
STEPHEN ELLIS
African Studies Centre, Leiden

Adam Ashforth arrived in Soweto more or less by accident in 1990. A historian preparing to do research on the transition to democracy in South Africa, he hired a room in the vast African township outside Johannesburg. He was adopted into his host family, and he has returned every year but one since 1990, making him perhaps the first professional researcher to write about Soweto on the basis of having lived there.

His white skin, he tells us, never posed much of a problem. A much greater obstacle to understanding life in Soweto was Ashforth’s lack of spiritual knowledge. He became particularly interested in what South Africans call witchcraft, a word that Ashforth does not define extensively but that, he writes, refers to “malicious human action” (p. 80) carried out by mystical means, or to a force, generated by intense hatred, that people experience as acting on them independently of their own will (p. 87). For many Sowetans, witchcraft is the explanation for a wide range of misfortune, including infection with HIV/AIDS.

Part 1 of the book is an ethnographic description of what Sowetans perceive as witchcraft and of the role it plays in their lives. Part 2 is an exploration of people’s ideas about spirits and about pollution generally; the material and invisible worlds in Soweto are joined seamlessly, as they are in the rest of Africa. Finally, Part 3 of the book describes how the state fails to deal with witchcraft and alleged witches.

This book, written in an unpretentious and pleasing style, differs from much of the recent anthropological literature on witchcraft in Africa in at least three significant respects. First, Ashforth does not analyze witchcraft primarily in symbolic terms, as anthropologists habitually do (see, e.g., pp. 111–121 and 163). Despite being a self-described secular humanist, he takes his informants’ opinions about the invisible world at face value for analytical purposes. This is a methodological approach that has long been standard in the scientific study of religion. Second, he situates people’s ideas about witchcraft in the context of some of their other ideas about the invisible world, such as concerning the spirits of ancestors, the Holy Spirit of Christian belief, and so on. Third, he considers how a population with a strong belief in witchcraft can be governed. The nub of the problem here is that supposed witches, like the vast majority of traditional healers in South Africa, operate according to norms that lie outside the purview of postcolonial states, which employ terms of analysis and instruments of policy that have no direct purchase on the invisible world.

The quality of this excellent book is not diminished by identifying a few points in which the discussion could be further elaborated or where, in the opinion of this reviewer at least, Ashforth’s judgment is questionable. For example, in considering what governments might do about witchcraft fears and witchcraft accusations, Ashforth has missed a broader literature, particularly on West Africa, that could have been useful. Similarly, he may be unduly pessimistic in his assessment of the chances of registering healers and of including traditional religion in school curricula, as a closer look at Zimbabwe and Zambia might have indicated. And, although Ashforth is to be congratulated on including in his bibliography some of the most salient literature by South African theologians, his analysis of the possible role of churches in providing a greater sense of spiritual security is rather perfunctory.

A more trenchant criticism concerns Ashforth’s rejection of the notion that the apartheid state in its last years contained a secretive network of operatives, dubbed the “third force,” that was intent on inflicting violence during the period of political transition. Ashforth’s point is well taken that Sowetans’ perceptions of the invisible world extend to the political realm, so that even after 1994 Sowetans account for their political problems by what amounts to a theory of witchcraft, now attached to the forces of the apartheid state. However, his account underestimates the actual historical role played in South Africa’s transition by South African counterinsurgency forces acting on the basis of a military–political strategy.

Not the least attractive aspect of Ashforth’s approach is his willingness to take positions sometimes avoided by scholars in search of an approach that escapes the charge of Eurocentrism. Thus, he is rigorous in his discussion of the work of “traditional” healers in Soweto (who often have little traditional about them) and of the notion of “indigenous knowledge” generally.

In short, Ashforth has shown the way for a discussion of witchcraft that goes beyond the “modernity of witchcraft” approach, above all in taking seriously the spiritual insecurity that abounds in Africa today.

ELSIE ROCKWELL
Centro de Investigación y Estudios Avanzados, Mexico City

The authors of this edited volume engage in discussions of various concepts introduced by Mikhail Bakhtin and his colleagues/co-authors, V. N. Voloshinov and P. N. Medvedev. Contributions generally focus on exceptional educational experiences with diverse populations, often in extreme conditions.

Editors Aretha Ball and Sarah W. Freedman set a unique orientation by stressing the theme of “ideological becoming” in a politically charged environment, in which individuals struggle to create an internally persuasive discourse in the face of multiple authoritative discourses. In their introductory chapter, the editors draw on their work in South Africa and in postwar Bosnia and Rwanda to argue that such issues as the choice of teacher-training practices and languages of instruction transcend narrow disciplinary perspectives and can benefit from the insights afforded by Bakhtinian theory.

The volume is exceptionally coherent and well edited. Three commentaries written by graduate students who corresponded with the authors accentuate the ongoing dialogue. Most chapters address the teaching of literacy, academic writing, and literary response with students whose linguistic and cultural worlds contrast with those assumed in mainstream schooling. Nevertheless, approaches differ significantly.

Two of the more absorbing chapters summarize long-term engagements with the Bakhtinian perspective. Charles Bazerman traces his appropriation of intertextuality as a key to academic writing. Bazerman recovers Voloshinov (as distinct from Bakhtin) to underline the predicaments of social agency within the “textually dense worlds of modernity.” His formulation situates “individual consciousness within a dynamic and complex social field” that includes the “historically evolved, and continually mutating landscape of text.” Bazerman censures current sanitized uses of Vygotsky and Bakhtin/Voloshinov that exclude their historical-cultural, Marxist perspective on language and consciousness. He is nevertheless keenly aware of the need to identify the intertextual resources and strategies used in the production of texts within particular rhetorical traditions. Rather than prescribing particular schemas and skills, he proposes increasing knowledge of the intertextual worlds that writers can draw on to produce powerful texts.

In another key chapter, Carol Lee demonstrates the cultural resources that her “underachieving” African American students already possess and are able to deploy during their “apprenticeship into literary response.” In a rigorously documented analysis of her own teaching, Lee presents her students’ discussion of the various layers of symbolic meaning in a short film, Sax Cantor Riff as preparation for their later immersion in a series of canonic texts. She argues that their entry into communities of discipline-based discourses requires the acceptance of the linguistic resources of African American Vernacular English. Thus, the students’ act of signifying both parodies and unearths the sense of literary signification that Lee intends to teach. This “double-voicing” plays with students’ hybrid ways of speaking to approach the inherent hybridity of literary texts.

In general, the volume attempts to do justice to the complexity of Bakhtin’s perspective, while also rendering it relevant and accessible to educational practitioners. Not all chapters achieve a balance. Although acknowledging the omnipresence of dialogism in human interaction, some authors immediately prescribe methods that “promote dialogism,” implying that it is nonexistent in ordinary practice. An alternative view would focus research on the dialogic nature of any sort of educational talk or text, even though particular instances may not be pedagogically commendable. Bakhtin was particularly interested in the diverse nuances expressed in the repetition of other persons’ words. In classrooms, every act (including repetition) reveals positions students and teachers assume in response to each other. I maintain that a deeper understanding of this constant dialogism is necessary for the task of co-constructing situated, relevant educational alternatives.

This book offers tools for research in this direction. Several chapters suggest novel ways to analyze the production of and response to texts. Attention to prosody, adjacency pairs, and indexicality would greatly enhance analysis of dialogic sequences. However, the challenge of understanding “internal dialogism” as fundamental to the ongoing creation of an “internally persuasive discourse” requires interdisciplinary bridges that are still under construction. Such an approach does not preclude attention to the crucial issues of violence, social inequality, and exclusion that underlie many contributions to this book. It would allow structuring alternatives within educational processes and social contexts that are always hybrid and dialogic, despite the omnipresence of “authoritative voices.”


TOM D. DILLEHAY
Vanderbilt University

The pre-Inca archeology of the valley and city of Cuzco and the cultural transformations leading to the rise of the Inca empire have attracted much archeological attention in recent years. The purpose of this volume is to examine “the settlement patterns for each major time period in the history of the Cuzco Valley” and the multitude of societies and ethnic groups that comprised it through time. Brian Bauer has put together a stimulating and, in some cases,
provocative collection of cultural developments and propositions that study the settlement, religious, social, and historical aspects of the valley. The volume contains several high-quality chapters on the area, with emphasis on the presence of the Wari empire, the Inca sanctuary of Coricancha, and on ancestor worship and the royal mummies of Inca lords.

The book consists of 12 chapters, an appendix, and extensive notes. One of the highlights of the book is 19th- and early-20th-century photographs and drawings of Cuzco and surrounding areas, which are published together for the first time. Also provided is a highly useful appendix of all radiocarbon dates for archeological sites in the valley. Bauer wrote the majority of the chapters and coauthored three with other archeologists (Alex Chepstow-Lusty, Michael Frogley, Bradford Jones, Cindy Klink, Alan Covey). The chapters are organized chronologically, beginning with the early Archaic period and ending with the colonial city of Cuzco. The presentation of data in chapters is solid and thorough, and Bauer acknowledges the weaknesses in available information, making few inferential leaps. In several instances, Bauer negotiates unclear paths between fact, opinion, and speculation. He presents renaissance and systematic survey and excavation data that make possible new regional-scale models of settlement patterns and sociopolitical organization in the valley. Most chapters discuss early independent farming communities giving way to politically centralized hierarchical societies that culminate in the Inca state. Special attention is given to the variable influence of the Wari empire in the valley and to the incipient formation of the Inca state between C.E. 1000 and C.E. 1400. In addressing the late pre-Inca and Inca periods, Bauer challenges the traditional views of some ethnohistorical works while developing a comprehensive and testable model of cultural change in the valley.

It is difficult to do justice to the many empirical and interpretative considerations addressed in this work; I have touched on only a few here. This volume is indispensable for anyone interested in Cuzco and the Inca Empire. The photographs and drawings of historic sites provide a wealth of information and could stand alone as an invaluable reference. Although all of the chapters would have benefited from more consideration of the implications of the variation in the data evident from the author's analyses, they all provide welcome new data and interesting discussions, which, it is hoped, Bauer and his colleagues will pursue in subsequent publications.

If there is a weakness in the book, it is limited discussion of the valley's impact on adjacent regions in southern Peru. Further, the chapters could be more effective if more material culture (e.g., artifacts, architecture) were illustrated to help contextualize the survey and excavation information for those less familiar with the local cultures. Also missing is a theoretical and comparative discussion of Cuzco's place in the broader social, economic, political, and ideological traditions of the New World's great preindustrial states. Thinking in terms of state formation raises questions of political control, economic development, agency, identity, and diverse ideologies that seem to be productive ways to engage in a comparative study of the Inca society and other preindustrial expansionistic societies.

To date, the archeology of the Cuzco Valley has largely been defined by the city of Cuzco, the massive fortress of Sacsayhuaman, and the town of Machu Picchu in the neighboring Valley of Urubamba. Bauer and his colleagues perform a great service in synthesizing a previously scattered body of new and old archeological evidence for the pre-Inca periods and competently relating it to the ethnohistory and archeology of the Inca period. The book goads the reader into realizing that much more work is needed to document the increasingly apparent complexity and variation in the political structure of the city of Cuzco and the long cultural development of the Cuzco Valley. In this regard, the book is an excellent summary of archeological inquiry and solid current research, and it demonstrates that we need not wait two to three generations for Cuzco archeology to play a major role in understanding social complexity and polities in the Central Andes.


ALESSANDRO DURANTI
University of California, Los Angeles

The term intertextuality was introduced by Julia Kristeva some 40 years ago to capture the dialogic quality of texts as originally articulated in the writings of Mikhail Bakhtin's and his associates and alter egos. Among the scholars who have shown us how to identify and analyze intertextuality in oral performance (as opposed to written texts), Richard Bauman is one of the most productive and theoretically sophisticated. Bauman has been consistently attentive to the aesthetics of the spoken word and to the properties of performance as a distinct mode of language use. For these reasons, the publication of A World of Others' Words: Cross-Cultural Perspectives on Intertextuality is more than welcome. Readers who are not already familiar with Bauman's work will have an opportunity to read through a series of thematically linked studies spanning a period of 18 years. A newly written introductory chapter establishes the theoretical tone of the book and its key concepts: genre, performance, entextualization, and intertextual gap.

One of Bauman's interests is the ways in which narrators offer cues or metapragmatic frames to help listeners interpret what is being said. In “‘And the Verse is Thus': Icelandic Stories about Magical Poems,” we are introduced to the kraftaskáld, the Icelandic poet who is able to compose a verse that has magical power and which allows him to get
control of an adverse situation and take revenge. Bauman analyzes how stories about kraftaskálæs are contextualized in such a way to reconstruct the line of tellers who kept those stories alive. This is a process of traditionalization “as an act of authentication” (p. 27). A later chapter, “‘Go, My Reciter, Recite My Words’: Mediation, Tradition, Authority,” returns on the same themes in a cross-cultural framework that provides evidence of their universal relevance.

The concept of “intertextuality” finds an ideal testing ground in those situations in which one genre is inserted into another, to create a “hybrid” (another Bakhtinian concept). In “‘I’ll Give You Three Guesses’: The Dynamics of Genre in the Riddle Tale,” Bauman examines how the genre of the riddle finds its way in the middle of folktales. He shows that certain formal properties of the riddle (e.g., its ambiguity, the implied unequal power relation between the knowing and the unknowing, the expectation of a clever resolution) are easily exploitable for narrative purposes (e.g., the hero or heroine’s ability to overcome adverse conditions). The mixing of genres is also the central theme of the chapter on the language of vendors in a Mexican market. In “‘What Shall We Give You?’: Calibrations of Genre in a Mexican Market,” Bauman starts out by describing two contrastive genres of market cry, which he renders in English with the terms “calls” and “spiels.” Through the analysis of transcripts of audio recordings, we are shown that calls can go from simple lists of products and their prices to more elaborate lines, displaying syntactic and phonological parallelism, as well as the patterning of particular prosodic contours and the skillful use of pauses. Things get interactionally more dynamic when two vendors alternate their calls, producing a collaborative performance. Spiels are used by vendors who deal with specialized, less ordinary merchandise. In addition to descriptions and repetitions, spiels contain epigrammatic statements with risqué innuendos and brief narratives directed to specific addressees but meant to be overheard by others. Having established the features of the two genres, Bauman presents a functional–economic argument to explain in-between cases, in which the two genres are merged, he argues, by vendors who offer goods that “fall in-between the low-end necessities [of the calls] and the high-end specialty items [of the spiels]” (p. 79).

The mixing of genres is also discussed in a chapter in which Bauman expands on a phenomenon described by Dell Hymes as “breakthrough into performance.” The term refers to the situation, not unusual for ethnographers, in which a native consultant may suddenly step out of the interview genre to engage in the telling of a traditional story. Bauman points out that a sensitivity to these moments—and, more generally, to performance as a mode of speaking marked by accountability for how something is said—is crucial for critical, reflexive ethnography.

In sum, Bauman has put together an empirically sound and theoretically rich collection of chapters that elegantly illustrate the power of intertextuality in the social life of verbal art.


SUSAN LOBO
University of Arizona

This is an odd book: It has both brilliant, often challenging ideas and rich resources for scholars, practitioners, and students, but, at the same time, it is disappointing in what it fails to include and in its biases. It is one of Blackwell’s “companion to” series focusing on various aspects of anthropology. Editor Thomas Biolsi accomplishes a challenging task by including 27 original chapters by different authors. Content synopsis, extensive reference lists, an excellent index, and cross-references enhance its usefulness. Only available in hardback, the cost takes it beyond the reach of many. Otherwise, I would recommend that it be on everyone’s shelf.

Some of the chapters (see, esp. Loretta Fowler, “Politics”; Eugene Hunn, “Knowledge Systems”; George Castile, “Federal Indian Policy and Anthropology”; Renya Ramirez, “Community Healing and Cultural Citizenship”; and Peter Whiteley, “Ethnography”) are particularly noteworthy by placing their topic within the context of anthropological thought and also exploring contemporary topics.

Biolsi makes some bold editorial decisions, and he is owed respect for creating a thought-provoking book. However, there are some troubling aspects as well. The somewhat narrow, but richly developed, shaping of this book, give it its “odd” character.

It is dedicated to Vine Deloria, the subtext responding to his 1969 and later works critiquing anthropology. Biolsi says in the introduction, “We have chosen to focus this book . . . on the native peoples of the United States. . . . its rationale in the colonial situation faced by native peoples” (pp. 2–3). The unifying theme is “native resistance, adaptation, and accommodation to the U.S. social formation” (pp. 2–3). Thus, the book heavily emphasizes the U.S. relationship with federally recognized tribes, as well as policy and legal issues especially relevant to reservations. For example, Part 2 (“Political, Social and Economic Organization”) is characterized by Fowler's “Politics” and by Miller’s “Tribal and Native Law.” Part 4 (“Colonialism, Native Sovereignty, Law, and Policy”) has strong contributions by Biolsi’s “Political and Legal Status (’Lower 48’ States),” Castile’s “Federal Indian Policy and Anthropology,” and Larry Nesper’s “Treaty Rights.” “American Indians in the United States: A Political and Legal Focus” would have been more appropriate than its current title.

The focus reduces the time frame of the depth and sweep of native legacy in what is now the United States and beyond and in the breadth of inquiry by anthropologists. A slight nod is given to linguistic anthropology with James Collins’s chapter, and the last 15 pages by Larry Zimmerman are titled “Archaeology.” Physical anthropology is absent. Rebecca Dobkins’s fine chapter on “Art”
We have Vine Deloria and others, scholars and nonscholars, Indians and non-Indians, to thank for motivating anthropologists to be responsive to native peoples and consequently releasing American Indian studies from the exclusive domain of anthropology.

Ultimately this book is not so much a reflection of what anthropological American Indian scholarship is but, rather, what the contributors think it should and might be in the future. It will be discussed, referred to, and consulted widely, hopefully also stimulating increased work addressing contemporary issues of importance to native peoples within the United States and beyond.

REFERENCE CITED


JOAN VINCENT
Barnard College

The contribution of this book is both political and pedagogical. It is over 30 years since the Yanomamo of Napoleon Chagnon’s ethnography became controversial within the academy: Combatants are immediately recognizable from their spelling of the name. Five years ago, the imminent publication of journalist Patrick Tierney’s Darkness in El Dorado: How Scientists and Journalists Devastated the Amazon (2000) led concerned members of the American Anthropological Association to request that the actions of two of its members, Chagnon and medical anthropologist James Neel, be reviewed by the association’s Ethics Committee.

Robert Borofsky’s Yanomami is really two books in one. The political takes the form of an inflammatory response to matters raised in Darkness in El Dorado and the well-intentioned but misguided interventions of the AAA’s Committee on Ethics. This is part of a programmed effort to expose the abuse of “the Yanamamo” among whom Chagnon and Neel worked and to mobilize professional intervention. The pedagogical is an impassioned book about widening discourse on the imbalances of power between anthropologists and the people among whom they work. The testimonials on its jacket from highly distinguished anthropologists are equally passionate. Four of the five pronounce its value as an introduction to critical issues within the discipline. There is no doubt that Borofsky’s book performs a service for the profession and will doubtless head the required reading for a course that, it is suggested, the AAA might require of all aspirants to the profession (p. 288).

This said, the book requires a lot from its readers and, perhaps, even more from the instructors who use it. Some may find Part 1 overly dominated by Borofsky’s views on the controversy (p. 314). Others may welcome his step-by-step guidance over 103 pages toward the ethical
dilemmas that are to be discussed in the Round Table presentations of Part 2. These Borofsky initially (p. 20) likens to a jury trial but as challenges and counter-challenges mount over three rounds, a boxing match seems the more apt metaphor. Six combatants argue the nature and validity of the charges made against the fieldwork practices of Chagnon and Neel. As master of ceremonies, Borofsky summarises the professional status and Amazonian experience of each: a representative of an NGO, a Yanamamo fieldworker, a colleague of one of the accused, a medical human rights worker, a longtime resident with a missionary organization, and a professor long engaged in Amazonia human rights issues. Five are academics (pp. 73–75). Their photographs—along with that of Borofsky and Davi Kopenawa, a controversial Yanomami activist—precede their dialogue (pp. 109–281).

The reader is left with conflicting testimony and interpretations. To aid the student reader, Borofsky heads each exchange with what he considers to be the key accusations made, the issues raised, and questions the student might consider. An appendix (pp. 317–341) summarizes the positions taken. At the end of the debate, the participants agree on an open letter assessing the role of the AAA (one of the few matters on which all six appear to agree) and offering guidelines for any response its Ethics Committee might make on the questions raised by the Yanamami controversy.

Finally, Borofsky pleads (his term) with readers to decide (1) where they stand on the issues raised by the controversy, (2) whether blame should be directed at anyone, (3) how the Round Table letter and AAA final report might be faulted and improved, and (4) “how might the structures that fostered the controversy and the disciplinary ills so openly displayed in it” be changed and “things set right?” (pp. 313–315).

Having made it clear that his book seeks “in empowering readers, to develop a new political constituency for transforming the discipline” (p. 21), Borofsky ends by advising his readers against waiting to know more: “There will always be more references, more data, one could cite . . . But essentially all the information you need to form your views is right here in this book. To allow others to intimidate you at this point with data that they possess but you lack is only to perpetuate academic status games” (p. 314). Case closed.

The book ends with a millenarian call to go public with “what has not had the Holocaust reminder, even though the study of human rights issues. Five are academics (pp. 73–75). Their photographs—along with that of Borofsky and Davi Kopenawa, a controversial Yanomami activist—precede their dialogue (pp. 109–281).

The reader is left with conflicting testimony and interpretations. To aid the student reader, Borofsky heads each exchange with what he considers to be the key accusations made, the issues raised, and questions the student might consider. An appendix (pp. 317–341) summarizes the positions taken. At the end of the debate, the participants agree on an open letter assessing the role of the AAA (one of the few matters on which all six appear to agree) and offering guidelines for any response its Ethics Committee might make on the questions raised by the Yanamami controversy.

Finally, Borofsky pleads (his term) with readers to decide (1) where they stand on the issues raised by the controversy, (2) whether blame should be directed at anyone, (3) how the Round Table letter and AAA final report might be faulted and improved, and (4) “how might the structures that fostered the controversy and the disciplinary ills so openly displayed in it” be changed and “things set right?” (pp. 313–315).

Having made it clear that his book seeks “in empowering readers, to develop a new political constituency for transforming the discipline” (p. 21), Borofsky ends by advising his readers against waiting to know more: “There will always be more references, more data, one could cite . . . But essentially all the information you need to form your views is right here in this book. To allow others to intimidate you at this point with data that they possess but you lack is only to perpetuate academic status games” (p. 314). Case closed.

The book ends with a millenarian call to go public with “what has not had the Holocaust reminder, even though the study of human rights issues. Five are academics (pp. 73–75). Their photographs—along with that of Borofsky and Davi Kopenawa, a controversial Yanomami activist—precede their dialogue (pp. 109–281).

The reader is left with conflicting testimony and interpretations. To aid the student reader, Borofsky heads each exchange with what he considers to be the key accusations made, the issues raised, and questions the student might consider. An appendix (pp. 317–341) summarizes the positions taken. At the end of the debate, the participants agree on an open letter assessing the role of the AAA (one of the few matters on which all six appear to agree) and offering guidelines for any response its Ethics Committee might make on the questions raised by the Yanamami controversy.

Finally, Borofsky pleads (his term) with readers to decide (1) where they stand on the issues raised by the controversy, (2) whether blame should be directed at anyone, (3) how the Round Table letter and AAA final report might be faulted and improved, and (4) “how might the structures that fostered the controversy and the disciplinary ills so openly displayed in it” be changed and “things set right?” (pp. 313–315).

Having made it clear that his book seeks “in empowering readers, to develop a new political constituency for transforming the discipline” (p. 21), Borofsky ends by advising his readers against waiting to know more: “There will always be more references, more data, one could cite . . . But essentially all the information you need to form your views is right here in this book. To allow others to intimidate you at this point with data that they possess but you lack is only to perpetuate academic status games” (p. 314). Case closed.

The book ends with a millenarian call to go public with “what has not had the Holocaust reminder, even though the study of human rights issues. Five are academics (pp. 73–75). Their photographs—along with that of Borofsky and Davi Kopenawa, a controversial Yanomami activist—precede their dialogue (pp. 109–281).

The reader is left with conflicting testimony and interpretations. To aid the student reader, Borofsky heads each exchange with what he considers to be the key accusations made, the issues raised, and questions the student might consider. An appendix (pp. 317–341) summarizes the positions taken. At the end of the debate, the participants agree on an open letter assessing the role of the AAA (one of the few matters on which all six appear to agree) and offering guidelines for any response its Ethics Committee might make on the questions raised by the Yanamami controversy.

Finally, Borofsky pleads (his term) with readers to decide (1) where they stand on the issues raised by the controversy, (2) whether blame should be directed at anyone, (3) how the Round Table letter and AAA final report might be faulted and improved, and (4) “how might the structures that fostered the controversy and the disciplinary ills so openly displayed in it” be changed and “things set right?” (pp. 313–315).

Having made it clear that his book seeks “in empowering readers, to develop a new political constituency for transforming the discipline” (p. 21), Borofsky ends by advising his readers against waiting to know more: “There will always be more references, more data, one could cite . . . But essentially all the information you need to form your views is right here in this book. To allow others to intimidate you at this point with data that they possess but you lack is only to perpetuate academic status games” (p. 314). Case closed.

The book ends with a millenarian call to go public with “what has not had the Holocaust reminder, even though the study of human rights issues. Five are academics (pp. 73–75). Their photographs—along with that of Borofsky and Davi Kopenawa, a controversial Yanomami activist—precede their dialogue (pp. 109–281).

The reader is left with conflicting testimony and interpretations. To aid the student reader, Borofsky heads each exchange with what he considers to be the key accusations made, the issues raised, and questions the student might consider. An appendix (pp. 317–341) summarizes the positions taken. At the end of the debate, the participants agree on an open letter assessing the role of the AAA (one of the few matters on which all six appear to agree) and offering guidelines for any response its Ethics Committee might make on the questions raised by the Yanamami controversy.

Finally, Borofsky pleads (his term) with readers to decide (1) where they stand on the issues raised by the controversy, (2) whether blame should be directed at anyone, (3) how the Round Table letter and AAA final report might be faulted and improved, and (4) “how might the structures that fostered the controversy and the disciplinary ills so openly displayed in it” be changed and “things set right?” (pp. 313–315).

