to anthropology.

Once in a while I come across an ethnography like this that makes me want to hand out copies far and wide, to academics and beyond. *Embodying Culture* reads lucidly and almost as grippingly as a brightly crafted novel. The work, with its dynamic critical edge, is an important addition to the reproductive health literature. It would make an excellent text in any medical anthropology or gender course and an intriguing addition to a medical school curriculum.

Ballroom: Culture and Costume in Competitive Dance.

Jonathan S. Marion. Oxford: Berg, 2008. 176 pp., illustrations, charts, index.

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Jonathan S. Marion's *Ballroom: Culture and Costume in Competitive Dance* is a welcome addition to a growing body of literature about competitive and social dance forms including McMains's 2006 *Glamour Addiction: Inside the American Ballroom Dance Industry* and Malnig's 1995 *Dancing Till Dawn: A Century of Exhibition Ballroom Dancing*. Marion's work is rooted in visual, psychological, and sociocultural anthropologies. This orientation provides Marion with a distinctive scholarly voice.

Many dance studies scholars are committed to movement description and to drawing their experiences and knowledge bases as dancers into their data, interpretative processes, and theorizing. Although Marion is a ballroom and samba dancer, he politely puts his bodily experience aside and, instead, employs photographs and a deft

relationship between text and images as one of his means of relaying information, observations, and analyses. The resultant examination of competitive ballroom centralizes the fabulous look of ballroom dancers and allows readers to think about how that look is personally and culturally created and reinforced, and its social and psychological costs. Compared to other dance writing, Marion's work is a little distant, a little removed from the sweaty experience of dancing, and this allows him to enter the subject from a fresh place and to focus on things we might otherwise miss.

The introductory portions of *Ballroom* are clear and economically presented. Marion begins with a discussion of his own dance training and decision to underplay his physical knowledge and then discusses the theory and literature that support his work. He aligns his research (p. 26) with studies of bodybuilding, beauty pageants, surfing, and the Olympics, all cultures created by committed participants that operate translocally and as metagenres. Histories of competitive ballroom dancing and of ballroom organizations follow, along with discussions of how dances are categorized and judged. Part 2 is given to an examination of competitive ballroom practice as spectacle, art, and sport. In part 3, Marion explores ballroom competition as ritual and celebration.

Marion's discussion of competitive ballroom as sport is especially intriguing. He explains the scoring system used in ballroom competitions and examines public attitudes about the value of "objective" competitive athletics versus "subjective" competitive ballroom. He also explores the underappreciated physical condition of dancers. In an interview (p. 82), a Finnish ballroom competitor describes her experience undergoing mandatory cardiac fitness tests required by her Ministry of Sport. When her fitness registered in the zone usually attained by cross-country skiers, the testers repeatedly assumed an equipment malfunction and asked her to take the test again. This points to popular misconceptions about dancer fitness and opens up a host of other questions: How do they train? What do they eat? How do hotels and resorts holding competitions balance the needs of competitors and of partying audiences and vacationers? Do some ballroom dancers indulge in performance-enhancing supplements, and how is this understood within ballroom culture?

In the final and most nuanced section of the book, Marion explores costuming, gender, and the stresses of ballroom competition. Costuming is first a theatrical and competitive tool. A carefully chosen costume calls attention to the dance couple as they move under the lights, in a particular ballroom, and among other couples vying for attention. Costuming emphasizes the distinctive qualities of particular dance forms: a waltzing couple must appear in a ball gown and tails or dinner jacket, and never in the short, sassy dress and tight pants and shirt meant for Cha Cha. The "rules" Marion relays for costuming suggest these dis-

tinctions are taken to great lengths. He notes, for instance, that female dancers who waltz, foxtrot, or quickstep may have black or blond hair, while those doing the Cha Cha or Meringue may have black, blond, or red hair. Presumably, neither group ever sports hair that is a mundane brown or the gray or white of maturity. Further, costuming is bound up with a dancer's identity. Costuming styles carry over into the ways dancers experience and present themselves when not performing, reinforcing personality types and bolstering self-concepts.

Marion's analysis of gender is situated within ballroom's celebration of the heteronormative couple. Men retain some traditional male prerogatives in ballroom and are highly valued because there are relatively few male dancers. This complicates the day-to-day interactions of dance partners and negatively impacts some female competitors. Marion ends the book by discussing the difficulties of dancers who feel lonely and mistrustful in the midst of a community that supplies support and validation within a highly stratified system of amateurs and professionals, competitors and champions. He also discusses the difficulties of young women who are socialized within ballroom culture.

Marion uses his own images of ballroom dancers and competitions throughout the book. These emphasize the importance that ballroom culture places on the visual, perhaps to the detriment of other values. One series of photographs illustrates the aesthetic values and scoring system of ballroom. "Posture" is clarified with a photograph of a couple in a quickstep leap. The pair seems unfazed by their own forward momentum and billowing costumes, as they remain perfectly upright on top of their vigorous leap. While judges do evaluate more kinetic qualities such as "power," many of the values have to do with visual aspects such as "line," "shape," and "presentation."

An image (p. 118) of Latin competitors congratulating each other after their last dance shows divas enacting images of good sportsmanship and community cohesion. While competitors in athletics perform ritual handshakes, it is difficult to imagine a group of tennis players standing around midcourt hugging and pecking each other on the cheek. Is this picture of civility a remnant of the 19th-century social ballroom or a considered aspect of contemporary competition? How does this picture trump or moderate competing imagery of cultivated glamour and the real-life experiences of physical competition?

Marion's work is akin to image-based analyses of professional women athletes and of Hollywood stars and his photographs might be interesting to examine alongside images from other physical cultures. His work not only contributes to our understanding of ballroom dance but also furthers and suggests the continuing promise of dance research carried out through interdisciplinary methodologies.

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Muslim Lives in Eastern Europe: Gender, Ethnicity, and the Transformation of Islam in Postsocialist Bulgaria.

Kristen Ghodsee. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2010. xvi + 252 pp.

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On joining the European Union in 2007, Bulgaria became the EU nation with the largest Muslim population. Kristen Ghodsee's study of the Pomaks, Slavic Muslims living in the mountainous Rhodope region of southern Bulgaria, is an important contribution to existing works on the transformation of Islamic practices in contemporary Europe. Ghodsee argues that contemporary Islamic politics in Eastern Europe must be understood as distinct from those in Western Europe, where Muslims are largely immigrants and descendants of immigrants living in stable parliamentary democracies. In contrast, she suggests, in Eastern Europe, where indigenous Muslim communities proliferated with Ottoman rule, the growth of orthodox Islam in recent years is tied to people's frustrations with unstable states and the failed promises of democracy and market capitalism. Focusing on the Pomaks in the former mining town of Madan, Ghodsee addresses how macrofactors, such as the collapse of communism, globalization, and the increased presence of international Islamic aid organizations in the Balkans, interact with local conditions, such as massive unemployment, poverty, and shifting gender relations that followed the closing of the lead-zinc mines around Madan, in the Rhodope region. Ghodsee thus asks why the Pomaks in Madan embraced Saudi-influenced "orthodox" Islam after communism while other Bulgarian Muslim groups, like the Turks and the Roma, did not do so.

One of the most interesting arguments in *Muslim Lives in Eastern Europe* proposes that in Eastern Europe, orthodox Islam is in the process of being "Marx-icized" (p. 200). Connecting the Pomaks' nostalgia for communism and their embrace of orthodox Islam, Ghodsee demonstrates that orthodox Islam's anti-Western social justice bent had a strong resonance with the residents of Madan, who prospered under communism. Throughout the communist era, mining was one of the most well-respected and highly paid professions, with Madan's miners earning higher wages than the Bulgarian ambassador to the United States. With

careful economic and cultural analysis, chapters 2 and 3 detail the rise and fall of GORUBSO, Bulgaria's largest lead and zinc mining enterprise headquartered in Madan. After 1989, the rapid decline, privatization, and ultimate destruction of the mining industry led to massive unemployment. Families who had once enjoyed the highest living standards in the nation were unable to pay for even the most basic necessities such as food, medicine, heat, and electricity. Meanwhile, the complete collapse of the Bulgarian economy and banking system in the mid-1990s allowed foreign missionaries, including Saudis, to gain incredible purchasing power with foreign currency. Through various forms of charitable aid, religious missionaries seemed to care about the poor in a way that the state no longer did (ch. 5).

Ghodsee nuances her linkage between communism and orthodox Islam in Madan by arguing that the reorganization of gender relations accompanied the rise of both worldviews. She suggests that shifting conceptions of masculinity and femininity in postsocialist Bulgaria fueled the embrace of orthodox forms of Islam in the region. Ghodsee convincingly shows that during communism, miners embodied an idealized form of worker masculinity. Thus, although communists advocated gender equality, women's work in more feminized sectors, such as the garment industry and education, did not garner as much pay or respect and, therefore, did not present a threat to dominant masculinity. In the postsocialist era, as former miners lost their sense of self-worth with unemployment, Ghodsee suggests that new mosques, built with funds from Saudi-based Islamic aid organizations, provided a space of all-male sociability. Meanwhile, orthodox Islam's advocacy of the return of women to the private sphere eased concerns that accompanied the revaluing of formerly feminized forms of labor, such as medicine and banking. Although Ghodsee raises compelling questions about the relationship between postsocialist economies, gender, and the rise of orthodox Islam, the majority of her interlocutors remained suspicious of Saudi-style Islam. According to Ghodsee, many of Madan's residents believed that women were being paid to wear the headscarf in the new "Arab" style (the hijab) as opposed to the traditional *fustan*, and that that Saudi aid organizations had hidden political and economic agendas. While Ghodsee's account of orthodox Islam in Madan often returns to emergent veiling practices as the primary marker of shifting gender relations (ch. 6), the book's analysis would be strengthened by a parallel discussion of the kind of masculinity Islam represented for the former miners.

In addition to its exploration of the social justice and gendered aspects of the Pomaks' embrace of orthodox Islam, *Muslim Lives in Eastern Europe* provides an excellent historical and cultural account of Balkan Islam in Madan through the Ottoman and communist eras (ch. 1). Ghodsee's analysis is mindful of the distinctions between the new "Arab"-style orthodox practices and traditional Pomak

practices, which contemporary orthodox practitioners see as incorrect innovations that developed under communist repression. In spite of her important claim that orthodox Islam is being transformed and “Marxi-icized” among the Pomaks, Ghodsee’s analysis often inadvertently creates a too sharp distinction between indigenous–traditional and “foreign”–orthodox forms of Islam. She suggests that the infighting among national-level Bulgarian Muslim leaders after communism created a vacuum in leadership that opened the door for orthodox Islam to take root in the Rhodope (ch. 4). There is thus a discrepancy between Ghodsee’s critique of orthodox Islam as a foreign influence in Bulgaria and her insights into the localized transformations of orthodox Islam in the postsocialist context. The book would have benefited from further exploring the embrace of orthodox Islam as a transnational longing that is both parallel to and critical of Bulgaria’s joining the EU. For instance, Ghodsee points out that many young Pomaks have come to imagine their ethnicity as historically tied to “Arabia” rather than to the Slavic nations, but she does not address how this shift in ethnic self-imagining might represent an antiracist critique of growing Islamophobia in the EU.

With the questions it raises about gender, ethnicity, and Islam in postsocialist Eastern Europe, *Muslim Lives in Eastern Europe* opens up a number of important areas of inquiry in contemporary studies of European Islam. It will be of interest to scholars of religion, gender studies, and postsocialist transition.

In God’s Image: The Metaculture of Fijian Christianity. Matt Tomlinson. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2009. 249 pp.

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One prominent cross-cultural pattern of linkage between time and collective life is commitment to large-scale narratives in which the relation between the present day and another time is intensely evaluative. Here, critical consciousness about current social life is lived through a historical sensibility about the present’s difference from what has come before or what will come later. For example, the dominant metanarrative of European modernity and its diasporas has been one of progress. Not only is the present better than the past, but this present is also a forward-oriented threshold of constant innovation, already reaching toward a future of greater achievements in technology, knowledge, capital accumulation, material prosperity, aesthetic accomplishment, or morality. Pessimistic counternarratives of primitivism, environmentalism, and critical theory have also been cultural forces to reckon with in the last century or

more, but they are feeble alongside the juggernaut of mass progressivist conviction. Scholars have occasionally suggested that modernity’s constitution around a core ideology of progress has deep debts to Christianity. Löwith (1949) described progress as a secularization of Christian concern with salvation, and Nisbet (1980) finds many of the idea’s seeds in Augustine. In anthropology, Keane (2006) has followed a large tradition of social scientific writing on Protestantism, in linking modernity’s dominant “moral narrative” of progressive liberation of the human subject to Calvinist projects of purifying semiosis of idolatry.

