

Book Reviews

Paris Primitive: Jacques Chirac's Museum on the Quai Branly. *Sally Price.* Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2007. viii + 239 pp., 10 illustrations, map, notes, bibliography.

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This is not primarily a book about objects, although they are the currency that is elevated, demoted, transferred, and re-framed throughout the narrative during their hapless journeys in and out of Paris collections. Rather, this book is an excellent account, witty but also very well documented, of the French politics of culture in all its complexity, played out in presidential ambitions, competing interests of aesthetes and anthropologists, and in a bureaucratic contest of musical chairs among various Paris museums. As one Musée Quai Branly (MQB) insider quipped to Sally Price, it is a project authored by “Jacques [Chirac], Jacques [Kerchache], et Jean [Nouvel]” (p. 146), which is to say the president, his art dealer-collector friend, and the architect who designed the new museum on the Seine.

It should not be supposed however that these three men just got together and “worked things out.” In fact, the battle lines were drawn early on through a tangle of planning committees representing both aesthetic and anthropological perspectives but overruled at crucial intersections by administrative coups d'état upholding the interests of primitivists and aesthetes. The story begins with the chance meeting of Chirac and Kerchache in 1990, at a resort hotel in Mauritius. Chirac, no longer prime minister and not yet president, is approached by Kerchache, who wants to ask him if the presence of Kerchache's coffee-table African art book in a press photo was just décor or did he really care about the subject? Chirac replies that not only did he read the book, he also bought 50 copies to give his friends. There ensue days of intense discussion in which it emerges that both are passionately committed to the elevation of non-Western art within the hallowed precincts of French culture (pp. 1–3).

Thus begins the first volley targeted at “the world's greatest museum.” On becoming President in 1995, Chirac

appoints the Friedmann Commission to determine ways for works of art from Africa, Oceania, and the Americas to enter the Louvre. The report recommends both a “showcase” for these arts in the Louvre and an eventual new museum to house the collections that currently “gather dust” in the Musée de l'Homme (MH) (pp. 43–44).

From the beginning, theoretical and practical objections were raised from all sides: if ethnographic objects were to be elevated in this way, why put them in the Louvre, its curators argued, which was never intended as a universal museum like the Met but, rather, as a temple of the achievements of Western civilization? Why not put them in the Pompidou where their connections to modern art in Paris could be made visible? And from the MH there were vehement objections to the emptying of a long-established scientific establishment to provide fodder for the aesthetes to chew on (p. 43).

There are two equally interesting strands interwoven here: the power struggle between the opposing camps and their détente of sorts in the exhibition strategies deployed in the Louvre and later in the new Quai Branly (the place name adopted to settle endless contestation over what the museum should be called). But for the benefit of the American reader, Price first lays out the differences between French and American attitudes toward a national culture. We are reminded that contrary to the American acceptance of multiculturalism in the 1970s, the French position has remained assimilationist, such that ethnicities are given no official recognition (pp. 38, 40). This means not only that, for example, Muslim girls can't wear headscarves in school but also that Louvre curators strongly uphold the hierarchy that places French culture and its classical antecedents above all others and are therefore bound to resist the invasion of its galleries by African and Oceanic sacra. Chirac wanted to flatten this hierarchy with a dramatic statement and turned to his friend Kerchache to decide how the “showcase” should be selected and installed. The resulting new section called “Pavillon des Sessions” (which Louvre curators hoped fervently would be temporary, and may yet turn out to be) was aesthetically driven, meaning “masterworks” of exquisite sculptural form, widely spaced and carefully illuminated to bring out their plasticity. Their provenance, many from famous French collections, was also a deciding factor in their inclusion (p. 62).

The requests from anthropologists for contextualization was met in a separate section and consisted not of explanations concerning the meaning of the objects but, instead, of their validation by French collectors: for example, by screening a film on Kerchache himself, in shorts and pith helmet, bravely crossing a bridge of lianas somewhere in Africa in the sixties, and in his later incarnation as a connoisseur in Paris. Another film featured the library of André Bréton, the French theorist of Surrealism, and his collection of Art Nègre. As the author aptly surmises, the “interpretive area” seemed more for the display of French aesthetic sensitivities in validating the art for a European spectatorship than for elucidating the cultures that produced it (p. 62).

But if the Louvre’s new section, opened in 2000, set the scene for initial skirmishes, the design and installation of a whole new museum devoted to “arts premiers” (the euphemism that has replaced “primitive art” in enlightened French circles) was cause for all-out warfare among the factions. Initially in the Louvre stage, Maurice Godelier (who joined the Friedman Commission) and Claude Lévi-Strauss (who was named its honorary president but remained aloof), both distinguished elder statesmen for the anthropology side, endorsed the idea of a new, “truly postcolonial” museum and implied that the MH was beyond salvaging (pp. 86, 94). But the commission was clearly weighted toward the aesthetic perspective in its leadership and Godelier eventually left in disgust, feeling that he was being sidelined in the decision making.

There next ensued the creation of more planning committees which argued for various reconfigurations of existing Paris museum collections. After weighing the pros and cons of every possibility (which took several years), a new museum was considered the only viable alternative to the various consolidation proposals. A design competition followed and Jean Nouvel was chosen to be its architect and implementer of the newest version of French primitivism.

This did not mean there was no resistance on the scientific–ethnographic side. As early as 1996, curators and academics organized an internet campaign and later founded an activist committee, Patrimony-Resistance, which issued regular bulletins about the movement of collections, illegal acquisitions of artifacts from Mali and Nigeria, and other shady doings (p. 91). Ethnographic filmmaker and activist Jean Rouch reminded the public of the MH’s founding by anti-Nazi resistance fighters, to combat racism and celebrate cultural diversity. In 2001 the MH staff, from curators to security guards, staged a two-month strike that received extensive press coverage (p. 93).

But, ultimately, it came to little, as the MH curators were also locked in divisive infighting among the three divisions (ethnography, prehistory, and physical anthropology), and all three were beholden to their parent body, the Museum National d’Histoire Naturelle, for their meager funding. In the end the MH, paralyzed by lack of power and

money and in a state of advanced physical decay, had no choice but to accept the handing over of its 300,000 ethnographic objects to the new MQB. In the spring of 2003, the MH’s ethnographic galleries were closed, one by one (p. 97), leaving, as one curator put it, “bones, prehistoric tools and trinkets” to study (p. 94).

The final stage was the design and installation of a totally new presentation of perhaps 10 percent of these objects. Nouvel was to carry forward Chirac’s vision of an antipalace on the Seine. Adhering to the down-with-hierarchy mantra, there were no templelike allusions to classical antiquity. Instead, it was to resemble a living jungle, created through walls of live plantings, and illuminated dimly, with objects slowly emerging from the darkness. The main building would be suspended on irregularly spaced columns (tree trunks?) over a “lush expanse of greenery” (p. 129). As in the Louvre, the aesthetes held sway in keeping contextual information removed from the visual presentation, enclosing the former in an undulating pathway which Price refers to as the Serpent, meant to evoke a journey upriver through a forest of objects, while simultaneously holding video consoles, texts, and seating. The dim lighting came in for heavy criticism from the public and journalists alike. Michael Kimmelman of the *New York Times* likened it to a “journey into the jungle” where “scary masks or totem poles loom out of the darkness . . . the only thing missing are people throwing spears at you” (p. 150). Others compared it to “scare-producing fun houses in amusement parks” (p. 151). Against these negative reactions must be placed the architect’s intention, which he described as “random shimmerings of light to evoke sunbeams piercing the forest canopy” (p. 129). That the public and even critics were unmoved by this art-in-the-forest metaphor must have been disappointing, although given its controversial suggestion of jungle theatre, surely not surprising.

Finally, Price argues that this primitivizing effect of the installation is also reinforced by references to early writings such as Guillaume and Munro’s *Primitive Negro Sculpture* (p. 151), rather than to up-to-date ethnographies. To this one might reply that this makes it consistent with a reading of “primitive art,” which is now deeply embedded in the history of modernism, particularly in Paris. The question becomes whether this history should be ignored, refuted, or acknowledged in the new MQB.

In the last chapter, “Cultures in Dialogue?,” Price offers four models for the museum presentation of cultural difference. While these are not new, they are illuminating in the MQB context. First is the “ethnographic present,” the location of objects in an idealized precontact past, which characterized not only the MH but also most other ethnology museums until recently. Second is the universalizing, purely aesthetic presentation typical of art museums such as the Louvre. The third approach, a “native voices” scenario in which members or descendants of the cultures

represented act as curators or consultants, is more common in North America, for example, at the Museum of the American Indian in Washington, D.C. The last is a model that acknowledges the colonial encounter that made the collections themselves possible, though in practice this is a delicate issue to implement because too much of it can torpedo the celebratory mode of presentation which museums regard as their most effective public face. The author's recent example is the new installation at the Museum of Ethnology in Vienna. In North America this model is typically folded into the "native voices" scenario.

The MQB installation combines the first two approaches although they are spatially segregated and presents a limited glimpse of the third. While a group of Aboriginal Australian artists were invited to paint the symbolic ancestral landscapes for which they are known, this was done in Australia and then translated piecemeal into wall designs on a far larger scale at the Museum, such that they would not be easily recognizable to the artists themselves. The fourth approach, which would require describing the military conquests that made possible their West African collections, is the least visible at MQB. Price illustrates this with two famous royal figures taken by the French army from the palace at Abomey in 1893. The MQB website describes them simply as "spoils of war" but presents no information on the artist, although he was well known, or on French aggression and Dahomean resistance (pp. 157–163). One wants to believe the cryptic treatment is the result of the simultaneous acquisition of 300,000 objects and the huge practical challenges of documentation this presents, but critics in the French press, as well as the author, are more disposed to diagnose it as a failure to remove the Louvre-colored glasses and come to terms with France's colonial past.

Being and Place among the Tlingit. *Thomas F. Thornton.* Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2008. 247 pp.

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I am especially pleased with Tom Thornton's *Being and Place among the Tlingit* because it complements my own work and that of others by focusing on the importance of place in Tlingit culture, a component of the total picture lacking or incomplete until now. It follows in the classic Southwest tradition of Keith Basso's *Wisdom Sits in Places* (1996) and James Griffith's *Beliefs and Holy Places: A Spiritual Geography of the Pimeria Alta* (2005) and is a welcome companion to Julie Cruikshank's *Do Glaciers Listen?*

Local Knowledge, Colonial Encounters, and Social Imagination (1993), to Sergei Kan's work, and to my own. Thornton is in the mainstream and on the cutting edge of the best work in this genre.

Thornton connects place and place names to history, song, oratory, worldview, traditional use, and "subsistence" economy. He compares and contrasts indigenous Tlingit and Euro-American colonial systems of naming places, and how the naming reflects different and often conflicting worldviews.

The book opens with rigorous review of theory, establishing the conceptual framework of the study. This is important for scholars, but general readers might be advised to skip this or save it for last. The book gets more exciting and easier to read as it moves from abstract theory to the case studies of specific examples illustrated with the lives of traditional Tlingit elders and the naming of particular places, showing how names, stories, songs, myth, legend, history, artistic designs, food gathering, and material culture (such as boat design) are specific to place.

Chapter 2, "Know Your Place: The Social Organization of Geographic Knowledge," presents the terms and hierarchies of Tlingit social structure, people, and places and includes a detailed list of traditional and contemporary groups. Chapter 3, "What's in a Name? Place and Cognition" is an exciting analysis of the politics of naming and the differences between indigenous and colonial names. As an example of cognitive terrain Thornton describes the fascinating use of place names in the Sitka story of the "Salmon Boy" Aak'wtaatseen—names based on the point of view of the migrating salmon. His discussion of toponyms in Glacier Bay contrasts indigenous and Euro-American concepts of names: what geographic features are named and how they are named. Whereas Euro-Americans are preoccupied with biographical names (missionaries, sponsors, politicians, girlfriends) of prominent features, Tlingit names reflect land use, fish and animals associated with a place, and events that happened there.

Chapter 4, "Production and Place," examines how culture is defined through the harvest, processing, and meaning of food. It discusses the calendar, annual cycle of seasonal relocation to follow resources, social organization of production (ownership, who uses what land, when, and how), and the encroachment of newcomers that disrupted traditional patterns of land ownership and use.

Throughout the book, Thornton connects land to visual art, various genres of oral literature, and ceremonial life. This culminates in Chapter 5, "Ritual as Emplacement: The Potlatch/*Ku.éex'*" and links especially to my work. Central to Tlingit worldview is the concept of "*at.óow*," literally "something purchased," usually purchased with the life of an ancestor. The *at.óow* are connected to place and typically reflected as clan crest designs in many genres of visual art (hats, woven robes, beaded and button blankets,

etc.). Narratives describe the acquisition of the crests, songs accompany the visual art, and the art objects become the inspiration for metaphor and simile in ceremonial oratory for the removal of grief delivered across moiety lines. This is accompanied by distribution of gifts and food from the land, through which the spirits of the departed are comforted by the hosts' giving comfort to the living of the opposite moiety.

Chapter 6 is a brief conclusion called "Toward an Anthropology of Place." The book includes a bibliography, index, and many maps, photographs, and tables. There are some typos in some of the tables, but on the whole the book is attractively designed and contains a wealth of information. I am using it as a text this fall (2008) in an interdisciplinary course that links Tlingit oral literature in translation, anthropology, and visual art. The book appeals to several disciplines, including anthropology, Native American literature, Native studies, geography, and ecology. I hope it will be a model for similar studies of being and place among other indigenous cultures of the world.

