

BOOK REVIEWS

Review Essay

Last of the Stone Age Warriors

Noble Savages: My Life among Two Dangerous Tribes—The Yanomamö and the Anthropologists

Napoleon A. Chagnon. New York: Simon and Schuster, 2013. 544 pp.

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The most thoroughly scrutinized scholarship in anthropology's history has focused on the Yanomami, indigenous people who live in the rainforest of southern Venezuela and northern Brazil. Over the past half-century that numerous scholars have studied them, developments among Yanomami and developments in anthropological theory have coevolved.

When ethnographer Napoleon Chagnon first met the Yanomamö (a subgroup of the larger Yanomami population) in 1964, he felt he was seeing primitive humanity "as close to the 'state of nature' as one could in the twentieth century" (p. 8). In the 1970s and 1980s, events thrust Yanomami out of that "savage slot" into the spotlight of world attention. In conflicts that encapsulated dynamics of political economy and world systems theory, Brazil's dictatorship built roads and military bases in Yanomami territory; in the late 1980s, the expanding capitalist frontier exploded with a massive, illegal gold rush. Epidemics and violence erupted, mercury poisoned streams and fish, and the government evicted all medical personnel and researchers. Thousands of Yanomami died. Anthropologists working with NGOs mounted an international campaign that tapped globalization's potential for political mobilization.

Yanomami case studies figured in almost every theoretical debate in the 1970s to 1990s, from sociobiology to cultural materialism to reflexive critique of politics of representation. As Yanomami developed intercultural skills to speak for themselves in organizations, activism, and health and education work, they reflected changes taking place worldwide as indigenous people claimed new national and global citizenship. In a long-term collaboration that embodies anthropology's growing emphasis on partnerships in participatory research, Davi Kopenawa, a Yanomami leader, has worked with ethnographer Bruce Albert in a project of

"reverse anthropology" to present Kopenawa's analysis of white people and their civilization, and highlight the contemporary relevance of Yanomami ideas (Kopenawa and Albert 2013).

By the late 1990s, critiques of Chagnon's key analyses, combined with changing theoretical concerns, had left his work being taught mostly as methodological counterexamples. In 2000, attention focused on it anew when a book, *Darkness in El Dorado* by journalist Patrick Tierney (2000), accused Chagnon and other researchers of egregious misconduct that harmed Yanomami (see Borofsky et al. 2005; Gregor and Gross 2004). The most extreme accusations proved false or distorted, but the ensuing scandal embroiled U.S. anthropology in years of acrimony.

The best thing that came out of the *Darkness in El Dorado* imbroglio was another book: *Yanomami: The Fierce Controversy and What We Can Learn from It*, produced by Robert Borofsky and colleagues (2005). Written for teaching undergraduates, it presents arguments from multiple positions to encourage critical reflection. Six ethnographers with different theoretical perspectives and professional allegiances engaged in a series of discussions of ethical issues raised by Tierney's book and the question of how anthropology should deal with these (Borofsky et al. 2005:109). Each stated a position, responded to the others' statements, and then made final comments. While disagreements persisted, significant points of consensus emerged around research ethics, anthropological commitments to human rights, and collaborative partnership with the people one studies. The constructive exchanges of ideas and teachable lessons that coalesced in Borofsky's text felt like a healthy move forward out of a toxic period of disciplinary strife.

Chagnon's *Noble Savages* revives the strife. Having remained largely silent during the controversies, this is Chagnon's first major public statement. He is understandably angry and pulls no punches in denouncing his critics.

For those interested in his perspectives and account of events throughout his career, there is abundant material to parse.

This is also Chagnon's autobiography, written for the general public (p. 13). This format is ideal to tell his story as he wishes, unburdened by the citations and substantive, factual attention to other scholars' work that academic writing requires. The chapters follow, chronologically, the 35 years during which he spent a total of five years visiting and working in 60 Yanomamö villages. He presents his current thinking and some new data about violence, kinship, and reproduction, arguing that the ubiquity of terror and quest for security were driving forces in the evolution of political and social complexity (pp. 9–12). The purpose of tribal social organization is to regulate men's sexual access to nubile females through coalitions organized around patrilineality, marriage exchange, and strategic deployment of violence (p. 217).

Academic arguments alternate with autobiography. Chagnon is a good storyteller, and he recounts fieldwork adventures and misadventures with humor and self-deprecation. He describes ethnography's unglamorous challenges—the logistical headaches, linguistic misunderstandings, social minefields, political rivalries—and captures textures of Amazonia: nighttime sounds in a rainforest village, the mildew-plus-stale-wood-smoke scent that clings to hammocks and clothing no matter how many times you wash them. His account of building a house for his wife and two small children to join him in the field reveals a loving husband and father.

Chagnon recalls the wonder of entering a radically different world where he feels transported back to an ancestral age. Stalking the wild Paleolithic, he pushes ever farther from civilization, seeking unacculturated Yanomamö with the “glint in their eyes” of true wildness (p. 39). When he finally meets the legendarily fierce Shamatari, he writes, “I felt goose bumps on my arms. I imagined myself being present at a time ten thousand years in the past . . . These were the last of the Stone Age warriors” (p. 82).

Yet no matter how far from civilization he journeyed, metal tools got there first. To anyone familiar with Brian Ferguson's (1995) comprehensive historical analysis of Yanomami warfare, *Noble Savages* reads like a screenplay based on Ferguson's thesis: that unequal access and competition for scarce metal tools were factors in many conflicts. Chagnon's account shows how demands for Western goods dominated his interactions with Yanomamö. Steel was the obsession of this Stone Age.

Noble Savages pursues two main goals: (1) to show that Chagnon's Yanomamö data offer unparalleled insights into ancient human evolution and (2) to discredit his enemies, the Salesian Catholics who impeded his research and the academics who criticized it. The first goal requires representing Yanomamö as exemplars of Stone Age humanity. The second requires showing that Salesians, not he, harmed Yanomamö and that his critics are antiscience ideologues.

These dual purposes weave through the narrative, crossing in tangled contradictions. These representatives of

Paleolithic foragers are village-dwelling farmers who get 70 percent of their diet from horticulture, using steel axes and machetes (pp. 295–296, 467 n. 58). Yanomamö are exemplars of primitive warfare; yet before he arrived, shotguns introduced by Salesians “probably caused an increase in mortality rates in areas near Salesian missions” and may have made Yanomamö more willing to attack enemies (p. 258; see also pp. 113–116). Yanomamö were “isolated” (p. 38), but plantains and bananas, the dietary staples around which key ritual practices revolve, are crops introduced from the Old World (pp. 299–300). In 1964, Yanomamö were “demographically pristine,” unravaged by introduced epidemic diseases (p. 379); yet (refuting charges that the research team he and James Neel brought in 1966 and 1968 worsened health conditions) malaria (another Old World import) was especially bad in 1964, and diarrhea, dysentery, and respiratory infections were serious problems (p. 100). Yanomamö lived “free from the interference of any government” (p. 1), but Venezuelan public health workers, who lived at the mission post where Chagnon set up house next door to a North American family, traveled to distant Yanomamö communities to pass out antimalarial pills and periodically spray the natives' *shabono* dwellings with DDT (p. 3, 466 n.44).

Much of *Noble Savages* reads like a 1960s period piece, frozen in a time before scholarship showed that every society, no matter how remote or apparently isolated, has been shaped by interconnections among peoples and movements of ideas, goods, foods, and biological agents. Yanomami have been affected, directly or indirectly, by centuries of slave raiding, trade, introduced diseases, missions, and rubber tapping, but Chagnon still views them as almost pristine. He argues for biological explanations, but *biology* means only genetic evolution, narrowly conceived. He does not consider how social isolationism, hostility, and intercommunity violence fit into an historical, epidemiological context in which lethal diseases spread by human contact were the greatest threat to survival and reproduction (Conklin 2008).

The centerpiece of Chagnon's evolutionary argument is his analysis, first published in 1988, which shows that Yanomamö men who had killed another human had three times more children than nonkillers (pp. 273–278). Cultural success enhances reproductive success: in a society terrorized by violence, men who display capacities for murderous aggression get more wives and sire more offspring. Twenty-five years ago, scholars pointed out methodological flaws: the statistical correlations are distorted by the way age categories are used and by the exclusion of dead men and their children (because killers are targets for lethal revenge, and dying ends a man's reproductive career; Albert 1989, 1990; Ferguson 1989; see also Lizot 1994). Chagnon (1989:566) promised to provide data on dead men, but those who hoped he finally would do so in *Noble Savages* will be disappointed.

Methodological problems and the disconnect between facts and interpretation led most anthropologists to discount Chagnon's conclusions. He dismisses the scientific objections

as “ad hominem criticism” (p. 278, 410) and focuses instead on personal and political attacks against him: the “secret dossier” circulated by Salesians, Brazilian anthropologists’ concerns about political misuses of his work, Tierney’s malfeasances. Chagnon lumps his academic critics together under a blanket condemnation: cultural anthropology has lost its way because of biophobia (antipathy to evolutionary analysis), postmodernism, and the move away from science into activism and advocacy (pp. 399–403, 452–454). According to Chagnon, cultural anthropologists do not do in-depth ethnography, compare multiple communities, or collect empirical data; many doctoral theses are based on less than six months of fieldwork (p. 66). (I wish someone had told me this when I was sweating through my second year of Amazonian dissertation fieldwork.) The “ayatollahs of anthropology, the Thought Police” (p. 32), outlaw ideas that contradict the politically correct images of indigenous people as harmonious, egalitarian innocents, which activists and Marxist materialists promote. (Ironically, some of the clearest critiques of overromanticism in NGOs have come from the Yanomami activist-anthropologists Chagnon most disparages, Alcida Ramos [1998:267–283] and Bruce Albert [1997:59–60]. Like Chagnon, Albert [2005:215–216] emphasizes that anthropologists must be faithful to facts, even when the facts conflict with advocates’ public relations agendas.)

A major reason why many anthropologists reject evolutionary psychology is that its common assumptions about sex, gender, and kinship look like ethnocentric projections of Western values (McKinnon 2005). In Amazonian anthropology, long-term, empirical field research and comparative studies of the kind Chagnon champions are alive and well. There is extensive work on indigenous warfare, violence, sex, gender, and even reproductive fitness, but the data undercut such simplistic models. Partible paternity is a prime example. This is the belief, shared by Yanomami and many other Amazonian peoples, that a child can have more than one biological father because every man who has sex with a pregnant woman contributes semen to form the fetus. While obviously not medically true, this belief (which appears to be of considerable antiquity) influences sexual behavior, kin-based exchange, and child support. In their seminal volume, *Cultures of Multiple Fathers*, Stephen Beckerman and Paul Valentine (2002:3–9) found cross-cultural attitudes ranging from puritanical to quite tolerant of married women having multiple lovers, refuting the sociobiological claim that “in no society do men readily share a wife” (Pinker 1997:490). Among Yanomami, Catherine Alès (2002) documented high rates of partible paternity and gender relations at odds with Chagnon’s model. Evidence that individuals with “multiple fathers” have higher survival rates (Beckerman and Valentine 2002:7–8) suggests possible evolutionary implications that are complex, contextual, and a focus of ongoing research and debate (see Walker et al. 2010).

Cultural complexity also came to the fore in a study of violence and reproductive success among the Waorani

(Huaorani) in Ecuador, who in the past had “the highest rate of homicide of any society known to anthropology” (Beckerman et al. 2009:8134). Employing a methodologically rigorous approach to avoid the problems in Chagnon’s 1988 analysis, this study found that among Waorani “more aggressive warriors have *lower* indices of reproductive success than their milder brethren . . . the Yanomamö situation . . . does not apply to warlike tribal societies in general. The culture-specific particulars of the situation are important” (Beckerman et al. 2009:8134, 8139, emphasis added).

In *Noble Savages*, many significant culture-specific particulars go unexplained, leaving readers to puzzle over questions such as, Why does the highest ritual honorific, *unokai*, which killers earn by completing a posthomicide ritual, apply also to girls who perform this ritual during their first menstruation (p. 92)? And how does the male reproductive imperative to sire many offspring and ensure paternity certainty (p. 207, 218–219) fit with the frequent divorces, gang rape, domestic violence, and beatings that kill wives or make them leave their husbands (pp. 228–232)? A poignant moment comes when Chagnon feels that Yanomamö finally recognize him as a human being like themselves, after a mortuary ceremony when he sets aside his ethnographer’s role to express his own, heartfelt sadness and cry with them (p. 97). Though he does not explore his indigenous companions’ response, this resonates with Alès’s (2000) analysis of how compassion for the suffering of others motivates much of the anger and violence that Chagnon found so salient.

Throughout his career, Napoleon Chagnon has been admirably forthcoming about his research activities; one reason his work has received so much scrutiny is that he has told so much. *Noble Savages* does what an autobiography should do: reveal something of its subject’s life and tell his story as he wishes. It offers rich insights into the inner world of one of today’s best-known anthropologists. Those seeking to understand the inner worlds of the people whose stories he tells, however, must look elsewhere—perhaps, increasingly, to hear directly from Yanomami themselves.

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Single Reviews

¡Venceremos? The Erotics of Black Self-Making in Cuba

Jafari S. Allen. Durham: Duke University Press, 2011. 256 pp.

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This study, a consolidation of the author's fieldwork and theoretical reflections, both formal and informal, over a period of some ten years, takes a fresh look at the interplay of race and sex in the lives of contemporary Havana citizens (and some Cubans living in the United States). Jafari Allen sets out to provide a counterpoint to previous approaches, to add complexity and texture to the often-oversimplified and politically polarized question of how race and sexuality are played out in the lives of ordinary Cubans, using research methods that he describes as a "deep hanging out" (p. 7), which is not only self-reflexive but also aware of how he is perceived, as a

black man talking to black respondents. His insistence on examining the small, often private or domestic, spaces where the self is made—the home, private parties—and on the importance of the erotic and friendship in making that self offers many brilliant insights that might otherwise be missed. Indeed, through these methods, he sets out to create a new set of tools to add to the "toolkit" required to understand agency and self-making. Overall, then, the study is elegantly balanced, avoids many oversimplifications about Cuban society, and presents a nuanced and self-aware understanding of contemporary Cuba that emphasizes its complexity and the multiplicity (and often contradictoriness) of the ideological and social forces at play. Allen mostly depicts the revolution, quite rightly, as both enabling and constraining,

and within this framework, his take on resistance in Cuba as not necessarily oppositional and his ability to recognize what he terms “a larger freedom” that the system provides (p. 2) allow for some dazzling analysis of how individual subjects negotiate their everyday lives.

The study as a whole is somewhat less successful in several areas. Perhaps the most surprising of these is in its professed claims to play subjectivity against context in order to produce a multidimensional or “messy” analysis. Chapter 2, on the public discourses that have constrained and enabled black subjectivity, seems somewhat overreliant on specific secondary sources (Carlos Moore) rather than primary texts, and for anyone wanting to understand the discursive construction of race, this is disappointing; more so when, within the discussion of this discursive context, the coverage of the historical construction of race in 20th-century Cuba is at times superficial and unsatisfactory. In addition, while the book’s intended complexity offers much in conceptual and theoretical terms, it fails to live up to that promise in the empirical data presented: the women’s party presented in chapter 5 produces what is to my mind a forced analysis of the performance and aesthetics of the body. Perhaps more worryingly, his analysis of the transformation of a young black University of Havana academic from *oficialista* (government supporter, toeing the part line) to multidimensional being, thanks to being accepted into the friendship group of the author’s friends, is at best tenuous and at worst frankly unconvincing; it also raises some complex ethical questions about the power dynamics inherent

in his methods, despite his apparent ability to be treated as a black Cuban and to undertake “deep hanging out” (p. 7). Similarly, although Allen’s fieldwork takes in a range of sites and locations where sex and race are being made, his repeated claim that he is avoiding typically tourist-focused locations does not preclude him from observing behavior at, for example, Havana’s Café Cantante, which for many Cubans typifies the tourist space.

Some of these reservations are made more noticeable by one specific area of weakness: the incorrect reproduction of the Spanish language throughout, whether representing spoken Spanish or textual citations. To misquote not only common Cuban expressions, such as “hasta victoria, siempre” (p. 2) but also some of the well-known poetry of Nicolás Guillén (p. 48) or the infinitely quoted Dentro-Contra aphorism from Fidel Castro’s 1961 “Palabras a los intelectuales” reflects poorly on the editing process. More seriously, if we are to assume that the author also had some agency in the production of the final manuscript, this linguistic carelessness undermines the persuasiveness of the account as it calls into question the competence of the anthropologist in listening to—and interpreting correctly—the respondents at the center of his study.

In conclusion, then, this is a lively book with a radical agenda, imaginative prose, and a sensitive approach to an often-misunderstood context. If readers can overcome the deficiencies indicated above or supplement their knowledge through recourse to more traditional scholarship, they stand to gain much.

The Accidental Slaveowner: Revisiting a Myth of Race and Finding an American Family

Mark Auslander. Athens: University of Georgia Press, 2011. 376 pp.

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University of South Florida

Mark Auslander’s book is about slavery, family, and kinship, and the legal, social, psychological, and emotional ties that bind those with power to those they control. It is an ethnographic examination of the life of one enslaved woman, Miss Kitty, whose story we now know today.

Auslander introduces the reader to three ways of thinking about slavery and kinship in the United States and implications today. The first is through a theoretical and textual analysis of myth making in the telling and retelling of the Miss Kitty story over time. The second is through a critical unveiling of stories etched in the spatial landscape that help organize our thinking about power and place. The third is through the introduction of specific families, living people, and communities as key stakeholders in shaping public mem-

ory about slavery in Oxford, Georgia, in the past and the present.

In the first instance, Auslander engages in a textual analysis of archival records and published accounts of the Miss Kitty story. His goal is to understand the differing interpretations of the story, particularly among African Americans and white citizens of Oxford. He concludes that “part of the explanation . . . lies in underlying structural features of the narrative, when thought of in the classic terms of myth” (p. 67). The central theme of the myth of Miss Kitty is that she is the beloved property of Methodist Bishop James Osgood Andrew of Oxford, Georgia, and remains enslaved by him throughout her life beginning from when she is a girl. Bishop Andrew is cast as reluctant owner of an enslaved mulatto woman, a good man trapped in an impossible situation whose career is jeopardized as a result of his kindness, care, affection, and ownership of Miss Kitty. Although Miss

Kitty, referred to as Catherine Boyd by her descendants, eventually marries Nathan Boyd and has three children by him, she continued to live in a house built for her by Bishop Andrew on the grounds of the Old Church in Oxford, where he once preached. Upon her death, Miss Kitty becomes the only recognized person of color to be buried in the white section of the Oxford Cemetery. For Auslander, “a critical excavation of the mythologies that still surround American chattel slavery” (p. 4) is an act of restorative justice that can be mutually enriching for descendants of the enslaved and heirs of white privilege—helping us chart a more democratic path.

In the second instance, Auslander extends discussions about the transatlantic slave trade and the U.S. system of chattel slavery and its implications to include “lived social place” (p. 16)—communities and social relationships not typically talked about nor critiqued with respect to this topic. Specifically, he draws attention to university and college campuses in the United States and their “historical entanglements with the Atlantic slave trade and the operations of slavery” (p. 148). Although Auslander focuses on Emory University in Atlanta and Oxford College of Emory University in Oxford, there is a growing list of others. Most notably, institutions like Brown University in Rhode Island, which in 2003 under the leadership President Ruth Simmons appointed a Steering Committee on Slav-

ery and Justice. Additionally and perhaps most surprising for some, the Oxford City Cemetery founded in 1830 is introduced as the key spatial reminder of the realities of slavery and segregation with inscriptions on grave markers and differing levels of cemetery upkeep testifying to social place and power. Oxford Cemetery is also the site of “The Other Side of Paradise,” as Auslander titles chapter 5 of his book. This other side is the historically African American side of the cemetery, which for much of its history (until 2001) was kept segregated from the white section, though many buried here labored without acknowledgment for the college.

Auslander’s work is theoretically dense and historically rich. However, what new lessons can be drawn from this discussion of slavery? In the end, he succeeds in making the unassuming but formidable character of Miss Kitty and the reality of her lived experience and that of her descendants the heart of the story and the key to understanding changes in representations of Emory University’s and Oxford’s history today. For me, Auslander’s work exposes the very roots of power and privilege at the heart of the myth of the good slaveowner—control of national public memory making and institutionalization of public acts of mourning and memorialization. It is in the public celebration of Catherine Boyd’s life and death by her descendants that interpretations of the myth of Miss Kitty are revisited again.

The Materiality of Freedom: Archaeologies of Postemancipation Life

Jodi A. Barnes, ed. Columbia: University of South Carolina Press, 2011. 256 pp.

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Archaeology of the African Diaspora has developed as a discipline since Charles Fairbanks’s 1968 excavation of a slave cabin at Kingsley Plantation in Florida. However, its core focus has been on enslavement. Few studies have examined the archaeology and material culture of postemancipation life, and even fewer have focused on the very recent black past. African Americans experienced radical changes after liberation, which have been the subject of numerous historical works. Archaeology can provide further insight into the challenges faced by blacks in the postemancipation periods and Jim Crow South. This is especially true in regard to living patterns, changes in material culture, acquisition of important resources, and cultural expressions of belief systems and class. *The Materiality of Freedom* focuses on these key issues, placing the archaeology and histories of postemancipation African Americans at the forefront.