Having made it clear that his book seeks “in empowering readers, to develop a new political constituency for transforming the discipline” (p. 21), Borofsky ends by advising his readers against waiting to know more: “There will always be more references, more data, one could cite . . . But essentially all the information you need to form your views is right here in this book. To allow others to intimidate you at this point with data that they possess but you lack is only to perpetuate academic status games” (p. 314). Case closed.

The book ends with a millenarian call to go public with “what has not had the Holocaust reminder, even though the study of human rights issues. Five are academics (pp. 73–75). Their photographs—along with that of Borofsky and Davi Kopenawa, a controversial Yanomami activist—precede their dialogue (pp. 109–281).

The reader is left with conflicting testimony and interpretations. To aid the student reader, Borofsky heads each exchange with what he considers to be the key accusations made, the issues raised, and questions the student might consider. An appendix (pp. 317–341) summarizes the positions taken. At the end of the debate, the participants agree on an open letter assessing the role of the AAA (one of the few matters on which all six appear to agree) and offering guidelines for any response its Ethics Committee might make on the questions raised by the Yanamami controversy.

Finally, Borofsky pleads (his term) with readers to decide (1) where they stand on the issues raised by the controversy, (2) whether blame should be directed at anyone, (3) how the Round Table letter and AAA final report might be faulted and improved, and (4) “how might the structures that fostered the controversy and the disciplinary ills so openly displayed in it” be changed and “things set right?” (pp. 313–315).

Having made it clear that his book seeks “in empowering readers, to develop a new political constituency for transforming the discipline” (p. 21), Borofsky ends by advising his readers against waiting to know more: “There will always be more references, more data, one could cite . . . But essentially all the information you need to form your views is right here in this book. To allow others to intimidate you at this point with data that they possess but you lack is only to perpetuate academic status games” (p. 314). Case closed.
Palestinians obviously were not responsible for the Holocaust. Clearly, perceptions of victimization limit the likelihood of feelings of collective guilt.

The importance of feelings of injustice and of ingroup victimization, however, may raise questions not addressed in these studies—such as regarding attributions of collective guilt in the legal sense as a political strategy. Frankly, when I was asked to review the book, it never occurred to me that the *collective guilt* in the title referred to a phenomenon of group psychology, because the term is much more often used in attempts to justify disfavoring members of one group now on the grounds that their group committed crimes in the past. Yet groups with long histories of interaction are likely to have had periods in which each has perpetrated atrocities against the other, and feelings of injustice are apt to be mutual. To be more concrete, insisting that Hutus accept collective guilt for the genocide of Tutsis in the 1990s ignores the genocide of Hutus by Tutsis a generation earlier. Something similar may be said about the Balkans. If Serbs were the major perpetrators in the 1990s, they were the greatest victims in the far worse events of the 1940s, so that demands for Serb collective guilt for the 1990s amount to demands that the children and grandchildren of genocide victims apologize to the children and grandchildren of perpetrators. Or so, at least, they will think. In such cases, German remorse for the Holocaust is an inappropriate comparison, because it is too clear cut: It is not possible to find times in which Jews had victimized Germans.

That this study does not consider the politics of legal guilt attributions weakens its normative force. Nevertheless, as a set of studies of conditions under which people assign themselves guilt as “perpetrators” for crimes committed not by themselves but by their group, the volume has much to recommend it.


**AISHA KHAN**
New York University

In *Creole Economics*, Katherine Browne convincingly demonstrates the necessary relevance of cultural values, and their practice on the ground, in analyses of economic activity. Focusing on the informal economy, Browne argues that “most people, including scholars, do not associate economic behavior with cultural patterns” (p. 15) and, thus, miss the meaning and measure of the informal sector in contemporary society. A key consequence is that development projects and planning efforts are less (or not) effective. One lesson of *Creole Economics* is that rather than the failure of inferior cultures in explaining why economic development does not always work as metropolitan models suggest it should (a still-vibrant saw among many policy makers), it is neglect of the “irreducible complexities of local meaning and practice” (p. xiii) that hinders proper understanding and thus remedy.

Brown’s entree into these issues is through what she calls “creole economics,” culturally influenced forms of local economic strategies in Martinique that sidestep the legal claims of the French state (pp. 4, 48). A *department* of France, Martinique remains politically and economically dependent. For Martiniquais of color, an additional consequence of this dependence is a racial hierarchy that devalues them and excludes them from being fully “French.” Browne is interested in the ways that creole economics, and its associated cultural values and psychological motivations, both “strain the relationship with France and relieve those strains” (p. 10), as people choose certain paths of economic noncompliance.

The cornerstone of creole economics is the *debrouillard*; in France, it is someone who is smart, self-reliant, and resourceful (p. 101), but in Martinique, it is someone “economically cunning and resourceful in unorthodox ways” (p. 11). Deriving from the slave plantation, Browne argues, *debrouillardism* calls on cleverness as an effective means of survival in the face of superior power. Yet there is a moral imperative, as well, because debrouillardism is *pas grave* (not serious). One might vend clothes from a suitcase or be an engineer moonlighting on the weekends, but criminal behavior causing victimization is outside this concept. Emphasis is on demonstrating cunning, which requires public, visible performance to accrue cultural capital. As such, debrouillardism fulfills the Martiniquais cultural—psychological need for autonomy, status, and respect, in addition to meeting economic needs.

Given its slave antecedents and its contemporary configuration, Browne interprets creole economics, following Homi Bhabha, as a subversive “third space” (p. 100) lying between two distinct spheres, French hegemony and Martiniquais “sense of dispossession” (pp. 84, 100), in which escaping the rules and asserting cultural difference occur. Not all Martiniquais, however, valorize debrouillardism. Browne divides interviewees into defenders, relativists, and objectors. The latter tend to be Christians, high-income locals (Afro-Creoles and *bekes*, or whites), or French metropolitan living in Martinique. These schisms remind us that informal economies are not confined among the poor; they link the entire society in buyer–seller dyads. Yet dyads illuminate the apparent reinforcement of patron–client hierarchies, in which the affluent seem to offer comparatively little to others yet receive many informal economy services from them.

Men predominate in creole economics. Browne explains this in terms of the Caribbean trope of reputation and respectability: Afro-Creole men’s essential tension is with white bosses, so debrouillardism is an effective strategy to assert autonomy and cunning and gain reputation. Afro-Creole women’s essential tension is with men, so it is more compelling for them to become independent financially, not through the risky business of cunning but by penetrating the formal economy. The relatively few women who do work “off the books” interpret it as aimed toward family and
household, which signals respectability. Although Browne shows that class is marked by gender distinctions, she might have pressed gender more vigorously for the significance of class differences. Doing so would illuminate those female debrouillards who do not have “regular jobs” (p. 186) and “relate to the satisfaction so many men describe” (p. 204).

Browne’s focus on “Afro-Creole” Martiniquais leaves out bekes and unnamed “other small minorities” (p. 15)—the former because they declined to be interviewed and the latter because her argument hinges on historical perspectives from slavery. Yet given its analysis, this book helps us to ask other important questions about creolization. For example, because other Martiniquais are also culturally “creole” in some respect, might there be additional contexts or modes of creolization figuring into creole economics? Beke men, too, in their own way, may also strive for the reputation values of creole economics. Cunning in a plantation environment makes good sense, yet if cunning is culturally recognized in Martinique, then it may also encompass bekes and others in a variety of manifestations. And if not, the question of where the boundaries (cultural, ideological) lie is a valuable one, as well.

Persuasive and engagingly written, Creole Economics should be required reading in anthropology, economics, and Caribbean Studies courses.


NOEL IGNATIEV
Massachusetts College of Art

This book explores how whiteness continues to exert hegemony over U.S. life and how that hegemony could be undermined. It focuses on Brooklyn College, which is a large public institution with an ethnically and racially diverse student body. Melanie Bush’s outlook is shaped by her years of experience in social justice and antiwar movements and her study of world systems theory. The research on which the book is based was carried out between 1998 and 2000, and consists of written surveys of opinion of undergraduate and graduate students across the college, discussions with small focus groups of students and faculty and staff members, and her observations as a participant in campus activities.

Chapter 2 explores students’ understandings of the meaning of whiteness. How do Jews, Italians, Latinos, and others for whom ethnicity may have meaning position themselves in relation to whiteness? How do they see the advantages of being white? We hear the students’ voices responding to her questions, for example: “I never grew up around white people, only Turkish, Russian, U.S.-born Jews, Pakistanis, Blacks, Spanish, Christians, ‘crazy’ lesbians, Middle Eastern people” (p. 63). Some think “Brooklyn” is a category alongside Black or Hispanic.

Chapter 3 examines U.S. identity in relation to race. This is a topic of special contemporary relevance. A great deal has happened since Malcolm X, speaking for millions, declared himself not an “American” but one of the victims of “Americanism.” To what degree do black and white Brooklynites, native born and foreign born, consider themselves citizens and share views toward Arabs, Muslims, and illegal immigrants, as well as attitudes toward U.S. democracy and opportunity? As it turns out, more than was the case and less than the defenders of the status quo might hope.

Chapter 4 explores the rules of engagement: What sort of conduct is considered acceptable among whites when dealing with members of “other races”? This is the area many students regard as the most crucial, because it deals with their personal conduct in a direct way. With whom do they socialize, and whom do they marry? According to the survey, only 22.8 percent of U.S.-born whites now say they disapprove of “interracial” marriage (more than other groups, but still low compared to a generation ago [p. 63]). Perhaps as significant, nearly all seem to view the line as natural, even when they are willing to cross it.

Who is to blame for poverty and the racial gap is the topic of Chapter 5, and here the self-contradictions among her subjects are flagrant. Sixty percent of U.S.-born white respondents agree that people of color are discriminated against when applying for jobs, housing, and when approached by the police, yet most feel that poverty is still largely the fault of the poor. It is evident that many people are in denial (pp. 76–187).

Chapter 6 is called “Cracks in the Wall of Whiteness.” After recapitulating the various mechanisms that reinforce the status quo, it points to bases for potential challenge. Among these are the persistence of democratic ideals, the realization by some whites that they, too, may suffer the effects of programs ostensibly aimed at cutting services to people of color, and growing financial instability and hardship in the country as a whole. Bush stresses education as a means of weakening the grip of whiteness; foremost among her recommendations for the academy is curricular reform.

Bush brings to her work a keen ear for her subjects and clear writing. If there is a shortcoming in the work, it lies in the author’s overreliance on what people say as distinct from what they do. But then, what else could we expect from a study carried out in a period characterized by the absence of mass movements that could offer starting
points for the sorts of changes the author would like to see?


**BONNIE ADRIAN**

University of Denver

Mix Claude Lévi-Strauss on marriage exchange and Arjun Appadurai on the unleashing of imagination wrought by globalization, and your result would be the fresh approach to the anthropology of marriage found in *Cross-Border Marriages: Gender and Mobility in Transnational Asia*, edited by Nicole Constable.

Ellen Oxfeld’s contribution traces the history of Hakka marriage migration from China to India and, from there, to Canada. As Oxfeld puts it, “although one might categorize these as cross-border, hypergamous marriage exchanges, each of these categories is rendered somewhat less certain” by her research (p. 31). To emphasize the crossing of national boundaries is to miss a key point: These marriages are endogamous within a deterriorialized community, which is true in about half of the cases collected here. Oxfeld’s reasons for problematizing the notions of “hypergamy” and “marriage exchange,” likewise, are echoed throughout the volume and best explained by way of introducing the other case studies.

The key concern with hypergamy revolves around the extent to which—and the ways in which—a seemingly hypergamous marriage entails a move “up” for a woman. Six of the volume’s eight chapters describe situations in which marrying women travel to wealthier, higher status locales where, for them, life is harder than back home. Make that five chapters: The Filipina bride in the chapter by Nancy Abelmann and Hyunhee Kim reneges on her promise to move to the sex ratio—skewed farmlands of South Korea for marriage to a disabled man.

Nobue Suzuki reports that Filipinas who marry Japanese men experience high living costs in Japan amid acute pressure from home to remit funds to support their natal families. In Japan, they lead frugal lives and work long hours, enviously eyeing the comforts of family members in the Philippines. If this is global hypergamy, those who achieve it experience “fantasies of transnational transversal” (see chapter title). Couples often hope to relocate to the Philippines, where they might at last realize the comfortable, high status lives that folks in the Philippines imagine for Japan.

In a similar case, Miao wives of men in Jiangsu, China—which suffers from a dearth of marriageable women—had imagined how much better life there would be in comparison to Guizhou, from which Miao women have formed a chain of female marriage migrants. Louisa Schein reports that the women often find themselves married into families with an exceptionally high demand for labor. Folks in Guizhou consider these marriages “spatially hypergamous” (a phrasing borrowed from William Lavenly by many of the volume’s contributors) regardless of the disproportionate toll they exact from bitter Miao brides. Interestingly, Miao women are also the long-distance objects of desire of U.S.-male tourists in pursuit of Hmong authenticity, although Guizhou to U.S. marriage migration seldom results.

The most extreme case of spatial hypergamy involves considerable downward class mobility for professional women marrying “up” in the world, from Vietnam to the United States, by marrying down the class ladder to working-class Viet Kieu men. Hung Cam Thai details an impending transnational marriage of individuals who find themselves in unfavorable marriage markets because of skewed sex ratios, products of war and migration in both locales.

Just as it complicates the “hypergamy” concept, the volume also critiques notions such as “marriage exchange” and “bride trafficking” for their lack of attention to female agency, which is the central theme of several chapters. Emily Chao, for example, explores complicating factors in discourses of marriage, elopement, and bride-napping in southwestern China. Caren Freeman’s chapter on women of Korean ancestry in China who marry South Korean farmers reveals that Chosŏnjok women enjoy considerable strength to position themselves favorably vis-à-vis their husbands and affines—so much so that South Korean media now depict Chosŏnjok women as unpatriotic in ways that call into question assumptions of racial unity. The Filipina and Chinese women of Constable’s ethnographic contribution to the volume look more like agents than victims in their marriages to U.S. men. Constable argues that women may use global introduction agencies to “achieve mobility through marriage” (p. 186) but that the kinds of mobility for which they strive are not exclusively or even primarily economic. They, much like the U.S. men who court them, seek intimacies of a kind they believe to be unavailable in local marriage markets.

Macrolevel contextualization is frustratingly absent from some chapters, perhaps only because of the unavailability of needed data. For example, to what extent are the agentive women highlighted here typical among marriage migrants? I also wonder if the outsourcing of marriage affects the relative bargaining positions of men and women in local marriage markets. In every instance described, marriage migration is available only to women. Does the availability of long-distance marriage opportunity for women force local men in search of local brides to offer them more autonomy or better treatment? Do men who expand their own marriage markets to include women from distant places undermine local women’s efforts to increase bargaining power?

Despite these unanswered questions, *Cross-Border Marriages* is an important addition to the anthropology of marriage and should be read by the scholars in many disciplines who write on the topic of “bride trafficking.”

CASEY WALSH
Universidad Iberoamericana

This book is an important and timely contribution to anthropology and Mexican studies. After some 40 years of practicing economic anthropology in Mexico, Scott Cook presents a detailed reflection on some of the field’s major debates and key concepts. The book comes toward the end of a long and distinguished career, and it presents the vision of a senior anthropologist who has participated in many of the discussions that are now the subject of historical interest by younger colleagues. The book is also timely for its release at the beginning of the 21st century, as the results of North American Free Trade Agreement are beginning to unfold, and in the book Cook seeks to consolidate and orient economic anthropology in order to better understand this emergent globalized context. The central concept developed in these pages, “commodity culture(s),” both helps the reader understand the theoretical orientation that has shaped Cook’s rich ethnographic research over many years and provides a departure point for future work.

To flesh out his idea of “commodity culture(s),” Cook sets up a series of dialogues with other authors. He defines the field of economic anthropology by distinguishing it from Marxist anthropology, substantivism, and anthropological political economy (among other approaches), all of which place an inordinate amount of importance on social and cultural factors and which fail to concentrate on the fundamental problem of economic anthropology—material reproduction in concrete local settings. Although Cook incorporates an idea of the social (classes, households, community) and notions of “culture” (sign value, identity) in his vision of the economic, he insists the economy is fundamentally about the creation, circulation, and consumption of value.

Having narrowed the field of study, he is a solid position to argue a main point of his book: that the Mesoamerican economy should not be divided into two domains (traditional–modern, precapitalist–capitalist, use value–exchange value, etc.). To make his point against the “dual economy thesis” prevalent in Mexican anthropology, Cook critiques the substantivist position that places emphasis on the social organizations and cultures of indigenous groups in Mesoamerica, referring the reader back to the more limited economic domain of economic anthropology. Within this domain, Cook deploys a reading of Marx that finds labor value inherent to the objects produced, exchanged (or not), and consumed by people in Mesoamerica both before and after the arrival of the Spaniards and the subsequent development of capitalism. This expanded notion of the commodity allows Cook to establish a research agenda that studies circuits of value creation through production, market exchange, and consumption by individuals in concrete historical settings. Although much of the argument is established negatively as an attack on the “dual economy thesis,” substantivism, and “ethnocultural survivalism,” Cook discusses favorably an eclectic sample of thinkers that includes anthropologists Robert Redfield and Sol Tax, novelist B. Traven, and philosopher Daniel Little. Cook further rehabilitates the formalist perspective by arguing that individuals exercise a “prudent rationality” in making their economic decisions, although these decisions are always made within limiting structural conditions. According to Cook, this tendency to maximize is another integral part of “commodity culture(s)” shared across the divide wrongfully established by the formalist–substantivist debate. In his careful analysis of the literature, Cook reestablishes intellectual spaces crowded out by binary thinking.

The author states in his acknowledgments that the book was the outgrowth of a review essay. Although the book offers a careful reading of many works of economic anthropology in Mexico, this is perhaps its principal weakness, for much ink is spilt in discussing texts in great detail. Eight pages, for example, are dedicated to evaluating the arguments in Catherine Good’s book Haciendo la lucha (1988). These works, and Cook’s discussions of them, are rich and rewarding to the student of Mexican economic anthropology, but the reader wonders if such detail does not hinder the accessibility of his larger arguments about “commodity cultures.” Some of this energy could have been devoted to increasing the number of extremely interesting and helpful ethnographic examples provided by the author from his field work Oaxaca and the U.S.–Mexico Border. There is also a relative imbalance between the chapters discussing Mesoamerica, which has long been Cook’s area of expertise, and those focused on the U.S.–Mexico borderlands and on “The New Transborder Space” established by NAFTA, which are themes that Cook has come to more recently. But despite these weaknesses, the book provides a well-argued statement of the author’s intellectual position and establishes an important research agenda for the years to come. It would be especially useful for advanced undergraduate and graduate-level classes on economic anthropology, Latin American anthropology, or the history of anthropological thought.

REFERENCE CITED
Good, Catherine


MICHAEL J. MONTOYA
University of California, Irvine

“Love of Shopping” Is Not a Gene provides yet another salvo in the debate about the biological bases of human behavior.
Anne Dagg offers a challenge to the unsullied stereotypes of violent, aggressive human natures that purportedly permeate Darwinian psychology. Spawned of a controversy that erupted in this journal (1998), Dagg begins with her own role in the debate over lion infanticide. Her erudite analyses of the hypothesis, and careful review of the research on which it is based, reveal that lions kill their cubs no more than lionesses and, hence, claims of evolutionary advantages of infanticide are wholly speculative.

Focusing on what she calls “Darwinian psychology,” Dagg attempts to counter numerous myths about human behavior within the scientific and popular literature—for example, that men are by nature sexually aggressive; women are coy and hearth oriented; war is an inherited trait; IQ differences are biologically determined; and so forth. In *Love of Shopping*, Dagg illustrates that science is not neutral but a cultural product in its own right. However important this message is today, Dagg’s analyses themselves falter beneath cultural presumption. For example, Dagg asserts that research into the sex-loving Bonobos lost to the more violent chimpanzee, because “it is men who publish books and articles about human aggression” (p. 26). This faulty science endures, explains Dagg, to fulfill a “cultural need reflected by the media to keep male-defined order in society” (p. 30). Although science studies scholars may accept her analyses of the weakly supported claims of evolutionary psychology, Dagg offers little to convince readers of the link between gender, society, and scientific motive.

Critiquing the weak primatological foundations of the aggression hypotheses in Darwinian psychology, Dagg also unpacks inheritance as a principle that makes evolutionary thinking possible. Reviewing an intellectual history of sociality and aggression, Dagg illustrates how aggression as an inherited trait cannot confer evolutionary advantage at the exclusion of sociality. Both behaviors are options common to our “ape-like ancestors” and are influenced by sex, experiences, culture, and personality. If either confers evolutionary advantage, it is sociality, argues Dagg.

Dagg persuades that the findings of evolutionary behavioral science must be treated with the greatest of suspicion. In chapter after chapter, Dagg demonstrates how the conditions created by the research environment explain many of the “observations.” For example, in assessing Goodall’s conclusions that chimpanzees wage war, Dagg convincingly asserts that it was Goodall’s feeding practices in the field that created the conditions for chimpanzee violence rather than a necessarily inherent trait. However, in a most unfortunate passage, Dagg attempts to evaluate the evolution of aggression by examining the ethnographic accounts of the Yanomamo people. She reports that the Yanomamo feuds result only in symbolic victory but not serious injury, which “makes evolutionary sense” for conflicts between relatives (p. 49). But the implication that we can learn about evolution, or that we can go back in time, by looking at the Yanomamo is to this reviewer as problematic as inferring the heritability of complex human behavioral traits from chimpanzee research or as explaining a scientific field through reference to the gender, race, or class of its knowledge producers. The phantom of the great chain of being undermines Dagg’s otherwise important point, to wit, careful attention to context, culture, and life conditions better explain complex human behavior than evolutionary naturalizations.

Readers should grant Dagg considerable pluck for titling at such a formidable wind-making machine as evolutionary psychology. Further, for those unfamiliar with the range of evolutionary mythologies skittering about, *Love of Shopping* will likely serve as an eye opener. The chapters on criminality, race, IQ, and the “gay gene” are solid primers on the problems with Darwinian psychology. However, those looking for a definitive strike at research that advances biological explanations for social phenomena (gender inequalities, rape, race, health outcomes, incarceration rates, or homophobia) will be better served by works that draw on empirical evidence to explain rather than simply point out the persistence of weakly supported biogenetic theories. More syntheses such as Dagg’s are needed—particularly ones informed by anthropologies of knowledge production and sociologies of science. Whether more careful attention to science as a culturally productive behavior will prevail in the battle against shoddy scientific claims and the bad public policies that co-produce them remains to be seen.

**REFERENCE CITED**


**SHELLEY ERRINGTON**

University of California, Santa Cruz

For most of anthropology’s 20th-century history, photography (whose convenient availability for amateurs coincided roughly with the expectation of fieldwork as professional training) has been theorized as a research tool (e.g., Collier 1967, a classic among many). In 1992, Elizabeth Edwards’s edited volume *Anthropology and Photography, 1860–1920* signaled a shift in the study of photography and photographs in our discipline by placing them firmly within colonial discourse, thus ushering in a new phase of sophisticated historical and ethnographic work on still photography that situated photographs’ meanings within larger discourses of power and semiotic practices (such as Pinney 1997, Poole 1997, and more every year or so). *Photographs Objects Histories: On the Materiality of Images*, edited by Elizabeth Edwards and Janice Hart, continues this trajectory by extending meaning explicitly to photographs’ materiality. The book’s premise, as Edwards puts it in the useful and wide-ranging introduction, is to treat photographs
not only as two-dimensional images but also as three-dimensional objects—artifacts that circulate, are collected, have uses, are embedded in power relations, and are enacted and performed by the human body. Yet they are not just commodities either: The image makes the photograph a special kind of artifact. This is an ambitious and thoroughly welcome premise.

Most of the contributors to this volume hold positions as curators or archivists; they are people positioned to discuss the material aspects of photographs—the albums in which they appear; their changing classifications; their contexts of use, storage, and distribution (albums, museum walls, playing cards, religious posters, and so on); and their “biographies.” Most of the contributors are also highly informed by the last decades’ many studies in material culture. There is no doubt that the book’s main foil and main gripe is that the photograph is regarded as a self-contained two-dimensional image. Perhaps as a corrective to the two-dimensional approach to the photographic image, most chapters include close-grained descriptions of their every aspect (which I welcome), but too many repetitively belabor the assertion that the photographs are material objects (which becomes tedious). Yet, just at the moment the significance of photographs’ materiality is being discovered, it is being snatched away by digitization and the Web, which represent the ultimate in dematerialization, claims Joanna Sassoon in the last chapter. Perhaps this is true, but photographic images are not only decontextualized but also recontextualized on the Web, and whole new fields are being devoted to speculating about the implications. The chapter, “Photographic Materiality in the Age of Digital Reproduction,” is misleadingly titled to evoke Walter Benjamin but should have been called “An Archivist’s Lament.”

The most exemplary and most enlightening of these chapters link image, materiality, and historical context and use to a larger theoretical orientation. Four chapters that I found especially suggestive and will use in teaching are by Glenn Willumson, Clare Legène, Nuno Porto, and Clare Harris (in order of their appearance in the volume). Willumson’s “Making Meaning: Displaced Materiality in the Library and Art Museum” shows with telling examples how photographs can be turned into Fine Art in the museum and gives a brief history of how photography was turned into Fine Art in the 1930s—with its own linear narrative of masters and masterpieces—in the exhibitions and writings of Beaumont Newhall under the wing of Alfred Barr, Director of the New York Museum of Modern Art. (It brought to mind how tribal artifacts became fine art in the same era and in the same venue). Legène’s “Photographic Playing Cards and the Colonial Metaphor: Teaching the Dutch Colonial Culture” draws on Susan Stewart’s (1993) ideas about collections and miniatures to discuss educational playing cards published by the Colonial Institute in 1942, featuring sets of iconic (both photos and drawings) atemporal categories (physical types, musical instruments, etc.) in groups of four items each, from the Dutch East Indies. Legène shows the double transformation from historically specific photo to photo-icon of “type” and to yet more generalizing drawing of type, and she claims that playing the card-game reenacted collecting by colonial powers. In “‘Under the Gaze of the Ancestors’: Photographs and Performance in Colonial Angola,” Porto writes about the Gallery of Native Chiefs in a colonial museum in Angola, where the museum became a cultural-political setting of the propagation and enactment of power. Harris’s “The Photograph Reincarnate: The Dynamics of Tibetan Relationships with Photography” tells us that among Tibetan Buddhists the distinction between things and people is not as clearly drawn as among Judeo-Christians. With that in sight, Harris shows how distrust of the photographic image was transformed between the time of the tenth Dalai Lama and the 14th, and how overpainting signifies and reveals the uses of photographs for Tibetan identity in the diaspora.