This is one of many contexts we could bring to Matt Tomlinson’s welcome ethnography of Wesleyan Methodism as a lived practice in villages of Kadavu, the fourth largest island of Fiji. Indigenous Fijians are virtually all Christian, and two-thirds are Methodist. Tomlinson colorfully describes Fijian Methodism as not the opiate of the masses but their “caffeine,” “energizing people while intensifying their anxieties” (p. 25). And Fijian Christians’ overarching anxieties take the form of narratives of loss and decline. Tomlinson’s title phrase *In God’s Image*, for example, refers to the great significance that Fijians attach to the verse in Genesis recording that God created humans in his own likeness. To villagers whose Christian discourse Tomlinson encountered, the obvious and core force of this biblical passage is that it casts into relief the great decline people have undergone, from that earlier state of perfection to their contemporary fallible and weak conditions.

This sense of decline emanates in part from unsettled tensions and interdependencies between Fijian Christianity and the heritage of the chiefly political system—a system that in turn is often taken as the metonymic anchor of the larger customary order of ancestral and land-grounded mana. Narratives of decline are a way for indigenous Fijians to have their Christianity while also ambivalently lamenting valuable aspects of what was lost in the break with chiefly violence. The sensibilities about decline are also generated, Tomlinson suggests, out of an ongoing tug-of-war between the chiefly system and the church. As the book’s ethnography deepens, though, the search for an explanation for sensibilities of decline is mostly set aside in favor of documenting those sensibilities in their full complexity and their full relationality to other currents of Fijian experience. Often, Tomlinson’s empirical emphasis is on specific discourse genres and events. Core chapters examine how decline is represented and made intelligible in sermons, how it is felt in the body in kava drinking sessions or crystallized in controversies about kava’s ongoing place in Christian life, and how it is both acknowledged and remediated in prayer activities directed at removing ancestral curses from land.

Tomlinson’s late chapters turn to ways in which Fijian Methodism’s past-oriented anxieties of decline also become the organizing foundations of future-oriented projects of “recuperation” at collective and biographical levels. He

presents a nuanced and indispensable account of the Methodist church's complex relations to the long series of military coups, constitutional crises, and outbreaks of violence that Fiji has suffered since 1987, turning on the ethnic divide between indigenous Fijians and Indo-Fijian descendants of colonial-era indentured laborers. A final chapter recounts the biography of a particular Kaduvan man, who takes St. Paul as the model for his own redemptive arc from convict to catechist.

Tantalizingly, Tomlinson introduces Fijians' own reflexivity about culture as a core conceptual concern, under the label "metaculture." However, this theme is not pursued in the book's ethnographic chapters beyond basic identification of categories like "tradition," *lotu* ("Christianity, religion"), or *vanua* (the chiefly system and the land) as being metacultural in character and beyond broad identification of Christianity as having strong metacultural tendencies. In light of the book's unifying ethnographic focus on the topic of an ideology of decline, I would have welcomed more explicit conceptual engagement with how temporality and historical consciousness are areas where to live culturally is by definition to live reflexively about culture. Yet while Tomlinson does not engage in sustained ways with literature on progress ideologies mentioned above, or with other possibly more pressing conceptual issues in the anthropology of temporality suggested by his case, rich lineaments of such engagement are present throughout the book's empirical and contextualizing work.

Tomlinson excels as a sensitive ethnographer of Fijian Christianity in the village setting, and on a personal and congregational scale. Through this stimulating study, readers can appreciate the ways that villagers' Christian ideas and practices do not follow settled or hermetic codes. Rather, these ideas and practices are highly inventive, tension generating, and deliberative as they unfold both in local Kaduvan social fields and in Kaduvans' back-and-forth with wider institutional orders and textual circuits. Tomlinson's careful and extensive rendering of many different persons' forms of Christian speaking about their lives offers a rich counterbalance to metropolecentric journalism and scholarship on Fiji, or on churches anywhere. This lucid book is further testimony to the full arrival, within anthropology's ethnographic tradition, of the study of world Christianities as they are actually lived.

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Theorizing the Local: Music, Practice, and Experience in South Asia and Beyond. Richard K. Wolf, ed. New York: Oxford University Press, 2009. 329 pp.

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In *Theorizing the Local*, Richard Wolf has put together a stimulating collection of chapters that challenges and complements the globalization literature. Examining various and often-conflicting ways that people define and perform the local, the volume provides a multitude of fresh tools for examining peripheral music practices. Each chapter has a slightly different approach to the local, defined through a variety of relations—economic or cultural flows, movement of groups, movement of the body, the family, discourse, and so forth. The contrasting but complementary presentations of local theory and theories of the local are the strength of this book.

Globalization theories are often concerned with issues of generating value out of things that circulate. In music studies this narrows the range of subjects and creates a hierarchy that belittles some musical traditions. This book counters such a premise through detailed work on unique practices that have not and will not gain attention in widely distributed markets. *Theorizing the Local* argues for the value of comparative microstudies that are not concerned primarily with the flow of capital and politics but that highlight other forms of interconnection, avoiding the implications of a single globalism. After a comprehensive introduction by Wolf, the book divides into four sections that move from the corporeal centers of locality through the movement of such entities, into the transmission of ideas, and, finally, toward theories of local theorizing.

Bodies and instruments are sites where actors create microlevel theories. Part 1 shows how performers and instruments relate to broader discourses such as gender and modernization. Reed argues that notions of feminine respectability and modernity in Sri Lanka have both influenced and been shaped by ways in which women articulated themselves through dance. The male ritual tradition, which did not codify roles for women dancers, provides wider latitude for articulating the feminine. Dancers now stretch the possibilities of the stereotypically feminine—from submissiveness and grace to strength and confidence. Weidman argues that the violin, an imported colonial instrument, has been absorbed into Karnatak music and has played a significant role in defining an authentic Indian sound. While Weidman explores the violin as something recognizably Indian, Clayton's chapter brings forth contrasting voices of guitarists who play "Western" genres. These guitarists' understandings of themselves as

Indian differ in significant ways from violinists in the previous chapter.

Part 2 emphasizes how places of music making are connected to other sites through itineraries of moving musicians. Local is understood, in part, by the way people move and the interconnections between them. Booth examines how brass bandsmen travel seasonally from small towns, where living costs are low, to perform in the major markets in larger cities. Explaining the rules that govern movement within and between networks points to indigenous understandings of space and locality. Chaudhuri recounts local stories of Mānganiar hereditary musicians and their relationship to shrines of their patron deity, Rāni Bhatiyāni. Variations of the origin story serve as ongoing iterations of local theory with respect to musical-social interactions. New versions of the Rāni Bhatiyāni story influence the economics of patronage and the relationship of the cult to mainstream Hinduism. Wegner's chapter complements the movement and devotion subthemes by addressing the way that performing bodies move around religious monuments in Bhaktapur, Nepal. Drum patters, like phone numbers, dial up particular deities associated with specific sites. Links between places and pieces reveal local understandings of the music and create large-scale mandalas around Bhaktapur.

The learning and transmission section critiques the *gurukula* relationship, the mechanics of repetitive bodily experiences, and the embodiment of musical knowledge. Groesbeck turns his attention to the social world of the open-air learning environment. Insights that students gain from "peer-group immersion" show a significant horizontal component to their learning. Qureshi unpacks the deeply layered concept of *sina ba sina* (from one heart to another) in the family-based teaching of hereditary sarangi players. The passing of tradition here is marked less by transmitting pieces and techniques than by various rituals that affirm discipleship and family. Henderson's phenomenologically informed article contrasts by asking how it is that musical knowledge gets into the body. Henderson's personal experiences studying tabla and Newari drums are a springboard for talking about feeling (heart, head, and hand) as a measure of local value.

The final section, "Theorizing Social Action," moves logically to the articulation of musical knowledge. Through the words of Khorasan bards in Northeast Iran, Stephen Blum articulates a model for thinking about the relationship between what a musician knows and access others have to that knowledge. That musicians are only partially attentive to, in control of, and able to communicate their knowledge reveals interesting problems for theorizing a tradition. Theorizing of theory is given a very clear example in Badalkhan's examination of the *zahirok*, a song genre found in southern Baluchistan originally associated with camel drivers but now with a variety of diverse peoples.

Zahirok is fundamental to the understanding of local for the Baloch people, yet it is now a tradition that encompasses great variety. Lastly, editor Richard Wolf cleverly concludes the book with a chapter on beginnings. The *varnam* is both an exercise and a composition type performed at the beginning of a Karnatic concert. Wolf argues that the *varnam* (and a few related genres) is a site through which musicians and musicologists assert and construct their theories.

A notable strength of the volume is the level of interaction between the articles. Cross-references abound and as different perspectives presented themselves I caught myself flipping back to reread earlier passages with new insights. These case studies offer a subtle range of ways to think about how societies systematize and represent their music. The volume is valuable for scholars interested in different models for theorizing globalization, gender, and space, and ethnomusicologists will appreciate the online sound and video examples. Covering a broad region that shares certain large-scale musical practices the volume will be helpful for those looking for microsituations that challenge many large-scale theories. Indeed, this book is as much about theorizing theory as it is about theorizing the local.

South Koreans in the Debt Crisis: The Creation of a Neoliberal Welfare Society. *Jesook Song*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009. 224 pp.

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Modern history, as it is sometimes commonsensically invoked in contemporary South Korea, contains signposts marking critical moments when many of the basic assumptions of social life became irrevocably different. The annexation of the Korean nation by the Japanese Empire in 1910 is one such signpost, and the outbreak of the Korean War on June 25, 1950, was another. In more recent times, the end of military dictatorship in 1987 and the election of South Korea's first civilian president in 1992 bespoke not only political changes but also changes in the conduct of social life well beyond politics. Arguably arbitrary, such signposts retain a heuristic power, both emic and etic. In *South Koreans in the Debt Crisis*, Jesook Song probes the social consequences of another much-invoked signpost, the Asian financial crisis of 1997, locally known as the "IMF Crisis" in reaction to the stringent reforms required by the International Monetary Fund in exchange for bailing out the troubled South Korean economy. By shaking the theretofore symbiotic relationship between government and the large Korean corporations (*cheböl*) and with it, the possibility of

secure and respectable lifetime employment, the IMF crisis prompted massive layoffs and the visible presence of new ranks of homeless people. The crisis, and South Korea's (arguably effective) responses to it are commonly seen as ushering in a neoliberal social order.

Song defines *neoliberalism* as "an advanced liberal mode of governing that idealizes efficiency and productivity by promoting people's free will and self-sufficiency" (p. x). She sees welfare responses to the crisis as extensions of the "biopower" of a new welfare regime. Song uses the Foucauldian term *biopower* to indicate the unique operation of power in a neoliberal regime where policies aimed at enhancing the well-being of the population are oblique techniques of control (p. 12). Although state control is muted, state influence is expanded "through partnerships with civil society" and by "outsourcing tasks to expert groups or entrepreneurs" (p. 13). Song argues that the neoliberal regime that took shape during the crisis, while posing a sharp contrast with the disciplines and surveillances of the military dictatorship, effectively conscripted to its own ends those progressive civic groups who had gained prominence in the democratic culture of the 1990s.

Here, Song presents herself as a situated subject, a self-defined progressive since her student days who, as a temporary employee in a crisis-relief program, found herself inadvertently abetting the creation of the new neoliberal order. Song's troubled musings on her own position and the positions taken by those government and civic workers whom she regards as generational peers and one-time soul mates makes this work much more than a policy analysis enlivened by ethnographic description and scholarly critique. Song wants the reader to understand biopower as something visceral in the South Korean ethnographer's own experience. She is not always effective, as her voice is sometimes overly intrusive, repetitive, and verges on protesting too much, but this is a better book for her having chosen to write this way.

Song aims to provide a comprehensive picture of the developments of a welfare society in South Korea during the crisis. Her central argument is that state and civil programs tailored assistance to match an ideological construction of "worthy" and "unworthy" citizens. In neoliberal mode, "worthiness" was correlated with potential productivity. Men laid off work as a consequence of the crisis were worthy of assistance; they could be retrained and reemployed. Men who were homeless as a consequence of unemployment could be rehabilitated and returned to "normal" life with their families. Long-term unemployed and homeless men were unworthy and further marginalized by the new relief programs. Responses to the crisis reflected the neotraditionalism already present in South Korean family law and social policy; men were recognized as bread-

winners, women as temporary employees who would "normally" become wives and mothers. Song offers a telling anecdote when a counselor at a job placement center informs her that she can solve her own unemployment problem by getting married.

