

Book reviews

Art, music, and film

BAILY, JOHN. *War, exile and the music of Afghanistan: the ethnographer's tale*. xiii, 231 pp., illus., fig., bibliogr., DVD. Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2015. £60.00 (cloth)

The city of Herat in Western Afghanistan is known as the pearl of the historic lands of Khorasan. During the 1970s, Herat served as Baily's entry-point as an ethnographer into Afghanistan. Accompanied by the writer Veronica Doubleday, his wife, Baily conducted two years of fieldwork during which they learned Dari, the Persianate language of Afghanistan. He also achieved proficiency in the *rubâb* and *dutâr* (plucked lutes), she as a singer of Herati songs.

Spanning four decades of fieldwork, ten fieldtrips, and portraits of ten musician 'colleagues' (*hamkârân*), the book combines ethnographic insights, filmmaking as musical ethnography, and the pedagogies of researcher and researched in learning to perform as a *shauqi* (amateur enthusiast). Baily's subject, the 'fluctuating state of Afghanistan's music culture from the 1970s to 2014' (p. 1), offers richly textured insights into distinctive regional styles and instruments, evolving classical folk and popular musical forms, and their variegated political, cultural, and religious usages.

Organized chronologically, seven chapters adumbrate diverse musical transformations and adaptations in the periods before the communist coup of 1978; the *jihâd* against the communists and Soviet invasion; the *mujahideen* parties' rise to power; the Taliban rule of the 1990s; the post-Taliban 'recovery' era of music culture, its

global expansion across diasporic locations, and its taking root in Kabul's new classical music institutes.

Genealogies are unsurprisingly important. They are narrated by hereditary musician families, maestro teachers (*ustâds*) and their students, and pattern political discourses around war and migration. Baily is distinct amongst a small generation of researchers who have worked on Afghanistan since the 1970s. This book conveys his deep commitment to the country's music, enduring relationships he formed with key protagonists – including players of the '*armonia*, *rubâb*, *dutâr*, *tabla*, and performers in voice ensembles – and his development as a student (*shâgerd*) and global performer (with Veronica) of Afghan music.

The *longue durée* is treated lightly except to emphasize the relevance of Afghanistan's formation in 1747 by (the allegedly Herati-born) Ahmad Shah Durrani, as well as British colonialism, Russian expansion, and Pakistan's emergence (1947). Baily links fascinating detail on musicians who synthesized Indian classical, Khorasanian, and Pashtun musical traditions at the courts of Kabul's rulers (Amirs) in the nineteenth century to the establishment of originary musician communities in the capital's Kucheh Kharabat quarter, from whom some musicians still trace their family history. Here emerged the classic Kabuli style of *ghazal* singing accompanied by the *rubâb*, the national instrument of Afghanistan (pp. 17-19) – that reverberating 'doorway to the soul' (p. 20). In 1925, the inauguration of what would later become Radio Kabul popularized, vernacularized, and broadcast music countrywide, cementing Kabul's position as the national centre for musical

activity, and launching many popular stars (pp. 25–32). Yet most professional musicians (*kesbi*) – including performers of the shawn (*sornâ*) and double-headed frame drum (*dohol*) typifying Herat’s rural music – suffer a lowly status, alongside other putatively licentious immoral groups (e.g. barbers).

The era of Islamist resistance to Afghan communism and the massive migration of refugees to Pakistan newly politicized Afghan music. While successive communist governments supported the regional folk traditions of ‘the people’, yet simultaneously supported ‘modernizing’ radio and television artists playing Westernized guitars, keyboards, and drum-kits if they praised the regime (p. 49), *mujahideen* groups played cassettes of carousing nationalist songs during battle. Although religious singing forms are practised across Afghanistan – linked to Sufism, Shi’ism, and saints worship – theological controversies about ‘lawfulness’ reached their zenith with the Taliban, under whom ‘the disembowelled audiocassette’ served to symbolize the banning of *all* music except their own genre of unaccompanied religious singing (*tarânas*) (p. 105). The final chapters examine the peripatetic global expansion of folk and classical music forms, occurring alongside the demise of the audiocassette era, and a clamorous explosion in popular singers who adopt the ‘modernizing’ timbres of Hindi and Western pop.

An accompanying DVD of four films portrays the lives of musicians in exile (Pakistan, California) and in Afghanistan. Notably, ‘Amir’ captures the intimate rapport in the unlikely pairing of the experimental psychologist-turned-ethnomusicologist and an orphan adopted into a Herati family of hereditary musicians. Shot in 1985 in Peshawar in Pakistan, Baily’s film captures footage of Amir’s humble home, Peshawar’s musicians’ quarter, a wedding party in the Frontier, and *ghazals* that lament the torment of exile, the heartache of love, and life passing, and that resonate with Amir’s own hardships.

Arguably missing are the scholarly and theoretical debates that might enlighten understandings of exile, or ethnography as a practice. This need not detract, however, from the book’s encyclopaedic detail and eloquent insights. It forms a common ground that will allow ethnomusicologists to communicate with anthropologists, and film-makers with singers and musicians. The result is a harmonious interpolation destined to shepherd the reader calmly through Afghanistan’s crisis of war and

exile. It will be seen as a classic text on the country’s music.

NICHOLA KHAN *University of Brighton*

BENDER, SHAWN. *Taiko boom: Japanese drumming in place and motion*. xv, 259 pp., map, illus., bibliogr. Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 2012. £19.95 (paper)

Shawn Bender’s *Taiko boom: Japanese drumming in place and motion* is a breakthrough publication, for it is the first book in English to deal solely with the post-Second World War development of ensemble taiko drumming in Japan. Positioning the rise of taiko performance within greater cultural and political movements in Japanese society, Bender reveals how concerns of identity and community, among other discourses, influenced the development of this art form over the past six decades. Examining musical practice through the lens of anthropological theory, he highlights the spaces occupied by this growing performance art in a changing culture.

This is, broadly speaking, an exploration of the rise of taiko performance in Japan, with particular emphasis on the explosive growth of the art form in the 1980s (the titular ‘taiko boom’). Bender divides his book into two main parts. The first half of the book, titled ‘The emergence and popularization of taiko’, is a survey of prominent groups that helped guide the development of ensemble taiko performance, beginning in the 1950s. The second half, titled ‘Discourses of contemporary taiko’, is an examination of prominent discourses used by musicians as well as those whose actions fostered the ‘taiko boom’. Bender calls ensemble taiko performance a ‘new folk performing art’, linking it to existing Japanese folk arts while at the same time claiming that it must be considered as a separate entity. He presents taiko ensembles as a new kind of folk culture that expresses ‘the cosmopolitanism of the contemporary’ (p. 116). His writing weaves together multiple narratives and historical developments as he presents the sociohistorical context that fostered the growth of the genre.

One prominent topic in *Taiko boom* is the relationship between the growth of ensemble taiko performance and community festival creation in Japan in the 1980s and 1990s. Bender ties together evolving government policies, changing rural and urban populations, and the influence of these developments on Japanese arts to show, for example, how new community festivals created a space for new performance

arts, one that was filled in part by amateur taiko performance. Similarly, he uses the examination of the relationship between the local and the global in Japanese culture, demonstrating the connection between identity discourses of gender and nationality and the development of performance practices such as the *ō-daiko* solo. In this manner, he demonstrates how taiko performance can be 'a site for examining how contemporary Japanese negotiate distinctions between native and foreign, popular and tradition, and local and national through expressive culture' (p. 6), thus providing a nuanced look into this growing musical art while also laying the foundation for understanding its rapid growth.

However, Bender's study is limited in scope, offering a mere glimpse into the large world of ensemble taiko performance. Even as he reveals the influence of governmental policies that encouraged amateur participation in the 'taiko boom', for example, the narrative is often dominated by the activities and discourses of a few professional ensembles. This limited scope is perhaps an inevitable result of the nature of fieldwork and the groups to which Bender had access, not to mention the sheer number of groups across Japan. (A footnote suggests there are more than four thousand amateur ensembles.) This is not necessarily a criticism of Bender's study; rather, it reveals the enormity of the subject even within a single country. It is to his credit that he is able to provide a cohesive story of the growth of ensemble taiko performance.

Yet the limitation of Bender's study reveals the opportunity for further explorations of ensemble taiko performance. He offers a wealth of materials – not limited to the social, historical, and governmental influences on the 'taiko boom' – that may serve as a foundation for future studies of ensemble taiko performance. Indeed, as the art form spreads around the world, *Taiko boom* exists as an essential source as other scholars delve into the genre. It is a milestone publication, providing a research foundation for others to draw from while also offering a methodology for future studies.

BENJAMIN PACHTER *taikosource.com*

SANSI, ROGER. *Art, anthropology and the gift*. vii, 188 pp., illus., bibliogr. London: Bloomsbury, 2015. £21.99 (paper)

Art, anthropology and the gift is a welcome addition to anthropological scholarship on contemporary and modern art. Providing as

comprehensive an overview as possible without sacrificing clarity, Sansi situates the subject of *relations* and *encounters* in contemporary art practices by way of a genealogy of the traditions that precede them, most notably those associated with Duchamp and Surrealism, but also Bataille and the Situationists. The reason for his return to 'the gift' is artists' own turn to anthropological concepts and descriptions. In particular he is interested in these artists' visions of gift exchanges as events of transgression informed by 'anthropological understandings of the gift as a form of reciprocity and reproduction of communities' (p. 88).

In doing so, this work offers a distinctly modern take on art that goes beyond a formalist application of art historical methods simply to 'other' societies (see Sansi review of Morphy and Perkins, *JRAI* 13, 2007, and Svašek, *JRAI* 14, 2008). *Art, anthropology and the gift* problematizes the very tradition of modern art and its history with an anthropological perspective inspired by Gell, Mauss, and Strathern. Going beyond the well-elaborated discussion on methodological affinities between art and anthropology, Sansi proposes that deeper ties, both conceptual and theoretical, relate the two fields, and that untangling them provides ground for sustained dialogue.

The main argumentative thrust of the book lies in a rereading of anthropological debates on the gift, 'the key through which they are inextricably related' (p. 87). Sansi refocuses attention from the representative qualities of art to the agents it comprises and constitutes. The 'common ground from which the dialogue between art and anthropology can be brought forward' (p. 17) rests on the claim that art encompasses not merely meaningful objects, but collective ways of living and sharing. It is no surprise, therefore, that so-called 'relational art' practices present one of the central threads of the book's texture, for they take as their central problem the question whether 'it is still possible to generate relationships with the world' (Bourriaud, *Relational aesthetics*, 2002 [1998], p. 9) – and if so, how to produce them?

Since '[t]his book has been designed as an attempt to build a bridge between different publics, with different traditions of thought' (p. 17), its opening chapter clarifies key terms such as ethnography, aesthetics, representation, and the gift. The following seven chapters are organized around central questions, rather than art historical or ethnographic case studies, although aspects of both inform the book as a whole. Chapter 2 ('Art as anthropology') retraces

anthropological engagement in and with modern art, from Duchamp and Dadaism, Bataille and the Situationists to relational aesthetics and the ethnographic turn in the twenty-first century. This genealogy serves to facilitate a constructive dialogue with art practices: 'rather than asking if they are using anthropology properly, one could ask what they are using it for' (p. 37, emphasis in original). Chapter 3 ('Traps and devices') builds on this perspectival shift by undoing a persistent narrative that identifies art with representation. The point, here, is to unravel not what art *means*, but how it can *function* as 'a tool for constituting social relations' and thus composes 'devices for action' (pp. 43, 65).

Chapter 4 ('Aesthetics and politics') presents one of the book's finest discussions. Sansi elaborates why the view that 'art is a modern form of religion and aesthetics its theology, just as museums are its temples and artists its priests' (p. 68), is not only an anthropological one (see C. Pinney & N. Thomas, *Beyond aesthetics*, 2001). Artists, too, have been involved in anti-art movements like Dada and institutional critique. In this sense, anthropology's dismissal of aesthetics as a uniform bourgeois cult (see A. Gell, *The art of anthropology*, 1999) has only been catching up with a long-standing objective of modern art. An accessible reading of Kant's *Critique of judgment* (if such a thing exists) grounds Sansi's subsequent reorientation of the political in aesthetics via Schiller and Rancière. Aesthetic cultivation, Sansi highlights, denotes not merely an objectivist withdrawal from the world (as Schopenhauer read it) or the reproduction of social distinctions (as Bourdieu did). More positively, it can act as the very foundation of politics; as the 'utopian promise of a different form of life' (p. 78) beyond utility and reason.

The gift returns throughout this book, but finds its most complex development in chapter 5 ('Participation and the gift'). Discriminating the anthropological canon that underlines its hierarchical nature from artistic appropriations of the gift, Sansi explores how Bataille, the Situationists, and contemporary artists mobilize the notion differently: as an event of 'excessive expense' that 'questioned the reproduction of the existing social order' (p. 88). However, their espoused revolution of everyday life through art has evidently not taken place; instead, artistic critique has been integrated as a principle of post-Fordist labour paradigms, merging artistic work, *oeuvre*, and life (see chapter 6). Can artists and anthropologists therefore still produce sustainable critical interventions by facilitating 'social situations of encounter' (p. 144)?

The gift returns once more in the concluding chapter, 'Ethnography and utopia', as an artistic device for generating 'micro-utopias': shared moments 'dedicated to the construction of social relations' (p. 162). While such alternative modes of sociality may only remain 'suspended at the level of possibility' (p. 162), the quality of this book is that it renders them visible and viable.

JONAS TINIUS *University of Cambridge*

SCHNEIDER, ARND & CATERINA PASQUALINO (eds).
Experimental film and anthropology. xvi,
205 pp., illus., bibliogr. London: Bloomsbury,
2014. £19.99 (paper)

This edited collection is composed of eleven fairly short essays, most of which derive from presentations at the 2012 conference 'New Visions: Experimental Film, Art and Anthropology', hosted by the editors at the Quai Branly museum in Paris. Like other collections co-edited by Arnd Schneider, it is an invitation to a dialogue between two fields that can discover commonalities and reciprocal utility. Previously, the only other notable attempt in this direction had come from the field of film studies, with Catherine Russell's 1999 book *Experimental ethnography*. Experimental film, the editors argue in their introductory essay, can help anthropology to rethink its narrative conventions, the material processes of visual perception, and closeness and distance between subject and observer (p. 2). Although this invitation to dialogue throughout the book seems addressed mainly at visual anthropology, there is no reason why it should not benefit in a more indirect way anthropological representation in general, as the book title seems to suggest.

As a visual anthropologist, I appreciate the way this book tries to enlarge the scope of the debate on visual and acoustic representation, too often confined to a discussion of the works produced inside the subdiscipline. As such, *Experimental film and anthropology* can be a welcome resource to stimulate students to experiment with languages other than those of more established documentary genres. The examples touched in the book range from the photofilm to manipulations of 8mm film and digital images, passing through discussions of montage and synchronicity of sound and image. This collection can also contribute to a proper evaluation of works perhaps ahead of their times – a case in point being the animated films of Robert Ascher reviewed in Kathryn Ramey's essay.

What I find to be a shortcoming of the book is a general limit of some takes on the '[insert term] and anthropology' approach that Schneider has been advocating in a number of works now. Whether through the trope of appropriations, dialogue, borrowing, or contact zones, those essays that treat experimental film and anthropology as essentially separate fields hold the least promise for innovation in anthropological practice. It is the case of critical essays that limit themselves to review the work of one or more filmmakers, highlighting their interest for anthropology. Paradoxically, this kind of approach runs the risk of reinforcing disciplinary boundaries through this procedure of juxtaposition. Much more promising are those essays by practitioners who, through their works, try to contest and blur boundaries that are not essential but established by communities of practice. Alyssa Grossman makes an interesting point introducing her split-screen filmic work *Memory objects, memory dialogues*. She sees her work, which is a collaboration with visual artist Selena Kimball, not as an application of artistic methods to anthropology but as a way of emphasizing the artistic possibilities already present, but often downplayed, in anthropology (p. 132). This is a starting-point for an approach to memory that she describes as evocative, rather than representational (p. 142).

Another of the best contributions to the book similarly derives from first-hand ethnographic practice in images and sounds, and reflects on the relationship between the two. Jennifer Heuson and Kevin Allen advocate for a role for asynchronicity – distinguished from non-synchronicity – in the evocation of sensory experience. In contrast with recent takes on observational cinema, such as those proposed by David MacDougall and Anna Grimshaw, in this case Heuson and Allen claim that drawing attention to the constructed nature of filmmaking is truer to the fragmentary and multisensory nature of experience (p. 120). An argument in favour of hyperrealism, meant as going beyond the conventions of filmic realism, runs as a thread throughout the whole book, from the review of montage shocks made by Rane Willerslev and Christian Suhr to the reflections on time and the way it is experienced during trance and near-death experiences made by Caterina Pasqualino and the attempts at a poetic ethnography by Martino Nicoletti. But it is only in its second half that the book really takes up 'the challenge of practice', as Schneider and Christopher Wright called it in *Contemporary art and anthropology* (2006), and becomes innovative and exploratory.

Finally, as a side note, I can't help remarking that the small, washed-out black and white images that are included in this book do not do justice to the visually striking and acoustically rich pieces described in it. Perhaps an accompanying webpage, such as those that more and more journals are developing, would have been a better solution to offer some audiovisual samples to the reader.

LORENZO FERRARINI *Granada Centre for Visual Anthropology, University of Manchester*

Development, democracy, and the state

HART, GILLIAN. *Rethinking the South African crisis: nationalism, populism, hegemony*. xxiii, 268 pp., map, figs, tables, bibliogr. Athens: Univ. of Georgia Press, 2013. \$21.95 (paper)

As I read this brilliant yet troubling book about South Africa's protracted political crisis, a new wave of xenophobic violence took hold, beginning in Durban and spreading to Pietermaritzburg and Johannesburg. Shops were looted and camps were set up on the outskirts of Johannesburg for those fleeing violence. Seven people were killed. These events provoked memories of a similar wave of violence in 2008 in which sixty-two people died, recounted by Gillian Hart through the shocking account of the death and burial of Ernesto Alfabeto Nhamuave, a Mozambican who was set alight in the street less than three months after his arrival in Johannesburg to seek a better life. Media commentaries of the recent attacks of April 2015 point out that they took place in areas of deprivation and poor service delivery. As anger mounts, these accounts suggest, immigrants become 'easy targets' of these violent outbursts by economically disenfranchised youth. However, while the underlying conditions of poverty and inequality are a crucial dimension, Hart's book argues that politics cannot be read in a straightforward way from the structural conditions of accumulation. She demonstrates persuasively that a deeper analysis is necessary, and explains the escalation of populist politics as a reaction to, and an expression of, the weakening hegemony of the ruling African National Congress (ANC).