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A Coincidence of Desires: Anthropology, Queer Studies, Indonesia. Tom Boellstorff. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007. ix + 292 pp., figures, notes, references, index.

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It is no coincidence (or is it?) that *A Coincidence of Desires* represents another critically important contribution to anthropology and queer studies by Tom Boellstorff. While each of the central chapters have been previously published as separate journal articles, what makes this book unique is that Boellstorff assembles and interrogates this impressive range of ethnographic data through five distinct case studies, asking key theoretical questions in a sophisticated

and compelling way. What is the relationship between anthropology and queer studies? What is the meaning and promise of interdisciplinarity at this point in intellectual history? How might we begin to theorize non-normative genders and sexualities in relation to the nation state, popular culture, language and religion? And what does time and temporality have to do with it all?

At one level, Boellstorff employs an intersectional theory of gender and sexuality—grounded in feminist and queer theories—to explore the lives of people who call themselves *gay* and *lesbi* in Indonesia. (Following Boellstorff's usage, the italicized terms *gay* and *lesbi* represent Indonesian words even as they appropriate English language terminology.) At another level, he draws on classical anthropological theory to critique "straight" (and queer) Western conceptions of time and temporality. His book is framed by this intriguing argument for "coincidence" as a theoretically productive interdisciplinary method engaging both anthropology and queer studies. By oscillating between the two disciplines, and by highlighting the "permutations of coincidence" this method produces, Boellstorff aims to provide a kind of "queer hope" (p. 34) in a world fractured by inequalities and violence.

Boellstorff's five case studies include an analysis of Indonesian *gay* zines; the lives of *warias* or "male transvestites"; *bahasa gay* or the playful form of the Indonesian language spoken by many *gay* men; and a thoughtful examination of the incommensurability of being both Muslim and *gay* in Indonesia. Thus, each of the central chapters of the book presents a rich set of ethnographic data based on over 15 years of research in Indonesia. (As the author indicates in his introduction, the book can be read as a companion piece to his earlier volume, *The Gay Archipelago* [2005].) And one of Boellstorff's key arguments that weaves throughout the current book concerns the relationship between *gay*, *lesbi*, and *waria* subject positions in Indonesia and the nation state: he suggests that "homosexual desire may appear as an unexpected effect" of the clearly heteronormative nation-building project (p. 36).

Boellstorff marshals the evidence for his argument carefully, examining the full range of *gay* Indonesian self-published magazines called zines published since 1982 to argue that these representations of *gay* (and, to a certain extent, *lesbi*) life and particularly love demonstrate that the desire for national belonging constitutes a foundational force in *gay* and *lesbi* life. Similarly, he describes *warias* as "national transvestites" whose subjectivity has been (is being) forged in important ways through this impulse for national belonging. In "Gay Language, Registering Belonging," Boellstorff expands on this theme with a nuanced discussion of *bahasa gay*, a unique slang that is colloquially described as a "*gay* language." He also explores the notion of incommensurability in relation to the apparent contradiction for Indonesian citizens between being both *gay*

and Muslim. Finally, in “The Emergence of Political Homophobia,” Boellstorff provides compelling evidence for the dangerously and sometimes quite violent “heteronormative logic that lies at the heart of nationalism” (p. 16).

In many ways, Boellstorff is writing against an older anthropological tradition that has been critiqued as a kind of “ethnographic cartography” (Kath Weston’s concept), that is, a putatively objective mapping of the world’s queer peoples in terms of “traditional,” localized (and colonial) categories of ethnicity. Instead, he is contributing to what has been called the “new queer studies,” with its emphasis on intersectionality, highlighting “multivalent deployments of gender and sexuality that always have some kind of cultural logic to them” (p. 217). Boellstorff’s love of anthropology shines through in his thoughtful meditations on the promise and power of what he calls “coincidental interdisciplinarity.” And in an appropriately queer ending, he refuses to offer a summative conclusion to the work but, rather, develops a set of intriguing theses based on a comparative review of the impressive body of work now available on non-normative genders and sexualities throughout Southeast Asia.

A Coincidence of Desires will be compelling reading for anyone interested in queer theory, Indonesia, and Southeast Asia. Boellstorff’s meditations on anthropology will also be intriguing for anyone interested in the history of anthropology and debates about interdisciplinarity. Hopefully, other scholars will engage with Boellstorff’s proposed theory of coincidence; while he remains true to his theory of queer coincidences by refusing to provide a sense of closure at the end of the book, I was left still desiring more details on this playful and hopeful possibility.

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Assembling Women: The Feminization of Global Manufacturing. *Teri L. Caraway*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2007. xi + 208 pp., tables, figures, references, index.

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The reliance of export-oriented manufacturing on a predominantly female labor force (particularly in key sectors of garments and electronics) is one of the most frequently

noted and often studied elements of late-20th-century global capitalism. From the Mexican *maquiladoras* to the proliferating free trade zones of East and Southeast Asia, this global “feminization of labor” has been the subject of dozens of ethnographies as well as a growing library of documentary films. In *Assembling Women*, Teri Caraway, a political scientist by training, offers an intriguing new portrait of this phenomenon. I should note immediately that this is not an ethnographic portrait. Rather, *Assembling Women* is a comparative statistical analysis of labor market feminization; it traces longitudinal patterns of male and female representation (relative “feminization” and “masculinization”) in a variety of employment sectors within and across ten national economies. The bulk of Caraway’s analysis focuses on shifting employment patterns during the rapid industrialization of several East and Southeast Asian economies, particularly between the 1960s and 1990s but includes some important comparisons with three Latin American countries. In addition, Caraway grounds this comparative analysis in an extended case study of Indonesia, investigating in some detail how shifting hiring practices affected employment rates by sex in a variety of industrial sectors. Paying special attention to employment patterns in four industries (garments, textiles, plywood, and automobiles), Caraway establishes the uneven and at times counter-intuitive ways in which women have been incorporated within some sectors of Indonesian manufacturing while remaining largely excluded from others. Working from the Indonesian case material, Caraway suggests how these national findings can illuminate patterns in the larger cross-national statistical record and makes a strong case for the need to approach studies of labor force feminization with close attention to the variability and fluidity of outcomes hidden within aggregate data.

Caraway marshals this complex array of statistical data on labor market participation in innovative ways. Most notably, she challenges assumptions common to many labor market studies, particularly by questioning models that assume markets to be gender neutral. Instead, Caraway investigates how labor market patterns reflect the gendered beliefs and norms that managers and supervisors bring to local employment processes. To do this, she incorporates data from interviews with a range of Indonesian employers and managerial staff, tracing how beliefs about what men and women can and should be doing are intimately involved in hiring practices. These “gendered discourses of work” serve at some times to bar women’s entry and at others to justify their presence within or movement into new sectors of production or new tasks within a larger labor process. Although varied in application, employers’ own gendered beliefs (and beliefs about their workers’ gendered preferences) are crucial factors in Caraway’s analysis for understanding the persistence of sex-segregated tasks within certain industries as well as the differential rates

of feminization between industries, particularly the relatively low rates of female employment in capital-intensive manufacturing versus high rates in more labor-intensive sectors.

Readers familiar with richly ethnographic studies of women's global labor are likely to find Caraway's spare analysis of observational and interview data rather unsatisfying. Similarly, her conceptualization of "feminization" is limited to numeric rates of employment by sex and does not address broader symbolic processes through which low-waged, under-, or deskilled laborers (whether men or women) around the globe are positioned in feminized roles of subservience and dependence. *Assembling Women* clearly acknowledges existing anthropological research that highlights these discursive and ideological dimensions of global labor relations but does not add substantially to the ethnographic record. In addition, Caraway's focus on interviews with managerial and supervisory staff provides few avenues for examining the roles that workers and their local communities may play in the feminization and masculinization of different employment practices or in the production and contestation of gendered meanings in the workplace and beyond. But, as noted above, this is not an ethnographic study. Rather, Caraway's critical contribution involves the integration of such qualitative concepts as "gendered discourses of work" within a quantitative study of labor markets. Particularly significant is the way Caraway's research design and subsequent findings resonate productively with anthropological understandings of the deeply cultural dimensions of global markets and transnational capitalism.

More generally, Caraway's arguments complement and contextualize the existing ethnographic literature. For example, she rightly criticizes many studies of labor feminization that focus solely on employment sectors where women workers predominate. Caraway examines shifts in both men's and women's employment rates across a broad spectrum of manufacturing industries. One of the key findings of *Assembling Women* derives from her comparative analysis across employment sectors, including industries that have resisted women's entry. Her analysis of data within and between different nations reveals highly varying rates of feminization and also traces patterns of remasculinization in several instances. The longitudinal and cross-national dimensions of the study allow her to show that rates of feminization have most often peaked during the early and rapid periods of expansion in labor-intensive industrialization (particularly in early shifts from import-substitution to export-oriented development strategies). By contrast, preference for male workers has tended to persist in industries that are capital intensive or that expanded more slowly, while feminization typically slowed down or reversed as labor-intensive practices gave way to more capital-intensive ones. Thus, Caraway's statistical compar-

ison points to some of the practical mechanisms that underlie the structural persistence and even strengthening of gendered hierarchies and inequalities in global labor markets, despite expectations (at least in some quarters) that women's massive wage-labor recruitment would itself lead to the weakening if not the disappearance of such inequities.

Among the many interesting findings of Caraway's study is the link she draws between local histories of unionization and patterns of labor market feminization. While ideological claims regarding women's innate docility and socialization to greater obedience are commonly proffered to "explain" women's appeal as a cheap industrial labor force, Caraway finds that it is instead the relative weakness or "docility" of male-dominated unions and labor movements (rather than beliefs about women's submissive natures) that better explains differential rates of labor force feminization. That is, both in employment sectors and in countries with a history of strong unions and (typically male-dominated) labor organizing, women's labor force entry proceeded more slowly and reached lower levels; whereas weak unionization among previously male-dominated sectors tended to coincide with much more rapid and higher rates of female employment. Caraway does not go further to explore the effects that new union movements or other forms of social mobilization may have had or could have in the future, but these are not avenues of investigation that her primarily statistical and workplace data can readily support. In sum, students of globalizing production processes, transnational capitalism, and gendered labor relations will find much food for thought in *Assembling Women*. Its findings offer a useful complement to the present qualitative literature and suggest some valuable avenues for more comparative research into the varied dimensions and persistence of gender inequalities within contemporary global capitalism.

Stitching Identities in a Free Trade Zone. Sandya Hewamanne. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2007. 296 pp.

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Sandya Hewamanne begins this book at the garment factory's New Year's party in 2005, which also serves as a sort of reunion party for the author who had conducted her fieldwork five years previously. She returns like a prodigal daughter, welcomed by her old friends on the line and also

by the supervisors, members of the “enemy camp.” Hewamanne uses this interesting retrospective or “flashback” technique numerous times through the book to great affect. As the ethnography is written in the first person, and the author emplots herself in her writing, the reader is invited to, if you will, peer over Hewamanne’s shoulder to eavesdrop and witness the events in 2005 and those in 1999–2000. The first-person voice is retained throughout the book, the author responds strongly, intellectually in her interpretations and emotionally on hearing or witnessing events. There are clearly workers and a few supervisors she likes and some she does not. Thus, the reader becomes attuned to, indeed intimate with the author’s biases, friendships, emotional responses, and interpretations of events. There is little of the hesitancy, introspection into one’s own character, concern about one’s own cultural or linguistic competency, or worry that one is being ethnocentric or cannot figure out the culture that one finds in first-person ethnographies written by the cultural stranger. Even though there is some ambivalence in the author’s dual standing with the workers and with management, the author is confident, or appears so, in her ability to maneuver, understand, and interact with both groups. She recognizes her high status as a college-educated, middle-class Sri Lankan who is there to do research and obtains her foothold in both the dormitory and factory through connections. Her inside status, competence as an anthropologist, and ability to move between both the world of the exploited and that of the exploiter makes this a unique and particularly valuable ethnography because most ethnographies remain written by the linguistic and cultural outsider. The author’s stated purpose is, “I want the readers to feel the human spirit that allowed these women to deal with power and violence in the best way they could . . . It is the story of their lives in all its complexity. . . that I present in the pages that follow” (p. 3). She meets this goal, for the most part, and this is the strength of this book. I say for the “most part” because of course it is a hyperbole; she cannot, nor can anyone, tell “the story of their lives in all its complexity.”

There are many “binaries” that run through this text: male–female, fair–dark, bosses–garment workers, tradition–modernity, urban–village, aggressive–sexual–shame–fear ideology, and more. In cultural narratives about these women particularly as presented in popular movies, soap operas, the press and everyday subjectivities, these “binaries” often line up to damn these women. Hewamanne frequently refers back to this master cultural narrative (my words, not hers) that serves as a baseline for her analyses of ethnographic materials. This master narrative goes as follows: females move from kin and village to urban Free Trade Zone (FTZ) areas where, particularly if they are “fair and slim,” they fall prey to or are attracted to males who have power over them such as supervisors, boardinghouse owners, and their male family members;

eventually, these women lose their village traditions of gender based on a “shame–fear” ideology and are transformed into personally aggressive and active sexual agents who threaten the traditional Sri Lankan Buddhist cultural order that position woman in sexually passive, subservient, nurturing, and domestic roles.