To the eyes of policy makers, homeless women were almost uncannily invisible, sometimes literally so, as when Song attempted to point one out to a caseworker who had been adamantly denying their existence, apart from those women who were mentally ill. Respondents presumed that no normal woman would choose to live this way, even despite domestic abuse. Song's own interview with an otherwise normal-seeming homeless woman is a poignant account of a secret community huddled together in an out-of-the-way subway station. At the end of their conversation, the woman kindly asks Song if she, herself, is in need of help. Because of the necessary wariness of these women, Song has only the sparest interview data, and this is understandable; fieldwork with this community would be a challenging project indeed. Even so, and on the strength of what she has resented, this reader hopes that either Song or some other ethnographer will be tempted to follow these women into that subway station for a more full-bodied account of their lives.

Song describes underemployed youths as the ideal potential neo liberal subjects, the subjects of a "*proactive* attempt by the South Korean capitalist state to nurture and organize a post-Fordist labor population." As members of a flexible, entrepreneurial labor force, youth of both genders were being encouraged in directions of "self-management" and "self-cultivation" including not just the development of marketable skills and entrepreneurial know-how but beautification of the body as part of a professional and marketable self-image. This, Song notes, marks a ground shift. Although self-cultivation was a feature of South Korean consumer culture from even before the crisis, it was a target of disapprobation, commonly leveled at stereotypically self-indulgent married women. The youthful products of this neoliberal engineering are ripe subjects for future ethnographic inquiry. How does this new emphasis on self-realization play against the ideological weight of Korean familism witnessed in Song's other cases? We are likely to be reading more about twentysomething South Koreans.

Given that Song writes about events from more than a decade past, one wishes that she had included some brief concluding thoughts on where neoliberalism has taken South Korean society in the years since her fieldwork. Even so, her ethnographic and sharply critical perspective from within the eye of the storm reads fresh, even at this remove. This book may itself become a signpost for the kind of witnessing that future anthropologists of South Korean society will be challenged to write.

Pioneers or Pawns? Women Health Workers and the Politics of Development in Yemen. Marina de Regt. Syracuse, NY: Syracuse University Press, 2007. 383 pp.

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Much of contemporary development discourse about women in the Arab world is focused on the problem of low labor-force participation rates and rests on the assumption that waged labor is key to both women's development and regional progress. This narrative is largely driven by quantitative analysis that fails to capture women's experiences and perceptions of waged labor, as well as other forms of labor—domestic and non-wage-earning economic activity.

Marina de Regt's *Pioneers or Pawns* is a welcome contribution to the anthropological literature on women and labor in the region and that concerned with foreign-funded development initiatives in the Arab world. This volume is a study of a Dutch-funded health project in Yemen, the Hodeida Urban Primary Health Care Project and specifically focuses on the experiences of female *murshidat*, health extension workers who play a central role in the project. De Regt became acquainted with these *murshidat* as a development practitioner, herself engaged in the Hodeida project as an applied anthropologist for several years. In the midst of her work for the Dutch aid agency, de Regt decided to begin doctoral research and, to this end, she began gathering "topical life stories" from the *murshidat* during her last year of employment with the Hodeida project in 1997. Thus, her research builds both on her experiences as a development practitioner and as an anthropologist.

According to de Regt, Dutch aid workers viewed the *murshidat* as "agents of change" (p. 14), believing that the effects of employing these women would extend beyond the aims of this public health project. It is this belief that de Regt takes up in this volume. Specifically, de Regt tells the reader that she sought to understand how the *murshidat* "shifted the boundaries of dominant gender ideologies" (p. 20) in Yemen. She explores this question by tracing the trajectory of individual women who became *murshidat*, as well as the trajectory of the project itself; a project that she shows was both susceptible to the aid agencies' policy imperatives, as well as local and national politics and health policy.

While de Regt does not view international development as a panacea, she argues that the exiting literature neglects the "enabling" effects of foreign-funded development initiatives. She finds the literature that is critical of development to be limited primarily because it fails to pay enough attention to local actors and their agency and as such relegates the "objects of development" to a status of victim-

hood. She asserts that her actor-oriented approach to the study of the Hodeida project addresses these limits. Drawing on the life stories of the Yemeni women who work in the Hodeida project, de Regt contends that the effects of development were mixed—although the project and what she calls its "modernizing" tendencies involved new forms of social control, it also gave the *murshidat* improved status in their communities and contributed to the "shifting of gender boundaries." Most significantly, de Regt argues that although health work of this nature was considered a low-status occupation, especially for women, the *murshidat* came to be respected in the community for their knowledge. She points to other evidence of change, such as the interaction with males in the work place, opportunities to drive a car, and the increased power that can come with contributing to family work.

The book has many strengths. It provides an inside look at the workings of a development project, the politics of foreign aid and international development policies, and the ways in which they interact with local political considerations. Furthermore, it is rich with thick descriptions of women's lives, what motivates them to train as *murshidat*, and their perspective on this work. The author divides the *murshidat* into three groups, roughly approximating when they became *murshidat* and why. The effect is that the reader can see and appreciate the class and geographical diversity of these women, as well as the shifting personal, historical, and political contexts in which women find themselves when they become *murshidat*. For example, de Regt teases out the role of the Gulf War of 1990, return migration and displacement as influencing factors in some women's decisions to become *murshidat*, deepening the readers' understanding of the forces at work in these women's lives.

However, at times de Regt frames particular phenomenon, like the low status of *murshidat* relative to other health or medical workers, as the product of gender hierarchy when it is clear that credentials and expertise shape many of these attitudes. De Regt begins to address these overlapping hierarchies in her discussion of modernization–modernity but could do more to develop her conception of modernity and development as a modernizing project. Too often the author relies on extended discussions of other authors' arguments to do this work for her. Given the richness of her data, more analysis and theorization would strengthen her work.

In addition, in several places the author points to interesting gendered tensions or interactions, without fully grappling with the implications of what she has observed. For example, de Regt points to evidence that complicates the assumptions about women's labor as always progressive, such as male unemployment or the delayed marriage of women supporting their parents, but her analysis of these phenomena and their significance for gen-

der relations, division of labor, or cultural perceptions of work and family responsibilities can fall short. The reader is left wanting the author to elaborate further about the potential implications for a broader understanding of development and its effects—intended or not—on a variety of actors.

Furthermore, at times the author's conclusions about shifting gender boundaries and the broader effects of the project on gender relations in Hodeida appear incomplete. According to de Regt, Dutch perceptions of rigid gender boundaries were challenged early on in the project when the Dutch officials who assumed the health extension workers had to be male were convinced by Yemeni officials that they should be female. De Regt frames some events as transformative of gender boundaries when there is evidence in her book that the boundaries were not so rigid, or that boundaries were equally if not more class-based than gendered. One final observation is that the book is at times repetitive, with details about certain murshidat and dimensions of the project repeated several times.

Despite these concerns this is a valuable book that would serve well as a text for courses in development or gender in the Arab world. It provides a welcome alternative or complement to the discourse of women's failed development in the region and an interesting contribution to the anthropology development.

Observational Cinema: Anthropology, Film, and the Exploration of Social Life. *Anna Grimshaw and Amanda Ravetz.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2009. 224 pp.

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Anna Grimshaw and Amanda Ravetz's *Observational Cinema* is a fascinating and much-needed study of an important body of work. The authors note that it was Colin Young, one of the founders of the Ethnographic Film Program at UCLA, who first used "observational cinema" as a genre designation in 1975 (Young 1995). Characterized by long shots, and an editing style that maintained the integrity of the dimensions of space and time encountered during filming, these films stood in stark contrast to the didactic style of many anthropological films, which often featured an authoritative voice-over and made the content of the film subject to an overarching theoretical statement. Observational filmmakers were accused of lacking scholarly and analytic rigor, their films critiqued for projecting a sense of unmediated reality or objectivity. Grimshaw and Ravetz set out to reclaim the terms of the current debate on observational

cinema using an interdisciplinary approach (blending film studies, anthropology, and the history of science) to explore the concept of observation in filmmaking practice in observational cinema as well as Italian neorealism and American cinema verité. In reexamining observational cinema, the authors make a double theoretical intervention: into the terms of the debate around ethnographic filmmaking, and into what constitutes knowledge itself, how knowledge is produced, and what is even knowable within the ethnographic encounter.

Grimshaw and Ravetz write from the valuable perspective of having made observational films themselves. In Grimshaw's published e-mail exchanges with David MacDougall she writes: "It is clear that a good deal of writing about observational cinema is done by people who are not themselves filmmakers" (Grimshaw and MacDougall 2002:101). For both Grimshaw and Ravetz, it is crucial to take into account the practice of filmmaking when thinking about observational films. In their close reading of MacDougall's filmmaking techniques, Grimshaw and Ravetz describe the ways in which the camera itself is part of an embodied practice of ethnographic engagement. However, observation is not assumed to mean the same act for every filmmaker—rather, it is a practice that unfolds through filming and within the ethnographic encounter. For example, the authors describe the films of Herb Di Gioia and David Hancock as a close engagement with the material world and everyday processes of their subjects. Their films were often preoccupied with craft and how subjects live in the world (a furniture maker, for example), as well as how a film is edited to remain consistent with the encounter of shooting. Hancock's camera was never on a tripod and remained a kind of extension of his presence while shooting—decisions made during editing reflected this commitment to maintaining the situatedness of the camera's vision. MacDougall's *Doon School Chronicles* (2000), however, is regarded by the authors as a kind of innovation within the genre. In these films, MacDougall explores questions of knowledge and pedagogy in the postcolonial context as well as the forms of knowing that are produced through shooting and editing techniques. The films, which document his experience in the Doon School, an elite boarding school in India, use the juxtaposition of sounds, still photos, and moving images that serve not just to evoke a sense of place or of being in the world but also to give rise to different meanings that are "suggested rather than demonstrated" through connections made by the viewer while watching the film (p. 89). Through these techniques, MacDougall's films are an intersubjective encounter between himself and the students, the students and the institution they inhabit, and the ways in which the process of shooting itself can impact these relationships. Despite these differences, all the filmmakers share a similar ethos of filmmaking that has its roots, the authors

suggest, in Italian neorealism rather than in American cinema *verité*.

Grimshaw and Ravetz reclaim film theorist André Bazin's writing on the embodied quality of camera techniques in neorealist films to draw out the aesthetic and ethical similarities between observational and neorealist films. Bazin identified neorealist films as featuring "an emphasis on shooting rather than editing, scenes rather than shots" (p. 20). He also contrasted the preservation of real time via long takes and the slow unfolding of movement in neorealist films with Hollywood-style omniscient editing effects that made both time and space subject to overarching narrative structures and ideological imperatives. Neorealist techniques, along with the use of nonactors, represented an ethical stance on the part of filmmakers that was better able to reflect the harsh social realities of postwar Italy.

While American cinema *verité* proved an important precursor to observational cinema, the authors suggest that observational cinema is more closely linked to Italian neorealism, while the American films relied more on conventional narrative structures. Nevertheless, the authors' discussion of the work of three filmmakers most associated with the cinema *verité* moment, Hancock, Maysles, and Wiseman, is equally productive in terms of challenging the prevailing critique of their work as having to do with a naïve conception of engagement with reality. Instead, they carefully examine the ways in which these three filmmakers approach observation in very different ways, both in terms of formal techniques as well as intentions and aims in their filmmaking practice.

Grimshaw and Ravetz's book is a refreshing addition to their existing work on visual anthropology and ethnographic filmmaking. Most crucial is the way Grimshaw and Ravetz go beyond discussions within the subfield of visual anthropology to challenge broad paradigms in the discipline, provoking the reader to think about the nature of observation, the practice of ethnographic encounter, and the meaning of analysis.

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Marketing Dreams, Manufacturing Heroes: The Transnational Labor Brokering of Filipino Workers. *Anna Romina Guevarra*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2010. 251 pp.

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The Filipino migratory wave has been one of the most extensively studied phenomena in the migration literature, yet very few works have explored its "behind-the-curtain" mechanisms whereby state and private employment agencies, through their interdependent and contradicting relationships, socially produce and commodify Filipino workers. Guevarra's book on the labor-brokering process of these migrants, specifically nurses and domestic workers, fills this gap and contributes to our global understanding of the Filipino overseas migration. As a daughter of a Filipino migrant worker, Guevarra is well positioned to carry out her transnational ethnographic fieldwork in the Philippines and in the United States. Moreover, her research background as a sociologist feeds her critical analysis, resulting in a body of thought-provoking findings.