Chapter 2 takes us chronologically through the political terrain of the 2000s, using key events to weave together the strands of this complicated story. Thabo Mbeki's succession to power was

accompanied by deepening fragmentation on the left. The inability of the 'new social movements' to form alliances and gather momentum opened space for the proliferation of populist politics, leading to the defining moment of August 2012 when police opened fire and killed thirty-four striking miners near the town of Marikana, an event which laid bare the mounting contradictions described in the book. In chapter 3, Hart draws on several years of detailed ethnographic research to provide insight into the workings of local government, which has been the site of many protests, moving the discussion beyond the usual focus on corruption and poor institutional capacity.

In chapter 4, Hart develops the core idea of the book, suggesting that the framework of 'neoliberalism' through which post-apartheid South Africa has frequently been debated is inadequate to explain the ongoing crisis. Instead, it must be analysed in the light of contradictory processes of de-nationalization and re-nationalization. South Africa's entry into the financialized global economy, the entrenchment of white corporate interests, and the scale of capital flight in the post-apartheid period all indicate processes of de-nationalization, many of them in line with neoliberal orthodoxies that have been much criticized. Describing the contradictory dynamic of re-nationalization, Hart navigates through the messy ideological terrain of nationhood in the post-apartheid period. Repeatedly evoked through appeal to a deep-seated, collective memory of the anti-apartheid struggle, national identity is a hegemonic tool that legitimizes contemporary modes of governance. However, '[w]hile articulations of the nation and liberation are vitally important to the ANC's hegemonic power', Hart writes, 'they are simultaneously a source of weakness and instability because they are vulnerable to counter-claims of betrayal' (p. 189). Chapters 5 and 6 develop the theoretical arguments of the book by drawing on the works of Antonio Gramsci and Frantz Fanon. Tracing the similarities between the two, Hart uses Fanon's concept of 'new humanism' as a vantage point through which to situate Gramsci's ideas in an African context. Hegemony is not an all-encompassing, stable condition characterized by widespread consent, she concludes, but rather a process by which the terms of debate are set. Intrinsic to this process are efforts to 'neutralise the revolutionary potential of popular antagonisms' (p. 175). This was exemplified in a statement by Jacob Zuma following the latest outburst of xenophobia – itself a manifestation of

re-nationalization – in which he accused the recently formed Economic Freedom Fighters of propagating a 'violent culture of apartheid'. Once again, images of the past are evoked and allegiances re-staked. However, as Hart's book convincingly argues and as recent events demonstrate, the limits of this ideological terrain are growing ever more palpable.

Hart reflects on South Africa's troubling predicament with original and engaging insight, opening up new and important lines of argument. Despite the book's ominous conclusion, her description of Govan Mbeki's meticulous and co-ordinated political activities in Ladysmith in the 1950s offers with superb acuity the hopeful alternatives that could emerge. For this to happen, a renewed, critical attention to history, instead of its simplified celebration, will be vital. Whatever may come, this book's sophisticated and detailed analysis is brilliantly placed to expose the huge political stakes involved.

ELIZABETH HULL SOAS, *University of London*

HUSSAIN, DELWAR. *Boundaries undermined: the ruins of progress on the Bangladesh-India border*. xxiii, 187 pp., maps, bibliogr. London: Hurst Publishers, 2013. £20.00 (cloth)

Delwar Hussain's *Boundaries undermined* represents an important intervention in discussions of the India-Bangladesh border, of borderlands in general, and of development and state-formation in South Asia. Much of the work on this border explores the unfinished business of Partition in 1947 and the ways that this traumatic division not only created the border itself, but also continues to shape politics at and across it. A central trope of work on the India-Bangladesh border – mirroring broader studies of borders in anthropology and beyond – has been violence and repressive tactics of securitization. Hussain takes a different tack. Rather than focusing on the aftermaths of Partition, the border here emerges as a vantage-point on the dissolution and disillusion of modernist postcolonial fantasies of progress and development. Through rich ethnographic narratives, Hussain charts the impacts of life in this neoliberal borderland in vivid and often beautiful prose.

Boundaries undermined takes the villages of Boropani and Khonighat, on the Sylhet/Meghalaya border, as its subjects. The two adjacent spaces represent a study in contrast. Khonighat is the site of the Khonighat Limestone Mining Project, a now-defunct high-modernist mining marvel that represented the promise of

progress and development for the East Pakistani and later Bangladeshi state. The Project is situated in contrast to Boropani, a cross-border village at the heart of a major coal-mining operation. The mining operation itself is based in Indian Boropani, but much of the extracted 'black gold' is imported across the border into Bangladesh. Moreover, much of the labour used in extraction is provided by Bangladeshi workers from across the border. Where the Khonighat Project embodied a vision of progress and modernist values such as education, economic mobility, and social hierarchy, the coal in Boropani offers a neoliberal counter-measure. It is dirty and socially diminished. It offers no promise of a better future, merely a continued and impoverished existence. The contrast that Hussain draws between these two spaces and industries is, itself, fascinating. But he grounds this contrast in the socialites of Boropani. Chapters focus on everyday life in mining communities, sexuality in the borderland, development and NGOization, and the navigation of Hindu and Muslim identities across this nominally communal boundary.

What makes this book a valuable contribution is its heterodox approach to the border. Life in borderlands is always a fundamentally overdetermined affair. A focus on violence and securitization that dominates contemporary border studies often effaces the ways of living that emerge in these zones. As Hussain shows, borderlands are nexuses not only of security, but also of trade, labour, migration, and more. His study writes social complexity back into the study of borders, highlighting how the dynamics of labour, sexuality, and history combine in often surprising ways. He uses Boropani as a lens to better understand transformations underway not in border management, but in neoliberal Bangladesh. *Boundaries undermined* is a book not about violence, but about decay – the ruination of the promise of social and economic inclusion inherent in the postcolonial project writ large.

Though the book presents a number of crucial insights, it can, at times, also be challenging. Hussain's writing privileges ethnography over analysis. It is not always clear how each individual chapter fits into the broader argument. While Hussain's style spares readers an overly theoretical framing, it shies away from making broader claims about what might be learned from the case of Boropani and how it speaks more broadly to discussions of this or other borders. Indeed, the border itself remains somewhat underexplored in the broader analysis. It seems an almost incidental fact, or coincidental location, rather than a locus of criticism. For example, Hussain's most striking

chapter is titled 'The sexual life of borderlanders'. It is a fascinating study of hijras (a complex category in South Asia, broadly and imprecisely understood as transgendered or transsexual) working in and around the Boropani coal mines. The chapter shatters a range of preconceptions about hijra society and social organization. Yet, despite the Malinowskian pun of the chapter title, there is little here to explain how the border plays into or shapes hijra social dynamics. The location of analysis in 'the borderlands' appears incidental to the overall argument, rather than a critical element of it.

This aside, Hussain's book augers for a reconsideration of ethnography in border zones. *Boundaries undermined* refuses to be swept up by the pre-established tropes of borders. Rather, it offers a rich, beautiful, and empirically grounded exploration of how patterns of history and economics shape marginal spaces in surprising, yet crucial, ways.

JASON CONS *University of Texas at Austin*

PILIAVSKY, ANASTASIA (ed.). *Patronage as politics in South Asia*. 469 pp., illus., bibliogr. Cambridge: Univ. Press, 2014. £75.00 (cloth)

I'm slightly torn in my assessment of this volume on patronage in South Asia. On the one hand, it is an important topic that deserves considerably more attention than it receives and most of the contributions do indeed offer invaluable analyses of the significance and pervasiveness of patronage across South Asia. On the other hand, Piliavsky lays out the principal argumentation of the book in ways that do not reflect the sophistication of the *anthropology* of patronage. She is critical of work that simplistically equates patronage to corruption and undermining democracy. Most of the contributions would also appear to suggest this is a naïve reading of patronage. While this is indeed the case in many political science circles, and Roniger, cited repeatedly, has been a principal culprit in analysing reciprocal asymmetry (clientelism) as damaging democratic institutions, anthropologists, who have been paying attention to patronage since the heyday of patronage studies in the 1960s and 1970s, on the other hand, have not necessarily been so assertive in their political leanings. My own book (*An anthropological analysis of local politics and patronage in a Pakistani village*, 2004), which included the word 'patronage' in the title no less (pp. 4-5), was certainly not attempting to evaluate the political pros and cons of patronage, but rather seeking to understand one of the

dominant forms of political relationship in Pakistan with a view to discovering how it is maintained and reproduced. In other words, I, like other anthropologists looking at such relationships, did not try to assign a prescriptive value to patronage, but instead understood the principle of *lena-dena* (give-take) relationships as broadly constitutive of asymmetrical relationships as well as the less common symmetrical ones. It is also worth mentioning that while there were good reasons for patronage to lose some of its prominence after the 1970s, 'overwhelmingly dull' writing was not among them (p. 5). Some of most accessible and engaging ethnographies came out of those detailed analyses of the political practices of so-called 'patronage networks' (cf. F.G. Bailey, *Stratagems and spoils: a social anthropology of politics*, 1969; F. Barth, *Political leadership among Swat Pathans*, 1959; J. Boissevain, *Friends of friends*, 1974, though one could expand the list of well-written, engaging patronage studies in anthropology rather easily).

Many of the contributions are excellent, despite my disappointment at the persistence of what appears to be a misleading account of the anthropology of patronage in the introduction. The book is divided into three sections, each with between four and seven chapters: 'The idea of patronage', 'Democracy as patronage', and 'Prospects and disappointments'. One of the great strengths of this collection is the breadth of coverage across regions and faiths, though, as is perhaps justifiable given the demographics of South Asia, patronage in India among Hindus dominates. It is nevertheless gratifying to see that Pakistan, Bangladesh, Tibet, and Gulf migrants each have at least one chapter focusing on different aspects of patronage in contrasting contexts. One of the themes that comes through persistently across most of the chapters is the dynamism of patronage. Most of the contributors are at pains to represent patronage as a form of political interaction that is, in itself, neither at odds with nor beneficial to democracy. This is not consistently the case, however, and the negative aspects of the personal and partial asymmetrical reciprocity are clearly included, for example in Martin's interesting condemnation of Pakistani patronage (seemingly in ways rightly criticized by Piliavsky in her introduction).

I believe the fundamental direction of this collection is undoubtedly correct. Patronage is not one thing and it must be understood with reference to specific historical and ethnographic contexts. Nor can it be understood as isolated dyadic transactions, but instead it must be seen as part of a broader social and cultural network of

intersecting relationships and values. Finally, that it is far from unique to South Asia, and to deny the significance of patronage politics in so-called successful states is naïve at best. Although my own view is admittedly biased, having worked on Punjabi patronage since the late 1990s, what the contributors have produced is a work of tremendous significance, and any criticisms I may have of the way the collection is theoretically introduced are far outweighed by the value and originality of the individual contributions.

STEPHEN M. LYON *Durham University*

WITSOE, JEFFREY. *Democracy against development: lower-caste politics and political modernity in postcolonial India*. x, 243 pp., tables, bibliogr. Chicago: Univ. Press, 2013. £19.50 (paper)

Jeffrey Witsoe's *Democracy against development* is an incisive account of how the social relations of caste mediate everyday practices of democracy and state-formation in postcolonial India. His rich ethnography shows how 'postcolonial democracy' ought to be understood in its vernacular specificities rather than as a deviation from a universal political norm established by North Atlantic societies. In the eastern Indian state of Bihar, a state often portrayed in media and academic narratives as poor, lawless, and corrupt, Witsoe analyses the workings of 'postcolonial democracy', enmeshed as it is today in dynamic webs of changing state-city relations. In doing so, he also offers sharp insights into how '[p]rocesses of state-formation shape identities, local power, and state institutions and the relations among them' (p. 186), reminding us that the specific forms of democratic life in a region arise from the distinctive ways in which the materialities of the 'state' are embedded in everyday society.

The book begins by showing how processes of colonial state-formation shaped caste identities in modern India, and then explains how caste relations later became entangled with postcolonial discourses of development and democracy. Witsoe's multi-sited ethnography criss-crosses villages, regional sites, and the state capital to paint a fascinating portrait of what he calls 'lower-caste politics' permeating different realms of governance and everyday political life in Bihar. For Witsoe, 'lower caste' is an umbrella term that encompasses various peasant castes such as the Yadavs as well as ex-untouchable castes or Dalits. In the 1980s and 1990s, this vast coalition of caste groups rallied against upper-caste control over state institutions. Against

the background of these struggles, the election of Lalu Prasad Yadav as chief minister of Bihar in 1990 marked a significant change in the style and substance of Indian politics. Lalu's rhetoric of 'lower-caste' empowerment had a clear impact on electoral politics in Bihar and beyond. Once in power, he centralized decision-making structures around himself, and constructed local patronage networks with elected lower-caste politicians. These patronage networks were held together not by a strong party organization, but through his 'personal charisma and populist appeal' (p. 69). At the same time, Lalu's politics of patronage sought to erode the power of public institutions, which continued to be dominated by upper-caste bureaucrats. Undermining public institutions, argues Witsoe, had disastrous consequences for development agendas that these institutions were meant to implement. Development agendas were understood to be reinforcing upper-caste dominance, and therefore came to be seen in opposition to the democratic politics of caste under Lalu.

Witsoe's nuanced treatment of the politics of 'democracy against development', reveals the paradoxical effects of democratization in his rural fieldsites. For instance, Yadavs benefited immensely under Lalu's rule, albeit at the cost of other 'lower-caste' groups such as Kurmis and Dalits. Also, some Yadavs with access to Lalu's patronage networks benefited far more than other Yadavs who remained poor. When Lalu was convicted on charges of corruption, his wife Rabri Devi took over the reins in 1997. For the next eight years, Rabri ruled over the various factions that formed the grand 'lower-caste' alliance stitched together by Lalu. By 2005, however, 'Yadav Raj' had run its course, and Nitish Kumar, a prominent Kurmi leader and rival to Lalu, came to power with the aid of upper-caste groups in the state. 'Lower-caste' groups that had hitherto been left out of Lalu's networks of patronage and empowerment also came to support Nitish's call for good governance and development. Democratization, in other words, paved the way paradoxically for a renewed emphasis on development.

The volume's detailed ethnography of the everyday meanings and practices of democracy, it must be noted, follows Witsoe's painstaking fieldwork in an understudied region of modern India. His access to his Yadav interlocutors gave him a unique vantage-point from which to understand social change as it happened in Bihar. The book is an important contribution to the emerging scholarship on caste, the state, democracy, and development in postcolonial

India. It demonstrates persuasively that caste in postcolonial India is irreducibly political, both shaped by and shaping the dialectic between democracy and development. The state, of course, as political anthropologists of India have long recognized, remains a field of contestation between a wide range of social groups vying for power and privilege. One wishes Witsoe had delved deeper into the multiple meanings that development discourses have acquired in the realm of subaltern politics, especially tensions among different peasant castes and between them and ex-untouchable labouring groups. However, this criticism ought to be seen as a spur to future scholarship rather than a weakness of Witsoe's study. In the last instance, his book leaves us to ponder whether, or perhaps to what extent, democracy and development must necessarily be antagonistic to each other in postcolonial India and beyond.

LIPIKA KAMRA *University of Oxford*

Institutions and elites

CREWE, EMMA. *The House of Commons: an anthropology of MPs at work*. x, 246 pp., tables, bibliogr. London: Bloomsbury, 2015. £16.99 (paper)

It was a canny move on the part of Bloomsbury, Crewe's publishers, to launch this book – the first by an anthropologist on the United Kingdom's House of Commons – during the fervour of the 2015 general election campaign.

In creating an ethnographic account of the work carried out by our parliamentary representatives, Crewe's self-professed aim is to offer her readers 'a many-faced portrait rather than a definitive history' with 'theatre, conflict and secrets at its heart' (p. 9). In that, she broadly succeeds. Her book, *The House of Commons: an anthropology of MPs at work*, charts how people become MPs, and how they build relationships when they get there – with fellow MPs in the House, with their constituents, and with their party and its whips. The book also explores in detail the kind of work MPs do in parliament: the riffs, rhythms, and rituals of scrutiny, as Crewe terms them, and the specific work entailed in getting a bill through parliament and on to the statute books.

For those who regularly devour political blogs, diaries, newspaper sketches, and biographies, the parliamentary anecdotes retold here, engaging as they are, will probably already be well known. Many of them draw as much on those secondary

sources as on the series of interviews that have been carried out for the book. After all, the objects of Crewe's gaze are, unlike the remote tribes of the classical anthropological imagination, already very much on public record. We can even watch them, from the comfort of our armchairs, on the parliamentary channel on television, or, if we are really committed, read what they've said verbatim in *Hansard*. Tales less told, however, are those of the everyday constituency caseloads, or stories of how our MPs juggle the competing pressures of their constituents, their party whips, and the twenty-four-hour media. These, for me, were the most interesting and informative parts of the book, and also the most demonstrative of what an ethnographic approach to the House of Commons might bring to an already crowded field of interest. The book is also good on how social media – Twitter in particular – has transformed the Westminster goldfish bowl, not only putting MPs under closer and more intense scrutiny than at any time in the past, but also allowing them to communicate directly, and immediately, with their followers.

Written in uncluttered, pared-down prose, this book is, I would venture, aimed primarily at an audience beyond the anthropology seminar room – a suspicion confirmed by the introductory sections outlining what an ethnographic approach might look like. Although superfluous to the trained anthropologist, there is useful material here for introductory methods courses, as well as for the non-anthropologist readers who are, presumably, Crewe's main envisaged audience. She makes an initially compelling case as to *why* that broader audience should listen to us. Her straightforward style also makes for an accessible read.