Archaeologist Jodi Barnes, the editor of the volume, has woven together 15 articles that address the lives and

archaeologies of African Americans and their landscapes following emancipation. What is impressive about this work is its temporal and regional diversity, with research from the Caribbean and the American Midwest, South, North, and West, dating from Reconstruction to the 1950s. Thus, *The Materiality of Freedom* ties the past to the present and addresses issues intertwined with race, racism, and the treatment of African Americans through time. Furthermore, this volume clearly illustrates how “archaeology has the potential to present a different view of the past and challenge popular conceptions of how African Americans dealt with the oppression of slavery and its aftermath” (p. 2). Kelly Dixon’s study of the black-owned Boston Saloon, in 1860s and 1870s Virginia City, Nevada, provides an example of this by demonstrating the post–Civil War success of African Americans in the West, a region often portrayed as predominantly Euro-American.

Multidisciplinary methods that incorporate archaeology, culture, socioeconomic and political contexts, and history are employed by the contributors to Barnes’s volume to tease the stories of former bondsmen and their descendants

from the archaeological record. Each chapter illustrates the ease in which archaeology can collaborate with other disciplines to provide better interpretations of the past. For example, Kenneth Brown uses archaeology and cultural history to tie artifacts to the belief systems of former slaves and their descendants. Leland Ferguson, through archaeological, linguistic, and historical analysis, discusses the Moravian use of the term *Gottesacker* in relation to African Americans buried in the St. Philips Complex in Old Salem, North Carolina. Megan Teague and James Davidson rely on osteological, archaeological, cultural, historical, and mortuary practices data to explain how postemancipation African Americans of Dallas “transformed their gender and childhood ideologies,” and adapted some aspects of “white Victorian life, while simultaneously struggling under the constraints placed on them by white Victorian hegemony” (p. 87). Laurie Wilkie and Paul Farnsworth, along with Carl Steen, illustrate the postemancipation usage of plantation landscapes by blacks in the Bahamas and South Carolina through historical documents and the archaeological record. These plantation afterlives have often been ignored by past archaeologists and referred to as “ephemeral,” “squatters,” or “modern disturbances.” These terms dismiss those that lived in these spaces and “reify historical narratives that privilege the period of enslavement while enforcing silences about the postemancipation period” (p. 60). Wilkie, Farnsworth, and Steen animate these afterlives and illustrate how former slaves modified their landscape and participated in global economies.

This work also addresses the impact of structural racism on postemancipation African Americans and their archaeologies. Christopher C. Fennell examines how structural racism and the bypassing of major railroad networks affected the integrated Illinois towns of New Philadelphia, Brooklyn, and Equal Rights, resulting in economic drains and eventual abandonment. Matthew Palus uses Michel Foucault’s theory of governmentality to illustrate how African Americans in the Annapolis, Maryland, suburb of Eastport did not receive equal access to water and sewage resources.

The Materiality of Freedom breathes life into the archaeology of postemancipation African Americans. Although some chapters lack archaeological analyses, strong theoretical arguments are made. For example, Fennell only discusses archaeological data for New Philadelphia, and Palus’s work lacks artifact analyses but focuses on “sewer and water infrastructure” (p. 228). Despite this, Barnes’s volume is an important addition to African Diaspora studies. It demonstrates the advantage of multidisciplinary approaches in anthropology and reveals the importance of postemancipation archaeology. It also illustrates how, as stated by Christopher Matthews and Eric Larsen, black history is “alive in African American communities, where stories of families, neighborhoods, work, migrations, and leaders are widely known and shared . . . black history appears missing because it is being interpreted through the lens of white America” (p. 29).

Ideologies in Archaeology

Reinhard Bernbeck and Randall H. McGuire, eds. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2011. 424 pp.

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The 13 chapters of the edited volume *Ideologies in Archaeology* explore the central role of ideology in both present-day archaeological research and past social formations, ranging from ancient Mesopotamia and Iron Age Europe to Mississippian centers and present-day Madagascar. In the realm of contemporary research, archaeology as a bounded discipline is critiqued as an ideological construct in and of itself (LouAnn Wurst and Sue Noviger), while other chapters critically evaluate the ideological agendas underwriting archaeological theory, heritage tourism, public outreach, repatriation policies, museum displays, higher education, secularism, and the commodification of national and local histories. The contributions defend ideology as a valuable heuristic that defies rigid definition, a construct malleable to differing historical contexts and one that ultimately dispenses with the “postmodern narcissism and nihilism” associated with the concept of discourse (see concluding chapter by Jean-Paul Demoule, p. 295).

The contributors attempt to reconcile the two major theories of ideology inspired by Karl Marx, Friedrich Engels, and later philosophers. Within the first analytical framework as originally formulated in *German Ideology* (1963), the term refers to a distorted representation of reality. False consciousness, a rationalization of social inequalities that legitimizes elite interests and economic power, prevents the dominated from fully understanding their material reality. In the second theoretical approach influenced by *Capital* (1994) and Althusserian philosophy, reality is no longer seen as simply mystified. Instead, a decidedly real material world (as exemplified by commodity fetishism in the age of capitalism) fashions dispositions, desires, and routines in such a way that power asymmetries become so thoroughly enmeshed in being and sedimented in places and things that questions of belief recede to the horizon. Prevailing structures of inequality interpellate individuals into subjugated subjects (*sensu* Althusser). As discussed in the various chapters, this expanded conceptualization of ideology is reminiscent of Antonio Gramsci’s notion of “hegemony,” Pierre Bourdieu’s theory of “doxa,” and Michel Foucault’s

conceptions of “discourse.” Therefore, the authors agree that ideology encompasses more than conscious worldview and sectarian interests, and their attempts to move beyond false consciousness foregrounds how ideology infuses habitual behavior, is embodied in ritual performances, and is reified in the material and spatial sinews of social existence.

Nevertheless, the differing perspectives of the contributors still tend to align with one of these two traditions or with the third stream of ideology studies that perceives ideology as consisting of explicit and plural stances advancing the political interest of competing social factions. For many anthropologists, a practice becomes ideological when its iniquitous social effects are championed, challenged, or questioned, a viewpoint that differs from Engels’s original formulation that full knowledge of the relations of production would herald an end to ideology. Indeed, the more compelling chapters (Susan Alt, Susan Kus and Victor Raharjaona, Ruth Van Dyke) are those that mobilize a somewhat narrower conceptualization of the term, recognizing that not every practice is reducible to power, thus leaving room for other heuristics including culture, memory, and related structuring dispositions not directly related to the reproduction of inequalities. Thus, many of the authors treat ideology as a conscious struggle over the production of meaning, while still recognizing that the taken-for-granted contours of social life sets the preconditions for political conflict (Uzi Baram, Matthew David Cochran and Paul Mullins, Christopher Matthews and Kurt Jordan). Susan Kus and Victor Raharjaona demonstrate, for instance, that the ideological valence of the traditional house of the Malagasy Highlands differed significantly within changing social contexts.

On the whole, the authors successfully demonstrate that the analytical power of ideology lies in its protean meanings and applications. Vicente Lull and colleagues argue that Colin Renfrew’s theory on the emergence of megalithic monuments in Atlantic Europe betrays the influence of capitalist ideology. However, Renfrew was unlikely conscious of the capitalist biases underlying his explanation that scarcity, competition, and demographic pressure underwrote the construction of the megaliths, revealing the

difficulty of reducing the ideological simply to conscious struggles over beliefs and values. The same could be said of Reinhardt Bernbeck and Randall McGuire’s critique of post-processual archaeologists’ elevation of agency and practice as founded on neoliberal ideologies of consumer choice—a thought-provoking but perhaps not entirely fair characterization. Kathleen Sterling’s fascinating chapter on how archaeologists have tended to reduce Paleolithic hunter-gatherers to rationalizing *homo economicus* provides yet another example of how capitalist ideologies have compromised archaeological inference. As further intimated by Ruth Van Dyke, archaeologists obsessed with the agency of things are perhaps guilty of fetishizing commodities in the classic sense of Marx and Georg Lukács. In this vein, and to subject a few of the chapters to their own ideological critique, Susan Pollock’s argument that decorated female figurines resisted Akkadian conquest in Susiana poses the danger of essentializing past social difference in terms of present-day ideological conflicts, thus eliding the historical particulars of Mesopotamian identity politics. Bettina Arnold similarly examines Hallstatt funerary rites as expressive of competition and agonistic political contests, a viewpoint that disregards other possibilities, including cosmologies of death and sacred landscapes in Iron Age Europe. In fact, Bernbeck and McGuire’s amplification of *ideology* to encompass all domains of social practice demonstrates how archaeological interpretations are invariably conditioned by the historical context in which they are formulated—an overarching thesis of the collective articles. To be sure, the tremendous force of capitalist ideology should not blind us to the existence of alternate (and perhaps not so overdetermined) political worlds.

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Emerging Evangelicals: Faith, Modernity, and the Desire for Authenticity

James S. Bielo. New York: New York University Press, 2011. 256 pp.

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Emerging Evangelicals is an ethnographic portrait of a network of Christians seeking “authentic faith,” who want to avoid the pitfalls of commodification within evangelical culture. James

Bielo defines an “Emerging Evangelical” as one who participates in the “cultural critique” of “mainstream” evangelicalism as overly consumerist and focused on megachurches, while preferring small communities that foster “authentic” relationships within churches, families, and neighborhoods. Recounting narratives of “deconversion” from conservative

evangelicalism, Bielo traverses a loose urban network of largely white, middle-class, urban, male clergy who moved to Cincinnati with a mission.

Bielo focuses on three characteristics of emerging evangelicalism: (1) drawing from the Christian past to create an “ancient-future” approach to ritual and worship; (2) a “missional” mapping and inhabiting of local neighborhoods as spaces of everyday labor for Christ’s “Kingdom”; and (3) “church planting” based on a model of a young, married man who, with his wife’s help, settles into a neighborhood to lead a house church, an after-school program, or a conventional church. Bielo offers fine-grained descriptions of several emerging evangelicals, arguing that their cultural critique is part of a deep-rooted “dialogic” Christianity.

Bielo describes his approach as “person-centered ethnography,” in which he avoids granting agency to concepts such as habitus or ideology in a commitment to the premise that “cultures do not act; people, individually and collectively, do” (p. 27). Granting autonomy to the people one is studying makes sense, but too much of a theoretical commitment to individual agency could be read as an evangelical Protestant conviction in itself. Evangelicals such as Billy Graham and Martin Luther King Jr. advanced bold cultural critiques; however, their theological arguments, rhetorical gifts, and communal dreams were never external to formations that one might call ideology, gender, or habitus.

Bielo depicts emerging evangelicals as critics focused on megachurch evangelicalism as their Other; their critical targets also include capitalist consumerism, cities versus suburbs, white privilege, and liturgical memory. Showing their engagement with these cultural and theological critiques, Bielo pays less attention to their critical disinterest in other cultural formations, such as masculine heterosexual authority and the missiological conviction to convert Cincinnati to the reign of Christ. To balance his interest in agency above cultural formations, Bielo might have drawn on literature on religion and subject formation to set the critical choices of the “evangelical person” within particular prescriptive regimes.

Bielo shows that emerging evangelicals hope to bring the “Kingdom of God” to Cincinnati by mapping, walking, and inhabiting the local. Many had taken a “vow of stability” under which they committed to stay in Cincinnati for the duration of their lives, hoping that this commitment would help challenge the “racial dystopia” of the urban United States (p. 155). According to one church planter: “My job is to find out what these people’s deepest fears are. And my job is to find out what their greatest hopes are. And then I need to show them why Christ is *more* than either

one of those” (p. 187). Interestingly, the entrepreneurial mapping these church planters do when writing “proposals” for mission funding from national organizations echoes 19th-century Christian missions to Ohio discussed by Amy DeRogatis in *Moral Geography* (2003). In both cases, maps were at once imperial and evangelical, providing a blueprint for why the previous inhabitants needed to change or move aside.

Bielo paints an image of emerging evangelicals as white men with neat beards, gentle voices, and “tattoos displayed conspicuously on muscular arms” (pp. 144, 159). Some embody a “hyper-masculinity” (p. 158) that reflects their theology of gender “complementarianism” in which the New Testament ordains men as leaders in church and home. Bielo suggests that their conservative view of gender is softened by their perpetual state of “ironic” emerging, as their hypermasculinity “becomes a resource for reflexive, self-deprecating humor” (p. 159). Exploring the limits of this self-deprecation would be revealing. For example, detailing the “incarnational” approach to monastic-inspired community of Kevin, a house church pastor, Bielo discusses Kevin’s blog, subtitled “Unpimp and remonk.” Left unremarked is that Kevin, a married man, has chosen two extremes of masculine sexuality—the pimp who sells access to women’s sexuality and the monk who forbids all access to his own sexual pleasure—to represent his “authentic” faith.

Emerging Evangelicals provoked this question for me: What is cultural critique? Defining emerging evangelicals via their commitment to critique the conservative evangelicalism that bore them, Bielo shows this is a complicated family drama. He might have gone further in setting these family battles in a wider historical and cultural compass. Gaining anthropological perspective on the tensions and contradictions within any cultural critique requires a willingness to go beyond the immanent critique that one’s interlocutors practice without forgetting one’s own critical limits. Bielo goes partway to acknowledging his proximity to his subjects (p. 139), and it would have been helpful to learn more. That said, *Emerging Evangelicals* demonstrates how understanding particular Christianities as traditions of cultural critique can clarify their fraught relations with “worldliness” both within and without the church. Accessibly written and relatively compact, the book would be appropriate for undergraduate classes focused on anthropological approaches to Christianity in North America.

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Their Way of Writing: Scripts, Signs, and Pictographies in Pre-Columbian America

Elizabeth Hill Boone and Gary Urton, eds. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2011. 422 pp.

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This beautifully illustrated edited volume contains 15 chapters by some of the principal scholars of pre-Columbian communication technologies of Mesoamerica and the Andes. Originating from a 2008 Dumbarton Oaks symposium, this work expands upon the approach championed in Elizabeth Hill Boone's earlier *Writing without Words* (Boone and Mignolo 1994), enriching the empirical scope and the methodological and theoretical depth of that ongoing project. Gary Urton's introduction to the volume establishes the questions that guided the organization of the volume and the historical role of Dumbarton Oaks in supporting such inquiries. This is followed by eight chapters on Mesoamerican systems and five chapters on Andean systems.

The first three contributions focus on Maya and other Central American systems. Michael Coe's historical essay on the Cold War and the Maya decipherment underscores the *raison d'être* for comparative approaches to writing systems and other communication technologies. According to Coe, it was Yuri Knorosov's training in comparative anthropology and his background in linguistics and Old World scripts that "pre-adapted" him for the decipherment of Maya logosyllabic glyphs in a way Eric Thompson was not. Stephen Houston's chapter explores changes in the Maya script over its long history, identifying social circumstances in which apparent ruptures in glyphic transmission resulted in innovations in scribes' glyph repertoire. Oswaldo Chinchilla outlines the features of the Cotzumalhuapa script from Guatemala's Pacific Coast. Chinchilla provides a sign list of known glyphs and analyzes the degree of animation (investing written signs with the attributes of living creatures) that occurs within known inscriptions.

The next five chapters investigate systems of Central Mexico and southwestern Mesoamerica. Karl Taube's chapter illustrates the script conventions of Early Classic Teotihuacan, which he and others argue was the predecessor of Aztec writing. Although some of the day name glyphs and the form and placement of numeral coefficients may have derived from Zapotec, Taube argues the Teotihuacan script is not strongly related to any other early Mesoamerican writing system, with conventions such as the regimented presentation of signs in grids that are linked to Teotihuacan's concern with military organization. Javier Urcid's macroregional comparison of six scribal traditions of southwestern Mesoamerica investigates the role of writing in culture-specific notions of place making, performance,

the body, and personhood, all the while making good use of Roy Harris's integrational semiological theory of writing. Michel Oudijk's study of Mixtec and Nahua pictorial manuscripts utilizes the methodology of ethnoiconology to demonstrate how shared archetypal themes enabled Mesoamerican scribes to freely make use of elaboration and abbreviation. Federico Navarrete's welcome application of Mikhail Bakhtin's concept of the literary "chronotope" and François Hartog's "régime d'historicité" to historical scenes from Aztec codices and stone monuments provides this area of study with a well-defined theoretical orientation. Boone's case study documents the hybrid forms of expression that emerged in 16th-century Mexico in the encounter between the indigenous pictography and European technologies of alphabetic writing and mimetic figuration. Following colonial patterns of inequality, Mexican pictography was more profoundly affected by these ruptures and unions than European practices, with pictography's greatest influence evident in those genres that conveyed indigenous knowledge to Europeans and vice versa (cultural encyclopedias and pictorial catechisms).

Five chapters are devoted to new research in Andean systems. Margaret Jackson explores Moche ceramic imagery to argue that scenes contain both semasiographic and logographic elements. Tom Zuidema's essay on Chuquibamba style textiles illustrates how repeated designs served as notational system for expressing multiple calendars, including the sidereal lunar period. Tom Cummins pursues a comparison of tocapu depicted in colonial portraits by Martín de Murúa and Felipe Guaman Poma de Ayala to caution against tendencies in recent scholarship to interpret tocapus as fixed sign sets. Especially noteworthy for its methodological innovation, Gary Urton and Carrie Brezine present a measured effort at identifying archival and functional khipu typologies using the NeighborNet algorithm. Concluding the volume's case studies is the impressive multidisciplinary investigation of the Rapaz patrimonial khipus by Frank Salomon, Brezine, Reymundo Chapa, and Victor Falcón Huayta, which grounds these communicative artifacts soundly in their archaeological, historical, and ethnographic contexts.

Drawing upon the volume's case studies in the concluding essay, Boone moves in the direction of constructing a typology of pre-Columbian communication technologies. This is no small task given the scope of the volume's contributors, who vary in how narrowly or broadly they define terms such as *logograph*, for example. In terms of individual chapters' theoretical and methodological innovations and its

contribution as a volume as a whole, *Their Way of Writing* is required reading for anthropologists and others interested in the comparative study of scripts, signs, and pictographies anywhere in the world.

Disaster Culture: Knowledge and Uncertainty in the Wake of Human and Environmental Catastrophe

Gregory Button. Walnut Creek: Left Coast, 2010. 311 pp.

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Disaster Culture makes a fine addition to a burgeoning anthropological literature on natural and human-made disasters. The emphasis in this body of scholarship has often been on the ethnography of catastrophe and calamity in local settings. Scholars have explored local impacts and ramifications of disasters, looking at conditions of citizenship; how people make claims on states, nongovernmental organizations, and corporations in the wake of catastrophes; the constitution of structures and economies of care; and the shape of subjective experiences of suffering and trauma. Anthropologists have set out to apprehend local worlds amid the larger political, economic, and societal forces and processes that influence how they are impacted and the scope of response, resource mobilization, and meaning making at multiple levels. *Disaster Culture* complements these areas of study with a focus on the politics of uncertainty and the roles of powerful actors—corporations, the media, the state, advocacy groups, science, and other institutions—in shaping the nature of uncertainty in times of calamity.

An overarching argument in this book is that disasters are historical and social processes, and that the notion of “disaster” is itself a cultural construction. “We can distinguish disasters as routine and normal,” writes author Gregory Button, “connected to one another along various social fault lines and a direct product of our culture, not something to be imagined as simply an exceptional event” (p. 17). Button encourages readers to see disasters not as discrete, bounded events or punctures in time but, rather, as powerful constellations of processes, dynamics, and structures that have historical longevity, social roots, and lasting impacts. As the primary way for apprehending disasters in historical and social context, Button adopts a comparative approach, taking the reader in a series of chapters through six case studies, each exploring in-depth a different disaster and the culture of explanation and response that arose around it.

Chapter 1 examines the *Exxon-Valdez* oil tanker disaster that occurred in 1989. The tanker dumped over one million barrels of crude oil into Prince William Sound near Alaska. As this event soon became “the benchmark in U.S. environ-

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Boone, Elizabeth Hill, and Walter D. Mignolo, eds.

1994 *Writing without Words: Alternative Literacies in Mesoamerica and the Andes*. Durham: Duke University Press.

mental history by which all ensuing environmental disasters were to be measured” (p. 21), *Disaster Culture* shows how it also became iconic of a particular culture of response, in which government agencies worked in conjunction with the oil industry to undertake the clean up, leading to several interconnected controversies, including the use of chemical dispersants, burning oil, and sluggishness in responding to contamination of the food chain and the attendant local impact on Native Alaskan populations. While reenergizing the environmental movement, the spill also “raised disturbing questions . . . about our nation and culture’s sociopolitical ability not only to prevent disasters but also to respond to them effectively” (p. 44). Chapter 2 extends this analysis of the oil spill to look at the impact on animals and the symbolic importance of animal rescue. The book shows how different actors—including environmental groups, governments, Native Alaskans, and the Exxon Corporation—constructed this importance in different ways, leading to social conflict and to a process that built on pervasive cultural assumptions about the relation between humans and animals.