There are other binaries noted by the author: structure–agency; exploitation–resistance; imposed–negotiated identity; power–powerless and so on. It would perhaps have been easy for the author to avail herself of these binaries to tell her story. She does not. Instead, she uses her loadstone of stories obtained through observation, participation, interviews, and conversations to show how the women created and negotiated spaces, resisted, and used their leverage as reliable, good workers to gain some power. Through their experiences in the factory and in the boardinghouses the women became more aware of “macrostructures of domination” and also of the need to unite and create a “class identity that fights for ‘worker’s rights’” (p. 129). However, Hewamanne also noted that these negotiations were often ad hoc, specific to particular women, and limited in expression within a system of exploitation. Even in the exploitatively highly structured space of a FTZ garment factory, Hewamanne always portrays the agency and personality of all her subjects. One comes away with an impression of knowing each person and how those personalities invariably and variously inscribe themselves on the system of the factory work just as the larger Sri Lankan culture and the system of the factory inscribes itself variously on them. It is a two way street, but it is always biased in favor of those in power. This is what makes this book so interesting. One is rooting for the workers, sympathizes with their predicaments, and admires their strengths and humanity. At the same time, the author lets us know that the workers are exploited by the capitalistic imperatives that make the factory possible in the first place and the patriarchal culture which views women on their own as dangerous (threatening traditional village culture) and fallen.

Now for some criticism. I appreciate the author’s presence in the book. I am less comfortable with her self-portrayal as a sort of heroic figure fighting for and with the workers. While the author writes of the ways workers are aware of and manipulate the hierarchy of power and also recognizes her own high status, she nevertheless considers her relationship with workers as one of friendship and equality without delving into how her own temporary and superior status affects that relationship. She does not quite live in a boardinghouse, although she visits frequently and stays over; she does not quite work on the floor, although she works a bit (it is never clear) and hangs out on the floor. At the boardinghouse, the workers try to obtain an expensive fish when they invite her for dinner, but they usually eat just rice and lentils. There is little reflection of her own position and how it shapes her ethnography.

Second, Hewamanne's emotional involvement in the plight of the workers sometimes leads to passages that, I think, are too critical of the actions of some of the workers. For instance, after a short, failed strike discussed in the middle of the book, Hewamanne writes of her interview with a worker, Madhu, "Madhu continued her account of the traitors: 'Amila dragged Priyanka back to work'" (p. 122). Earlier she had already given profiles of these two workers (Amila and Priyanka) and some others that were unflattering. Discussing a romantic relationship between Priyanka (an assembly line worker) and Sanuja (a male floor supervisor), Hewamanne writes that "Niluka (another worker) said, 'the only reason that Priyanka captured . . . Sanuja was that our Vasanthi (the name given to one of the author's favorite workers who had also won a company beauty contest) . . . did not want big people'" (p. 110). Elsewhere, she writes that when she found out that Vasanthi had invited Pushla, a floor assistant supervisor who she portrays very unflatteringly, to her wedding, "I was still fuming. . . . Why was it so hard to shake off the feeling of betrayal? Hadn't Vasanthi said that she would never forget the way Pushla treated them like dogs and cats?" (pp. 92–93). The many passages of this nature give energy and intimacy to the book, but at the same time I wonder what is the point of divulging such intimacies when, given the photographs in the book and the fact that the world of factory workers is small, these people could easily be identified and may suffer from such public portrayals and conversations that seem to be spoken "off the record"? Where is their agency in these profiles and writing of things they say in the heat of the moment or in seeking to gain the friendship of the author? How do such divulgements benefit the living and working conditions of garment workers?

A final issue I have of this book, and of many ethnographies, is the ease by which the author takes a reflexive, thick descriptive, interpretivist stance that, it seems to me, implicitly, if not explicitly, rejects claims of objectivity and generalizability and, yet, makes dogmatic, objective generalizations that few ethnographers with a more scientific bend would harbor. Here I divulge my own biases, which are to a scientific anthropology qualified by the inherent subjectivism of our methods and our biases, but one that aims toward truth, objectivity, and generalizability however bracketed. There are many instances of this tendency to facticity; to quote but one, after discussing the romantic interest and affairs of three women, all excellent examples of the author's strength at getting us sympathetically inside the lives of these women, she concludes by writing, "the analysis shows that the FTZ area is a transformative space that enabled working women to become desirous subjects who strategically moved back and forth between the subversion of cultural codes and their expressed loyalty to dominant cultural discourses" (p. 177). Here descriptions of the "politics of desire" are interesting, but what is meant by "transformative"?

A permanent transformation? As she indicates that some women are not so transformed, her interview with Janaki suggests that "there are no real barriers in my village about girls finding boyfriends if they have stopped schooling. In fact . . . then some families even subtly encouraged finding one's own partner" (p. 161). The point is the dominant cultural discourses are also often situationally contingent and negotiated at the village level. Discourses about village culture are not the same as the "politics of everyday village life." But such claims have a dogmatic assurance, an objective certainty to them that is unwarranted given the meager evidence, the sample, and the components of the argument. When Hewamanne is attending to the ethnographic case studies and interview material, the sense of situated contingency and qualifiers are present; however, there is an attempt in the chapter conclusions to paint in broad strokes, as if to signify the broad import of the case study material. I think the case material is rich enough to stand on its own and can be used for further studies that are aimed at thinner, more generalizing statements.

To conclude on a more positive note, Hewamanne, to her credit, moves from space to space: the first part of the book is about the workplace, the second about the dormitories, and the third (and shortest) about many of the women's return to their native villages. Hewamanne states that she has and is conducting research focusing on the lives of garment workers after they leave the FTZ. This should take her to villages and urban areas for more than just a few interviews with garment workers, but, one hopes, long enough to talk with and get a feel for the different villages. A second book on this subject would strengthen this book, as village culture is portrayed too much as corresponding to portrayals of village culture by urbanites and the media. Hewamanne succeeds in meeting her primary objective, which is to tell us the story of these women in a way that we can see and partially apprehend the complexity of their lives through her writing. Few ethnographies are as passionate, confident, intimate, and evocative as this one.

Governing Spirits: Religion, Miracles, and Spectacles in Cuba and Puerto Rico, 1898–1956. *Reinaldo Román.* Chapel Hill: University of North Carolina Press, 2007. 273 pp.

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In the first half of the 20th century, Cuba and Puerto Rico were newly independent from Spain but under U.S. neocolonial regimes—Cuba as an ostensibly independent

republic under close U.S. supervision, and Puerto Rico as a commonwealth, achieving neither statehood nor independence. In these new political contexts, both governments were keenly interested in matters of citizenship, governance, and social progress. Against this background, Reinaldo Román examines the trajectories of a number of charismatic religious figures who rose to prominence in each country. He argues that folk religious movements and leaders became focal points of negotiation among the state, its various publics, the media, and religious institutions. By tracing the careers of such varied phenomena as the Cheo Brothers, Elenita, and a Virgin apparition in Puerto Rico and man-gods, purportedly cannibalistic witches, and a radio faith healer in Cuba, Román can tell diverse and contrasting stories about how these two Caribbean neocolonial nation-states handled issues of race, class, and religion in the context of struggles over political power, religious diversity, civic freedoms, and the role of the media.

Midway through his introductory chapter, Román attempts to lay out a simple and rather reductive overall progression of changing practices of governance in each place, from a focus on governing to what he calls “managing” or even “stage-managing” religion, but this formulation does not do justice to the fascinating materials he pulls out of his rich oral and archival sources. The true contribution of this fine historical project lies in the careful detail through which Román tells a series of rather more complex and multifaceted stories about how various institutions and actors coconstructed religious miracles and spectacles as they worked out what religious modernity would look like in each place.

The entire book is bracketed by a contemporary tale of the *chupacabras* phenomenon in Puerto Rico. During the 1990s these mysterious, vampire-like “goatsuckers” created a media frenzy and varied political responses, along with public responses ranging from panic to satire. In his epilogue, Román follows other authors in situating the *chupacabras* within a global bestiary of monstrous experiences of neoliberalism and neocolonialism. But, for him, the *chupacabras* are an object lesson in avoiding the temptation to write off reports of the occult and the miraculous of any era according to any one explanatory framework. Instead, he sees the *chupacabras* in the same vein as the Spiritist, folk Catholic, and Afro-Cuban religious specters and spectacles he examines throughout the book: as Turnerian cults of affliction, yes, but produced at the tangled intersection of public discourses of rumor, journalism, science, religion, and governmental as well as public actions and responses.

Throughout the early 20th century (and, arguably, still today), questions of religiosity and superstition implicate issues of citizenship and governance, precisely because of governments’ concerns with progress and modernity. On the one hand, Cuba and Puerto Rico struggled to enact and protect religious freedom as modern secular states free of

an institutional Catholic yoke. On the other hand, varied religious forms and performances functioned as markers of progress or backsliding that were often read quite differently by differently positioned social actors. For example, while reform-minded Puerto Rican Spiritists might have seen the public’s enthusiastic embrace of certain religious figures and spectacles as signs of conservative Catholicism’s loosening grip, the state and the church viewed Spiritists as dangerously atavistic. Often too, concerns about the potentially negative impacts of blackness and the lower classes on citizenship played out on religious terrain. Román traces a shift in both countries in which the state and its religious, scientific, and class elites who in the first decades of the 20th century viewed subaltern religious practices as threats to social stability and progress later came to see those same practices as “folk” and “traditional” manifestations imbued with a popular authenticity, however backward they might appear.

Román’s book is organized roughly chronologically with alternate chapters considering Cuban and Puerto Rican case studies. Although Román draws connections and contrasts across sites, persons, and times throughout the book, each chapter can also stand alone. Chapter 1 compares the trajectories of two Cuban man-gods, Hilario Mustelier and Juan Manso, to understand what shaped government views of religious fanaticism as a social problem and why the two men, so closely related in religious genealogy, had such different receptions. In chapter 2, Román compares the ministries of Elenita and the Cheo Brothers in Puerto Rico, whom he describes as mediating between institutionalized and popular forms of Catholicism and Spiritism. Rather than depicting a fixed hierarchy of institutional and folk religions, he argues for a field of overlapping practices through which extreme poles of religious power and identity were negotiated. In chapter 3, he applies a similar focus on discursive fields to examine the role of the Cuban press in creating a powerful narrative genre around racialized fears of black folk religion, glossed during that era as witchcraft. In chapter 4 he introduces his notion of economies of affliction to account for the emergence of spiritual leaders and healers such as La Samaritana. In Puerto Rico, class functioned somewhat in parallel to race in Cuba, as the field in which different forms of Spiritism emerged as dialogical products of clashes between cosmopolitan elites and poorer, more rural masses. Chapters 5 and 6 consider state attempts to “manage miracles” during the 1950s, arguing that miracles are collectively and dialogically produced. In chapter 5 Román examines the role of radio and print journalism in the rise of media phenomena *La Estimizada* and *Clavelito*, considering their popularity in light of the fraught politics of Batista’s Cuba—a time of affliction. In chapter 6 he traces the emergence of a vision of the Virgin in the Puerto Rican rural outpost of Sabana Grande in light of internationally circulating

models of the Virgins at Lourdes and Fatima. He accounts for the government's low-key response to the mobilization of tens of thousands of pilgrims as a performance of its modern, administrative capability to benevolently manage their travel, safety, hygiene, and health.

Contested Tongues: Language Politics and Cultural Correction in Ukraine. *Laada Bilaniuk*. Ithaca, NY: Cornell University Press, 2006. xi + 201 pp., appendix, references, index.

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In this ethnography, Laada Bilaniuk tracks changes in language ideology in Ukraine from the tsarist period, through the Soviet regime, to independence. The Ukraine's history of division among different regimes has created a stark geographical divide between a Ukrainian-dominant western Ukraine and a Russian-dominant central and eastern Ukraine. This sociolinguistic panorama has been complicated by Ukraine's independence from the Soviet Union in 1991, which raised questions of how Ukraine would be imagined as an independent nation-state. "Ukrainian citizens did not all want the same thing, and while, for some, the drastic social changes galvanized their sense of self, many were not sure what their identity should be" (p. 192).

Bilaniuk lays out three goals for the monograph: (1) to examine conflicting and shifting Ukrainian language ideologies and language politics, (2) to examine the political constellations surrounding "mixed" Ukrainian and Russian language, and (3) to contribute to scholarship on language and social power by studying a case of rapid change of linguistic values (pp. 10–11).

In regards to the first goal, in chapters 1 through 3, Bilaniuk shows a shift from a Soviet linguistic market in which Russian dominates to a Ukrainian linguistic market, in which Ukrainian gains prestige as a national standard. Under both ideological regimes, Bilaniuk argues that there is an emphasis on what she calls "linguistic and cultural correction" (p. 11). Such correction entails a normative one-to-one correspondence between state and language and the promotion of a single standard language. Under the tsarist and Soviet systems, correction was in the direction of Russian, while under the current system, it is increasingly in the direction of Ukrainian. The underlying ideology of correction remains unaltered, in spite of the political changes. "Despite drastic struggles over and shifts in the symbolic values of particular linguistic forms, the belief in the necessity of a prestigious standard persists" (p. 31). The themes of

linguistic ideological contestation and change arise in four life histories presented in their entirety in chapter 2. Unfortunately, Bilaniuk provides little analysis of this rich ethnographic material. This chapter would have been stronger if she had offered a thematic analysis of the life histories and saved the complete narratives for an appendix.