Guevarra structures her book in three parts, each of which focuses on one of the main social actors involved in the Filipino overseas migration: the Philippine state, the private sector, and the migrant workers. An introductory chapter sets the tone of the discussion by reflecting on the state's discourse of the Philippines as the "home of the great Filipino worker." This "social imaginary" (as the author puts it) does not simply result from the difficult economic condition of the country but also from a more complicated process of transnational labor brokering. The author builds on this argument throughout the book while taking into account the social and cultural logics of the Filipino labor migration.

The cultural logic behind labor-brokering process consists of two elements: the ethos of labor migration, and the gendered and racialized moral economy of Filipino migrants. The former became ingrained in the Filipino consciousness after a long period of Spanish (1565–1898) and American colonial administrations (1898–1945), particularly under the influence of the American agricultural and educational systems. On the one hand, the export-driven agricultural economy produced experienced farmers ready to fill the demand for agricultural workers in the United States. On the other hand, the school system and various educational institutions (e.g., nursing schools) modeled after that of the United States have been delivering "ideal" workers suited for the U.S. market. State initiatives and political discourses have also helped reproduce the Filipino

ethos of labor migration. These state actions, mostly intended to “empower” migrant workers, actually resulted in the construction of a “gendered and racialized moral economy” of Filipino migrants.

The Philippine state tries to empower its migrants through a labor diplomacy honoring them as “ambassadors of goodwill,” through seminars and training aimed at harnessing their skills, and through cultivation of a “culture of entrepreneurs” urging them to invest and retire in the country. There is also a particular focus on women migrants warning them of the “negative” effects of migration on their families and teaching them to be good mothers away from home (e.g., reasonable use of earnings through investments, efficient remittance sending). However, these state strategies make Filipino migrants accountable for their actions and free the state from its responsibilities. Drawing from Michel Foucault (1979), Guevarra interprets this as a form of “state discipline” and “control” that paradoxically “dis-empower” the very workers it intends to “empower.”

The second part of the book starts with a description of the unequal and contradictory relationships between the Philippine state and private labor-brokering agencies that consider each other both as “partners” and as “competitors.” The author then highlights the often-unrecognized role of the latter in the production of the “great Filipino workers,” and explains how these agencies market these workers’ “added export value.” Labor-brokering agencies serve simultaneously as “promoter” and “manager” of Filipino labor migration and market Filipino workers’ “added export value,” notably that of women: for instance, nurses are advertised as offering “tender loving care” and housemaids as being “obedient and overqualified.” They also go headhunting and condition applicants to be “docile,” “all-around workers” using a discourse centered on sacrificing for the family.

The last part of the book focuses on Filipino nurses in Texas and in Arizona. Here, the author examines their “professional consciousness” in relation to the “American dream” ideology. These nurses live in a Filipino residential enclave and enjoy the benefits of migration: increased buying power, acquired intellectual and practical skills, possibility to acquire U.S. citizenship, and improved social position in the Philippines. However, the author also highlights the challenges in the life of these workers: high family expectations, loneliness, and social constraints in their workplace. Contrary to the state and the labor-brokering agencies’ portrayal of Filipino migrant workers as the nation’s “heroes,” Filipino nurses rather see themselves as “rebels” to their country but “heroes” to their family. The final chapter of the book demonstrates the nurses’ agency: they internalize their “added export value” for their advantage, confront their vulnerabilities, and resist exploitative working conditions.

The book’s greatest achievement lies in its vivid descriptions and in-depth analysis of the state and private employment agencies’ brokering of Filipino workers, an area that had not previously been explored in detail. Written in an accessible way, the book demonstrates convincingly that Filipino labor migration goes beyond the logic of supply and demand and of push and pull but is, rather, governed by the dynamic gendered and racialized brokering of Filipino workers by the Philippine state and private employment agencies.

However, the author’s focus on the case of female migrants evokes some questions regarding male workers, whose voices are almost absent in this book. Readers will be wondering for instance how Filipino men nurses compare with their female counterparts not only in terms of their working experience, but also of the strategies and discourses they employ. The book also raises the question of how the labor-brokering process of Filipino seamen, who also constitute a big part of the annual outflow of Filipino labor migrants, differs from that of domestic workers and nurses. Guevarra’s book paves the way for such further research directions, and as such represents an illuminating sociological work and an interesting reference for students and scholars of labor migrations and Philippine studies.

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Becoming Europeans: Cultural Identity and Cultural Policies. *Monica Sassatelli*. London: Palgrave Macmillan, 2009. 233 pp.

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Monica Sassatelli’s book aims at contributing to the academic and institutional debate on “European cultural identity” through an empirical approach of two European-wide policies: the EU European City of Culture (ECOC) Programme, and the Council of Europe’s European Landscape Convention (ELC). But it also does much more than that because this empirically based analysis allows the author to formulate strong conclusions on the general issue of identity building, a central one for both academics and (European) citizens.

Sassatelli wanted to study narratives of European identity, but on the one hand within the local contexts where

they become part of the reality of European people rather than among “Euro-elites”; and on the other hand by considering them as symbolic policies, trying to shape new representations and narratives, and informing new social realities and identities. Her choice of ECOC and ELC is then particularly sound because it allows her to analyze how loose “European” frames are filled with contents at the local level (and how these levels interact, an essential point in Sassatelli’s analysis), and to include issues of territoriality and spatiality in her discussion of culture and identity.

Through interviews with participants and observation during a variety of events, meetings, and working groups organized in ECOCs and in different networks linked to ELC, Sassatelli analyses the discursive and practical field of these two policies, as well as the interpretations and uses they both enable and frame. And it is indeed one of the many qualities of this book, that considers European policies as as many narratives made available by European institutions, but in the construction of which “recipients” play an active role, and whose effects are not only tangible and direct but also have to be looked for in representations. In order to do so, the author, adopting an approach familiar to anthropologists, “takes seriously” the reports and working documents many observers tend to dismiss as empty (European) rhetoric or inconsistent (European) statements. Her interest is thus not to discuss their logical solidity but, rather, to sociologically explore why and how such rhetoric and statements are successful in spite of their looseness and level of generality, and how, where, and by whom they are appropriated, transformed, and filled with meanings and practices.

Becoming Europeans thus offers a refreshing departure from more classical analyses of “Europeanization,” or European identity and culture, by paying attention to the material and cultural conditions from which it emerges, instead of opting for a normative, abstracted, or purely institutional viewpoint.

In parts 2 and 3, respectively dedicated to the empirical analysis of ECOCs’ and ELCs’ working, Sassatelli clearly highlights the extent to which, for participants, “Europe” and Europeanness is found in the process of collaboration and exchange itself more than in any specific theme. Working together because it implies discussing meanings and representations, and reaching discursive solutions for differently thought of notions, indeed creates a sense of common belonging for those who participate in meetings, define programs and initiatives, and practically negotiate at the local level how these European cultural policies are implemented.

Thus, a “creeping Europeanization” would be emerging from below, through practices and networking (a networking that also provides resources for negotiation and recognition at the local and/or national levels), that endow

participants with a new sense of belonging. But one of the important contributions of Sassatelli’s book is also to be found in the demonstration she makes, that “becoming European” happens through processes that starkly differ from what has long been, and is still largely, the yardstick according to which belonging and identity have been measured, evaluated, and legitimated, that is, the national model. Her exploration of the discussions required to first elaborate the ELC and then connect a series of networks involved in landscape issues is here particularly revealing. Having to discuss the many different meanings and representations the very notion of “landscape” is endowed with in different disciplines, concerns, and societies, indeed exposes their partiality and allows for the built dimension of any (cultural) commonalities to be tested and lived.

To “become Europeans” is to build new understandings by resolving, always temporarily and contextually, discursive and practical challenges through collaboration, thus overcoming, and even making a resource of, cultural differences. Through such practical processes, culture and identity are experienced not as static objects but, rather, as built and moving processes; Sassatelli’s discussion of ECOCs also clearly shows the extent to which they were forums for discussing the very concept of culture.

Throughout the book and in her conclusions, the author then offers an original and important contribution to contemporary discussions of the challenges posed to classical approaches of issues of identity and culture by the emergence of new social, political, and cultural spaces of policy and agency. What her analysis shows is why Europeanization or Europeanness both needs, in order to be grasped in its actual dimensions, and empirically provides for, a renewed conception of culture and identity. According to Sassatelli, European discourse displaces binary (national) logics of identity and contributes to the emergence of a new style of imagining a cultural identity. While both “Europe” and the nation are imagined, naturalized, and made banal, they are made so differently because the first requires agents to reach a degree of explicitness and publicness the second lacks. *Becoming Europeans* exposes culture as a project and a cooperative construction and allows for less holistic and more overlapping forms of belonging.

While the reader may have wanted the author to give more examples of these practical exercises in cultural translations, or might feel less optimistic than Sassatelli when she doubts “European identity” requires an “external other,” it remains that Sassatelli’s book offers a welcomed and stimulating research that provides empirically based evidence that culture and identity can be conceived of and conceptualized in more fluid, processual, and contested ways than is still too often the case.

East African Hip Hop: Youth Culture and Globalization. Mwenda Ntarangwi. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2009. 155 pp.

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East African Hip Hop: Youth Culture and Globalization by Mwenda Ntarangwi examines the cultural, economic, and political presence of hip hop music in Kenya, Uganda, and Tanzania. For those in the ethnography, hip hop presents an opportunity to gain some semblance of representation for artists that allows them to enter economic and political process in ways that were previously unavailable. This is an acknowledgment of the influence and significance of hip hop that is keenly deployed by youth. In a similar way to other treatments of hip hop the author sees it as a tool by which youth rethink and redefine widely held notions of work, identity, gender, and nation. Ntarangwi notes that the fluid nature of identity and national borders is reified by the creation of hip hop music. In this instance, hip hop allows young artists to transcend national boundaries by collaborating with other performers from other East African countries, incorporating influences from reggae and local musics, traveling between countries, and rapping about issues that cut across borders. Here, notions of transnational alliances are apparent by examining parallel forms of marginalization that youth in a number of East African nations endure that become reflected in the content of the music. As such, hip hop artists create a type of regional East African hip hop bloc or community. The author's analytical framework around presenting hip hop as cultural flow represents a useful way to place hip hop in context while addressing the link that it has to youth culture and globalization within the region. Ntarangwi captures the way in which process and content related to the creation of the music present an opportunity for the development of identities and alliances that correspond less to nation and more to participation in hip hop.

The author effectively presents a view of globalization from the perspective of nonelites who occupy a precarious position in regard to larger social and economic policies related to neoliberalism. The author notes that East African hip hop artists are embedded in and impacted by larger processes related to globalization. As is the case in many places, youth disproportionately bare the brunt of wide-scale economic and social policy reforms that redistribute economic and political resources. The ethnography captures some of this in its discussion of the daily difficulties and challenges that youth face around economic security, political participation and representation, and public health awareness especially around HIV/AIDS. According to the author, hip hop represents a "forum through which East African youth, of-

ten left out of important socioeconomic and political commentaries and decision-making processes, attain agency that enables them to variably shape their lives and participate in raising public awareness and consciousness to social and political issues while also appropriating for their own economic and political gain" (p. 3).

East African Hip Hop provides a well-textured analysis of the impact of social and economic policy on young people. One of the strengths of the book lies in its ability to reflect the ways in which hip hop is used as a tool to create different material and political realities for young people. While Ntarangwi does a good job in presenting hip hop as vehicle for mobility, the book would have been strengthened by integrating additional ethnographic material related to the practice of hip hop in East Africa more pointedly. Hip hop is a complex set of behaviors, practices, and beliefs that are usually constituted differently depending on locale. As such, more ethnographic description and examination around what constitutes hip hop in East Africa would have been extremely useful in contextualizing the wider significance of the music to those who use it as their main point of cultural, political, and economic reference. In addition, an historical account of hip hop and how it came into being in the region would have also been helpful. This would allow readers to better ground the practice of hip hop in East Africa alongside local histories and global processes that bare large influence on the way in which hip hop is created, practiced, and disseminated.

In addition, the book appears to set up a dichotomy between genres of East African hip hop music that focus more so on social issues such as HIV/AIDS and political issues akin to addressing national politics in opposition to hip hop music that does not include social and political critique. The author could have unpacked these distinctions more as critique may or may not come in the forms of music that have been dubbed a "conscious" or socially and politically aware form of hip hop music. Such an analysis would extend the discussion to address what constitutes political in hip hop while exploring the increased potential of hip hop in East Africa and beyond to become more central to debates in fields such as public policy, for example.