The following chapters present similar case studies looking at the actions of diverse concerns, meanings of uncertainty, the mobilization of knowledge, and the politics of response in the wake of disasters. Chapter 3 looks at the grounding of the U.S.-owned oil tanker *Braer* near the Shetland Islands, focusing on the ensuing emphasis on quick technological fixes rather than a consideration of the concerns of local communities and long-term environmental solutions. Chapter 4 looks at Hurricane Katrina’s impact on New Orleans, focusing on one particular parish that was hit by “a disaster within a disaster,” as an oil-refinery tank was shoved off its moorings by the storm. This chapter places the hurricane in the wider context of environmental health problems that are part of the landscape of petrochemical production in that region. Chapter 5 continues this discussion of Katrina by looking at the ways that government agencies managed the disaster through interactions with local populations and considerations of issues of accountability for damages. Chapter 6 turns attention to the collapse of fly-ash impoundment in Eastern Tennessee, and it yields rich analyses of different and contested conceptualizations of risk and harm by government responders, corporate interests, and

community residents. Subsequent chapters deal with more theoretical issues across a range of disasters, including, in chapters 7 and 8, a discussion of how the media frames disaster, how corporate public relations works, and how science and other forms of expertise are embroiled in processes of knowledge production and governance. “Laypeople are made to feel as if they are inadequate arbitrators of uncertainty while scientists, corporations, and government agencies attempt to gain control over calamity,” writes Button, making a key point. “The determination to define and control the distribution and interpretation of knowledge is an attempt to define what is normative while excluding other alternative narratives” (pp. 167–168). The final three chapters of the book develop a comparative picture of multiple case studies to discuss how access to information about disasters and risk is constituted, how realities of risk and harm are often minimized or downplayed, and how corporations play a major role in this process.

The major arguments of the book can be summarized as follows: disasters are not exceptional events; the pub-

lic culture tends to sensationalize major disasters while ignoring the ubiquity of industrially produced risk; and responses to risk and calamity are sociopolitical to the extent that resources, knowledge, information, and meaning are informed through contested processes involving multiple stakeholders and actors. “We must change a public discourse,” the author inveighs, “that too often defines what is acceptable to say about disasters and usually tries to maintain an emphasis on scientific and technical aspects while avoiding other realms, such as values, ethics, policy, politics, and the opinions of lay people” (p. 248). *Disaster Culture* is a valuable resource for a range of educational purposes, including undergraduate classes in environmental anthropology and the anthropology of corporations. It is readable and incisive at every turn and is highly recommended for students of environmental health and public policy, and the role of anthropology in coming to grips with the local nuances, community dynamics, powerful state and corporate forces, and often dangerous and narrow discursive framing of disasters.

Ecologies of Comparison: An Ethnography of Endangerment in Hong Kong

Timothy Choy. Durham: Duke University Press, 2011. 224 pp.

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How do everyday objects assume a meaningful place in the environment? How do some objects come to matter more than others? Tim Choy’s *Ecologies of Comparison* offers analytical tools for understanding the importance of environmental specificity; his approach makes a compelling case for reconsidering the relationship between ecological particulars and the scientific universals of systems-based ecology. This engaging ethnographic account of environmentalist practices in late 1990s Hong Kong makes important contributions to recent anthropological work in the areas of environment, scientific knowledge, and rights.

At its heart, *Ecologies of Comparison* is an ethnography of environmentalism—its knowledge practices and its cultural dynamics—at a time when residents of Hong Kong anticipated the handover from British to Chinese sovereignty. Choy follows local and international conservation mobilizations; contests over the knowing, naming, and claiming of particular “indigenous” or “distinctive” species; and various place narratives told by environmentalists. Toward the end of the book, he considers in depth how environmental advocacy and expertise involve collaborative engagement by challenging the reader to notice the peculiar case of air as an environmental object. In every case, Choy notes practices of specification, exemplification, and comparison. How, he

asks, does the lived practice of environmentalism actively connect some species while disconnecting others? How are notions of belonging forged and erased, and with what consequences? The cases Choy describes return to a basic problem in environmental anthropology: How do we understand the social dynamics of place specificity when environmentalism presupposes scientific universals?

The analytical approach is comparative but unconventionally so. Choy avoids using cases from elsewhere in China, or the postcolonial world, or the “West”; he resists even small gestures toward universalized environmental discourse. Instead, he offers an “ethnography of comparison,” in which he marks how connections between activists, scientists, laypeople, and others in Hong Kong are forged. Choy simply does as he declares; he “compares comparisons” (p. 6). His method anchors the reader’s attention to the “inseparability of political and epistemic practices in environmental arenas” (p. 12) while moving deftly between rich ethnographic accounts of the stakes, the sense of urgency, and the ubiquitous rhythms of mourning loss and anticipating gain that animate the everyday life of environmentalism.

The book’s ethnographic terrain is varied. We first meet with human and nonhuman modes of life feared to be on the verge of extinction. Moving between the politics of dolphin conservation and efforts to save a fishing village from redevelopment, Choy maps a “politics of endangerment”; here, the urge to catalogue, name, classify, and distinguish

modes of life on the verge of disappearance enables certain claims to knowledge, affinity, and belonging in an ecological system of things that matter.

But that system shifts, and to mark this Choy then describes quests for environmental and social distinction. The reader meets plant biologists studying a distinctive orchid species and anthropologists recording what they regard as Hong Kong's unique cultural life. In both arenas, objects are simultaneously specific and connected to a broader ecological web. Here, Choy shows how situating something within the purview of environmental conservation gives it a particular kind of visibility, and therefore potential invisibility, at many scales.

Choy then traces how transnational environmental activists and indigenous villagers work together, strategically and consciously, to oppose the construction of a municipal waste facility in the New Territories. We glimpse the global cosmopolitanism and deep place attachments that charac-

terize activists' stories of environmental consciousness and living an environmentalist life. Choy uses these narratives to observe how environmentalists delineate relations among one another, as well as between themselves and other Hong Kong residents.

The book's final chapter describes the ways that air, brought into social and political life as air-quality politics, again defies conventional universal/particular analytics. This section concludes the book, underlining the inseparability of everyday engagement with socionature and the multiscaled gestures that imbue them with meaning and urgency.

Ecologies of Comparison reminds us of the power of ethnography to move beyond theoretical abstractions and quite simply to see abstractions themselves as powerful social gestures with consequences for human action, socionatural change, and our shared and unshared accountings of loss and gain in a world of rapid environmental change.

China with a Cut: Globalisation, Urban Youth and Popular Music

Jeroen de Kloet. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press, 2010. 264 pp.

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Jeroen de Kloet's ethnographic monograph, *China with a Cut*, presents fascinating insights into the complexity and diversity of rock music in China, focusing on the 1990s until around 2008. Through fieldwork, interviews, and historical comparisons, the author takes us on a journey, from dingy Beijing clubs featuring in-your-face punks to the coffee houses of folk-rock balladeers to the stadiums of pop-rock mega stars. We hear the longing in fan letters and complaining of record-company capitalists. Along the way, de Kloet adds his own theoretical and critical perspectives so that we get a unique and nuanced portrait of youth, politics, and globalization in contemporary China. A pleasure to read, this book would be great for undergraduate or graduate students because it is accessible, theoretically rich, and appropriately controversial.

The author begins with stereotypes even he had to overcome. In 1992, when he first saw a Chinese punk-rocker complaining about his life ("I live on a garbage dump!"), de Kloet adopted a common double bias: "In my reading, music was inherently provocative, and China was ruled by a monolithic totalitarian state" (p. 16). He argues that we must move beyond such common binaries (resistance vs. compliance, the State vs. the people) and instead embrace the paradoxes that lie at the heart of popular culture and politics.

The book's title, *China with a Cut*, refers to an unusual path of globalization. In the 1990s, unsold CDs from the West were given small cut in the side to prevent reselling. Many of these *dakou* ("cut") CDs ended up on the black market and hence opened up an unofficial musical space and also came "to signify a whole urban generation" (p. 20). This *dakou* generation is represented through ethnography, close readings of lyrics and album covers, and above all the voices of musicians, fans, and producers "to account for the profound multivocality . . . of music cultures in China and beyond" (p. 35).

The book's core is a comparison of different music scenes. Chapter 1 discusses underground rock, punk, heavy metal, and hip-hop. The author calls these "hard scenes" (p. 28), a term adapted from Arjun Appadurai's notion that "hard cultural forms are those that come with a set of links between value, meaning, and embodied practice that are difficult to break and hard to transform" (Appadurai 1996:90). For de Kloet, those links are constituted by a "rock mythology" that imposes a relatively rigid repertoire of styles and, more importantly, ready-made expectations of value arising from sincere, rebellious, noisy males who eschew commercialism (p. 28). Intriguingly, rather than debating whether this or that sound is "authentic," de Kloet tracks the modes of authentication, and their relative distance from rock mythology, by locating scenes amid other scenes. Chapter 2 considers "hyphenated" scenes less beholden to rock mythology, such as folk-rock, pop-rock, pop-punk, and so-called

fashionable bands. Chapter 3 adds the voices of women rockers and those of southern urban areas, such as Shanghai and Guangzhou. Although de Kloet clearly sympathizes with the rockers, he finds politics in pop music's disruption of rock mythology's dominance through a valorization of "a surface, transient noise that resonates deeply with everyday life" (p. 138).

The next two chapters shift registers. In chapter 4, de Kloet examines audiences through surveys, interviews, and fan letters to musicians. Music here is a "technology of self" that enables people, in Michel Foucault's words, "to transform themselves in order to attain a certain state of happiness, purity, wisdom, perfection, or immortality" (Foucault 1997:225; see p. 140). To me, the fans left the deepest impression, as they shared the challenges of facing difficult expectations of parents, schools, and the state. Chapter 5, through an analysis of industry data and comments of insiders, disputes the notion that rock music in China has become more commercialized. Rebellious himself, de Kloet contends that political censorship of lyrics is "both a limiting and a productive force" (p. 169). Agree or disagree, this will be perfect fodder for classroom debate.

Elsewhere as well, de Kloet makes fascinating arguments, not all of which I agree with, but he gives enough detail that we can contest his conclusions. For example, he finds that "being global sells locally, and being local sells

globally" (p. 101), which makes sense (like cosmopolitan Afrobeat vs. indigenous "world music"). But is this an instance of "global" versus "local" or a question of networked localities? If I have a criticism of *China with a Cut*, it's that I would've preferred more ethnography, a little more sense of how the rock mythology is embodied in musical performance spaces. To his credit, de Kloet chose instead to emphasize the voices of those he met, through more than 100 interviews.

In his conclusion, de Kloet argues that only if we position "paradoxes at the heart of our analysis, can we grasp the politics of popular culture and its complex dynamics in society at large" (p. 196). For de Kloet, this is not just a matter of celebrating contradiction and absurdity but also of seeing the logic and untapped potential within the paradoxes. As such, this is a rich and successful project.

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Tacit Subjects: Belonging and Same-Sex Desire among Dominican Immigrant Men

Carlos Ulises Decena. Durham: Duke University Press, 2011. 328 pp.

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A book review should not be a love letter, but I do love this book. Decena's *Tacit Subjects* draws from in-depth interviews with 25 Dominican men living in New York City who have sex with men. The chapters are organized around concepts that are both theoretical and thematic, such as relationship to family and community or the place of sexuality in one's life. The subfield into which this book most comfortably fits is a contentious one—the anthropology of human sexuality. Within this field, there are two primary sets of theoretical commitments. The first is a more culturalist position that holds sexual practices and the meanings associated with them to be largely determined by a relatively closed cultural system. From this perspective, scholars often claim that gay and lesbian identities, for example, are a cultural imposition for all but the few societies in which they emerged historically. The second approach to the subject tends to be more materialist and to emphasize the roles of industrialization,

modernization, and urbanization in reshaping cultural practices, resulting in (through complicated and varying kinds of mediation) investments among many societies in sexual identities such as (although not necessarily identical to) "gay" and "lesbian." The work of Tomás Almaguer or Gloria Wekker might be associated with the first position, while that of Gayle Rubin or the late Lionel Cantú exemplifies the latter. When I first opened Decena's text, I anticipated it to fall within the culturalist position. I was therefore pleasantly surprised to discover that his work in fact achieves a remarkable synthesis, or even transcendence, of the two theoretical "camps."

To accomplish this feat, Decena introduces the concepts of the "tacit subject" and the politics of "estar." The *tacit subject* is a politically ambivalent term used to describe the importance of unspoken knowledge (and precisely its unspokenness) for the maintenance of social relations: "asymmetrical power relations that [people are] invested in maintaining" (p. 21). The politics of *estar* builds on Rodolfo Kusch's work to use the Spanish sense of *being* ("estar") in a location as part

of the process of *being* (“*ser*”) an identity: “no pure ‘being someone’ (*ser*) is possible without accounting for one’s being somewhere, for its location (*donde está*)” (p. 10). These two concepts bring the role of culture in shaping meaning and identity to bear on the material power relationships shaping capitalism, neocolonialism, and patriarchy.

Although cultural difference plays an important part in Decena’s account, he never reduces the rich texture of his interviewees’ experiences to culture alone. His rich exploration of the importance of class, race, gender, and geography for these men often challenges the assumptions of scholars working within more culturalist frameworks. For example, Decena attends carefully to the role of male privilege in shaping the perspectives of the men he interviews. He illuminates how they are neither solely oppressed subjects nor always resistant to forces of subjugation; rather, they exist as complicated individuals working on and within various hierarchies and structures of oppression.

His theoretical constructs always seem appropriate to the data he has gathered. He introduces and elaborates them in ways that illuminate the data while simultaneously emerging from the data. What helps Decena do this is the depth

and complexity he brings to his ethnographic subjects. He has a gift for allowing indeterminacy to sit and for offering multiple possible interpretations of statements made during his interviews—including interpretations that would deviate from his theoretical models.

Decena’s synthesis of perspectives on sexuality and culture also allows him to articulate a relatively new perspective on identity that has both nuance and acumen. He does this by situating his subjects in their movement between contexts and locations, showing how they negotiate circumstances that, in one moment, call for them to choose identification and, at another, to dwell in ambiguity. His work does not make light of or dismiss identity as a choice, nor does he see sexual identity as culturally limiting or inauthentic. At the same time, he offers textured descriptions of the possibilities other than political identification with a “gay” community that are available to his subjects in various moments and locations. He does so without idealizing or vilifying those possibilities. In sum, rarely have I seen the movement among culture, material circumstances, politics, and political identity so well and so thoroughly accomplished as in Decena’s beautifully written book.

Counterplay: An Anthropologist at the Chessboard

Robert R. Desjarlais. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2012. 266 pp.

Noel Dyck

Simon Fraser University

In the course of completing a book on the death and funeral rites of Nepal’s Yolmo people, Robert Desjarlais finds himself weary of writing, tired of the anthropological profession, and outside a Manhattan chess shop on a Saturday. Inside, where anyone can play for a dollar an hour, he realizes how much he enjoys thinking about his next moves and responding to his opponent’s ideas. Two days later, he purchases a year’s membership in the United States Chess Federation, a chess set, and several books to reintroduce him to a game that he had given up upon entering graduate school. So, after a 20-year break from competitive chess, Desjarlais returns to a game that has become more alluring than professional anthropology meetings. Yet, an anthropologist he remains, and out of this extended encounter emerges a remarkably compelling account of the rekindling of a passion for chess by an erstwhile player. It provides a flexible ethnographic means for examining the intricately layered counterplay that makes this celebrated cultural form both irresistible to its devotees and otherwise largely inaccessible to others.

One of this book’s many achievements is how deftly and persuasively it invites the reader—whatever the level of his or her familiarity with chess—to accompany the author on a chapter-by-chapter encounter with the defining

features and intricacies of the game as it is played in varying forms at different levels. Thus, we move from the rapid action of five-minute “blitz” games to higher-level “ranked” amateur club competitions to the World Open tournament held each summer in Philadelphia. Although the book stops short of providing a front-row seat at the highest levels of professional chess, it is supplemented by interviews with world-class players. The author also notes just how pervasively professionals’ matches inflect the playing of the game beneath their ranks. In addition to visiting “over-the-board” competitions that occur in face-to-face venues, the reader is guided through the mysteries of the Sveshnikov defence (ch. 4) and the fundamental reshaping of the game by the arrival of computer-driven cyberchess (ch. 7), as well as chess played against unseen opponents on the Internet (ch. 8).

Despite the formidable particularity and complexity of the matters addressed by Desjarlais, this remains a “reader-friendly” book. In addition to maintaining an engaging style of writing and a crisp pace, the author consistently draws the reader’s attention to how the formal and experiential dimensions of chess connect with one another, sometimes in aesthetically thrilling ways, other times in a psychologically devastating manner. Among other things, Desjarlais demonstrates that the timely posing of questions of various types can serve both to announce larger analytical concerns and introduce essential ethnographic materials.

What initially drew me to this book was the hope that it might present a more comprehensive prospectus for “an anthropology of passion” (mentioned in ch. 1) than has appeared to date. Aside from a brief discussion of Pierre Bourdieu’s notion of “*illusio*” and Csikszentmihalyi’s concept of “flow,” however, that larger project is not mounted here. But what Desjarlais does provide is an outstanding example of how to identify and reflect upon the ways in which passions may both shape and be shaped by a cultural form capable of absorbing hours, days, and years of its aficionados’ time and energies. This is fundamental for those concerned with how subjectivities and pastimes seen as generating “passions” are being marshalled by individuals and institutions within contemporary life. Articulation of the underlying similarities and differences in the processes and workings of otherwise disparate cultural forms and practices depends upon an abundant provenance of clearly and imaginatively analyzed studies of different types of activities.

What is striking about this study is the manner in which it underscores an instructive set of similarities between chess, commonly viewed as a purely “intellectual” pursuit, and sports, which tend to be characterized in terms of their physicality. Throughout *Counterplay*, Desjarlais notes commonalities between these cultural forms, acknowledging the varied forms of embodied participation that figure within each of these fields of activity. The demands made upon the physical stamina of participants in chess tournaments, the attention given to developing perceptual capacities for recognizing an opponent’s system of tactics and strategy, and the manner in which games and players’ capacities are verbally reconstructed in postgame discussions are all found in most, if not all, sports.

Accordingly, anthropologists interested in any game, sport, or form of cultural practice that inspires “passions” of one sort or another will find much of interest in this book.

Moral Ambition: Mobilization and Social Outreach in Evangelical Megachurches

Omri Elisha. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011. 276 pp.

Kevin O’Neill

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Anthropologists often coin terms. These catchphrases aspire to be, though rarely become, flexible analytical tools with broad utility. It is an effort that is not always successful. A list could be constructed of all the imaginings that never really took—terms that could never really apply to another instance beyond the one in which they were invented. This is not the case with Omri Elisha’s work. I have not come across, nor do I expect to (at least for a while), a concept as productive, as provocative, as inspiring as his concept of “moral ambition.” I cannot get enough of it. I simply cannot. The idea of moral ambition captures so much about evangelical megachurches in Knoxville, Tennessee, while also having the potential to provide a window onto a wide range of contemporary practices: from corporate social responsibility to volunteerism; from humanitarian aid to development work; from parenting to public education. I walked past a woman composting the other day, and I thought to myself, “That seems morally ambitious.”

Moral ambition, as defined by Elisha, emerges when “aspirations pertain not only to what [people] desire for themselves but also what they have come to expect of others” (p. 2). There are other components to the definition, but this is its most generalizable form. This sits, at least by my reading, at the core of moral ambition. Elisha mobilizes this term ethnographically, with a close study of two Tennessee megachurches. In many ways, the book is a study of

activism. Elisha pushes past the tired lightning rods of political debate that routinely define evangelical politics, such as abortion, same-sex marriage, and public prayer, to explore both honestly and intimately how conservative Christians work to improve society. The important contribution here, especially for the ever-growing anthropology of Christianity, is a close look at how new forms of Protestant Christianity are not simply individualistic; believers have a rich sense of the social and a concern for how to think and act upon society. Poverty, racial justice, and urban revivalism—these are evangelical concerns.

The book has seven chapters. The introduction and the first chapter orient the reader, highlighting the social worlds and moral sentiments of the people that stand at the center of Elisha’s research. Chapters 2 and 3 provide more context for evangelical social engagement, with chapter 2 focusing on the megachurches and chapter 3 exploring Knoxville. The fourth chapter provides portraits of some key informants. How do the faithful conceive of their moral ambitions? This seems to be the question at hand. Chapters 5, 6, and 7 mark a narrative shift toward heightened critical analysis, with the fifth chapter exploring how moral ambition unsettles middle-class comforts through social outreach. Equally interesting is the topic of “compassion fatigue” addressed in chapter 6. The seventh chapter explores race and justice through a look at how white suburban megachurches engage inner-city communities of faith. Here, Elisha brings us a clear vision of how his informants imagine the Kingdom of God. He quotes one man who says,

If I had my ideal dream—you know that would never happen—but it would be to have four or five blocks of folks here that are all different sizes, shapes, poverty levels, economic levels, cultures, all having a common central theme of Christianity, living in the middle of the city and infiltrating the rest of the city, through the political arenas, the business arenas, the school arenas, all those different levels, mixing it up based on who they are, fleshing their faith out in that way. For me, that would be the ultimate utopia. [p. 191]

This is fascinating material.