The flipside of all this is that while the book has much to offer those with a general interest in the machinations of British politics, its wider theoretical implications – those which might justifiably have interested anthropologists – are left largely underdeveloped. References to ritual, culture, and social relations – while clearly important to the story Crewe is trying to tell – often appear as bolt-on extras, synoptic indicators to the lay reader of why the book might be considered anthropological. What, for example, might interpreting Crewe's data as examples of ritual or of culture tell us that less anthropological approaches might not? What I was left wanting more of (and I am hoping that Crewe has held this back for subsequent publications) was both the ethnographic richness to bring the relationships described fully to life, and a more detailed unfolding of the theoretical insights of which we have so far only been afforded

glimpses. There are a couple of references to Bruno Latour, for example, and his work on the production of knowledge and of truth, analytical threads that might have been utilized to tie together the ethnographic material in more telling patterns. Similarly, Crewe's own work on the anthropology of development and the anthropology of organizations more generally might have offered wider frames within which the material she presents here could have been read. But this is less of a criticism than a plea for more, elsewhere, in the future.

Reading the book in the immediate aftermath of the 2015 general election – with its references to the coalition government and to the Liberal Democrats as the third party of British politics – it already appears curiously dated, proving, perhaps, former Prime Minister Harold Wilson's much-quoted observation that 'a week is a long time in politics'. It might well have been in the rush to get the book out before the election that a more than usual amount of typographical errors seem to have slipped through the proofreader's net. There are a few other mistakes, such as the reference to the end of Labour's '18-year term in office' (p. 71) in 1979, when the Callaghan government had actually only been in power since 1974. Hopefully, these can be corrected in subsequent editions. Overall, however, these do not distract from what is a fascinating account of the web of contradictions that our contemporary politicians navigate on a daily basis. If you are interested in the processes of politics, this book is well worth a read.

JAMES STAPLES *Brunel University London*

STRYKER, RACHAEL & ROBERTO J. GONZÁLEZ (eds). *Up, down and sideways: anthropologists trace the pathways of power*. ix, 272 pp., maps, bibliogr. Oxford, New York: Berghahn Books, 2014. £65.00 (cloth)

'The consequence of not studying up as well as down are serious in terms of developing adequate theory and description', warned Laura Nader (1969: 290) in her classic essay 'Up the anthropologist' (*Reinventing anthropology* [ed.] D. Hymes, 1969, p. 290). Attempting to 'reinvent' the discipline in the America of the late 1960s, Nader urged anthropologists to look closer to home, and 'up' – at the elites and powerful institutions influencing or controlling lives of American citizens.

Nader's motive was civic indignation at the unaccountability of power-holders, as much as a desire to extend anthropology's reach beyond the

boundaries of traditional fieldwork. Today her work is a useful reminder of the political, theoretical, and methodological debates that have influenced what we deem legitimate as objects of study.

In their volume *Up, down and sideways*, Rachael Stryker and Roberto González take inspiration from Nader's work. They propose public 'anthropology with scope' that would confront problems of power from a critical social democratic perspective. Essays collected in the book attempt to 'move anthropology from a largely static engagement with and depiction of reality, to a deeper critical questioning of the means by which realities are shaped, as well as recognition of the means by which realities might be transformed' (p. 233). They seek to do so by tracing 'systems of power' – up, down, and sideways, across the 'vertical slice' – in how they tie the powerful and the powerless in complex relations of cause and consequence. The ten chapters are thematically organized ('On debt', 'On bureaucracy', 'On food', 'On truth', etc.) in a way suggestive of a catalogue of cases to which Nader's method can be applied. They cover a range of issues: from the social construction of individual debtors in the United States (Linda Coco), to land reform and dispossession in Guatemala (Liza Grandia), to extractive industries' governance in Peru (Patricia Urteaga-Croveto) and international child adoption in the United States and Russia (Rachael Stryker).

But if the collection's organization is meant to underline the presumed coherence of the volume, it also makes it more apparent that there is little unity among the chapters. Studying in different directions may be a useful method, but most essays struggle to demonstrate in a practical way how exactly 'vertically integrated' research is different from extended case study or multi-sited ethnography. More importantly, while claiming to study up, most essays study down and focus not on the workings of the elites or powerful institutions, but on the effects thereof among the dominated and the marginalized.

One wonders: are indignation and critique alone sufficient to develop adequate theory and description of power? The editors do recognize that studying up is important not only for the purpose of anthropologists' civic duty, but also for scientific adequacy. Yet there is little by way of actual ethnography of elites or powerful institutions. Hermeneutics of suspicion and reductive critique preclude inquiry into perspectives of powerful actors.

This might be a problem of access: in most cases, authors in the volume did not have direct

access to institutions and groups they criticize. But even where they did, as in Grandia's study of the World Bank's land reform project in Guatemala, the question of why and how project workers understand and justify what they do is of much less interest to the anthropologist than the injustices resulting from the reform. This suggests a certain ethnographic deficit. Voices of informants (even of those who are supposedly powerless) are just that, voices, and seem to be mere epiphenomena of analysis. Given the volume's focus on power critique, it is surprising how anthropologists' power to interpellate and define their subjects remains unchecked. The lack of ethnography manifests itself in another way: with the exception of two essays, the contributions do not recognize that power and the configuration of its structures are not an analytical given, but an ethnographic problem to explore.

So what can one take away from this book? Not all essays embrace the dominant framework of the volume uncritically, and some do interrogate the received critical wisdom of where up and down are. Monica Eppinger, for example, takes Nader's imperative as a heuristic. She asks her informants, 'Which way is up?' in order to explore how people conceive of social change in post-Soviet Ukraine. Ellen Herz, writing about meetings at the International Labour Organization, also questions the spatial metaphor that structures Nader's approach. She reminds the reader that not only anthropologists, but also their supposedly powerful subjects, are preoccupied with mapping out complex relations of influence and control in which they themselves are trapped.

There is no doubt that studying up is an imperative for anthropologists now as it was in the late 1960s. However, Stryker and González's collection demonstrates the limitations of reductive critique, making it clear how their version of a vertically integrated research cannot deliver 'adequate theory and description'.

TARAS FEDIRKO *Durham University*

WELKER, MARINA. *Enacting the corporation: an American mining firm in post-authoritarian Indonesia*. xviii, 289 pp., maps, table, illus., bibliogr. Berkeley: Univ. of California Press, 2014. £19.95 (paper)

Enacting the corporation is an ethnography of a large mining company, Newmont Gold, which examines life in the mine's corporate office in the United States as well as the Batu Hijau copper

mine in Indonesia. The volume is clearly written, ethnographically rich, and situated in a young and robust literature on mining and corporations. As a result, this excellent study should be widely read and taught.

The volume consists of an introduction, six chapters, and a conclusion. The introduction covers the book's main argument and ethnographic background. The first chapter describes the work of the team tasked with 'social responsibility' in Newmont's corporate headquarters in Colorado. The action then moves to Batu Hijau, where the corporation's relationship with stakeholders is covered. Chapter 2 describes Newmont's relation with the state, chapter 3 examines its work with village elites, and chapter 4 focuses on the grassroots. Chapter 5 is a case study which examines tensions between villagers and environmental activists, while chapter 6 examines how auditors from corporate headquarters do 'social assessment' of the local mine. A brief conclusion recapitulates the main themes of the study.

Welker's main goal in this book is to take issue with the assumption that corporations act as rational, coherent, and self-interested entities which are metaphysically prior to their employees. Rather, she argues, corporations are composed of networks of people and are construed differently, and often ambivalently, by employees and others. In taking this position, she opposes leftist portrayals of corporations as greedy, schizophrenic monsters as well as rightist approaches which see corporations as people – an idea common in the United States, where Welker and Newmont are both located. Both these positions, she argues, reify the corporation. Welker hopes to provide new ways to discuss corporate and stakeholder responsibility in the mining industry and capitalism more generally by challenging the ontological assumptions that undergird standard approaches to the corporation.

Her argument is not new. Anthropological approaches to bureaucratic institutions have been making this point since at least Britan and Cohen's 1980 volume *Hierarchy and society*. This viewpoint is also accepted wisdom in sociology and other disciplines adjacent to anthropology. But by connecting it with science studies and other recent trends, Welker freshens up this approach. So while not being totally novel, her book has the virtue of being correct: her arguments about the ambiguity of the corporations have the support of much previous literature on the concept.

In the case of the anthropology of mining, both this volume and Welker's earlier work mark a turning-point. While earlier work tended to examine the relationship between local communities and corporations, Welker is one of several authors who focus their analysis on corporations themselves. This is part of a broader shift in anthropology to critically study the corporate form. As a result, this ethnography comes at an excellent time.

The test of any ethnographic monograph is its ethnography. Once the theoretical positioning is done, is the resulting description actually valuable? Given the study's focus on the corporation, area studies specialists may find Welker's account of Indonesia proficient but not an erudite, expert contribution. Anthropologists of mining, on the other hand, will welcome this ethnography of Newmont – a major player in the global mining industry – for its original contribution to the literature.

But one does not need to be an Indonesianist or corporate anthropologist to recognize the value of Welker's ethnography. While sceptics might argue that her theoretical claims are old wine in new bottles, there is no doubt that they have enabled her to paint a rich and true account of the ironies and contradictions of the global mining industry. Anyone familiar with this field will find themselves nodding their heads as they read page after page of stories similar to those they encountered in their own fieldwork. *Enacting the corporation* does a superb job showing us the scenes that typify lifeworlds of global corporations: supposedly omnipotent executives paralysed by the bureaucratic structures of their corporations, farmers attempting to fake a love of 'sustainability' in order to meet the expectations of development workers, and inter-village politics that give the lie to first world romanticism of the global South. Welker's book is so valuable because it is so true – because of how clearly it paints this world. Because it is written in a mainstream American academic style, it is very teachable and will help students learn about the reality and ambiguity that surround global mining. While adepts will recognize what Welker describes, for novices this is an excellent way in to the ironies and tragedies of global capitalism.

In sum, this clearly written ethnography does an excellent job portraying the complexities of mining while also reminding us of some classic truths about complex corporate forms. It deserves a wide audience and will be accessible to both students and faculty alike.

ALEX GOLUB *University of Hawai'i at Mānoa*

Kinship, childhood, and parenting

DYCK, NOEL. *Fields of play: an ethnography of children's sports*. ix, 214 pp., bibliogr. Toronto: Univ. Press, 2012. £17.99 (paper)

Community sport, aimed at children and based on informal organizations and the efforts of volunteers, represents a very widespread form of social activity in Canada, but also one that is difficult to study, and which is not well recorded statistically. Dyck's engaging ethnography reveals community sports clubs to be constantly evolving organizations, not only in terms of their membership but also, as a consequence of their constant turnover, in terms of their goals, ethos, and approach to competition. This image of flux finds its reflection in the roles played by the parents, coaches, and athletes who were Dyck's interlocutors in an ethnographic engagement spanning two decades. The question of what children's sport is for or what it should be pervades Dyck's ethnography of community sport in a suburban zone close to Vancouver. While the author's stated intention is to engage community sport in its own terms, rather than to use it as a vehicle for other scholarly interests, in true ethnographic fashion his analysis expands beyond its limited field to engage wider theoretical issues, particularly in the anthropology of childhood.

Dyck conceives of community sport as a social field. As a theoretical device, this is appropriate and illuminating, and he makes a point of demonstrating the extent to which it is generated from his own experience. It allows him effectively to acknowledge and analyse the different vantage-points of athletes, parents, coaches, and spectators, and the different social contexts and roles they occupy around sport. Perhaps most significantly, the notion of sport as a social field avoids seeing it as a technique for achieving a specific social outcome. Rather, Dyck succeeds in demonstrating the various interests, positions, and personae that make community sport a complex social phenomenon which might illuminate its wider social context.

The capacity of community sport to reveal something about the wider contexts in which it exists is most evident in the way in which the author's ethnography crosses the anthropologies of childhood and of sport to advance an account of what it means to be a parent or a child in Canada. He contends, for example, that shifting patterns of employment and marriage in the post-Fordist era have had profound effects on families' capacity

to invest in parent-child relationships, at the same time as developments in discourses and policy around childrearing have made those relationships fraught with moral judgement. These judgements are fully engaged in parents' and children's interests and aspirations in relation to sport, in questions of the appropriate relation between adult organization and children's participation, and the value of sport for the development of personal qualities and social success. Dyck shows how engagement in sports elicits a continuous, reflexive re-evaluation of parental roles and responsibilities in 'sports parents' as they often anxiously discuss their performance as parents. Sport becomes a venue or medium through which parents have the opportunity to shape their own and others' perceptions of childhood.

For children, sport represents a site not only in which to relate to their peers, but also in which they have the capacity to shape and frame their relations to their parents and their value as persons. Community sport thus says something about the construction and value of childhood in Canada as a period of innocence or a preparation for future adulthood, as well as the place of development, competition, and compassion. For Dyck, the field of sport produces childhood in a dialogue between what children want from sport, how they wish to compete, and what their parents want from them and their involvement. In common with the recent anthropological literature that he cites, there is no sense that childhood is simply a site of social reproduction here; rather it is a field of more or less overt contests over what being a child should mean, contests in which the children themselves are very much active.

Dyck's analysis will be very attractive to anthropologists of childhood. While the author is perhaps over-modest and focuses on children's sports to the exclusion of wider theoretical claims, the book's strength lies in his capacity to sketch in vivid detail a social situation of almost continuous doubt, flux, and uncertainty, where none of the people involved can ever be truly certain of their role. Out of this predicament, childhood, adulthood, and parenthood emerge not as social roles, but as ongoing projects in constant negotiation. His is an account not simply of the agency of children, but of childhood as the product of what children and adults do to, for, and around one another.

WILL ROLLASON *Brunel University London*

FAIRCLOTH, CHARLOTTE. *Militant lactivism? Attachment parenting and intensive motherhood in the UK and France*. xi, 266 pp., illus., tables,

bibliogr. Oxford, New York: Berghahn Books, 2013. £60.00 (cloth)

In her ethnography of UK and French mothers who practise long-term breastfeeding and attachment parenting, Charlotte Faircloth provides a refreshingly critical approach to her discussion of childcare practices and beliefs. Her work stands in contrast to anthropological literature that emphasizes the biocultural and evolutionary imperatives of parenting practices. Based on her participant observation at La Leche group meetings in London and Paris, with follow-up interview and survey research, she illustrates how a kind of intensive mothering is operationalized and understood by the women in her sample. Faircloth respects and gives voice to the feelings and perspectives of the women she interviews. At the same time, she demonstrates how their parenting philosophy requires extreme demands of 'embodied maternal labor' (p. 137), which are explained as 'natural' in the attachment parenting literature and La Leche meetings. Faircloth demonstrates how social class and national policies facilitate or complicate attachment parenting as a parenting strategy.

In the introduction, she positions herself in the work as not a mother. Many of the women she interviewed would tell her she would only understand some things when she became a mother, but she notes the advantages to this perspective as a 'cultural novice': she was able to ask questions about breastfeeding and parenting and get detailed answers, considering that she did not have personal experience. Her stance of questioning and critiquing the use of science to back up attachment parenting decisions did, however, create some tension in the attachment parenting community, as there was an expectation that her work would serve as a form of advocacy for their practices.

In part 1, Faircloth introduces the idea that the women in her sample engage in identity work that serves to justify alternative parenting practices, such as child-led weaning, co-sleeping, and other attachment parenting practices advocated by La Leche League and described by the American paediatrician Dr William Sears. Breastfeeding has become somewhat of a 'moral imperative' in the United Kingdom, but those who continue breastfeeding past what is considered 'normal' (generally beyond the toddler stage) often perform a more 'self-justifying form of identity work, as opposed to the defensive work undertaken by formula-feeding mothers' (p. 53).

Faircloth provides context for La Leche League's definition of 'full-term' breastfeeding in the second part of the book, and she discusses how the naturalness of attachment parenting practices was articulated by her informants and in group meetings. This narrative of 'natural parenting' draws on anthropological and other scientific studies about parenting cross-culturally and among nonhuman primates. In part 3, Faircloth deconstructs the sometimes loose interpretation of existing studies to naturalize practices: their interpretations rarely consider cultural change, differences between humans and nonhuman primates, or differences between women in industrialized and foraging societies in which varying levels of support are available to women.

Though Faircloth's ethnography is largely focused on the United Kingdom, her chapter 9, about parenting in France, is particularly interesting. In both the United Kingdom and France, the women who formed her sample were operating outside of mainstream norms of parenting, though in the latter case their practices were even farther removed from the normative parenting culture. She provides the contemporary and historical context for breastfeeding and childrearing in each country, including the current laws on maternity leave that affect women's ability to maintain breastfeeding. In France, for example, women have less paid maternity leave than in the United Kingdom, which makes intensive mothering more difficult. Faircloth notes that French mainstream parenting is more focused on individuation of the child at an early age, and concerns related to long-term breastfeeding include excessive attachment, in which mothers are overly 'fused' with their children (*mères fusionnelles*).

Despite the fact that many women she spoke with had 'given up' careers permanently or temporarily to raise their children, they were far from passive agents in their mothering choices. However, while intensive parenting can create strong bonds among women and families who practise this strategy, Faircloth notes in her conclusion that there is a polarizing effect that creates tension outside of this community and even within it, as some mothers feel marginalized if they accept some, but not all, aspects of the attachment parenting philosophy.

Faircloth's exceptional and thought-provoking work has the potential to generate productive discussions and perhaps controversy in anthropology, gender studies, and the attachment parenting community. It is an important topic that could be expanded upon in

future studies for comparative purposes to other countries with different maternity leave policies or different prevailing attitudes about parenting practices.

CASSANDRA WHITE *Georgia State University*

INHORN, MARCIA C., WENDY CHAVKIN & JOSÉ-ALBERTO NAVARRO (eds). *Globalized fatherhood*. x, 419 pp., bibliogr. Oxford, New York: Berghahn Books, 2014. £75.00 (cloth)

Drawing together research from a variety of societies outside the West, this volume, part of the growing literature on fatherhood, highlights the growing complexity of this role in an increasingly globalized world, as labour flows beyond state boundaries, reproductive technologies transcend local contexts, and international conflict undermines families' stability.