Combining close viewing, serious scholarship, and exemplary readings, this book taken as a whole imaginatively enlarges the possibilities for studying photographs as cultural and historical image-objects. In the best contributions, one understands the physical processes of cropping, recontextualization, mounting, modifying, and enacting as rhetorical processes of meaning making. Photographs are neither just image nor just object but, rather, image-objects that are historically and culturally situated in complex ways, including varying semiotic practices regarding the kinds of meanings that iconic representations with some photographic content are asked to bear.

REFERENCES CITED


DOROTHY L. HODGSON
Rutgers University

What is the relation between spiritual power and political power, between religion and politics? How do we account for the recent flourishing of religious networks in Africa and elsewhere, at the same time as the dominance of secular forms of governance like “democracy”? According to Stephen Ellis and Gerrie Ter Haar in Worlds of Power, the study of the relationship between religious thought and political practice in Africa offers a unique insight and
essential corrective to common understandings of world affairs because “Africa may be in the vanguard” in such matters (p. 3). They draw on examples from across the continent to argue that Africans draw primarily on religious ideas to understand and participate in the world as social and political actors.

After a brief introduction, the remaining chapters explore different themes or keywords that refract and reflect the convergence of religion and politics: ideas, words, spirits, secrets, power, wealth, morality, transformations, histories. The authors use this creative structure to great effect, weaving anecdotes and stories from different places in Africa with primarily African secondary sources to analyze African ideas of power, the political uses of spiritual beliefs and practices, and shifting ideas of wealth, morality, and justice.

The breadth of the book’s argument and scope of its evidence are at once its greatest strengths and most troubling limitations. Ellis and Ter Haar offer smart, informed, synthetic accounts of the power of rumor, the prevalence of secrecy, the moral valences of power, and contemporary perceptions of evil in the context of democracy and economic neoliberalism. Perhaps most provocatively, they move beyond an analysis of the relationship between religion and politics to argue that most Africans believe that “power has its ultimate origin in the spirit world” (p. 4). Guided by this “widespread” belief, Africans, especially African politicians, constantly seek to engage, placate, and draw on spiritual power in order to expand and strengthen their formal and informal political power. Despite the efforts of colonial and postcolonial imperialists to foster the separation of church and state in Africa as a means toward “progress,” Africans have retained and recently reinvigorated their beliefs in the intertwined relation between the two. Blinded by Enlightenment traditions of the separation of church and state, however, most Euro-American scholars have failed to see, much less analyze, the complicated connections between secular and sacred power.

The problem, however, is that these broad generalizations about “Africa” and “Africans” are based on selective or even anecdotal evidence—stories of El Negro in Botswana, rumors of vampires in Malawi, the dilemmas of a Liberian Ph.D. seeking political office, excerpts from African novels and popular religious tracts. Based on these disparate sources, the authors claim, “Religious relationships now constitute perhaps the most important way in which Africans interact with the rest of the world” (p. 2). The most important way? Or, a page later, they claim, “African politicians . . . typically pay great regard to the spirit world as a source of power” (p. 3). Some perhaps do, but “typically”? Their ability to make such expansive claims is facilitated by their broad definitions of religion and politics, so that religion following E. B. Tylor, entails “a belief in the existence of an invisible world (p. 3) and is used throughout the book to include morality as well, and politics includes formal and informal assertions of power. Occasionally, the distinction seems to be reduced to little more than the difference between “ideas” and “practice.” The result is that all actions can be understood as expressed in the “spirit idioms,” so that the analytic divide between religion and politics is erased rather than probed.

Despite these issues, the book offers provocative arguments for anthropologists, political scientists, and others to assess in more empirically rigorous and rich ways. Certainly, the relationship between religion and politics needs more careful analysis in Africa, as elsewhere. Moreover, the rapid spread of Pentecostalism, rise in Islamic activism, and other processes suggest that the African continent is, as the authors suggest, an ideal site to study these questions. But more systematic comparison and analysis of the histories, contexts, meanings, and practices of religion and politics from places throughout the continent is needed before we can begin to accept some of the broad conclusions about the nature of “Africa” and “Africans” posed by the authors. In conclusion, the book is best considered as a source of stimulating ideas rather than one of definitive conclusions.


DANIELLE DE LAME
Royal Museum for Central Africa, Tervuren (Belgium)

As opposed to the countless accounts for horror that have been published after the genocide perpetrated in Rwanda, this book is in line with the book published by Johan Pottier (2002), aiming as it does at elucidating discourses around this tragedy. Where Pottier examines systematic disinformation and analyzes it within its broad political context, Nigel Eltringham relies mainly on interviews from Rwandans, both locally and abroad, to produce a “conflict-prevention” oriented study of the accounting by various members of the Rwandan elite.

His starting point is that the genocide was a “deliberate choice of a modern elite to foster hatred and fear to keep itself in power” (p. xii). This is certainly so, but the elite was not restricted to an urban environment, nor was it as homogeneous as the interviews would indicate; moreover, this argument should be further qualified. Eltringham, in tune with those he interviewed, leaves aside the dynamics enshrined in the social practices of the countryside, the appropriations of local history and of the connections with the wider world that made sense of the fight for ever-scarcer resources. This multifold synthesis of events gave special turns to the relationship between specific types of elite and the people that civil servants call “the masses.” “The masses” (95 percent of Rwandans) are absent from the discourse of the interviewees. Talking about “the nature and continuity of absolutist ways of envisaging society” (p. xiv), this is certainly a case in point.

What are the themes around which current debates among urban elite revolve? Ethnicity comes first of the five main topics. Eltringham relies on some of the best authors
on the subject (e.g., C. Newbury and D. Newbury) but does not make clear the “theoretical” views underlying the discourse of his interviewees, who are, at this stage, left behind. We are more into the object of the book in Chapter 2, in which the stances of various groups on the 1959–63 antecedents to the genocide are well explained. An overwhelming parallel between the “Holocaust” and the genocide appears as a means of rejecting qualifications of primitive tribalism that have been all too frequent in the media. It should be remarked that this misleading connection occurs under an essentialist paradigm of ethnicity, well in line with the accusations but also well in tune with a political discourse appealing to the “West.” This is a rewarding register, but Eltringham does not provide us with a political analysis, striving, in a somewhat Platonist way, for conflict prevention. Also streamlined by ethnic perceptions is the collectivization of guilt that remains at the heart of allegations and embittered debates. The need to identify individual responsibilities keeps conflicting with this type of Manichean categorization. The crimes perpetrated by the Rwandan Patriotic Army (RPA) remain problematic. Last, but not least, continuity transpires in the everlasting appeal to the past and in the willingness to write a monolithic, official history of, and for, the country. This is not new, indeed. But, contrary to what the author writes, neither is it a heritage of the colonial period. Even if we consider that Rwandan history was written for the first time in the beginning of the colonial era, it remains that this was done in close collaboration with the court memorialists (Vansina 2004). Writing gave the seal of modernity to a history that had been monopolized and controlled by the most fundamentalist fractions of society. Is there anything new in this respect?

According to Eltringham, current debates of Rwandans about their own history revolve mainly around ethnicity and the legitimation of supremacy. From 1994, it has been politically incorrect to legitimate a fraction in power by looking back to the past. It becomes, then, convenient to erase any trace of ethnic divide of which literature on pre-colonial times testifies. However, similar “ethnic” relations existed in many other states of the area. Comparatively, centralization and the absolutization of power are striking features of the Rwandan state. The political instrumentalization of identities should be analyzed in the wide, internationalized context of economic and political relations, past and present, but it has not been the author’s choice. We read an interesting account and discussion of elite opinions. We must take care of contextualizing these opinions, and their accounting, by getting acquainted with the history of the country as a whole and as a part of the wider world.

**REFERENCES CITED**


**ALAN H. SIMMONS**

University of Nevada, Las Vegas

Although archaeologists often are unwilling pawns of political events, we sometimes are conscious players. The latter is aptly demonstrated in *Archaeology under Dictatorship*, a collection of nine chapters dealing with how political ideologies can shape archaeology. The papers include a detailed introduction by the editors, seven case studies, and a summary by Bettina Arnold, well known for her writings on archaeology and dictatorships. The examples include pre–World War II Italian studies in Egypt, archaeology in “interwar” Albania, two chapters on Italian colonial archaeology in Libya, archaeological resource management in Spain under Franco, Turkish archaeology and the quest for the “original Turks,” and Greek archaeology in times of dictatorship.

Editors Michael Galaty and Charles Watkinson’s introduction observes that dictators frequently have recognized the past’s ideological significance and have manipulated archaeology as a political tool. They contextualize the role of archaeology and politics, noting that this occurs in most nations but can be more intense in totalitarian regimes, especially when a dictator wishes to create and legitimize new ideologies. They define dictatorships and then discuss a specific example that sets the tone for much of the volume. Their interest in archaeology and dictatorships stems from Albanian archaeology, and it is here that it becomes clear that *Archaeology under Dictatorship* will examine the issue from an historical (primarily, the first half of the 20th century) rather than contemporary context, with an emphasis on Mediterranean Europe. There is nothing wrong with this, but it does make the book’s title somewhat misleading, because of its circumscribed geographic focus and historic emphasis.

Galaty and Watkinson make several important concluding observations, many of which are relevant to those of us working in foreign countries. For example, they note that Albanian archaeology is somewhat dependent on foreign missions (at least financially), and that this relationship has led to a sense of a loss of control by many Albanian archaeologists over their heritage, because those who control the purse strings also usually control the research. This has resulted in a desire by some younger Albanian archaeologists for a return to a centralized research focus much as it had been under a more totalitarian regime. Thus, Galaty and Watkinson note that some have suggested that “attacking post-totalitarian archaeologies in young developing nations constitutes a form of neo-colonialism” (p. 13). This is an interesting paradox: Many developing countries lack the financial resources to conduct research and must therefore rely on foreigners eager to work in their countries. At the same time, there is a belief amongst some that such an arrangement represents an assertion of power.
by dominant (i.e., richer) countries. Galaty and Watkinson correctly note the theoretical ramifications of such a relationship, especially from a postprocessual context. This situation is certainly not restricted to Albania; it occurs in virtually any country in which foreign researchers have a stake. The editors conclude by noting that a comparative and diachronic approach to archaeology under dictatorship may contribute to the struggle that archaeologists of younger democracies face as their deal with “the legacy and challenges of totalitarian pasts” (p. 14).

The remaining chapters are specific case studies, some more readable than others. One common theme is that archaeologists have not always been innocent participants in the manipulation of how we understand the past. Margarita Díaz-Andreu’s and Manuel Ramirez Sánchez’s discussion of archaeology in Spain under Franco notes that archaeology “lost its innocence” when postmodernism hit the discipline (an observation also made by others). Although acknowledging that archaeological practice has political implications, they also note that archaeologists often are naïve in such situations (I would add that this is likely especially true for those who have not lived under totalitarian regimes).

Bettina Arnold’s “The Faustian Bargain of Archaeology under Dictatorship” provides an apt conclusion and may be the chapter of most widespread interest. She makes several compelling observations, such as noting that most of us will not experience the trauma of negotiating between principle and survival in totalitarian regimes (p. 191). She further notes (p. 192) that there are two themes of archaeology under dictatorships: origins and spatial distributions, both of which have been used to justify land expansion and superiority. Archaeology, however, is a doubled-edged sword for dictators: It has propaganda value but can also pose a threat with discoveries contradicting the totalitarian doctrine (pp. 195–196).

Arnold also importantly discusses the implications of funding (pp. 201–202), something that should be a concern to all archaeologists especially given contemporary political events. Here Dimitra Kokkinidou’s and Marianna Nikolaidou’s observation (in their contribution on Greek archaeology) that it is not only authoritarian regimes that can misinterpret and abuse history to political ends but also parliamentary governments (p. 155) should be underscored. One might wonder, for example, how an appropriate balance can be achieved in protecting Iraq’s archaeological heritage (which, surprisingly, is hardly mentioned in the volume) in light of the current conflict there. Is it appropriate or ethical for Western archaeologists to accept U.S.-funding (pp. 201–202), something that should be a concern to all archaeologists especially given contemporary political events. Here Dimitra Kokkinidou’s and Marianna Nikolaidou’s observation (in their contribution on Greek archaeology) that it is not only authoritarian regimes that can misinterpret and abuse history to political ends but also parliamentary governments (p. 155) should be underscored. One might wonder, for example, how an appropriate balance can be achieved in protecting Iraq’s archaeological heritage (which, surprisingly, is hardly mentioned in the volume) in light of the current conflict there. Is it appropriate or ethical for Western archaeologists to accept U.S.-funded coalition funding for what many consider an ambiguous war? This clearly is a complex question, but it should give pause and certainly makes this volume a timely one. Although Arnold perhaps overstates that “the U.S. could become a place in which archaeologists would face persecution under a dictatorship,” she is absolutely correct that “neutrality for [archaeologists] has certainly ceased to be a realistic option, if it was ever anything other than an illusion” (p. 210).


DElia Easton
New York City Department of Health and Mental Hygiene

The Puerto Rican Syndrome opens with description of northeastern Philadelphia’s Puerto Rican barrio being white-washed in preparation for its use as the futuristic backdrop of the movie Twelve Monkeys. That the Barrio actually needs to be restored before it can acquire a convincingly gritty, “post-Apocalyptic” (p. 2) look, reflects the ineffectual, misplaced paternalism of U.S. policies toward Puerto Rico and Puerto Ricans that Gherovici convincingly argues is at the root of the “Puerto Rican syndrome.” This historically and politically situated inquiry, part ethnography and part psychoanalytic theory, explores the social construction of the name that mystified U.S. army psychiatrists gave to a broad collection of symptoms in the 1950s—including extreme anxiety, rage, and depression—which were experienced by Puerto Rican men who were veterans of the Korean War.

Drawing from her own historical research, Freudian and Lacanian theory, and case studies from her clinical practice as a psychoanalyst, Gherovici argues that the Puerto Rican syndrome is a form of hysteria, as Freud defined it, and, as such, “the Puerto Rican syndrome, like any hysteria, forces itself on us as an enigma that poses a question addressed to the Other” (p. 20). The “Other” in this case is not only the psychoanalytic other but also the imperialist others who colonized Puerto Rico in the first place. Gherovici suggests that because of the indefinable nature of hysteria, the entire phenomenon has illuminated the “faultlines and blindspots” (p. 52) of biomedical expertise. Similarly, the Puerto Rican syndrome, through a psychoanalytic and historic gaze, has the capacity to reveal the political and economic conundrums and hypocrisies of U.S. policies toward Puerto Rico. Psychoanalysis, Gherovici demonstrates, is an integral and overlooked theoretical tool for both mapping and understanding the physical and psychological repercussions of U.S. colonialism on its colonial subjects.

Gherovici advocates for making psychoanalysis—something that is not readily available to Puerto Ricans, or for that matter anyone living in poor, urban areas and depending on neighborhood clinics for health care—more accessible and presumably more affordable. Traditional psychiatry, with its premise on assimilation and adaptation to mainstream norms, is not necessarily an appropriate therapeutic option for Puerto Ricans, because they have already been forced to conform to colonialist dictates. Unlike earlier studies that described ataques de nervios (lit., attack of nerves) as a folk illness best treated through traditional healing such as Espiritismo, Gherovici argues that spiritualists, like psychiatrists, devalue individual difference and perpetuate therapeutic dependency in their clients. By encouraging reliance on an all-knowing Other, both psychiatry and Espiritismo replicate the colonialist dynamic. Lacanian psychoanalysis, by contrast, “underscores subjectivity, rather
than underscoring the myth of shared identifications” (p. 208).

With its focus on both the Puerto Rican syndrome and psychoanalysis, there are places where a lesser scholar than Gherovici could have slipped into the broader generalizations of culture and personality theory. Building on a Puerto Rican psychoanalyst’s work, for example, she describes how the “permanent union” (p. 218) theme common to both of the main political parties in Puerto Rico is both indicative of Puerto Rico’s need for reassurance from the United States and a way of perpetuating a fantasy of an ideal relationship with the United States that will never be. Permanent union is an unstable political status because the U.S. Congress can unilaterally vote to amend it. The ataque, Gherovici suggests, is an embodied parody of this unrealized idealization. Her case studies—in particular, her commentary about how ataques were an apt response for Puerto Rican soldiers faced with the double bind of fighting for a country in which they were not full citizens—affirms and anchors these broader speculations.

A weakness of this work lies in the depth of its empirical richness. Gherovici’s theoretical framework is compelling enough to suggest extensions to the experience of ataques in other cultural, historical, and political contexts. She mentions that further study is needed to explore the meanings of ataques experienced in other Latin American and Caribbean contexts. If the dysfunctional, quasi-familial relationship between the Puerto Rico and the United States is so central to the experience of the Puerto Rican syndrome, what is the significance of this relationship to ataques experienced in other contexts? Is the ataque more generally an expression of oppression and untenable social circumstance, as has been suggested elsewhere? The answers to these questions, perhaps addressed by Gherovici in another book entirely, could increase the relevance and accessibility of this work to nonacademicians and clinicians.


GARDNER BOVINGDON
Indiana University

Dru Gladney has probably done more than any other anthropologist to convey the importance of China’s ethnic diversity to non-China specialists. Although not the first to puncture the myth of a homogeneous China, he took the lead in explaining that myth—and what it concealed—to anthropologists and other social scientists beginning in the late 1980s. He was also among the first scholars to introduce poststructuralist concepts to the study of Chinese culture. His work has thus helped integrate the study of Chinese society into larger theoretical debates within anthropology.

This book is a fine introduction to Gladney’s work, as it ranges more widely than any single article or mono-graph he has previously produced. It collects many of his shorter works originally published as journal articles or book chapters, most originally written between 1987 and 1999. Individual chapters consider topics ranging from economics to education, sex to cinematography, Sufism to cyber-separatism, fieldwork to foreign affairs, always with an eye to broad theoretical currents. As a group the chapters reflect Gladney’s extraordinary accomplishments as a field researcher with 20 years of experience, and his unequalled access to Muslims of every description from elite to peasant in China, as well as Uyghurs and Qazaqs in Central Asia and Turkey. They also show wide reading in cultural anthropology and literary and social theory.

What of his theoretical contributions to anthropology? Gladney’s 1991 work, Muslim Chinese (revised in 1996), genuinely advanced the study of identity by demonstrating that it is not only affected by state actions; in some cases it may actually be invented by the state, and then come to be accepted by the people so labeled, rather like Pascal’s persevering skeptic who continually kneels to pray and eventually grows faith to suit the posture. The new collection demonstrates the special payoffs of studying non-dominant groups in an authoritarian nationalist state: They have more to say than members of the dominant group because they often feel alienated from, rather than able to identify with, the state. His argument in Chapter 4 (first published as an article in 1994) that states simultaneously “exoticize” and “eroticize” members of minorities—in other words, that Orientalism occurs not only between civilizations but within them—has clearly achieved wide influence. He has also efficiently dismissed Samuel Huntington’s theory of the “Clash of Civilizations,” here in Chapter 6, by demonstrating that two hypothesized civilizations converge in China’s Muslims. Finally, in the chapters making up the final third of the book, he suggests the promise of a burgeoning “subaltern school” in Sinology.

Despite the book’s title, Gladney does not actually “dislocate” China. He makes non-Hans the focus of the narrative but cannot thereby make them central to Chinese culture. And although he repeatedly claims to illuminate the construction of Han collective identity, what he really does here is suggest its vulnerability. In the latter half of the book, Gladney writes that “it is because the construction of Han identity is so tenuous, so questionable, and the position of Han superiority so insecure, that the portrayal of the other as sensual, immoral, and even barbarous becomes so important” (p. 258). These are bold claims, which merit much thought. Do Hans, who officially make up more than ninetenths of China’s population, really consider their position in China precarious? Can the tissue of Han identity really be so flimsy given the extraordinary number of books, newspaper articles, and television programs devoted to articulating and glorifying it? This book might more accurately be described as a prolegomenon to dislocating China.

The process by which the previously published work was incorporated into this volume is somewhat disappointing. The same information is introduced many times and
several passages are repeated verbatim in separate chapters of the book. With few exceptions, the chapters are only lightly revised versions of the originals. This was a missed opportunity, because Gladney’s most widely read and influential pieces have provoked responses, even spawned new research agenda. One would have liked to see the new versions cite and respond to a larger number of the works they inspired.

These criticisms notwithstanding, the book deserves a wide readership. For graduate students and scholars new to Gladney’s work, it helpfully gathers some of his strongest pieces. For scholars interested in ethnonational politics in East Asia, both in socialist and postsocialist regimes or in states with Muslim minorities, the book’s arguments and insights are indispensable.

REFERENCE CITED
Gladney, Dru C.


SUSAN McCOMBIE
Georgia State University

Once upon a Virus is a story. It is a story about stories about AIDS. These stories might be described as urban myths, modern myths, or solidified rumors. Diane Goldstein uses the term contemporary legends and makes the point that it does not really matter what you call them; in fact, it does not even matter whether they are truths, part truths, or total fictions. What matters is that people tell them, and they reveal understandings of health, illness, and risk perception.

The first chapter begins with the common childhood game “Tag, you’ve got AIDS,” which the author uses to begin a discussion of concepts of “contagion” in children’s games and the AIDS jokes that began in the 1980s. According to Goldstein, these jokes largely began to be replaced by narratives (the contemporary legends) in the 1990s, as concern shifted from the facts about the disease to what was unknown and uncomfortable. Telling the legends became a way to create dialogue. More than half of the chapter is devoted to a description of the field site in Newfoundland, with a description of the author’s methods of collecting data, the general environment and economy, and HIV statistics. The subsequent chapters return to more general discussion of contemporary legends about AIDS and the focus does not return to Newfoundland in depth until halfway through the book, where some of the descriptive information is repeated. It is never quite clear whether the book is about AIDS legends in general or AIDS legends in Newfoundland. Almost all of the examples are from the United States and Canada, leaving the reader hungering for more examples from around the world.

When we return to Newfoundland, the story becomes a bit more interesting as we are presented with a “true” story related to the “Welcome to the World of AIDS” legend. This well-known legend involves an individual who has unprotected sex and wakes up the next morning to find a message that he or she has been exposed to AIDS. Goldstein’s discussion of her involvement with a legal case involving an HIV+ man (Billy Ray) provides a good illustration of how legend and fact are weaved together in a local context.

I was struck by how the author alternated between the terms HIV and HIV virus. There was a time when the purists among us would correct people who used the redundant form, but it has become so commonplace that most have given up. I have accepted that the name of the virus had been reified. What interests me is why Goldstein, like other people, alternate between the two forms. As I searched for a nonrandom pattern and considered her use of the term wildfire transmission to describe the spread of the virus through a rural Canadian community, I wondered if this was actually a book about folklore or if the book was folklore itself.

Like any good story, Once upon a Virus caused me to ponder. I began to have ideas, and as I read I became less sure whether the ideas were my own or had been articulated in an earlier part of the book. In some places, I wanted the author to go further in her interpretation. In others, I cast a skeptical gaze. For example, Chapter 6 contains an eloquently presented argument that needlestick narratives (movie seats and phone booths) are examples of resistance to conventional medical authority and reveal the externalization of risk from the home to the public sphere. Perhaps. One of Goldstein’s main messages is that public health officials should take AIDS legends seriously because they affect health choices. It is not clear to me that AIDS legends, whether conspiracy theories or needlestick narratives, are actually associated with risky behavior, but I am willing to entertain the notion.

In the final analysis, the book is more than a story about stories. There is a good discussion of the types of behavioral models that have been used by public health officials to explain risk behavior in Chapter 3, and the final chapter incorporates a nice critique of the “Know Your Partner” educational strategy. If you have students who are interested in AIDS, or students who are interested in what contemporary legends reveal about the societies they are produced in, this book is worth a look.


SILVIA HIRSCH
Facultad Latinoamericana de Ciencias Sociales (Argentina)

The Chaco region of Argentina, one of the least ethnographically studied areas of South America, is inhabited by the Toba and numerous other indigenous groups, whose complex history has been marked by state domination and
violence, labor migrations, evangelization, and environmental degradation. It is in this context that Gastón Gordillo's book sheds light on the Toba's contradictory and shifting construction of these factors and on the interplay of memory and place.

The bush, which is the Toba's habitat, is a site of tension and social contradiction. The "ancient ones," as the Toba refer to their ancestors, remember the bush as grasslands over which they could roam freely, but the bush is now transformed in a wooded area invaded by settlers and ecologically degraded. The bush is the site of marisca (hunting, gathering, and fishing), where the Toba forage for foods, in contrast to the world of work, which came to be associated with agriculture, herding, and seasonal labor. In exploring the links between memory and place, Gordillo reminds us that habitat is culturally constructed.

In the memory of the Toba, the bush was also the place of state domination unleashed by the military against them and other Chaco groups. Military violence decimated the indigenous population and expropriated lands, paving the way for intrusion of capital and labor intensive forms of agriculture. As a result of these state-initiated changes, the physical and social landscape was permanently altered—thus bringing about the loss of lands, the arrival of settlers, the withdrawal of indigenous groups to the fringes of the region, and indigenous engagement in labor migrations. Again Gordillo provides a persuasive account of the interplay of geography and historical experience.

In his chapter on Toba labor migrations to the sugarcane plantations, Gordillo underscores the paradoxical nature of the experience. On the one hand, the Toba for the first time in their history were subjected to the "political-economic" of time and work: The plantations were, clearly, brutal sites of exploitation. However, on the other hand, for the Toba they also provided an opportunity to acquire goods (foodstuffs, clothing, tools) and to be free from missionary intrusion. While working at the plantations, the Indians engaged in uncensored dancing and shamanic practices, but they also confronted the presence of payaks, devil-like beings that haunted and killed workers. In the bush, these payaks had been a positive source, associated with food and power, but in the plantation, they now acquired negative connotations linked to political economy.

Working at the plantations also redefined how the dominant society viewed the Toba. They became "aborigines," a category that linked ethnicity to class. The Toba, together with other Chaco indigenous groups, were near the lowest rung of the ethnic ladder of workers at the plantations, paid less than most others and living in worse conditions. Although the experience of degradation was especially difficult for the men, the Toba women at the plantation also experienced a different experience, enabling them to become economically independent from their husbands but distancing them from their children. In recalling their time at the plantation, the Toba men and women describe the experience with a mixture of fascination and estrangement.