I have very few quibbles with this book. I think Elisha's early invocation of "lived religion," a popular methodological approach in the study of religion, is not unnecessary. His work is simply more sophisticated than what that literature has to offer. I also think he could be more ambitious with his term *moral ambition*. As I mention in my opening paragraph, it applies to so very much, and he could have made those connections brighter. Finally, I think Elisha could have made

moral ambition a slightly sharper concept. I do not mean analytically sharper but rather politically sharper. He writes in his epilogue, "By now it should be clear that my use of the term *ambition* is value neutral. . . . I regard ambition as a generic human disposition that manifests itself in a wide range of social proclivities, which need not be associated only with egoism, avarice, unbridled opportunism, or the will to power" (p. 222). Point taken, but as a scholar of not just Christianity but also politics, I would have liked to have seen more critique. Elisha himself suggests such implications in the book's very last sentence. He writes, "They are ambitious actors in a culture of relentless striving, and whatever else can be said about ambitious people, they rarely keep their ambitions to themselves" (p. 222). Moral ambition, as a concept, is most attractive, I believe, when considering those people who cannot "keep their ambitions to themselves."

Harnessing Fortune: Personhood, Memory, and Place in Mongolia

Rebecca M. Empson. Oxford: Oxford University Press, 2011. 398 pp.

Erik Mueggler

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The large painted chests on which Buriad houses in Mongolia center took their present form in the 1960s, when cooperatives were established and nomadic households began to move less often. In their smaller, paired earlier form, chests probably traveled with Buriad households when they fled to Mongolia from Russian Buriatya during and after the 1917 revolution. All those chests were destroyed during the 1930s, when nearly all Buriad men were killed or imprisoned on suspicion of siding with Japanese, White Russians, or pan-Mongolian nationalists. Now, chests move with houses when Buriad take their doors, roofs, and windows from winter pastures to summer camps to be installed in the empty frameworks of houses there. And chests rescued when Buriad burn down each other's houses in fearsome acts of violent purification become the "seeds" of new houses in new locations.

Valuable items like radios and lipsticks are displayed on the surface of chests; in the center, a large triple mirror stands surrounded by a montage of photographs. Among the most evocative images in Rebecca Empson's book about Buriad personhood are photographs of such montages from seven households with detailed captions outlining the complex networks of relations with agnates, affines, friends, and others that they index. The mirror places the viewer in momentary relation to this network, a hypothetical objectification of an exemplary person caught in a net of possible relations collected and displayed by others. Empson's varied

explorations of personhood move largely along these lines: persons are produced as fluid assemblages of social relations, real and potential, articulated mainly through attention to objects. Portraits of deceased kin hang above the chest, along with a shrine composed of books, images of animals, milk offerings, and a "fortune bag" containing parts of offerings made at ceremonies for *ovoo*s, heaps of things on which landscapes are focused. This technology for generating fortune works like photographic montages, gathering pieces of relations from different spheres in order to nurture the varied connections they index. Deep inside the chest are umbilical cords and tufts of children's hair wrapped in ceremonial silk scarves. Made by cutting and separation, these body parts are contained to anchor people in the "blood" relations that create bodies. The relations made visible in photographic montages on the chest's surface are "bone" relations, instantiating agnatic kinship, patriarchal ideology, and intergenerational continuity. Those indexed by the objects hidden inside the chest are "blood" relations, founded on the umbilical ties between a woman and her children and among siblings. The latter are the necessary hidden background against which the visible "bone" relations are foregrounded.

Harnessing Fortune is an ambitious, intelligent, and convincing book about Buriads living in the Ashinga district of Mongolia, bordering Siberia. The book is a substantial contribution to the style of understanding the everyday processes of generating kinship that Empson's teacher, Janet Carsten, helped pioneer. Empson builds on Marilyn Strathern's insight that persons are generated by the social relations in which they are embedded. But her approach is not

derivative: it is given originality by her insistent engagement with relations among people and objects. Working in a framework inspired in part by Alfred Gell's *Art and Agency* (1998), Empson focuses on practices in which social relations are made through attention to things. While household chests are the topic of three remarkable chapters, other chapters consider histories of violence and destruction, practices of containing and nurturing fortune, practices of containing and separating from others through rebirth, the landscape, and the bewildering recent habit of burning down the houses in which the results of others' processes of separating and containing to create and nurture persons are centered.

Many beautiful passages in Empson's book render complex ideas with convincing clarity. But the book is earnest to a fault. As a whole, the analytical style reminds me of my son's habit of narrating his acts when he was learning to talk ("I'm gonna run! I'm running! I ran!"): "I will argue; I'm arguing;

I have argued." While this is sometimes useful, as Empson's arguments are of a kind to require much repeated explication, it is ultimately off-putting—a monotonous default in lieu of more artful argumentation. Despite its evocative subject matter, vivid descriptions, and intricate but rewarding analysis, *Harnessing Fortune* remains, alas, a book that only anthropologists can love. But many will love it—some out of duty, others out of delight in following the working out in great detail and across several scales of the myriad logics of separation and containment with which Empson's Burial create each other as persons.

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Nimo's War, Emma's War: Making Feminist Sense of the Iraq War

Cynthia Enloe. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010. 336 pp.

Madawi Al-Rasheed

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Three factors make *Nimo's War, Emma's War* an unusual anthropological book: first, the author is not a specialist on Iraq. Second, the author relies on media reporting on the war, and third, the author combines the stories of Iraqi women with those of U.S. women in one volume. The common thread lies in Cynthia Enloe's solid quest to give a nuanced gendered account of war and its impact on women, separated by space and life experiences. The outcome is a detailed analysis of this impact influenced by feminist theory and interpretation. The eight women whose lives are changed beyond recognition as a result of war are given voices that challenge a masculine account of conflict, death, rape, and hardship.

Cynthia Enloe argues that all wars are dependent on narratives about masculinity and femininity, patriarchy being the key notion that informs how wars are promoted and practiced. Women's narratives of war remain marginalized and rarely feature in traditional news reporting. The Iraq war was an exception as journalists trained in feminist theory came of age. They reported on the human cost of war, thus contributing to gendering conflicts and highlighting their impact on women who often remain voiceless. Wars often impact the social structures of societies in which women are embedded. Marriage, sexuality, property, and access to resources are always gendered during times of both peace and war. When societies experience shortages of water and electricity, women are the first to experience hardship as

their domestic chores tend to multiply. When men are killed, women tend to be the first to experience violence, rape, and harassment. When women are enlisted in the military, they tend to become targets of sexual harassment by their own colleagues.

War stories are talked about in the most unusual spaces, namely the beauty parlor where Nimo and other Iraqi women engage in conversations in ways that challenge the military narrative of occupation, conquest, and liberation. Enloe captures a nastier site in the landscape of the U.S. occupation of Iraq when she moves her reader to Haditha, the site of a horrific crime committed against Safa, whose family was massacred by U.S. soldiers two-and-a-half years after the occupation of Baghdad. The 13-year-old survivor and her remote city exposed the myths about the liberation of Iraq from dictatorship only to suffer a prolonged conflict that made her witness to one of the most savage war crimes. Years after the occupation, the flourishing brothels of Baghdad, ethnic cleansing, and the sectarian militia-run streets attest to a different reality of a torn-apart country.

The stories of the four Iraqi women told in this book sit uncomfortably with the stories of U.S. women who either experienced the war as mothers of deceased soldiers or combatants. Here the cost of war is mediated by campaigning, counseling, and public engagement with the war in which race, class, and ethnicity unfold in U.S. cities. Hispanic Emma, who had already sent her eldest son to the war, resists recruiters hoping to enlist another son. Danielle seeks the army as the family she never had, while other women

rush to rehabilitate their own bodies and lives, and those of others shattered by war. While Iraqi women struggle to find support, U.S. women are caught in the illusion of finding solace in the maze of campaigns and pressure groups. In both cases, a gendered critique of war highlights the suffering of women and children caught up in the fog of war.

Nimo's War, Emma's War remains a powerful testimony that goes beyond stories of survivors and victims to develop a humanist and gendered interpretation of conflict that is shocking, troubling, and beyond justification. If there is a lesson to learn from the Iraq War, it is the one told in this

book. It is a history that many would prefer remain buried rather than be exposed—let alone told in meticulous detail and accuracy.

Enloe's dense book will inspire a future generation of graduate students, journalists, and civil-society activists. It should be on the reading list of diverse audiences seeking a deeper understanding of war and its hazards. It confirms the assumption that reporting war is a gendered political act that exposes the truth about conflict without degenerating into sensationalism. It also confirms the assumption that memories of war linger to haunt generations of women.

The Skull Collectors: Race, Science, and America's Unburied Dead

Ann Fabian. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2010. 288 pp.

Ann Kakaliouras
Whittier College

The story of how U.S. naturalist Samuel George Morton and his scientific descendants crafted theories of racial difference from their often ill-gotten skeletal collections is never more elegantly told than in Ann Fabian's unique and fascinating account. The excoriation of 19th- and early-20th-century "race science" has been a pursuit shared by the sciences, social sciences, and humanities alike; it has become so familiar to anthropology in particular, though, that there is a danger of falling into ennui about the period and the real horrors associated with U.S. colonial and imperial collection of people for display and study. Fabian's object of analysis, however—"the unburied dead"—allows her to reach far and wide, as her account pivots from Morton's shelves and cabinets to the changing lives of the Chinook of Oregon, to the conflict between phrenology and craniology, to the shores of a Fijian island, to Civil War battlefields, and to the late-20th-century repatriation movement, among other places and cultural moments. Although *The Skull Collectors* is more descriptive than analytical, Fabian's careful attention to the experiences of multiple actors involved in the transformation of human skulls from symbols of death into scientific objects makes this book a welcome and somewhat unexpected contribution to the history of anthropology in the United States.

The expected pieces of Fabian's narrative include her situation of a personal and intellectual biography of Morton and his cranial collection within larger developments in the science of race (ch. 1: "The Promise of a Fine Skull"), as well as an exhaustive review of the production and subsequent distribution problems that plagued his magnum opus (ch. 3: *Crania Americana*). Her attention to Morton's contemporaries, including the dissenting voices of African American intellectuals Joseph Wilson and Frederick Douglass, paints

a rich portrait of a multiracial 19th-century urban U.S. intellectual class.

Of particular interest in her weaving of the story of *Crania Americana* into the larger intellectual world of 19th century Philadelphia, and the United States in general, is her display of the amount of discursive and cultural effort Morton and others performed in their creation of racial facts out of cranial shapes, bumps, and volumes. Although Fabian does not frequently broach the territory around why naturalists and early anthropologists came to need massive collections of the bodies of assumedly disappearing "Others" for their science, the reader of *The Skull Collectors* is reminded that powerful cultural constructions take considerable energy to build and maintain.

Sandwiched between and immediately following these rather more unsurprising chapters are two complicated and utterly absorbing stories of a young Chinook man (ch. 2: A Native among the Headhunters) and a Fijian elite (ch. 4: "News from the Feegees") who could have been and were, respectively, "collected" for this new racial science. William Brooks ("Stumanu") was a Christianized Chinook from Oregon whose head was purposefully flattened against a cradleboard. Fabian ably sketches a picture of Brooks as a complex figure at the nexus of the ravages of U.S. colonization and Native survival, if not actual resistance. When he traveled to the East Coast, he met scientific and public curiosity about the shape of his head with, as Fabian relates, patience and humor (p. 59, 61). He died of tuberculosis in New York in 1839 but was buried whole on the insistence of a doctor who actively resisted the charms of phrenology. In contrast, and just a few years later, the skull of Fijian leader Ro Veidovi—who confessed to murder and for punishment was brought to New York by naturalist William Pickering—was removed from his body and ended up in the collection of the Army Medical Museum, the larger history of which Fabian recounts in a robust chapter on collecting

around the time of the Civil War (ch. 5: “The Unburied Dead”).

By the end of the text, one might fault Fabian for her generous portrayal of 19th- and early-20th-century scientists and explorers—the “skull collectors” who made objectification into regularized scientific practice. Those archaeologists and anthropologists familiar with the U.S. repatriation lit-

erature and NAGPRA, likewise, may find her treatment of the quest to return “the unburied dead” somewhat thin. However, the central and much-needed contribution of her book, and the reason why anthropologists should read the work of skilled historians, is her “thick description” of the work of skull collecting as a wider U.S. cultural tradition, not just a peculiar and macabre scientific habit.

The Struggle for Maize: Campesinos, Workers, and Transgenic Corn in the Mexican Countryside

Elizabeth Fitting. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2010. 320 pp.

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Elizabeth Fitting’s book is an important and lucid contribution to understanding the latest turn in Mexico’s long debate over its food system, cultural identity, and national economy. Few cultures approach Mesoamerica in attachment to their staple food. Maize has dominated the region’s agricultural, religious, political, and culinary landscapes for over six millennia. It is perhaps inevitable that maize would become grist for the political and cultural debates of this heterogeneous, tumultuous society.

The current debate deals with transgenic seed (popularly known as “genetic modified organisms”) that have been widely adopted in the United States, Canada, Argentina, and Brazil but that confront political obstacles in many other countries, notably Europe. Mexico imposed a ban on planting transgenic maize because of the possibility that the transgenes could escape into maize’s wild progenitor and because of uncertainties about its impact on subsistence producers, especially in southern Mexico where indigenous populations are significant. Despite the ban, researchers found transgenic maize growing in Oaxaca in 2000, triggering a national movement to defend both traditional maize and its producers.

No other analysis presents the national debate about transgenic maize and its political and cultural contexts with the acuity of Fitting’s book. Her greatest contribution is to deal with both the national debate, especially with those opposed to this technology, and maize’s ethnographic context in a village in the southern state of Puebla in the Tehuacán Valley, where some of the earliest maize was grown.

Fitting devotes the first half of the book to national debates about transgenic maize. These reflect earlier ones about the fate of Mexico’s national crop and the subsistence farmers who produce it. In 1941, Carl Sauer warned the Rockefeller Foundation against introducing hybrid maize, a U.S. invention, into the biologically and culturally diverse Mexican landscape. That debate has been renewed several times as Mexico has sought to improve yields and

income and to avoid reliance on imported maize. Higher yields in the United States translate into production costs that are half or less of those in Mexico. Less expensive imported maize is attractive to this increasingly urbanized country. The long-standing alliance between the national government and peasant maize producers ended in a series of reforms, starting with constitutional changes to allow privatization of communal (*ejido*) lands in 1992, followed by Mexico’s entrance into the North American Free Trade Alliance (NAFTA) in 1994 and then by the closure in 1999 of the national maize-marketing agency (Compañía Nacional de Subsistencias Populares, CONASUPO), which lowered maize prices to parity with U.S. grain. Fitting’s discussion of the debate centers on opposition to the “neoliberal corn regime” characterized by these changes that are seen as leading to the demise of the peasantry. Transgenic corn is only the latest manifestation of this regime.

This viability of opposition to transgenic maize is belied by the government’s recent decision to proceed with test plantings, continued reliance on maize imports, the lack of compelling evidence of widespread diffusion or escape of transgenic traits, and the fact that peasant producers seem largely unaware of the national debate. In her ethnography of San José Miahuatlán, Fitting finds that “not one maize farmer whom I interviewed in 2001–6 had ever heard of *maíz transgénico*” (p. 119). Like small producers everywhere in Mexico, Fitting’s informants remain fiercely loyal to local maize. Their struggle is not with novel types of seed but with wresting a crop and income from an environment viewed as increasingly difficult and in a hostile economic and political climate. To Fitting, maize has become a “recourse” for households that must look elsewhere for a livelihood, especially to migration away from the village requiring adjustments in the conventional gendered roles in the production cycle. Indeed, producing maize is done at an economic loss, especially among small-scale producers who subsidize it with migrants’ income and their poverty. Yet it persists as the peasants’ mainstay in Mexico, planted on over half of Mexico’s cropland and by 12.5 million rural inhabitants. In the end, the real struggle for maize is not over transgenic

varieties but, rather, in generational shifts in the willingness to abide the hardships that accompany attachment to the grain. The long-standing debate goes on whether Mexico's peasants will disappear or endure.

Fitting echoes other Mesoamericanists in noting that maize is "clearly more than an economic good" (p. 117), suggesting that the fate of the peasants' crop will rest on factors beyond financial cost and benefit. She comes closer

than any other ethnographer in exploring the crop's cultural place in Mexico. Her vision is grounded in economic anthropology and human ecology rather than in thick description. Whether an interpretive approach would gain us more purchase in understanding the hold that maize has on Mesoamerican life and culture will have to wait for another project. We can be thankful that Elizabeth Fitting has taken us this far.

Imagining the Post-Apartheid State: An Ethnographic Account of Namibia

John T. Friedman. New York: Berghahn, 2011. 324 pp.

Jennifer Hays

École des Hautes Études en Sciences Sociales

"What can we learn about the Namibian State by investigating the state-related imaginings of a group of Kaokoland-connected people?" [p. 10]

In this well-written and timely book, John Friedman poses the Namibian state itself as an object of anthropological research. Acknowledging the challenges of and multiple possible entry points for such a study, Friedman positions the state as a system of social relations constantly being constructed, ultimately located in the "political imagination of those who inhabit it" (p. 5). The inhabitants through whose eyes and experiences he explores the Namibian state are those living in (or connected to) one of the most remote and "marginal" parts of the country, Kaokoland, the arid and mountainous far northwest corner of the Kunene region.

As Friedman notes, study of the "State" is dominated by political scientists, who tend to produce "top-down, normative accounts of high politics" (p. 248). Sparsely populated Namibia—with its particular history as a former apartheid state and as the only state colonized by another African country—does not conform to the dominant vision of "Africa" and is often excluded from analyses. Friedman provides an important contribution with this nuanced, "ground-up" view of the postcolonial politics that captures the uniqueness of Namibia, and of the specific area (Kaokoland), while also illuminating broader questions of statehood.

Namibia achieved independence from South Africa in 1990, and Friedman conducted the bulk of his research about a decade into the country's independent statehood. Early in his fieldwork, a query painted on the exterior of a house in the town of Opuwo caught his attention: "How do you feeling about Freedom?" Responses to his initial questions about the message revealed a deep—and sometimes surprising—local ambiguity toward the new Namibian state, leading Friedman to ask, "How could a majority express sentimental longing, nostalgia, even a sense of loss for South African

rule?" (p. 58). This fundamental conundrum will be familiar to many who have worked in the "remote" areas of Namibia, and Friedman's analysis provides a constructive approach to understanding.

In Part I of the book, Friedman lays the groundwork for his argument that familial—especially paternalistic—relations are a "unifying trope" through which the Namibian state is imagined. Part II of the book compares the parallel dispute-resolution systems in Namibia: the state court system and customary law. With vivid prose that evokes the texture of the settings, Friedman first contrasts cases heard in both a magistrate's court and a traditional court. He goes on to argue that the two systems have evolved in relation to each other to form a "legal hybridity," of which a key element is the social embeddedness of individuals as "children" (p. 172). Part III examines the political history of the region, ultimately turning again to the discursive construction of families.

That paternalism is a basis for colonial and independent state relations is not a new observation, but Friedman's analysis of how Kaokolanders "invoked idioms of kinship and their own moral imagery of families and households in order to instantiate government" is revealing (p. 238). For example, the government is "literally expected to feed and nourish the individual directly, like a father does his child" (p. 94); indeed, many of his interviewees considered the president's primary responsibility to be "the canvassing of foreign aid" for this purpose (p. 73). Kaokoland parents expect that children should be tied to them "in a lifelong and dependent relationship" (p. 103). A particularly significant observation is that most Herero-speaking Kaokolanders view political affiliation—to both traditional authorities and political parties—as an "inheritable attribute" rather than linked to political platforms or party ideologies. Such perspectives on government contrast sharply with a neoliberal, individualistic, democratic perspective of statehood (and also with "development" ideology, although this is not Friedman's topic) in which individuals ideally become independent and self-sufficient. The expectation that the state should "be as the

father” and the cultural expectations of what that father is responsible for, align—especially in retrospect—more closely with the former apartheid state than with modern independent Namibia. This is what Friedman calls the “Kaokoland critique,” and it forms the basis of an insightful and useful analysis of the Namibian state as experienced in one corner of its territory.

Friedman does not present his subjects as socially or politically uniform; there are deep cultural and historical rifts, which he thoroughly elaborates. However, when it comes to discourses about government, the main differences “related not to the art of government per se, but rather to

Kaokolanders’ assessments of the new independent State’s ability to master that art” (p. 238). It would be interesting to further explore how this analysis is relevant beyond state relations—for example, to those involving the multiple international aid agencies and development organizations that are active in Namibia—but that would be another book. This book will be of interest to anthropologists, historians, and political scientists—both those interested specifically in Namibia or southern Africa and those more generally interested in the ethnography of the state, and in the continuous, mutual construction of the state by its “citizens,” and vice versa.

Hobos, Hustlers, and Backsliders: Homeless in San Francisco

Teresa Gowan. Minneapolis: University of Minnesota Press, 2010. 368 pp.

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Teresa Gowan’s *Hobos, Hustlers, and Backsliders* draws upon five years of fieldwork (from the mid-1990s to the early 2000s), some 1,700 hours of shadowing her “research companions” (as she speaks of them) or “brothers” (in her acknowledgments), to offer up vivid ethnographic accounts of the lives of 38 homeless men in San Francisco’s roughest neighborhoods.