Globalized fatherhood engages with the recent work on emergent masculinities, employing the concept 'emergent fatherhood' to explore the 'creativity, hybridity, and transformations abundantly apparent in both the discourses and practices of fatherhood in the twenty-first century' (p. 7). The volume focuses on five key themes concerning fatherhood: work, migration, childcare, reproduction, and family formation. These themes are explored in eight different sections, with each section including two chapters, often from fundamentally different perspectives. For example, the first section, 'Corporate fatherhood', explores policies' and market mechanisms' influence on paternal involvement. The first chapter explores public policies in the United Kingdom and Nordic countries and the second focuses on resistance to paternal leave in corporate Japan. The disparate theoretical and ethnographic material comes together to show both the power of non-legislated forces and the diversity of fathers' experiences in these very different contexts. Likewise, the third section, 'Primary care fatherhood', explores cases from Vietnam and Gaza, in which female migration and chronic violence force fathers to be primary caretakers of their children. Individual fathers in strikingly different settings struggle against cultural and institutional constraints to rise to the needs of their children in very difficult circumstances. We build an awareness of the powerful international forces that act on men, forcing them to develop new ways to be fathers in the twenty-first century.

The volume makes its intellectual contribution in extracting from these diverse cases to introduce a new vocabulary of emergent

fatherhood, conceptual categories that are useful in exploring the shifting rights, relations, roles, and responsibilities of men in our increasingly globalized society. 'Toxic fatherhood', 'ambivalent fatherhood', and 'globalized fatherhood', among others, enter the lexicon as new ways of thinking and talking about fathers.

Although the diversity of cases, categories, and perspectives speaks to the multifaceted nature of emergent fatherhoods, it also calls attention to the lack of an overarching perspective. Without a common conceptual grounding, the reader loses sight of the salient characteristics of the more general concept of fatherhood.

Several of the case studies in this volume seek to engage with larger theoretical frameworks. Thus, Greenhalgh uses the concept of assemblage to explore the experiences of unmarried men in China, consigned to perpetual adolescence without children. We come to see the body as political, and state policies as parameters which individuals both conform to and transgress. Browne, in turn, draws on political philosophy to explore the importance of the conceptualization of fatherhood to the structural constraints on primary care fatherhood in Northern Europe. She finds that liberal policies define fatherhood in rigid biological and legal terms. It would have been useful had the editors taken the opportunity to speak to these larger issues. The current volume contrasts strikingly with the more overarching theoretical framework offered in a parallel volume, *The globalization of motherhood: deconstruction and reconstructions of biology and care*, edited by Wendy Chavkin and JaneMaree Maher (2010). It would seem that the extensive literature on motherhood that grew out of feminist theory has resulted in a better understanding of the underlying transnational factors that affect mothers.

The work is commendable for its interdisciplinarity, drawing on scholars from anthropology, geography, political science, biology, history of science, and sociology. The editors argue that any understanding of fatherhood demands an international and an interdisciplinary perspective. It is interesting to note the paucity of men's authorship in this volume. Only two of the articles' authors and one of the editors are men. As a century of women have dominated the study of women's reproduction, similarly the study of masculinity and reproduction is in need of engaged research by men.

The work is a welcome contribution to the study of men and reproduction, with special attention to changing identities and roles in an

increasingly globalized world. It serves as a call for more research towards and stronger conceptual frameworks for understanding fatherhood.

RICHARD REED *Trinity University*

JOHNSON, CHRISTOPHER H., BERNHARD JUSSEN, DAVID WARREN SABEAN & SIMON TEUSCHER (eds). *Blood & kinship: matter for metaphor from ancient Rome to the present*. x, 357 pp., illus., bibliogr. Oxford, New York: Berghahn Books, 2013. £60.00 (cloth)

In recent decades, anthropologists have questioned the view that kinship relations are based on biological substances, considering instead this notion to be culturally constructed. This collection of essays contributes greatly to the debate by providing mostly historical studies about how blood has been appropriated as a metaphor for kinship in diverse ways. By offering a 'critical account of the ways "substance" – in this case "blood" – has been employed in the European past to make connectedness' (p. 3), the authors point as well to the various ways of conceiving kinship ties in European societies.

Consequently, in their introduction, the editors criticize the tendency among anthropologists to generalize about 'Western kinship', seen as 'essentially' dominated by bilateral and 'ego-focused' reckoning. Descent is taken to mean the equal sharing of a substance – mostly blood – that comes from both parents, a notion that has actually varied among European societies through time. The idea of 'substance' as a matter of physical incorporation is further viewed as a narrow construction, and the editors suggest it should accommodate many other forms of inclusion and exclusion, such as property, names, offices, and statuses. As they point out, blood 'had a rather short and very discontinuous life in European history' (p. 14).

The ten chapters of historical analyses cover a wide span of time – from ancient Rome, through the Middle Ages, to Nazi Germany – and different European societies, with rich and detailed accounts of the diverse forms of thinking about blood as an element of kinship. In addition, three essays written by anthropologists discuss contemporary ideas on blood and its varying relation to kinship in the age of biomedicine.

Among the variety of themes examined, I single out three issues relevant to the recent anthropological debate on kinship. The first is

how substance can be manipulated to establish kinship connections and boundaries according to social, political, and economic interests. The need to delineate groups entitled to rights appears markedly in Harder's and Moreau's essays on what is understood as *consanguinitas* in ancient Rome, and in Ruiz's and Delille's discussion of problems in defining the nobility around the sixteenth century. It is also present in Weston's discussion of the various interests in synthetic blood, which is thought of as avoiding kinship relations. The problem of creating boundaries, now between science and kinship, appears as well in Carsten's analysis of blood donation and in Franklin's comparison between genes and blood as elements of relatedness.

The second issue refers to the significance of blood in kinship in constituting race and nation. In Ruiz's essay about blood in early modern Castile, the quest for purity of blood in a lineage is described as part of the process of creating hierarchical distinctions among Christians, Jews, and Muslims when an awareness of Castile as a territorial entity was emerging. Aubert shows how the concern with France as a community of blood appeared in relation to the colonies' 'mixed blood' from the unions between French men and 'savage' women. By then, blood was becoming less an idiom of kinship and more of connection to a wider community, as Johnson concludes in his study of nineteenth-century Brittany. The debates on the quantum of blood that defines a person as member a particular race were part of the process of defining the nation, strikingly evident in Essner's analysis of Nazi Germany's anti-Semitism.

Lastly, in most chapters, the way in which blood relates to kinship is gendered – an important point underscored by the editors in the introduction. For a long time, kinship was structured on patrilineal terms. Blood flowed mainly from father to children, with women seen as mediators for this circulation, as Sabean argues. It was this belief, Aubert shows, that initially supported the idea that French men could impregnate 'savage' women in the colonies, since their French blood would eventually 'eradicate' Indian blood. In Essner's essay, the question of contamination through sexual relations is seen to have affected men and women differently. So blood connected fathers and mothers differently in the lineage, thus revealing gendered views of descent and generation.

Blood & kinship is an important contribution to the anthropology of kinship, by providing significant analyses of how kinship in Europe has been understood distinctly through time,

incorporating blood as metaphor in different ways.

CLAUDIA BARCELLOS REZENDE *Universidade do Estado do Rio de Janeiro*

Migration and diaspora

BELLWOOD, PETER (ed.). *The global prehistory of human migration*. 432 pp., maps, figs, bibliogr. Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell, 2014. £29.99 (paper)

The movement and timing of human migration is a subject that holds a deep fascination for science and the public alike. The questions of when our ancestors arrived, whom they replaced, and who 'owns' a space are intrinsically tied up with issues of identity and belonging. The ramifications of such issues can range from small-scale questions of ethnic identity, such as 'What does it mean to be English?', right through to debates over ownership of mineral rights or who decides what happens to prehistoric human remains.

The global prehistory of human migration is a repackaged and republished version of the first volume of the larger encyclopaedia *The global history of migration* (2013). While it is potentially useful to have this first part available as a stand-alone book, it is worth noting that two years is a long time in archaeology and especially in human evolution. Rapid changes resulting from new fossil discoveries or advances in genetics are the norm for human evolution and it is a shame that no revisions appear to have been made in between the publication of the two volumes. While it is no fault of the authors Mark Stoneking and Katerina Harvati, chapter 4, 'Early Old World migrations of *Homo sapiens*: human biology' is already looking dated and missing key new developments and discoveries based on the incredible amount of ancient DNA research made in the last two years.

The breadth of the timeframe the book covers is simultaneously a strength and a weakness. Ostensibly, the volume is in two halves: the first dealing with the Pleistocene (c.2.6 million to 11.7 thousand years ago), and the second with the Holocene (c.11.7 thousand years ago to the present day). No attempt is made at parity between the two sections, presumably an editorial decision by Bellwood or Wiley-Blackwell. The Pleistocene is dispensed with in a touch over sixty pages while the Holocene has around three hundred and fifty pages devoted to it. It is the second 'half' of the book that struggles to find a sense of narrative or flow. The individual chapters,

while almost all engaging and erudite, form a disjointed whole. The reader is left with the sense of a book suffering from a severe case of wanderlust. The title of the book also poses something of a semantic problem when considering population movements during the early part of the Pleistocene. The term 'migration' infers a planned intention to move and settle somewhere else. When dealing with early hominins (and indeed early groups of *Homo sapiens*), the ecological term 'dispersal' is much more appropriate. Although Bellwood does touch on this during his introduction, his justification for the use of the term is a weak attempt to head off this objection.

While it is inevitable that edited volumes often struggle to find a consistent voice or style, there are times when these problems are hard to ignore. There are fifty-three chapters written by a large number of authors ranging in length from a few pages to much longer contributions. Many of the contributions are excellent and offer pithy and authoritative pen sketches of their subjects. But there are a number which are less satisfactory. An example that highlights the problem is the chapter by Colin Groves (chapter 3: 'Hominin migrations before *Homo sapiens*: out of Africa how many times?'). A strong argument could be made that this chapter represents a very niche interpretation of many fossils that, while familiar to the extreme 'splitter', are based on such small samples that it seems perverse to discuss genetics (which often favours fewer species) in the same chapter. While technical discussion of interpretation, of course, has its place, it is perhaps not best suited to this type of volume.

The global prehistory of human migration is without question a work of impressive scope that simultaneously covers a deep timeframe and a broad geographical distribution of human population movement. It is not without problems, and many chapters will be out of date long before they are read, but this is the fate of all books on archaeology. As such it perhaps highlights the role that volumes such as this serve in the digital age. The cost of series such as these to libraries and students makes one think of the open access movement currently sweeping the world of journals. As a first port of call for students looking for dates, locations, and references, it is of great value in essay-writing but little beyond that.

SIMON UNDERDOWN *Oxford Brookes University*

BRENNAN, DENISE. *Life interrupted: trafficking into forced labor in the United States*. xii, 289 pp.,

illus., bibliogr. Durham, N.C.: Duke Univ. Press, 2014. £16.99 (paper)

Life interrupted would be a welcome contribution under any circumstances. It is a well-organized, clearly written, and intensely researched account of an urgent social issue. Denise Brennan's fascinating book explores the sharp link between the lived experiences of immigrants and the immigration policies that ensure most will live and work under extremely exploitative conditions. Her focus on the small subset of immigrants who have been trafficked into forced labour – those experiencing the most exploitative end of the immigrant experience – makes the book all the more powerful.

Yet what makes *Life interrupted* exceptionally compelling is both its timeliness and its refreshing sanity. The recent fixation on human trafficking by both the mainstream media and politicians, as well as the tendency to reduce the entire issue to *sexual* slavery and prostitution, is not only annoying in its sensationalism and often complete disregard for the facts, but also politically dangerous in that it serves to obscure the exploitative conditions under which millions of immigrants arrive, live, and work in the United States. Brennan never loses sight of this, and repeatedly situates the extreme of human trafficking within a broader series of policies and practices that make immigrants vulnerable to a wide range of abuses. We can only hope that this book will circulate widely among those who shape the debates and policies on these important issues.

Part of what keeps the book so grounded is that Brennan focuses less on the actual experience of illegal trafficking or forced labour (though powerful testimonies abound), and more on what happens to the formerly trafficked once they experience 'freedom'. Immigrants who obtain the designation of 'trafficked' by the US government are provided with a legal immigration status and some modest support to transition into life in the United States. Although they are now legal, and have something of a leg up on their undocumented counterparts, what they face looks less like 'liberation' than the intense exploitation experienced by immigrants in general. This situation is compounded by the fact that they often do not have the support networks that other immigrants depend on (which is partly why they fell victim to trafficking and forced labour in the first place).

The first chapter looks at the immigration and sexual politics swirling around the policies that shape the lives of low-wage migrants and sex

workers. The problem, as Brennan clearly demonstrates, is that the intense focus on the sex sector has worked to obscure and make it difficult to address the intense exploitation found in other labour sectors. The chapter does a particularly good job of showing how immigration and labour policies have ensured that immigrant workers are routinely ripped off by employers, have reduced capacity to make demands or speak up, and work under extremely difficult and often illegal conditions.

Chapter 2 explores forced labour. How do immigrants find themselves in a situation defined by forced labour, what are its conditions, and how do they get out of it? There is no single formula, but a multiplicity of paths into and out of forced labour. For (poor) immigrants, the decision to migrate in the first place is one that requires courage, ambition, resources, and a willingness to assess and accept risk. It also means that at some point during the process they will inevitably find themselves in a position where almost anything can happen. One possible outcome is forced labour.

The rest of the book, chapters 3 through 5, looks at life after forced labour. How do people who experienced significant abuse begin to piece their lives together with relatively few financial or human resources? Although there is no single path, many immigrants are ready to get on with life, to find jobs, develop relationships, obtain an education, and pursue the dreams that led them to leave home in the first place. This ambition and hope is often confronted by the reality of simply surviving – of finding safe shelter, acquiring food, and navigating social services. In other words, although the formally trafficked do get on with their lives, they are quickly faced with severe economic insecurity, few real opportunities, and all the challenges of being poor immigrants in the United States.

Life interrupted will be of interest to anyone who wants to understand how the dark side of globalization plays out in the United States. By focusing on the daily experience of forced labour and its aftermath, it avoids the sensationalism of sex trafficking while taking us into the much larger story of how millions of immigrants deal with the abuse and exploitation that define their daily lives. It is a very readable, powerful, and important book that deserves widespread attention.

STEVE STRIFFLER *University of New Orleans*

EGOROVA, YULIA & SHAHID PERWEZ. *The Jews of Andhra Pradesh: contesting caste and religion in*

South India. x, 208 pp., illus., bibliogr. Oxford: Univ. Press, 2013. £41.99 (cloth)

What can a small group of 'Judaizing' Dalits in Southeastern India tell us about either world Judaism or Dalits in India? The reader may at first be sceptical. But Yulia Egorova and Shahid Perwez's insightful and sensitively written account illuminates subtle processes of religious and social change.

The book centres on a group of forty Madiga ('Dalit') families called the 'Bene Ephraim' in Andhra Pradesh. They claim to be one of the Lost Tribes of Israel who have a forgotten oral and genealogical connection to Jewish history, which they are now seeking to revive. The ethnography describes the synagogue in the village, the Madiga Dalits' Jewish festivals and rituals, and the accounts of their Jewish identity and marriage practices.

There is a strong international dimension to the book. The authors travel to New York and Israel to visit Jewish leaders and NGOs who support 'emerging' Jewish communities. Some of this contact results in extraordinary encounters, such as the New York rabbi's wife who was asked to teach the village women to prepare *matzoh* (unleavened bread). Since she would normally buy it, she had to look up the method on YouTube. International discourses also shape the Bene Ephraim. For example, after the attacks in Mumbai, the Bene Ephraim raised concerns about terrorism, and in so doing, it asserted its Jewish profile and established connections worldwide.

Egorova and Perwez compare the Bene Ephraim to other Indian Jewish groups, notably the 7,000-strong Bene Menache. Like them, members of the Bene Ephraim hope to immigrate to Israel. Because of this, the authors predict that their practices will be forced to resemble mainstream Jewish practice if they are to pass the test for religious conversion.

The question of authenticity is present throughout the book. Is this simply a strategic move to attract foreign donors and move to Israel (p. 11)? The authors dispatch this accusation by saying that the book cannot prove or disprove the Bene Ephraim's claims and neither does it seek to. Instead they argue that Judaization is 'first and foremost a project in communal self-empowerment' (pp. 14-15)

This is important because Dalits are, after all, among the most disempowered groups in South Asia. As in the case of many other Dalits who have turned to other religions, 'Judaization could be interpreted as an attempt to recast Madiga Dalit identity in terms more positive than those

supplied in the discourse of upper-caste Hindus' (p. 172). As well as escaping stigma, intriguingly, Egorova and Perwez show that members of the Bene Ephraim also celebrate a specifically Madiga identity through eating beef, burying their dead, and denouncing inequality (p. 172), practices which are at once Jewish and Madiga.

But arguing against an instrumentalist view, the authors show that Judaism has not in fact benefited those Dalits who have adopted it. Wealth and education enabled two brothers to form the Bene Ephraim in the first place, but becoming Bene Ephraim has not especially helped anyone to be educated and wealthy. 'Becoming Jewish' can be seen as an outcome of social mobility not a means to it (p. 14).

Moreover, the Bene Ephraim has not liberated its members from caste inequality; they are still marginalized in the same way as other Dalits (p. 163). Neither has the Bene Ephraim been able to overcome the division between Dalits themselves: Indian Jews already follow caste lines (the Bene Israel are Mala while the Bene Ephraim are Madiga; pp. 160-3). Moreover, the Bene Ephraim disassociates itself from the Dalit movement and 'the entire history of Indian untouchables' (p. 53). Indeed, occasionally, it uses the tools of the oppressor (there are restrictions on synagogue entry similar to temple entry; p. 53). As such, the authors argue that Judaization can be seen as a 'pathway to social, spiritual and intellectual liberation and self-empowerment, but not as a means for social mobility' (p. 177).

But social liberation and social mobility seem to me rather difficult to disentangle. Doesn't social liberation go hand in hand with social mobility, access to better jobs, education, and concomitant independence from the dominant castes? In this respect, some of the arguments need greater contextualization. I wanted to know more about the socioeconomic and political situation of Dalits in the village generally: what jobs do they do and where are they educated? How are they connected to the urban economy? To what extent are they discriminated against? What role do the state, the Christian churches, Dalit politics, and development organizations play? Also, if Judaization is about 'spiritual liberation', then more on the spiritual benefits of Judaism would have been useful. With such information, we would have a clearer idea about what is pulling and/or pushing the Madiga Dalits towards Judaism. We learn a lot about the Bene Ephraim's global interlocutors but less about local relationships of caste, class, religion, and politics.