Chapters 4 through 6 are dedicated to Bilaniuk's second goal, describing mixtures of Ukrainian and Russian (named languages that, as she points out, are themselves ideological constructions) and their shifting symbolic value, drawing primarily on literary and media data. Chapters 4 and 5 focus on the history, typology and symbolic value of "*surzhyk*," mixed Ukrainian and Russian, a widely condemned phenomenon. She traces the origins of *surzhyk* to the incorporation of Ukraine into the Russian empire. Under the tsarist regime, the indexical linkage between Russian and state power gave that language prestige, while Ukrainian became associated with peasant life. When Ukrainian-speaking people attempted to speak Russian (an act of linguistic correction), the result was a mixture of the two languages. Increasing contact with the Russian state meant that by 1900, "the relative linguistic purity of Ukrainian in most villages no longer existed" (p. 108). Bilaniuk identifies five constellations of linguistic practice and speaker identity that today go under the label "*surzhyk*." Three of these are mixed codes originating in correction toward Russian during tsarist and Soviet times. The remaining two types involve codeswitching and codemixing between Russian and Ukrainian. In what Bilaniuk terms "urban bilinguals' *surzhyk*," speakers engage in habitual mixing. In "post-independence *surzhyk*," native Russian speakers attempt to correct to Ukrainian, in a mirror image of the original *surzhyk*. In an ideological landscape in which linguistic purity is a condition of personal and national legitimacy, these mixed practices are widely condemned, although they also have positive connotations of local solidarity and the "carnavalesque" (p. 192). Interestingly, Bilaniuk points out that mixing with English is considered unproblematic, a reflection of the cachet of English and Ukraine's incorporation into a global economy.

Chapter 6 describes another kind of language mixing, that which occurs at the level of the interaction in what Bilaniuk calls "nonreciprocal bilingualism." This practice has been made possible by the redefinition of Ukrainian as a legitimate public language in the post-Soviet period. In nonreciprocal bilingualism, neither the Russophone nor the Ukrainophone corrects toward the opposite language, instead each employing his or her own preferred code. This practice results in asymmetrical conversations in which one party speaks Russian and the other Ukrainian. Bilaniuk argues that ironically these mixed conversations in fact reinforce the notion of distinct, mutually exclusive codes and a one-to-one correspondence between language and identity.

As for Bilaniuk's third goal, she begins by arguing that other scholars of language and social power have focused on stable ideological constellations, while her study contributes to theory on this topic by looking at rapid ideological change (p. 11). The author is not as convincing on this goal as she is on the other two. For one thing, her claim ignores other work on linguistic ideological change, for example by Kathryn Woolard on Catalonia or Joseph Errington on Indonesia (although she does cite these authors). More importantly, the analysis here could be more specific, as could her statements of its theoretical contributions. Bilaniuk demonstrates that political shifts in Ukraine have created a thoroughly heterogeneous linguistic marketplace. She could do more to specify what her findings tell us about language and social power more generally. Adding a concluding chapter to address the theoretical implications of the work could have solved this problem.

Despite this shortcoming, the book is successful on the whole. Its careful attention to linguistic form, identity politics and social change will make it of interest to scholars of bilingualism, language ideology, publics, and postsocialism.

Culture of Corruption. Daniel Jordan Smith. Princeton: Princeton University Press, 2008. 296 pp.

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Talk about corruption is ubiquitous; anthropological studies of corruption are rare. Daniel Jordan Smith's *Culture of Corruption* offers an impressive contribution to the literature. His book is rich, readable, and rewarding.

The introduction offers a good overview of relevant debates in anthropology and related social science fields that will be of use for policy makers as well as academics. There is reference to some of the relevant Francophone literature as well. *Culture of Corruption* is replete with highly readable accounts of a wide range of social practices that Nigerians discuss, debate, reproduce, and combat in terms of "corruption." I know of no other monograph about corruption with such a wide ethnographic scope. Corruption in Nigeria has become, according to Smith, a discourse of commentary and complaint. Thus, the book discusses not only actual practices of corruption but also the multiple ways in which corruption is a way to talk about what is wrong, and what could be different, in Nigeria.

Ethnography of corruption faces numerous problems—some of them conceptual. What, exactly, is corruption? One can work with a classic definition of

corruption in politics: the abuse of public office for private gain. NGOs like Transparency International now use a broader definition that includes nonstate as well as state actors. Smith begins with a discursive approach to the analytic challenge: corruption is what our informants say and think it is. Corruption is not a universal problem of failures of the rule of law. Nor is it a "Western concept" of no relevance to Africa. Rather, anthropologists should take their clues from how their informants talk and think about corruption. Such an approach is unusual in the literature on corruption and an important contribution.

In the first chapter of his book, Smith analyzes the 419 e-mail scams for which Nigeria is famous, by seeing them as "cultural objects that convey popular conceptions of corruption" (p. 51). Other chapters look at practices and discourses of corruption in everyday life, development, politics, and love. Later chapters analyze the relation of corruption to the world of ritual, witchcraft, and Pentecostalism. The fieldwork materials on which the book is based are extensive and impressive. Smith has diverse connections to Nigeria—by marriage, work in the development business, and only later as a professional anthropologist. His book draws on conversations with "thousands of Nigerians . . . over fifteen years" (p. 55). This long-term knowledge gives Smith an authority when he talks about issues that tend not to be openly discussed with foreigners, and raises interesting questions outside the purview of his direct interests: how can ethnographers integrate forms of knowledge gathered through such different means as kinship, professional labor, and professional ethnography?

Given the range of issues that Smith analyzes (and his informants discuss) with the concept of corruption, it may not be surprising that his analytic perspective jumps around a bit. This is fine, but it would have been helpful if Smith had made these jumps explicit. Sometimes, corruption is a form of critique of the powerful by the weak. Here, corruption (or discourses about corruption) is a reflection of underlying problems in political economy and political organization. At other points in the book, and particularly when Smith is writing of stealing on the part of the powerful, corruption becomes a thing with causal effects. It becomes an explanation (things in Nigeria are bad because there is so much corruption) rather than a discourse (corruption is a way of thinking about the fact that things are bad in Nigeria). Smith also opens up a new line of analysis about corruption: it has become a language with which to imagine the future, and a new language of accountability to replace the failing language of moral economy. Thus, corruption is not, or not only, something done to the Nigerian people as victims; it is rather a broader system of which they are participants. At the same time, he proposes, the incessant commentary on corruption, and the widespread adoption of a discourse of critiquing corruption, gives the potential for a new kind of democratic politics.

Smith indirectly points to the problems of calling too many kinds of practices “corruption.” One person’s corruption might be another’s moral behavior. That is certainly the case in Nigeria, his ethnography shows. Helping a relative or associate get access to the state, or channeling resources to a person in need, are practices that Transparency International might call corrupt, but they can generate social honor as well. In this moral economy, Smith shows, anyone who followed the rules about “public office” too closely and completely kept the personal out of the public sphere, would be morally suspect and subject to rebuke. Smith has the beginnings of an argument that such equations of moral economy were destabilized with the rise of the oil-state on the one hand, and neoliberalization on the other hand. Behaviors that were once only to be practiced on strangers or on the powerful—trickery being foremost here—have now become common in the sphere of the intimate. This can be seen, for example, in the use of the metaphor “419” to talk about cheating on a lover, a husband, or a friend.

As Smith makes clear, corruption is but one semantic register for a whole range of discourses on morality and markets. For one thing, the term *corruption* needs to be understood as a concept with its own historicity, that has had multiple meanings even in the West. For example, in 18th-century England, debates about corruption concerned fears that the rise of new forms of mobile property would corrupt the basis for civic virtue in a world where citizenship was premised on independence and stability of forms of wealth. Given the vast sweep of programs undertaken by international organizations (IOs) and large NGOs such as Transparency International to “uproot corruption” in poor countries like Nigeria, terms that might have once been “foreign” have long been localized, to assume their own meanings and resonances. Smith indicates that debates about corruption have colonial roots but never tells us much about what that means for his ethnography.

Linguistic as well as conceptual specificity is thus urgent here. And, yet, surprisingly, given his linguistic skills, Smith never tells us what specific words his informants are using, in what languages, when they talk about corruption. His linguistic specificity about the now broad meaning of “419” as a metaphor for corruption cum trickery, helped this reader understand much about Smith’s argument that was not explicitly spelled out.

Some of the issues that Smith analyzes as corruption have been studied elsewhere in anthropology under quite different analytic frames. In *Culture of Corruption*, the long lines to buy petrol that have plagued the oil-producing Nigeria are an exemplar of corruption. But in Jane Guyer’s analysis of petrol lines in Nigeria in *Marginal Gains* (2004), it is interesting to note, the word *corruption* never appears. One can read in other ethnographies, of other places, about the creeping of trickery into modes of exchange previously marked by long-term exchange and investments in people,

in a variety of anthropological works. But only here are such transformations attributed to corruption. I do not point this out to say that Smith is right or wrong in his choice to follow his informants’ insistence that this is all about corruption. Rather, it is to emphasize the analytic challenges and theoretical richness facing all of us interested in the anthropology of corruption.

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Empowering Women in Russia: Activism, Aid, and NGOs.
Julie Hemment. Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007. ix + 151 pp.

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Over the last decade, a substantial body of anthropological literature has critically examined Western development aid and democracy promotion in the former Soviet Union. This scholarship exposes issues that mainstream Western discourses on democratic transition systematically eclipse, including how the tumultuous economic and social displacement accompanying postsocialist transitions has affected local communities. It also highlights the failures of Western models of democratization, from market economics to civil society development to global campaigns for women’s rights, to facilitate social justice; often, the empowerment these models promise serve only a few, at the expense of the many. While making important critiques of postsocialist politics, it is notable that many of these authors have positioned themselves safely outside the fray, observing the processes they critiqued from a distance. Readers are often left with a sense of cynical hopelessness that any kinds of empowering change could be achieved.

Julie Hemment’s *Empowering Women in Russia: Activism, Aid, and NGOs* is a carefully constructed, honest portrait of an ethnographer who is at once staunchly committed to such critical observations, and at the same time unwilling to remain aloof from the messy, complex struggle for a more equitable society. A feminist scholar and activist, Hemment confronts head-on the immensely difficult challenge of undertaking research and praxis: her efforts to do so are a key theme of this book. The result is a supremely nuanced, reflexive account of a feminist scholar-activist who joins together with a provincial women’s group to establish a women’s crisis center—and,

simultaneously, studies the process of engagement itself. Hemment achieves the balance of critically observing and engaging by including herself and her strategies in the ethnography, guiding us through her process of learning with and about the Russian women who become her partners. This personal account exemplifies the best of feminist ethnography—it is passionate, committed, and thoroughly self-critical while avoiding the tendency toward narcissism that reflexivity can sometimes generate.

A central innovation in Hemment's book is her wedding of Participatory Action Research (PAR) with ethnographic methods. The author came to Russia with the hope of undertaking a collaborative project with local women's groups to address gendered inequities. Inspired by PAR methodology, she nonetheless recognized that it could not be deployed in an immediate or direct way, but needed to be situated within a long-term ethnographic inquiry among the community members with whom she would work. As she became acquainted with the members of Zhenskii Svet, a newly formed women's group in the provincial city of Tver', Hemment put ethnographic and PAR methods of engagement to use to help her friends and colleagues develop a crisis center partially funded by Western foundations. The strategic use of PAR, including details about its appropriateness, relevance, and limitations for a foreign anthropologist in Russia, is a key contribution of the book that will prove valuable to readers working in a variety of locations at home and abroad.

Hement's account is also an insightful look at the process of figuring out what activism can be in a society that until very recently prohibited independent citizens' groups from forming at all, let alone mobilizing for social change. As Western aid organizations arrived in Russia in the early and mid-1990s with the goal of nurturing a fledgling civil society, their strategies for supporting community groups presented great opportunities but also severe constraints—because it was the foreigners with resources who defined everything from the kinds of projects that could be undertaken, to the relevant skills and knowledge that locals needed to display, to prove they were worthy of support. Hemment shows how these organizations' policies, supposedly aimed at promoting democracy, in fact served to enable the very structural adjustment processes that were dismantling women's socialist-era citizen rights and excluding them from the political and economic opportunities of their new society. Yet with the state abandoning its former commitments to social welfare, few channels besides NGOs were available for addressing the urgent social issues that impoverished women faced on a daily basis. While Hemment's Russian colleagues initially resisted involvement in the world of foundations and grants in an effort to remain "independent," they came to realize that such involvement would be necessary to maintain their integrity amidst increasingly desperate socioeconomic con-

ditions. As they embarked on a journey of feminist "engagement," they entered a terrain where "activism" became akin to professionalization—requiring tasks such as navigating bureaucracies, mastering grant writing, and demonstrating "effectiveness." These experiences—the empirical realities of democratization through international aid—facilitate theoretical analyses of the meanings of civil society, "third sector," "social capital," and political subjectivity under Russian neoliberalism. We come to see the mismatch between democratic ideals and aid organizations' assumptions and actual practice as Hemment details how she and Zhenskii Svet members negotiated the changing boundaries of moral behavior brought on by the competing demands of foundations, the Russian state, and members' personal sense of ethical imperatives. This too is a story that resonates beyond the Russian context, as feminist praxis everywhere is being shaped by the combined challenges of gender "mainstreaming," the demands of professionalization, and the disciplines of neoliberalism. The struggle to negotiate the constraints of bureaucratization that occur with "gender mainstreaming" while maintaining a commitment to feminist precepts, is an issue that feminists around the globe need to debate: Hemment's work paves the way.