Alternating field vignettes and analytical chapters, she identifies and compares three competing discourses about homelessness, which define, shape, organize, and constrain individual lives and compromise efforts to think creatively about how to turn around the rising tide in the numbers of homeless people in the United States and elsewhere. Compassion and charity for the plight of the homeless, having given way to ideas about their moral failure, led to a sense of numbing inevitability that many must live in conditions of extreme poverty and very public suffering. The discourses diverge in characterizing how homelessness arises in the first place and how homelessness (and the homeless themselves) should be addressed—whether as “sin-talk” (homelessness is a moral failing and deserves criminalization, punishment, exclusion), “sick-talk” (homelessness is a kind of disease or mental illness and requires medicalization, treatment, therapy, case management), or “system-talk” (widespread homelessness and poverty demand substantial socioeconomic structural changes and regulations).

The narratives Gowan gathers are filtered through the lenses of management and control, challenged by the homeless themselves as they reinvent ways to survive with a sense of dignity and degree of autonomy, despite changing economic and political climates, tactics of sociospatial segregation, racism, classism, and national and state

initiatives intersecting with local contexts. Gowan’s research highlights the resourcefulness, entrepreneurship, inventiveness, and cunning that many of the homeless deploy in their quest to survive with dignity. Her work joins a growing legacy of sociological, anthropological, and ethnographic work around homelessness in the United States—a legacy of work by the likes of Elliot Liebow, Kim Hopper, Irene Glasser, Joanne Passaro, Ida Susser, Philippe Bourgois, Anna Lou Dehavenon, David Wagner, Alisse Waterston, Janet Fitchen, Vincent Lyon-Callo, and many others.

Yet bearing (descriptive) witness is not enough. Readers may be left with some unanswered questions after reading *Hobos, Hustlers, and Backsliders*. Gowan tends to dismiss the work of the many men and women working in diverse and multiple sectors (state-run, nonprofit, and public-private partnerships). They devote their lives to trying to make a difference for, reach out to, care for, and support the homeless in their midst. What of this work? Her account in “The Homeless Archipelago” (ch. 6) appears profoundly colored by the perceptions of the homeless men she shadowed, who cycle in and out of contact with the “systems” ostensibly intended to help them. As well, what are the strengths (and weaknesses) of ethnographic discourse analysis as a research approach? What of internal consistency across narratives? What of the divide between talk and actual behavior? Gowan appears to gloss over such gaps in somewhat slippery fashion, by characterizing speech as a kind of act and action as a kind of speech (p. 25) that is susceptible to analysis. More detailed methodological discussion would help others follow in her footsteps to explore fully the rich insights that can potentially be generated by such research. Moreover, what are the implications of Gowan’s work for planning, policy, and action or intervention? How does her work actually aid us in challenging and transforming sin-, sick-, and system-talk?

Aspiring ethnographers and those interested in “messy” qualitative research will learn much about access and rapport, representation, reciprocity, and the juicy ethics of difficult, forbidding, dirty, and, at times, dangerous fieldwork from Gowan, “a small English white woman of muddled class origin” (p. 16). One of Gowan’s great strengths lies in her raw accounts of life on the streets, which will speak to (and perhaps provoke) those working in many disciplines and fields—urban sociology, urban anthropology, human geography, social work, urban studies, poverty,

and inequality activism and research. Gowan’s candid black-and-white photos (taken in the early 2000s, toward the end of her fieldwork) offer another layer of discovery for the reader, as does the book’s cover design, which features powerful stenciled white cutouts of letters screened by strokes of bruised violet and rich ochre. Only upon a closer look does one perceive the background close-up image of a man’s face with ornate tattoo, a broken cigarette dangling from his lips. His steady eyes gaze right back at you.

Ethnographic Contributions to the Study of Endangered Languages

Tania Granadillo and Heidi A. Orcutt-Gachiri, eds. Tucson: University of Arizona Press, 2011. 248 pp.

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This short volume presents case studies of endangered languages and their speaking communities from across the globe. In their introduction, the editors identify four themes interweaving the case studies. First, while proindigenous language legislation has little effect on language vitality, anti-indigenous language laws heighten endangerment. Second, language revitalization effort must extend beyond the language classroom, giving the indigenous languages valued and visible social roles. Third, where strong and charismatic leaders embrace and promote language revitalization and use, community involvement in language promotion and use is enhanced. Fourth and finally, economics can accelerate either language rebirth or death: where the community is fragmented by the necessity of wage labor elsewhere or where the community sees no economic advantage and considerable disadvantage in the maintenance of the local language, revitalization efforts generally fail; however, where the community has a strong economic base and productive career possibilities for local language speakers exist, local languages may revive.

The first section of the book deals with the “Effects of Educational Policies.” Tania Orcutt-Gachiri shows that the use of exams in English and KiSwahili as gate-keeping devices regulating access to higher education devalues the local languages. Olga Katzakevich provides an overview of the complex linguistic landscape of Siberia. She notes that parents, while expressing positive affect for their indigenous languages, are teaching and speaking Russian in the home to facilitate success in state schools and access to careers with a secure economic future. M. Lynn Landweer, writing on two languages of Papua New Guinea, finds that even where English, a worldwide killer language, is the medium of school instruction, language shift does not occur if the indigenous language does not cede local noncurricular domains.

The second section deals with “Effects of Revitalization.” Two effects, (1) development of positive self, community, and language images (Paula Meyer and Jon Meza Cuero on Kumeyaay; Marie France Patte on Añun) and (2) increased political coherence, activism, and legal action to ensure group claims to land and social autonomy (Marie France Patte on Añun), are commonly touted benefits of language revitalization projects. However, the third essay in this section, by Melissa A. Rinehart on Miami, details an unexpected barrier to language revival, noting that, even within a group committed to language revitalization, divergent ideas and expectations about language learning and use can inhibit the spread of the language beyond the classroom.

The final section treats the “Effects of Sociohistorical Processes.” Barbara G. Hoffman’s life history of Chief Gasou IV of the Igo illustrates the dilemma of language groups whose agrarian community base, while potentially a viable arena for minority language use, competes with the great economic utility of regional and world languages. Tania Granadillo documents Kurripako language use in two villages in Venezuela, where despite supportive legislation, language nests, and a fair number of speakers, the language is in retreat. She provides a telling quotation from a young speaker: “Why are you interested in Kurripako? We speak it because it is our language, but if it weren’t we wouldn’t” (p. 144). Lars Karstedt shifts the focus to Öömrang spoken on the German island of Amrun. The island’s beauty has drawn an influx of non-Öömrang speakers and pushed the housing prices beyond what young local couples can afford, driving them to the mainland and Standard German. Mark Sicoli shows that among the Zapotec, where an ideology of bilingualism successfully contests a vision of a monolingual Mexico, speakers maintain their indigenous language while also mastering Spanish. Heidi M. Altman recounts the history of the Cherokee communities of North Carolina, who have prioritized language revitalization. Part of the revenue stream from the casino opened in 1997 has

funded initiatives to restore language use: a toddler immersion program, parent workshops, master-apprentice nests, emergent Cherokee literature, and online classes and podcasts. Though she does not mention this, the development of Tsalagi (Cherokee) computer keyboards has integrated Cherokee language use in the modern classroom and enabled a vibrant Internet presence for the script as well as the spoken language.

While the editors emphasize that these studies show how the local and particular inform and explain language

loss, shift, and, occasionally, maintenance, it must also be noted that linguists and community members struggling to awaken, save, or reinforce their languages will recognize the ideologies; the legal, social, and economic conditions; and the strategies deployed. As illustrative of general processes and conditions, *Ethnographic Contributions to the Study of Endangered Languages* can serve as a resource for university classes on language death and for people, like Zepeda, who have dedicated their lives to giving indigenous languages a chance.

Breaking Ranks: Iraq Veterans Speak Out against the War

Matthew C. Gutmann and Catherine Lutz. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010. 234 pp.

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Through the moving voices of six U.S. Armed Forces veterans—Charlie Anderson (sailor), Ricky Clousing (soldier), Tina Garnanez (soldier), Chris Magaoay (Marine), Demond Mullins (Guardsmen), and Garrett Reppenhagen (soldier)—who fought in the Iraq War and subsequently “broke ranks” from mainstream military sentiment by publicly opposing it, Matthew Gutmann and Catherine Lutz’s *Breaking Ranks: Iraq Veterans Speak Out against the War* offers a vital counternarrative to dominant celebratory representations of war. The book is noteworthy for capturing the multifaceted nature of veterans’ experiences and performs a valuable service by providing a vehicle for the circulation of dissenting voices within the military.

The text is framed as a type of bildungsroman in three parts with the life stories of the veterans constituting its heart and soul. Through a collection of anecdotes wherein the protagonists recall how they first became aware of the military, how they were recruited, and their various struggles through basic training, “Part I: Innocence” sets the stage by tracing the conditions of possibility for the emergence of critical consciousness in these individuals. Five of the working- and middle-class veterans also speak about their first mission deployments, while the sixth, Magaoay, details the consequences of choosing instead the difficult and controversial path of heading to Canada and going “U.A.” or “Unauthorized Absence.”

“Part II: War’s Crucible” describes the veterans’ increasing disillusionment as their time in Iraq exposes them to the humanity of the local populace alongside instances of criminal and inhumane actions tacitly accepted at times by some U.S. military personnel. It is in this section that we begin to witness the seeds of consciousness planted in Part I take root, as nourished by the harsh realities and contradictions of the veterans’ experiences in the Iraqi war zone. Here questions about the morality and purpose of the war become voiced

with greater urgency. One tragic highlight of this section is Garnanez’s recollection of the specifically gendered nature of violence. For her, the threat of violence against female warriors is an inside-out affair where the constant risk of enemy violence from without is doubled by the threat of sexual harassment and assault from within committed by “trusted” members of the U.S. military.

“Part III: Aftermath and Activism” details the return of these veterans to a U.S. society largely blinded to the cruelties of the war and complex postwar experiences, including posttraumatic stress, endured by these protagonists and many other returning military personnel. The authors also treat the veterans’ ongoing activism, such as counter-recruitment efforts and involvement in antiwar and antimilitarization support networks.

This book has numerous strengths. One shortcoming does deserve mention, however. Specifically, it is somewhat curious that a book so admirably dedicated to broadening and complicating the unfounded view of military personnel as monolithic would recapitulate a rigid dichotomy between the ranks of enlisted personnel and commissioned officers. The complexity of enlisted veterans is established in the text against what are near caricatures of commissioned officers who are ostensibly obsessed only with their careers and self-preservation to the detriment of ethically committed leadership. Even if the authors explicitly focus on the experiences of enlisted veterans, their attempt to broaden the reader’s view of the military and its members is weakened by their unbalanced treatment of military personnel.

For instance, might the perspective of Ehren Watada, the former Army first lieutenant who refused to deploy to Iraq in 2006, have added another dimension to these war stories told otherwise? One wonders as well if other examples of this sort could have been incorporated to help flesh out the book’s portrayal of activist military veterans. Indeed, had the book been written today, one could imagine the addition of West Point graduate, former lieutenant, and LGBT activist Dan Choi; or, perhaps, the inclusion

of former Lieutenant Colonel Joe Estores and his complex and ambivalent transformation from “imperial soldiering” to “Indigenous [Hawaiian] warriorhood” (Tengan 2011).

Breaking Ranks is a significant contribution to the growing literature on militarisms and militarization, and to antiwar and antimilitarization research situated within the broader project of radical social and cultural critique. For the most part, the book achieves its goals. Its uneven depiction of military personnel detracts, however, from its overarching goal of presenting the reader with a more nuanced understanding

of the process of war making and the depth of the people who fill in and break from its ranks.

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Gender and Culture at the Limit of Rights

Dorothy L. Hodgson, ed. *Pennsylvania Studies in Human Rights* series. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2011. 312 pp.

Carole Nagengast

University of New Mexico

Authors in this stimulating volume address the potential and limits of a rights-based approach to gender justice, as well as if and how NGOs and domestic or international law can deliver, encourage, or promote certain rights and proscribe others, even though the proscribed rights are legitimate practices in the view of ordinary people.

Pamela Scully rehearses the view that colonial powers, drawing upon images of degraded women’s bodies, introduced Protestantism, nuclear families, heterosexuality, individualism, and bans on FGC into Africa, denigrating local forms of kinship, gender relations, and solidarity. Scully suggests that contemporary NGOs also position women as degraded bodies, teaching Africans that sufferers of rape, FGC, and other violence need international protection and the intervention of the state, which is (sadly?) informed by human rights law.

Salma Maoulidi and Sally Goldfarb examine law, domestic violence, and culture in Zanzibar and the United States, respectively. Maoulidi’s history of Zanzibar emphasizes the interface of secular and religious law and cultural practices. She avoids reification and demonstrates the shifting meaning of *race* in differing historical and political circumstances. Goldfarb’s account of the ways U.S. laws help and hinder survivors of domestic violence is excellent but draws entirely on literature dating to 2005 or earlier. Recent literature may offer new insights about the intersectionality of class, education, ethnicity, immigration status, and the religious affiliation of those who survive or perpetrate domestic violence and perhaps inform intervention strategies.

Peggy Levitt and Sally Engle Merry discuss alternative forms of presence and activism that do not draw on national and international human rights standards, demonstrating it is not necessary to invoke law in order to introduce justice and rights.

Lila Abu-Lughod implies that women’s rights NGOs in Egypt have created careers, channeled funds, inspired commitments, and given credence to new actors and that some NGOs report all violations against women “as if they were instances of the same phenomenon” (p. 110). She further charges that NGOs do not campaign against women civilian deaths in the Palestinian–Israeli conflict and ignore the effects of occupation and pervasive violence on Palestinian family relations.

Caroline Yezer discusses the tension between law and customary practice in rural post–Shining Path Peru. During the violence, indigenous men were drafted into the army, which bestowed citizenship and was valued for its discipline. Military rule was similar to customary law, and this in part explains why men and sometimes women favor customary law, even though traditional sanctions may violate global human rights standards. Interestingly, women celebrate the freedom provided by human rights law to control their reproduction and to complain about male domestic violence but prefer the safeguards of customary forms of justice because the former offers restorative justice.

Dorothy Hodgson pleads for the voices of Maasai women to be heard, especially those who aver that the eradication of FGM is not a priority—that economic security and political empowerment must come first. One supposes Hodgson equally supports the platform of other Kenyan women who are struggling to replace FGM with health, safety, and life-affirming initiation practices that do not entail cutting of the genitalia. The latter is a measurable goal that is well-articulated, even though the “economic and political causes of disease, hunger and insecurity” (p. 157) will remain elusive for some time to come.

Lynn Stephen’s history of a teacher’s strike in Oaxaca, Mexico, that later included other social sectors and became a transnational movement resonates with the Kenyan ethnographic material outlined by Ousseina Alidou. Both

authors illuminate the processes and the outcomes of women seizing—literally in Mexico and ideologically in Kenya—the initiative by illustrating the needs of indigenous teachers demanding school supplies and adequate pay in Oaxaca or Muslim women insisting their Qu’ranic reading of a proposed law punishing sexual violence be heard. In both cases, activist women demonstrate their sophisticated understanding of legal and administrative issues—perhaps to the surprise and chagrin of dominant male educated elites.

Robyn Rodriquez discusses the construction of masculinity in the discourse of immigration policy in the post-9/11 era in the United States. That discourse invariably depicts male immigrants as lawbreakers and potential terrorists, regardless of legal status or whether a serious crime has been committed. Rodriquez examines the claims of human rights law with respect to the vulnerable and suggests they may shape the debate around the practice of keeping

immigrants in detention facilities along with suspected criminals, many of them violent. Detained immigrants’ parental, spousal, and filial roles are unacknowledged, and they have fewer legal rights than criminals.

Mary Jane Real, using a variety of ethnographic accounts, makes a welcome plea for universal rights and transnational organizing as a way for people to realize and defend their rights. Real’s focus on human rights defenders reflects campaigns made by local, national, and even international human rights organizations (e.g., Amnesty International had a “Defend the Defenders” campaign a few years ago).

Books in the Pennsylvania series on Human Rights, under the able editorship of Bert Lockwood, always stimulate additional discussion and further arguments about the universality of human rights. *Gender and Culture at the Limit of Rights* is no exception.

Eldorado! The Archaeology of Gold Mining in the Far North

Catherine Holder Spude, Robin O. Mills, Karl Gurcke, and Roderick Sprague, eds. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2011. 376 pp.

Liam Frink

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I am quite grateful that the *American Anthropologist* book editors asked me to review *Eldorado! The Archaeology of Gold Mining in the Far North*—I learned some very interesting aspects of colonial gold mining in the north and grew an even deeper appreciation for the data collected by my archaeological colleagues in various government and private archaeological agencies. The chapters also reinforced for me the essential contribution northern studies offer to cross-cultural research.

Catherine Holder Spude and colleagues are clear about their primary goal for this volume: to bring light to the terrific research on mining that has, prior to this book, been relegated to “gray literature.” I think this an admirable goal of this volume and one that should be supported by other academic presses and even journals. I also very much appreciate that the editors inspired chapters that to a surprising extent focus on those aspects of mining culture that are not as commonly addressed: namely, how underrepresented people were a significant element in the historic mining era.

If I had to point out problems with the edited book, I would suggest that the early chapters seem to be apologizing for the lack of theory in the subsequent case studies. While I was reading, I felt I was encountering too many introductory chapters, each trying to validate the worth and organization of the case studies—and pushing ideas of how to position the research (both to the reader and the authors). Frankly, overall the early chapter reading was slightly tedious, and

the information seemed dated and felt mildly forced and disconnected from the primary purpose of the book. The introduction of the case studies by Catherine Holder Spude and Robin Mills is engaging and sufficient for an introduction: Holder Spude’s overall history of the Alaska-Yukon gold rushes is an excellent basic history (for those of us less familiar with the history), and I generally appreciated Mills’s model for site function in the northern gold-mining system, an effective method to place the chapters within an overall context. As the chapters demonstrate, there were a range of locations and strategies (e.g., Michael Brand’s transient traders and miners), different goals of miners (Becky Saleeby’s “subsistence miners” who were more invested in being able to live a northern subsistence lifestyle because of mining), and ways that the social and economic context of mining camps and towns developed over time (Mills).

The meat of the book—the case studies of the individual sites and the fascinating historical context in which each author places their data—stand strongly on their own. Yes, there were places in several of the chapters that I wished the authors would have connected their data to larger archaeological frameworks and cross-cultural research—where brief comments on data are such fertile and exciting seeds to deeper engagement with other scholarly research and contextual framing. For instance, the brief (but fascinating) discussion (in Doreen Cooper and Holder Spude’s chapter) of the 100 black soldiers that were assigned to Skagway could have included analysis—as did, for example, Laurie Wilkie, who in her extraordinary work integrates historical excavation data on African American women and

thoughtful wider contextualization. These soldiers lived in coal sheds and largely fended for themselves (by hunting and fishing); tellingly, immediately after the men of company L 24th Infantry were relocated, the army upgraded their facilities.

I was thrilled to see that several of the chapters include information about women and indigenous people who were involved in the colonial mining industry, not just as laborers in the case of indigenous men or as prostitutes as in the case of women—both important roles—but there is a wider range we must explore, and this book inspires this dialogue. For example (in Holder Spude's contribution), the dynamic Mattie Wilson, a stamper who "gleefully" wore pants and staked her own gold claim. Where studies have been relatively

silent on women, they are even less revealing of indigenous participants—like the local women that miners and traders often married and who contributed to their integration into critical local networks and market success (see Cooper and Holder Spude). Robert King explores Native entrepreneurs who were well-aware of the challenges they encountered in the face of colonial biases, such as the indigenous people who would keep gold discoveries secret until they could successfully partner with Euro-North Americans, and Thomas Thornton discusses how Tlingit leaders controlled access to the pivotal mining thoroughfares of Chilkoot and Chilkat Trails (long used as indigenous routes of trade) and how this monopoly was challenged by colonials and other indigenous entrepreneurs.

Ethnicity in Ancient Amazonia: Reconstructing Past Identities from Archaeology, Linguistics, and Ethnohistory

Alf Hornborg and Jonathan D. Hill, eds. Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2011. 408 pp.

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Ethnicity is a situational category that was invented to classify and divide peoples colonized by the European empires, and in more recent times by nation-states, under the ideology of nationalism. More recent works have demonstrated how ethnicity is becoming another commodity in relation to tourism and, in particular, to NGOs that seek economic resources by utilizing postcolonial mythologies of the "noble savage." *Ethnicity in Ancient Amazonia* arrives late to the global discussion on this issue, in particular since the Amazonian nation-states over the last 30 years have recognized the rights of indigenous groups over large territories. Furthermore, constitutional changes in Amazonian states have benefited "ethnic groups" with more rights to health, land, and autonomy than what the states offer to nonindigenous poor persons. The present volume contributes to understanding some of the processes of ethnogenesis that generate the complex mosaic of Amazonian indigenous peoples. The central theme focuses on the Arawak language groups that expanded over large territories of South America and the Caribbean islands. The book provides an introduction to concepts of "ethnogenesis" and "ethnicity." The 18 chapters of this volume are divided into three sections: archaeology, descriptive linguistic dispersion, and ethnohistory. The text ends with a discussion of the volume's contribution by the late Neal Whitehead.