However, the book seeks to shed light on processes of Judaization more than the everyday realities of Dalits. As such, it can be said to have effectively advanced rhetoric theory by demonstrating how 'new audiences' are created through narrative and practice, and by showing how maverick leaders draw on the cultural resources at hand to create new social and religious formations, which may eventually lead to a better future for their members and indeed challenge conventional definitions of what it is to be Jewish.

CLARINDA STILL *University of Oxford*

GRABSKA, KATARZYNA. *Gender, home & identity: Nuer repatriation to southern Sudan*. 223 pp., maps, illus., bibliogr. Woodbridge, Suffolk: Boydell & Brewer, 2014. £45.00 (cloth)

Grabska returns to the academically well-known example of the Nuer and draws on assumptions in feminist anthropology to provide a rich, sensitive ethnographic study of displacement, return, and emplacement during recent decades of war and social flux in South Sudan. The main aim of this book is to explore the impact of displacement and emplacement on gender and generational relations, including ideas of 'home'. Challenging a simple narrative that sees war-displaced women only as victims, Grabska argues that women and men's agency makes a difference as they navigate the complex social relations of displacement and emplacement. This adds an empirical example to the thin literature that considers women's agency amidst the instability of war, while moving with a broader literature that highlights the existence of agency in warscapes and 'forced' displacement.

The book is based on the stories of two women and one man who moved to the Kakuma Refugee Camp (Kenya) in the 1990s and early 2000s, and then returned 'home' to settle in Ler (South Sudan) after the 2005 Comprehensive Peace Agreement. Far from a discrete focus on these three characters, the book sows together snippets from many people's stories collected during Grabska's seventeen months of ethnographic research. The book's organization is based on her idea that the ecological seasons of the year as recognized by the Nuer can be a metaphor for seasons of fighting, displacement, and return.

After an introduction, chapter 2 compiles previous literature and adds illustrative experiences from interviews to briefly sketch the wars of the 1980s and 1990s. Grabska's account unpredictably follows most literature in not

underscoring the primacy of the Nuer-Nuer wars, despite them prompting the largest displacements where she researched. She then discusses the challenges and opportunities of this wartime context for gender relationships. While women are not necessarily victims, she still concludes that women have often suffered more than their male counterparts, partly owing to their inability to be mobile.

Chapter 3 starts with a vivid portrait of Kakuma. Access to education, awareness of gender equality, realignment of men's control over the household's food, and the UN mechanisms for protection allowed new gender relations to be imagined alongside a reimagining of self-identity as part of the 'modern'. Yet the author questions whether this reimagining translates into practice. She also discusses how this reimagining is challenged through the discourse of 'our culture', which idealizes remembered values of the Nuerlands.

Chapter 4 looks at refugee return, emplacement, and the gendered and generational nature of 'home'. Grabska emphasizes that return is not about going back, but is about new space and a new home, with a reconciliation of cultural differences. Chapter 5 then highlights the variety of settling-in strategies and options amongst women and men. Yet the chapter does perceive a commonality in women's experiences that makes it harder for them to settle in owing to limited access to land and livelihoods.

Chapter 6 opens with an example of the marriage of a man who had returned (a 'returnee') to a girl who had remained (a 'stayee'), and it asks how emplacement is experienced differently by young men and women. Grabska describes returnee and stayee ideologies as competing, and suggests that many returnees adapt their gender ideologies to help them settle in, adhering to embedded gender ideas especially in marriage. Yet examples are also given of those who navigate alternatives. The volume ends by highlighting the theoretical implications of Grabska's work.

Although the book emphasizes the negotiation between returnees and stayees, the majority of material is from returnees and naturally emphasizes their struggles. While Grabska includes the perspectives of stayees, it would be interesting to hear more about the complexity of their experience. This might, in turn complicate the analytic dichotomy between those who stayed and those who were refugees.

The book was obviously developed before the December 2013 crisis in South Sudan. While Grabska's epilogue mentions this crisis, it is the

weakest contribution of the book, largely based on discussions at one impromptu event in Nairobi in January 2014. Yet the ongoing relevance of the rest of Grabska's book is testimony to the reality that December 2013 was not a disjuncture from past experience in South Sudan. Grabska ends with an e-mail extract from one of the book's characters. The e-mail laments that the same experiences of war and displacement are now happening again amongst the western Nuer. This book only gains more relevance in this sad context of repetition. While Grabska contributes to the academic debate and a global discussion about those who are displaced, humanitarians currently spending millions in South Sudan would also do well to read this book.

NAOMI PENDLE *London School of Economics and Political Science*

PEDERSEN, MARIANNE HOLM. *Iraqi women in Denmark: ritual performance and belonging in everyday life*. ix, 197 pp., maps, bibliogr. Manchester: Univ. Press, 2014. £70.00 (cloth)

Despite a high interest among anthropologists in Islam and Muslims in Europe, there are relatively few ethnographic accounts of Shi'a Muslim migrants, a religious minority among Muslims. Taking on 'ritual events as a cultural prism' (p. 3), Pedersen sets out to examine the construction of belonging, notions of relatedness, and relations to place among so-called 'first-generation' Iraqi women. *Iraqi women in Denmark* is the product of lengthy fieldwork undertaken in Copenhagen, with a particular ethnographic focus on three rituals, 'Id ak-fitr, Muharram, and *taklif*. While performing Islamic rituals in Denmark may well come to symbolize the women's difference, argues Pedersen, such practices simultaneously construct 'belonging to the place where they live' (p. 2). Providing the context to these interactions is the Danish welfare state, with its particular mechanisms of inclusion and exclusion that curtail opportunities for respect and recognition. While the Iraqi religious community localizes the women in Copenhagen and provides them with a desired social position, it does not offer any bridging relations to other parts of Danish society.

Pedersen's starting-point is that performance of ritual events is embedded in social relations and everyday life structures. A study of rituals elucidates broader social relations. Pedersen seeks to clarify the social and cultural dynamics in three interrelated domains of women's lives: the extended family, the ethno-religious milieu, and the domain of generational relations. She follows

the last decade's increased focus on everyday religious life and performance, contributing to the study of how this engagement affects people's sense of belonging to the local context. She examines how these rituals change as a result of being performed in a new social context, a focus frequently overlooked by scholars.

The book is divided into seven chapters, in addition to an introduction. In the introduction, Pedersen briefly introduces the reader to the particular political context and site of her study, as well as Iraqi migration in particular. Chapter 1 presents the key themes developed in the later chapters: belonging as relational and situational, ritual performance as a cultural prism, relatedness, and place-making. Pedersen's fieldwork largely comprised expanded periods of participant observation during religious events performed in homes and centres, as well as interviews and conversations with women and their relatives. Chapter 2 discusses how the women she studied settled in Denmark and how religious spaces represented a way for them to create social networks (creating strong ties). Facing difficulties in continuing their education or accessing relevant jobs, the middle-class women experienced both an underuse and devaluation of their skills, and limited opportunities for social interaction with non-Iraqi people in their everyday lives (creating weak ties).

Living in a working-class neighbourhood which many of them did not identify with, these well-educated women found few arenas that were open for social interaction with other middle-class but ethnically Danish women. The mosque and associated religious events represented spheres for socializing, and a means through which women could obtain respect and recognition. For some this involved increased and deepened religiosity and piety in Denmark. This did not, however, change their social status in the larger society. Women's involvement in an Iraqi Shi'a milieu is thus not a continuation of a relationship from their home country, but formed in the particular Danish context and processes of downward social mobility. Chapter 3 explores how the celebration of 'Id al fitr exposes the fact that the women belong to an 'ethnic minority in society' (p. 63), and reminds them of the absence of extended families in Denmark. Chapter 4 focuses on what 'community' implies, emphasizing the social differences and identification within the religious communities, and how it is differently played out. In chapter 5, Pedersen discusses how parents raise their children in Denmark, both from the perspective of the youth and from the parents' standpoint. The

chapter's focus on both the first and the second generation is highly refreshing, and I would have wished for this double perspective to have been stronger throughout the book. Chapter 6 focuses specifically on how transnational practices, such as return visits to Iraq, re-create social links with relatives and places of origin and make apparent social changes in Iraq. These experiences made the women question their notions of belonging and relatedness both to Iraq and to Denmark. While they felt a sense of belonging to Denmark, they simultaneously did not consider it possible to become 'Danish', partly owing to the ethnic exclusiveness of that category, demonstrated by the citizenship test, as well as personal experiences of discrimination, and the negative categorization of Muslims.

Overall, Pedersen calls our attention to the necessity for studies of social networks to not focus exclusively on ethnicity, but also to include gender and social class. I would have encouraged a stronger take on her distinction between belonging versus integration, and a more systematically comparative approach, in particular with the generations born in Denmark. It is a shame the book does not focus more on issues of religiosity, for example through drawing out the relationship between deep religious devotion and belonging. Notwithstanding these limitations, future research on the younger generation would do well to take Pedersen's findings on the first generation into account. In view of the continued and often misinformed debate on Muslims' (lack of) belonging in Denmark, as in other European countries, Pedersen's ethnography offers a refreshing take on how to conceptualize belonging and social relations in which processes of inclusion (through religious communities) and exclusion (lack of social mobility) work simultaneously.

SYNNØVE BENDIXSEN *University of Bergen*

VORA, NEHA. *Impossible citizens: Dubai's Indian diaspora*. xi, 245 pp., tables, illus., bibliogr. London, Durham, N.C.: Duke Univ. Press, 2013. £16.99 (paper)

This book is an ethnographical study of South Asian 'temporary' migrants in the Gulf emirate of Dubai. It is set within the historiographical framework of migration, diaspora, citizenship, and identity. South Asians in Dubai are a unique case in this framework. South Asian communities have existed in Dubai for more than a century. They are part of the so-called 'south-south diaspora', whereas most literature is dominated

by the south-north migration. They are the majority in Dubai and make up over 70 per cent of the total population. In other words, they dominate the daily culture of Dubai in terms of housing, dress, habits, food, music, and film. Nevertheless they cannot acquire local citizenship, despite their numbers and history and their economic and cultural contribution to the region. Citizenship remains restricted to the local Arabs and includes remunerations such as generous welfare benefits, free education, subsidized health care, and land and housing facilities. These conveniences are not available for non-citizens.

The continuity of 'temporality' is an important theme in this study, which shows that South Asian migrants in Dubai remain reliant on serial short-term renewable work visas to enter and reside in the city. Within this insecure context of continuous 'temporality', there is no permanent 'social contract' between individuals and the state within the framework of (universal) rights. This involves the risk that members are not considered persons as such, but seen as a means for contributing to the local societies in a neoliberal setting. The central question of this study is how South Asians experience, narrate, and perform belonging to Dubai within the state of 'permanent temporariness'. Vora shows, for example, that families are only allowed to settle in Dubai if the husband earns a certain minimum income. Foreign children born in the United Arab Emirates are included on their father's visa until the age of 18 or the end of their studies. Girls, however, are considered to be dependent until they marry or until they find work, through which further visa sponsorship is established and guaranteed. This shows that the formalities of 'belonging' create highly uncertain circumstances and that these are profoundly gendered. Young women face insecurities resulting from uncertainties relating to questions of marriage and where they will live in the near future.

In Dubai, there is no hyphenation where ethnic and national belonging are combined, like Asian-American/Indian-American in the United States or British-Asian in the United Kingdom. Indians in Dubai identify with the city, but not with the United Arab Emirates. At the same time, it is clear – being a majority in Dubai – that their Indian identity is paramount. This Indian identity, however, is shaped in Dubai through Indian families, Indian neighbourhoods, and Indian (private) education. Many informants noted that Dubai was more of an extension of India than a foreign country. For many South Indians, for example, Dubai was accurately nearer (in flying time) than New Delhi. Therefore, three hallmarks

in the literature on the Indian diaspora – the myth of return, nostalgia, and hybridity – tend to be missing in the narratives of Indians in Dubai.

The bulk of the fieldwork was conducted in 2006, two years before the global economic downturn in 2008 and the Arab Spring. Mainstream Western media and scholars alike have placed the protests against neoliberalism, banking, and Arabic regimes in the area within the framework of ‘citizens’ rights and workers’ protests. In the Gulf area, however, the majority of the inhabitants are not citizens with a ‘social contract’; these are inhabitants who claim a ‘right to the city’. In this respect, Vora builds upon the work of Aihwa Ong and Arjun Appadurai. She defines her subjects as ‘impossible citizens’ because they define their identity and sense of belonging not despite the legal structures and constraints but through these structures of continuous temporariness. Despite these fascinating insights, I would have welcomed some more discernment and reflection on differences in how ‘impossible citizens’ define themselves between the middle and lower classes, or between Hindus and Muslims (especially in an Arabic environment). Are there any? Do Indians in the Gulf States contribute to national hockey, football, and cricket matches? Are there areas where these impossible citizens compete on a level playing field? Or do they live in a segmented society that almost equals apartheid?

Despite these minor limitations and questions, this book is a remarkable study in the field of Gulf Studies, migration, diaspora, and citizenship. It challenges these concepts with the exceptional case of Dubai. In addition, Vora’s ethnographic approach aims at understanding these concepts in the framework and daily lives of the subjects themselves and not that of theorists and academics. Her painstaking research has resulted in an extraordinary and extremely well-documented contribution. The book is well organized and well written. It will be welcomed by students, professionals, and academics alike.

GIJSBERT OONK *Erasmus School of History, Culture and Communication*

Race, culture, heritage, and identity

BESSIRE, LUCAS. *Behold the Black Caiman: a chronicle of Ayoreo life*. xiii, 310 pp., illus., bibliogr. Chicago: Univ. Press, 2014. £19.50 (paper)

Far away from a world where ‘Custom is king’, as Herodotus or Marett’s friends would have had it,

the Ayoreo of the northern Chaco do not live according to traditional myth, ritual, and lore. They use cell phones, demand payment from anthropologists, buy noodles and Coca-Cola in Mennonite air-conditioned supermarkets, and eagerly enjoy martial arts films starring Jean-Claude Van Damme. In the dry borderland between Bolivia and Paraguay, they are also systematically marginalized, abused, patronized, and tamed. It is no surprise, then, that Bessire’s narrative is a tale of terror, decadence, and disintegration with bulldozers, rapes, and murders galore.

The book studies the multilayered construction of Ayoreo identity as a contested object, as well as the native struggle to self-objectify the process. Ayoreo refuse to adapt to external stereotypes that alienate them from what they consider to be their true nature, and try to control the terms of their own transformation: they have abandoned all ‘traditional’ practices (despite older ethnographers’ wishes) (p. 44), talk about God and not about colonization (despite younger ethnographers’ wishes) (p. 112), and ask for digital recorders to tape the very same myths they have allegedly forgotten (p. 121). They persistently defy every primitivist label forged by mestizos, missionaries, and anthropologists: perhaps the most controversial item here will be Bessire’s discussion of the somewhat asphyxiating fashion of ontology and perspectivism (‘Instead of jaguars who are humans, I found Indians who were animalized’, p. 15).

Despite programmatic intentions, nevertheless, some issues (*puyaque* interdictions, the cultural meaning of salt lakes) have not actually gone beyond the findings of orthodox ‘Ayoreology’ (Sebag, Kelm, Bórmida, Fischermann, and others). The analytic recourse to sympathetic magic (pp. 119, 154) or millenarianism (‘apocalyptic futurism’) (pp. 128, 136, 145) does not seem to do the trick either. The hagiography on the back cover states that the book is ‘iconoclastic’. On the contrary, it has almost all the fashionable musts: ‘subjectivities’, ‘bodies’, ‘ontologies’, ‘immanence’, and so on. The less convincing issue, though, seems to be the constant obsession with political correction (pp. xiii, 13, 171), denouncing ‘the guilty pleasures of ethnography’ (p. 13), while conspicuously spreading the word ‘I’ throughout the book (‘Yet I was haunted by images I could not forget and questions I could not answer. The disquieting sense that I might have gotten everything wrong, that I had misunderstood entirely . . .’, p. 10). The missionary characterization of Ayoreo as ‘brown gold’ is

criticized as well (p. 97), but surprisingly they appear later described as 'brown bodies' (p. 153).

Rather than its contribution to theoretical discussion, the book's strength lies in the ethnographic description of Ayoreo modernity. The most engaging feature is the abundance of oral testimony and its context. Analytical highlights include the careful description of the Ayoreo concept of shame (pp. 147-61), female prostitution (pp. 165-70), or addiction to glue and coca paste (pp. 173-5). The critique of the rhetoric of 'ethnocide' is well taken too (p. 107). More interesting even is the deconstruction of the 'politics of isolation' (pp. 194-220). Sponsored by a dense industry of anthropologists, missionaries, indigenous leaders, politicians, NGOs, and even the United Nations, the cyclical nostalgia about 'isolated' or 'uncontacted' groups tends to be based upon feeble proof: a glimpse of a hiding body, a half-hidden track, a handful of ashes, a twig snapping at dusk.

It is a pity the edition has been so sloppy in its flagrant disregard of Spanish: 'Gaston' (pp. 25, 33, 233), 'empelotudos' (p. 64), 'Los indios Ayoreá' (p. 240), 'Relación histórica' (p. 246), 'orienta Boliviana' (p. 268), 'diciembre' (p. 291), 'Perez-Diaz' (pp. 270, 293), 'hermeneutica', 'illusion', 'construcción', 'fenomenológica', 'etnología', 'indígenas' (all of them in the same bibliographical entry, p. 285), and so on. Bórmida's article entitled 'Cómo una cultura arcaica concibe su propio mundo' is rendered as 'Como una cultura arcaica conoce la realidad de su mundo' (p. 240). These shortcomings can also be found in Portuguese: 'casadores' ('caçadores'), 'comunicacao' ('comunicação') (p. 283), and so on.

I did not find the literary figure of the Black Caiman particularly persuasive. But this is subjective and it may not be there to convince us anyway. Bessire readily admits that the Ayoreo could disagree with his interpretations (p. 222). Their efforts to achieve self-identity are constantly dissolved into fragmented elements, aligned into new constellations, and broken apart again. If there is a conclusion, then, it has to be almost existentialist. The Chaco is dystopic, nonsensical, and absurd. Efforts to reconstruct Ayoreo cosmology are vain: no indigenous knowledge can redeem humanity and save it from the world it has created. The experience of reading this book is as ambivalent as the reality it describes. The reader may judge whether this is a compliment or a critique.