In general, *East African Hip Hop: Youth Culture and Globalization* represents a useful discussion of how globalization is experienced and utilized by youth involved in hip hop. By focusing on youth, readers are able to gain a better understanding of the unique social and political dynamics that characterize life for those involved in hip hop in this region. For students, scholars, and researchers interested in the intersection of globalization and youth culture, the book will be of use especially given its regional and outer national focus. For those who are interested in hip hop more generally, the book is a point of entry into understanding the dynamics of hip hop and the wider hip hop community in

East Africa. Additional documentation and analysis of hip hop culture itself in East Africa, however, would have made this ethnography an even stronger contribution to regional and hip hop studies. In all, the ethnography generates additional questions in regard to the practices, beliefs, tensions, and history related to hip hop in East Africa as well as how these questions map onto debates related to globalization and youth culture more generally.

The Making of a Human Bomb: An Ethnography of Palestinian Resistance. Nasser Abufarha. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009. 277 pp.

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Since the mid-1990s the figure of the Palestinian suicide bomber has attracted enormous attention from the Western media, evoking visceral horror and public outrage. With suicide bombings popularly understood as irrational, illegitimate, and fueled by religious extremism, and in light of their mostly civilian death toll, any examination of strategic or symbolic motivation risks being perceived as an apologia. The result is a hermeneutic taboo surrounding the practice. Nasser Abufarha's *The Making of a Human Bomb*, which examines the significance of "martyrdom operations" for Palestinians, is therefore an important and timely contribution both to Palestinian ethnography and to the scholarship on suicide bombing. While stressing that the practice cannot be condoned, Abufarha argues that it represents not "a psychological pathology but rather a cultural expression of how violence is conceived and culturally understood . . . in the historic moment of its performance" (p. 224). Situating the ethnographic present in historical context, Abufarha examines the significance of martyrdom for Palestinians throughout their colonial encounter with Israel, arguing that its purpose is both strategic and performative, that it has a logic as well as a "poetics."

Abufarha begins by tracing Palestinians' deep-rooted attachments to the land, providing an engaging and informative overview of indigenous, pre-1948 systems of land ownership, land-acquisition by Jewish nationalists in the first decades of the 20th century, the traumatic expulsion of Palestinians in 1948, and the rise of Palestinian resistance to Zionism in the 1930s. Drawing primarily on textual sources (revolutionary songs, poems, political graffiti, political speeches, and chants) Abufarha notes that themes of rootedness, memory, and loss are frequently expressed through reference to land and body. The constitution of Palestinian culture and identity through such historical ties is central to Abufarha's claims about the "cultural poetics" of suicide bombing.

The introduction of martyrdom operations in 1994 was, in large part, an attempt by Hamas to derail the Oslo "peace" process, widely regarded as having provided cover for aggressive Israeli expansionism. With the collapse of the Oslo process in 2000 and the outbreak of the Al-Aqsa Intifada, martyrdom operations were popularized and secularized, as leftist organizations established new military wings. Abufarha argues that operations since reflect the strategic calculation that public fear would coerce the Israeli government to end the occupation. He suggests that their popularity is also aesthetic: they constitute both a "medium of mimetic practice to Israeli state violence" (p. 72) that establishes "a balance of fear" and a cultural performance that symbolically reverses territorial and social fragmentation through a poetics of sacrifice and rootedness. Abufarha argues convincingly that the cultural logic of martyrdom is not primarily or intrinsically religious, showing how suicide bombings have been fueled by competition between Palestinian factions, particularly between Islamic parties and the Palestinian Authority, and revealing contemporary martyrdom's roots in earlier conceptions of bodily sacrifice associated with the secular *fid'ayeen* fighters of 1960s and 1970s.

As the Israeli state has expanded, so has the ontological gap separating Palestinians living under occupation today from the communities of pre-1948 Palestine. Chapter 4 focuses on ethnographic accounts of life under occupation. Accelerated Israeli settlement construction, land confiscation, closures, roadblocks, checkpoints, and the wall have all intensified the confinement and paralysis of Palestinian communities. Abufarha argues that "this territorial fashioning of power on the landscape," is experienced at a visceral level, is indeed "perceived by Palestinians as tampering with their souls and bodies" (p. 114), creating a dual sense of exile and intensified rootedness. Martyrdom operations represent a "sacrifice that mediates issues of uprooting and rootedness, achieved through the physical and conceptual fusion of Palestinian lives in the land" (p. 120).

This last sentence exemplifies a problem that arises whenever Abufarha moves into the register of "cultural poetics": his analytical stance tends to blur and merge with the rhetoric of the poets, political spokesmen, and speechmakers he's discussing. Adjusting for differences of diction, how different is the formulation above from nationalist boilerplate about the blood of martyrs nourishing and renewing the land of Palestine? The Hamas official who tells a defiant crowd gathered after the assassination of Sheikh Ahmed Yassin in 2003 that "Martyrdom is a characteristic of our country and our people" (p. 131) seems to summarize one of the main arguments of the book (with a succinctness uncharacteristic, alas, of the author himself). One pauses to wonder here if this argumentative tack will challenge the Western understanding of Palestinian suicide bombing or

confirm it in its worst suspicions and biases; Zionist discourse has its own version of the claim that suicide bombing is an expression of Palestinian culture, a “culture of death.”

At any rate it is debatable whether what Abufarha offers is indeed a “cultural poetics of political violence” (p. 2), or rather merely a thematic account of its rhetoric. Cultural poetics privileges the anecdote, the chance encounter, the seemingly neutral document; it prefers, as it were, to ambush symbolic meaning where such meaning least expects to be found. Abufarha’s evidence, by contrast, comes from the political speeches, chants, poems, and performances that are consciously designed to assign symbolic meaning to martyrdom operations in the first place. At its most tautological, his methodology simply participates in an economy of nationalist symbolism it purports to examine.

The task of examining suicide bombing while navigating its fraught politics is admittedly daunting. Another difficulty is that its proper subjects are by definition no longer alive (while those preparing for martyrdom cannot be approached for ethical reasons). In the final section of the book Abufarha considers political and personal motivations in the life histories of three martyrs from the Jenin area. He discusses the symbolic value of martyrdom (“a form of living in death, a preferred form of living over the crippled present life”) and the conflicting emotions of loss and pride that martyrs’ families experience (p. 151). Abufarha argues that martyrdom operations move the conflict from the military sphere, in which Palestinians are disadvantaged, to the conceptual sphere of culture and history, in which Israeli legitimacy is challenged. Here again his analysis relies heavily on political tracts, hagiographic eulogies, and other literary and artistic representations—in which bodily sacrifice renews “the naturalized Palestine pre-boundaries and pre-occupation as a united landscape” (p. 164). He suggests that these acts are also defiantly addressed to a morally compromised global order that legitimizes Israeli colonial violence and demonizes Palestinian resistance.

The reader might emerge from this book unaware of the vigorous internal debates about the strategy, ethics, and, indeed, the symbolism of martyrdom and the targeting of civilians. One is left wondering why certain texts count as representative of the cultural logic of suicide bombing, while others—like “Petition of the 55,” which condemned the practice and generated considerable debate on its publication in 2002—do not. Also missing is an analysis of the other modes of civil resistance and nonviolent protest that continue to be central to Palestinian resistance, such as the weekly demonstrations in Bilin. Abufarha’s analysis would have been strengthened by examining martyrdom within this broader field of resistance and contestation.

In making the case for a collective cultural logic of martyrdom, Abufarha deemphasizes individual motivations

such as revenge and despair. Ironically, the source of the book’s richest ethnographic material—and its most powerful, unforgettable passages—is its author’s firsthand experiences living under occupation (Abufarha is a Palestinian from Jenin). Reading these extraordinary sequences, it is impossible not to imagine personal motivations for political violence, motivations perhaps having little to do with the “physical and conceptual fusion of Palestinian lives in the land” or making poppies grow with martyrs’ blood. Abufarha can hardly be blamed for this apparent disconnect between his strongest material and his analytical conclusions. It results from writing perhaps the most difficult kind of ethnography imaginable, one whose physical subject has vanished and been replaced by competing ideologies. Abufarha deserves credit for rising to this challenge and writing an insightful, passionately researched, and consistently provocative if analytically uneven book. He has broken new ground; may others join him in tilling it.

The Insecure American: How We Got Here and What We Should Do about It. *Hugh Gusterson* and *Catherine Besteman*, eds. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010. 371 pp.

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The Insecure American is an extraordinarily important book about the contemporary United States. It is a collection of articles about the many different ways in which American society has moved away from its ideals of justice, democracy, and humanity—however imperfectly and unevenly those ideals were applied and achieved in the past—under the regime of a neoliberal economy and under a political order that has been deeply infiltrated by the most conservative interests. The articles are of almost uniformly high quality, ranging from good to outstanding. Among other things they show very powerfully what anthropology can contribute—empirically and analytically—to the critical discourses of the present moment.

In a relatively brief and to-the-point introduction, the editors take us through the basics of the neoliberal economic order: the downsizing of corporations and the outsourcing of jobs, including white-collar jobs; the increase not only in unemployment but also in partial, temporary, and otherwise insecure employment; the retrenchment or elimination of benefits, both from the state and from private employers; and, thus, finally, the rapid erosion of the formerly robust middle class, leaving an increasingly bottom-heavy two-tier structure of haves and have-nots. The editors appropriately quote *Washington Post* columnist Harold Myerson as saying, “These are epochal shifts of epochal significance” (p. 5).

The majority of the articles show, one way or another, the negative impact of these massive changes on people's lives at different levels of the class structure. For the middle class, Setha Low's article on the rapidly growing phenomenon of gated communities shows the ways in which walls and gates both assuage and stoke the insecurities of an increasingly fragile middle class. Nancy Scheper-Hughes's article on the declining quality of care for the middle-class aged—in this case her parents in a nursing home—is inextricably tied to the institutional use of lowest-paid labor for their care. For the working class, Christine Walley provides an account of her father's devastation after losing his once seemingly secure job in the steel mills of southeast Chicago. Lee Baker and Peter Kwong separately explore the impact of burgeoning immigrant labor on the already unstable economic and racial dynamics of the American working class. And, finally, looking at what the editors call "the most vulnerable" at the very bottom of the class structure, Philippe Bourgois explores the impact of cost cutting in the medical system on homeless drug addicts, and T. M. Luhrman examines the ways in which mentally ill homeless women mobilize the great American value of independence (newly pumped up, one might note, under neoliberalism) to deal with the insecurities of life in the streets.

In all of the studies just noted, we see neoliberalism as a relatively abstract economic system. We see that it has serious human costs, but the authors do not seek to bring out the thinking of those who operate the system. In a number of other articles, however, we get a glimpse of what can only be called the twisted thinking of the neoliberal operator, for whom no one is too poor or too vulnerable that they cannot be squeezed for a profit. At the most benign end of these examples, Joseph Dumit looks at the ways in which people who market pharmaceuticals cheerfully inculcate an ever-proliferating set of anxieties about health into consumers, in the process undermining the very notion of the possibility of health and well-being. Juliet Schor writes about corporations that actively market unhealthy consumer goods to children; these corporations deflect the responsibility for protecting children onto the family and at the same time seek to undermine parental authority through their ads. Brett Williams writes about the predatory financial services that have become big business in poor neighborhoods that lack regular banks. Check-cashing services, payday loans, pawn shops, and the like are being bought up by large corporations and proliferating in "piranha-like" fashion, siphoning off the few pennies that poor people might otherwise keep for some personal need.

And, finally, in this group, there is Jane Collins's article on Wal-Mart. I did not think it was possible to learn anything worse about Wal-Mart than what I already knew. But Collins, drawing on a 2005 article by Liza Featherstone in *The Nation*, argues very persuasively that Wal-Mart's business strategy actually depends on people being and stay-

ing poor. She quotes Featherstone: "In a chilling reversal of Henry Ford's strategy, which was to pay his workers amply so they could buy Ford cars, Wal-Mart's stingy compensation policies contribute to an economy in which workers can only afford to shop at Wal-Mart" (p. 98). She also shows how Wal-Mart's massive position within the U.S. and global economy drives other businesses to adopt the same strategy, and "forge[s] a relationship between poverty and profits that is breathtaking in its implications for the economy as a whole" (p. 98).

There is one other group of articles that I would like to break out for discussion, which in one way or another attend to issues concerning the state in relation to the new economic order. The editors do not bring the question of the state into focus, but I do think it requires separate attention. All of the articles in this group tell more or less the same story: The democratically elected state, no matter how badly it may have functioned in the past, was at least in some ways answerable to an electorate. Under the regime of neoliberalism, however, the state is increasingly being undermined by the privatization of state functions and the formation of shadowy governing bodies of unelected technocrats.