The archaeological chapters show very complex networks and hierarchical social systems expressed in the landscape that were very dynamic and transformative, not static as they are usually portrayed. One of the six archaeology

chapters, authored by Eduardo Neves, contributes to dismantling essentialist interpretations on the human occupation of the Amazon by examining the case of the Central Amazon, where he demonstrates the lack of correlation between material culture, ethnicity, and linguistic dispersion. The contribution by Michael Heckenberger focuses on longue durée construction of identity that archaeologists like himself have pieced together in collaboration with indigenous groups, showing the continuity and transformation of identities in a "deep time" perspective. In a very ingenious analysis, Warren DeBoer's chapter defends the relationship between material culture, like ligature locations on the body as ethnic markers, and language by using data collected by Günter Tessmann in the early 20th century. Other chapters deal with the transformations in pottery assemblages from prehistory to the republic in the case of the Orinoco Basin in Venezuela. Alf Hornborg and Love Eriksen explore broad data in an inductive way to think about migration as a cause of ethnogenesis. This pursuit of an essentialist view of ethnicity based on the correlation of attributes or indicators of regional interactions in which the local history or the understanding of historical context vanishes in favor of broad views does not assist understanding the present situation.

The linguistic part of the book illustrates the problems of classification and historical reconstruction of the diversification of Arawakan languages. All the chapters discuss previous divisions and subgrouping of the Arawakan languages, such as a north and south (west) division by using, for example, network analysis. A chapter on the use of GIS presents arguments to explain isolated languages as a very early human occupation of Amazonia in contrast to the recent dispersion of the Arawak-speaking peoples.

The ethnohistorical part is far more diverse than the previous parts. There is a chapter by Jonathan Hill on the construction of sacred landscapes and how this correlates with Tupí-Guaraní and Arawakan Wakuénai prophetic, movements and ritual (musical and verbal). Another article, by Pirjo Virtanen, explores the continuity in oral history about earthworks found in the area of the Upper Purús River. The chapter on the region of Apolamba (Bolivia) explores the impact of influences from the Andes on local, historical processes of ethnogenesis. The study of the Ecuadorian “forest of Canelos” by Norman Whitten is a critique of the continuous reproduction of ethnical divisions that come from the time of the religious missions. Fernando Santos-Granero presents a

discussion on captive identities and subordinations between indigenous groups and introduces the concept of “selective emulation” to explain how identities emerge.

In general, *Ethnicity in Ancient Amazonia* will be appreciated by those with an interest in understanding the diversity of the Amazonian past and historical situational views of ethnicity. The editors did a good job of putting together these fascinating chapters, which will generate a lot of discussion on the role of anthropology and archaeology in our understanding of present-day Amazonia and what it means in relation to the future of this region’s people.

Living with Koryak Traditions: Playing with Culture in Siberia

Alexander D. King. Lincoln: University of Nebraska Press, 2011. 348 pp.

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This monograph reads as a thesis against the reification of native culture in Kamchatka, and it does so with impressive success. Alexander King’s *Living with Koryak Traditions* sits comfortably within the best Sapirean anthropological tradition, providing a nuanced and dynamic picture of Koryak culture at the turn of the 21st century. King weaves his discussion around issues as diverse as local museum dioramas, animal–human communication, the use of Russian words for modern technologies, Bible translations, and hygienic ideology in language textbooks in a manner that connects it all, not in some outlandish theoretical abstraction but, rather, in the concrete realm of cultural practice and semantic negotiation.

King explores the effects of early ethnographic writings, Soviet anthropological theory, and the continuing policy of “certified authenticity” on contemporary debates on culture and language among Koryaks. In so doing, he discards deterministic readings that tend to reduce the center–periphery relation in Russia to one of imposition and resistance or compliance. By setting at the center of his analysis the notion of tradition as a resource for “creative play,” King examines what people actively do with it in various spheres of social life. Hence his analysis goes beyond invented–real and copy–original dichotomies, presenting a truly dynamic understanding of Koryak culture in which debate is the driving force of generating meaning between past and present as well as between local (*mestnyi*) and newcomer (*priezzhii*).

Perhaps the book’s crucial analytical turn regards King’s approach to dance as an “iconic index” or “synecdoche” of Koryak culture as a whole. In examining a number of different dance groups (such as Weyem and Mengo) and their perspective on cultural genuineness, King explores the intricate native debate over understandings of performance,

tradition, and their dialectic. In an ethnographically rich text, he presents a true kaleidoscope of perceptions, opinions, and ideas: of the performers on themselves, and on each other, as well as of audiences regarding each performing group in and of itself and in relation to other groups. What is particularly refreshing is the discussion of the way in which Koryaks dissociate their evaluation of the authenticity of performances from issues pertaining to the ethnic identity of the actual performers; what matters for Koryak evaluations of performances, such as staged folk dances, King argues, is not the reproduction of some eternal or otherwise static cultural authenticity but, rather, “doing it right.” This overarching principle, applied to a broad range of social practices not excluding funerals, is key to King’s approach of culture as fundamentally creative and processual.

When it comes to discussing Koryak language, King adopts an analytical perspective deriving from the principle that “the ‘cultural’ in language lies in the connection between microinteractional experiences and macrosociological contexts” (p. 25). He thus takes readers across different phases of Russian colonialism and the Soviet era, presenting complex linguistic policies and theories of culture and ethnos in a way that equips us to understand the sociology as well as the phenomenology of teaching and learning Koryak in schools today. Underlying Koryak emphasis on “the plurality of linguistic practices” (p. 204), the book provides a fascinating discussion of Soviet efforts to standardize Koryak language. King’s study of history of “official Koryak” in the last century furthermore provides the ground for an exploration of the afterlife of Soviet dichotomy between modernity and tradition as reflected by the realm of language and language teaching. Once again native rejection of ethnic nationalism and purism plays a significant role in King’s analysis, especially as it contrasts with Soviet and post-Soviet anthropological and official categories of “native language” (*radnoi iazyk*) and the spurious metaphysics of form and

content, which still form a residual part of a dialectical materialism in Russian approaches of “peopleness” (*narodnost*) today.

Overall, King develops a subtle and persuasive analysis of Koryak culture, whose force persists long after one has finished reading the book. This product of meticulous ethnography and long-term engagement with Koryak culture is a very valuable contribution to the study

of Siberian societies, Russian colonialism, and post-Soviet cultural dynamics as a whole. More than just that, however, it provides a clear and sound example of the value of Boasian anthropology today in that, in its critical engagement with the notion of culture as “an essential part of being human” (p. 20), it achieves a relational portrayal of Koryak society as embedded in both everyday practices and macrosociological and historical power relations in the region.

Caring for the “Holy Land”: Filipina Domestic Workers in Israel

Claudia Liebelt. New York: Berghahn, 2011. 252 pp.

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Caring for the “Holy Land” provides a nuanced account of the migration of Filipina domestic workers into Israel. Migrant Filipinas legally enter Israel to provide long-term care for the elderly as well as the physically infirm. They are granted nonrenewable guest-worker visas that tie them to care for a particular individual, whose death without exception results in the termination of their legal status. Though “selective exclusion” (p. 38) primarily defines Israeli labor migration laws, as Claudia Liebelt shows, the experiences of migrant Filipina domestic workers cannot be reduced to the law, as they continuously carve migrant worlds that defy their exclusion.

To conduct this study, Liebelt spent 16 nonconsecutive months doing fieldwork in Israel and the Philippines. She employed a variety of ethnographic methods, including participant-observation and interviews. She interviewed a total of 101 individuals including Filipina and other domestic workers, government officials in the Philippines and Israel, and various practitioners of migration institutions. Her rich data allow her to foreground the subjective perspective of migrant Filipina domestic workers in Israel and illustrate their lived realities as migrants in Israel, including their quest to maintain transnational female lives, to find intrinsic satisfaction in caring for the infirm and elderly, to build community solidarity with other Filipinos, to defy the law and live in illegality, and finally to create a diasporic sensibility.

The book begins by providing the context of immigrant integration in Israel. Chapter 1 establishes the regime of “selective exclusion” against labor migrants in Israel. In this chapter, Liebelt describes the laws of exclusion that limit the integration of migrant workers in Israel, thereby establishing the context that defines their limited incorporation. For the most part, migrant Filipina domestic workers in Israel are

segregated in their work in the private home, whether as a documented caregiver or an undocumented housecleaner or babysitter.

The rest of the chapters describe the various ways that migrant Filipina domestic workers negotiate their exclusion from Israel. Chapter 2 establishes that migrant Filipina domestic workers tolerate their marginalization as excluded members of Israeli society for the sake of their family in the Philippines. As Liebelt notes, “migration is a step women may take in order to actively maintain or even create a family” (p. 59). She convincingly argues that the constant maintenance of ties to family in the Philippines centrally defines these women’s experience of migration. Chapter 3 interrogates the meaning of work for Filipina domestic workers. It establishes that intrinsic motivations (e.g., fulfilling a calling from God) provide them with deep satisfaction, telling us that our understanding of domestic work cannot be reduced to rational calculation.

Chapters 4 and 5 describe the spaces that migrant Filipina domestic workers inhabit outside the workplace, showing how the community transitioned from a culture of active public engagement to one of fear. Chapter 4 provides a rich description of the Filipino migrant community, the solidarity that ties its members, the commitment of many to the festivities and events that represent the community, and finally the plundering of this community by the Israeli government’s deportation campaigns. Chapter 5 then moves onward to describe the feelings, sensibilities, and actions that embody the fear of deportation in the community.

In the final substantive chapter, Liebelt reminds us of the lived reality of the Filipino Diaspora and the use of other destinations by Filipina domestic workers in Israel to imagine alternative possibilities for migration. Placing Israel as a middle-ranked destination in the diaspora, Liebelt describes how domestic workers in Israel fantasize about the prospect of Canada and other destinations with more inclusionary migration regimes that offer the possibility of

permanent residency. At the same time, she reminds us that Israel is perceived as a destination to which they had been directed by God as part of their divine destiny as Christians, as well as a step they had to take in their perpetual motion across nations. In so doing, the book ends by reminding us to move beyond rational motivations in our understanding of the migration of Filipina domestic workers. Instead we need to consider the women's intrinsic motivations, including their spiritual growth.

Caring for the "Holy Land" makes an important contribution to the literature on migrant domestic workers across the globe. Not only does it call attention to an ignored destination of Filipina domestic workers in the literature of migration—Israel—but it also provides an important introduction to the experiences of migrant domestic workers who do not qualify for long-term residency. This book will be of interest to scholars of migration, domestic work, Israel, the Philippines, and women's work in globalization.

The Mirage of China: Anti-Humanism, Narcissism, and Corporeality of the Contemporary World

Xin Liu. New York: Berghahn, 2009. 222 pp.

Susan D. Blum

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GDP. Annual growth rate. Apparently objective and commensurable, such figures constitute the measure of China for itself and the world—not class struggle or any outmoded revolutionary concepts. China is a frenzy of statistical collection, where numbers are regarded as there for the picking, “as someone goes to a forest to gather strawberries or mushrooms” (p. 58). “Statistical data have come to be seen as a source of neutral, objective knowledge about the economy and society. This knowledge is now owned, as common property, by both officials and ordinary people” (p. 48).

In *The Mirage of China*, Xin Liu has written “a conceptual ethnography . . . an ethnographic investigation of concepts” (p. xi) of statistical thinking and their effects on the intangible quality of experience in the present age. Liu aims to “capture the epistemological rupture that has separated today's China from its recent past, resulting in a different mentality and outlook for the People's Republic” (p. xii). And he laments the mentality and outlook he finds: “What occupies one's mind in today's China is how to run fast and faster in the race for wealth on the global market” (p. 57).

As with any analysis of rupture, both before and after must be examined. “Instead of the future [as goal in the now-discredited Maoist past] there has arisen the figure of the modern Other, which has become the eternal measurement of happiness,” and the reform era “has prepared a mode of self-representation that is based on commensurability and comparability with the Other” (p. 119). In the Maoist years, prescription was worshipped; now it is description. “On the vast ruins of the Maoist revolution, a new regime of truth has been born: social reality and economic development are now believed to be attainable only by means of statistical data and quantitative facts” (p. 38), which might be observed in the almost-comic proliferation of statistical almanacs and worship of statistical bureaus. And while this might represent “progress,” Liu does not find it so.

“If one may say of the Maoist years that they were brutal, one would have to say of the present age that it is pitiful” (p. 187). He calls the former “ferocious” and the current age “ruthless” (p. 188). No apologist for the Maoist era, Liu is disturbed by the 21st-century focus on the corporeal and the sad mirage of comparison. Liu includes a vignette from the special economic zone of Shenzhen—bustling and filled with fancy cars and well-dressed professionals. Outside a seafood restaurant, he watched a young mother eat from the trash can as passersby of every category—male and female, urban and rural, middle-aged and young—paid no attention. He contrasts this indifference, which also implies tolerance, with the Maoist prohibition of begging (p. 191).

In part I, “Moral Mathematics,” the strongest section of the book, Liu introduces the origins of statistical thinking from Auguste Comte (1798–1857) and Adolphe Quetelet (1796–1874), the Maoist and Marxist view that statistics are necessarily political, and the sudden dominance within China in the 1980s and 1990s of the scientific and positivist view that statistics were neutral and objective. Liu reminds us that statistical analysis involves positing categories and assigning each individual and datum into relevant classes.

The slightly digressive part II, “Statistics, Metaphysics, and Ethics,” details internal academic debates about whether statistics are methodological or theoretical. Professor Dai ultimately triumphed in courageously championing the new, international standard for statistics over Professor Ma's claims about the political nature of Marxist statistics. What endures is not the teleological “emancipatory fantasy” of the Maoist years but “a competitive game of material development with or against the Other” (p. 109)—and especially a “fixation on the Other” (p. 109).

Part III, “Reason and Revolution,” demonstrates why people's subjectivity is now made entirely of material and commensurable features. “The average man is no longer a living self, for his life has been exteriorized by the numerical seriality whose visibility has become the definitional

criterion for self identity or identification” (p. 184), leading to a focus on individuals and materialistic competition. All pretense at collective life has vanished. People have no connection except through sharing a place within a statistical membership.

In terms of the mainstream discussion of *homo oeconomicus* (p. 186), this is accurate, yet we might still note an extraordinary urge for the spiritual and collective, evident in growing Christian denominations and Falun Gong, Tibetan and Uighur identity, and philanthropic efforts at earthquake recovery. Though official and dominant ideologies are indeed as Liu depicts, China’s current situation is complex.

Xin Liu has written a courageous, sad, and profound analysis that will change the way this reviewer, at least, hears news about China’s modernization, growth in GDP, and so forth. Though not light reading and not intended for a broad audience, the book is clear and incisive, with just enough memorable ethnographic material to keep a reader’s attention. It would be useful for advanced courses on contemporary China but could also provide a model for social theory, employing anthropological techniques to query the very underpinnings of a thought world that has come to appear as common sense but that Clifford Geertz showed so long ago is always a cultural system.

I Say to You: Ethnic Politics and the Kalenjin in Kenya

Gabrielle Lynch. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2011. 296 pp.

Peter D. Little
Emory University

Kenya exploded with widespread violence and human tragedy in the aftermath of its highly disputed national elections in December 2007. Only last-minute diplomacy by former UN Secretary-General Kofi Annan and stressful political compromise among the country’s divided leaders kept the country from sliding into prolonged conflict and political turmoil. It was a long and painful three months in early 2008 for a country that was once the continent’s rising star and a bastion of stability.

Gabrielle Lynch’s new book takes on the political and social history of one of the main political protagonists in the events of 2007–08, the Kalenjin, detailing the complex political and historical origins of this “ethnic group.” Through careful research and lucid prose, the author shows why the Kalenjin eventually figured into the contested election and its violent aftermath. As most anthropologists who work in Kenya know, Kalenjin identity is a relatively recent phenomenon. However, what most do not know and what Lynch so skillfully depicts is that from its very beginning Kalenjin ethnicity was an intentionally constructed political identity to challenge Kikuyu and Luo hegemony, the country’s two largest groups, and that it was chock full of its own divisions and contradictions. It comprises a group of related and well-known ethnicities, such as Kipsigis and Nandi, who share the same language but only forged a common identity in the 1950s and 1960s. Some of these groups, such as the Pokot and Marakwet, were (are) not comfortable with the Kalenjin label, and as Lynch points out, they have paid a high price for their sentiments.

The author shows how the ethnic brand of Kalenjin emerged in the heated political environment leading up to Kenya’s independence in 1963, rather than as a colonial construct for administrative convenience. The term itself,

Kalenjin, means “I say to you”—hence the book’s title—and was first used by a Nandi radio personality in the late 1940s. The individual usually started the Nandi radio show by exclaiming, “I say to you,” and carrying on with his show from there. It caught on among key Kalenjin-speaking leaders, who then applied the label to the entire community of Kalenjin-speaking groups.

A central question with which Lynch grapples is why is it that ethnicity remains such a strong political force in Kenya, even growing in significance in recent years? The author’s explanation points to commonly cited factors, including elite manipulation, patron–clientelism, and marked inequality and poverty in the country. Although Lynch backs off from pointing to democracy as an explanatory variable, the book provides enough evidence to conclude that the externally forced democratic elections of the early 1990s did little to alleviate ethnic-based tensions in an autocratic state. What the author shows is that just as the first president, Jomo Kenyatta, strongly favored his Kikuyu community with state resources and positions, his successor—Daniel arap Moi—did the same for his Kalenjin group during his tenure. Moi’s approach left many Kenyans feeling politically excluded to the benefit of Kalenjins, although many in the Kalenjin community felt the same marginalization.

Why is it that ethnic tensions became so violent and prolonged in 2007–08? The author offers several cogent explanations. The first is that political elections had become zero-sum games for Kenyan leaders and their ethnic followers, whereby a lost election precluded any economic and political benefits for the losers. Secondly, widespread poverty made it easy to recruit the poor to foster chaos; and, thirdly, violence itself had become “normalized” in Kenyan society. Finally, leaders who were used to verbally bashing “ethnic others” in their campaigns found fertile grounds for instigating violence in the aftermath of a disputed election.

As Lynch points out, political elites played no small part in the postelection violence, and they must be held accountable for their actions. The International Criminal Courts (ICC) has indicted six Kenyan notables for postelection related crimes, including William Ruto, who is the Kalenjin heir apparent to Moi.

In closing, with *I Say to You*, Lynch has written an important book that anthropologists and other social scientists who work in Kenya, or with interests in the politics of ethnicity or autochthony, will greatly appreciate. There are certain issues that might have been addressed in more detail, including Kalenjin relations with the Maa-speaking

(Maasai) community and Maasai land claims in the Rift Valley. However, the author compensates by focusing on how land figures into Kalenjin identity and their struggles to reclaim territories originally appropriated by European settlers. As a political scientist, Lynch heavily draws on archival research and political science literature in the analysis but also nicely incorporates ethnographic data and anthropological scholarship and theory in the book. For these and other reasons stated above, the book will be of great interest to Africanist anthropologists, as well an excellent teaching tool for courses on African society, political anthropology, and ethnicity and identity.

Defying Displacement: Grassroots Resistance and the Critique of Development

Anthony Oliver-Smith. Austin: University of Texas Press, 2010. 303 pp.

Marisa O. Ensor

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Defying Displacement: Grassroots Resistance and the Critique of Development is the impressive culmination of more than four decades of scholarship and ethnographic engagement by Tony Oliver-Smith in a wide spectrum of cases of involuntary displacement across the world.

Lucidly written and solidly argued, the book provides a timely, thoughtful, and ethnographically grounded analysis of the interconnections between two of the core themes of our current global zeitgeist: spatial mobility and social mobilization. Large-scale infrastructural projects, so central to Oliver-Smith's discussion, have become almost iconic of prevalent constructions of development and modernity, and continue to result in the uprooting of millions of people each year. Forced to suffer unacceptable risks and left struggling against severe impoverishment and gross human rights violations, people at the grass-root level from many societies and cultures worldwide are taking action against development-forced displacement and resettlement (DFDR). Oliver-Smith offers the first major book to comprehensively document their struggles.

Defying Displacement focuses attention on an impressive array of significant themes. An articulate introduction outlines Oliver-Smith's stated purpose "to explore the rights, claims, and visions of the development process that the complex and multidimensional forms of resistance to DFDR express in their refusal to relocate, as well as how these insights, claims, and visions become part of a multi-level and multisectoral effort to critique and reconceptualize the development process" (pp. 40–41). Subsequent chapters succeed in accomplishing precisely that in engaging, well-informed, and consistently insightful prose. Important topics discussed include the concept of "resistance" and the many different

kinds of responses, goals, and strategies adopted by those defying displacement. DFDR-affected people constitute a similarly disparate array of individuals, although indigenous and traditional peoples, derided by postcolonial elites as "impediments to development" (p. 84), are unsurprisingly more frequently targeted. The implications of these power differentials are carefully considered and documented in the chapter on "The People in the Way," as well as elsewhere throughout the book.