In sum, this is a brave ethnography. With its innovative combination of PAR and ethnographic research, and its carefully constructed reflexive narrative, *Empowering Women in Russia* offers a model for merging research and activism that sustains a critical focus on all these activities. Well written and accessible, this book will enrich the discussions and debates of undergraduate and graduate students alike, as well as NGO activists, policy makers, and foundation staff.

Going Indian. James Hamill. Urbana: University of Illinois Press, 2006. 216 pp.

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Going Indian opens with a curious claim that "Oklahoma, unlike other places in the Indian country, was one place where there really were Indians" (p. vix). Hamill argues that what makes Oklahoma distinctive within Indian country is the emergent identity formation associated with "Indianness" rather than a focus on localized tribal identities. He sets out to explore the historical experiences and conditions impacting this shift in identification and complements the historical information with interviews with Native Americans living in Oklahoma today. The book examines several key themes in the development of a distinctive Oklahoma

“Indian” identity, namely the shared colonial experiences of forced removals, reservations, and boarding schools (chs. 1–4); the politics of identity articulated around blood (ch. 5); and intertribal practices of church (ch. 6), powwow, Peyote Religion, and Stomp Dance (chs. 7 and 8).

Going Indian examines the important topic of identity formation and the impact of these formations on social practices among Native Americans in Oklahoma. The book is strong in its engagement with the historical issues that shaped the distinctive Indian experience in Oklahoma. Hamill’s attention to the impact of colonial assimilationist policies such as the forced removals of Eastern Native Nations to Indian Territory as well as the Dawes Act, the land grab in 1887, and the complicated legal history of dissolution of Native American nations in Oklahoma poststatehood, illuminates the distinctiveness of Oklahoma within the history of Native American and Euro-American relationships. Additionally, the book contains a vibrant engagement with the rich archive of the Indian Pioneer Papers and the Doris Duke Interviews, allowing for a diverse set of Native American voices to articulate their memories and experiences with these historical forces shaping the emergence of a distinctive Indian identity in Oklahoma.

The title, *Going Indian*, is a bit misleading as readers may think that this book is exploring the topic of the cultural appropriation of Native American identity by non-Native people, as has been analyzed in the scholarship of Philip Deloria in *Playing Indian* (1999) or Shari Huhndorf in *Going Native* (2001). *Going Indian*, however, focuses attention on the emergent intertribal Indian identity among Native Americans in Oklahoma. Hamill highlights the dual function of the symbols of Indian identity in defining Indianness in opposition to Euro-American identity while generating a shared Indian experience and identity across tribal boundaries. Although he is focused on intertribal Indian identity, he states, “there are at least two ways to be Native American: one can be Indian, or one can express a specific tribal identity” (p. 9). While he does acknowledge that these two ways are not mutually exclusive, this binary reduces the complexity of the lived contemporary Native American experience to an either/or situation. Instead of examining the rich intricacies of navigating between intertribal cultural activities such as powwow or Native American Church meetings and localized tribal traditions, Hamill relies too heavily on generalized descriptions of the symbols and activities associated with “Indianness.”

Despite Hamill’s attempt to place “Indian” identity formation center stage, his data ultimately undermine his own argument. There are many places within the extended quotations from the archival materials, as well as in Hamill’s interviews, where the tenacity of local tribal identity surfaces in people’s narratives. For example, in chapter 4 Hamill discusses the boarding school experience and its impact on Indian identity. He includes several passages from interviews

with Native Americans who talk about their experiences of discrimination within the white-dominated educational system. He quotes one man who described his experience in a public school, noting that “the things I learned in school . . . never provided the kind of information I was looking for. Especially not anything in depth when it came to the *Cherokee* people, that was a part of me” (p. 83, emphasis added). In other words, it was not “Indian” history or cultural information that he was looking for in his school experience but, rather, Cherokee history and cultural knowledge. This is just one example of many occasions throughout the book where Hamill’s analysis is so myopically focused on “Indian” identity that he neglects the moments when his interlocutors refer specifically to the importance of their own tribal traditions, histories, and experiences.

A key problem in Hamill’s analysis is the lack of attention to issues of power, particularly his avoidance of race and polity as he fails to examine Indian identity in the framework of nationhood and citizenship. Hamill hones in on the centrality of the way in which “blood” is used to reference metaphors of belonging and cultural authenticity within both the archival materials and in contemporary narratives of the individuals participating in his ethnographic project. Clearly, “blood” is an essential issue historically and currently in Oklahoma and throughout Indian Country. However, Hamill ignores key scholarship, particularly that of Circe Sturm in *Blood Politics* (2002), that examines the nuances of the entanglement of blood quantum within Euro-American racial hierarchies while at the same time situating this discourse within the framework of tribal sovereignty and nationhood. According to Hamill, “the meanings of blood are negotiable, and are used in social interactions to create Indian identities” (p. 95). But metaphors and measures of blood are also used by tribal nations to create tribal citizens, not just Indian identities. Hamill’s lack of attention to the politics of enrollment and enfranchisement neglects the important issues of sovereignty and nationhood bound up in conflicts over blood and identity.

Hamill relies heavily on his archival material, utilizing extended quotes from these archives. He complements this archival material with interviews with nine Native Americans living in Oklahoma. His use of pseudonyms may have been necessary to protect their identity, but other information is lacking about his interlocutors as individuals tied to tribal or intertribal Native American communities. Hamill implies that he has had extensive experience, personally and professionally, with Native American communities throughout Oklahoma, and including additional ethnographic material from his fieldwork would substantially strengthen this book.

Despite the thin ethnographic data provided in the book, Hamill nevertheless situates Indian identity within practice, acknowledging that “Indian people in Oklahoma

are educated as Indians, they worship as Indians, and they engage in their communities as Indians. They live being Indian every day of their lives" (p. 8). I would add that, in addition, Indian people in Oklahoma, like Native Americans elsewhere, live as tribal citizens (or are unrecognized as tribal citizens) and that the articulation and navigation within and between those identities is absolutely crucial for understanding the complexity of contemporary Native American identity in the 21st century. *Going Indian* promises to be a book that expands analysis of identity formation in Indian Country in Oklahoma. However, a reader seeking an ethnography of this topic through the lens of citizenship, tribal sovereignty, and a critical engagement with identity politics will find *Going Indian*, as this reader did, disappointing.

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Aceh, Indonesia: Securing the Insecure State. *Elizabeth F. Drexler*. Philadelphia: University of Pennsylvania Press, 2008. iv + 288 pp.

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The territory of Aceh in northern Sumatra has always claimed a special status in Indonesia. At the end of the 19th century, Aceh's fiercely independent sultanate held off invading Dutch armies for three decades. Regional notables took to the hills and continued to resist Dutch rule until the late 1930s. In 1953, Aceh fighters joined with Muslims in other provinces to rebel against the central government. In the 1970s and the 1990s, resistance to the central state again mounted, first in the form of a largely secular national movement, and then as the Islam-oriented (but religiously moderate) Free Aceh Movement (GAM). Under the military-dominated New Order government (1966–98) and its "reformation" (*reformasi*) successor, the military responded to these latter challenges with withering repression.

This study focuses on the legacy of state violence and its effects on truth and justice in a society where there is no possibility of exposing state violence because there is no

"process of judicial accountability" (p. 8). Elisabeth Drexler is an anthropologist at Michigan State University who conducted research in Aceh over a 30-month period from 1998–2000, and then again during several visits in the early 2000s. These were difficult years for Aceh researchers, and it is a testimony to her dedication that Drexler managed the comprehensive study she did. These were years when the military unleashed repeated repressive campaigns, targeting civilians as well as those it claimed were GAM rebels. GAM itself was far from cohesive; worse yet, some rebels allegedly affiliated with GAM actually had ties to the Indonesian army and carried out their own acts of terror.

Drexler relates that initially she had conceived her project as a study of the role of environmental NGOs in the creation of an Acehnese civil society. Shortly after her arrival, however, Indonesia's long-serving ruler, Suharto, fell from power, giving way to the reformasi era, during which civil society organizations pressed for justice for those who had suffered regime abuses. Many of Drexler's NGO friends turned their attention to exposing military violence in Aceh. Unfortunately, Aceh's agony was not yet over, and the territory soon experienced new acts of violence, often at the hands of mysterious third parties.

This was a dangerous political landscape, to say the least, and Drexler draws on several sources to create a rich ethnohistorical narrative. She secured access to protagonists and victims through her ties to Acehnese NGOs. She also interviewed GAM representatives and government officials in Aceh, Jakarta, and overseas. She supplemented her primary materials with extensive historical research. The result is a complex ethnohistorical narrative that works at several levels: recounting Aceh's modern history, tracing the genealogy of Acehnese movements, and exploring "the work that historical narratives do in conflict dynamics" (p. 19). Rather than a James Scottian story of state hegemony and local resistance, Drexler's *problematique* evokes Walter Benjamin's reflections on the dependence of state law on extralegal violence, and the way in which state rules and performances create opportunities for unauthorized forgeries. The author's broader aim is to show how "the legacies of systematic betrayal and polarization are more damaging socially than individual trauma because they ramify through relationships in the present" (p. 3).

Drexler shows that narratives on the violence were central to both the government and its opponents' efforts. Ironically, the two sides agreed in portraying the conflict in a bipolar way: the military so that it could justify its repression against a supposedly resilient enemy; the GAM leadership so that it could claim to be the sole representative of the Acehnese people. The two narratives conveniently erased the middle ground of women's groups, NGOs, and ordinary Acehnese not aligned with either protagonist.

In the end, this legacy made a just rendering of accounts impossible, even after GAM and the government

reached a peace accord. The example, Drexler argues, “demonstrates the falsity of the reigning assumptions of international human rights organizations: that the exposure of past violence promotes accountability and reconciliation rather than the repetition of abuses” (p. 2). There was ample documentation of violence in Aceh, but no judicial structure to render justice. Knowledge of the violence only made for further insecurity and distrust, as “the pervasive and profound disjunction among words, actions, and consequences” made state institutions “prone to being hijacked into the service of violent conflict” (p. 3). Drexler’s extension of the concept of corruption beyond graft to the idea of a “radical disconnection between agency and liability that undermines the possibility of communal solidarity as well as institutional legitimacy” (p. 225) captures vividly the dilemma of post-Suharto Aceh.

The only weakness in this fine account concerns the state and Islam. The state in Aceh was never as unitary as Drexler implies. In the negotiations leading up to the peace accord, the central government indicated its willingness to allow the Acehnese to implement Islamic law, within certain limits. The GAM leadership had never articulated a clear demand for the implementation of Islamic law, and as Drexler rightly observes (p. 164), the concession was widely seen as a government ploy. However, Indonesian observers have noted that the proposal also reflected the momentary influence of officials from the Ministry of Religion (MORA), who were convinced that concessions on Islamic law would be welcomed by Aceh’s religious establishment and, thus, enhance the prospects for peace. MORA officials enjoyed a legitimacy in Aceh the military and general bureaucracy did not; Ministry officials saw themselves as serving the interests of the Acehnese, not just the Indonesian state. In these and other examples, Indonesia under Soeharto may have been “a fundamentally insecure state” (p. 1), but it was not a unitary agent but, rather, a pluralized and contested field in its own right.

The primary story that Drexler relates so well is important well beyond the troubled territory of Aceh. For anthropologists of Indonesia and for researchers interested in postconflict reconciliation and corruption, this is a thought-provoking, timely, and important book.

Religious Identity and Political Destiny: *Hindutva* in the Culture of Ethnicism. Deepa S. Reddy. Oxford: AltaMira Press, 2006. 242 pp.

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Deepa S. Reddy raises some interesting lines of inquiry concerning Hindu nationalism in India in her book, *Religious*

Identity and Political Destiny: Hindutva in the Culture of Ethnicism. She criticizes the academic literature for excluding consideration of the reasons that Hindu nationalism appeals to urban, educated, middle-class households and credits her in-laws for shaping her views on what she refers to as the “ethnicist critique.” She also presents her fieldwork with two women’s organizations in Hyderabad and her interviews with two Hindu ideologues in New Delhi. According to Reddy, the “thread connecting the rather disparate chapters” of her book is “the search for the ethnicist critique, its energy, its rationale, its justification in itself and in others” (p. xxv).

In the first part of the book, Reddy relays her views on the extant literature. She argues that the political and intellectual elite in India focuses on the threat that the ethnicist critique poses to the secular nation-state. By portraying the ethnicist critique as pathological, extremist, or a “perversion of modernity,” Reddy says, leftist intellectuals turn it into an “illicit discourse,” thereby precluding consideration of its appeal to the educated, urban middle-class household. Reddy argues that this view of the ethnicist critique is premised on assumptions about the appropriate relationship between religion and the nation-state as well as about the appropriate place of religion in daily life. These assumptions, she asserts, are rooted in a history particular to the secular, scientific West, rather than to the historical and political context within which Hindu ethnicism emerged.

Reddy also takes issue with the tendency of scholars to view religion in general as false consciousness and the Hindu ethnicist critique in particular as ideologically motivated. Religious faith and practice cannot be relegated to the “private realm,” Reddy says, but, rather, exist in an “organic relationship” with the public and the political in India. She stresses the importance of examining the ways that the ethnicist critique refracts, and is refracted in, everyday life.