David Graeber describes a "system of global governance" of this unelected and unaccountable nature, dedicated to the furtherance of neoliberal goals, that was largely in place by the 1990s. Catherine Lutz, writing of the domestic impact of massive U.S. militarization, points out the ways in which the military has increasingly operated outside of any democratically (and constitutionally) defined controls. Roger Lancaster writes of the explosion of the American prison population and the rise of the "carceral state," seeing this at the intersection of "a neoconservative political orientation and neoliberal economic policies." Susan Hirsch writes of the ways in which law in America has been increasingly subverted and deformed in relation to the prosecution of terrorism in the neoliberal era. And, lastly—and most chillingly, among the articles in this group—Janine Wedel writes about how shadow public-private networks of players she calls "flex nets" have come to play an enormous role in policy making in Washington. For example, she writes in very specific and telling detail about a group of neoconservatives who moved in and out of various highly placed (but unelected and unaccountable) government positions in pursuit of, among other things, the launching of the war in Iraq.

If this book has one flaw, it is that it is too devastating. Reading it from cover to cover, one really wants to throw in the towel and move to Canada. We needed to hear more about the resistances, the alternatives, the possibilities for a better future. Surely they are out there. David Graeber writes a bit at the end of his article about the antiglobalization movement, which is of course very important, but the mention is too little, too late. The only article with a ray of

hope comes at the very end of the book, as Susan Harding writes about dissident evangelical Christians: gay evangelicals, green evangelicals, and something called the “emerging church movement,” which distances itself from, among other things, right-wing politics.

In sum, everybody needs to read and assign this book. But then everybody also needs to read, assign, and—more importantly—do something on the other side of the ledger.

The Edge of Islam: Power, Personhood, and Ethnoreligious Boundaries on the Kenya Coast. Janet McIntosh. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2009. 325 pp.

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Themes of ethnic identity politics and notions of belonging have long been prevalent in the ethnographic literature. Over the past few decades, anthropologists and historians have come to question the idea that ethnicities, in Africa and across the world, are as sharply divided as colonial rule has construed them to be. Despite this by now commonplace in the study of ethnicity, the deep-seated links between ethnic identity and religious affiliation have received less attention. Along similar lines, while many anthropologists have illustrated that Islamic practice in Africa is both heterogeneous and locally contested, less explored are the ways Islam is (re)negotiated between ethnic groups. Based on theoretically informed and empirically grounded research, Janet McIntosh's monograph sketches with historical depth an account of the current ethnoreligious tensions in the multiethnic, multireligious Kenyan town of Malindi. Of old, this commercial center on the East African coast is inhabited by the Arabo-African Swahili and nine closely related ethnic groups known as Mijikenda, of whom Giriama are the largest and most predominant in the Malindi area.

As the title *The Edge of Islam* suggests, many Giriama live on the geographic and economic margins of areas dominated by Swahili in the core of Malindi and maintain an ambiguous relationship with Islam, which reinforces the widespread idea that Giriama and Swahili are distinct categories and that Islam belongs more to Swahili than to Giriama. Although the data presented in chapter 1 illustrate a history of interdependence between Swahili and Giriama (through patron-client and trade relationships, and intermarriage), in the contemporary context of Malindi there is a clear insistence on their social differentiation, a differentiation that is laced with economic inequality (ch. 2). Here it should be noted that while many Swahili enjoy clear socioeconomic advantages relative to most Giriama, they both feel subjugated by an upcountry-dominated (Kikuya and Luo), predominantly Christian administration—a situation explained by the political history of East Africa.

The central question in the monograph is: Why do many Giriama identify a supposedly universal religion, Islam, as belonging more deeply to a certain ethnic group than to others? To respond to this question, the author considers both Giriama views of Swahili and Swahili views of Giriama in the town of Malindi, exploring macrohistorical and economic forces, including colonialism and capitalism, and micro matters of discourse and religious practice that have given hegemonic weight to the ethnoreligious divisions described in the book. Central to McIntosh's investigation of these divisions are the concepts of “hegemony” and “personhood.” The concept of “hegemony” captures well the way Giriama habitually defer to Swahili status and Islam's power in the Malindi area. Giriama and Swahili enact different, often oppositional kinds of personhood, differences that make themselves known in economic practices and that are ritually expressed in the realms of conversion practices, spirit possession, divination, and linguistic code-switching. Although the focus on personhood helps in understanding the differences in Giriama and Swahili modes of religious experience, a point of critique is that McIntosh interprets “person” as an ungendered, ageless category, not paying attention to the differences in how Giriama and Swahili men and women, elders and youths, view each other's discourses and practices.

Although Giriama view Islam as a religion belonging to Swahili, the former frequently use Islam in their rituals (ch. 4). The author explains this somewhat paradoxical situation by arguing that many Giriama model Islam in a way that pushes inner states such as belief and intention to the background, while focusing instead on pragmatic outcomes. In other words, Giriama who profess Christianity and African traditional religion can interact with Islam to appropriate its perceived power without necessarily “believing” in it. This explains why in healing rituals, Giriama traditional practitioners address Muslim powers in Arabic rather than in their own Kigiriama language, assuming that Arabic is a source of exceptional mystical potency. Giriama's ritual practices that draw on mystical sources from different religious traditions and involve linguistic code-switching, in turn reinforce a hegemonic ethnoreligious divide whereby Swahili view Giriama not as “proper” Muslims and the latter experience Islam as a domineering and alien power. This ambivalence between aspiring to partake of Islam and experiencing it as Other sometimes culminates in cases of madness among Giriama allegedly overtaken by Muslim spirits that speak (spirit versions of) Arabic (ch. 5).

A danger that lurks in any study of ethnicity is that stereotypes become essentialized and ethnoreligious boundaries reified. Although the author selected her fieldwork residence (neither in a Giriama community nor in a Swahili community) in such a way that she could remain “neutral” in the matter of Giriama and Swahili disputes, she

pays more attention to Giriama than Swahili understandings of religion. For example, chapter 2 focuses on the stories of money-gathering and bloodsucking Muslim *jini* spirits who fly to Arabia and bring back riches to their Swahili masters narrated by Giriama to explain economic discrepancies in Malindi. Similarly, chapter 3 takes Giriama spirit possession experiences that compel them to convert to Islam as its starting point. Seemingly aware of this bias, on page 75 McIntosh states “It is the Giriama point of view that most concerns me, because their perspective on Swahili ethnicity as compelling yet Other is intimately bound up with their perspective on Islam.” An unintended consequence of this biased portrayal of ethnoreligious boundaries between Giriama and Swahili is that it reinforces the image of a marginalized and “helpless” (p. 100) group that finds itself in “an impossible situation” (p. 169), “peering in at a life of greater privilege and sometimes cognizant that they are on the brink of access but not quite able to break through” (p. 8).

Despite this pitfall, *The Edge of Islam* provides a vivid case study that helps to understand the powers of ethnicity and socioeconomic inequality in the shaping of religious practice. The politically driven ethnic violence that tragically divided Kenya in the wake of the 2007 presidential elections (epilogue), demonstrates the importance of a better insight into these powers.

War and Shadows: The Haunting of Vietnam. *Mai Lan Gustafsson*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2009. 206 pp.

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The thin line between the living and the dead is very thin. Mai Lan Gustafsson tells us in the first words of her preface that this is a book about the effects of the Viet Nam war on both this world and the next. It is a book about people who know that to become well, they have to lay to rest the ghosts of war, ghosts that are not like the American ghosts of Viet Nam that the first President Bush tried to lay to rest with the Gulf War—and, yet, not entirely different, either.

How can we address these ghosts and speak of that past and its ongoing consequences in a way that makes us recognizable to each other in the present as human beings, acknowledging the war without perpetuating its fears and hatreds? Gustafsson chooses stories, stories told by Vietnamese today who are beset by the ghosts of people who died unnatural deaths during the war. The book traces their search for a double resolution: one that eases their own present sufferings by releasing the ghosts of war from their rage.

There are many such stories. There is the story of her vivacious, savvy, entrepreneurial friend who claws at herself unmercifully, drawing blood, when her dead brother is displeased. There are the stories told by three friends who walked together down the Ho Chi Minh trail who attribute their various malaises—recurring nightmares, rashes, and listlessness—to a fourth friend who died of an injury on the trail. There is the retired professor who stayed in the North, cutting off all contact with his Catholic parents and siblings who went south in 1954, and who now suffers from searing pain, lightheadedness, and a male voice shrieking “Anh!” (“older brother”). There is the woman honored by the state as a “Heroic Mother” for the loss of her three children in war, who dreams of those children, who turn from flesh and blood to skeletons in her nightmares, eating and drinking the food she prepares for them. Waking in tears, she is beset by visions of blood and death until the nightmare recurs and the cycle begins again.

And there is the American veteran, now married to a Vietnamese woman and living in Hanoi, who in his sleep unleashes angry invective-laced tirades in a Vietnamese that is far beyond his waking proficiency in the language. “Give it to me,” he screams, “Motherfucker you give it to me or I will eat your mother’s soul.” His symptoms stop when he locates the mother of a dead Vietnamese soldier whose identity card he has kept since the war, returns the card, and makes an offering at their family altar.

These are but a few of the stories Gustafsson shares from the nearly 200 interviews she schematizes in the appendix, listing symptoms, diagnoses, treatments, and results. Each story adds descriptive detail to our understanding of the war as it was lived, and to connections between the living and the dead today.

In between the stories Gustafsson differentiates ancestors from ghosts; helps us understand that offerings made to ancestors are a matter of respect, not religion; discusses a variety of healers and mediums; relates the world of suffering, ghosts, and mediums to state power and social change; and gives us an introduction to spirit possession by offering examples from the stories she has collected for the 11 symptoms commonly associated with possession in the 74 percent of cultures where spirit possession is found.

One thing Gustafsson does not do—insists on not doing—is to tell these stories in some other language than the one the people who have told her their stories would recognize. She refuses academic language, refuses to theorize, refuses to propose “what’s really going on.” What is important to her, she says, is the fact of the suffering she encountered, and how it was managed. To tell the stories in other terms, she says, “would denigrate their years of suffering, give lie to what I witnessed, and imply that they were not sound of mind” (p. x).

In a section of her conclusion subtitled “Data,” Gustafsson talks about the 190 people (not including mediums)

in her sample and both gives and shows the inadequacy of standard social science categories: 49 percent female, 51 percent male; 58 percent from Hanoi or other northern cities, 42 percent rural areas of the north; age, income, education, religion, history of disease, marital status—all disparate. She ends her section on data by giving statistics that cut across all categories, statistics from the war: 5.1 million dead (civilians on all sides and military), 300,000 missing; 40,000 mothers who lost at least 3 children; 20 million gallons of Agent Orange and other toxic defoliants sprayed; 8 million tons of ordnance dropped, at least 350,000 tons of which remain buried; a minimum of 10 million refugees; 250,000 deaths of people trying to escape by boat; and 40,000 killed and another 64,000 injured by landmines and unexploded ordnance since the war's end in 1975.

This is not the book Gustafsson went to Viet Nam to write. There was already too much written on the war, she thought. She wanted to do something different, something about *life* (her emphasis) in postwar Viet Nam. She was not alone. Many of the scholars in the early days of the Vietnam Studies Group resolutely focused on “the country, not the war” both as an antidote to the opposite tendency in the general American population, and because “the country” was so fascinating. Yet Gustafsson, like some of those scholars as well, slowly came to realize that “to dismiss [the war’s] impact . . . is to denigrate the past and present experience of the Vietnamese people” (p. xi). It is to fail to understand the present.

There are always things one wishes an author would have taken up, or taken up differently. For example, as Gustafsson reflects on why these stories appear to have intensified at a time when prosperity was increasing, I think of Vietnamese friends who would, in hushed and sometimes anguished tones, muse about what it was all for, then—all the suffering, if the country was to let go of the vision of equality that so many had died for. Unsettling ghosts indeed. And while I wish that her comments on the role of the state were as insightful as much of the rest of her work, Gustafsson is addressing her questions, not mine, and I remain grateful to her for opening up a space for students to engage stories often heard in Vietnam about the thin line between the living and the dead.

The Invention of the Jewish Gaucho: Villa Clara and the Construction of Argentine Identity. *Judith Noemí Freidenberg.* Austin: University of Texas Press, 2009. 184 pp.