By the late 1920s, the Toba established contact with British Anglican missionaries and invited them to settle in their communities. The Toba took in these missionaries as a way of protecting their communities against settlers and military raids. Missions became strongly rooted among the Toba: They disciplined, transformed, and censored many practices while granting protection and providing the skills necessary to adapt to the national society (literacy and new labor practices). As the author aptly asserts, conversion "implies a cultural production reconfiguring practices, bodies and places" (p. 93).

The bush, homeland to the Toba, was a place where poverty constituted part of the social landscape and aboriginality another form of exclusion and marginality. However, the experience of labor migration and contact with the missionaries constructed the bush as a place of healing and freedom. Although acknowledging the influence of the missionaries' work, Gordillo aptly explores the multiple aspects of the Toba's cultural resilience.

Gordillo's analysis is nuanced and engagingly written. The strength of this book lies in its deep, ethnographically grounded, and historically situated research, as well as in its emphasis on the ambiguities, tensions, and social contradictions that construct memory and place. State violence, labor migrations, and Anglican missionization have shaped the way the Toba recall their own experiences, and, in so doing, have also detailed how memory and place are inextricably linked.


MARGARET TRAWICK
Massey University

A tradition in South Asian literature is for people to write commentaries on older literature—adage by adage, verse by verse. The commentator will explicate the older work, putting hard to read and elliptical verse into more readable current prose and adding interpretations that may or may not have been intended by the original author. Multiple layers of commentary come with some works. In this way, old classics have been made available to wider audiences, ancient insights have been continually renewed, and complex philosophical systems have been built. David Shulman and Don Handelman continue this tradition in their current work. The fruit of their labor in the book here reviewed is twofold. First, previously untranslated south Indian Saiva texts (about the god Siva) become available in translation to the modern Anglophone audience. And second, an original, and certainly thought-provoking, cosmic vision is offered for our contemplation.

That Saiva mythology is erotic to the hilt is no new discovery. The set of related stories here translated evoke the god Siva as the concentrated essence of sexual passion and power. But the interest of Shulman and Handelman
in this set of texts is philosophical and cosmological, far from the life of the body. They take us on a topographic journey that reminds this reader of her youthful forays into popular astrophysics: Space folds in on itself, time freezes and melts, the flow of energy slows to become inert matter, rents occur in the fabric of the universe, pieces of it break off and encyst, an object spinning at incredible speed creates a vast gravitational force that pulls everything into its heart from which nothing can escape.

Through their interpretations of the old south Indian texts, the authors ask direct questions about the nature of God. Strictly speaking, theirs is a theological essay more than an anthropological one. The authors never claim otherwise and are not to be faulted for their choice of approach.

If I were to have a personal quibble with this book, it would be that the authors sometimes appear intolerant of alternative interpretations of the same or closely related data, even when those alternative interpretations are at least as plausible as their own. For instance, they dismiss as secondary the argument that “in Tamilnadu sorcery is first and foremost a psychological expression” and countersorcery is thus “therapeutic and regenerative” (Nabokov 2000:48). They insist that “sorcery cannot be reduced to social relations” and that the “cosmic, i.e., cultural dimensions of sorcery, are paramount” (p. 21). But how is the cosmic more cultural than the social and psychological?

The most compelling feature of this book is not the argument but the imagery. The old Saiva texts here translated offer immediate intense sensory experience: blood, fire, hair, fingernails, drops of sweat, the winds of disease, the breasts and vulvas of women overcome and melting with desire as they stare intently at the penis of a naked beggar. Juxtaposed with that is the pure, abstract, emotionless, quasi-mathematical imagery of the authors of this book as they interpret the cosmic intent of the Saiva texts. The master trope is space, whose dimensions are interior and exterior.

This trope is a central to Tamil and Saiva literature, sculpture, and temple construction; Shulman and Handelman explore some of its potentials. In addition to lust, an at least equal power explored in the stories here translated (and many others as well) is hunger. Siva comes to the forest taking the appearance of a beggar, with a begging bowl in his hand. The wives of the forest sages fall in love/lust with him and rush to feed him and be had by him sexually. What is so irresistible to these women about a hungry naked beggar? And how is sorcery (one of the words in the title) implicated in these stories? For the authors of the book, sorcery is a metaphorical, or cosmic, process, entailing imprisonment of the self (even the self of God) and the perpetual, necessary instability of the relation between God and the world. Sorcery entails alienation of oneself from oneself, whether by imprisonment or by some other means. God becomes ensorcelled when he is either cut off from a part or the whole of the world or too much immersed in it.

In the end, however, who can say whether, for the authors of the old texts, hunger was a metaphor for the cosmic or a down-to-earth animal need more terrifying than anything else imaginable? The latter view deserves more attention in this world, where so many are starving.

REFERENCE CITED

Nabokov, Isabelle


JOCELYN LINNEKIN

University of Connecticut

One of the pleasures of reading a new volume in the History of Anthropology (HOA) series is the joy of discovery. The hallmark of HOA is meticulous research into the lives of our predecessors, whose intellectual and personal relationships are carefully reconstructed from private papers, correspondence, and institutional archives. Every volume contains surprises—hitherto unrevealed or unpublicized connections, encounters and collaborations, as well as a liaison or two. Although the biographical particulars are fascinating, the merit of what could be called “the HOA treatment” is that the work of individual scholars is contextualized in complex ways. The subject’s standing in anthropology is elaborated in relation to social location, personality, political movements, and the cultural–historical moment. Excluded Ancestors, Inventible Traditions is the ninth HOA publication and the first to be edited by Richard Handler, who demonstrates herewith that he is a fitting successor to George Stocking. In my view, it is one of the strongest volumes in the series, not least because of stellar chapters by George Stocking and Maria Lepowsky. The book is a must read for baby boomer anthropologists and their students, and it would be an excellent choice for a graduate course in the history of theory.

The primary theme of the volume is the establishment of scholarly authority. In his chapter on 19th-century occultism, Peter Pels investigates the formation of anthropology’s identity as a science. The Victorian ethnologists’ rejection of occultism and theosophy—and, by association, philosophical idealism—was rooted in class antipathy. Scientific professionals saw themselves as an intellectual aristocracy, superior by virtue of a canon that vaunted quantification and objectivity. The chapter has obvious contemporary relevance, as anthropologists continue to spar over the boundaries of the discipline.

Although we know in general terms that the contributions of women and nonwhite anthropologists have been largely erased from the history of theory, the devil is in the details—in seemingly insignificant acts of overlooking, dismissing, and setting aside. In its choice of subjects, this volume is the most gender-balanced in the HOA series. Charlotte Gower—the first woman anthropologist to
receive a Ph.D. at the University of Chicago—is the protagonist in Maria Lepowsky’s chapter. Ralph Linton and Robert Redfield figure prominently, however, and even Radcliffe-Brown makes an appearance. In light of the eventual stature of these male scholars, Gower’s truncated academic career makes for infuriating reading. Despite an institutional and social milieu in which flagrant gender discrimination was the norm, Gower interacted with her male peers as an intellectual equal and conducted innovative fieldwork in a peasant society. A gifted teacher at the University of Wisconsin, Gower had several male students—including Sol Tax, the focus of Stocking’s chapter—who went on to become well-known figures in the discipline. Her ethnography of a Sicilian community was lost in manuscript, however, and remained unpublished for decades while Redfield’s book on Tepoztlan became the touchstone for peasant studies. Gower is the archetype of the excluded woman ancestor and her history is a road map of women’s systematic erasure from the history of anthropology.

The centerpiece of the volume is Stocking’s superb chapter on Sol Tax, an architect of the modern discipline and the embodiment of “liberal democratic anthropology.” At 94 pages, the chapter resembles a small book and, in fact, Stocking notes that he intends it as part of a longer work on Cold War anthropology. Although Tax has been excluded from the history of theory, his contributions to the discipline were enormous; he was, for example, the founding editor of Current Anthropology. His optimism, earnestness, and commitment to activism recall the ideals that inspired many baby boomers to become anthropologists.

Stocking’s chapter is a veritable minicourse on the development of the discipline as we know it. Another noteworthy feature is that Stocking here explicates his method and practice as a historian of anthropology and positions his own career in the context of Cold War and post–Cold War scholarship. With refreshing reasonableness, he asks us to be gentle when evaluating the work and conduct of our immediate intellectual ancestors. Considering the role of individual agency, Stocking also offers a definition of his concept of “resonance” that will be very useful to intellectual historians. Stocking’s chapter and Ronald Stade’s chapter on Austrian ethnographer Lucie Varga invite us to ponder redactions, and her history is a road map of women’s systematic erasure from the history of anthropology.

In historical context, many of the latest concepts look like new labels manufactured to sell old wine. The HOA series demonstrates that there are few new ideas in cultural anthropology, underscoring the importance of teaching the history of theory.


**ERIC ALDEN SMITH**

University of Washington

In the last two decades, economic experiments have shown that people’s choices often deviate substantially from those that would maximize their immediate material payoffs. Although experimental results were quite consistent across different countries, most subjects were college students and all were members of industrialized societies. Recently, Joseph Henrich and colleagues extended these methods to small-scale societies, attempting to measure the effects of cultural variation, ecological adaptation, and social interaction on decisions in some standard economic games. The present volume, edited by two anthropologists and four rather heterodox economists, details their findings. These are often surprising and always stimulating, and they contain broad (but contested) implications for a variety of social sciences.

The basic research program summarized in this book consisted of running economic experiments in 15 foraging, horticultural, and pastoral societies scattered around the globe, from Amazonia to Mongolia. The experiments were directed by ethnographers conducting broader long-term projects in these communities. The book consists of reports by each ethnographer-experimenter, plus theoretical and methodological summaries by the editors. The chapter authors have diverse theoretical orientations, including behavioral ecology, economic anthropology, cultural evolution, cognitive anthropology, evolutionary psychology, and economics. But all are committed to quantitative analysis of rigorously collected ethnographic data.

To the extent practicable, the ethnographers followed a common protocol in conducting the experiments. Participants played the ultimatum game (UG) in all 15 societies, and additional games (public goods, trust, dictator) were played in some. In the UG, the experimenter provides the stake (e.g., $100), and one player is allowed to choose the portion offered to a second player; should the responder refuse the offer, neither player gets any money (which is retained by the experimenter). If the game is played anonymously and only once per player (as was the case in all experiments reported in this volume), the income-maximizing strategy for the first player is to offer as little as possible, and for the second player...
to accept any offer, no matter how small. There are two basic findings reported here. First, like the college students and others who were the focus of comparable economic experiments in industrial societies, most of the participants in the small-scale societies make game choices that violate what the editors call the “selfishness axiom” of maximizing personal material payoffs. For example, modal UG offers typically reach 40 to 50 percent of the stakes. Second, the pattern of choices is much more variable across societies (and in some cases even across communities within societies) than is typically recorded in industrial settings. Thus, mean UG offers vary from 25 percent (Quichua, Ecuador) to 57 percent (Lamalera, Indonesia).

The advantage of experiments over naturalistic observation is that the researcher can control for various factors that might influence outcomes, and, thus, hope to arrive at a clearer understanding of the effects of various hypothesized determinants. The disadvantage is that the “ecological validity” or relevance of the experiment to naturalistic contexts can be questioned. If the experimental results are not simply artifacts, we have to ask what they really mean. The authors have struggled valiantly to answer this question, but no definitive conclusions are attained. According to the overview chapter by Henrich et al., a plausible hypothesis is that play in the games reflects daily life—that it reflects “differences among groups in the ways that group-members typically interact in the pursuit of their livelihood” and “in governance of their common affairs” (p. 28). More specifically, a multiple regression analysis finds that variation in “aggregate market integration” (an index measuring involvement in external markets, settlement size, and scale of sociopolitical complexity) and “payoffs to cooperation” (an index of the potential benefits of multifamily economic production) together account for 47 percent of the between-society variation in UG offers. Although a valuable initial generalization, this conclusion runs into trouble when one examines detailed empirical patterns within and between the 15 cases.

For example, Frank Marlowe’s chapter reports that among the Hadza, the only significant predictor of UG offers is camp size—the modal offer is 50 percent in large camps versus 20 percent in small camps—yet food sharing between households is greater in small camps than in large ones. So “generosity” in the UG is inversely related to real-life food sharing, something inconsistent with the editor’s generalization (but consistent with a signaling or reputation-based interpretation). John Patton, who worked in an Ecuadorian community divided along ethnic–coalitional lines, found that members of the Achuar coalition make much higher UG offers (mode = 50 percent) than do members of the Quichua coalition (25 percent), yet members of these coalitions do not differ in levels of cooperation in daily life (see Chapter 4). The editors list the Achuar as having higher market integration than Quichua (see figure 2.5), yet Patton (p. 113) says the opposite is true and notes that the two coalitions do not differ in their frequency of between-household sharing of game nor in the imbalance of such sharing (p. 119). They do differ in the stability of the coalitions and the tendency of higher status men to build coalitions by sharing meat, which Patton argues explains the observed differences in UG offers. Similar findings are noted for the Tsimane of Bolivia (Michael Gurven) and for two lowland New Guinea groups studied by David Tracer. These and other findings suggest that generalizations regarding market integration and payoffs to cooperation are at best only part of the story (Smith 2005). Fortunately, these and other researchers have embarked on a new round of studies aimed at systematically exploring various anomalies and issues, and we can look forward to more intriguing results in the near future.

REFERENCE CITED

Smith, Eric Alden


BORIS WISEMAN
University of Durham

This interdisciplinary volume groups together new essays on Lévi-Strauss and structural anthropology by more than 50 scholars and writers from around the world, as well as a number of lesser known pieces by Lévi-Strauss himself. Its context is the renewal of structuralist thought (not just in anthropology) that is undeniably underway in France and perhaps elsewhere too. The editor, Michel Izard, is among those closest to Lévi-Strauss. He was, in 1961, one of the founding members of the prestigious Laboratoire d’anthropologie sociale and has already co-edited (with Pierre Smith) a volume in homage to Lévi-Strauss entitled Between Belief and Transgression (1982).

Several chapters deal with the biography of Lévi-Strauss, whose life story is inextricably intertwined with the development of modern anthropology and, indeed, with the evolution of 20th-century thought. These chapters cover such diverse aspects of his life as his early involvement in politics as a socialist militant (he once thought he might become the philosopher of the French Socialist Party), the formative years spent as a lecturer in sociology at the University of São Paulo (1935–38), and his period of exile in New York (1941–44) when, as a Jewish refugee fleeing Nazism, he met Roman Jakobson and started work on the Elementary Structures of Kinship (1971). The majority of the chapters, however, are concerned with Lévi-Strauss’s thought: its reception, its interpretation, and, above all, its continuing relevance. As one reads these chapters, one cannot help but think that the true value of Lévi-Strauss’s works—in particular, in the Anglo-American world—has been obscured by a number of misunderstandings, which have no doubt been made worse by problems of translation (in the broadest sense, including “cultural”), as well as by the vagaries of intellectual fashions. One may legitimately...
ask to what extent, in the popular imagination at least, a version of structuralism invented retrospectively by “post-structuralists” has become substituted for the real thing. One of the most common misunderstandings regards structuralism’s alleged inability to handle history, which Michael Oppitz, an experienced field anthropologist, and François Hartog address in their chapters. Philippe Descola returns to Lévi-Strauss’s philosophical positions and the common misconception that his positions are close to a form of idealism or materialism.

The chapters as a collection show that the works of Lévi-Strauss are not reducible to the exposition of a method or doctrine. They constitute a complex assemblage of texts, often related by hidden connections, whose meaning in many ways remains to be discovered. Olivier Herrenschmidt illustrates this point very well. He first read The Savage Mind (1962) when it appeared in the 1960s, but returned to it in the 1990s, having assigned it as reading for his students at the University of Paris X. Rereading Lévi-Strauss’s classic in this very different intellectual and political context he found himself discovering in it (not without a degree of astonishment) a world of meaning he had not suspected. What came to the fore was not so much the analysis of the logic of classificatory systems, but remarks on the place of affect (in particular, pity) on social relations. Affect was construed, in an 18th-century tradition, as an elemental—one might even say “prehuman”—form of identification of one living being with another. In the process, what is revealed is not only a possible explanation of one of the central problems raised by Lévi-Strauss’s work on totemism—namely, why human beings appear to privilege animal and plant species in the construction of social nomenclatures—but also the ethical dimension of Lévi-Strauss’s thought. It is not sufficiently understood that Lévi-Strauss is a profoundly ecological thinker, whose critique of a “corrupt” humanism that places “Man” above other living beings, is today more relevant than ever. Lévi-Strauss’s original title, La pensée sauvage, takes on here its full significance, which is lost in translation. As the francophone would know, the title is based on a pun. A pensée, in French, is at once a “thought” and a “pancy”; here, more specifically, the pensée is a wild pansy, the Viola Tricolor. The kind of thinking with which this book is concerned is “wild” only in the botanical sense of the term.

A number of chapters, such as those by Philippe Descola and Françoise Hérinit, combine a critique of structuralism, necessary for its renewal, with an attempt to use its productive elements to forge new paths of inquiry. Descola’s chapter explores the contradictory meanings given by Lévi-Strauss to the contrastive opposition between “nature” and “culture,” according to the various contexts in which he makes use of it: as a tool for the structural analysis of myths and folk classifications, as a philosophical foundation accounting for the origin of society, or as an antinomy to be superseded in the edification of a (monist) theory of knowledge, which refuses the traditional opposition between the mind and the objective world. He reveals the continuing validity of the analysis of the categorical distinctions that structure a culture’s symbolic productions, whilst rejecting the Lévi-Straussian reduction of these distinctions to that between “nature” and “culture.” (As he points out, growing ethnographic evidence suggests that the cosmologies of most nonmodern peoples do not divide the world into a natural world and a social world.) Françoise Hérinit’s chapter is part of the same systematic effort to conceptualize the future of structuralism. She may be said to reinsert the body into structuralism. Where Lévi-Strauss draws on linguistic analogies, Hérinit draws on bodily ones. Cultural productions, including kinship systems, are seen in terms of a dialectics of identity and difference whose basis is not linguistic-style structures but bodily substances, among them skin and fluids, such as blood and semen.

One of the great strengths of this volume is undoubtedly its interdisciplinary nature. The chapters of two philosophers in particular, Claude Imbert (Ecole normale supérieure) and Denis Kambouchner (Sorbonne), do a great deal to reveal some of the new directions in which Lévi-Strauss’s thought—beyond the clichés that are repeated about structuralism—may be pursued. Imbert’s chapter is intriguingly titled “Qualia” (the plural of the Latin quale, lit. meaning “what sort” or “what kind”). These are sensible qualities such as they are subjectively apprehended (e.g., the way an apple tastes or a particular color looks). Western thought has always separated sensation from reasoning (i.e., logic). Imbert shows, amongst other things (if I have read her correctly), that Lévi-Strauss’s originality consists, at least in part, of the discovery that there is a logic of sensible qualities. Contrary to Plato’s injunction to the philosopher that he or she must turn away from the sensible world to practice logic, Imbert argues that the first geometries are immanent to the qualitative dimensions of reality: They are attributes of various kinds of sensible forms. Instead of seeing sensation and reasoning as belonging to two distinct registers, and the concepts that denote them as delineating essentially autonomous realms, Lévi-Strauss imbricates logic in sensation and, indeed, in the “sensible.” Lévi-Strauss thereby defines a new “contrat de réalité” (Imbert’s phrase, p. 433) that one may see as being at the core of the elaboration of the many different kinds of symbolic systems that make up “culture.”

Kambouchner’s chapter is concerned with complexities of Lévi-Strauss’s understanding of the nature of “anthropological judgments,” which he defines as the conditions of elaboration of a specifically anthropological form of understanding—especially as viewed in the light of current, and often heated, debates about cultural relativism. On the one hand, Lévi-Strauss subscribes to a “classical” understanding of the notion of “cultural relativism,” one which recalls, for example, the positions of Boas or Kroeber: that value judgments made by one culture about another are rooted in that culture’s systems of belief and cannot therefore lay claim to objectivity. On the other hand, Kambouchner identifies a series of subtle attempts to reconcile relativism and universalism. His close reading of a
chapter of *Tristes tropiques* ("Un petit verre de rhum") is illuminating. It follows the twists and turns—moral, philosophical, practical—of the anthropologist’s effort to “detach” himself or herself from the culture to which he or she belongs to become immersed in another culture. This effort co-exists with the problematic and never entirely successful transformation of an agent into an observer, with all its attendant dilemmas, in particular for the political activist. In its concluding section, the chapter attempts to bring to light Lévi-Strauss’s engagement with the concept of “civilization”—in particular, his discrete attempts to theorize an ideal of civilization. As a vocal denouncer of the ravages of monoculture, Lévi-Strauss is less likely than many to be blind to all that is corrupt in the concept of “civilization.” Anthropology, Lévi-Strauss often repeats, is an expression of the remorse felt by Western “civilization” in the face of the evidence of its own destructiveness; it is a vast salvage operation launched in order to preserve as much as possible of what remains before the process of destruction is complete. Yet, at the same time, Kambouchner shows, Lévi-Strauss attempts to imagine a space between cultures that is also the space of anthropological understanding, one that corresponds to an ideal of civilization construed as a “coalition of cultures.”

Among the chapters by Lévi-Strauss contained in this new volume, "Nous sommes tous des cannibales" (We are all cannibals) deserves a special mention. It is best described as a deconstruction of the notion of “cannibalism” (there is exocannibalism and endocannibalism, and cannibalisms whose aims are nutritional, religious, medical, etc.). Once defined in such a way as to encompass its many different forms, it becomes apparent that the notion of “cannibalism” (in its broadest sense, the incorporation of parts of one human being into another) may not designate a particularly “savage” custom; instead, it can be read as an elementary metaphor for sociability.

**REFERENCES CITED**


**LESLIE E. SPONSEL**  
University of Hawai‘i

What can we learn from peaceful societies? That is the pivotal question addressed throughout this anthology. The first two chapters develop a mentalist theoretical and methodological context; nine case studies elaborate on this context; and a final chapter refutes opposing views and then summarizes underlying commonalities among the cases.

In the first chapter, Graham Kemp critically analyzes the concept of peaceful societies by exposing the sterility of the persistent oppositions of Hobbes–Rousseau, nature–nurture, and absolute–relative peace together with their historical context and enduring political motivations. Basically, he defines a “peaceful society” as having a worldview with accompanying values, customs, and institutions that together minimize violence and promote nonviolence. Accordingly, peace is a dynamic process as well as a condition. Kemp provocatively observes that “the threat of peace breaking out is something a warlike culture needs to attend to in much the same way that the outbreak of violence is something a peaceful culture needs to deal with” (p. 7).

In the second chapter, Ximena Davies-Vengoechea argues that peace and war are not only alternative capacities of human nature but also that they may actually coexist in real situations as well. This has been the situation in Colombia during more than 50 years of civil war among a quarter of a million people, while simultaneously a remaining 40 million pursue peace (p. 15). In other words, the phenomena of war and peace, as well as violence and nonviolence, cannot always be reduced to simply either–or, all-or-none, always-or-never propositions. Davies-Vengoechea views peace as a life-enhancing, dynamic process, one that is the normal condition in the daily lives of most humans, even those occasionally exposed to violence or war. Accordingly, peace is a choice, commitment, and way of being.

The above and other key points are further developed in particular cultural contexts by Alice Schlegel for the Hopi of Northern Arizona, Alan Howard for Rotumans in the South Pacific, Peter M. Gardner for the Paliyan of South India, Douglas P. Fry for a Zapotec group in Mexico, Robert Tokinson for the Mardu of Australia, Robert Fernea for the Nubians of Northern Africa, Clifford Sather for the Sama Dilaut of Southeast Asia, Kristin Dobinson for Norway, and Robert Knox Dentan for the Semai of Central Peninsular Malaysia. This ethnographic sample is especially interesting because the Hopi, Zapotec, and Norwegians are peaceful societies, although they have been involved in intergroup violence in the past. In contrast, the Mardu, Paliyan, and Semai have no known history of feuding or warfare.

In spite of the cultural and historical diversity among these cases, in the concluding chapter Fry identifies common denominators in the creation and maintenance of a peaceful society, including core values that promote nonviolent behavior; avoidance of violence; self-restraint and self-control; friendly peacemakers such as mediators; processes for reaching consensus and minimizing hard feelings; and social mechanisms to prevent and discourage physical aggression. Furthermore, Fry critically analyzes the arguments of those who oppose the very idea of peaceful societies as variously political, biased, incompetent, or disingenuous.
This book follows several previous anthologies on the anthropology of nonviolence and peace, including those edited by Ashley Montagu, Nancy Howell, this reviewer, and others. In combination with these and with the annotated bibliography of 47 peaceful societies by Bruce Bonta (1993), the Encyclopedia of Peaceful Societies, and other information on Bonta’s website (http://www.peacfulsocieties.org), the present book contributes to an accumulating ethnological record that honestly cannot be ignored any longer. Perhaps some of the apologists for war that Fry refutes will begin taking this record into consideration. Unfortunately, however, this anthology illustrates the growing divergence between peace studies and war studies. Far more attention needs to be focused on the mutual relevance of these two arenas, as is suggested by Davies-Vengoechea in the example of Colombia.

Finally, although the year 2000 was declared by the United Nations to be the International Year for a Culture of Peace, following the tragedy of September 11, 2001, and the responses to it, the world seems to have almost forgotten about genuine peace. During such an anxious period in world history, initiatives such as this book can provide a glimmer of light at the end of the tunnel. Readers can learn that peace is not merely an ideal but, in fact, an actuality in a significant number of societies, as is scientifically documented through ethnography.

REFERENCES CITED

Bonta, Bruce D.


DEBORAH R. ALTAMIRANO
State University of New York at Plattsburgh

Sexuality, homoeroticism, performativity, gender identity, and friendship are central themes in Elisabeth Kirtsoglu’s portrayal of the young Greek women of a parea (a company of close friends). Set in a provincial town outside of Athens, Kirtsoglu’s ethnography delves into the lives of these women and focuses on a topic rarely discussed in such intimate detail—female sexuality in Greece beyond the context of traditional heterosexual womanhood. Kirtsoglu, herself a member of the parea, seeks to elaborate the ways in which “gender is not simply a fixed attribute of the person, but the point of interaction between subjective experience, cultural ideals, social values, and power relations” (p. 33).