Reddy attributes her perspective on the ethnicist critique to her experience living with her in-laws in Bangalore. Reddy asserts that her in-laws, like other newspaper-reading, middle-class households, are aware of and engaged in a critique of the way that the political and intellectual elite portray Hindu ethnicism in India. She argues that religion structures not only everyday life in their households but also political association. Reddy also notes that her in-laws at times demonstrate exclusionary tendencies widely associated with the ethnicist critique, but it would be helpful if she addressed the contradictions between the positive (or the presumptively benign) aspects of the ethnicist critique and the negative ones.

The chapters in which she presents her own research, entitled “Cultures” and “Ethnicist Genealogies,” would benefit from ethnographic detail that addresses the issues that she raises in earlier chapters. In the first of these chapters,

Reddy presents her work with two women's organizations in Hyderabad. She explains that the focus of her research shifted as a result of the impact that the Shah Banu case and the demolition of the Babri Masjid in 1992 had on these organizations. She then traces the ideological and structural transformations that have taken place in these organizations since their origins as secular, liberal, feminist organizations. This approach could have led in interesting directions; for example, how do the women themselves talk about the impact of the ethnicist critique in light of the two events that have so shaped their organization? However, her main point seems to be that a shared appreciation of songs that are ultimately religious in nature, rather than a shared feminist outlook, shaped the ethnographic encounter.

In "Ethnicist Genealogies," Reddy presents her interviews with two Hindu nationalist ideologues in Delhi. She explains that her motivation to conduct these interviews stemmed from her desire to examine the "margins" of the ethnicist critique rather than the "center." Again, many interesting questions suggest themselves. For example, what are the men's views concerning the content of the "margins" and its relation to the "center"? Instead, Reddy simply credits her uncle for providing her with access, positions herself as a receptive listener struck by the awkwardness and seeming irrelevance of her questions, and expresses her admiration for the ideologues' passion and resolve.

Reddy's multisited ethnography of "the intellectual terrain that produces ethnicist critiques" (p. xix) would benefit immensely from a more systematic discussion of the ethnographic material that she presents. This would include a clearer explanation of its relationship to the political and intellectual elite's portrayal of the ethnicist critique, as well as a more thorough discussion of how the ethnographic cases that she presents relate to one another. Reddy opens the doors to a number of potentially interesting discussions but unfortunately does not take us very far into them. Rather than a significant theoretical or ethnographic contribution, her work comes across as a personal sifting of ideas that ultimately tells us more about the author than the subject.

Democratic Designs: International Intervention and Electoral Practices in Postwar Bosnia-Herzegovina. Kimberly Coles. Ann Arbor: University of Michigan Press, 2007.

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Despite an emerging body of critique, much international policy and intervention remains animated by normative

ideas of democratic progress. Kimberly Coles's ambitious and well-argued book is an important step in revealing how such international intervention mobilizes democratic practice and procedure as a form of power. Coles begins her book with a simple insight: "Democracy is neither natural nor intuitive" (p. 5). She examines the underlying rationalities of electoral democratic techniques and practices, and the "apolitical" procedures through which norms and desires are produced and enforced. Coles argues that the international community attempts to produce democratic effects "through complex political machinery—tools and techniques that act explicitly and implicitly through coercion and desire—and through specific logics and rationales of being and truth" (p. 12).

Coles's primary interlocutors were the internationals who parachuted into Bosnia, often with little or no knowledge of the country, and the election and democracy programming that they implemented. By focusing on "the agents of elections—the human and the nonhuman actors that give elections form" (p. 15), she examines the underlying logics and modes of coercion of electoral practices. In turn, she reveals how democratic logics of "participation, agency, democracy, progress, choice, and Europe—are naturalized and normalized, to the detriment of other possibilities" (p. 22).

Democratic Designs is divided into two parts. "Internationality" focuses on the social world, practices, and logics that animate "internationals." "Democratic Governance" analyzes democratic rationalities through an examination of specific technical forms. The text also includes brief ethnographic sketches. Coles acts both as ethnographer and "native" informant, drawing on her many years of experience in international election work in Bosnia. She also speaks to the challenges of analyzing ethnographic materials that resonate so strongly with our own social science mode of knowledge production and truth-making.

In "Blueprints and Builders," Coles introduces the institutions and mechanics of international intervention and reconstruction in Bosnia. She then troubles the notion of a homogenous "international community," showing that international workers have a wide range of knowledge, competencies, and motivations. Coles also examines the impact of internationals' perceptions of Bosnia on the negotiation of ethnic politics in the postwar period. In highlighting the very different experiences of violence for Internationals and Bosnians, Coles points to how these actors differently imagine Bosnia's past and (democratic) future.

In "Hyper Bosnia" Coles argues that an "international" Bosnia overlays the state, with different geographies of access and privilege. Internationals supersede new institutions of Bosnian statehood, such as borders and currency, through "supra- and hyperstate practices" (p. 65). Paradoxically, the internationals sent to model and build new state services and competencies were not subject to, and were

often scornful of, precisely those institutions and regulations. In turn, the process of “integrating” Bosnia into Europe (variously defined) served to produce and reinforce hierarchies of cultural and political difference and access.

In “Doing Nothing: The Practices of Passivity,” Coles argues that international authority and power is in part constructed through practices of presence: “a mode of intervention marked simply by the existence of international bodies” (p. 85). She distinguishes three types of presence, sheer, mere, and peer, which refer to the sheer numbers of internationals, the mere fact of being on the ground, and modeling of democracy for Bosnian peers.

In “Election Day,” Coles examines democracy “as a set of practices and artifacts” (p. 122) and “a network of material and knowledge practices” (p. 150). She focuses on the complex processes and institutions that produce “election day,” and that are often elided by a focus on the election event rather than its conditions of possibility. Coles draws on insights from science studies and anthropology that contested political processes can be made to seem apolitical through their technicization. This chapter adds a welcome ethnographic perspective to that body of scholarship. It also investigates new modes of democratic governance based on procedure and the production of “trust.”

In the next chapter, Coles analyzes “Electoral Actants”—material instantiations of complex political and social processes that enable and circumscribe certain kinds of democratic action. She traces how the notion of “free and fair” “comes into being through electoral objects and their deployment” (p. 156). For example, Coles examines the ways in which ambiguous intentions are translated into “voter will” through strict adherence to ballot counting procedure. Actants such as voters, ballots, and results “incorporate[d] particular meanings of freedom and fairness while simultaneously denying forms of authority embedded in [their] form” (p. 157). Thus, the technical, bureaucratic practices underpinning free and fair elections rely on hidden relations of power which produce specific effects defined as democratic. Elections, in turn, “become tools for reshaping society” (p. 189).

Finally, Coles deals with the transparency practices through which internationals try to achieve particular democratic effects in Bosnia. In “Embodied Transparency,” Coles argues that by “looking in” at the election, internationals were constructed as neutral supervisors situated as outside, rather than constitutive of the electoral process. She also points to how the link between vision and truth encapsulated in “transparency” masks those relations of power revealed through an auditory register. In “Transparent Forms and Bureaucratic Mechanisms of Watching,” Coles examines how the authority of embodied transparency practices was externalized over time through written forms. These forms flattened and decontextualized the specific experiences of voters and election workers, dis-

ciplining local knowledge through technical procedures. In turn, this flattening allowed individual ballots to be translated into broader political authority.

Democratic Designs is extremely timely for understanding the forms of power mobilized in (postwar) democratic intervention. Indeed the very same actors and actants are now being deployed in emerging postconflict and newly democratic contexts throughout the globe. The text would be appropriate for courses on the anthropology of democracy, international policy studies, conflict-postconflict studies, and political anthropology more generally. The chapters could be taught stand alone, although this would require some background reading for students unfamiliar with Bosnia.

Coles keeps the material lively, although the volume of ethnographic description can work against her given the dry nature of bureaucratic material. More in-depth accounts of her interlocutors and specific moments of interaction and contestation among different actors, might have served her better here. Despite Coles’s insistence on the heterogeneity of the international community, there were surprisingly few moments of tension, discussion, and debate to represent that richness. Coles could have also linked her material more explicitly to the institutions and discourse practices through which democratic practice is made authoritative, particularly in moments of interaction among internationals and Bosnians. Ultimately, Coles is most compelling when relating her own attempts to navigate and enact the democratic practices she analyzes. Drawing on her unique perspective, she captures something of the strangeness and frustration that condition the lives of internationals as they implement democratic designs.

Shifting Ethnic Boundaries and Inequality in Israel: Or How the Polish Peddler Became a German Intellectual.

Aziza Khazzoom. Stanford: Stanford University Press, 2008. 360 pp.

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The social construction of dichotomies, and in particular the East–West dichotomy, is at the center of many current studies. Aziza Khazzoom’s book makes a significant contribution to this area, focusing as it does on the creation of the East–West division among Jews during the establishment of the state of Israel and the subsequent massive migration to that state. The book traces the establishment of two distinctive Jewish groups: Ashkenazim who migrated to

Israel–Palestine from Christian countries, mainly Eastern European, who were classified as Westerners; and Mizrahi who originated from Arabic and Muslim countries and were classified as Easterners. However, the book exceeds the discussion of the construction of these categories by focusing on the inconsistency and lack of totality of the process, thereby exposing its artificiality and immorality.

Khazzoom highlights the first steps in the crystallization of this dichotomy during the 1950s, shortly after the establishment of the state of Israel, by shining a critical spotlight on the labor market and its relation with education. Combining quantitative and qualitative methods, she probes “the returns to education” in the labor market of each ethnic group, that is, economic and social attainments in the labor market through the acquisition of higher education. These “returns” reflect and construct the Ashkenazi–Mizrahi dichotomy and the internal differentiation between the two. To this day, Ashkenazim are defined as civilized and rational, a group who deserve white-collar professions, while Mizrahi are classified as an uncivilized and uneducated blue-collar group.

The book is divided into four parts. The first and second parts introduce the subject and give historical background for the formation of the ethnic hierarchy. The third and main part analyzes this process, while exposing two main paradoxes at its core. The first, entitled “the Iraqi paradox,” shows the exceptional returns to education among Iraqi Jews. Khazzoom’s statistics show that Ashkenazim who originated from Romania, Poland, and the USSR received relatively high returns, and Mizrahi who originated from Morocco and Yemen received relatively low returns. While this is not surprising, the finding that Iraqis who were also Mizrahi attained Ashkenazi returns is innovative, as it challenges the common perception of the ethnic binary formation in Israel. The author’s explanation of this paradox is the desire of the Zionist hegemony to establish a Western society in the Middle East. Hence, the Western education and culture of some of the Iraqi youngsters paved their way for white-collar occupations in Israel.

The second paradox is “the Moroccan paradox” and deals with the attainments of diverse ethnic groups across different geographical locations in Israel. The dominant argument is that Mizrahi who were placed in “development towns” (marginalized settlements lacking employment opportunities) became members of the proletariat while Ashkenazim attained managerial positions. Khazzoom presents a more complex situation. She asserts that residency in development towns reduced the attainments of most ethnic groups—Ashkenazi and Mizrahi alike—except in the case of Moroccans. Since the early years of statehood, the development towns have been centers of Moroccans immigrants, with a very small number of skilled Ashkenazim; as a result, some of the young and well-educated Moroccans have achieved white-collar jobs. The

discovery of these statistical data does not cancel the argument of Mizrahi discrimination, however. The peripheral location of the development towns and their isolation from the national elite state power, as well as their lack of economic and educational resources negate and overturn the relatively high attainment of the first generation, dooming the second and third generation to life on the Israeli margins.

These paradoxes, although challenging the East–West dichotomy of the Jewish population in Israel, do not lead the author to underrate the importance of this dichotomy in shaping Israeli society. Quite the contrary—it enables her to present its gradual and disguised appearance. Because it was Mizrahi who had to prove their adjustment to Western culture, not Ashkenazim, the Zionist project of concealing Eastern or Arabic cultural elements promoted the advancement of the second group over the first. Hence the book’s title: the “Polish Peddler” will be reshaped into the “German Intellectual,” awarding him much higher returns to education than Mizrahi, including Iraqis. To support her argument, Khazzoom asserts that subsequent generations of immigrant Iraqis did not conform to the local conception of Westernization and suffered downward mobility as a result, but some Moroccans adopted this concept and received higher returns to education. The result is an ethnic hierarchy passing from generation to generation, albeit lacking totality in a way that opens a space for change.

Although the book focuses on the relations between Jews in Israel, leaving the Israeli–Palestinian conflict on the margins, it sheds some light on its existence. The Zionist desire to establish a Western society in the Middle East, awarding groups and individuals who fit their perception about the West, is a main variable in the conflict, along with the dispute over territory. Hence, studying the results of this Westernization project, while dearticulating it, is another means of creating a moral and social order in Israel–Palestine.

Who Defines Indigenous? Identities, Development, Intellectuals, and the State in Northern Mexico. *Carmen Martinez Novo*. New Brunswick, NJ: Rutgers University Press, 2006. 187 pp.