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The Invention of the Jewish Gaucho draws on life histories, archives, material culture, and performances of heritage to

enhance the memories of a singular population. Encouraged by Argentine governments that wanted to “civilize” rural areas of the country, and financed by Baron Maurice de Hirsch, the Jewish Colonialization Association had placed hundreds of Jews in settlements in Entre Ríos by the end of the 19th century. Concerned about ever increasing anti-Semitism, de Hirsch thought that Argentina could become a new homeland to them. These immigrants began settling on small farms in the north-eastern Argentine province of Entre Ríos at the end of the 19th century, mimicking the lifestyle of the cowboy-farmhands who lived in their area of the pampas. Freidenberg extensively quotes the Russian-born journalist Alberto Gerchunoff, who coined the term *Jewish gaucho* in his book of short stories, *Los gauchos judios* in 1910 (13).

This very accessible and well-researched study of a fascinating aspect of Argentine history was initiated after the author and her mother, a descendent of those Jewish gauchos, visited Villa Clara, a small village in the Entre Ríos province, “a recent addition to Argentine cultural tourism” (p. xiii) as Freidenberg puts it. The principal settlement was Colonia Clara, but by 1902, when the railroad set up a station there, some farmers moved closer to the station—some abandoning their farms, others working them part time or leasing them—and formed the village of Villa Clara. As there is not much material evidence of these immigrants left, Freidenberg therefore focuses on memories of the residents, immersing herself in their daily lives, to account for the historical development of the village within the larger context of 19th-century immigration in Argentina. She uses both written and oral sources and advocates the inclusion of ethnography to create a more diverse and inclusive social history. Chapter 1 traces Argentine ideologies of immigration policies, which Freidenberg correctly sees as a succession of liberal and nationalist periods. The second chapter focuses on the actual implementation of these policies at a provincial level in Entre Ríos from 1850 to 1892, when the last sizeable influx of Eastern European immigrants arrived. Chapter 3 concentrates on an agricultural colony close to Villa Clara, founded in 1892 by the Jewish Colonialization Association in 1892. In chapter 4, Freidenberg sketches the impact of the arrival of the British-owned railroad, which caused a significant economic improvement of the area that ended with its nationalization in 1947. Chapter 5 traces demographic changes as immigrants’ descendants transformed into ethnic groups and migrated to the cities, mainly Buenos Aires. Chapter 6 discusses the closing of the railway system in 1994 and the transformation of Villa Clara from “a producer of goods” to a “producer of heritage” (p. xvii). The official version of the village’s history, chosen for public presentation and passed on through the educational system and disseminated by the writers of history is, Freidenberg finds, occasionally quite different from that of the inhabitants and descendants themselves.

The Invention of the Jewish Gaucho will appeal to students and scholars of Latin American history and culture as well as to all interested in the Jewish Diaspora.

Islamism and Democracy in India: The Transformation of Jama'at-e-Islami. *Irfan Ahmed.* Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2009. xx + 306 pp.

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Syed Abul ala Maududi ranks among the most influential Islamist ideologues of the 20th century. His ideas were forged in the mid-20th-century struggle for Indian independence. But, within this context, he focused less on the relationship between minority Muslims and majority Hindus than on competing views within the Muslim community itself. In particular, he opposed both the All-India Muslim League, which pressed for a secular, democratic, Muslim-majority Pakistan, and the Jamiatul Ulema-e-Hind (based in Deoband), which supported the Indian National Congress and its vision of a secular, democratic, multireligious India. Maududi argued that both groups failed to appreciate the necessity, for Muslims, of a fully “Islamic” state. This state, Maududi argued, should be led by a single “vanguard” party—the Party of Islam or the Jamaat-e-Islami. And, after the independence of India in 1947, Maududi moved to Pakistan to advance his largely authoritarian views.

The development of the Jamaat-e-Islami in Pakistan—including the relationship between its authoritarian ideology and its evolving political pragmatism—has been examined by others (e.g., Sayyed Vali Reza Nasr). But, in this new book, Irfan Ahmed takes up a new set of questions. What happened to the Jamaat in India? How did the practice of democracy affect the strongly hierarchical Jamaat? How did the practice of secularism affect the lives of India’s Muslims?

Relying on a brilliant combination of microlevel ethnography and macrolevel Indian history firmly grounded in a study of Jamaat-affiliated madrasas, schools, and student organizations in and around the Aligarh Muslim University in Uttar Pradesh (North India), Ahmed demonstrates that Indian secular democracy has had a profound effect—indeed a “transformative” effect—on the politics of the Indian Jamaat. This effect did not proceed from above (e.g., via specific laws issued by the Indian state). Instead it proceeded from below (via mass-based Muslim “demands”).

According to Ahmed, Indian Muslims embraced the practice of democracy (e.g., democratic elections) and, faced with political irrelevancy, the Jamaat was forced to

respond. Indian Muslims embraced the notion of secularism (given its recognition of minority religious rights). And, again, the Jamaat was compelled to respond. Indeed, when Indian Muslims identified a clear link between high-quality education and gainful employment, the Jamaat duly reversed its rejection of the model provided by India’s Aligarh Muslim University and urged its members to apply. In fact, like Maududi, who rejected the Pakistan Movement before emigrating to Pakistan, Ahmed argues that India’s Jamaat was transformed from a party that rejected democratic elections and secular government into an active participant in elections and an ardent defender of India’s secular constitution.

Drawing on scores of interviews with members of the Jamaat across North India, Ahmed moves beyond the notion that “Islamist” politics are determined by “Islamic” texts. In fact he goes out of his way to illuminate the ways in which common texts frame divergent religious and political views: non-Jamaat versus Jamaat views, divergent views within the Jamaat, and so on. For Ahmed, what defines the politics of Indian Muslims is not “text” but “context.” Islamism, Ahmed explains, is “accountable.”

Even as the Jamaat drew closer to the terms of secular democracy, however, Ahmed goes on to describe a group of what might be described as refuseniks (in this case, an offshoot of the Jamaat known as the Students Islamic Movement of India or SIMI). This, too, amounts to a valuable contribution—not only because it unpacks familiar debates unfolding within “moderating” authoritarian parties (parties like the Jamaat or the Communist Party of India) but also because it fills a gap in our understanding of the dynamics surrounding specific refusenik movements (movements like SIMI or the Naxalites).

Ahmed does not fall back on the facile notion that SIMI refuseniks preserved the “core” ideology of the Jamaat (rejecting electoral participation, secularism, etc.). Instead he offers a carefully historicized account of the ways in which specific debates within the Jamaat were shaped by larger trends within Indian democracy itself—in particular, the emergence of the Sangh Parivar and the expanding influence of anti-Muslim “Hindutva” ideologies during the 1980s and 1990s. In fact, just as Indian democracy had a “moderating” effect on Muslims (and, ultimately, the Jamaat), Ahmed argues, Indian democracy also opened up new spaces for the revisionist forces of Hindutva. And, in due course, Ahmed explains, these forces inspired the “radical” rhetoric of refusenik movements like SIMI.

Where Indian democracy was “open” and “pluralistic” (e.g., under the Congress Party), in other words, it had a “moderating” effect. Where it was “narrow” and “exclusionary” (e.g., under the Bharatiya Janata Party or BJP), its effect was largely “radicalizing.”

As an explanation for the Janus-faced trajectory of a changing Jamaat during the latter half of the 20th century,

this argument is very helpful. But, along the way, Ahmed argues that both of these two faces (the “moderating” and the “radicalizing”) amount to “democratizing” faces within the Indian Jamaat. In fact, Ahmed argues that, within the Jamaat, the presence of internal “disagreement,” on its own, points to the existence of an internal “civil society” and, thus, “democracy.” But, in many ways, this is unconvincing. Indeed the disagreements that Ahmed associates with SIMI are, in many ways, zero-sum debates that leave little if any room for compromise. They are, if you will, the “intra-Islamist” analogue of the fiercely exclusionary posture adopted by the Sangh Parivar. They are, in other words, reform minded only insofar as they define *reform* as radical assimilation or separation. *Partition* becomes the paradigmatic example of (internal?) “democratizing” reform.

This argument is ineffective. But, again, this argument is just one small piece of an otherwise illuminating book. Spanning a familiar account of Maududi’s philosophy, a careful study of Muslim demands in the context of a modern Muslim education, a nuanced account of Jamaati diversity within India’s most important Muslim university, and a detailed study of “intra-Islamist” debates within a prominent Jamaati madrasa (the Jamiatul Falah madrasa in District Azamgarh), this book amounts to a key resource for those with an interest in Muslim minorities, Islamist politics, and the practice of democracy today. I was not persuaded by Ahmed’s theorization of “democracy” and I found the book’s numerous misspellings and its occasional failure to translate Urdu words and phrases disappointing. But, as a contribution to the literature on Islamism, secularism, and democracy, this book stands out as a fascinating political ethnography—one that, in my view, should be widely read.

The Dream Fields of Florida: Mexican Farmworkers and the Myth of Belonging. *Ella Schmidt*. Lanham, MD: Lexington Books, 2009. xxvii + 127 pp.

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In her study regarding agriculture, Schmidt treats a currently headlining subject of the anthropology of work and industry while delving into a central interest of our discipline, the social and political dynamics of cultural identities. For many Mexican immigrants in Florida (and elsewhere), the reality of racism, exploitation, and fear of deportation counters their dream of U.S. residence and eventual citizenship. A thread running throughout the book is examination of a core U.S. tradition, the politics of exclusion. Construction of identity, including self-esteem, does

not occur in a vacuum: it occurs in a sociocultural milieu having structures that both constrain and allow potential action and achievement.

A focal point of U.S. identity for undocumented or illegal immigrants is having a social security account. Without this numerical ID, substantial employment and attending college are difficult to attain. Growing up speaking English in U.S. K–12 schools could mean one cannot return to Mexico for employment because of insufficient skills in Spanish. Here, politically, we create people caught outside of their two societies of enculturation. Some, however, immigrated at an early age and have little enculturation other than as Americans.

As with other impoverished residents of the United States, hard work and obeying the rules of the job often do not reward. Fragmented attendance does not allow the U.S.-born children of the immigrants to benefit fully from public education or to become the model citizens ideally educated by society. Conflicts of children’s familial circumstances with the system of education can prevent them from graduating and becoming normative Americans. Our hoary maxim of individual responsibility for actions drowns in a sea of containment, suppression, and control focused on individual behavior, ignoring the sociocultural milieu in which people exist.

In the first half of the 20th century, Anglos saw Mexican migrants as economically useful, that is, as pliable, hard workers willing to take low-paying jobs while obedient to authority. Yet the Anglos suppressed and oppressed these members of a pool of cheap labor existing in a sociocultural space apart from that of the American dream. White Americans can choose whether to be “ethnic.” They display an ethnic label given a context or stimulus. (“Kiss me, I’m Irish.”) Nonwhite Americans display a fixed ethnicity in the color of their skin and, thus, as being one of “the other,” not fully belonging, one of “you people.” They are denied entrance to U.S. exceptionalism and its “[shining] city set upon a hill.”

Class, color, and ethnicity are not just concepts of social science but also label palpable forces channeling the course of a person’s socioeconomic life. The three classifiers condition everyday social negotiations for “the others,” struggling against stereotypical discrimination felt by them to be inaccurate and unfair. A broad U.S. fiction of classlessness or at least a nearly all-encompassing middle class thwarts our reflecting in a structural manner on social differences and inequality. The great illusion in the United States, created in part by the schools, is that the individual is solely responsible for his or her own socioeconomic achievement and consequent statuses and roles. Teachers instruct no one to go inherit a department store, factory, or family wealth.

The founding fathers defined “We the people” ambiguously: in their time, it did not include nonwhites, women, or even white men without property. *We* does not mean *all*.

The current U.S. regard for and treatment of Mexican migrants and Latinos, then, accords with traditional core precepts of the United States, perhaps a foundational essence of the republic.

As part of the U.S. charter mythology, we celebrate Anglo Jamestown and Plymouth while we disregard the settlements of the Nuevo Mexicanos (Hispanos), Texanos, and Californios. How does one define *illegal immigrant*, from what selection of information by whom? Charter defining, after all, is a fundament of U.S. exceptionalism, which alleges liberty and all hard-laboring immigrants can rise to the top.

Schmidt's chapter 1 concerns public space, including the official accounts and histories of such space. Interestingly, during World War II, foreign farmworkers in Florida included POWs from Field Marshal Rommel's Afrika Korps. Not barbed wire concentration camps but socially bounded, dilapidated neighborhoods reinforce the current status of Mexican farmworkers. Chapter 2 provides an overview of Florida's rural, agricultural history. Not only was a black slave but also a good Seminole was a dead one or one driven out of Florida. Race and ethnicity became central in developing views concerning farmworkers. Chapter 3 explores global economic pressures and their connections with identity, community, and migration. In modern societies, most social relations have roots in the political economy, despite patriotic, religious, or other idealistic camouflage.