Oliver-Smith writes with passion and compassion about the complex situation of DFDR-affected women. He is to be lauded for avoiding the portrayal of women as vulnerable, passive victims of the multiple forms of violence associated with forced displacement—the essentializing approach that so often characterizes those studies that consider women at all. Instead, he aptly captures both the tribulations—higher risk of impoverishment, loss of access to resources, beatings, imprisonment, and rape—as well as the achievements—successful resistance campaigns and more active leadership roles in local and national politics—that frame the multifaceted experiences of displaced women. The section on Medha Patkar, a female faculty of social work and activist who has tirelessly fought for the rights of the people impacted by the Sardar Sarovar Dam in India and who is, "without question, the most notable leader of a recent resistance movement" (p. 201), is particularly inspiring.

Constructions of nature and society are at the heart of development, ecological upheaval, and resistance to DFDR, as Oliver-Smith makes clear in his chapter on "Contested Landscapes." Another theme that he brings to the fore in this work is the economics of displacement. He highlights the multidimensionality of dislocation so often ignored by resettlement schemes in which those aspects of the human experience not amenable to quantitative analysis are dismissed as immaterial and unimportant. The cultural discourses of

resistance, and the politics of DFDR resistance, are explored in two chapters evocatively titled “The Lake of Memory” and “Confronting Goliath,” respectively.

Defying Displacement concludes with a cautionary note. Recent developments, including the weakening of the World Bank’s guidelines on involuntary resettlement, signal a reduction in the protection available to vulnerable people and do not bode well for those confronting development-induced displacement. At the same time, local resistance movements are increasingly responding to the need to frame their struggle in more global terms. In doing so, they are helping reframe the global debate on development and on human and environmental justice in ways that highlight democratic forms of governance and human rights protection for all. As

Oliver-Smith remarks, “in resistance to DFDR, local people defend not only their rights and well-being—they defend ours” (p. 257).

Tony Oliver-Smith was awarded the 2013 Malinowski Award for his outstanding contributions to disaster research and displacement and resettlement studies. *Defying Displacement*, Oliver-Smith’s latest book, is a work of ambitious scope that demonstrates a deep, contextualized understanding of some of the most pressing issues of our era. It is destined to have a significant impact both within and well beyond the anthropology of displacement, development, and resistance, and represents a powerful illustration of why Tony’s Malinowski Award is unquestionably well deserved.

Economies of Abandonment: Social Belonging and Endurance in Late Liberalism

Elizabeth A. Povinelli. Durham: Duke University Press, 2011. 256 pp.

Tania Murray Li

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The central question explored in Elizabeth Povinelli’s ambitious and wide-ranging text is this: How do we liberals rationalize, justify, and live with—or overlook, allow, and disavow—social abandonment? What, more specifically, is the economy of abandonment—the scheme we use to attribute value, allocate rewards, calculate risks, measure costs and benefits, and distinguish between people who can be made functional to the order of value and those who are surplus to it and should be left to die or swept out of the way?

Povinelli’s first answer concerns tense, specifically our use of the future anterior tense, the argument that present harms will turn out to have been justified from the perspective of the last man. This is a familiar line of reasoning: cut welfare benefits to reduce deficits and restore growth; move people out of the way so a dam can be built, and growth will follow. Harm is sometimes recognized as a sacrifice, a price that some are asked to pay so that others may prosper. More often though the sacrificial aspect is disavowed by means of the argument, or the implicit assumption, that the people who are harmed now will benefit later through mechanisms that aren’t specified and seldom tracked.

Event is the second mode in which abandonment is enabled—or, more precisely, the lack of an event. Here Povinelli points to the routine, mundane, unnoticed, slow process of decay. People who are abandoned don’t die quickly or dramatically; they die prematurely of diseases of poverty, “natural causes,” causes that they themselves often see as natural or self-inflicted. Alcohol, accidents, or, graphically in her account, concussions and sores would appear

to be afflictions that could have been avoided but in practice are built into conditions of life in the zones of abandonment she explores.

Difference is the third mode in which abandonment is rationalized. In Australia, she argues, the liberal multicultural argument that Aboriginal people have a secure place defined by their positioning as copresent founders of the modern Australian nation has been pushed back. It hasn’t disappeared, but it is currently drowned out by a neoliberal argument that Aboriginal Australians must become productive citizens who pay their own way in a market economy. If not, they can legitimately be abandoned to die, preferably without drawing too much attention to themselves—that is, without an event.

Set against these economies of abandonment are narratives, practices, and ways of thinking that interfere with it. The principal one she highlights is the persistence of living—the fact that people who are abandoned insist on staying alive, and they continue to act, to inhabit places, to sustain social relations, and, sometimes, to make claims. In some richly ethnographic chapters, Povinelli provides moving accounts of these lives, this endurance, and the stubborn refusal to give up and die.

The contentious part of her account, in my view, concerns the political significance of endurance. Povinelli argues that it is among abandoned people, places, and social groups that social projects for “living otherwise” or what she calls “alternative social projects” are nurtured. She is not romantic about this, acknowledging that disintegration, fragmentation, and defeat are pervasive in zones of neglect, making everyday endurance a minor miracle and the development of alternative projects a major one.

Why, then, does she place so much hope in these zones and among these people, proposing not only that they can save themselves but they can save all of us? The grounds aren't clarified by her discussion of what she calls "ethical substance," something that some people (we) reflect on and others (the neglected?) embody. Positioning the political potential of "alternative social projects"—indeed, their naming as alternatives, as social (i.e., not solipsistic), and as "projects"—aligns her work with a genre of critical theory more interested in the "ontology of potentiality" than its troubled manifestations. To bridge her two sources of insight—critical theory and ethnography—Povinelli wants to turn "from an ontology of potentiality to a sociology of

potentiality in which potentiality is always embodied in specific social worlds" (p. 14). This is an important goal, but her delivery in this book is incomplete, in part because the analysis relies heavily on fiction. The social worlds of the short story and film she examines have been artfully constructed to respond to an ontological premise. No doubt there is more than one way to make an argument, but for my taste the chapters in which she wrestles with actually existing endurance and the limitations of its politics provide the more profound critical engagement.

The central ideas of the book are compelling and deserve to be widely debated, though the writing style makes it a challenging read, suited mainly to specialists.

The Broken Village: Coffee, Migration, and Globalization in Honduras

Daniel R. Reichman. Ithaca: Cornell University Press, 2011. 224 pp.

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While it provides deep insight into the Honduran culture of migration and contemporary religious expression, at its heart *The Broken Village* is ultimately an exploration of the dominant ethos of individualism resulting from neoliberal political and economic transformations. Daniel Reichman investigates three strategies that the people of La Quebrada, a small community in rural Honduras, utilize to "reconstruct a moral vision for society in the wake of rapid change" (p. 4): the creation of a fair trade—organic coffee cooperative, participation in religious congregations promoting personal morality, and the construction of local discourses that characterize transnational migrants as the cause of social crisis rather than its victims. Reichman convincingly argues that these strategies share a vision of the individual—rather than the nation-state, community, or some other collectivity—as both the root of social decline and the potential source of social redemption.

Reichman's methodology relies heavily on key informants, and he successfully combines case studies of individuals and families with rich descriptive narrative to provide insightful analysis. In addition to the topics above, the book includes a detailed overview of the past 30 years of Honduran history refracted through the lens of the life story of Hernán López, a La Quebrada farmer (ch. 3). While an in-depth discussion of the failed coffee cooperative is noticeably absent, Reichman does scrutinize the fair-trade market, revealing how it is embedded in a transnational secular concept of "social justice" that combines normative concepts of fairness with liberal economics (p. 140).

Chapters 1 and 2 provide a rich and nuanced examination of migration, including a comprehensive investigation

into migration decisions and community responses. Chapter 1 answers the deceptively simple question: Why do people leave La Quebrada for the United States? Reichman makes a critical intervention here, demonstrating how the decision to migrate is not necessarily a rational one but is instead driven by social and cultural values. Chapter 2 delves into an important discussion of the distinction community members draw between "needy" migrants and unethical "greedy" migrants. Here he demonstrates the ways in which economic survival through migration threatens social reproduction in La Quebrada. The divergent categories into which migrants are placed illustrate how people perceive migration to be a conflict between the needs of the individual and of the group (p. 40).

Because La Quebrada is a relatively young community founded by internal migrants motivated by lumber and coffee opportunities, the social tensions resulting from migration are perhaps more pronounced than other comparable cases. As Reichman points out, it has never been a particularly egalitarian place (p. 40), and this is increasingly true today in light of the new social order in which previous status markers such as education, land ownership, advanced age, and political connections are being replaced by the cultural capital associated with participation in the migrant economy, which is primarily held by young returnees (p. 56).

Chapter 4 examines how two different churches use theology to articulate radically different political and moral visions in the context of migration. Reichman argues that both the Creciendo en Gracia (CEG; Growing in Grace International Ministries) and the Pentecostal Iglesia Seguidores de Cristo criticize the alienated representations of power in other religions, "seeking to restore the power of individuals to autonomously chart their own course in life"

(p. 112). He explores these religious settings as sites where participating community members address their anxieties regarding gender, class, family, and morality. Here Reichman makes the critical point that in contemporary popular religious congregations such as these, there is no notion of “the social” beyond the immediate kin group and local church. Consequently, “secular political debates have been replaced by a focus on depoliticized individual morality” (p. 126).

One of the strengths of *The Broken Village*, a methodology and narrative structure rooted in the life experiences of key informants, may leave some readers feeling dissatisfied that the book shortchanges breadth in favor of depth. For

example, the almost total exclusion of female voices and perspectives from the text results in a highly masculinized portrayal of the community and its ethos of individualism. The one exception to this is the detailed presentation of a young Pentecostal woman, Yadira, and the social identity she claims through church membership (p. 105). Despite this omission, *The Broken Village* is sure to become obligatory reading for social scientists considering the cultural shifts resulting from neoliberal policies and the retreat of the state in Latin America and beyond. It provides much-needed perspective on the relatively understudied country of Honduras and is ideally suited for graduate-level courses in anthropology and related fields.

New Organs within Us: Transplants and the Moral Economy

Aslihan Sanal. Durham: Duke University Press, 2011. 264 pp.

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Aslihan Sanal's book *New Organs within Us: Transplants and the Moral Economy* provides an ethnographic analysis of organ transplantation in Turkey. The author relates this topic to the cultural and medical conceptions of body, death, and life, as well as the historical and current debates around Turkish modernization and multiple modernities. The book gives examples of various Islamic discourses and practices that have shaped the conceptualization of organ transplants and displays the close interaction between religion and medicine in different contexts, such as in the illness narratives of kidney-transplant patients. It also includes the political economy of organ transplantation by investigating the patients' different strategies for finding a new organ and the doctors' interpretations of the existing laws on organ transplants. Sanal explores how the social actors who are involved in organ transplantations—the dialysis and transplant patients, their relatives, the doctors of various specializations, the business-people who import grafts—“attribute, transfer, translate or lose” (p. 9) particular meanings to organ transplantation.

Organ transplants recently became a popular topic among social scientists, thanks to the issue's close connections with the patterns of health inequalities at local, national, and global levels. In 1999, Organs Watch was founded and led by Nancy Scheper-Hughes and Lawrence Cohen at the University of California, Berkeley, in order to research global traffic in human organs. The anthropologists in the team have conducted ethnographic research in several countries, such as the United States, Israel, and Brazil; and Aslihan Sanal joined this team to conduct research in Turkey in 2000. Her book *New Organs within Us* is partly based on that research, which she also conducted for her PhD thesis at MIT's Program in Science, Technology, and Society. Sanal's

book is also comparable to Sherine Hamdy's *Our Bodies Belong to God: Organ Transplants, Islam, and the Struggle for Human Dignity in Egypt* (2012).

Transplant medicine developed in 1980s in Turkey, and since then there have been legal efforts to prevent people from selling their organs, although this is “widely practiced in Turkey and other places in the Middle East, even without the involvement of dealers, merchants and businessmen” (p. 92). Sanal relates this problem to the political instability and poverty in Turkey and states that the small private hospitals became the natural habitat of the organ mafia and organ trafficking. The strategies of patients to find an organ varies from organ donation from a close relative to traveling abroad to India, Russia, or the United States to have the transplant operation, depending on their ability to afford it. However, most patients endure an excruciatingly long period of waiting and remain dependent on dialysis machine, because of the long lists of patients in need of organs, the lack of organ or tissue banks and the inadequacy of donations from cadavers, despite the recent discourses of Turkish media and Islamic scholars, who approve organ transplantation.

In her rich ethnographic analysis, Sanal also benefits from the sources of media, visual arts, poetry, literature, and theater, as well as detailed and vivid narratives of “spaces of death,” such as dissection rooms where the cadavers are dissected, mental health units where the dead residents' unclaimed bodies are used as cadavers for scientific and medical purposes, cemeteries, and organ transplantation units. The author is especially successful in presenting the variety of conceptions of dead bodies and their parts, from the eerie descriptions of “the pool of the dead” (*Ölü Havuzu*), an old swimming pool filled with unclaimed dead bodies kept in formaldehyde in the basement of Cerrahpaşa Medical School, to the unemotional accounts about grafts, the human bones rendered “lifeless” through demineralization by radiation.

Sanal indicates that conceptualization of death in Turkey is highly nuanced, even in the case of suicide, which is the most unacceptable and intolerable form of death in Turkey partly because of the “negative correlation between suicide and Islam” (p. 153), which becomes especially complicated when the organs of the person who committed suicide are used to save the lives of other people.

New Organs within Us: Transplants and the Moral Economy is an important contribution to the fields of science and technology studies and the anthropology of health and illness.

Due to its large theoretical scope, this book also contributes to the globalization studies, Middle Eastern studies, and the anthropology of religion, particularly in terms of the debates of the various Islamic discourses and practices.

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In the Shadows of the State: Indigenous Politics, Environmentalism, and Insurgency in Jharkhand, India

Alpa Shah. Durham: Duke University Press, 2010. 288 pp.

Kalyanakrishnan Sivaramakrishnan

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Alpa Shah offers a critical and empathetic engagement with poor *adivasis* (literally original residents; members of scheduled tribes as identified by the government) in eastern India living through the birth of a new state (province) in the early 21st century. This is a state for which *adivasi* leadership had fought for decades. This leadership, however, had but a selective following because some of the members of the communities from which the leaders came supported other parties, sympathized with Maoists or Naxalites, or simply left the homelands that seemed mired in unending conflict and intractable poverty and danger.

From her location in a largely Munda (one *adivasi* group in the area) village, Shah takes on a number of received ideas about how their politics works; about where poor rural people may find succor or freedom, opportunity or marginality; and about how they view the development and conservation intended for them or built around representations of their beliefs and aspirations. That schemes for their improvement are misguided, poorly designed, hijacked by elites, and that they become new mechanisms for old exploitations of poor tribal communities are all insights received plentifully in earlier studies by anthropologists of rural development. To that extent, Shah joins a distinguished tradition of reflection on well-intentioned intervention in the lives of poor people that neither seek such interventions nor end up benefitting from them. But she also does much more.

It is a merit of this book that it resists various romantic urges and equally remains wary of speaking for people who do not easily find voice, who cannot share a single perspective, and who thereby are conflicted, confused, and contradictory in their response to political and social change like others in the society around them. Poor rural Jharkhandis find that struggles for resources and livelihood or en-

terprise and influence in power seeking and profit making are conducted simultaneously in registers of class struggle and identity politics. Shah, in depicting these dilemmas, leaves us with the question: Can a sacral polity have democratic values? In India, given the long struggle over secularism and its natural affinities (mostly uncritically assumed) for democracy and universal human rights, this is a tough question to which there is no easy answer. Shah provides one, affirmative and predictably controversial, answer to her question. The argument, whether we like it or not, is cogent, compelling, and well supported by her ethnography.

The logic of this argument is extended through chapters on development and conservation. Munda *adivasi* leadership appears in these pages as divided, perhaps, but always aware of the possibilities held in unification around identities that sacral polities alone could solidify. As Shah notes, these are not romantic erasures of real divides but practical negotiations in uneven political fields where historic privilege, of being landed elite, and modern privilege, of being educated and cosmopolitan, may rest by far with non-*adivasi* groups operating within and through a state system shot through with questions about its own credibility and legitimacy. Nothing brings this point home more vividly than the struggle with elephants that trample crops and kill poor Munda or Oraon women walking through the forest in search of fodder or small timber. It is a struggle that takes place in enforced silence, for as Shah notes, to be authentically *adivasi*, in influential terms not of their making, requires unqualified love of all that is cast in the category of nature, whereas being simply *adivasi* is a troubled political quest that daily endangers lives.

Not surprisingly, then, many young people from these *adivasi* villages of Jharkhand view the hardships of migrant work with some positive anticipation. Along with some other scholarship on this topic, Shah acknowledges that

their apparently willing submission to the cruel exploitation visited on them by the informal economy of circular migration and unskilled, hazardous work might help produce new unforgiving forms of flexible accumulation for the wealthy and the powerful. But it also produces horizons of aspiration that young adivasi people seek out, not in moments of delusion but, rather, while recognizing them for what they are—dangerous pleasures with slender possibilities for escape, at night.

Throughout this fine book, Alpa Shah consistently stays close to her ethnography but is skillfully in conversation with apposite scholarly debates both in South Asian studies and in social anthropology—of development, indigeneity,

environmentalism, and politics—and from her vantage point is able to not only question many of the assumptions that drive accounts of adivasi people and their struggles but also rethink theoretical formulations that are advanced through these scholarly accounts. Accessibly written, as per her stated ambition, but also tightly argued, this book will stir up debate in anthropology and the study of contemporary India. It will reward close reading because none of its insights are easily won or carelessly tossed out. *In the Shadows of the State* deserves the thoughtful engagement it practices to reveal its sophisticated scholarship and advance the best traditions of scholarly debate in social anthropology, in these pages and in the classroom.

Ainu Spirits Singing: The Living World of Chiri Yukie's Ainu Shin'yōshū

Sarah M. Strong. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press, 2011. 336 pp.

Emiko Ohnuki-Tierney

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The book under review is a major contribution to Ainu studies and related fields by Sarah M. Strong, an eminent scholar of Japanese literature. It introduces the Ainu chants of spiritual beings by Chiri Yukie (1903–22), preceded by meticulous and extensive contextualization in terms of both ethnographic explanation and the broad background of Ainu studies.

Strong introduces us to Chiri Yukie, a brilliant poet with an extremely refined sensitivity whose ill health terminated her life at age 19, both as an individual and an Ainu whose experience tells us the tragic impact on the “indigenous population” of Japan as a result of “Japanese” colonization. This history was presented by Takakura Shinichirō and John Harrison (1960) at a time when studying the Ainu was not a route to success in the historical profession. Chiri Yukie came from a prominent intellectual family and her brother, Chiri Mashio, was the major figure in Ainu linguistics and ethnography (Ohnuki-Tierney and Fujimoto 1973). Strong's enormously broad scholarship locates Chiri Yukie's and the Ainu worldview against other scholarly approaches to “nature,” such as perspectivism, now receiving much attention as well as being hotly debated, especially among the scholars of indigenous populations of Brazil.

The Ainu oral tradition, which has several categories, has been widely recognized. The category called *yukara* or *oyna* consists primarily of epic poems of their culture hero, recited by male elders in the sacred language, formerly an exclusive property of the male elders. These long heroic tales, comparable to the Greek epic poems in the view of some scholars, are recited not only at ordinary times but also at times of crisis, such as the approach of a smallpox

epidemic. If the epic poem recital fails, the only antidote for the afflicted is menstrual blood, which is applied to the affected spots (Ohnuki-Tierney 1981:63–65). This gender complementarity is found in other areas of the society, such as the obligation of men among the Hokkaido Ainu to consult shamans, all female, before making a declaration of war.

While some of these epics have been recorded and published, the chants have been less accessible. It is thanks to Chiri Yukie that we now have a superb collection of the chants (ch. 6) with Strong's extensive ethnographic explanations, allowing readers to immerse themselves in the Ainu world of “nature” shared by animals and humans. Eleven of the 13 chants are narrated by animal speakers to whom humans respond. In Strong's words:

The natural world portrayed in the *Ainu shin'yōshū* chants is strikingly intimate and animate; animals and even plants at times possess emotions and cognition similar to those of humans. In chants salmon laugh and shout for joy as they ascend streams of crystal-clear water, lighthearted snowshoe hares chuckle at the jokes they play on humans, and even freshwater mussels can be heard commiserating together over the consequences of a prolonged drought. [p. x]

When I began my study of the Sakhalin Ainu, the Ainu received attention outside of Japan primarily due to the interest in the peopling of the New World, with scholars trying to find out which groups in the northeastern corner of the world crossed to the Americas, ultimately reaching Tierra del Fuego. Another prevalent interest was the racial classification of the “primitives”—whether the Ainu are related to the Australian Aboriginal people, for example. Although I use the terms *Japanese* and *Ainu* here, many scholars today believe that they share the same ancestry. While the Japanese followed the path of nation-state building, based on wet-rice

agriculture introduced around 300 B.C.E, the Ainu retained primarily a fishing, hunting, and plant-gathering economy.

In the past decade or so, there has been a strong resurgence of interest in Ainu studies. Although many scholars focus on the Ainu as a minority in Japanese society, *Ainu Spirits Singing* will be an encouragement to young researchers to look further, as well an invaluable contribution to the field. Despite its high scholarly content, the book is clearly written without jargon and thus accessible to general readers, undergraduates, graduate students, and scholars who are interested in the Ainu, folklore and oral tradition, nature and environmental studies, and Japanese culture and society. University of Hawai'i Press must be congratulated for publishing this fine book.