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It is difficult to imagine any anthropologist who works with indigenous communities advocating for an agenda other than the community’s, yet Martinez has written an intriguing ethnography that questions anthropologists’ and other

advocates' well-intentioned outcomes in their work with Mixtec migrants in Baja California. Invoking Laura Nader's call in 1969 to "study up," Martinez conducted fieldwork in Baja California from 1996–97. Her work focused on state officials, NGOs, intellectuals working with Mixtec migrants from Mexico and the United States, and Mixtec leaders to produce an ethnography of how racism evolves into paternalism–maternalism among these groups, and how this, in turn, affects Mixtec identity and politics. Throughout the text she locates herself as both intimately embedded and objectively distanced because of her Spanish citizenship, contending that her European roots provide her access to the popular classes of Mexico through language and history while also producing an equality to the elite and intellectuals on both sides of the border. Martinez holds that it was this outsider–insider location of her European status that mitigated the tensions associated with studying the elite despite her forthrightness that she was assessing their relationship to Mixtec identity politics.

The ethnography consists of a lengthy introduction that draws the reader into the author's personal journey with the politics of Mixtec identity followed by five chapters, each of which reflects the various subgroups that work with Mixtec people. Martinez finishes the text with a conclusion that returns to the issue of studying up.

The first chapter provides a brief historic overview of the Baja Peninsula, its relationship to the Mexican state, and Mixtec migration to the region. The chapter is brief and does not address agricultural development and tourism that are the mainstays of Mixtec migration to the region, nor Baja California's dependency on seasonal migration from other states that led to the reliance on Mixtec and other indigenous populations in the 1980s and 1990s. Some of this, however, is picked up at the beginning of each chapter. Despite this underdevelopment, the overview serves as an appropriate catalyst for the case studies that form the subsequent chapters. Each of the chapters is unique in style and can be read independently but also segue into the next chapter.

Chapter 2 uses the Santa Anita Riot of 1996 to talk about indigenous versus mestizo agricultural workers, exploitation within the agricultural industry, and the way in which the press and various agricultural and indigenous groups represent workers and workers' issues through the lens of racial and ethnic discourses. The narratives of indigenous passivity, docility, submission to *caciquismo*, and their status as minors that is outlined here feeds into subsequent chapters as a foundation for reading racial stereotypes, and for understanding how Mixtecs invoke these narratives to their benefit in their invocation of their ethnicity and challenge them in their desire to leave this identity behind to move toward a national identity.

Chapter 3 utilizes interviews of key officials at state and local agencies that are designed specifically to advocate for

indigenous groups to flesh out her argument on unintended paternalism. Beginning with the director and followed by the lead anthropologist of the National Indigenous Institute (INI), Martinez also interviews the director of the trilingual radio station, the director of indigenous education for the Department of Education-General Directorate of Indigenous Education (SEP-DGEI), and ends with the director of Culturas Populares. The interviews are almost completely summarized by Martinez with only a few excerpts from the interviewees, all of which are translated into English. This is notable because she creates a tension between the strong advocacy for indigenous identity, their mestizo backgrounds, and paternalism on the one hand, and in the case of indigenous workers, a complicity in their formation of ethnic boundaries that can be read as segregation in programs aimed at reinforcing indigenous rights on the other hand. Yet neither their words nor their context is available, leaving the reader vulnerable to her juxtaposition of the interviewees' intentions to her interpretations.

The tension that is introduced in this chapter evolves in the subsequent chapters and is perhaps most manifest in chapter 4 where Martinez depicts anthropologist and human rights advocate Victor Clark Alfaro as paternalistic and exploitive of the Mixtec women with whom he is working (p. 109). This is difficult to understand as Martinez constructs Clark as their advocate and protector of their rights in previous chapters. This contradictory positioning is not isolated as she invokes Kearney positively in the beginning of her book but then goes on to critique his argument of Mixtec's strategic use of ethnicity in organizing as simplistic in this chapter (p. 116). What is missing from her critique is that they were both talking about distinct groups of Mixtecs within the larger population that were responding to discrete incidents. Perhaps this is her point and she simply does not know how to express it beyond creating a Janus-faced tension that the reader unfamiliar with these scholars would be able to sort out. This is the weakness in her work and it is a shame as the question she poses about whether or not anthropologists have been paternalistic–maternalistic in not giving equal voice to the indigenous who do not wish to retain this aspect of their identity as strongly as has been indicated through their publications is fair and deserves to be asked.

The characters, especially Elena in chapter 5, make those who work on the border smile in appreciation of Martinez's ability to capture the dynamic of the class dichotomies that form a majority of NGOs as well as DIF and many other social service agencies that are run by the elite. The reader will simply have to overlook her frailties and points of naiveté that include her lack of understanding about North American anthropologists' relationships with Mexico and her own misreading of her European standing that she views as insight. The dialogue on indigenous representation provoked here is worth the read and indeed we do

need to provide more space to the other side of indigenous identity politics.

Black behind the Ears: Dominican Racial Identity from Museums to Beauty Shops. *Ginetta E. B. Candelario.* Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2007. 271 pp.

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The discussion of Dominican racial identity and the politics around it continues to be polemical. Ginetta E. B. Candelario addresses this topic from the perspective of a sociologist as she states in her introduction that her book is about “identity discourses that negotiate blackness and Hispanicity” and that the book addresses “how ethno-racial discourses are narrated, internalized, and displayed by actors and institutions negotiating identity in transnational social fields” (p. 6). Separated into five chapters, preceded by a lengthy introduction, and closed with an aptly thorough conclusion, this book offers a new approach to the study and analysis of the Dominican identity that has repeatedly been interpreted as resistant to accept its African heritage at best or racist at its worst. Candelario cites historical and political events, literary narratives, and results from the sociological experiment employing photo elicitation that she conducted to support the national rhetoric that declares that the Dominican *indio* negotiates the perceived gap between blackness and whiteness. To be able to do this effectively, the author had to convincingly explain how Dominicans came to embrace an Indo-Hispanic identity in the first place and the logic behind this negotiated identity. However, the text falls short of the latter goal, and may instead provide further proof that the Dominican *indio* is the attempt to negate Dominican blackness.

This book covers two very different topics: in the first part, a racial-ethnic identity in the Dominican Republic that rejects any similarities with Haitians, and the survival of that racial-ethnic identity in New York City and Washington, D.C., in the second. *Black behind the Ears*, like my own monograph on the development of Dominican blackness, credits Manuel de Jesus Galvan's epic novel *Enriquillo* (1986[1882]) for the introduction of the Dominican national identity that emphasizes Indo-Hispanicity as it inverts the North American “one-drop rule” ideology, and posits that despite having African ancestors, one drop of European blood makes a Dominican white. Nevertheless, this study by Candelario goes further and enumerates 19th- and 20th-century texts that document Dominican whiteness and credits those for the instability of Dominican racial identity today. Professor Candelario cites many texts writ-

ten by white North Americans at the moment when the United States was considering annexation of the Dominican Republic and finds that the Dominican population's depicted whiteness depended on the political ideology of the author of the text; those authors that most supported the expansionist ideology whitened Dominicans in their texts.

Professor Candelario's book states that the ideology espoused by travel literature has been able to influence Dominicans's self-perception of racial and ethnic identity through the “behavior-management technology” of the national Museo del hombre dominicano (Museum of the Dominican Man) in Santo Domingo (p. 84). An archaeological and ethnological museum founded in 1973, the Museo del hombre dominicano has four floors of displays related to the three ethnic roots of Dominican identity: indigenous, Spanish, and African peoples. The museum relegates the least amount of space to the Africans and the greatest portion of the focus of this space is on African slavery (p. 121) without attributing to it any influence on contemporary Dominican culture. This is where the analysis of the first topic ends, in my opinion. I would add that, perhaps, this is one of the weaknesses of the book. There is an attempt to tie together the two topics in the conclusion of the book, but it feels artificial, giving a rather disjointed feeling to the book.

The third, fourth, and fifth chapters deal with Dominican self-identifications in the context of the United States. While the third chapter discusses the Dominican community in Washington, D.C., the last two chapters discuss the Dominican community in New York City. These are two very different cities with Dominican communities with two very different perceptions of their own racial and ethnic identities. Although it seems to me absolutely logical that Afro-Dominicans in the United States would still identify themselves racially as blacks and ethnically as “Hispanic” or “Latino,” Professor Candelario seems surprised by this. She attempts to explain why Dominicans might want to identify themselves as racially black through an in-depth analysis of the process of African American self-representation in the public sphere. In this analysis, she parallels the 1967 founding of the African American Anacostia Neighborhood Museum in Washington, D.C., with the Museo del hombre dominicano in Santo Domingo for their intentions of cultural indoctrination. She accuses the Anacostia Museum in Washington, D.C., of teaching “African American children to accept the one-drop-of-blood-rule,” which obligates them to accept their African heritage despite their physical appearance (p. 135). Candelario hypothesizes that the fact that the “black mosaic,” an addition to the museum with displays on the African Diaspora, focuses upon Afro Latinos explains why Dominicans in Washington are more likely to identify themselves racially as black than any other Latino group. From the interviews that she conducted with the Latinos involved in the black mosaic she concludes that

they chose a black identity to benefit from the “opportunities for upward mobility” (p. 155). This chapter emphasizes the forced racialization of Dominicans as consistently the respondents spoke of identifying as black as a way of feeling unity with African Americans, while always maintaining a personal identity that was Dominican. While the stories of the participants in the United States are interesting in the context of this book’s ethnological study, what’s brushed over is that it is precisely because of their physical appearances that they suffered during the Jim Crow era in the United States and that for some, the perceived darkness of their skin color or other physical features may have given them similar, if not the same negative experiences in the Dominican Republic. It was difficult to determine if those that felt forced to accept a black identity in the United States were opposed to it because they never perceived themselves as blacks before or because they felt offended because they were “mistaken” for blacks.

The photo elicitation experiment Professor Candelario conducted in the Dominican Salon Lamadas in Washington Heights involved using hairstyle books displaying models of differing ethnicities to determine which models (men, women, and girls) were the prettiest, the most intelligent, would be best in public office, best suited for business or marriage, most successful, and “looked Latina” based on their physiognomy and hairstyles. Her respondents’ selections appear to point to the fact that beauty is equated with whiteness, as whiteness is equated with the models’ ability to be successful in the future. While these results demonstrate that Dominican women may be more accepting of African heritage when discussing children, they frequently use Negrophobic discourse to talk about other women and to choose potential marital partners.

The photo elicitation experiment demonstrates what scholars have said about the Dominican community for some time: that the national rhetoric on the island is decidedly negrophobic and may even be racist. When forced to face their own African physiognomy, Dominicans in the United States either choose to identify themselves as black or align themselves with the other Latinos to deemphasize their blackness and exaggerate their whiteness, referring to it as “*Hispanidad*.” I do not think that African Americans would deny that there is great ethnic diversity among African-descended people in the United States, but for many Dominicans, their Hispanic ethnicity will always negate their African Heritage. *Black behind the Ears* is another fascinating dissection of Dominican racial and ethnic identity that offers further explanation of a complicated leitmotif in the study of the Dominican Republic.

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Blood and Oranges: Immigrant Labor and European Markets in Rural Greece. Christopher M. Lawrence. Oxford: Berghahn, 2007. 224 pp.

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The ongoing effects of globalization have raised core questions about the status of the nation-state across the world, and in Europe the issue of immigration has been tightly woven into these inquiries. In *Blood and Oranges*, Christopher Lawrence zeroes in on Argolida, a small region in rural Greece, to lay bare the political, economic, and cultural dynamics that together produce not only the economic exploitation of immigrant laborers but also their social marginalization and exclusion. The treatment is a learned one, rich and erudite in its treatment of the circumstances in Argolida, and always embedding those circumstances within a broader set of forces and connections.

Each chapter of *Blood and Oranges* is densely packed with argumentation that weaves together existing literature with the political economic facts on the ground. We learn, for example, how the history of communist affiliation in this area and throughout rural Greece continues to exert an influence on how immigrants are treated and that these progressive and inclusive communist policies ultimately fail to be a bulwark against anti-immigrant sentiment. Similarly, we learn that past immigration to the area from Albania (many locals identify as Arvanites) also does not produce sufficient fellow-feeling to counter increasingly strident and exclusionary nationalism. The various ways in which the Greek state has pursued agricultural policy, and the various (and largely successful) reactions, resistances, and exploitations of it are also laid out in complex array. The details keep coming, and the book, to its credit, constitutes an education in postwar Mediterranean political economy, brought skillfully all the way to the present.

The aim of this depth is to answer a question Lawrence poses about nationalism in a globalizing Europe. Why, he asks, is nationalism resurgent in Argolida, when the rhetoric of liberal citizenship is on the rise and the state apparatus has shifted away from nationalist claims to legitimacy, increasingly serving EU policy and, by extension, global capitalism? His answer is to see nationalism as neither simply a holdover from the past nor as a form of resistance to the pressures of global capitalism but, instead, as a vital component of how the inequality of global capitalism is maintained and reproduced. Rural Greek citizens, unable to reproduce the labor they need themselves, turn to the exploitation of illegal or quasi-legal immigrant labor, which they legitimize by appealing to essential ethnic differences. The state itself is implicated in this project: “The

discourse of citizenship that often served to disguise and mitigate class differences in nation-states through *inclusionary* tactics is more and more used to disguise class difference through *exclusion*" (p. 131).

The argument is a powerful one, for it resituates nationalism and the state in relation to global capitalism, and points to how many things which on the surface appear to be points of resistance to global capitalism are in fact part of its reproduction. The book brings to mind the documentary film *Rancho California (por favor)* (2002) by John Caldwell, who similarly shows how the complex array of interests connected to illegal agricultural labor in southern California are not, in the last analysis, opposed to each other but, instead, part of a regime that ensures the continued provision of this labor to California's economic system.