Chapter 4 deals with the tragedy of immigrant children's schooling, a potentially vital force of enculturation structurally unresponsive to their needs. Often placed in, thus segregated, special education classes and defined through a lens of marginality, the children have difficulty melting into the pot of model Americanism. For these children, public education closes its customary gate of entrance into the mainstream. Chapter 5 examines the farmworkers' views on their place in U.S. society. Their positions can be vulnerable because of limited skills in English and related imposition of ethnic boundaries. Chapter 6 visits the immigrants' classification of themselves. Redefinitions of the immigrant self include who is legitimate and documented and who is not. Their discourse on legality of status reflects inequalities and class distinctions among the farmworkers.

Beyond the informing ethnography of the graphic plight of the Mexican farmworkers of Florida, Schmidt uses intertwining analytic concepts explaining the Anglos' beliefs that Mexican immigrants are largely inassimilable and the immigrants' reactions to these. Thereby, she contributes penetratingly to the ethnology of ethnicity, assimilation, and nationalism. To attempt acceptance, identity is a negotiation that the immigrant must reformulate, in answering, "What kind of a *foreigner* are you?" A worker at any job available might be one response. Schmidt's book reaches its goals of developing theory buttressed by description to explain the position of the Mexican migrants varyingly stuck

between two worlds. This monograph will inform politicians and policy makers for their comprehension of a hard-working, misunderstood people building the United States.

Suspended Apocalypse: White Supremacy, Genocide, and the Filipino Condition. Dylan Rodríguez. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010. 258 pp.

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In *Suspended Apocalypse*, Dylan Rodríguez provides a compelling, critical assessment of the rise in U.S. public and academic discourse on Filipinos since the early 1990s. Although mainstream scholarly interest on this U.S. ethnic group often has focused on isolated, demographic characteristics, like being the second-largest immigrant group in the United States, Rodríguez builds on a more recent interdisciplinary body of scholarship that has illuminated the formative role of the Philippines' intimate historical relationship with the United States as its only former formal colony in Asia (1899–1946). However, Rodríguez takes this one step further by exploring the (in)capacity of mainstream U.S. discourse on Filipinos—called "Filipino Americanism"—to adequately address how the violent encounter of the decade-long Philippine–American War and its aftermath continues to haunt the Filipino experience. That is, Rodríguez contends that in Filipino Americanism's efforts for civil recognition, it has embraced a romantic narrative of immigration, settlement, and ultimate "American" redemption, and the ritualistic performance of this moral allegiance, which Rodríguez cleverly calls "Filipino American communion," has foregone concerted confrontation not only with "race" as a structure of global–social organization but, more specifically and provocatively, "genocide" as the central racial logic of the Filipino condition.

The first half of the book elucidates the elaborate "architecture" that structures and enables Filipino Americanism. Drawing from a range of academic texts as well as publications from the popular newspaper *Philippine News*, Rodríguez extends Antonio Gramsci's concept of "common sense" and the analytical frameworks of British cultural studies to offer incisive readings of how Filipino Americanism is a political–cultural labor intensively performed and reperformed. For example, Rodríguez offers an enthralling analysis of the "moral drama" created by *Philippine News* in its interplay of celebratory images of beauty pageant winners and honors students alongside disapproving reports of criminalized Filipino youth. Illustrating the valorization of the former as appropriate, legitimate, and empowering and the denigration of the latter as embarrassing, illicit,

and regressive, Rodríguez exposes the “rejected underside” of the efforts by the *Philippine News* to present an upstanding Filipino American citizenry (p. 83). Ultimately, according to Rodríguez, these political qua discursive efforts proffer a deleterious outcome, what he calls “arrested raciality,” which “displaces, exoticizes, and/or postpones” a willingness or even capacity to conceptualize “race” as a central structure of subject formation and social organization (p. 88). The rest of the book uncovers the racialized conditions arrested raciality displaces and its varied manifestations.

Although in recent years there has been a growing scholarly and public recognition of the “genocidal” nature of U.S. military tactics during the Philippine–American War, Rodríguez builds on emerging work in the field of “critical genocide studies” to conceptualize genocide as an “archive,” a genealogical approach that does not confine genocide to an “historically contained episode” but, rather, expands it to an “epochal social logic” (p. 148). Rodríguez argues that this logic, what he calls “categorical death,” has structured modernist projects, like nation-building, that although often touted as heroic pursuits in the name of “life” (e.g., “civilization,” “freedom”) require multiple productions of “death,” in the case of Filipinos, both empirically (e.g., high death counts) and ontologically, as signifiers of U.S. “benevolent” conquest. As such, Rodríguez’s accompanying analysis of an array of congressional testimonies and newspaper articles from the time of the war refrains from solely an exposition of the number and nature of Filipino deaths and, rather, focuses the reader’s attention on the logics of “political rationality,” “military necessity,” and “historical inevitability” that enabled them.

Yet, amid this “epochal social logic,” how have some Filipino subjectivities since “lived” and even thrived? Rodríguez contends through a specific manifestation of arrested raciality: “suspended apocalypse,” the “existential and analytical *postponement* of the genocidal encounter with the United States” (p. 160). Extending Frantz Fanon’s notion of “national bourgeoisie,” Rodríguez maps how, similar to the “petite bourgeoisie” behind Filipino Americanism, a “Philippine national bourgeoisie” has repeatedly performed a global–moral allegiance to “America”—one exemplified in continued U.S.–Philippine military coalitions—that perpetually suspends confrontation with the apocalyptic U.S. encounter and genocide, more generally, as the “Filipino–American” relation’s “essential condition of possibility” (p. 160).

Concluding that traditional Asian American rubrics remain insufficient in adequately addressing the specificities brought with formal U.S. colonialism in the Philippines, Rodríguez offers a “different paradigm of identification.” Through the juxtaposition of the “natural” disasters of Hurricane Katrina and the 1991 eruption

of Mt. Pinatubo in the Philippines, Rodríguez critically compares the groups disproportionately affected by the disasters: African Americans and Philippine indigenous populations, particularly the Aetas. Drawing striking parallels between the (non)responses of the U.S. and Philippine states, Rodríguez illustrates a shared black and indigenous proximity to “death,” a position that not only facilitated their occupation of spaces most harshly affected but also ultimately absolved these events of human responsibility in the public eye, hence, their continued designation as “natural.” In his black–Filipino comparison, Rodríguez importantly avoids the frequent pitfalls of cross-racial comparison, particularly of black–nonblack relations, for he is keenly attentive to the different racial logics that have shaped the two groups’ experiences (e.g., slavery vs. genocide) and equally weary of lapsing into a—aptly worded—“compensatory Filipino negrophilia” (p. 213).

Suspended Apocalypse is not for the theoretically faint of heart. For some, the book’s most challenging ideas may require more than one reading to grasp. Additionally, for many, the book will not be an exemplar of the most empirically rigorous research. However, Rodríguez stresses—several times—that he is less interested in an exhaustive “inventory” of the “empirical content” of the material he analyzes than in elucidating the political “stakes” and underlying social and cultural “logics” that inform them. Thus, along these lines, *Suspended Apocalypse* offers an analytically sharp and theoretically robust argument that surely will be of use for scholars of American and critical race studies and is a definite must read for any honest, scholarly attempt to understand the contemporary Filipino experience, both in the Philippines and its diaspora.

The Encounter Never Ends: A Return to the Field of Tamil Rituals. *Isabelle Clark-Deces.* Albany: State University of New York Press, 2007. x + 146 pp., notes, bibliography, index.

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Revisiting the field and undoing the previous field work is not a new phenomenon in the ritual studies of South Asia. What Clark-Deces tries to do in this work is to make us conscious about the previous field materials that continue to haunt us. An ethnographer has much to learn from the field as Clark-Deces does in a Tamil ritual of “the killing the worst person.” Rereading the field notes after several years, Clark-Deces opens her eye to a new reality in her book *The Encounter Never Ends*. Each chapter of this work reveals that, for an ethnographer, the field is an endlessly eye-opening space, even the field notes that require us to contest our

own takes. “It was like looking at an old photograph of one’s self,” says Clark-Deces. Prior to that intriguing statement, she had also described the distance between her old field notes and the new experience of rereading them. Her revisitations of the field notes carry an intense reflection that enriches the analysis of the field. The term *reflexivity* remains the keyword throughout this work. Undoubtedly, this approach has provided the field of ethnography a new lens to think through the practices of ethnography. More recently, this reflexive turn further began to expose more gaps and absences in the field research. Although this aspect of reflexivity is not a new mode of anthropological practice, new ethnographers are now more intimate with their field.

In this book, Clark-Deces returns to her 14-month fieldwork in a village called Somatur (pseudonym) located in Tamil Nadu in the early 1990s. When she unpacked these field notes in December 2003, according to her, they “projected an aura of mystery” (p. 3). These notebooks made her reflexive as they began to unravel that aura of mystery and the result is this book. Reflecting on multiple gaps and absences in her fieldwork, Clark-Deces wrote this book in a way that it would guide an ethnographer to deal with the field with a fresh insight.

The book begins with an introduction that explains the importance of engaging the newly found yet old materials from her fieldwork. Beginning with a set of questions about the field work, Clark-Deces turns to various theoretical works that made an impact on recent ethnographies in South Asia, particularly village studies. Departing from different anthropological approaches such as functionalism, Clark-Deces travels to an idea of understanding “ritual in itself and for itself” (p. 11). In the first chapter, Clark-Deces contests the Dumontian notion of hierarchy that is based on the scale of purity and brings forth an alternative term, the “precedence” (*mutalmei*) that is prevalent in Somatur. Most importantly, this chapter focuses on revealing the competitive nature of the village community. The second chapter focuses on the importance of “seeing everything” in the field but discusses the idea of community. Describing the practice of *kottumpavi*, a ritual of the killing of the worst person (who is accused of causing the drought in the village), Clark-Deces emphasizes the importance of the local interpretations and the usage of local vocabulary. In the third chapter, Clark-Deces discusses a significant aspect of the study of rituals and practices: the colonial ethnography and the missionary activity that privileged the Sanskritized categories. Focusing on the immediate need of erasing that colonial ethnography, Clark-Deces powerfully critiques some recent

studies such as that are still tangled in colonial and the missionary thinking based on Sanskritized categories. This discussion sets a theoretical background to understand the Sanskritized funerary ritual of *karumati* discussed in the following chapter. Describing this ritual, Clark-Deces provides an explanation that is, as she put it, “rooted in the basic premise that ritual—its practice, representation, and interpretation and so on—is affected by ritual factors” (p. 83). This chapter effectively analyzes the multivocality of a Tamil ritual; however, readers learn more about the reflections of the ethnographer in her effort to fill the gaps in the previous research. In fact, here lies the real purpose of revisiting and rereading the old, but newly found, field notes. In the conclusion, Clark-Deces sums up her observations in the field notes, reinforcing her theoretical approach.

While the experience of rereading the old field notes remains central to the entire work, there are several key moments that open the eyes of an ethnographer in this work. Theoretically, Clark-Deces’s journey through various stages of orientalist, colonialist, and Sanskritist approaches provides a clear understanding of different ways of thinking through the field. Predominantly, the approaches to ritual studies and the significance of de-Sanskritized local rituals are two ways that expand the contours of this study. First, this rereading helps us to understand the importance of studying a ritual within “a broader ceremonial field” (p. 100). Although Clark-Deces follows Don Handelman’s model of ritual to a certain extent and then continues to expand her model, arguing that “more often than not Tamil ritual responds to itself before responding to changes in the social world” (p. 96). Second, this work provides an alternative lens to see a local ritual that has nothing to do with any Sanskritized practice. Clark-Deces has made a clear argument about “the demise of the Brahmins as a main narrative frame” (p. 101) and reveals a ritual pattern that borrows extensively from various other practices yielding space for the diversity of meanings. However, more emphasis on ritual in itself made her ignore the aspects of other processes, namely anti-Brahminization, de-Sanskritization, and modernization. Considering the political factors of the 1990s, these aspects are crucial in the making of rituals or in the processes of providing interpretations to those rituals. Nevertheless, they require an entirely new fieldwork and field notes to focus further on those extended aspects. As Clark-Deces concludes this book, “there is always something more to say” (p. 103). Making any definitive statement or a single conclusive interpretation is a misadventure in itself, specifically, for an ethnographer.