In the opening chapters, Kirtsoglu introduces us to her parea, which comprises a cross-section of contemporary Greek womanhood. The members range in age from teenage high school students to well-educated professional women in their late thirties. Most of the women in the parea are single, but several are married with children. Some are just beginning to explore the bounds of their sexuality while others have had many relationships both homosexual and heterosexual. None of them self identifies as a “lesbian,” nor, the author points out, do any feel a special connection to, or kinship with, the classical Greek lesbianism of Sappho (p. 10). Yet, within the parea, these women’s lives are centered on their intense erotic relationships with other women. Furthermore, the author emphasizes that these homoerotic relationships all take place within and “depend on familiar cultural idioms of masculinity and femininity” (p. 24).

In Chapter 2, Kirtsoglu relies on her extensive grasp of the literature to outline her theoretical approach to the study of gender and sexuality. Most specifically, she employs Judith Butler’s notion of “performativity” to analyze how the women of the parea experience and construct their sexuality and their gender identity within a patriarchal social-sexual milieu. For example, she uses the theory of performativity as a framework for analyzing the women’s “sexually charged ‘female’ belly dance” (pp. 35–36), which they perform at their main hangout, a family-oriented taverna. This dance, the author posits, represents a “public statement of desire” toward women and, yet, it is “symbolically coded such that it does not openly provoke the heterosexual ethos of the town” (p. 81).

In the following chapters, Kirtsoglu guides her reader through the various stages of the women’s erotic relationships as they progress from flirtation and courtship to stable erotic unions, and, finally, through their dissolution. Kirtsoglu’s discussion emphasizes how these complex homoerotic relationships are heavily ritualized and imbued with symbolic significance and rites of passage drawing the women into even more intense bonds of friendship, “family,” and community. In each chapter, she continually challenges her reader to reconsider the basis on which gender, sexuality, and concepts of maleness and femaleness are constructed.

Although the focus of Kirtsoglu’s ethnography is on a group of women and their erotic relationships with other women, this is not an ethnography of lesbianism in Greece. It is an insider’s view of a contemporary womanhood constructed on complex levels of identity, sexuality, and friendship within a patriarchal society. Yet the author maintains that the parea should not be viewed as a unique case of “genderhood” but, rather, as “another expression of intracultural variation, one of the many different and contrasting frameworks for the enactment of the gendered self” (pp. 85–86).

Kirtsoglu sprinkles her ethnography with short vignettes, but I find her entrée into the world of the parea most engaging in Chapter 6 when she lets her narratives flow unencumbered by numerous citations and analytical interjection. Here she addresses how, given the intense demands of the parea, individual women skillfully navigate between their public life of (hetero)sexuality, friends, family, and work and their homoerotic life expressed within parea. Although the dense vocabulary makes for a challenging read, which may be more geared toward the

DIANA BROWN
Bard College

Spirit possession religions continue to offer riches for anthropological analysis in this ethnographic study of vodhun in a Watchi (a subgroup of the Ewe) village in Southeastern Togo. Vodhun has been less studied here than in Benin, Ghana, and Nigeria, and Nadia Lovell opts for an experientially oriented, embodied analysis of villagers' own conceptualizations and practices of vodhun and their interactions with the deities (also known as vodhun), over the theological and taxonomic focus of Francophone predecessors. More than a religion, and far more than a set of ritual practices, she asserts, vodhun “is linked to an understanding of Watchi identity, personhood, locality and territoriality ... through a complex web of bodily images,” which connect humans to the territory and the cosmological landscape they inhabit (p. 16).

At the center of her analysis is the “cord of blood” (hunka) of the book’s title, which refers to the linkages created among those (mainly women, 60–70 percent of the female villagers) who undergo initiation into the vodhun secret societies through matrification, with new initiates succeeding their deceased maternal grandparents. Drawing on myths, narrative histories, and extensive genealogies of cult leaders, initiates, and their families, Lovell provides a complex exegesis of various strands that feed into Watchi villagers’ conceptualizations of this symbolic matrix. The cord of blood emerges as a gendered metaphor that symbolizes women’s procreative powers and matrilineal ties; it refers both to the blood that links all humans to their mothers and to wombs, associated with the earth through clay pots. These clay vessels evoke both the domestic sphere, in which they are used by women in cooking, and the religious sphere, in which they form the receptacles placed at shrines, in which the deities are contained and which serve to ground and to situate human settlements. It provides a female narrative of belonging and identity, which works through bodily imagery to connect humans in their daily lives to their deities and to their locality.

Lovell pays particular attention to issues of gender and spirit possession. Rejecting notions of female subordination, she portrays complementary gendered spheres of action and power in which female linkages and solidarities and access to religious knowledge through vodhun increase the status of its almost exclusively female initiates, and counterbalance patrilineal filiation and virilocal residence patterns and the secular powers of elder males. Critiquing models of spirit possession as a safety valve for oppressed groups, she suggests that it may provide for and express the breaking down of gender boundaries and the ambiguity of gender attributes.

Cord of Blood is not for anthropological neophytes. The author’s rendering of the complexities of descent and residence patterns among villagers, among the vodhun, and between humans and vodhun, combined with her explicit emphasis on the fluidity and malleability of these in daily understanding and practice, make for a very dense narrative, which is at times hard to follow and requires rereading. The book also omits data on the social context of vodhun practice—subsistence, daily patterns of activities, the gendered division of labor, political organization, ethnic composition of the village—which this reviewer considers crucial to her argument. Her discussion of vodhun and modernity is abstract, decontextualized from transformations in contemporary Togo. She argues that vodhun is not inherently traditional; possession provides a powerful idiom for facing what lies outside itself, at once resisting modernity, the state, and colonial and religious institutions and at the same time enabling female adepts, those most excluded from modernity, to join in the process of modernity, embedding modernity within this religious complex, a role carried elsewhere in Togo by independent Christian churches. But she does not discuss any of the dramatic changes occurring in the area, or their impact on the village, which by implication itself remains relatively unthreatened by modernity. This discussion might have benefited from the comparative Latin American literature on diasporic versions of these West African possession religions. For any who might doubt vodhun’s capacity to adapt to and exist in the modern sector, Brazilian Candomblé provides an example of a fully legitimized, “modern,” modernized possession religion whose “authenticity,” like that of Togolese vodhun, has enjoyed state support and become a tourist attraction.

For professionals and advanced students of spirit possession, gender, and West African religions, this book offers many rewards. Criticisms notwithstanding, it is a significant ethnography of vodhun and an important contribution to the comparative literature on this religion with which all specialists will need to engage.


LINDSAY WEISS
Columbia University

We live today under the ascendant sign of heritage. The word heritage seems to increasingly occupy every social and political-economic current of change; indeed, the rhetoric surrounding this phenomenon seems more and more these days to reside outside of the framework of nationalism and
to instead inhabit an imagined global space. The professional resources and traditional remit of the archaeologist are, by contrast, much more localized, and so this situation leaves the archaeologist the very awkward task of teasing out the new boundaries of their own professional commitments and priorities from the seeming endless horizon of expectation and possibility evoked by heritage discourse. Here enters the new Cultural Heritage Studies series, the first volume, *Heritage of Value*, of which constitutes a decisive call to action for archaeologists and cultural resource managers worldwide to once again wrestle with these very pressing questions of archaeological theory and praxis.

The volume sets out as its first obligation the clarification of core concepts such as “significance,” “importance,” and “value.” Timothy Darvill applies a hermeneutic approach to these questions, puzzling over these ill-defined and vague categories and rendering explicit the particulars of the imagined community to whom current categories of “heritage valuation” seem relevant. Laurajane Smith proceeds to articulate how research structures and disciplinary biases (such as the scientism of New Archaeology) have historically led to a very problematic sampling of recognized sites. These considerations turn to the concrete question of what we do when these very imperfect modes of valuation and categorization inform government statutes, which, in turn, continue to legislate from a very dated set of intelectual premises, as Jeffrey Altschul explicates. The fundamental dynamic operating behind these issues emerges in Barbara Little’s revisitation of Trouillot’s classic problematic: Which pasts become socially “visible” and which ones are concomitantly silenced through the history-making process? Barbara Little wonders how is it possible that the pre-colonial past of North America—which constitutes a time span 20 times as long as the colonial era and postcolonial era—only constitutes seven percent of listed sites on the National Register? She adds, “The dearth of archaeological listings results in a deafening silence: a gap in the national memory” (p. 120).

Indeed, the politics (and problematic) of recognition have, in many ways, come to be the defining situation of modernity and the case studies contributors have selected from around the world indicate that this is certainly the case for heritage politics. As Joseph Tainter, Bonnie Bagley, and Clay Mathers et al. point out, for every heritage site chosen and highlighted, countless other narratives or cultural landscapes are overlooked, depersonalized, or even destroyed. We live in a time of passionate archiving—including the accumulation of evidence of cultural difference—but there are often glaring omissions. Whether this cultural difference comes to be about the project of redeeming the past, reframing the archived records of this past, or rectifying present inequities, *recognition* (which is the social appropriation of these valued pasts) comes to be our basis for admitting claims to cultural pasts. Indeed, demanding such recognition is for many a strategic political necessity—a fact that archaeologists would do well to recognize, as Ian Lilley and Michael Williams point out.

As many of the authors in this volume warn, however, with a heritage dynamic based in the politics of recognition, so also inevitably ensues the “cunning of recognition,” which is the potential violence of misrecognition or nonrecognition. This is an especially important consideration in light of fraught historical claims in settler and postcolonial states. This dynamic would seem to be exponentially increased when coupled with tourism’s drive for cultural authenticity and profit making. As John Carman states, “Archaeological sites and monuments are measured and assessed for their value relative to one another against the various practical and productive uses to which they can be put. Instead of being about good citizens, strong nations, or a peaceful world, the discourse of heritage as we enter the third millennium is about value for money and effective use. It is about sound economics” (p. 48).

The question that seems most pressing, then, is the one raised by Gavin Whitelaw: How do we—in the face of increasingly central claims of economic performance—come to accomplish political neutrality or our disciplinary construal of a “democratic past” when increasingly powerful economic and identitarian stakeholders have come to join the discussion? The case studies in this volume present the on-the-ground reality: that we simply cannot, and that, in fact, abandoning our disciplinary conceit to predominantly stewardship fosters a great deal more creative and reflexive debate surrounding key concepts of heritage and the valuation thereof. We will look forward to more answers and similarly provocative questions in future volumes of the Cultural Heritage series.


**CRAIG STANFORD**

University of Southern California

Often, when a senior scholar publishes a book with the word *reflections* in the title, it is a warning sign the scholar has simply done a couple of hundred pages of idle philosophizing about the state of the discipline from which he is soon to retire. But *The Cultured Chimpanzee: Reflections on Cultural Primatology* is no such set of mere reflections. It is a tour de force treatment of the emerging field of cultural primatology. Both an overview of the current state of research and a critique of some recent confusions in the literature, William McGrew sets out to place the study of nonhuman primate cultural behavior in cross-species context.

The definition of *culture* has always been a cottage industry for anthropologists. The debate over whether to include ape-learned traditions under the rubric of “culture” still rakes some cultural anthropologists 40 years after Jane Goodall first saw wild chimpanzees making and employing a tool kit not very different from that used by the most technologically simple human societies. To primatologists, *culture* is a term that, although invented by people for
people, simply requires a slightly more expansive definition to be applied to a wide variety of higher animals. McGrew respectfully submits his own defense of the use of culture, pointing out that there are few if any qualitatively unique traits displayed by humans that cannot also be found in other species. Speech is that form of primate social behavior most often said to be purely and uniquely human. But McGrew points out that the field of ethnography itself, so premised on the idea that informants provide a narrative discourse to an anthropologist, ultimately relies on the belief in the truth and reality of the informant’s narrative. The same philosophical problems of seeing into the mind of the subject exists whether we are trying to understand the words of a human research subject (as opposed to his or her behavior, which can be observed) and the motivations behind the communication of nonhuman animals. McGrew’s point here is simply that whether one studies non- or semilinguistic apes or linguistic humans, there are methodological pitfalls.

The book’s first section reviews the literature on learned traditions in a variety of animal taxa, demonstrating clearly the continuum from nonprimates to primates. McGrew then tackles the question of learned traditions in great apes, focusing on tool cultures. There is great irony to the current growth of cultural primatology, one that cultural anthropologists should appreciate. At the same time primatologists stress that five decades of primate research have shown that biocultural universals linking us with other animals, they have also begun to point to the degree of cultural diversity in great apes. Primatologists employ this double-edged sword at their own risk. One cannot plausibly argue that we should generalize about human societies because some aspects are biologically based at the same time that one argues that understanding chimpanzee societies requires a great appreciation of cultural diversity. I believe McGrew sees this and considers his own work on tool use to have pulled the two ends of the ape-human continuum closer together as a result.

I found Cultural Primatology to be a goldmine of idea-provoking discussions, loaded with nuggets of research the intersections of which McGrew has made where few others have. It proved highly worthy of a graduate seminar on traditions in primates and other animals, and I continue to mine it for information. It should serve as a stimulus for coming generations of students and researchers alike.


LOUISE S. SILBERLING
Cornell University

This is a welcome, but self-proclaimed as preliminary, effort to add to scant literature on traditional, nontribal Amazonians. The editors have previously published on Amazonian caboclos (historical Amazonian peasantry), but this book casts a wider net to include chapters on quilombos (maroon communities), piabeiros (ornamental fish catchers), posseiros (squatters), regatões (river traders), and other groups of poorly documented traditional Amazonians. It is admirable to publish a multidisciplinary work, although the volume makes little effort to engage with most of the current debates concerning Amazonia, leaving the reader with an impression of case studies left out in the cold, unevenly theorized and somewhat uncontextualized. The book would have been better served conceptually if its chapters, and particularly the introduction, had engaged with current theory in or across the authors’ fields (anthropology, sociology, history, geography)—specifically, as regards peasantry, identity, ethnogenesis, locality, property, development, democratization, decentralization, and social movements. Instead of a generalist outline of Amazonian regional history and simplified discussion of its conceptualization in the literature (with no citations), Stephen Nugent’s introduction would have done well, at a minimum, to discuss themes that do appear in several of the chapters—for example, kinship, patron–client relationships, and aviamento (debt-trading systems).

The political nature of identity, another key aspect of Amazonian social fabric, appears in chapters by Neide Esterci, Rosa Marin and Edna de Castro, and David McGrath. For example, in the chapter by Esterci, there is an excellent description of how local identities of posseiros were reworked into a “self-classificatory political category” (p. 132) through the struggle for land. But questions of land and resource rights and of related important Amazonian political mobilizations are left largely untreated in the volume, leaving the dynamic political nature of the region and state- and nation-making unaddressed. And ethnicity is referenced only in the (poorly translated) interesting chapter on quilombos.

A notable absence here is work on other important groups in the pantheon of Amazonians, such as babassú-collecting women (oil palm); seringueiros (rubber tappers) and castanheiros (Brazil-nut collectors), which are two of the largest, most visible groups; Japanese black pepper growers and frozen fruit pulp traders; and artisanal fishermen (with the exception of the chapter on piabeiros, an arguably different subgroup). Chapters on these groups would provide a more coherent and inclusive set of case studies. The chapter by Raymundo Maués on malinza (evil) is delightful, but curiously distinct from the case-study nature of other chapters.

The editors chose to completely ignore “traditional peoples” as a possible category for their groups of “other” Amazonians. There is a small but growing body of work exploring this term as a concept for nontribal Amazonians (cf. Cunha and Almeida 2000; Little 2002; Silberling 2003); the term is also used widely, if loosely, in development circles. Traditional Amazonians, along with indigenous groups, have been anything but traditional in the ways they have mobilized international tropes of sustainable development to their benefit and have reached a resoundingly critical “moment” in Amazonian and Brazilian social history, a
point largely lost out on here. Instead, we are left wondering what it means to be “Other” in Amazonia today: both marginal yet visible, poor yet rich with symbolic capital.

Nugent’s Introduction provides a number of provocative comments on modernity but does not cite or engage any literature on modernity or alternative modernities. This is regrettable, because his interesting statements that Amazonia has been dominated for the past 100 years by “experiments in modernity” (p. 5) whereas “Amazonian modernity is not so much absent as unexplored” (p. 6) mesh well with the alternative modernities thesis.

Nugent’s other provocative point (again, no citations) is that unsatisfying dualisms (primordialism–modernization) in depictions of Amazonians have contributed to the paucity of work on “other” Amazonians. Furthermore, states Nugent, portrayals pitting outsider colonists and developers versus Indians, plus a tendency to see Amazonia as an “imagined whole” (p. 2), have left no conceptual space for the rest of the (very diverse) population in the literature. It is an interesting thesis. But of greater interest might be a historical investigation into changing classifications and categories of nontribal Amazonians and into how those categories have today been radically shifted in struggles for rights to land, resources, and knowledge, coming to the forefront of national and international recognition, particularly via highly visible efforts of seringueiros and quilombolas. Harris touches on these changes in his chapter. Although this book does present a refreshing departure from narrowly dualistic focus on indigenous peoples as the apparently only legitimate heirs of Amazonia, and on evilly destructive colonists (or ranchers or loggers), it leaves “other” Amazonians appearing as a jumble of sui generis groups scattered across the Amazonian social landscape.

REFERENCES CITED


JAMES L. PEACOCK
University of North Carolina at Chapel Hill

A Companion to the Anthropology of Politics mirrors not merely a narrowly defined subfield—political anthropology—but much that is current in social and cultural anthropology and, in fact, in social sciences and cultural and international studies, generally.

Here is a list of chapter subjects: affective states, socialism, AIDS, citizenship, cosmopolitanism, development, displacement, feminism, gender, race and class, genetic citizenship, global city, globalization, governing states, hege- mony, human rights, identity, nations, intrapoltics, mafias, militarization, neoliberalism, popular justice, postcolonialism, power topographies, race technologies, sovereignty, transnationality, civil society. The range is wide, the quality high, the scholarship sound, the writing for the most part lucid. The Companion is to be recommended as a compendium of current thinking by accomplished anthropologists about timely issues and concepts, especially in relation to ethnographic approaches.

What questions might, then, be raised? My primary focus is to delineate and locate the guiding paradigm. This must be done inductively; the editors do so only briefly, perhaps relying on the text this companion accompanies for definition. A succinct characterization of the volume might be politics viewed ethnographically within a framework of current social and cultural theory. That would be a start, but then one would need to delineate what is common among the topics or domains to which ethnographic approaches to politics apply. One might note ideological perspectives, which tend to be critical of ways that power is wielded, less appreciative of why.

Who is the audience and what is the likely impact of this book? Marshall Sahlins’s dust-jacket comment addresses these questions. He states: “What is impressive about this collection is the way many authors take received ideas from political science, political philosophy, cultural studies, or world systems theory and, by subjecting them to ethnographic scrutiny, transform them in new and powerful ways. Anthropology makes a difference.” His first sentence is an excellent summary of what the work accomplishes. His second sentence asserts impact: “Anthropology makes a difference.” Does it, and if so, what kind of difference does it make and not make?

If one is exploring current thinking among academics about politics in a theoretical and comparative context, this is an excellent source to see how anthropologists weave ethnographic research and concerns into topics current in many disciplines. To prove Sahlins’s point, one would need to go further and identify exactly how this ethnographic weave does shape the overall fabric of thinking about politics: What key insights or concepts, other than ethnographic nuance, does anthropology provide? The Companion does not summarize this way that anthropology would “make a difference.”

What else is the book not? It is not a synoptic textbook, summarizing key concepts. It is not a synoptic theory. It is not a “how to” book at any of various levels—ethics (telling how to live or conduct collective lives) or strategy (suggesting how to do politics). It is sometimes a “how not to”—stronger on critique than prescription—not of strategies but of modes of governing, nation making, or sustaining, or processes such as globalization. Legislators I know already
articulate much about the “how to,” and few if any would bother with theoretical analyses until they get boiled down to the Economist or, more ominously, the local conservative literature of the John Locke Society.

In short, this Companion works the middle. Neither the deepest or broadest concerns, ultimate meaning or “culture,” which is the ground for more proximate categories such as identity or power, nor the “on the ground” strategies for how to conduct politics are its focus. The result is not, it seems, a single fundamental paradigm or transformation of paradigms but certainly a more contextualized awareness of the topics than is the case without anthropologists. They do indeed make a difference in this sense. Impact in the wider social sphere, however, would require translation, identifying the key insights to be gleaned, and distilling the insights into what lay citizens and policy makers read at airport news counters.

None of this is really a critique of this excellent book but, rather, a critique of us, our discipline, and its need to apply and translate. This work is an excellent source for students, colleagues, and others who seek to know recent and current thinking by anthropologists about what could broadly be termed “politics.”


MARISOL PÉREZ LIZAUR
Universidad Iberoamericana, México

Several years ago Laura Nader said that it is important to have a good knowledge of elites in order to understand the class structure and mobility of society. This has not been the case of anthropologists who have been singularly disinterested in the study of elites. With the exception of Sugiyama Lebra’s (1993) excellent study of the contemporary Japanese nobility, anthropologists, as far as I am aware, have not heeded Nader’s suggestion. In the case of Mexico, for example, only two studies of plutocratic groups have been undertaken: one by anthropologists Adler Lomnitz and Pérez Lizaur (1987) and another by Hanono (2004). It is in this context that the book under review must be placed.

Hugo Nutini’s book is the second of a series of three volumes on the aristocracy, and it is an outstanding study of this now-moribund social segment of Mexican society, whose origins go back to the Spanish Conquest. The study is a description and analysis of the Mexican aristocracy in the 20th century, as it evolved from the ruling and social class of the country to a virtually invisible sector of the upper echelons of the stratification system.

Nutini analyzes the structure, ideology, worldview, and the expressive mechanisms that have allowed the aristocracy to survive after they lost all political power and most of their wealth by intermarrying with Mexico’s postrevolutionary plutocracy. In this short review, it would be impossible to do justice to this complex book that includes so many significant descriptive and analytical topics. I shall therefore confine myself to what seems to me its most significant contributions to anthropology in general and Mexican studies in particular.

Nutini’s book is an important contribution to kinship studies in the urban context. Nutini demonstrates that the traditional kinship categories that anthropologists have employed in the study of tribal and folk societies are equally effective in the study of urban, complex societies, but they must be considered alongside other variables such as concentration in specific parts of the city, individual and family degree of wealth, and strategies of upward mobility within the largely endogamous aristocratic group. Thus, Nutini discusses three main kin units: (1) the nonresidential extended family, (2) the cognatic exocentric kindred, and (3) the name group. These units have exclusive and inclusive functions in the social and religious organization of the aristocracy and configure most of the life of the group. This is a useful approach to kinship, similar as that found among the elite family studied by Adler Lomnitz and Pérez Lizaur (1987) and conceptually worthy of being tested in other classes of urban Mexican society.

Nutini also analyzes aristocratic religiosity in depth. He discusses the transformation of religion, as the group evolves from an undisputed social and economic ruling class to a rather marginal position in the superordinate sector of the country’s stratification system. By the first decade of the 20th century, chantries and several mechanisms of exhibition and display (at the core of the aristocratic worldview) were gone. By the middle of the century, religion, ritually and ceremonially simplified, became mainly centered on the household, which was by then devoid of any social implications. By the end of the century, religion for many aristocrats, particularly the young, had become a philosophy of life without the rituals and ceremonies of orthodox Catholicism.

Last but not least, this book is not just an exercise in urban ethnography but an in-depth study of expressive culture. With respect to the latter, the book is unique, in that there are no other studies in the anthropological literature that deal specifically with the expressive culture of a single social class. Particularly noteworthy is Nutini’s analysis of class formation and mobility; he demonstrates that in order to understand and conceptualize these processes, structure and expression must be intimately complemented, and that one without the other gives an incomplete account of stratification. The book abounds in specific expressive analyses (the household as a shrine to the ancestors, religious and social mechanisms of exhibition and display, entertainment and food preparation, and many others), which taken together constitute one of the most extensive expressive descriptions and analysis in the anthropological literature.

Through this expressive analysis, Nutini attempts to differentiate Mexican aristocrats from plutocrats. However, in my experience, many of the cultural “array” that are, according to Nutini, exclusive to aristocrats (including the ancestor cult), are in fact not so, although some plutocrats’ interest in conserving a genealogical memory are possibly
another manner of recognizing the social “superiority” of the aristocrats and of imitating them. And, precisely because of its emphasis on expressive culture, the book, even though it deals with the group’s economic activities, leaves unanswered a large number of questions regarding the economic standing of aristocrats and the group’s relationship with other social groups in Mexico: How did they maintain their economic position until the beginning of the 21st century? And what was the role of urban development in this process?

Despite this series of unanswered questions, Nutini’s book is a very good and innovative ethnography. It should be required reading for Mexicanists; students of kinship, class formation and mobility, and urban anthropology; and for anyone interested in expressive culture.

REFERENCES CITED


NORA ELLEN GROCE

Yale School of Public Health

In 1984, Carol Padden and Tom Humphries wrote the classic study Deaf in America, arguing that individuals with varying degrees of hearing loss—and, indeed, often their hearing children—were members of a common culture. They share a language (American Sign Language), a history (including residential schools), common experiences with the surrounding hearing society, and, importantly, a strong and supportive social network. The idea of “Deaf culture” fit well into subsequent ethnic and minority studies and has become widely accepted.

In this book, the authors revisit Deaf culture. Much has changed: The deaf community, which in 1984 was struggling to define itself, has gelled and there is now a consensus that there is a “Deaf culture” and that it is one worth preserving. Yet there are problems looming—cochlear ear implants and the human genome project threaten the very existence of deaf populations. Cochlear implants have become a common operation for deaf children and, increasingly, deaf adults. The debate is not about whether or not to choose the operation. Rather the controversy—needlessly—lies in the insistence of medical experts that children who have undergone the operation become exclusively part of the hearing community and learn only English—even when sign language would be an asset for those whose hearing remains limited. This repression of sign language limits the communication options of deaf individuals and reflects a uniquely (and absurdly) U.S. discomfort with bilingualism that limits possibilities for children who might otherwise draw on two linguistic and cultural heritages.

Padden and Humphries raise another important issue as they describe how modern genetics is coming closer to allowing parents to select traits in their offspring. How should adults with a family history of deafness respond to genetic counselors who urge them to undergo prenatal testing? Will some be pressured into testing that they neither want nor need? If a fetus is identified as deaf, will these parents be pressured into giving up the pregnancy by medical experts or insurance companies? These two last chapters are a bit out of sync with the early historic chapters but are important in themselves and will interest social scientists, disability advocates, and bioethicists.

This book represents a significant contribution to Deaf studies, as well as to social identity literature. Although the first chapters will be of more interest to those already knowledgeable about Deaf history, and the last two will
have a wider audience, the authors are to be commended for this eminently readable, well-researched, and intriguing volume.