DIEGO VILLAR CONICET (*Consejo Nacional de Investigaciones Científicas y Técnicas*)

DAWSON, ALLAN CHARLES. *In light of Africa: globalizing blackness in northeast Brazil*. ix, 191 pp., illus., bibliogr. Toronto: Univ. Press, 2014. £16.99 (paper)

The book is based on research undertaken between 2003 and 2006, initially in West Africa and subsequently in the Brazilian Northeast. Theoretically, the author proposes a shift away from tracing the cultural origins and surviving traditions of enslaved Africans and their descendants in the Americas, focusing instead on the rhetorical and ideological effects of discourses about Africa on Black and Brazilian ethnic identities. He aims to show how in Brazil, just as in the United States, African diaspora communities do not actually have the single coherent ethnic identity that they profess, since their political positions confuse the idea of a unitary history with the positing of a shared cultural origin. Both race and other ethnic identities, the book proposes, are constructed situationally in relation to other individuals, collectives, and wider society, forming part of a dynamic process that responds to specific social contexts that can involve racism, prejudice, and marginalization.

Dawson sets out by arguing that the discourse on 'Blackness' in Brazil – itself part of a globalized process that involves journeys across the Atlantic and the role of anthropologists as key figures in shaping the debate – led to a primordialized and generic African identity. This identity, he writes, claims to be Yoruban but is merely an illusion since kinship, political leadership, and the everyday life of the populations concerned are organized nothing like those of a Yoruba village: these collectives should be understood primarily as Brazilian. The problems generated by this essentializing identity, the author adds, include transplanting notions of purity to ethnic groups without them, the creation of idealized African types, and the blanket imposition of identity constructs, all of which ultimately works to maintain racism and intolerance and to create new kinds of hegemony.

A preliminary issue thus guides the entire analysis: the inquiry into alternative forms of Black identity that do not involve claiming 'Africanness'. Anticipating this line of analysis, the research behind the book adopted a multi-sited ethnographic approach, deliberately eschewing groups traditionally seen as the defenders of an indomitably Yorubanized Blackness, like Salvador's Candomblé temples and Afro associations. One consequence of this approach was that the investigation dispensed with close

participant observation: instead, the empirical data supporting the book's conclusions are taken mainly from unstructured interviews and surveys, supplemented by the author's personal impressions. Unsurprisingly, therefore, most of the ethnographic examples come from tourist situations – ranging from interactions with traders to musical concerts – or from other areas deemed representative of Brazilian society, such as TV soap operas or carnival.

Striving to avoid the reification of categories that no longer exist and perhaps never did, the research basically involved contrasting the illusions of its informants with the researcher's own certainties, obtained from the literature on Africa and his research there. This methodology also explains the frequent use of quote marks and sceptical expressions whenever the author cites the supposedly essentializing remarks made by his research subjects. In analysing them, the book resorts to a market logic, evident in the copious use of expressions like 'commodified Africanness', 'entrepreneurs of identity', 'cultural brokers', 'key stakeholders', 'symbol bank', 'symbolic resources', 'cache of authenticity', 'competitive religious marketplace credibility', 'negotiators of Blackness', or 'added symbolic collateral'. Never once interrogated, these ideas establish an analytic language that matches the research angle but which is frequently refuted by the interviewees themselves.

The book contains some serious factual errors. These include the claims that Edison Carneiro was white, that Catholicism was never an official religion in Brazil (it was until 1890), and that the 1988 book by Beatriz Dantas, *Vovó nagô e papai branco*, tries to identify Africanisms (when her argument is actually very similar to Dawson's). However, the main limitation of *In light of Africa* is its highly instrumentalist approach, the presumption that the cultural constructs under discussion are entirely contingent and open to free manipulation. This approach colludes with an underlying disdain for the memory of the populations under study, cast aside in the haste to avoid tracing remnants of Africa. Rather than presenting a diversity of voices, then, the book ends up conflating different forms of ethnocentrism, presenting them as the same by implying that minority groups must be organized in the same way as majority groups: in exclusionary form. By extending its argument far beyond what the actual data suggest – and even against them – the book succumbs to a unilateral positivism that deliberately throws away the most interesting viewpoints in any anthropological dialogue: those that come from somewhere other

than the researcher's universe and his or her own convictions.

GABRIEL BANAGGIA *National Museum, Brazil*

GEISMAR, HEIDY. *Treasured possessions: indigenous interventions into cultural and intellectual property*. xvi, 297 pp., maps, illus., bibliogr. Durham, N.C.: Duke Univ. Press, 2013. £16.99 (paper)

Treasured possessions explores what happens when international and national laws and conventions concerning property – especially copyright and trademarking – combine with indigenous practices. It is a story that could easily have ended up as a narrative about indigenous people being ripped off as their cultures are turned into the property of others. Or it might have been a celebration of examples of resistance to these processes, with indigenous people copyrighting cultural products themselves. What Heidi Geismar presents here, however, is more complex and subtle – and more interesting.

She does not deny that either of the above two processes occur. The case of a Māori singer being prevented from using her own first name on her own album because that name had been copyrighted by a German media company is just one example of the former. Geismar also gives plenty of examples of indigenous deployment of copyrighting and other legal processes, but she points out that, as these deploy non-indigenous forms with roots in colonial histories, what is involved cannot be cast as 'resistance', a rather blunt analytical tool in any case. Neither, she argues, should such deployment be regarded as symptomatic of an impossibility of escaping an all-encompassing, neoliberal property regime.

Instead, through a detailed analysis of cultural and intellectual property in Vanuatu and Aoteroa New Zealand, *Treasured possessions* tells a different story – one in which indigenous perspectives reshape existing and emergent notions of property itself. Moreover, drawing on these two different Pacific cases, which have different colonial histories and indigenous presence – ni-Vanuatu as an indigenous majority and Māori as a minority within official state 'biculturalism' – shows that there is not only one potential mode of such reshaping. At the same time, it also reveals how indigenous developments in one nation and wider global indigenous activism can be mobilized to help inform those in another, thus broaching usual frames of analysis. This, Geismar argues, amounts to an 'indigenization of cultural and intellectual

property'. Furthermore, this indigenization accomplishes a 'provincialization' of customary 'Western' property notions and regimes, revealing them as located and specific rather than universal.

This is insightfully shown in relation to a range of fields in which property is at issue in both nations, giving considerable attention to law and customary practices, and especially showing how *kastom* in Vanuatu and *taonga* in New Zealand entail specific entitlements, social relationships, and moralities that reshape the ways in which copyright, trademarking, and more broadly 'the economy' and 'value', are performed. In a lively chapter on the auctioning of *taonga*, for example, Geismar illustrates how Māori change the behaviour of auction houses and dealers – and the prices that *taonga* attract – through their arguments about the nature of *taonga* and how they should be properly transacted, including the potential for harm to befall those who fail to respect these. This has altered the workings of auction houses dealing with *taonga* not only in New Zealand but also internationally.

Implicated here, too, are museums, which play key roles in mediating between different players, and in making publicly visible indigenous notions of property, objects, and value. In presenting objects as 'cultural heritage', they not only ally local practices to a powerful international discourse, but also articulate a mode of talking about objects and possession that is neither that of commodities nor that of gifts. While 'cultural heritage' is an expanding global discourse, at least partly motivated by international organizations, Geismar argues that it does not necessarily supersede the indigenous, and also that it has itself been transformed by indigenous perspectives, with, for example, Vanuatu having played a prominent role as model and participant in formulating UNESCO's intangible cultural heritage convention.

In making what she describes as a generally 'optimistic' argument for the potential of indigenous agency to reshape not only how practices such as copyright and ownership are thought but also how anthropology might address them, Geismar is thoroughly cognizant of the counter-arguments and counter-currents. This can make for complicated but rewarding argumentation. It also allows her to find alternatives to the usual offer of either private ownership or what is usually posited as its most radical alternative, namely the cultural commons.

In the world of publishing, however, creative commons can still be a radical move. *Treasured possessions* is available as a free download from the author's homepage, under a creative

commons 'Attribution-noncommercial-NoDerivs 3.0 unported license'. Because valuing and treasuring have a sensory and material dimension, too, it is reassuring that *Treasured possessions* is also available as a beautiful object, with nice paper, high-quality colour images, and a chunky good-to-handle feel – though for a price.

SHARON MACDONALD *Humboldt University*

WADE, PETER, CARLOS LÓPEZ BELTRÁN, EDUARDO RESTREPO & RICARDO VENTURA SANTOS (eds). *Mestizo genomics: race mixture, nation, and science in Latin America*. xii, 304 pp., illus., figs, tables, bibliogr. Durham, N.C.: Duke Univ. Press, 2014. £17.99 (paper)

In *The open veins of Latin America* (1997), Uruguayan writer Eduardo Galeano wrote: 'The whole process was a pumping of blood from one set of veins to another: the development of the development of some, the underdevelopment of others' (p. 83). It is to the great credit of these authors that in circumstances of 'development' they recognize that transfusions of blood, DNA, and other heritable matter are as much material as metaphorical, as much historical as bioscientific.

This suitably ambitious volume reminds us how bioscientific endeavours never live up to their universalizing and essentializing pretensions, and not because we are talking about Latin American rather than Euro-American contexts. That geographical distinction itself is shown to be problematic at intra- and international scales by demonstrating how place can be code for race. This is foregrounded throughout the book in terms of the ongoing legacy of race and the present appeal of genomics in national identity-building among political elites. Race is a palimpsest, a material-semiotic apparatus that informs genomic science rather than having transcended it. Other distinctions, implicitly, are shown to be unstable, including disciplinary divides and the competing epistemological and methodological claims of the human and natural sciences. Broadly underpinned by Actor-Network Theory, though not exclusively nor in orthodox fashion, the many contributing authors convey a sense of unstable hybrid processes begetting further hybrids socially, biologically, and politically at a variety of scales.

The nine chapters and appendix are organized along two comparative axes: nation-building and geography. The historical section includes three case studies of how social and biomedical conceptions of race were (and are) part of the

ongoing construction of national identities in Brazil, Colombia, and Mexico, respectively. Where Santos *et al.* indicate the Brazilian state must deal with a legacy of attempted 'whitening', Beltrán *et al.* suggest in the Mexican case it is a history of privileging 'the mestizo', as locally conceived. Restrepo *et al.*, for their part, demonstrate how conceptions of African, European, and 'disappearing Indian' in Colombia persist in the present through gene mapping indigenous communities via an idiom of 'salvage genetics' (p. 70).

The contemporary section considers case studies of genomics laboratories and projects for these same three countries in the early twenty-first century, and a useful synthetic chapter focuses on present laboratory practices as materially informed by social categories in 'tension between sameness and diversity' (p. 190). As such, these chapters add not only to relatively neglected non-Western bioscience studies, but also to postcolonial studies, though the term and literature to which it refers are rarely used. Kent and Santos's chapter describes how genomics is presently used in southern Brazil to maintain claims simultaneously to a Gaucho whiteness and a salvage genetics of indigenous Charrua. The materiality of material-semiotics comes out particularly forcefully in the chapter by Olarte Sierra and Díaz del Castillo H. on a Colombian population genetics lab's efforts to publish findings using two different systems of classification, and Deister's chapter on the power of different blood- and DNA-sampling practices in Mexico.

Several questions and themes recur throughout, such as how does genomics rely on the concept of race in nation-building processes, even when explicitly disavowed by scientists, politicians, and the public? How does the historical and geographical variability of race, indigeneity, and *mestizaje/mestiçagem* help shape 'imagined genetic communities' (pp. 29, 131) in concrete ways? How do variable conceptions and practices of genomics, in turn, alter the concepts and practices of race, mestizo, indigenous, and nation? What strategies and techniques are deployed in an effort to stabilize what are fluid and self-deconstructing processes, and by whom? As Beltrán *et al.* put it, 'Is there any scientific framework under which a national genomics makes sense?' (p. 103).

Though comparative and fieldwork-based studies undermine easy generalization, which this volume does admirably, they inevitably draw attention to their own limits. To varying degrees, the contributors recognize they can't do full

justice to the geographical, sociocultural, epistemic, biomedical, and historical diversity within the three nations anchoring the comparative framework. To say the multiplicity of laboratory practices receives more attention than the gender dimension of race, or the influence of historically racialized national science policies receives more attention than the significance of genomics on cultural practices beyond the issue of race, is not an indictment, but rather an inducement or call to build on several such passing references in the text. The strength of this volume lies in highlighting the multiple indeterminacies at play when bioscience is a privileged means for grounding national identity and development.

UDO KRAUTWURST *University of Prince Edward Island*

WILSON, ROSS J. *Cultural heritage of the Great War in Britain*. ix, 245 pp., table, illus., bibliogr. Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2013. £65.00 (cloth)

In the centenary of the 'Great War' of 1914-18, a myriad of national and local exhibitions, publications, shows, and heritage initiatives are demonstrating Britons' 'hypnotic' fascination with this conflict, to borrow a word from Ross Wilson in *The cultural heritage of the Great War in Britain*. The book, written before the start of the centenary, documents the pervasive presence of the Great War in British public culture, arguing that in twenty-first-century Britain, people still 'live with' this war, materially and psychologically (p. 1). The 'heritage' examined is both tangible (museums, memorials) and intangible, an 'ethereal legacy' (p. 54) of colloquialisms and visual and discursive imagery or 'myths' such as 'over the top', 'no man's land', 'lions led by donkeys', 'over by Christmas', 'the trenches', and so on. Wilson documents the use of these in media and parliamentary debates, public campaigns, and web forums to comment on current issues such as wars (e.g. Iraq or Afghanistan) but also policy (e.g. the future of the National Health Service). They are 'heritage' because they actively evoke the past to approach and understand the present; and because they encapsulate and convey a 'preferred' understanding of the past (p. 58): the war's futility owing to the incompetence and irresponsibility of leaders; and the suffering, victimhood, and humanity of ordinary soldiers. This narrative forms a 'frame' for placing contemporary issues 'within a comprehensible

structure' (p. 16): across the political spectrum, people use the war to call power to account for failing to protect the country and the interests of 'ordinary people' (e.g. by taking the country to war, privatizing the National Health Service, etc.); or also to affirm 'dissonant' identities in tension with officialdom (e.g. local, regional, politically oppositional). For Wilson, this critical potential explains why this version of the war and, by implication, the war itself have been 'retained' in British popular consciousness: they persist because of their 'utility' (p. 15 and *passim*). Not entirely consistently, he later (chap. 6) contends that the war has remained in consciousness because it was a trauma, which for Slavoj Žižek is remembered and revisited as a source of political critique (pp. 180ff.). Following Wendy Brown, Wilson suggests that trauma, in this case the Great War, is a 'symbolic resource' for 'anti-democratic' critique in the sense of holding to account, from the left or right, the institutions that claim to uphold democratic values (p. 188).

This conclusion does not fully account for Wilson's own interesting point that in today's Britain around the very same 'traumatic' event people can also uphold and proclaim uncritically (or indeed explicitly defend) the values of nationhood and service to established authority (whether military or political). This is developed in a discussion of the act of 'witnessing' war and atrocity (pp. 114ff.). Wilson perceptively notes that 'witnessing' the Great War in today's Britain can be *both* 'active' – when the war and its victims are judged in light of current concerns (e.g. by branding it 'imperialist slaughter', p. 122) – *and* 'passive' – when it is contemplated as past heroism (e.g. in the context of official Armistice Day observances), thereby upholding hegemonic values of sacrifice and defence of the nation. He explores this duality in relation to Great War museums (chap. 6), suggesting that museum displays largely invite visitors to contemplate a re-created past (objects, trenches, etc.) with no links to the present, positioning them as 'passive' witnesses to soldiers' fortitude and thus to state-sanctioned ideas of service and heroic death. However, 'active' witnessing is encouraged in on-line spaces increasingly created by museums for visitors to upload their own war mementoes and memories. In these spaces, the link between past and present is continually and spontaneously drawn, as people compare the suffering of relatives or others in the Great War with the predicament of troops in current wars; or link the mental anguish of physical pain of family who survived the war with their own pain and shock in learning of it. People here express a

judgement on the war past and, through it, on the present; Wilson also writes that via such acts the war is evoked and re-created as 'lived, contingent trauma' – at any rate, as a felt part of the present as opposed to fully past (p. 163).

Belated affective responses to relatives' past pain or trauma are plausible (cf. S. Feuchtwang, *After the event*, 2011; M. Hirsch, *Family frames*, 1997). However, Wilson's argument about the 'utility' of the war as 'trauma' in British public life assumes rather than demonstrates that such personal responses, rooted in family history and perhaps in a desire to care for one's dead (cf. F. Cannell, 'English ancestors: the moral possibilities of popular genealogy', *JRAI* 17: 3, 2011), filter into public and political discourse. Perhaps predictably, as an anthropologist I feel that what is missing (though tantalizingly glimpsed in the analysis of on-line forums) is an examination of the 'social life' of the 'heritage' of the Great War in social and discursive milieus in which individual and familial experiences encounter public and national life (localities, neighbourhoods, associations, schools, and also on-line communities). Such a study may or may not support Wilson's extension of the term 'trauma' to public life and discourse; but I suspect that it would add nuance to his conclusion that the Great War in Britain is only ever remembered in one way, and for one purpose. While the 'futility' view of the Great War (as one of my informants once referred to it) is undeniably widespread in Britain, I wonder to what extent it is shared, for instance, by people of different generations, or those approaching the war past through expert discourses such as those of archaeologists, local amateur historians, or members of heritage associations, or indeed those with particular cultural-historical backgrounds (e.g. ethnic, former colonial). All these partake in political processes of identity formation and negotiation but in my experience are also moved by the wish to understand and transmit, not always in a critical way, the experiences of an earlier generation. This is a comprehensive and timely study, but I am not convinced that it accounts fully for the almost mesmeric heritage power of the Great War in today's Britain.