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Becoming Indian: The Struggle over Cherokee Identity in the Twenty-First Century

Circe Sturm. Santa Fe: School for Advanced Research Press, 2011. 280 pp.

Julia Coates

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Full disclosure: I am one of the “hardline citizen Cherokees” described by Circe Sturm in her latest work, *Becoming Indian: The Struggle over Cherokee Identity in the Twenty-First Century*. An academic by profession, I also serve on the Cherokee Nation Tribal Council and represent “At Large” Cherokees, those citizens who reside outside the Cherokee Nation’s historic jurisdictional boundary. My own research investigates evolving identity constructions among this population, and as such, many of Sturm’s observations are relevant to diasporic citizens as well, of my Nation and others.

Sturm’s work focuses on racial and cultural assertions of Cherokee identity, primarily among those outside the parameters of citizenship in the three federally recognized Cherokee political entities. She frames the adoption of “Cherokee” as a new identity, often assumed after adulthood, as “race shifting” and defines a number of conceptual consistencies in the stories of those who have made the switch. The emphasis in the beginning chapters rests with those who are engaged in the development of new “tribes,” particularly in the U.S. South where the phenomenon is especially pronounced. In an uncontested account of the myriad of claims that are made by various individuals engaged in race shifting, as well as the organizations they have formed, Sturm examines the tensions between these individuals and organizations and citizens from the federally recognized Cherokee tribes, which frequently have developed official and unofficial policies and practices to oppose the influence and goals of the race shifters, in particular the goal of recognition at either federal or state levels.

In getting beneath the obvious statements and the most apparent problems, Sturm deserves kudos for discussions of white privilege involved in race shifting and performs an excellent analysis of unpacking the ability of such individuals to engage in an endeavor that phenotypic nonwhites would have little ability to enact. Other revelatory discussions include the acknowledgment of the political character of state-recognition processes, particularly in relation to the relatively nonpartisan nature of the federal system; the nature of culture and cultural construction in circumstances of ethnic fragmentation and dispersal; and an excellent comparison to neoliberal rhetoric and action around race and ethnic appropriation that appears in the last chapter.

In many respects, Sturm’s treatment of the various claims made around the process of race shifting and the formation of new “tribes” echoes the measured technique in the first chapters of Eva Garrouette’s work *Real Indians* (2003), which Sturm refers to and whose influence she often acknowledges. But unlike Garrouette’s work, which resolved at the end of each chapter with an analysis that deconstructed the arguments and positioned the author, Sturm does little to guide the reader to overarching conclusions until the last chapter. I was exasperated at a much earlier point with the seriousness with which many challengeable statements and actions were addressed, especially the completely uncritical acceptance of questionable identity claims and the lack of counterarguments. That balance finally came as the voices of the citizens of the historic tribes and their communities began to weigh in around the fifth chapter.

While an enlightening work overall, the primary dilemma lies in the lack of specific historic context for the subject of Cherokee identity, both individual and collective.

The privileging of race as an axis of Cherokee social organization is assumed by Sturm, but this is a questionable assumption in relation to historic tribal communities, which are more likely to place other axes—kinship and family relations, for example, which are also connoted by the language of “blood”—at the base of social structures. A still-different axis is particularly evident in the Cherokee Nation, which is renowned for the development of political nationality in the early 19th century, marked by the development of a constitution and republican governing structures. The existence of a constitutional residency requirement upon Cherokee citizens throughout the 19th century goes unmentioned in this work, even though it is the cornerstone of tribal opposition to the political recognition sought by these new heritage clubs whose ancestors were not part of a tribal

citizenry under the requirements of the Cherokee Nation itself.

Becoming Indian has much to recommend it and is a valuable contribution to the academic discussion. But as a “hardline citizen Cherokee” who has a deep understanding of my nation’s history as well as its internal conversations about race, I can only hope that this work does not lend validity to collective efforts that do not deserve to be validated, even as the individuals involved may be very sincere and well-meaning.

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One State, Many Nations: Indigenous Rights Struggles in Ecuador

Maximilian Viatori. Santa Fe: School for Advanced Research Press, 2010. 168 pp.

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People of many ethnicities who once spoke different languages are embedded within the 150,000 speakers of Amazonian Quichua of Eastern Ecuador. Two of them, Zápara and Andoa of Pastaza Province, spoke a Zaparoan language. Both recently re-emerged as bona fide indigenous nationalities with offices in Puyo. There, they join the Shuar, Achuar, Shiwiar, and Waorani with one or two offices each in that growing city of 45,000. Also in Puyo are several organizations serving Amazonian Quichua-speaking people and two organizations that serve multiple Amazonian nationalities. This book is an ethnography of political activism of a few leaders (*dirigentes*), other supporters (*solidarios*), and developers (*técnicos*) of the approximately 200 affiliates (my term) of Zápara (also Záparo, Sápara) Quichua-speaking peoples, up to five of whom—all very elderly—in a few widely dispersed communities actually speak the language (p. 90). Perhaps 10 to 15 percent of the people who identify as being of this indigenous ethnicity (*nacionalidad*) know a list of nouns and verbs and a few phrases in that language. People of the Zápara nationality speak Amazonian Quichua as their first language, and many in urban Puyo are bilingual in Spanish. Zápara distinct history, not contemporary language, per se, is crucial to their identity.

One State, Many Nations opens with a eureka moment on May 20, 2001, in north Quito, as Maximilian Viatori reads in the newspaper *El Comercio* that “the United Nations Scientific and Cultural Organization (UNESCO) had declared the Zápara ‘ethnicity’ part of the ‘Intangible and Oral Patrimony of Humankind’” (p. 1). Interindigenous conflict broke during and after the 1992 March for Land and

Life from Puyo to Andean Quito, one result being that the claimants for the 1,115,574 hectares of territory ceded to the “indigenous Amazonian nationalities” of Pastaza Province by then-president Rodrigo Borja Cevallos were divided up such that previously unforeseen divisions were created among established and emergent ethnicities. One of these was the “Comuna Záparo,” which was constituted by the territory ranging north from the Conambo River to the Pindoyacu River. Six years later, in 1998, working out of Puyo, the Nacionalidad Zápara de Ecuador (NAZAE) formed and focused on the dispersed communities of Llanhama Cocha, Jandiayacu, Mazaramu, and Cuyacocha while denouncing the Comuna Záparo as a fiction. Soon after its formation, “Julio,” an “upper-middle-class” Ecuadorian fluent and literate in Spanish and English who had connections to UNESCO in Paris, wrote the project proposal that led to the UNESCO naming of the Zápara nationality as one of its “Masterpieces of the Oral and Intangible Heritage of Humanity” (p. 78). Funds were finally forthcoming in 2004 (p. 91), and “like a springboard it launched the Zápara to a level of visibility and support they had not previously enjoyed” (p. 78). The Ecuadorian government recognized this nationality and funded it through the education department offices in Puyo.

Meanwhile, in 1997, the government of Ecuador established the Proyecto para el Desarrollo de los Pueblos Indígenas y Negros del Ecuador (PROPEPINE), and with funding from a substantial World Bank loan began to support, in a paternalistic manner, organizations such as NAZAE (at times) and the Comuna Záparo (at other times). As the UNESCO funds were used up, NAZAE dirigentes, técnicos, and solidarios became increasingly dependent on the vicissitudes of reliance on PROPEPINE and, accordingly, on the

Ecuadorian Government, in opposition to the national and regional indigenous organizations.

The significant strengths of Viatori's study of indigenous activism coupled with the activism by powerful and well-educated others on behalf of this indigenous emergent ethnicity is the detailed description of microlevel interpersonal cooperation and competition, collaboration and opposition, to emerge within what I would call an ethnogenetic conjuncture of local-level and global forces of contradictory values and strategies fueled by the fluctuation of available money. By demonstrating how a local charismatic leader and a few other notable dirigentes effectively used NGO funding to transform a small-scale movement for self-identity and recognition into minicompartments of national bureaucracy through the development of well-equipped administrative structure, bilingual (and trilingual) education programs, and political positioning, the author shows us how such national and international visibility can occur and to some extent work against the very purposes and values that initiated such indigenous activities.

One lesson taught by the dirigentes and bilingual educators throughout Zápara regions is that Spanish and Quichua

are essential to their contemporary identity as Ecuadorians and as a distinct ethnicity. Although this may seem (and probably is) paradoxical, Viatori takes the reader step by step through the unfolding processes, dropping back repeatedly into local-level, national, and international histories to explicate antecedent events at different levels that come together in the emerging conjunctures.

On the negative side, I think Viatori misses the great significance of the regional Amazonian system dominated by Quichua language and a shared historical consciousness of interculturality within which the Zápara nationality is clearly embedded. Also, errors of Amazonian significance occur throughout. Examples include the use of "Amazon" rather than "Amazonia" for the region, which is part of the Upper Amazon-Piedmont system, not the Amazon proper. Ecuador's slogan should be translated "Ecuador has been . . . an Ecuadorian country (not "was"). *Yuca* and *yucca* are not synonyms; they belong to totally different plant families. Unfermented banana pap is not a "beer." "Bark cloth" is the English translation of *llanchama*, not "tree fiber." And the story of Titsano is widely known among Pastaza Runa; it is definitely not "unique to Zápara oral tradition" (p. 47).

Balancing Acts: Youth Culture in the Global City

Natasha Kumar Warikoo. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011. 248 pp.

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Natasha Warikoo's *Balancing Acts* aims to understand the complexity of youth cultures by focusing on the meanings that second-generation immigrant teenagers place on status and popularity among their peers and how these values relate to antischolastic behaviors. Warikoo's study identifies two primary groups: Afro-Caribbean and South Asian immigrant high school students in New York City and London, respectively. The field sites were selected because of their "super-diversity," whereby no ethnic group is the majority (p. 12). Warikoo's method to attain an emic perspective of youth culture utilizes a mix of interviews, surveys, and ethnographic observations that combine the assessment of attitudes, behaviors, and self-representation (p. 13).

One of Warikoo's primary goals in *Balancing Acts* is to refute downward or segmented assimilation theories, the prevailing premises for understanding the lack of educational accomplishment by immigrants' children. Among the anthropological contributions to these theories, Warikoo contests John Ogbu's (Gibson and Ogbu 1991) findings that suggested that second-generation minority immigrant groups in the United States living next to poor African American peers in urban centers assimilate into an underclass of cultural norms. According to Ogbu, these norms

are allegedly oppositional to the dominant status quo, which impairs scholastic success. Warikoo refutes Ogbu's stance that minority youth reject the institutions of the dominant society (pp. 91, 159). Should assimilation theories such as Ogbu's be accurate, Warikoo argues that her transnational comparative results between New York City and London should ultimately clash. Instead, not only did Warikoo find similar oppositional cultures in both field sites, but she also found that oppositional culture does not necessarily lead to school failure (p. 159). She concludes that second-generation youth may adopt an oppositional culture but not necessarily oppositional attitudes (p. 160).

Warikoo argues that the problem with existing theories about youth cultures is their lack of attention to the meanings that teens themselves make of their own choices. She urges scholars to consider youth's tastes and styles, rather than merely consumption or behavior patterns, in order to rethink the oppositional culture explanation for downward assimilation. She claims that second-generation teens are more attentive to global rather than local pop culture, that their predominant interest in hip-hop music does not necessarily coincide with weaker achievement, and that youth in fact express positive outlooks and desires toward school and scholastic success (p. 123).

Warikoo presents the two social worlds of high schools. One is the official regimen made up of administrators and

teachers; the second is that of youth, which emphasizes peer relations, popularity, and familiarity with music and pop culture (pp. 114, 136). These two worlds are distinct, yet Warikoo insists that they are not in opposition. Academic failures result when the quest for popularity comes into conflict with academic achievement, yet such tensions should not be misunderstood as inherently antischolastic (pp. 97, 106, 108).

Her findings demonstrate that the most successful students are those who learn to balance popularity with scholarship—or, in other terms, dominant with nondominant cultural capital. The strategic movement between cultural spheres parallels the everyday language and cultural management immigrants apply to bilingualism and biculturalism. Warikoo's migrant categories, however, remain static and one way, omitting any discussion of immigrants who maintain coresidency and dual citizenship with their home nations, which can shift their tastes, practices, and, perhaps most importantly, their meanings about how they define accomplishments between homelands and host countries.

Warikoo concludes that the globalization of pop culture makes youth in each field site more similar than different because of a shared affinity toward hip-hop (pp. 55–62). The emulation of hip-hop styles is a status currency that immigrant teens use to maintain, cross, and blur ethnic and racial boundaries (pp. 18, 44–45). To construct this argument, Warikoo comfortably identifies hip-hop culture as black, which I believe is a weak racial measuring tool of pop

culture. Although she justifies this assertion by explicating that cultural practices become racially coded (p. 71), the works of various hip-hop scholars exemplify a diverse cultural, racial, and ethnic milieu of pioneers and icons that have spearheaded hip-hop culture.

Among the other weaknesses that stand out in Warikoo's research, perhaps the most obvious is the short-term nature of her ethnography, as she spent only four months at each school. Her ethnographic data are the only substantiation of student's self-reporting of achievement, which becomes questionable in such a short time frame. Finally, despite a brief discussion of discrimination as perceived by students, structural racism and its effects on youth do not seem sufficiently addressed. Notwithstanding, I believe Warikoo's study is useful for anthropologists, educators, and hip-hop scholars. Her recommendations for helping students make "good choices" toward scholastic achievement makes up the core of her conclusions (pp. 171–177). This emphasis on active research toward the betterment of her subjects and the importance she places on student's own definitions and meanings are an essential anthropological contribution to the study of youth cultures.

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Holy Hustlers, Schism, and Prophecy: Apostolic Reformation in Botswana

Richard Werbner. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2011. 268 pages.

Isabel Mukonyora

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Richard Werbner is known for his anthropological studies of Christianity in southern Africa. His work combines theoretical ideas with methods of research that are anthropological and, sometimes, so original that readers need to be aware. This book suggests a link between the words that one does not normally see together yet used effectively, furthering our understanding of African Christianity. *Holy Hustlers* and *Prophets* appear with *Apostolic Reformation* in the same title of yet another outstanding book on anthropological Christianity in Africa. In his earlier work, *Argument of Images: From Zion to the Wilderness in African Churches* (1985), Werbner challenges readers to see the connections between the words *Zion*, *wilderness*, and *African church*. In both cases Werbner uses theories of knowledge originating from other cultural studies to test the dynamism of African Christianity.

The phrase *Holy Hustlers* draws the attention to way of transforming Christianity into a commodity of faith in which hustling becomes a holy way of making a living in the city. Werbner is drawing attention to a theory of knowledge informed by methods of research easily recognized by anthropologists, historians, sociologists and other scholars who find it useful to allow ideas to flow from different disciplines to shape studies of religion. Inside the back cover is a DVD showing the importance of kinematics in anthropological research on Christianity. Reading Bibles in the vernacular, one of the main reasons for schism and renewal movements in Sub-Saharan Africa, is referred to in a book by David Barrett in a classic introducing the phenomenon of Africans transforming Christianity five decades ago (Barrett 1968). More recently, the anthropologist Matthew Engelke (2007) takes us beyond the Bible by highlighting dramatizations of knowledge there from in rituals transforming African Christianity among African Apostles in Zimbabwe while Thomas

Kirsch (2008) shows how reading and writing also became a way of spreading African Christianity in Zambia.

Holy Hustlers bring back to mind the emotional and spiritual impact of ritual behavior. Kinematics of the ineffable make sense to add to studies of religion by anthropologists, not only because of this new literature but also because theologians in the West made the much of their own history of stations of the cross, dramatizations of the death and resurrection of Jesus at Easter, ritual behavior at holy communion, and whatever lies behind all those colorful vestments worn by priests at prayer, each associated with some explanation connecting the visible to the invisible sense of the divine. *Holy Hustlers* provides a rationale for anthropological Christianity by welcoming the colorful syncretistic display of it. The African Apostolics from Eloyi are not merely breaking away from churches led by Europeans in Botswana. The cause of schism this time are the elaborate innovations young prophets make of African elders rural-based innovations in trying to build for themselves an urban clientele. Werbner concludes, the Apostolics are “somewhat like Catholic or Anglican.” Indeed, their vestments reveal this (p. 106). The young prophets also show that they understand the individualism of people in the modern world when they create setting for “personal nearness” through touching during healing ceremonies and, sometimes, by getting clients to fill in forms providing confidential information, just as medical doctors do in European managed mission hospitals (chs. 6–8).

Kinematics distinguish this book because the holy hustlers create a public discourse of morality involving swirling dance movements carried out while wearing bright red, white, and yellow regalia in front of believers. “Apostolic waves of powerful emotion surge in moral passion,” states Werbner (p. 5). Besides being joyful, prophets show pain and look disgusted as a sign of empathy to succeed as holy hustlers (pp. 21–42). In witch-hunting exercises, objects that

instill fear and symbolize the forces of evil in the minds of victims of misfortune explain the expressions of pain and disgust. Émile Durkheim’s “l’*esprit collectif*” becomes a matter of sensing the presence of forces of evil at the same time as the numinousness manifested in the Holy Spirit.

Finally, writes Werbner, “much of this book engages with the counter-bearing of the invisible on the visible, and the inaudible or ineffable on the audible” (p. 208). Werbner balances our understanding of the old and new in African adaptations of Christianity in Botswana by showing how different ideas from the social history of a people meet. The chapter “From Film to Book . . .” gives students of religion a way of viewing the study of religion in terms of steps to knowing that are often associated with phenomenology, Plato’s *Dianoia*. Plato’s *Noesis* is mentioned in the same concluding chapter perhaps to suggest that there is a knowable reality of the divine informed by the capacity for reason (pp. 208–220). In all, this is an excellent contribution to anthropological studies of Christianity.

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Navigators of the Contemporary: Why Ethnography Matters

David A. Westbrook. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2008. 160 pp.

Bradd Shore

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In this slim volume, David Westbrook makes the case for “a refunctioned ethnography” (p. 7) of modernity. Westbrook is a legal scholar who is director for Global and Strategic Initiatives at the law school of SUNY Buffalo. His previous books deal with corporate finance and international politics and national security. So why is Westbrook, who is no anthropologist, writing about ethnography?

The book emerged from extended conversations between Westbrook and two anthropologists, George Marcus

and Douglas Holmes, about the current state of theory and practice in anthropology. It is a welcome plea for cultural anthropologists, who are often distracted by the fog that decades of critical theory have left behind on their field, to embrace the unique potential of ethnography to illuminate what he calls “the present situation.”

The book is a quick, chatty read. Chapters are short. There is no bibliography and little specific discussion of anthropological scholarship. The only ethnographies even mentioned (none are actually discussed) are Bronislaw Malinowski’s Trobriand work and Paul Rabinow’s old Moroccan ethnography. For Westbrook, anthropology is more

an adventure than an academic discipline. In contrast to the relatively straitlaced disciplinary norms of most academic fields, anthropology's authentic ethos is nomadic. Westbrook's trope for a refunctioned fieldwork is a kind of freewheeling "navigation" through the shifting tides of modernity.

The book journeys somewhat peripatetically through the postmodern refashioning of anthropology. The passage is littered with well-worn critiques of traditional ethnography: its fetishizing of the exotic other, its misleading use of the ethnographic present, its assumptions that cultures were geographically bounded, its recolonizing of its subjects through totalizing theories, and its simplistic conceptions of culture as coherent systems of meaning. For anthropologists, the route is all too familiar. While stressing the novel conditions framing any ethnography of the present, Westbrook also acknowledges some overstatement in the claims of critical theory, admitting that a working conception of culture is necessary to navigate the often-confusing currents of "present situations."

In their laudable attempts to forge a politically committed anthropology, Westbrook suggests that anthropologists have sometimes replaced the "exotic other" with the "oppressed other." He pleads for a new genre of politicized ethnography where ethnographers study centers of power and decision making. He envisions ethnographic accounts of the world of central bankers, corporate boardrooms, courts, the halls of Congress, and other places from which the world is actually run.

The word *places* is misleading here because Westbrook recognizes that ethnographies of modern power are hard to

localize. He stresses the need for multisited research into domains of life that cannot be neatly bounded. Other traditional assumptions also give way. Abandoning the illusion of the superior education and understanding of the observer over the observed subject that was built into traditional fieldwork, Westbrook underscores the challenge for anthropologists in piecing together an insightful picture of fields in which the subjects observed will be at least as educated and in many ways more intellectually sophisticated than the observer.

While Westbrook rightly chides mainstream anthropologists for their reluctance to focus on centers of power, he inexplicably ignores the many extant ethnographies of power centers in the modern world. Science and technology scholars have studied the culture of the modern laboratory. Ethnographers have been busy analyzing corporate cultures, the everyday life of banks, schools, churches, hospitals, the workings of the European parliament, and many other mainstream institutions. The ethnography of present situations is well underway.

Anthropology is surely far from realizing its potential in studying modernity. But Westbrook could have better served anthropology by critiquing the ethnographic work that has already been done on present situations and laying out a nuanced and detailed set of guidelines for this sort of ethnographic work. Unfortunately, this well-intentioned book seems all too interested in the anxious and often-tiresome world of contemporary cultural anthropology when it might have more profitably focused on the fascinating worlds that anthropologists actually study.