REFERENCES CITED

Lane, Harlen
Padden, Carol, and Tom Humphries

Musical Ritual in Mexico City: From the Aztec to NAFTA.

JOSÉ LUIS REYNA
El Colegio de México

This is an unusual book and an impressive example of research. It approaches Mexican history through musical rituals. The context in which the research takes place is Mexico City, another convincing demonstration of the centralized culture we have had since its foundation, in 1325. Mark Pedelty has the academic courage to face 700 years of history in his book. Music as a genre successfully articulates this long period of time: from the Indian civilization (the Aztec) to the Global era, the time of the free trade. The musical rituals is his subject matter. However, as we read his book, we found a continuity in Mexican culture that can be interpreted on the bases of musical rituals. These remain as an expression not only of a culture but also of the hazardous politics Mexico has had over time. Many can argued that all countries on earth follow the same track, no doubt about it. However, very few can test the strong relationship between musical rituals and culture over seven centuries. Pedelty does. Mexicans has shown their character and their personality playing and singing, because in many periods of their history there was not another form of expression. This is a fact derived from the book we are dealing with. This is what this research is all about. This amazing collection of information significantly contributes to better understand the Mexican culture and helps, in many ways, to outline our identity from a different angle: music rituals. This is enough to justify an outstanding work.

Mexico has been a centralized society. Before the conquest, during the colonial period, and afterward, the heart of the country has been Mexico City. One voice and a musical instrument function as mechanisms to liberate feelings of anger and happiness, the political opposition, the victories and the defeats, and what else? In spite of the strength influence of foreign music on our being, Mexicans are used to keep a place for the native creation. That which belongs to us. It is always present. The revolutionary corridos during the beginning of the 20th century served to create a sort of consciousness among masses of people who did not read newspapers but listened to songs sung in the streets, evoking the feats of the revolutionary leaders Zapata and Villa, for example. A conclusion is inevitable: Those who want to understand a political movement in Mexico cannot ignore the music behind it, because is the complementary ingredient.

For almost 700 years, ritual music in the Zócalo, the main square of Mexico City, has been the stage to cheer Aztec emperors, Spanish viceroy, emperors, liberal presidents and dictators in the 19th century, and presidents in the 20th century. Antonio López de Santa Ana, 11 times the president of Mexico in spite of an abominable reputation, had the luxury of listening the nation anthem, which had been written and composed in 1854 to boost his ego. (By the way, with some minors changes, this is still Mexico's national song.) Music, history, and politics make up a complex relationship: People learn what is happening in the political sphere by a simple song. Politicians usually take note of what people are thinking of their performance for the creation of another song. This is a simple way to learn for both actors and an innovative approach to understanding for readers. In this sense, this book successfully accomplished this goal.

Pedelty develops a master research to demonstrate the link among different historical periods of time in which music is the main protagonist, and he does not ignore its impact on the rest of the whole social and political body— in the church, in the street, in the political system. Mexican Cathedral, built in the Zócalo (in the middle of the 16th century) over the Aztec pyramids, is the site in which many researchers have found music with a strong European influence (e.g., Vivaldi), which let the conquerors and their priests to take the Indian segments of society to paradise.

NAFTA (the North American Free Trade Agreement) is happening in a time of drug dealers, proliferation of mafias, and corruption of the top levels of Mexican politicians. People, in response, sing songs venerating the capos who at the same time are delinquents and heroes. They are delinquents because they are outlaws; they are heroes because they care for their people.

It is my opinion that Pedelty has found a new streak to do social and anthropological research. His book is the evidence for this assertion. Those interested in politics and history must be interested in ritual musicals: A new world will be discovered.


ILENE COHN
Policy, Information, and Resource Mobilization Section
UN Mine Action Service

The views expressed below are solely the views of the author and do not reflect the views of the United Nations.

In this extremely well-researched volume, David Rosen successfully illustrates the shortcomings inherent in the current efforts of many humanitarian agencies to “stop the use of child soldiers” by urging the promulgation of international law that targets the unscrupulous recruiters.
of children and by sponsoring advocacy campaigns that denounce the cruelty of war and the worldwide glut of small arms. Rosen reviews current international law, which regulates, enables prosecution, and, under certain circumstances, even bans child soldier recruitment and use. The protectionist stance of many humanitarian and human rights organizations involved in the development of these norms casts child soldiers as victims, denies their agency, and fails to acknowledge the specific sociopolitical contexts in which child soldiers live. Much energy has gone into the elaboration of treaties that bind states or require action against adult recruiters, whereas, in fact, largely children are involved in nonstate armed groups and many have joined voluntarily.

Most tellingly, the current approach has failed to reduce the incidence of child soldier recruitment. Monitoring by NGOs and the United Nations reveals no diminution in the number of children engaged in armed forces and groups. A report to the UN Security Council on February 9, 2005, lists 54 parties to 11 current conflicts that recruit children; and many of these parties have been on the annual list for several years running. Humanitarian actors are now focusing on improved monitoring and enforcement of international law and the commitments made in recent years by nonstate armed groups to refrain from child soldier use. But Rosen challenges them to reconsider both the utility and the premises underlying their efforts.

The research presented here is welcome indeed. International child rights advocates have long acknowledged the need for, but failed to produce, research on (1) whether trends in warfare have affected the extent and nature of child participation in armed conflict, (2) whether the availability of small arms makes children more attractive as soldiers, and (3) whether traditional or community values foster or hinder child recruitment or enlistment. Rosen lays out the long history of child soldiering, showing, for example, that hundreds of thousands of children served in the Union and Confederate armies of the American Civil War, more than are alleged to be fighting in all contemporary wars. His research also supports the conclusion that ready access to small arms does not help explain the attraction of children for recruiters.

Rosen's three case studies demonstrate that the current humanitarian approach is grounded on simplistic assumptions that belie the complexities of the child soldier problem. He questions whether international standards based on a definition of childhood that extends to age 18 are valid or even reasonable in all societies. He makes it plain that regardless the definitions and age limits enshrined in international law, some young people are simply better off—in their own views as well as those of the adults around them—joining armed groups.

Clearly, some young European Jews confronting genocide reasonably decided their fate was no worse for joining armed resistance movements. According to Rosen, today's young Palestinian suicide bombers and the thousands of children and youth recently terrorizing civilians as members of the Sierra Leonean Revolutionary United Front (RUF) are only the recent manifestations of long political and social histories of youth politics, armed youth mobilization, and structural violence in those societies. However, despite having shown that “child soldiers have always been present on the battlefield,” it is not clear whether Rosen feels this is an acceptable phenomenon, one that is far too complex to be reversed by initiatives at the international level, or, perhaps, even one that should be left to each society to determine.

Humanitarian advocates should heed Rosen's message about the means relied on to “end child soldiering” and should take note of the importance of understanding the choices young people make in specific, complex political situations or conflict settings. Perhaps local initiatives involving key members of children's ecologies (peers, religious leaders, family, and community members) are essential to influence the views and the decisions of young people inclined to enlist. But solutions must be pursued, because even these detailed and extensively researched case studies fail to convince the reader that the humanitarian is misguided in the outcome they seek: to end the involvement of children in suicide bombings, wanton mutilation, rape, and hostilities.

One can agree with Rosen that the protectionist approach taken to date by many international organizations is simplistic and unlikely to succeed, but he fails to demonstrate that societies in which children are soldiers are societies that generally endorse this course of action. Most children and youth living in violent, unjust, or war-torn societies do not engage in hostilities or terrorist acts—not in the societies Rosen describes or any other. International efforts to codify universal standards that protect children and youth from experiencing the worst forms of violence, whether as perpetrators or victims, reflect universal aspirations and cannot be denounced as mere Western impositions. The pursuit of interventions that acknowledge the agency and capacity of many youth to make important decisions is not incompatible with the aim of preventing child participation in armed conflict. This is not an antiar war argument in disguise; it is the rational impulse to regulate the conduct of war to enable the achievement of military objectives without unnecessary suffering. Wars can be fought without children, and efforts to achieve this are worthwhile. Those pursuing this objective would do well to read this book.


SARA RANDALL
University College London

This book emerges from Eric Roth's belief that human behavioral ecologists and anthropological demographers (defined here as social-cultural anthropologists) have much
in common, both in terms of theoretical approaches and domains of research and in that they could and should learn from one another. The book is therefore targeted at both these groups, alongside conventional demographers whom Roth sees as more open minded to new methods and theories than social anthropologists. His main aim is “to initiate a discussion” between the two fields and to set out shared theoretical and methodological commonalities. He is not totally convincing in this regard, although he demonstrates a shared interest in many demographic phenomena, in particular nuptiality, reproduction, and child care; a similar vocabulary (albeit, used with rather different meanings); and the fact that both theoretical approaches can be used to think about and explain particular aspects of demographic behavior. In reviewing the common ground and differences between anthropological demography and human behavioral ecology, Roth draws on a vast range of research, spanning eight centuries and including ethnographic examples from all over the world. This plethora of references eventually drowns the reader in examples and, too often, one loses sight of his arguments.

The high points of the book are the analyses of the demographic behavior of the population with whom he has worked for many years—the Rendille camel herders of northern Kenya. Chapter 2 uses his Rendille research to “reconcile” the two disciplines through developing and testing hypotheses about marital decision making (which are essentially reproductive decisions) and illustrating evolutionary approaches to marital decision making with informed ethnographic knowledge. This particular population exemplifies idiosyncratic demographic behavior that would fascinate researchers of any theoretical bent and provides a rewarding context for combining and juxtaposing both ethnographic and behavioral ecology approaches. It is the use of so many other examples, usually from a polarized theoretical stance, that is more problematic.

Chapter 3 reviews work on mating effort and demographic strategies focusing originally on polygyny and then reiterating in considerable detail Monique Borgerhoff-Mulder’s research on Kipsigis and Tom Fricke’s work on Tamang as contrasting theoretical approaches to understand demographic change. However, the Rendille case provides a richer and more coherent account than the reports of others’ work and is by far most convincing demonstration of the synergies between the disciplines.

In considering parenting effort and investment in children, the combination of the two theoretical approaches is the most convincing. Roth considers various cases, including the excellent example of Gambian reproduction, in which the emic interpretation of women’s limited physical strength resembles the behavioral ecologists’ allocation of resources. Differential investment in male and female children and issues emerging from primogeniture are examined. Culture is seen as the determinant of whether primogeniture is practiced (the Rendille and medieval Europe are the prime examples) and evolutionary theory is then applied to understand what happens to the noninheriting offspring (higher mortality or the formation of male bands). Infanticide and child abandonment might be considered by many clear evidence of parental failure to invest in children (although behavioral ecologists argue otherwise) and another wide-ranging review of different populations’ practices is cited. The adoption of unrelated children, as exemplified by contemporary China, cannot be explained by evolutionary theory; at the same time, much, but not all, of the evidence about child abandonment could be supported by evolutionary theory in terms of its relationship to poverty, although only by selecting the cases and evidence carefully. Ultimately Roth argues that both “biology and culture are essential to understanding parental behaviour” (p. 152) but that it is the phenotypic plasticity favored by natural selection that has allowed this situation to arrive.

Chapter 5 sets out a future research agenda that is oriented around sexuality and sexual behavior. There follow some extraordinary generalizations about African sexuality and sexual behavior regimes that are very discordant with the book’s earlier pleas for anthropological demography and locally specific cultural understanding.

The book is marred by poor proofreading—grammatical errors, wrong dates, misspelled names, and confused Rendille age sets (p. 33). “Female capacity for multiple organisms [sic]” (p. 159) is just one example. Despite these irritations, the book should interest exponents of the different disciplinary approaches, although some anthropological demographers may find the evolutionary arguments quite challenging. Although the two approaches combine well in the specific cases of the Rendille and Ari-aal, for which personal experience is very illuminating, it is hard for the reader to retain the details and the logic behind the huge numbers of other examples.


**ROD AYA**
University of Amsterdam

Reviews entail triage, especially this one, which may be as unfair to Sahlins as he is to Thucydides. The word limit rules out proper comment on the two good parts of his book if the one bad part is to get comeuppance. The best part is an ethnographic history of war between (and sedition within) the Fiji kingdoms Bau and Rewa from 1843 to 1855. Illustrating the argument that ethnography and historiography need each other, it is right stuff for seminars. The other good part is a philosophical essay (also right stuff for seminars) on historical agency illustrated with the 1951 National League playoff and the 2000 González child affair. With polemical panache, satirical acerbity, and a wicked sense of fun, it shows not only that being in the right place at the right time involves social location in a cultural order but also that the United States is a happy hunting ground for sportive
social critics—and Sahlins is a sportsman. The bad part is a
diatribe against Thucydides, accused of begging “important
questions about society and history” by supplanting culture
with “universal practical rationality” born of “innate self-
interest” (p. 3). False and easily refuted, it gives the book its
title.

Consider first the bad part: Sahlins says Thucydides viewed
“history as the expression of the worst in us” (p. 118). He replaced culture with human nature seen as self-interest—the “natural desire” for “power and profit” (pp. 120, 16). He committed the “ethnographic cardinal sin of ignoring what the people thought important” in the Peloponnesian War from 431 to 404 B.C.E., and, instead,
gave eloquent voice to the “specifically Athenian ideology” of “competitive, self-interested human nature as the mainspring of history” (pp. 119, 4). Revived in the 17th century “with the development of modern capitalism” and now with the “global triumph of neo-liberal ideology” and its avatars “from sociobiology and evolutionary psychology to rational choice economics and international relations realism,” he “got us into this mess” where “rational self-interest” is “generic human nature” and “acquisitiveness is an inevitable human disposition” (pp. 3, 124).

Sahlins says Thucydides presumed “culture didn’t matter,” though culture (by Sahlins’s definition) includes society, the “specific structure of which” is a “symbolically constituted order,” hence “ontologically a cultural formation” (pp. 3, 139). In fact, Thucydides observed culture constraining choices too often to list, but five examples illustrate. One, Spartan organization slowed down decision making—what Sahlins says Thucydides attributed to “character,” Thucydides said Pericles attributed to “structure” (1.141). Two, the plague eclipsed prayer and divination by killing believers and doubters alike (2.47, 2.53). Three, Athens panicked when subversives broke the phalli off statues of Hermes before the armada left for Sicily (6.27). Four, despite defeat there, the Athenians decided to stay after a lunar eclipse interpreted by fortune-tellers (7.50). Five, Syracuse (allied with Sparta) fought Athens best because (like Athens) it was an affluent democracy with a large navy (7.55, 8.96).

Sahlins is right that Thucydides “missed out” a lot of ethnography because he took it for granted (p. 123). So does Sahlins, whose Americana are luminous to whoever knows baseball and civics, but not to anyone else. Like Thucydides, he omits what intended readers know. How to square this with his maxim that “it takes another culture to know another culture” (p. 5) is a good seminar topic.

Sahlins says Thucydides explained history by human nature alias “avarice and the will to power” (p. 3). Wrong. He took motivation as it comes—a fact for discovery, not stipulation. His asides on human nature (mostly quoted in speeches) boil down to the truism that people try to make the best of their situation. Hence if they think violence pays—if war and revolution have hope of success and the alternative is servitude—they go right ahead. That is why speakers on both sides observed that strong states

rule weak ones—better safe than sorry. And the motives
Thucydides discovered were not only greed and ambition:
The commonwealth was uppermost for his model statesmen.

Sahlins says “Hume, Hobbes & Co.” viewed “relentless self-interest” as the “universal mainspring of historical action” (p. 118). Wrong again. “Men often act knowingly against their interest,” Hume said (Treatise of Human Nature, 2.3.3), adding “even interest itself, and all human affairs, are entirely governed by opinion” (1985:51), echoing Hobbes, who said “men’s actions are derived from the opinions they have of the good or evil which from those actions redound unto themselves” (Leviathan, 3.42), and anticipating Sahlins, who says “their interests depended on their cultural schemes” (p. 121). For opinion, read culture. Sahlins makes much of Hobbes noting a “restless desire of power after power,” but ignores the explanation—namely, a social situation where one “cannot assure the power and means to live well . . . without the acquisition of more” (Leviathan, 1.11). Sahlins also confounds Leviathan with Behemoth (Job 41, 40) and buys clichés like the Peloponnesian War was an “ideological battle of democracy and oligarchy” involving “class-based” civil war (pp. 18, 19, 21), even though statesmen never denounced the enemy regime, only enemy action, and “democrats” and “oligarchs” were patron-client hierarchies, not class–interest groups.

Now consider the best part: Sahlins is a world authority on Polynesia, and his analysis of the worst Pacific war until 1941 is virtuoso armchair anthropology based on British missionary and military sources that report “raw women” and “cooked men” as spoils (p. 232) and cunning worthy of Thucydides—the war king of Bau (who once had a rival half-brother killed while he watched) “strategically converted” (p. 163) in 1854 so the Methodists got the Christian ruler of Tonga to take his side and win the war.

The ethnographic and historical facts—too intricate for review—make a good read. Apologies to Sahlins.

REFERENCE CITED

Hume, David


RAVINA AGGARWAL

Smith College

In recent anthropological writing, borders—whether symbolic margins, social distinctions, or political boundaries—are becoming privileged sites for the study of nationalism and are pushing political ethnography in new directions. It is the border state of Assam in Northeast India that is the subject of Yasmin Saikia’s Fragmented Memories. Like many border citizens, the people of Assam too have been required to surrender their distinctive histories of belonging to fit in
with the grand narrative of national history. And like other Indian border states, Assam too has registered violent resistance to such national amnesia.

In documenting the history of the Tai-Ahom identity movement in Assam, the author alerts us to the process of commemoration and to historiography itself, which is always a selective exercise of power. Written with grace and clarity, the theoretical arguments are substantiated with an impressive body of historical and ethnographic data. The book is divided into two parts, the first of which traces shifts in the designation of _ahom_ over various periods of history. Through readings of royal genealogical texts called _buranjis_ obtained from public and personal archives, the author determines that in the precolonial period, the term _ahom_ referred to an administrative position designating officials appointed from diverse ethnic groups of Ujani Aham in the upper reaches of the modern state of Assam. In contrast to the pluralistic interpretations of _ahom_ in the _buranjis_, 19th-century British colonial portrayals initially relegate the ahom to a fixed ethnic group that encompassed royalty; such portrayals then clustered ahom under the generic label of _assamese_, a typology that denoted racial inferiority and erased the history of local labor and its active role in shaping the land.

Saikia locates the roots of Assam’s marginalization in the economic and political designs of empire and the persistence of discriminatory colonial policies in postcolonial India. She argues that imperial investment in Assam’s tea plantations, opium, and timber was facilitated by a series of frontier acts that demarcated the region as a restricted zone and brought it under the control of the colonial state. What followed was a process of political and ideological reconstruction whereby the local rulers were robbed of power, the Assamese language was obliterated by being categorized as a dialect of Bengali, and the people were treated as unruly and unproductive subjects.

After independence, a growing sense of alienation and dislocation set in when populations in Assam were faced with little control over their own resources, economic impoverishment, and sociopolitical disempowerment. The experience of becoming second-class citizens in their own home generated antistate and anti-immigrant resistance. The Tai-Ahom movement intersected with the broader Assamese movement in demanding autonomy and language recognition but, at the same time, diverged from it by claiming a distinctive historical identity and asserting what the author calls “local nationalism” rather than “subnationalism.” It adopted the colonial classification of “ahom” as an ethnic category and imbued it with an idyllic past, which could then serve as a model for a better future.

The second section of the book investigates the negotiation of Tai-Ahom identity by the organizations who created it; leaders who propagated it; histories that justified it; ideologies, emotions, and actions that supported it; and the everyday people who practiced it. As a historian who is partial insider, Saikia’s tone is sympathetic but not romantic. She points out the convergences, contradictions, and inventions of the movement. Despite having been perceived as an antistate uprising, the movement was backed by some prominent government representatives; despite its rejection of Hinduism, its religious practices were often syncretic rather than exclusive. Interviews with urban professionals, religious leaders, and youth groups also yield a good summary of the competing notions of “belonging” and “identity.”

Readers are introduced to the organized rituals and conferences through which Tai-Ahom identity and cultural memory are performed. Even though anthropology readers would have benefited from an extended discussion of these performative contexts, this segment offers compelling and innovative insights into the construction of the “local.” We learn that local aspirations gained momentum when the anticapitalist agenda of Thai scholars brought them to Assam in search of their past. Links between what came to be regarded as a South Asian locale and the Southeastern regions of Burma and Thailand reveal the limitations of containing subjects within geographical confines imposed by nation-states and area studies. A major contribution the book makes is to place the local in history, thereby challenging the trope of isolated borders and enabling us to consider the local, national, and transnational associations that constitute identity.

For many of the reasons listed above, _Fragmented Memories_ is valuable reading, not only for South Asianists or postcolonial historians but also for anthropologists working on ethnicity, politics, and history.

**Women at the Center: Life in a Modern Matriarchy.**


G. G. WEIX

University of Montana, Missoula

Can ethnography be conveyed as “anthropological memoir” (p. 11)? Peggy Reeves Sanday’s “quest to understand matri-centered meanings and social forms in West Sumatra” relies on extended fieldwork visits to a matrilineal household of three generations of Minang women. Her aim is to reassess and to refurbish the term _matriarchy_ (adat matriar-chaat) not as “rule by women” but as a coherent system of “female-oriented social forms” (p. xi). She succeeds in disentangling what she calls the “maternal meanings” and Islam, as they sustain an ethnic heritage for four million Minang in Indonesia, from previous theories of matriarchy as the “female twin” to patriarchy (p. xi). However, her description of Minang lives is infused with uncritical reflections of New Order Indonesia and its ideologies—specifically, a neocolonial melding of culture as tradition (cf. Pemberton 1994). For example, she describes a hydroelectric dam monument of a female figure holding a ceremonial rice bowl and lightning bolt as “the merging of culture and nature in adat symbology” (p. 33). Therein lies the shortcoming, and,
yet, the pedagogical value, of this book. The author revives a nostalgic celebration and containment of local cultures characteristic both of Dutch colonial ethnology (adat studies) and of Indonesia’s authoritarian New Order era (1966 to 1998). To understand how and why such nostalgia persists in accounts would require social history, rather than memoir, as a corrective genre to augment the important work of ethnography (cf. Rosaldo 1989, 1993).

Two methodological choices frame and define the narrative as uncritically nostalgic. First, Sanday presents recited myth as a precursor to historical narrative and ritual speech in life cycle events as prescribed and codified. Dutch colonial adat studies excelled at this approach, as John Pemberton and others have shown. Secondly, her hermeneutic interpretation of ritual speech and ordinary words—cokok is translated as “a special fit,” describing “the intention of adat” (p. 99)—characterizes her goal “to unlock the meaning of ‘female centered customs’” (p. x) and the key tenets of Minang culture. The conundrum of this approach is that translation becomes treasure seeking, and national ideology and culture are seamlessly joined in the final ethnographic narrative. Without a critical analysis of the work of translation, tradition—female or otherwise—will inevitably appear a prize pearl emerging from the rough shell of observed social life.

However, this ethnography is also traditional in the best sense, seeking to preserve a current generation’s self-conscious recreation of cultural forms and social structure for future Minang readers. Chapters 7, 8, and 9 on marriage negotiations and ceremony are exemplary ethnographic description, and the ethnomusicology in Chapter 10 is valuable for students and researchers alike. Still, this book will disappoint regional specialists, who are well aware of the ways New Order officials valorized tradition to obscure an inherent violence toward regional autonomy, including heterogeneous expressions of ethnicity. Sanday also ignores other attempts to reassess Minang culture as political critique, such as Jennifer Krier’s chapter on the inverted displays of female power to reevaluate the role of adat in postcolonial law (Ong and Peletz 1995). She thus spares her readers, and herself, the cynicism of Indonesia’s state-sponsored successes to codify its own diversity in monuments, museums, and textbooks as a peculiarly familial nationalism (Shiraishi 1997).

To her credit, Sanday cites doctor Taufik Abdullah, a Minang scholar and director of the Indonesian Institute of Sciences (LIPI), who comments that Minang culture appears to “synthesize contradictions” in ways that continue to intrigue observers (p. 20). Abdullah belongs to a generation of senior scholars dedicated to an unstintingly frank analysis of state power and censorship of the New Order era, particularly to studies of Islam. Sanday’s book is an interesting example of a similar commitment to comparative scholarship; she introduces new readers to a place where local gendered meanings predominate and invites them to appreciate the internal coherence of its kin-based social order. This work is best read, and taught, as a memoir of a significant feminist scholar who found inspiration among Minang women because they shared their lives and shaped her own. They helped her reflect on broader feminist debates about portraits of social life, and she clearly conveys the mutual respect and affection of that endeavor.

REFERENCES CITED


EDWARD SNAJDR
John Jay College, City University of New York

This highly original and refreshingly interdisciplinary book examines clan politics in the Central Asian Republic of Kazakhstan. Schatz is a political scientist who skillfully blends ethnography, archival research, interviews, and focus groups to explain the role of clan (or subethnic) identities in an arena that has transitioned from an appendage of the USSR to an independent nation-state. The result is a rich look at the resilience of clans both under imperialist Soviet power and along the slow and patchy road to market-based democratization.

The book’s three parts are nicely integrated, moving quickly from theory and history to a political ethnography of clan dynamics among both government elites and local residents. Challenging the Weberian notion that clan and state, as “ideal types,” operate by deeply divergent logics, Schatz follows earlier political anthropologists working in postcolonial contexts (e.g., Cohen 1981) by exploring the salience of kin-based interest groups and blood loyalties beneath the frameworks of nationalism and globalization. Drawing from sources in three languages, Schatz reminds us that clans are complex phenomena that endure a variety of hegemonies, adapt to new economic and political systems, and are actually co-constructed by those systems. Part 1 considers how the three major (or umbrella) clans—Elder, Middle, and Younger—along with subclan divisions operated as networks rather than fixed groups among pre-Soviet Kazakhs. Instead of fading away as vestiges of backwardness, Schatz shows how early Soviet rule actually politicized subethnic identities. In fact, despite the state’s attempt to engineer national (ethnic) identities, its shortage economy inadvertently encouraged the persistence of clan organization. It is the concealability of clan membership in the
public sphere that enabled these networks to survive in the past and to transform politically in the transition from Soviet rule. Thus, Part 2 describes clan conflict in post-Soviet national politics, with President Nazarbaev (a member of the Elder clan) balancing clan interests at the national level. Yet Middle and Younger clan loyalties appear to be vital links to power and influence at regional and local levels. In Part 3, interviews with urban migrants reveal that, although clan affiliation intersects with a range of other identities, people conceive of clan identity as crucial to ethnic consciousness and economic success.