PAOLA FILIPPUCCI *University of Cambridge*

Religion, ritual, and belief

CHIDESTER, DAVID. *Empire of religion: imperialism and comparative religion*. xx, 377 pp.,

bibliogr. Chicago: Univ. Press, 2014. £23.00 (paper)

Empire of religion, a detailed analysis of the origins and early development of the scholarly field of comparative religion, is a culmination of many decades of research and teaching by David Chidester. While most chapters focus on the work of one or two scholars (these include Friedrich Max Müller, E.B. Tylor, Andrew Lang, James Frazer, Henri-Alexandre Junod, and W.E.B. Du Bois), many other writers are discussed, some in detail. This discussion of comparative religion ranges widely through various academic disciplines, while maintaining a strong focus on South Africa as a primary source of data, with a foray in the final chapter into the African-American world of religion.

Chidester contends that the field of comparative religion evolved in the nineteenth century under the influence of European, particularly British, imperialism, and this political and intellectual system has moulded the discipline into the present, although his main focus is the nineteenth and early twentieth centuries. Chidester points out in his introduction that this book is not a history of religious beliefs, experiences, or social formations, but a history of the representations of religion. He argues that there was a triple mediation between the indigenous, colonial, and imperial. Indigenous peoples negotiated between ancestral traditions and Christian missions. Colonial-based experts generated reports about indigenous religious systems, which were mediated at the imperial level as the 'hypothetical reconstructions of the archaic primitive and contested civilizing projects, the indigenous and colonial were absorbed into imperial theory' (p. 4). Our knowledge of non-Christian religions developed through this triple mediation, so we have come to know and understand these religions through the lens of an imperial system and its values.

Although Chidester argues that comparative religion has a global focus, most of his data derive from South Africa, which is the locus of his discussion and where he has lived and worked for most of his academic life. He shows how the indigenous sources of information on religion were gathered by colonists with their own prejudices and preconceived ideas about 'primitive' or 'savage' religion mainly from informants who were Christians or influenced by Christianity. This information was then relayed to theorists based in the imperial metropole, people such as James Frazer, E.B. Tylor, and Andrew Lang, who, often working from the same data

(such as those gathered by Henry Callaway), developed their conflicting theories of the origins and development of religion. These experts treated the information as raw data outside their social, political, and economic context: that is, as if they were not gathered in a colonial system which had seriously disrupted the life of the people being investigated. These observations would, of course, apply to anthropology as a whole, not just comparative religion. Chidester describes this process as the production of theory, the process of turning raw religious materials into intellectual manufactured goods.

In his chapter 'Thinking black', Chidester makes the point that it was not just colonial outsiders who were influenced by prevailing ideologies of empire but also indigenous intellectuals. Among many examples, he discusses the Zulu writers Magma Fuze and Petros Lamula, who both used the Bible as a text for arguing about their origins. Basotho novelist Thomas Mofolo, writing about the Zulu Shaka (Chaka in the novel), adopted ethnographic conventions and Christianity to inform his writing. These indigenous writers reversed the indigenous, colonial, imperial mediations; thinking black, they produced knowledge using imperial sources to make their point about indigenous religion and society. These texts in turn were used by anthropologists as ethnological fact.

Chidester supports his argument with a detailed analysis of the texts and authors he has assembled, reading not only each text against others, but one edition of a text against later ones. There is some unnecessary repetition through this densely written book, which ends with a detour to the United States and African-American religion under the chapter heading 'Enduring empire'. A broadening of the survey of influences on the imperial theorists with some discussion of the Australia Pacific region, which was an important source of data for the debates on the origins of religion, would have further reinforced the argument.

PEGGY BROCK *Edith Cowan University*

DASWANI, GIRISH. *Looking back, moving forward: transformation and ethical practice in the Ghanaian Church of Pentecost*. xiv, 255 pp., map, illus., bibliogr. Toronto: Univ. Press, 2015. £17.99 (paper)

Daswani is interested in the way members of Ghana's Church of Pentecost (CoP) in practice negotiate existential or ethical issues in breaking with a non-Christian past while preserving their

ties with acquaintances and particularly kin (the idea is well caught in the title *Looking back, moving forward*). In his treatment, he claims to integrate two relatively new fields, the anthropology of Christianity and the anthropology of ethics. He attempts this mainly in telling the stories of some contacts in CoP, in Ghana, and in London. The fieldwork was done in 2002-3, though the book is obviously a subsequent reflection on and update of his Ph.D. Daswani's grandfather lived in Kumasi, although Daswani himself was born in India, and spent most of his life in Singapore before coming to London for this research. Daswani explains that he is not a Christian, and admits to knowing little about Pentecostalism before he began this project. He has read widely, and footnotes make reference to all sorts of authors, debates, and regions, some of which are more helpful than others.

He begins by painting the Pentecostal scene in Ghana, describing CoP and stressing its difference from later charismatic movements, an important difference being that the official CoP does not allow that evil forces can touch a born-again Christian, whereas the later charismatics allow just that and spend a good deal of their time helping followers overcome these forces. (Having made this distinction, however, most of the book suggests that it is not particularly relevant, since virtually every example is of combating these forces.) Chapter 2 narrates how a Kumasi CoP pastor hosts a Nigerian who has members praying with sand to break ancestral curses. When summoned by the CoP leadership to explain, the pastor essentially apologizes, reaffirms the official CoP position, but nevertheless felt justified in his behaviour because his wife had suffered witchcraft attacks resistant to church-sanctioned treatment and was healed soon after the Nigerian's ministrations. This is a good illustration of Daswani's thesis: the ethics of interconnectivity demand a response often in tension with any official line. Chapter 3 shows how prophets in their prayer centres and prayer camps combat witchcraft and other malignant forces, often predicting (even effecting) overseas travel. Chapter 4 tells the story of two women, one a Christian who, when troubled by spirits, turned to a traditional priest, and then, healed, returned to her Christian life; another who, suffering spiritual attacks, went to a CoP prayer camp and, being healed, then became Pentecostal. (Since the first was not a CoP member and the second subsequently left CoP, it is not perfectly clear whether this book is about the Pentecostal scene in Ghana generally rather than CoP in the narrow sense suggested in the subtitle.) The final three

chapters deal with migrants, particularly to London, members of CoP's Pentecostal International Worship Centre in Dagenham, where a new work economy and migrant identity further complicate ethical negotiations.

Daswani achieves his central aim well enough: to show the complexity for Christians of negotiating new challenges while maintaining traditional ties. This reviewer, however, wondered whether he perhaps overdefined Pentecostals by making 'transformation' such an essential element. Although this may well capture many (even most) Pentecostals, there seems every indication that the sector has plenty of nominal adherents as well (and indeed some of Daswani's examples show that any transformation is hardly profound). For someone who claims to have raised the ethical to a central analytical category, he studiously avoids addressing the ethical elements arising in several issues (like prophets' identifying family members as witches, or prophesying visas to the West and prosperity through magical banknotes; surely merely claiming that prophets 'ritually create a transformation of self through a personal commitment to a future' has not exhausted all possible ethical considerations). An admirable reluctance to judge and acceptance of participants' perspective is perhaps taken to lengths that sometimes obscure ethical considerations. Daswani gives the example of Ghanaian Airways, whose parlous economic state in 2003-4 led the directors to bring from London a prominent Pentecostal (again, confusingly, independent rather than CoP) to conduct deliverance prayers, thereby linking 'the company's financial difficulties . . . with spiritual causes and the possible effects of witchcraft'. This 'prayer performance' 'set the stage for a transformation' and 'a new start', and even 'provided the enactment of transformation'. Daswani does not consider the possibility that attributing failure to spirits diverted attention from corrupt management.

PAUL GIFFORD *School of Oriental and African Studies*

JOHNSON, PAUL CHRISTOPHER (ed.). *Spirited things: the work of 'possession' in Afro-Atlantic religions*. 344 pp., illus., bibliogr. Chicago: Univ. Press, 2014. £23.00 (paper)

The word 'possession' is used in very different ways: in economic terms, our possessions are the things we own; while in religious terms, to be

possessed means to have an external agency or 'spirit' in one's body. The first meaning describes a common and self-evident fact of modern life, while the second is rather uncommon, a relic of an enchanted past or the exotic belief of an enchanted Other (hence a privileged object for ethnographic study).

This book starts with two very straightforward but ambitious questions. What is the connection between both uses of 'possession'? And could they be mutually constitutive? Johnson's genealogy of 'possession' in the first chapter inevitably leads to the early modern West, the founding authors of social thought, and the Atlantic slave trade. But he carefully dispels causal relations between terms and historical facts: he is not saying that the phenomenon of spirit possession originated in the Atlantic slave trade, but that the problem of 'possession' acquires a very particular turn in that context. The notion of the free individual, owner of himself and his material possessions, appears then as a universal model of humanity, intimately connected to the modern European man, while Africans were often used as counter-models of questionable humanity, not only because they were sold as commodities, but, much further, because they believed that their bodies could be possessed by other agencies. 'Spirit possession' (the objectification of people) is inevitably linked to 'fetishism' (the personification of things), which emerges precisely in this period to describe African religion. Westerners were concerned with sincerity and authenticity, both applied to people and to things. If Africans were not always self-possessed, how could they be trusted in trade? If they didn't separate people from things, how could the value of commodities be determined? The scandal of African fetishism and spirit possession was the perfect counterpart of modern Western cosmology, which, as Latour has described it, is based on the work of purification of people from things, nature from society, economy from religion, West from Rest. But as Latour also says, this cosmological work of purification has generated more 'hybrids', or better, historical events, where it is difficult to distinguish one side from the other.

The chapters following Johnson's introduction show different facets of this historical process, not just because they address 'hybrid' Afro-Atlantic religions, but because they show that their apparently exotic 'hybridity' is in fact constitutive of the historical process of modernity at large. Palmié's fascinating piece describes the symmetrical fabrication of abakua and

electroacoustic technology in the early twentieth century. Polk's intriguing chapter investigates the uncanny mimetic interplay of minstrelsy and Spiritism in the United States during the second half of the nineteenth century, and the obsession to 'possess' the black other. Wirtz's analysis of santería introduces the notion of 'perspicence', a special kind of sensory orientation necessary to recognize the immaterial agency of spirits in the material world, beyond a notion of 'perception', in which the distinction between perceiving subject and object of perception is clearly established a priori. Brazeals's comparison of the emerald trade and sorcery in Bahia, Brazil, shows how both practices are grounded on uncertainty and deception; just as eighteenth-century European traders made a direct link between African fetishism and dishonesty in the gold trade, to which they opposed their sincerity as self-possessing individuals. A similar narrative can still be found today in the open 'religious war' between Afro-Brazilian Candomblé and Neo-Pentecostal churches, as Selka explains in his chapter. The tragic vision of Africa as a cursed land, poisoned by spirits and fetishes, still survives in millenarian Christian movements like Neo-Pentecostalism or the New Apostolic Movement in Haiti described by McAlister. They aim to extirpate these evils from the land and the bodies of its inhabitants, and take possession of both in the name of God. The close attachment of land and bodies in Haitian Vodou through the notion of *heritaj* is precisely the focus of Richman's piece. Romberg's final chapter also addresses the question of authenticity and deception in spirit possession.

All chapters in this book are more complex in their ethnographic and historical analysis than I have been able to summarize here, and sometimes they overflow the main argument of the volume. Lambek's afterword makes a good job of bringing together these different pieces, while responding to the core theme of the book, arguing for approaches to the ethnography of spirit possession that do not necessarily engage with the genealogical work that Johnson is proposing. And yet he acknowledges that all chapters in the book are illuminated in a particular way by this argument, like it doubtlessly will illuminate the work of many others, not just in the fields of spirit possession or African-American studies.

ROGER SANSI *University of Barcelona*

NIEHAUS, ISAK. *Witchcraft and a life in the new South Africa*. xxi, 239 pp., maps, figs, bibliogr.

Cambridge: Univ. Press, 2012. £69.99 (cloth)

This is a powerful tale of one man's gradual conviction that witchcraft is behind his misfortune. As in Adam Ashforth's *Madumo, a man bewitched* (2000), South African witchcraft is elucidated through biography. Yet the protagonist Jimmy Mohale is, unlike Madumo, employed (including as Niehaus's long-time research assistant) and a highly educated member of a rural middle class. Witchcraft here obstructs substantial ambitions. Accused is Jimmy's father.

Niehaus navigates between contrasting explanations of witchcraft: epiphenomenon of post-apartheid insecurity versus manifestation of ready-made cosmology. Illuminating witchcraft's malleability and relevance to different circumstances, the biography 'narrate[s] the interrelatedness of social contexts, historical processes, events, personal dispositions and states of mind' (p. 4). Crucial is an emphasis on unexpected, contingent moments, not just larger structural arrangements. Along the way, psychoanalytic theories provide useful insights. Niehaus is especially interested in father-son relations amidst rapid change. Post-apartheid life is widely characterized by precarity and obstacles to successful adulthood. As household heads, Niehaus contends, fathers may be held responsible for the frustrated ambitions of their sons, even as sons project their failures onto them. Niehaus also takes a position against cultural relativist perspectives. Unabashedly sceptical about witchcraft, he argues for 'critical empathy' (p. 214), especially when death is at stake.

Apart from thought-provoking discussions in the introduction and conclusion, theoretical concerns are worn lightly: tools for understanding Jimmy's story, not abstractions from it. Indeed, the book reads as a curated conversation between author and protagonist, replete with long interview quotations. Meanwhile, although tracing the arc of Jimmy's life, Niehaus avoids linear chronology. The chapters add layers of significance, following the author's own attempt to grapple with his friend's narrative of misfortune, illness, and eventual – probably AIDS-related – death.

Jimmy's early years were tough. His father, Luckson, a successful migrant worker, was violent. Sibling solidarity was eroded by conflict and witchcraft accusation between Luckson's co-wives. School life was insecure and coercive. No surprise, then, that the hidden violence of witchcraft quickly developed an 'aura of facticity'. Jimmy's experiences of young adulthood in the

turbulent 1980s, and of high school teaching into the post-apartheid era, were equally unsettling. His ambivalence about his late circumcision and diffidence about activism at university produced feelings of marginalization. Jimmy characterized his youth as a series of difficult investments that should have secured advancement. Yet he felt left behind and afflicted by misfortune because of his exclusion from political networks as a schoolteacher.

In chapters 4-7, Niehaus traces a second layer. A series of suspicious deaths in the family were rumoured to be the result of Luckson's witchcraft. Initially, Jimmy was sceptical. But as he suffered calamities, evidence against his father mounted. Car accidents could have been blamed on unfortunate purchases, and marital disintegration on Jimmy's affairs. But his world was falling apart. Meanwhile, his father's unusual behaviour around the sickness and death of close kin, and diviners' and prophets' diagnoses, suggested culpability. All this, crucially, preceded full-blown conflict between father and son (contra classical anthropological interpretations). Soon, a life of frustrated advancement became a tale of his father's interventions, and Jimmy and his siblings unsuccessfully attempted to kill Luckson through vengeance magic.

The final two substantive chapters connect the story to broader themes. Chapter 8 recounts Jimmy's declining health, and his interpretation of this. Consistent with Jimmy's view of his misfortune and a history of suspicious deaths, a witchcraft diagnosis had particular attractions. Blame lay with Luckson. A long-dormant, sexually transmitted disease raised the possibility that Jimmy had infected others. AIDS also meant stigma and 'death before dying' (p. 166), following public health depictions as a terminal condition. And witchcraft offered hope, because it could be addressed through diviners. Chapter 9 explores the gap between idealized depictions of Jimmy's life at his funeral (as successful and well regarded) and Jimmy's self-understanding. Such idealization promoted community, downplayed conflict, and avoided provoking Jimmy's spirit by speaking ill of him. Yet awareness of a more complex story in the speeches and in gossip leads Niehaus to cast idealization as a form of 'cultural critique' (p. 201) and veiled commentary about social arrangements.

This is a moving and insightful account whose biographical form is used to compelling effect. The form itself raises intriguing questions. Niehaus acknowledges Jimmy's use of narrative conventions. But the recurring trope of

marginalization might have been explored further. At one point, Jimmy risked ostracism from relatives for failing as father and kinsman. Yet they soon reappeared as his 'therapy management group'. If funeral speeches constituted a rosy fiction, the event nevertheless drew a massive crowd – perhaps Jimmy's preoccupation with isolation invites equal attention. As for the conventions of Niehaus's own writing, a window into those long conversations with Jimmy – and how they produced a narrative – would have been fascinating.

MAXIM BOLT *University of Birmingham*

RIBOLI, DIANA & DAVIDE TORRI (eds). *Shamanism and violence: power, repression and suffering in indigenous religious conflicts*. xv, 176 pp., illus., bibliogr. Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2013. £60.00 (cloth)

Since the famous books published by René Girard and Maurice Bloch, studies of the relationship between religion and violence have flourished. Both Wiley-Blackwell and Oxford University Press have released, respectively, a *Companion to religion and violence* (2011) and the *Oxford handbook on religion and violence* (2012). But this is not all. Neil Whitehead, who unfortunately died before finishing a paper intended for this book, has himself completed two other volumes on this topic: *Dark shamans* (2002), a monograph on the Kainama from Amazonia; and *Darkness and secrecy: the anthropology of assault sorcery and witchcraft in Amazonia* (2004), a co-edited volume with Robin Wright. With respect to shamanism, this book is thus well situated as part of an already well-established body of literature. In contrast to the editors, I am not convinced by the lack of studies of this kind.

In this book, the authors do not mention the many anthropologists who have, in fact, already discussed this issue quite extensively in the past. In 1982, for instance, Philippe Descola and Jean-Luc Lory wrote an excellent paper not only showing the structural ambiguity of shamanism, shamans beings always able to repair disorder and to destroy the order of the world, but also their great art to kill. Drawing from various ethnographical materials, they observe how this ability to kill is often used for war (see 'Les guerriers de l'invisible: sociologie comparée de l'agression chamanique en Papouasie-Nouvelle-Guinée et en Haute-Amazone', *L'Ethnographie* 87-8). In fact, these skills are the two sides of the same coin (see also the contribution to this book by Andrew Strathern

and Pamela Stewart [Strathern]), to the extent that shamans are always feared. In most societies, people find ways to protect themselves from attacks perpetrated by shamans, who are the first to be accused when a problem arises. Shamans are at the forefront of this ideology of predation, and violence is unavoidable, as was also shown by Bruce Knauft (*Good company and violence: sorcery and social action in a Lowland New Guinea society*, 1985) and Pierre Lemonier ('Couper-coller: attaques corporelles et cannibalisme chez les Anga de Nouvelle-Guinée', *Terrain* 18, 1992). Shamans always stand between two worlds, the human world and that of the dead and spirits, an invisible universe. Even in the societies that appear more peaceful, shamans are threatening others, and their function remains ambiguous. Inuit, for example, assume that the alliance between a shaman and a helping spirit is never stable, so things can easily go wrong. Mastering a helping spirit is always dangerous. As Inuit put it, shamanism is very demanding, 'it consumes one's life'. This instability of shamanism and its intrinsic violence might explain why so many indigenous societies decided to adopt Christianity. So in a way this book remains rather classical in its perspective.