There is a price to be paid for this provocative framing, however. The book gives us a clear sense of the circumstances in which the residents of Argolida find themselves, but not such a clear sense of them. There are ethnographic moments throughout the book, in each case dutifully exemplifying another step in the elaborate and rigorous argumentation, but they have a disconnected quality—there is little sense of the day-to-day warp and weft of life. Instead, these moments come to be the local playing out of a set of forces beyond the local, which carry with them a certain inevitability. This masks the fact that Lawrence's argument still must rest on a claim about the point of view of the Greeks in this area, and in particular about the moral circumstance that is generated by their day-to-day encounters with the illegal immigrants. What is it about that moral situation that leads them, so unfailingly, to reach for an ideology of exclusion, despite the available political or ethnic histories which would point to inclusion? The implication seems to be simply their relatively higher location on a ladder economic status—thus is the political economic engine at the root of this account reiterated. But the reader is left wondering whether, in the intimacies of the day-to-day, the moral perturbations might not be a bit more complex.

The book nonetheless makes an important argument about immigration and globalization that has a place in any course on the topic, whether focused on Europe or aimed more broadly. It provides a productive counterclaim to accounts informed more by the experience of immigration, and is particularly valuable as a book that foregrounds the political economic conditions of agrarian livelihoods in a globalizing Europe.

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Globalization and Race—Transformation in the Cultural Production of Blackness. *Kamari Maxine Clarke and Deborah A. Thomas*, eds. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2006. 408 pp.

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This is a very uneven book. I start with the relationship between the title—too broad—and the subtitle—to the point. Why not something in the line of globalization and blackness?

Race goes far beyond blackness, comprising whiteness, other visible and invisible "races," popular genetics, other configuration than the black diaspora or black Atlantic. I do not think that a sophisticated and instigating book—presenting in 407 pages a vast, varied, and interdisciplinary array of contributions—such as this one under review should easily fall in the trap of popular representations of race in the English-speaking world, a part of the world where there is a tendency in the media and popular culture to make of the white-black "great divide" the most cogent example of the race question. The title suggest a broader, universal, and, perhaps, even comparative perspective of a number of different configurations of race. In a world where scholars from different parts of the world, also and at long last from the South, develop new perspectives on racial hierarchies, such generalization could generate an aversion to a book project that is otherwise interesting exactly because it shows that many aspects of the relationship between globalization and race, blackness, in its traditional and modern formats, can often be interpreted as global icons with local meanings. The first globalization starting with the Great Discoveries and the modern globalization starting with the end of WWII confront the rest with representation of race generated in the West. This process of diffusion reverberates on those Western representations of race creating yet other philosophical, political, and scientific discourses of race. Indeed, ethnicity and "race," although often claiming locality or nationality are often constructed transnationally. Unfortunately, among the contributions there is none on three of the key engines of the globalization of race: the advertising industry, the politics of beauty (hair, beauty products, somatic norms, etc.), and narratives of *métissage*—the making of new "peoples."

All this said, the book presents 16 chapters preceded by an introduction by the organizers. The contributions result from a double session of the AAA 2001 called forcefully "2001: Black Odyssey: The Cultural Politics of Race and Nation at the Dawn of the Millennium." They are divided in three sessions: diasporic movements, missions,

and modernities; geographies of racial belonging; and popular blackness, “authenticity,” and new measures of legitimacy. The style and density of the contributions vary, as more often than is the case in collective volumes: essay, pamphlet-like text, empirically grounded. The introduction is strong, but for some reasons the following chapters do not follow its indications to the point that at several points I had to get the sense of what and where the thread was—globalization and race.

There are chapters on important agents of the globalization of race (more specifically, blackness): protestant missionaries (Lee D. Baker); images of modernity and the coloniality of power (Robert L. Adams); African migrants in European port cities (Jacqueline Nassie Brown); processes of becoming black at the margin of the black Atlantic (Tina Camp on Germany and Naomi Pabst on Canada), a process often combined with the use and abuse of images of black America as source of inspiration for the making of new black identities that rime with modernity; roots tourism, and universal images of heritage and its preservation. In a brilliant and introspective chapter, Kamari Clarke questions whose Africa is “Africa” and explores the tension between representations by (intellectual) Africans in the continent and the need to consume certain aspects of “Africa” especially among middle-class blacks in the United States, as these are made popular through roots tourism as well as certain popular TV series of fiction—*Roots*—and documentaries—such as the 1999 PBS series *Wonders of the African World*, directed by Henry Louis Gates.

In a chapter emphasizing migration as an important component of ethnogenesis, Kesha Fikes explores how Cape Verdian migrants who see themselves as Creole are reracialized by migrating to the United States and Europe. The tension between the construction of blackness from without—usually understood as a collective phenomenon—and images of popular culture and being black from within—generally more individual of family centric—is highlighted in Isar Godreau’s contribution on constructing nostalgia in the village of S. Anton near the town of Ponce in Puerto Rico. Jackson’s text on the gentrification of Harlem and the place of blackness therein adds new insights, but fails to put the U.S.-specific combination of system of taxation and racial-social segregation in a broader context that would have shows how peculiar is the United States in this respect. The “skin trade” involving Nigerian prostitutes in Italy is exemplary of how new relations of gender are made possible through the new channels of international South–North migration. It also shows how the maladjustment of important sections of the population in Western African cities is an important push factor for migration while new sexual landscapes and what can be called a geopolitics of desire developing in the North constitute a just as effective push factor (Jayne Ifekwunigwe). The horizons of sexuality are broader than ever and are in new

fashion intertwined with racial images. One of the important icons of global antiracism, postapartheid South Africa (has any of us not admired Nelson Mandela and his struggle?) is scrutinized by Grant Farred, who cogently asks what is the role of race in a nonracial society and whether there can be, at least for the time being, a nonracial democracy.

Part 3 starts with a text on *timba* music in Havana by Ariana Hernandez-Reguant that has the merit of showing how Cuban popular music is imbued with social commentaries on processes of racialization. She shows that the male black body and sexuality are contested icons: they can be the essence of racial exclusion as well as a window for black identity and pride. It is a thin line that is certainly worth exploring, and the text infers rather than asks what the people in question think of black male sexuality through timba dance, play, and lyrics. The tourist–foreign gaze can certainly have a stimulating effect on the process of turning certain aspects of male, black sexuality from a liability into an asset. In the following chapter, Oneka LaBennett argues that the politics of consumption are contingent. Girls of West Indian origin in New York watch what goes for white and black TV series and identify with their characters in different manners than just on the basis of color. Apparently among teenagers in the United States, taste is not racialized univocally. Raymond Codrington discusses the deterritorialization of racial and class identities that are facilitated by the globalization of popular culture. For many youth, black America comes to represent the vanguard because of its ability to create globally accessible idioms such as soul, funk, and hip hop. He shows that in the United Kingdom as, I would argue, in several other countries, the processes of appropriation of items of black American culture vary and nonblacks often participate much more in hip hop poses than in the United States. Also, the relationship of hip hop to commercialization can differ, so outside of the United States, one sees much less “gangsta” or ghetto glamour rap. The desire to consume culture diversity by becoming part of the scene of African dance in Stockholm shows that there is a new space for marketing Africa in the West (Lena Sawyer). This is a process that even though it activates a set of roots and primitive images of Africa that easily border stereotype, it also creates an ethnic economic niche for African men. It also shows that travelling as a cultural tourist to Africa often means wanting to have some “African experience” once back home. In her concluding chapter on some discomfiting varieties of modern blackness, Deborah Thomas explores the new challenges of Jamaica’s longstanding love–hate relationship with the United States. In exploring the contradictions of radical consumerism she argues that in black culture production and consumption “hegemony and resistance are fluid relationships, mutually constituting conceptual tools rather than oppositional . . . poles” (p. 350). The book shows convincingly how important it is to conceive of blackness, in

its processes of construction from within and without, as a multifaceted project. The limits and scope of the black Atlantic are moving and changing, developing new centers and peripheries for the production of black cultures and identities. So are changing the forms through which people defined as black express resistance and conformism through and within globalization.

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Qigong Fever: Body, Science, and Utopia in China. David A. Palmer. New York: Columbia University Press, 2007. 356 pp.

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It is about time that a Chinese-speaking scholar of religion looked seriously at the social and political context of *qigong*, the Chinese system of therapeutic exercises and meditations that became a national “fever” after the Cultural Revolution (1966–76). David A. Palmer’s *Qigong Fever: Body, Science, and Utopia in China* is an erudite, engaging, and much-needed study of this cultural art.

Palmer bases his work on participant-observer research in China and a thorough review of the literature, including many nearly impossible to find magazine and newspaper articles. He is eminently suited to the task. An adjunct professor of anthropology and religious studies at the Chinese University of Hong Kong and research fellow at the École Française d’Extrême-Orient, Palmer received his Ph.D. at the Sorbonne’s École Pratique des Hautes Études. He fulfills his goal of making a distinction between “(1) the body technologies, many of which originated in ancient times; (2) the modalities of their transmission by specific social organizations; and (3) the ideology carried by the latter.”

Palmer’s work has a clear picture of the history of *qigong* from its rise in ancient Taoist and martial arts culture to the statutes issued against it at the end of the Falun Gong craze in 1999. He shows how the “body technologies”—methods of posture, exercise, breathing, and meditation—provided both hope and health care at the end of the 1940s, when there were only 12,000 scientifically trained doctors in the entire country, 1 for every 26,000

people. *Qigong* practices, many of which began in Taoist or Buddhist monasteries, also provided an outlet for religious behavior during a time when religion was oppressed. Many Chinese citizens were desperate for new meaning in their lives and were all too eager to follow charismatic masters and their messianic ideology. Charisma and mass appeal could also be fabricated by hiring authors to publish miraculous fables or by paying party officials for their endorsements.

Qigong got the official stamp of approval because of scientific research into its healing benefits. But Palmer clearly demonstrates that Chinese science has some serious problems. When I was writing the chapter on experimental evidence in my own book *The Way of Qigong: The Art and Science of Chinese Energy Medicine* (1997), I found that about 90 percent of the published research was untrustworthy, plagued by poor methodology, uncontrolled variables, and incomplete or dishonest reporting. Imagine a study on *qigong* exercises for diabetes that does not consider diet in the baseline evaluation of subjects or one for pain that neglects to ask subjects if they are taking analgesics. Additionally, most *qigong* experiments have not been replicated. How can they be when the actual method used to control, say, hypertension, is not described, lest a master’s secrets be revealed? Truthfully, there should be no “Chinese science” or “American science,” only science.

The research problems are compounded by greed; many people got rich from teaching, demonstrating, or promoting *qigong* during its heyday from the 1980s to the mid-1990s. So-called scientists who were also students of particular *qigong* masters were determined to find positive research outcomes, a situation not unfamiliar in the annals of the Western pharmaceutical industry. Other scientists claimed to have verified cases of *renti teyigongneng*, “extraordinary Powers of the human body”: children who read words in sealed envelopes with their ears, and masters who claimed to cause 90 percent of the world’s mosquitoes to mutate so they could not sting humans, or who could, with their powers, bend laser beams and change the course of nuclear missiles. (As a child, I did admire someone who could “leap tall buildings in a single bound” and bend steel in his bare hands; an alien origin still seems a better explanation than *qigong*.) If these experiments failed (and it seems they did), it must have been because other jealous *qigong* masters, perhaps even scientist *qigong* masters from other schools, used their greater mysterious powers to neutralize the experiments and the credibility of their competitors.

In this short review, I can barely do justice to Palmer’s extraordinarily rich text. My critiques are relatively minor. I was surprised that the author did not examine the role of Hu Yaozhen (1879–1973), the Taoist priest and martial artist who, along with acupuncturist Liu Guizhen, was among the first to use *qigong* in a medical setting and coined the

term *yi gong*, “medical qigong” (the common translation, though probably better translated as “healing qigong”). In his frank and refreshing analysis of qigong charlatanism, Palmer mentions that many masters conferred phony graduate degrees on themselves. I would like to have also seen a discussion of how these degrees were enthusiastically awarded to Western visitors and the effect that China’s degree mill has had on qigong credibility abroad. A Western “representative,” with an “Advanced Degree in Medical Qigong” or “Doctor of Medical Qigong” degree earned after a three-day postconference seminar would be sure to increase the status and, sometimes, the funding of the Chinese organization.

However, not all qigong is bad. I got the impression that Palmer, like me, is aware of the 90 percent poor research. But this does not mean that we should ignore the 10 percent of good research or corroborating studies that have been conducted in the West for more than 20 years (e.g., Menninger Clinic 1983–95, which included qigong healers among the subjects). Ironically, as China discards qigong as “pseudoscience,” the West is embracing it in medical school education. My lecture “The Way of Qigong: An Evidence-Based Approach to Chinese Energy Medicine” delivered as a Grand Rounds presentation at the Mayo Clinic Medi-

cal School (Rochester, MN) in November of 2007 is one of the more recent examples. We will, perhaps, never measure qi. However, Western scientists have measured numerous correlates of qi, such as changes in EEG and blood chemistry among practitioners. Palmer does, indeed, note that “qigong could produce profound sensations and experiences that often led to a heightened sense of health, empowerment and understanding.” But as a social scientist, he sees this empowerment primarily as an antidote to “the alienated routines of disenchanting socialist–industrial culture.”

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