Although the book’s subtitle promises to look beyond Kazakhstan, it does not really do so. Instead, in an apparent nod to political science readers, the conclusion offers a short list of proposals for states to manage clan divisions. Other issues not covered but seemingly important to clan dynamics are religion and gender. More information on the role of clans in the revitalization of Islam would be helpful, as many Kazakhs, although moderate, are active Muslims. Likewise, the link between subethnic identity and changing gender relationships could be further explored in light of recent research on women, customs, and economy (Werner 2003). If clans endure as patrilineal forms, how are newer generations responding to or revising these gender-bound patterns?

But these shortcomings are minor considering the reach of the author’s integrated inquiry. Schatz has the keen eye of an anthropologist, noting the meaningful details in the apparently mundane actions of social life. For example, he observes that Kazakhs wear their shoelaces loose as frequent visits to kin demand their easy removal at the door. In fact, this study’s main contribution is to the subject of the construction of ethnicity itself. Kazakh identity is defined not only vis-à-vis the country’s sizeable Russian community but also at the level of kin loyalty and action. Thus, the state-led ethnic revival, comprised of the expected proclamations about authenticity and tradition in public discourse, is manifested at the personal level as renewed interest in genealogies, family experience, and the reinvigoration of urban–rural relationships. To be Kazakh in this new world means exercising the nuances of genealogy as these relate to broader challenges of education, economic viability, and social welfare. By showing us how ethnicity as clan network permeates the architecture of the postsocialist state and society, Schatz’s study is a welcome addition to a growing body of research about the nexus of state power and local experience.

REFERENCES CITED
Cohen, Abner

Werner, Cynthia


AVRAM BORNSTEIN
John Jay College, City University of New York

What can (or should) anthropology do to work against contemporary violence? Some ethnographers write and teach to evoke sympathy for suffering victims, hoping to depict them as worthy of restoration or recognition from the powerful. Others try to explain the processes that depict people as so utterly different that they are treated as enemies unworthy of dignity or protection. Imagined Differences is a collection of ethnographies, mostly by European-based scholars, that examines such processes of differentiation in times of hatred. Following Anderson’s notion of “imagined communities,” whether a nation or ethnicity, these 11 case studies with two introductions (by Günther Schlee and Elwert) put such social construction in antagonistic contexts. Like Frederik Barth’s examples of boundary making, or even Edward Said’s critical studies of Orientalism, this kind of anthropology illustrates how identity is constructed dialectically—within and against an opposing other—and not essentially—or made up of key features—as it is often portrayed.

Most authors in this volume lean toward a model of group identity formation that privileges political necessities rather than “primordial” sentiments. Most explicitly, Venema describes how French colonial administrators and indigenous Moroccan elites have tried to remake Berber identity to further their respective regimes. Kaiser shows how the Francophile Arab regime ruling Algeria and its opposing Islamic resistance both publish descriptions of each other as foreign-influenced, violent fanatics. Van Uffold’s chapter is, perhaps, the exception to this instrumental and political explanation of cultural construction. He describes the murder and funeral of a Protestant priest of the Indonesian Church and argues that sometimes violence is an unwilled accident, the product of a breakdown of rules.

Several chapters catalogue local markers or perceptions of difference. Beller-Hann describes the residential, occupational, educational, sartorial, gastronomic, and perceived temperamental differences between Han Chinese and the Uighur, a Turkic Muslim group in Western China. Haneke discusses how Oromo identity in southern Ethiopia has many classical features, like a common language, history, and social structure, but how no particular dimension alone is sufficient to explain the claiming or attribution of this identity. Weyland describes how indigenous Christians in an Egyptian village conceive of themselves as “modern” and stereotype their Muslim neighbors as “backward.” Her chapter also reflects on how her own perceived identity as a European Christian and her closer affiliation with local Coptic Christians became part of the boundary defining process. Several chapters explore cultural differentiations in artistic
and folkloric production, such as Hobart’s descriptions of a Balinese play, or Rieger’s examples of Indonesian nationalism in (proto)Indonesian novels from the first half of the 20th century. Kenny describes the symbolic history of the Orange Orders whose marches have led Protestants through Catholic neighborhoods of Belfast and have erupted in violence.

Although most of the chapters examine social differentiation in locations where there has been great strife and conflict, only two are concerned explicitly with the organization of large-scale political violence. De Silva describes vengeance and the spiral of violence in Sri Lanka, not only between government and resistance forces but also between Tamil rebel groups. He argues that attacks have a mimetic quality and that they are often intended to enforce internal discipline. Schlee describes the multiple lines of fraction and alliance, both local and international, driving the murderous violence and destruction of livelihood that was the breakup of the Somali state.

Together, the works in this volume illustrate how conflict and violence against “out” groups create borders and markers of difference that simultaneously create and reinforce a “we” group, what Elwert calls “endostrategic mobilization” (p. 48). Although some chapters in the book are rich and coherent, the volume is uneven. Several chapters are raw ethnographic descriptions with underdeveloped references to larger debates or questionable generalizations. Some of the individual chapters may be useful to those sharing a geographic or topical specialization, or appropriate as reading for undergraduates, but I would not assign the volume as a whole. Nevertheless, the book does push anthropologists toward (what should be) one of the most basic questions of the discipline: How can we account for human difference, especially when it structures violent conflict? The next question anthropology must ask—which is not raised in this volume—is a much harder one to answer: What productive path do researchers recommend given their observations and scholarly conclusions?


SUSAN ELIZABETH RAMÍREZ
Texas Christian University

Irene Silverblatt’s serious book, Modern Inquisitions, is a passionate, scholarly, and reflexive analysis that is more than it first appears. This book, on several levels, invites reflection and commentary. On its most basic plane, it is an innovative study of the Spanish Inquisition that follows and contributes to Richard Greeleaf’s pioneering and now-classic efforts on the substance and practices of that institution in Mexico. It also offers a sharp contrast with the way that some scholars, like Serge Gruzinski, have used Inquisition-generated sources. In this book, she argues, building on the ideas of Hannah Arendt (and others), that the modern state was formed in conjunction with colonialism and that the underside of the modern world was born in the mix of bureaucratic rule, race thinking, and the capacity to rationalize violence. Her genius is her focus on the Inquisition in the Spanish empire and specifically on its workings in the Viceroyalty of Peru as a tribunal of dynamic credentialed letrados (“lettered” or educated judges) as actual individual persons with their own foibles, interests, biases, networks, and social context. This approach updates the earlier studies of bureaucracies and bureaucrats by such authors as Susan Socolow (on Argentina), John Leddy Phelan (on Ecuador), and Mark Burkholder and Guillermo Lohmann Villena (on Peru).

To her scholarly audience, she presents, in her chapter on Inquisition as bureaucracy, the standards and rules that the Inquisitors were supposed to follow to serve and bolster the larger political system. These procedural conventions were designed to ensure dispassionate judgment and the attainment of truth. The problems of practice were jealousies, isolation and distance from the Metropolis, and the struggle over control. The Suprema back in Madrid could do little to ameliorate the excesses of its Limeño letrados who justified their breaches of rules and procedures—in legality, fairness, and morality—in terms of the defense of orthodoxy (of “national security”) that it was at the same time trying to define. The threats were (among many) those of the Portuguese, Judaizing, usurious, sabotaging spies who were ready to seduce Indians and blacks to their cause (p. 63). The examples of institutional lapses in procedure and rules, including safeguards against the notorious excesses of torture, are too many to enumerate here (pp. 63–73).

She continues, in “Mysteries of State,” to define “the state” as an ideology, a communal belief that cloaks concrete relations of power (p. 79). The Inquisition actively invented this ideology, giving magistrates control over life and death. It portrayed itself as a unified, autonomous, just and rational political assembly, but the dynamics behind and squabbles over decisions so poignantly detailed in the previous chapter show this characterization to be a sham. On the surface, the Inquisition proclaimed itself a defender against Jews, adulterers, bigamists—all social, political, economic, and religious misfits—and worse. It championed stability and order as it defined political and religious orthodoxy.

But this orthodoxy had little room for outliers. In the next section, she shows how the imported concept of “stained blood” imposed a hierarchy that turned Europeans into rulers, Indians into subjects, and Africans into slaves. Only the Europeans—and particularly the Old Christians—were free from pollution. In her last three substantive chapters, she explicitly discusses the consequences of the imposition of the concept as the bureaucracy’s battle to define and institute conformity, focusing on “the Jewish problem,” “the female/witch problem,” and “the Indian problem.” Dangerous ethnic profiling overlooked the
differences within groups to stereotype potentially disloyal New Christians who usurped trade and merchandising to the detriment of Castilians. Merchants were equated with enemies, spies, the Portuguese, and the Jews. Furthermore, it was thought that they conspired with blacks and Natives and allied with the Dutch. Women were no better. They threatened society’s morals. Silverblatt’s masterful analysis shows that the women persecuted by the Inquisition were nonconformist. They were described as mostly single, non-Indian, coca-chewing, mountain-worshipping, and Inca-loving, and were defined as “witches” (p. 165). Finally, she shows how native identity was transferred from ayllu (lineage) to the Incas and finally to the category of the Indian. She thus shows that “Indian-ness” developed as a function of colonialism. From these social categories that ordered confusions of nation and religion, religion and ancestry, and ancestry and political loyalty, the magistrates created a vision of humanity in which the Spanish were the international ruling elite.

This base level of inquiry is concretely tied to specific cases gleaned from the records in colonial archives. If one looks beyond the details and minor problems of the representativeness of her examples and an overterritorialization of native society, one can discern another, higher level of analysis, aimed at those interested in theory relevant to the origins of the modern state. Her discussion is as much one of Spanish colonial practices and institutions as a critical commentary on the present world order. Her analysis shows the parallels between the rule of Spanish colonial America and of the contemporary superpower. Her remarks in this regard, epitomized by the title of the book, take on additional meanings as inquiries into ourselves and the institutions that we and our antecedents created (or allowed to be created in our names) for many of the same reasons and with many of the same problems and weaknesses. At this level, her prose serves as a cogent warning. For this reason more than others, I recommend this book enthusiastically not only to those interested in Latin America but also to all students of global colonialism.


SATISH KEDIA
University of Memphis

This edited volume is the outcome of a School of American Research (SAR) advanced seminar on nursing home culture in the United States. It comprises ethnographic research conducted by scholars from four distinct but related disciplines: anthropology, nursing, human geography, and philosophy. The chapters explore how constructions of “self” and “home” in long-term elderly care are defined in the context of a struggle between a medical model of institutional care and a cultural model of domestic space. Drawing on richly detailed ethnographic research conducted in a variety of nursing home settings, the contributors of this volume enrich the literature on a topic that is largely understudied in anthropology.

In his introductory discussion, editor and contributor Philip B. Stafford seamlessly interweaves multiple threads: the historical foundation of the contemporary nursing home as an institution, major points of each chapter, a review of the state of scholarship on nursing home culture, and possible future directions for research, while presenting a conceptual model that ties the chapters of the volume together. Addressing the book’s title, Stafford finds “gray areas” of ambiguity in accounts of nursing home life, as evidenced by literature across various disciplines, the contributors’ chapters, and the original SAR seminar discussions of the topic. He locates the “chief problematic” of such accounts in the rendering of residents’ habitats: “Can a home and hospital coexist in the same space?” (p. 8). Stafford offers a model for understanding this ambiguity, arguing that the nursing home is a “contested cultural space upheld by social processes” (p. 10). Not just residents but also family and staff use various interpretive strategies to assign meaning while living in two seemingly contradictory worlds: the “medical domain of treatment and clinical care” and the “domestic domain of home and family” (p. 12). It is this contested terrain that is explored by the contributors: (1) how residents make meaning of their existence in this space; (2) how different constellations of relationships are negotiated among residents, attendant family members, and institutional workers; and (3) how the dynamics between meaning making and relationship making emerges in the context of an alternative to nursing homes, the assisted living facility (ALF). According to Stafford, ALFs may offer productive strategies for “promot[ing] critical reflection and interpretation of cultural meanings as an ongoing, deliberative process” (p. 20) among residents, staff, and family members through the use of individualized service and care agreements.

Generally speaking, each chapter is unique in scope, whereas collectively they offer perspectives on nursing home life by participants—patients/residents, their families, and the medical and administrative staff. In the section on “meaning making,” the range of methodologies include Jeanie Kayser-Jones’s positivist study of emergent social changes as residents experience episodes of acute illness, using event analyses of 216 case studies developed via interviews taken over a five-year period in several nursing homes. In contrast, Maria Vesperi employs a critical theory approach derived from rhetorical studies, incorporating lengthy transcriptions of discussions with an elderly relative, “T. D.,” in an interpretive chapter on how Burkean irony can be used to provide valuable, nuanced understandings of nursing home culture. “During his second career as a nursing home resident,” Vesperi notes, “T. D. has been able to see himself both as an individual and as a component of a well-oiled machine” (p. 102). Joel Savishinsky investigates the crucial function of food as a bearer of meaning in a small nursing home. His study, supported by other research on
consumption practices in institutionalized care for elders, further affirms the centrality of food in such settings because “people who are deeply displeased with life may lose their appetite for it and manifest this in literal, nutritional terms” (p. 119). Drawing on various theorists on space and place, Philip Stafford promotes a “phenomenological anthropology” to understand how nursing home residents use space and objects to re-create a home that “ignores” the walls of the institution. Across a set of case studies, he examines how definitions of home on the “outside” are not contested by the institutional domestic space but rather continued in it. Using multisite research and ethnographic analysis of Alzheimer’s Units (AUs) in nursing homes, Neil Henderson explores the “possible, nonobvious cultural underpinnings” of AUs’ expansion, given that research indicates they are “therapeutically impotent” (pp. 153–154). He concludes that both family members’ psychocultural reasons as well as market demand—for a putatively more humane mode of what is essentially “storage” of an incapacitated relative—will result in AUs’ persistence, if not proliferation.

In the section on “relationship making” in nursing homes, three chapters challenge stereotypes about residents, family, and staff locked in necessarily confrontational relationships in the institutional setting. Graham Rowles and Dallas High provide in-depth case studies taken from a three-year ethnographic study of life in four different nursing homes. Using participant observation, interviews, and event analysis, the authors develop a typology of eight basic decisions made by family members, with a focus on the influence of one relative designated as “point person.” In this way, Rowles and High demonstrate that, contrary to expectations, family members do exert influence over the care of dependent elders. For two years, Renée Rose Shield studied interactions between residents and certified nurse assistants (CNAs) at a home for the elderly with dementia and at another more medicalized unit. Using interviews, observations, and surveys of the stakeholders, as well as her own experiences as a “nursing home daughter,” Shield details CNAs’ views of family members and vice versa. Like Rowles and High, Shield documents the positive results of collaboration between staff and family members and suggests further the importance of distinguishing those characteristics of “home” that constitute good care. She also indicates the need to recognize the reflexivity of ethnographic work in nursing home settings—in this case, that one day these gerontological anthropologists will be old too. In the chapter that immediately follows Shield’s, Margaret Perkinson notes almost identical ethnic and class differences between staff and residents, although like Shield she chooses not to explore their impact on the establishment of both work and personal relationships. Perkinson conducted research on caregiving roles in a large, urban, long-term, nonprofit facility using focus groups with residents’ families and nursing home staff; their discussions were taped and transcribed, then analyzed using the grounded theory approach. Her goal was to convey to families “the basics of nursing home culture and to elicit input from both families and nursing home staff in defining family caregiving roles that were productive and workable within that culture” (p. 236). In this context, anthropologists act as “culture brokers” to empower participants in developing positive collaborations with facility personnel and to help “negotiate meaningful roles” as caregivers.

In the third section, Paula Carder’s article on ALFs, reprinted from a 2002 issue of the Journal of Aging Studies, details her 22-month ethnographic observation of three ALFs in action. Carder examined their “rhetoric of legitimization,” the language used to articulate a different social world than the traditional nursing home’s “medical model” to evaluate its impact on the attitudes of stakeholders. She concludes that ALFs are a “world in transition,” that more research will be necessary to determine whether they are actually an improvement on the standard nursing home or simply employ a rhetoric more consonant with a consumer economy (e.g., autonomy, individuality, choice, with residents who are not “patients” but “clients” or even “consumers”) without challenging the basic tensions between medical and domestic domains in daily practice.

Gray Areas merits much attention—given the dearth of studies in this important area of gerontological anthropology—particularly for its exploration of the key cultural ambiguity of whether an institution established on the medical model of a hospital can simultaneously be a domestic space. Although the chapters in the volume offer varying levels of critical engagement, together they make a compelling argument for the importance of recognizing human vitality and cultural vibrancy in the so-called sterile environment of nursing homes in the United States.


MICHAEL M. J. FISCHER
Massachusetts Institute of Technology

This slim volume (of four working papers) can serve graduate seminars as a kind of “notes and queries,” in conjunction with allied efforts to deal with the challenges of contemporary knowledge production such as Bruno Latour’s We Have Never Been Modern, Donna Haraway’s Modest_Witness@Second_Millenium.FemaleMan©_Meets_Onco_Mouse™, Paul Rabinow’s Anthropos Today, or my own Emergent Forms of Life and the Anthropological Voice.

Purporting to be concerned with the Cambridge Genetics Knowledge Park (CGKP) as one of a variety of interdisciplinary knowledge production sites—and, therefore, as access to questions about ownership of knowledge, commons, accountability, and communities constituted by mobile knowledges—the inquiry draws on what British anthropology once called “social organization.” Anomalously, however, one learns almost nothing (a couple of pages) about her touchstone CGKP or other specific sites.
Instead, Marilyn Strathern surveys topics raised by science studies authors beginning with the sense that the world we live in has outrun the pedagogies in which we have been trained, and that efforts to alleviate the ensuing sense of crisis often involve instituting regulations, monitoring, and reflexivity, including the subjection of social science itself to audit cultures (IRBs, ethics inquiries). Michel Callon is cited on “cold” versus “hot” situations (with stable measures of outcome versus ones with unpredictable outcomes, among which she counts mad cow disease); and Helga Nowotny is cited on Mode 1 versus Mode 2 knowledge production (Archimedesan science used to reconstrucct society in classic Comtean fashion versus science as internal to society where context “speaks back” and new knowledge often produces uncertainty and instability, requiring—Ulrich Beck might have been cited—more reflexive social institutions of second order modernity).

Strathern discusses as her first example of mobile knowledge communities Taxol, the breast cancer drug (although, oddly, Jordan Goodman and Vivien Walsh’s study is not cited). The Pacific Yew bark’s chemistry was analyzed with public funds, but the semisynthetic drug was patented and brought to market by Bristol-Myers Squibb. Patents, Strathern suggests, are devices for enabling knowledge to travel. Mario Biagioli’s work on authorship in science is cited to mark the differences between intellectual property (economic rights) versus academic publication (about credit, origins, “relations among colleagues,” gift exchange, and moral rights). John Law’s account of why England’s independent nuclear deterrent, TRS-2, failed (too many new and complex specifications) illustrates a third “P”—patents, publications, projects—of mobile knowledge (migrating elsewhere from failed projects). Bruno Latour’s study of the failed Paris intelligent subway system might also have been cited. To think about “what carriers tell us about the communities they form (people as a fourth “P”), she cites Stefan Helmreich’s account of life scientists at the Santa Fe Institute importing naive folk ideas about U.S. gender, kinship, and religion into explanations of programming the breeding of genetic algorithms. Finally we get two contrasting electronic civic environments, the European Network for Intelligent Information Interfaces (i3) piloted on islands off Denmark (as non-task-oriented, open to participatory design) versus Manchester’s InfoCity experiment (caught in the top down pedagogical desires of museums). Similar problems have plagued Programs in Public Understanding of Science, and the somewhat (rhetorically) more open Programs in Public Engagement with Science.

Strathern provides two examples of intellectual commons and borderlands. The first is Andrew Warwick’s study of how because Maxwell’s 1873 textbook was opaque to most who struggled to teach it (too many fields, vocabularies, assumptions combined beyond the competence of any one electrical engineer, physicist or mathematician), their commentaries became the real textbooks. The second is the House of Lords and Privy Council case on whether or not a book produced by a student based on his notes of a professor’s lectures constitutes copyright infringement. What was judged to be either public or private domain in these cases concerned utility to the nation and shaped the future of research universities.

Two contemporary cases distinguish economic and moral rights: (1) whether a cell-line from virus infected blood of a Hagahai man could be patented by NIH (and the role of the medical anthropologist who sent the blood); and (2) whether Cambridge University could claim the work of its professors as its own intellectual property. The distinction, of course, is familiar from Marcel Mauss’s Essai sur le don, and the rights of artists in France of his day to proceeds not just from first sale but from subsequent sales of their work. Ownership, Strathern summarizes, “is open to contest, it puts the form of identity an academic might claim in relation to his or her own work into a field of identities, a network of social actors with their overlapping claims on the ‘the owner’” (p. 62).

Finally, Strathern returns to the CGKP, government funded to develop appropriate ethical, legal, and social frameworks for genetic services (no indicators or milestones, only open-ended reports, reviews, and papers). She argues that interdisciplinarity can itself work as an index of accountability (of the work of translation, of validation through multiple contexts). Not to be Pollyanna-ish, she invokes the old anthropological “conundrum” of incomensurable systems of knowledge: Papuan Pressure Groups demanding compensation from the mines know they have to play by transnational rules of validation even though their culture (kastom) knows better (about underground spirit tunnels). The index of accountability here shows a failure, a weakness in solidarity, a potential social point of future trouble (shades of Victor Turner’s Schism and Continuity).

REFERENCES CITED


COLIN CLARKE
Oxford University

Modern Blackness is a history and ethnography of the cultural politics of nationalism in Jamaica. Tracing
developments since independence in 1962, Deborah Thomas surveys the evolution of nationalist ideologies, from the awakening of Jamaica as a creole nation—"Out of Many, One (Black) People," to parody the national motto—to an awareness of an identity rooted in an ethos of urban "blackness." Thomas explores the dynamic links between global forces, the Jamaican nation, and local possibilities (represented by Mango Mount, a village in the foothills of the Blue Mountains about six miles north of Kingston). In the process, she critically evaluates the political, economic, and cultural factors that have a bearing on modern blackness.

The book has three sections, each consisting of two or three chapters, dealing with the global–national (two chapters), the national–local (three chapters), and the local–global (two chapters). The first section explores the relationship between emergent identities rooted in blackness and Jamaicaness, and how these identities have been mobilized by perceptions of Africa, by a history of migration, and by the notions of "progress" as rooted in the respectable values of the sectarian churches. This leads into an investigation of the evolution of cultural-development initiatives during the period of Crown Colony rule (1865–1944), the ways in which these became institutionalized at independence through cultural policy, and the tensions that emerged over time between creole multiracialism and more explicitly racialized identities.

The ways rural people negotiate a range of ideologies and experiences to construct their own sense of belonging to the community and the nation is the focus of the second section, which also examines the consequences of social mobility among the poorer elements in the Mango Mount population. Thomas addresses the implications of class differences for leadership and definitions of development, and the extent to which local status distinctions are overridden by a sense of being black within a national hierarchy of races. Finally, an attempt is made to assess how class and ideological differences among community members have an impact on the state's strategy to encourage pride in Jamaica's history and in African cultural heritage—specifically discussing the 1997 reinstatement of Emancipation Day (originally August 1, 1838) as a public holiday. Thomas shows that poorer community members could appreciate the symbolism associated with the policy but did not identify with it as providing a basis for their own progress and development.

The third section examines lower-class conceptions of progress, modernity, and mobility, and it highlights popular representations of these visions. Modern blackness is shown to be "urban, migratory, based in youth-orientated popular culture and influenced by African-American popular style, individualist, 'radically consumerist,' and 'ghetto feminist' " (p. 23). In the conclusion, Thomas draws out the implications of the research findings, arguing that modern blackness is neither intrinsically divisive nor exclusionary. What modern blackness chiefly challenges is the subordination of black people—politically, socially, economically, culturally—that was established during slavery, persisted throughout the creole nationalist era, and has been reestablished, though in somewhat different ways, by globalization, privatization and structural adjustment policies. [pp. 269–270]

I endorse this line of argument about black subordination and appreciate the influence of urban, black U.S. culture on modern youth in Jamaica. Yet many aspects of Jamaican folk culture often thought of as "African"—such as the matrifocal family, Afro-Christian religions, and the use of patois—are downplayed in this account of Mango Mount, although they remain significant for older age groups and are crucial for social stratification in larger, urban communities such as neighboring Kingston. This is an aspect of scale that bedevils much anthropological and geographical work, although in this instance Thomas struggles valiantly to make the scale linkages work.

The book is well written and based on detailed ethnographic work carried out by an anthropologist–dancer in Jamaica in the late 1990s and presented as a doctorate at New York University. The text is accompanied by an extensive bibliography, notes, and a detailed index, but there are no photographs, tables, or maps. Thomas blends local, national, and global themes into a persuasive narrative that touches on and integrates many aspects of postindependence national life in Jamaica. This is a major contribution to the study of Jamaica at the turn of the 21st century, and it is essential reading for scholars and students alike. Duke University Press is to be congratulated on including it in the new series Latin America Otherwise: Languages, Empires, Nations, the stated object of which is to rethink area studies and disciplinary boundaries. This ambitious book is an excellent start.

**Cook: The Extraordinary Voyages of Captain James Cook**


**GANANATH OBHEYSEKERE**

Princeton University

Nicholas Thomas's work on Cook's three "extraordinary voyages" is full of rich detail, although it is somewhat neglectful of the "extraordinary voyages" of the people who first settled in this vast Polynesian region. The book is well written and focuses primarily on Cook's Enlightenment persona. It is extensively illustrated with paintings and sketches by ships' officers, by the noted artist William Hodges, and the less illustrious John Webber. They exemplify the stereotype of the South Seas as the "New Cythera" of Louis de Bougainville's imagination. The one picture that depicts violence against native populations entitled "The landing at Erromanga" (in Vanuatu) is absent. Like every Cook volume, Thomas's also contains the beautiful portrait...
of Poetua, the pregnant Tahitian noblewoman held hostage by Cook against her will while her people outside were cutting up their bodies and wailing in grief, demanding her release. Thomas ignores the mentality of the artist who could paint this romanticized portrait in the pitiful context of violence and suffering.