Shamanism and violence offers a contribution to the field insofar as it revives the debate. However, it relies on a very stretched conception of both shamanism and violence. The book comprises an introduction and eleven chapters exploring violence in different contexts and societies. The chapter by Neil Whitehead appears as an 'appendix' at the end of the book. Its title, 'Divine hunger – the cannibal war-machine', is intriguing, but frustratingly the text is only half a page long. Whitehead's argument is centred on modern violence, as he wanted to show how, 'originating with the colonial creation of a cannibal-war machine in the New World of the Americas, [it] gave rise to a form of spirituality in which ontological engagement with the Immaterial Sacred has come to be supplanted by a cultural fetish centred on the auto-consumption of material commodity' (p. 149). Unfortunately the reader is left with this intriguing abstract without any further comment. It is a pity, since a discussion could have been inserted in the introduction of the book. In the opening chapter, Andrew Strathern and Pamela Stewart (Strathern) return to this ambivalence of shamanism, focusing on the liminal position of shamans. Michael Oppitz continues on the dark side, showing how among Himalayan and Sino-Tibetan groups, shamans are first and foremost spiritual warriors. Chapter 3 is authored by Marjorie Balzer

and deals with Siberia, especially with the repression of shamans and their resistance during the Soviet era. Peter Knecht, in chapter 4, analyses the political situation of shamans in Mongolia, discussing extrinsic and intrinsic forms of violence. In chapter 5, Daniel Kister moves to Chinese minorities and Korea, where he discusses various forms of violence, envisioning rituals as mediums able to transform social violence. Galina Sychenko comes back to the dark side of shamanism in chapter 6, by exploring textual violence in a shamanic chant recorded in Russia. Chapter 7, authored by Laurel Kendall, deals with exorcism rituals performed by Korean shamans in North America. In chapter 8, Alban von Stockhausen and Marion Wettstein explore the various tensions emerging among the Rai in Nepal, where shamanism is confronted with other religious groups and movements. Davide Torri, meanwhile, analyses the encounters between shamans and nonhuman beings in the Himalayas, focusing on creation myths and stories. Finally, in chapter 10, Diana Riboli describes the shamanic traditions of the Semang-Negrito from Malaysia, where power is mostly shared, not only among humans but also with nonhuman beings, every element being connected to a whole, allowing little space for the notion of otherness. But violence is now increasing with the coming of various foreign groups (strangers, criminals, army, mining companies, etc.), presenting new tasks for the local shamans. Whitehead's abstract is then bright as he writes, 'The logic of the modern world is necessarily violent and cannibalistic. Persons and ecologies are perpetually consumed through forms of commodity production and price speculation'. But, one can argue, if violence is useful with respect to modernity and colonialism, is it really adequate to discuss shamanism?

FRÉDÉRIC LAUGRAND *Université Laval*

Tourism

ANDREWS, HAZEL. *The British on holiday: charter tourism, identity and consumption*. ix, 260 pp., table, maps, illus., bibliogr. Bristol: Channel View Publications, 2011. £24.95 (paper)

This is a remarkable book, for several distinct and overlapping reasons. To start with, it is a first-class ethnography. The field is the charter tourism resort of Magaluf (colloquially, Shagaluf) in the Balearic island of Mallorca. Conceived within a confluence of theoretically familiar and classic thematic streams – Durkheim (totemism), Lévi-Strauss

(bricolage and myth), Anderson (nationalism), Lefebvre (space), Barthes (iconography), and Douglas (the body), as well as more recent work in anthropology of tourism – Andrews' volume presents us with a penetrating description and analysis of the best-known destination for British holidaymakers in the Mediterranean.

The book begins with an introduction in which Andrews identifies the main strands of the research to be discussed in subsequent chapters. Thus chapter 2 discusses nationalism, identity, and consumption. This is where she lays out her overall claim: that Magaluf attracts British tourists (many of them young and from northern England) because the resort offers the possibility of consuming a version of Britain and British nationalism that seems reassuringly coherent in an otherwise culturally and economically uncertain world. Chapters 3 and 4 consider the symbolic landscapes and tourist spaces of the resort. There are the cafés and bars with such familiar names as Bar Trafalgar, Windsor, Big Ben, Lady Diana, Robin Hood, and so on. Then there is the night-time entertainment show *Pirates Adventure*, which draws its patrons into a world of alcoholic plenty, physical exposure, musical excess, historical narratives about foreign pirates, celebration of such British heroes as Sir Francis Drake, and evocations of 'a nostalgic understanding of Britain's role in the world during the time of the Empire' (p. 78). Chapters 5 and 6 explore the symbolic and metaphorical uses to which tourist bodies are put. There is a description of events that define the tourist experience in the resort: the bar crawls held in the high-season summer months. These are organized and orchestrated by the local representatives ('reps') of the tour operators, who lead their parties from bar to bar. The reps welcome their followers by announcing that their aim is 'to make you as shit-faced as possible. This is the bar crawl from hell' (p. 165). As the crawl develops, so do the various games and associated rules and regulations. Personal names are abandoned in favour of more generic ones such as Fred and Wilma, oaths are taken that commit group members to get drunk, be sick, have sex on the beach, eat a kebab. Chapter 7 consists of a sustained discussion of consumption: of food and drink, of women and men as sexual objects, of nationalistic fervour and senses of nationalistic solidarity, of recycled mythologies contained in such TV shows (played on endless loops in bars and cafés) as *Only fools and horses* and performances of the northern English comic 'Chubby Brown'. Souvenirs and imagery evoking stereotypic versions of British life proliferate.

The book concludes by asking where this description of 'The Great Escape' (p. 217) has brought us in our efforts to understand contemporary nationalism in both the British case and more generally. As analysed by Andrews, the case of Magaluf suggests that a certain kind of British nationalism is tied ineluctably to consumption whilst, in this case, both nationalism and consumption are framed by particular dispositions towards women. Andrews emphasizes the preponderance in Magaluf of female breasts: on the beach, in shows like those in *Pirates Adventure*, on bar crawls, as images on posters and postcards, and elsewhere. In various ways, breasts are incorporated into narratives that combine emphasis on sexual performance, attachment to and reliance on mother, and association with the nation-state. 'Being with Mother' (p. 235) involves linking ideas about the role of women in nationalist mythology, about the ability to fill oneself up with food and drink (including, symbolically, from the breast), about the ambiguous relationship between consumption and women – the latter being at once sources of consumption and objects to be consumed. Such a heady metaphorical cocktail gives rise to a widespread belief that Magaluf offers the chance to 'escape to a place that offers tourists the opportunity to experience what it [really] means to be British' (p. 242).

There is no doubt that this book belongs and contributes to such anthropological discussions as those concerned with the gendering of nationalism, the architecture of consumerist mythologies, and the physical and psychological processes, simultaneously intimate and collective, involved in establishing the rhetorical hegemony of the market. For British readers, the ambivalent relation between Magaluf and what are sometimes called 'British values' will be of particular interest. The resort appears almost daily in the British media: recently, BBC Two's *Newsnight*, Radio 4's the *Today* programme, *Guardian* features, all the tabloids. Whilst the tour operators' brochures invite clients to Magaluf in order to sample the 'Full English' (both breakfast and 'culture'), the media overflows with uniform censorious at what the *Daily Telegraph* terms 'the mean streets of Magaluf, a notoriously seedy den of irresponsible drinking, vomiting, and debauchery'. Arguably, the one elephant in the room (a suitable subject for her next book?) is the question of where Magaluf stands in the articulation of the British class system. With this in mind, Andrews' final observations are as suggestive as they are chilling. Holidaymakers come away from Magaluf, she argues, with the

idea of a 'romanticized past in which Britain was great, both on the world stage and in being able fully to nourish her children: in addition, men went to war and women knew their place' (p. 242).

TOM SELWYN *School of Oriental and African Studies*

KNIGHT, JOHN. *Herding monkeys to paradise: how macaque troops are managed for tourism in Japan*. xvi, 628 pp., figs, illus., bibliogr. Leiden, Boston: Brill, 2011. £132.00 (paper)

This study explores how *yaen kōen*, or 'wild monkey parks', use food handouts to attract free-ranging Japanese macaques to a display area where, in turn, the monkeys attract paying visitors. John Knight's analysis draws on ten years of visits to monkey parks, semi-structured interviews and participant observation with park staff, as well as interviews with regular visitors, farmers and other local residents, and a wide range of written sources.

The introduction reviews the broader contexts of recreational viewing of primates and other animals. Chapter 1 then describes how monkey parks are presented as a 'paradise' of peace and harmony where visitors can mingle with wild monkeys. Knight compares this frontier-crossing visitor experience – humans in 'monkeyland' – with that of a zoo, and explores the concept of 'natural zoo', in which monkeys remain part of a group and are connected to the forest, associating with humans voluntarily. The rest of the book (seven chapters and a conclusion) examines the extent to which reality conforms to this ideal.

Chapter 2 makes extensive use of primatologist Itani Junichirō's field study at Takasakiyama to illustrate the difficulty of observing wild monkeys. Knight describes three main barriers to human observation of monkeys: monkeys are wary of humans, move fluidly over mountainous terrain, and are virtually invisible in the forest ('forest opacity'). The same difficulties that frustrate primatologists seeking to make behavioural observations apply to tourists wishing to watch monkeys; neither are satisfied with brief glimpses of them. The next three chapters describe the use of regular food provisioning to manipulate monkey movements such that they can be viewed easily.

Chapter 3 focuses on the post-war history of provisioning that led to the creation of the monkey parks. Knight details how the founders of the parks persuaded monkeys to accept food handouts and to tolerate the presence of humans. Chapter 4 considers the daily activities of those

who run and work in the monkey parks. Beyond the central role of feeding the monkeys, park staff also police interactions between monkeys and visitors, maintaining order and ensuring visitor safety. Chapter 5 examines how park staff use provisioning to manage monkey movements in 'the park's tug-of-war with the forest' (p. 338). Monkey park provisioning supplements, but does not replace, wild foraging, and monkeys naturally exploit a food resource then move on. This means that the park staff cannot guarantee monkey presence in the park, particularly when natural forage is abundant and attractive to the monkeys. This freedom is key to the representation of the monkeys as 'wild'. However, it conflicts with the reliance of park staff on the presence of monkeys at the feeding ground to satisfy visitors. Knight examines the strategies that staff use to address this problem, using provisioning such that monkeys arrive in the park in the morning, stay until late afternoon, but return to the forest at the end of the day.

The next two chapters discuss various problems resulting from provisioning. In addition to monkeys failing to appear at the monkey park, where they are wanted, they also appear where they are not wanted, in park-edge settlements. Monkey damage to crops is a serious problem in Japan, and chapter 6 uses two case studies to illustrate how monkey parks exacerbate it. This causes ill will towards the parks in the local communities and a dilemma for park managers: while provisioning increases the number of monkeys who engage in crop-raiding, reducing provisioning will lead to increased crop-raiding in the short term. One solution is to reduce monkey numbers by culling or removal.

Chapter 7 considers further problems associated with long-term provisioning. These include increases in troop size and the effects of this on the forest and changes in the monkeys' relationship with it, which result in monkeys that are largely sedentary, 'commuting' daily from the forest just as the staff commute from the village or town. This calls into question whether the monkeys are 'wild', and Knight uses concepts of domestication, cultural transformation, and agency to examine this in detail, and to reconcile human control over monkeys with monkey freedom.

Chapter 8 addresses the question of whether the monkeys' relationship with the forest can be restored. This links to moves to educate, as well as entertain, visitors. Knight distinguishes *forest-edge display*, in which parks incorporate an area of forest adjacent to the feeding station into the visitor experience, from *forest display*, a more

radical change whereby the monkey viewing experience is resituated in the forest. A further possibility for viewing monkeys, 'monkeywatching', has no connection with monkey parks, and, as Knight points out, might be better termed 'monkeysearching'. Finally, Knight addresses the question of to what extent monkey park monkeys can be 'restored', illustrating this with the example of a park that continues to feed monkeys, although it is closed to visitors, to divert the monkeys from crops.

Knight's conclusion reflects on the limits of using provisioning to display animals. He then addresses possibilities for reorientating parks towards conservation. However, his analysis shows that the monkey tolerance of humans brought about by parks ultimately diminishes rather than increases human tolerance of monkeys.

This book is the tenth in Brill's Human-Animal Studies series. Throughout the volume, we read of human-monkey relations, including human struggles with monkeys (chap. 2), battles of will (chap. 3), the personalized, intimate, and emotionally intense relationships between park staff and monkeys (chap. 4), inter-species negotiations (chap. 5), crop-raiding (chap. 6), and domestication (chap. 7). However, the theoretical context and subject matter are far broader than human-animal relations, covering history, anthropology, primatology, Japan studies, tourism studies, and conservation.

The volume is large, and key points are repeated, meaning that chapters could be read independently. Taken together, however, the result is a comprehensive, authoritative, detailed picture of the history, practice, and implications of the provisioning of monkeys for tourism. The text is beautifully crafted and structured and the language is poetic. The text is illustrated with simple, useful diagrams that illustrate key arguments, as well as carefully chosen black-and-white photographs. I thoroughly enjoyed reading it, learned a great deal, and have already recommended it to students of human-animal relations as essential reading.

JOANNA SETCHELL *Durham University*

SALAZAR, NOEL B. & NELSON H.H. GRABURN (eds). *Tourism imaginaries: anthropological approaches*. xii, 292 pp., illus., figs, bibliogr. Oxford, New York: Berghahn Books, 2014. £60.00 (cloth)

Tourism, both as an industry and as a social practice, is contingent on our capacity for imagination. Stories, images, and fantasies of the

Other shape the ways tourism is practised, experienced, and interpreted. The present volume focuses on tourism imaginaries, 'socially transmitted representational assemblages that interact with people's personal imaginings and that are used as meaning-making and world-shaping devices' (p. 1). It offers a collection of ethnographically grounded chapters that explore the often contested production, maintenance, and consumption of imaginaries in tourism.

The first section, 'Imaginaries of people', starts with a chapter by Rupert Stasch, who studies the role of exoticizing stereotypes in encounters between international tourists and the Korowai of Papua. Arguing for a symmetrical treatment of the perspectives of tourists and tourees, Stasch juxtaposes both groups' processes of stereotyping and exoticization, thus highlighting their imaginative character.

In a similar vein, Dimitrios Theodossopoulos examines the mutual exoticization of the Emberá of Panama and their visitors. Tourist imaginaries oscillate between idealization and negative stereotyping; the Emberá, on their part, respond by either downplaying or emphasizing their cultural difference in an effort to control the representation, and enhance the visibility, of their culture.

In her chapter on the Aboriginal-owned Tjapukai Aboriginal Cultural Park in Australia, Alexis Celeste Bunten describes how indigenous employees navigate tourist imaginaries in an effort to open up a space for cross-cultural dialogue, and to take control of representations of their culture.

Margaret Byrne Swain investigates the co-production of mythic tourism destinations in southwest China. Her study contrasts the Sani Yi and the Axi Yi, two indigenous groups whose intangible ethnic heritage and location in a 'rural idyll' have fostered tourism development, and shaped the formation of a tourism 'imaginarium'.

In the final chapter of that section, João Afonso Baptista explores the moral imaginary of community in ethical tourism in Canhane, Mozambique. His work highlights how ethical fashions like 'community-based' tourism have ramifications for local self-representations as well as for development strategies.

The second section, on 'Imaginaries of places', starts off with Michael A. Di Giovine, who describes the efforts of two Italian towns to attract religious tourists on pilgrimages in honour of a Catholic saint. The analysis reveals how competing imaginaries shape the meaning and the materiality of tourism destinations in an 'imaginaire dialectic'.

Federica Ferraris investigates the production of tourism imaginaries of Cambodia among Italian audiences. She finds that the narratives produced by tourists and by the tourism industry portray Cambodia as spatially and temporally distant, as unchanging and unchangeable.

Theme parks are representational spaces that instantiate imaginaries. In her study of the miniature theme park Portugal dos Pequenitos, Paula Mota Santos explores why an objectification of the imaginary of the Portuguese colonial empire remains such a popular tourist destination to the present day.

Kenneth Little uses ephemera to study the emergent qualities of tourism imaginaries. By tracking the affective potentials of the 'clutter of travel', he seeks to capture the generative force and fluidity of imaginaries before their systematization and transformation into narratives and representations.

Anke Tonnaer uses a case from the Netherlands to examine how competing imaginaries of Dutch landscapes shape nature conservation and restoration strategies. By contrasting 'rewilding' projects with 'cultural landscape restoration', she shows how different 'readings' of the landscape are linked to regional and national identities, and how they are influenced by diverging views on the role of humans in relation to 'authentic' nature.

The book concludes with an afterword by Naomi Leite, who interrogates the theoretical concept of imaginaries. She finds that the idea of a 'shared mental life' is at the core of its study in anthropology. Leite explores how ethnographic approaches can make a fruitful contribution to the study of imaginaries, and she points to some possible areas of future research.

This book establishes 'imaginaries' as part of the conceptual apparatus of the anthropology of tourism by examining the concept from a theoretical angle, and by teasing out the complex roles of tourism imaginaries in a variety of ethnographic settings. It contributes to social anthropology more generally by exploring how tourism imaginaries intersect with broader cultural and ideological structures. Its chapters demonstrate that rich insights can be gained by lending equal analytical weight to the perspectives of tourists, service providers, and 'host' populations, as well as their dialectical relationships. The wealth of its ethnography, combined with its innovative conceptual approaches, exemplifies the strengths anthropology is bringing to interdisciplinary tourism studies.

CARLA BETHMANN *Zayed University*