For Thomas, Cook and Banks were “embodiments of Enlightenment inquiry,” although presumably like other officers, Cook sometimes “does not mention circumstances and events that reflect poorly upon him” (p. 59). Not content with omissions Banks “actually lied,” when in Tierra del Fuego he left his two black servants to die in the cold without sending a search party to rescue them. Thomas’s Cook was a “proto-anthropologist” who “took the human species as a unity, and he assumed that every particular people had its own variations on broader human institutions” (p. 65). Cook had empathy for the Other and he felt that Australian Aborigines were “unambiguously human” and “very much like himself” (p. 114). In Tahiti, during the second voyage, Cook alone among his crew felt that expeditions’ impact on the Maori, among others, “were not mixed or ambiguous but plainly evil” (p. 185), although I cannot imagine Cook being concerned with human evil. Unhappily, Thomas does not give us information that substantiates these, to me, preposterous assertions.

For Australians, Cook is their nation’s founding ancestor and Thomas gives us glimpses of his socialization in the mythic persona of Cook. “In my schoolboy sense of Cook, I always supposed [erroneously, he admits] that Endeavour was the name the captain gave the ship, a sort of emanation of the spirit that he uniquely possessed” (p. 19). Such stray remarks help us understand Thomas’s ambivalent relationship to Cook, documenting acts of outrageous violence against native peoples and yet attempting to excuse them. This ambivalence appears in his discussion of colonialism and in his failure to acknowledge the work of postcolonial theorists, which is surprising for someone who has written on colonialism in this region. For Thomas, Cook was only a reluctant colonizer. Thomas writes, “He had been told to take possession of lands, and in this sense he was a colonizer, but Cook’s colonial interventions in Maori life were tentative and tactical,” although Thomas recognizes that Cook paved the way for the later colonial appropriation of New Zealand and Australia, the major figure in the latter being Joseph Banks (p. 100). Cook as colonizer is probably a reasonable assessment; but everywhere Cook went he did appropriate lands for the crown as instructed by the Admiralty. Although some of these actions were purely formal, Cook believed in his role as the emissary of the crown, naming lands after royalty, after English places, and overpowering New Zealand in particular with toponymy. Thomas does not realize that taking possession, relabeling the alien landscape with English names, and above all planting English garden vegetables and releasing stock reflected a persistent strategy in colonial expansion. Planting of gardens implied the implanting of colonial or imperial claims. In Cook’s case, some of these actions had great personal meaning, particularly planting seeds and releasing English domestic animals. Hence, his disproportionate anger when gardens were destroyed or neglected and when his animals were stolen.

Theory hardly appears in this book, although this is not true of Thomas’s other work. To me, however, the most striking forfeiture of scholarship lies in his failure to use bibliographical references, which makes it difficult for us to conduct an argument with him. Thus, although his book may appeal to “Cookophiles” (my neologism), it is of very limited value to us ethnographers, except as a source of information. I will confess that I much prefer Anne Salmond’s more scholarly work, The Trial of the Cannibal Dog: Captain Cook in the South Seas, also published in 2003 by Penguin, New Zealand.

REFERENCE CITED
Salmond, Anne

A Rainbow of Gangs: Street Cultures of the Mega-City.

MERRILL SINGER
Center for Community Health Research
Hispanic Health Council

The literature on the street gangs of the United States is like the tide; it flows in (triggered by a new wave of moral panic about the threat gangs pose to communities, regions, or even the nation) and it flows out again (as the moral panic of a particular era subsides and stories about gangs disappear from the evening news and newspaper headlines). Thus, the literature is clumped into periods of intensive production separated by periods of relative inattention. Each era has its influential voices. Vigil is one of those voices in the contemporary era, a period characterized by prolonged public concern about gangs. This is especially true in places like Los Angeles, which Vigil, a longtime gang observer, calls the “mega-city.”

As the dust jacket of his book notes, L.A. has rightfully been called the youth gang capital of the country. At 200,000 strong, there are more gang members in L.A. than there are inhabitants in many U.S. cities. And, as Vigil emphasizes, they come in all the colors of the rainbow, and it is this ethnic diversity that attracts the author’s attention.

In this book, Vigil focuses on Mexican American gangs, African American gangs, Vietnamese gangs, and Salvadoran gangs: He begins his analysis with an overview of the gang phenomena in U.S. life. In Vigil’s perspective, one held by many but not all gang researchers, “the street gang is an outcome of marginalization, that is, the relegation of certain persons or groups to the fringes of society, where social and economic conditions result in powerlessness.” (p. 7).
Indeed, the groups Vigil examines are subject to “multiple marginality” produced by the mutually reinforcing effects of racism, social and cultural repression, fragmented institutions, and poverty. Thus, as he rightly asserts, “structural causes must therefore be at the forefront of any serious discussion of what causes gangs” (p. 13).

Yet each marginalized group has its own history, its own culture, and its own unique, if not totally distinct, story. In this book, as a result, a chapter is devoted to describing the history and experiences in the mega-city of each of the four ethnic groups mentioned above, including the emergence and development of a set of home-grown street gangs that reflect the particular nature of the social suffering each of these ethnic minority populations has endured in the City of Angels. Looking across cases, however, Vigil finds that ultimately diverse groups facing similar social conditions, in which street culture overwhelms ethnic heritage, result in remarkable similarities in the formation of street gangs.

After each of the “ethnic history” chapters, there follows a life-history chapter that focuses on a single member of a street gang from the ethnic group in question; his or her story is told with excerpts from interviews conducted by the author and is woven together by Vigil’s insightful commentary. These chapters help to put a human face on the otherwise impersonal and experience-distant view of gangs that drive moral panics in the general public. Exemplifying the value of these chapters is the comment by Arturo, a Salvadoran gang member, who tells Vigil: “My father left me when I was born. It just seemed like somebody was always leaving me” (p. 157).

In sum, this book can be seen as starting out at the most general level: the social and economic conditions that breed street gangs. It then turns to an examination of how these conditions interact with the cultures and histories of particular ethnic groups to produce street gangs, street formations that have much in common amid some notable differences. The book concludes with a close-up examination of completely unique cases of named individuals drawn from each of the ethnic gangs under examination. In the final chapter, Vigil switches from research to policy and asks as have many before him: What can we do to end the continual cycle of street gang formation? Although his recommendations are not new—and after all, it is likely the answer to the problem of street gangs has been known for a long time—they are nonetheless important. As Hurricane Katrina reminded us yet again, the problems of social inequality, relative and absolute deprivation, poverty, and discrimination are still around, even if the politicians, social commentators, policy wonks, and news media stop talking about them.

A Rainbow of Gangs would be a useful text for urban anthropology classes, classes on ethnic diversity and disparity, and courses that examine U.S. social structure. It would also make a thoughtful gift for senators, congressmen, and other policy makers on one’s Christmas shopping list.

**ELIZABETH LOMINSKA JOHNSON**

University of British Columbia Museum of Anthropology

The first anthropologist to work in the New Territories of Hong Kong, the late Barbara Ward was also the first to analyze the challenging “problems of unity and variation posed by the unique temporal and spatial span of Chinese society and culture” (1965:113). Her seminal chapter examined the problem of the identity of the Cantonese boat-dwelling, fishing people in the New Territories. Since that time, other authors (Hayes 1977:194–201; Strauch 1983:21–50) have addressed the differences between the small, relatively poor, single- or multilineage interdependent communities living in hilly areas and the powerful single-lineage villages with large land-holdings, the “dominant lineages” of the New Territories. The problem of unity and diversity continues to engage China scholars.

Much of the anthropological research done in the New Territories cannot contribute solid information to this discussion because it constitutes a patchwork of single studies conducted by various people at particular places and times. This does not apply to the work of James and Rubie Watson, who have conducted intensive diachronic research in two of the dominant lineages of the northwest New Territories, the villages of San Tin and Ha Tsuen, and published two books and many papers based on this research. Concerned that their work would not remain accessible, they selected 18 of their articles and chapters, six by Rubie and the remainder by James, and combined them into a book with a newly written introductory chapter, maps, and a Chinese character glossary. The chapters are organized under the headings “Village Social Organization,” “Gender Differences and Women’s Lives,” and “Religion, Ritual, and Symbolism.” Their analyses end in the late 1970s, when the last of their intensive fieldwork was done. As they say, “This book is about the past, a time when the New Territories was a very different place” (xii).

The great advantage of a book of this kind, compiled from separate publications, is that diverse problems can be explored in one volume while maintaining the fundamental focus. Both James and Rubie Watson are exceptionally attuned to unconventional and sometimes sensitive research topics. Among the many challenging problems they analyze are class differences within lineages, the equalizing function of a lineage banquet style that violates all norms of formal dining, women’s names, and ways of managing the terrifying presence of death pollution.

Their analysis of such diverse topics is not grounded in any one theoretical model but, instead, is situated in a rich comparative perspective. Each chapter has a substantial bibliography of sources wide-ranging both in time and culture. Their enviable knowledge of the
anthropological literature allows deep analysis of their material. As persistent and painstaking ethnographers who earned the trust of the villagers among whom they lived, they were able to gain in-depth information on the sensitive problems they studied. The end result is a solid and stimulating study of many features of Cantonese dominant lineage villages.

There are risks in immersing oneself in one kind of social system. Despite their acknowledgement of diversity, the authors, like many of us, sometimes write in generalizations about “Cantonese villagers” and “Chinese lineages.” In their introduction they invite challenges, however, and by offering such rich information on dominant lineages, they make possible not challenges so much as astonished comparisons. As an anthropologist who works within a very different New Territories social environment, I find it extraordinary that such a contrasting system existed only a short distance away. As presented, the worldview and behavior of the men, at least, of these dominant lineage villages was founded on exclusion, hierarchy, and conflict. This was expressed through competition with other lineage villages for territory; brutal domination over tenants in satellite villages; the subordination of slaves, female bond-servants, and concubines; violence against young women who cut fuel outside the village; and the lack of full acceptance of married-in women, who were never acknowledged as lineage ancestors. In men’s view, even the goddess Tian Hou “in her local manifestation, was a jealous and—at times—vindictive goddess who did not tolerate rivals” (p. 287).

What is lost when a book is built from preexisting essays? Those that may be less grounded in fieldwork (Rubie Watson on bridal laments), or that are somewhat tangential to the focus (James Watson on long-haired destitutes), cannot be edited. Furthermore, broader contextual material is not included. There is little information on the contrasting subsistence bases of Ha Tsuen and San Tin, for example, or on the wholesale emigration of men of working age from San Tin by the 1960s. Finally, although this book is deliberately presented as a study of the past, the lack of even a brief update to the present gives the impression of villages frozen in time, as the authors do not summarize the dramatic changes of recent decades. This information can be found in their other publications, however. Its omission does not undermine the value of this comprehensive study of dominant lineage villages in southeastern China.

REFERENCES CITED

Hayes, James

Strauch, Judith

Ward, Barbara E.


E. PAUL DURRENBERGER
Pennsylvania State University

What happens when people that define themselves in terms of what they consume reach the limit of their spending power? In a land that provides virtually no social safety net for retirement, housing, unemployment, pregnancy, child-birth, childcare, education, or healthcare, how can people provide the security that the state provides in other industrial lands?

We use credit cards. Brett Williams explores the causes and consequences of U.S. citizens being easily able to put themselves into often-unending debt to large financial institutions, as well as the motivations and political machinations of such establishments as they expanded from the relatively secure debt of comparatively well-off wage earners to the less-secure debt of the less well off and the poor.

She explains how the wealth that lending institutions siphon from the poorest and least secure U.S. citizens underwrites the convenience use of credit cards for the more prosperous who can pay their accounts in full at the end of each month. By expanding people’s ability to spend beyond their incomes, credit cards create and bolster an artificial middle class by disguising how much of our disposable income we expend: In 2003, it was 130 percent (p. 3). At the lower end of the hierarchy are the people without plastic, the cash-only folks who fund the credit industry by paying usurious interest rates on loans to help them stretch inadequate means from one payday to the next.

Williams shows how these relationships with debt sever linguistic and cultural connections with reality and turn economic causality and connections upside down.

We feel grateful, generous, or independent when we get the chance to spend beyond our means but these feelings thwart our empathy for those in worse positions. We do not blame ourselves for debt but pathologize others for theirs (p. 126). Convenience users construct discourses of choice and addiction to understand the overextended. In so doing, they ratify their self-congratulatory ideological certitude that everyone gets what they deserve in this economic democracy in which the meritorious rise to the top and the inferior sink to the bottom (pp. 52–53). Debtors ascribe to the same ideology and blame themselves because they must deserve the consequences of their bad choices.

The obfuscation of realities on all levels results in each person having to deal with financial problems alone without joint cultural knowledge to draw on for direction. When we turn to experts for guidance, we find deceit (p. 55). As Williams explains how financial institutions drain wealth from the poor, readers may wonder why only one in six of the poor suffer depressive episodes (p. 119), or why there is so little rage in such a world dominated by “war and
occupation, harsh inequality, and assaults on our civil liberties” (p. 125).

Journalists have documented the important trends in marketing and use of credit cards but have not linked their proliferation with structural and cultural features such as a distressed economy; very mindful banking political and sales strategies bolstered by government research, subsidies, and regulatory polices; or ideologies of individuality and meritocracy (p. 57). Williams uses financial industry research and economic data to show the structural and historical and institutional relationships that trap people in debt and transfer wealth from the poor to the rich. She illustrates the vicissitudes of the trapped by telling the stories she and her students garnered in interviews and long-term familiarity.

This book takes a place in the growing literature of class and power in our land and raises questions that may be difficult to approach ethnographically in the shadow worlds of government and finance. Especially when fieldwork is out of the question, one method of journalism that anthropologists might borrow is communicating with informants in high places for their understandings of the systems they control.

Although Williams shows multiple possible roles for anthropologists in this system—from creating obfuscatory rhetorics to plumbing the cultural proclivities of subpopulations of a diverse citizenry to understand their vulnerabilities—she does not recommend that we use our skills to enhance the power of the wealthy. Rather, she argues for reversing policies that allow predatory lending and that privatize all security functions (pp. 125–131).

One way of drawing people into debt is via loyalty to affinity groups. Thus, the Church of God in Christ offers a credit card—as does the American Anthropological Association. So do our loyalties turn against us.

The book is a useful review of the politics of a rapacious banking industry and the consequences for all of the people of the United States, as well as an addition to our knowledge of how power shapes culture.


**CAROLYN ROUSE**
Princeton University

In *Black Hunger: Soul Food and America*, Doris Witt explores race politics in the United States through the lens of food. Her objects of study include a fictitious “mammy” who sells pancake batter; a gay white southern culinary philosopher; chitterlings; Nation of Islam food taboos; Dick Gregory’s fetishistic diets; Vertamae Grosvenor’s food-based critique of second-wave feminism; and hegemonic discourses about black women, weight, fetal alcohol syndrome, and crack babies. What emerges from this deeply critical, at times humorous, foray into African American food history is a theoretical work as sensuous as the subject matter. Witt takes the reader on a journey through popular food discourses and along the way unpacks the signifiers of belonging, resistance, abjection, purity, and lust. Reading *Black Hunger*, I was reminded that food is not simply good to eat, it is also good to think with.

Claude Lévi-Strauss describes cooking as a language that reveals structure and contradiction. Employing Lévi-Strauss’s appreciation for food as cultural metaphor, Witt attempts to translate what Aunt Jemima and fruitarianism, for instance, have meant in the context of Reconstruction, Jim Crow, and the civil rights and black power movements. This heady project requires Witt to bring Hazel Carby, Henry Louis Gates, Margaret Homans, Anne McClintock, Claudia Tate, and a number of other scholars of African American literature and culture in conversation with Julia Kristeva, Sigmund Freud, Claude Lévi-Strauss, and Mary Douglas. What emerges is an engaging romp through some of the most interesting but largely neglected historical oddities that span from Reconstruction through the 1990s.

Witt begins *Black Hunger* by examining the historical essentializing of black women as mammys and cooks as revealed through the fraught character of Aunt Jemima. The fact that Aunt Jemima may have originally been “a white male businessman’s appropriation of a ‘German’ male vaudevillian’s imitation of a black male minstrel’s parody of an imaginary black female slave cook” (p. 31), attests to the character’s origins as a commodity fetish. Mammies sprung from the imagination of an entertainer and were perhaps no more real than Eddie Murphy’s hypermacho Buddy Love in the 1996 remake of *The Nutty Professor*. As Witt points out, Nancy Green, an ex-slave who played Aunt Jemima at shows including the World’s Fair, and actresses Louise Beavers and Hattie McDaniel, who played mammys for film, were quite different from the characters they performed. In the popular film *Imitation of Life* (1934), for example, Louise Beavers not only had to be trained to flip pancakes for her role but she also had to force feed herself to maintain her hefty figure.

Regardless of the questionable origin and authenticity of the mammy, food philosophers of the 1960s and 1970s reference either directly or indirectly the mammy as a symbol of a race and gender politics either to be embraced, as in the case of Craig Claiborne, or to be rejected. Nation of Islam co-founder Elijah Muhammad, for example, associated the cooks (women) and the product (“slave food”) with filth, contamination, and the continuing pollution of black consciousness. Witt asserts that male food philosophers, including Dick Gregory, scorned or negated black women by disparaging what “mammys” cook. About Gregory’s fruitarian diet, Witt argues, “Gregory consciously understood himself to be celebrating femininity via his valorization of rawness and nature, femininity nonetheless threatened the boundaries of the self as the maternal and so had to be abjected as the ‘rotted’” (p. 136). Witt asserts that Gregory placed himself on Lévi-Strauss’s “unmarked pole,” which was not the cooked or the rotted but, rather, the raw. In opposition to the male philosophers, female food writer Vertamae Grosvenor valorized soul food and the women who
produced it but problematically reessentialized black women's identities as cooks.

I think highly of Witt's feminist critique of a neglected part of cultural history in the United States; nevertheless, there were moments while reading Witt's exegesis that I found myself contemplating disciplinary borders. Witt is an English professor and her "field sites" are, for the most part, written texts. As an anthropologist, I found myself longing for the voice of those Witt critiques—particularly when psychoanalysis becomes what seems to me an analytical crutch. For example, describing an article from the Washington Post entitled "Fruitful and Multiplying" about five African American owners of vegetarian restaurants, Witt concludes, "The article enacts a fantasy of erasing African American women from their putatively solitary positioning in the scene of black reproduction. In their stead, African American men are inscribed as both father and mother, phallus and womb" (p. 150). Similarly, Witt uses broad strokes to paint Nation of Islam food discourses as patriarchal, but without any interview data Witt fails to appreciate what drives black women to embrace Elijah Muhammad's food philosophy.

Disciplinary issues aside, for any anthropologist interested in North American cultural studies, food, and African American history, Black Hunger is required reading. The book is dense, but fascinating and difficult to put down.

REFERENCES CITED
Imitation of Life
The Nutty Professor
1996 Tom Shadyac, dir. 95 min. Los Angeles. Universal Pictures.

KATHLEEN BARLOW
Central Washington University

In the early 1980s, scholars declared the discussion of inbreeding, incest, and the incest taboo at a stalemate. The problem seemed to hinge on whose argument about inbreeding avoidance in humans, incestuous impulses, and the reasons for incest taboos was most convincing—Sigmund Freud's or Edward Westermarck's. Freud's position that humans are innately incestuous led to explanations formulated around the Oedipus complex and the overcoming of incestuous impulses to create order in families and society. Westermarck proposed that natural (hence, biologically based) inbreeding avoidance in humans produced sexual aversion among those raised in close association in early childhood and that these innate aversions were expressed socially and culturally as incest taboos. This book, the outcome of a conference (2000) marking the inauguration of the new Department of Anthropological Sciences at Stanford University, focuses renewed attention on Westermarck's hypothesis in light of recent findings from genetics, biological anthropology, primatology, ethnography, history, psychiatry, and philosophy.

Most of the chapters examine the logic of and evidence for Westermarck's propositions. They consider questions such as the following: Are the elements of Westermarck's proposition causally related? Do biological and behavioral research findings support such logic? Is inbreeding avoidance biologically driven or learned or both? Patrick Bateson frames the discussion as a challenge to our ability to understand complex relationships among genetic, environmental, and social factors, and he cautions against succumbing to any too-easy determinisms. Alan Bittles shows that existing evidence on genetic costs of inbreeding in humans needs to be substantiated by research that includes social and environmental factors.

Three crucial ethnographic cases—Taiwanese minor (sim pua) marriages, endogamous marriage in Israeli kibbutzim, and Lebanese patrilateral cross-cousin marriage—show sexual aversion among adults raised together as children. They are cited by many of the authors (e.g., Bittles, William Durham, Mark T. Erickson, Neven Sesardic, and Arthur Wolf). In all three cases, low marriage rates and low fertility in such marriages provide evidence of sexual aversion. That each society also encourages these marriages raises questions about the basis of aversion (biological? learned? both?) and its relationship to cultural prohibitions.

Walter Scheidel and Hill Gates take up separate instances of the opposite case—preferred sibling marriages. Scheidel concludes that for Roman Egyptian sibling marriages, large age differences between marriage partners may account for lack of aversion. Using mainly Malinowski's Trobriand data, Gates argues that under compelling cultural circumstances aversion and taboo may be overridden at a high social cost.

Editors Wolf and Durham differ on whether Westermarck's hypothesis has carried the day. Wolf's analysis of his Taiwanese data shows a strong correlation between early childhood association and sexual aversion. Durham argues, contra many predecessors, including David F. Aberle et al. (1963), that human societies could have and did recognize the deleterious effects of inbreeding, which was then prohibited via incest taboos, possibly to avoid supernatural punishment. In his view, cultural incest taboos probably arose through different processes than sexual aversion in individuals.

Together the two co-editors argue for the important idea that attachment and sexual aversion had to evolve together. They suggest that the explanation for incest avoidance in humans and other animals, and for widespread incest taboos in human societies, must lie in the dynamics of how these two propensities interact and are catalyzed through socialization processes. Here, one of Freud's most important insights for which there is much empirical evidence—namely, childhood sexuality—is given short shrift. Anne Pusey's summary of the primate evidence...
and Erickson’s analysis of clinical understandings about psychopathologies associated with incest suggest a useful revision of their idea. Pusey describes multiple studies that showed high levels of inbreeding avoidance in many primate species, but not absolute avoidance. The main exceptions to avoidance were attempts by immature males to mount or mate with close female relatives, who usually protested vigorously. Pusey observes that full sexual maturity in primates develops over a long period of time, but sexual behaviors of various kinds occur earlier. Erickson reviews the strong correlation in humans between serious psychopathologies and experiences of incest at very young ages. He wonders whether some contemporary societies in which reported incest seems to be increasing undermine the kinds of socializing experiences that contribute to the development of strong attachment, sexual aversion, and hence incest-avoidant behavior. Wolf and Durham’s proposal about attachment and aversion might lead to understanding a wider range of behaviors if it were looked at as co-evolution of attachment and sexual development, with aversion as one possible outcome.

The chapters take up specific aspects of Westermarck’s view, establish some common ground, and point to avenues for further research. The strength of this book is the presentation of views from many disciplines in dialogue with each other. As such, it provides new perspectives on the complex and intricate relationships among culture, biology, and behavior. Scholars and advanced students in biological and cultural anthropology will find it essential reading.

REFERENCE CITED


JUDITH GOODE
Temple University

This volume, intended as a “resource for the newly emerging field of working class studies” (p. 2), includes contributions from scholars and activists. Its goals include establishing a higher profile for class analysis in the academy and examining prospects for class-based politics. There is a pervasive sense that time is ripe for class-based movements now that Cold War anticommunist hysteria has abated and wages, benefits, and opportunities for secure meaningful work are disappearing.

Unfortunately, this collection falls short of its aim to assert a new vision incorporating recent insights about neoliberalism and political subjectivity. Lacking a well-developed global framework, it largely stays within the self-contained boundaries of U.S. labor history as a linear sequence of political regimes, policies, and union organizational structure. Conflicts within labor are almost invisible. Different audience levels are imagined resulting in discordant voices, theoretical frames, and empirical examples. The tasks of sorting out these inconsistencies and raising critical questions for future research are sorely needed either in the introduction or through more engagement between authors.

The introduction and most sections of the book are intended for students and often seem simplified. Three chapters bring race or gender separately into class analysis. Anthropologists will not find anything new here and will miss the insights of ethnographically grounded work on whiteness or on how class and racial identities intersect to affect women’s negotiations of work and family. Two chapters in a section focusing on youth argue for strategies to help working-class students with their discomforts in the academy. One chapter essentializes working-class culture in talking about “cultural conflict” and seems to argue for labor studies as a “safe place” for a “special needs” population. This veers uncomfortably close to a “self-esteem” therapy at odds with the book’s political analysis.

Only two chapters, those written by William Tabb and Les Panitch, out of 11 total use the global neoliberal framework characteristic of anthropological work on working-class experience and social movements. Both assume an audience level very different from undergraduates. These chapters move beyond the labor movement to grapple with broader shifts from Keynesian state interventions in the market to neoliberal state enforcement of free markets. Each author stakes a position in the voice and terms of current debates within the left and problematizes the concept and forms of class analysis glossed over elsewhere. Questions are raised about the need to look beyond work as a site of class struggle and to rethink class structure because some professional and managerial work, defined as outside the working class in the introduction, is increasingly contingent, proletarianized, and devoid of meaning and control. Unfortunately, readers are left on their own to identify and reconcile the implicit contradictions between chapters. For example, Tabb asserts that the antiglobalization movement is reformist and needs to develop a class perspective, whereas Panitch views it as a class movement needing new tactics—less virtually organized protest and more locally grounded organization.

Throughout the volume, the ways in which power is masked by discursive constructions lurk below explanations of the weakness of United States class politics: Cold War silencing; labor disunity produced by racially segmented work and the psychic “wages of whiteness”; the subjective compensations of consumerism and identification with imperial power. Yet there is neither theorizing nor actual demonstration of how cultural processes work. Academics and labor activists make assertions about workers’ lives and beliefs. Evidence from anthropological work on labor, poverty, development, political ecology, and social movements could provide a complexity necessary for understanding the contingent cultural processes through which
working-class people take on, reshape, or reject discourses of power as political subjects in multiple sites of struggle.

Without theorizing culture and identity, a critical neoliberal cultural barrier to political action is missed. As market triumphalism combines with the governmentalist effects of therapeutic expertise, a culture of self-blame is reinforced along with the belief that only those remaking themselves for the market deserve the "American Dream." Documenting and understanding how this divides and masks class interests for working-class people is important to assessing the future of working-class movements.

In spite of the currency suggested by the title, this volume, while raising timely and important questions about the future, reproduces much residual baggage from the past to produce a limited vision of a new interdisciplinary terrain. Although many anthropologists have collaborated with labor studies scholars, individually and collectively, this volume demonstrates a need for deeper, continuous engagement.