Review of [Mothers on the move: reproducing belonging between Africa and Europe] by [Feldman-Savelsberg, P.]

Ruijtenberg, W.D.

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Book reviews

Archaeological explorations

Beyyette, Bethany J. & Lisa J. LeCount. *'The only true people': linking Maya identities past and present*. xviii, 288 pp., maps, tables, figs, illus., bibliogr. Boulder: Univ. Press of Colorado, 2017. £54.00 (cloth)

In *'The only true people'*, Bethany J. Beyyette and Lisa J. LeCount have gathered Mayanists from a diverse range of disciplinary practices – archaeology, epigraphy, ethnography, history, and linguistics – to discuss ethnicity and ethnogenesis. Divided into two sections, 'Maya identities of the present and the ethnographic past' and 'Archaeological explorations of identity construction', the respective chapters discuss how to define and study Maya ethnicity, with an emphasis on ethnogenesis. The underlying theoretical orientation of the volume is based on Barth's fundamental *Ethnic groups and boundaries* (1969), and the anthropologist Jonathan Hill's key theories on ethnogenesis. Hill contributes the preface, reviewing what is essential about ethnogenesis and considering the various chapters' contributions to the concept. The volume concludes with a short essay by the archaeologist Edward Schortman, who emphasizes that networks play a central role in the politics of identity. Several chapters explore the problem of treating Maya identity as a salient overarching category, and this short review focuses on those.

Overall, the volume is uneven and for the most part, the authors rarely go beyond Barth in their discussions of ethnic identity. Discussions of Mesoamerican and Maya identity from Sol Tax's *Heritage of conquest* (1952) to more recent treatments of the topic are largely ignored, as is Carol Hendrickson's 1995 monograph, *Weaving identities*, which uses Maya textiles to explore Kaqchikel Maya ethnic, community, cultural, and political identities. In short, there are many articles and monographs by Mayanist ethnographers that draw on a diverse range of evidence, including material culture, which help untangle the region's identity politics and make clear that 'Maya' does not represent a homogeneous culture.

While homogeneity has been emphasized in the tourism industries and in some of the strategic essentialism of Guatemalan Maya political activists, scholars need to question why they use the overarching category Maya, to what ends that serves, and if that is an ethnic identity. The difference between academic classification and the self-designation of ethnicity and ethnic groups is not explicitly addressed in this volume. Several essays in the first section (C. Mathews Samson's chapter 2, Juan Castillo Cocom, Timoteo Rodriguez, and McCale Ashenbrener's chapter 3, and Matthew Restall and Wolfgang Gabbert's chapter 5), however, argue that Maya is not a very salient ethnic category for most of the people who are broadly lumped together.

Cocom, Rodriguez, and Ashenbrener's challenging and creatively written 'Ethnoexodus: escaping Mayaland' offers the most critically self-reflexive discussion about ethnic identity and ethnogenesis in the volume. They propose not using ethnicity or ethnogenesis but rather the concept of ethnoexodus, because it captures the fluidity of how people practise and embody multiple identities. I would argue, however, that there are instances where Maya as an ethnic

identity is used in a contemporary context: among the indigenous handicraft vendors I have worked with in Guatemala, others working in tourism, and the primarily Guatemalan activists promoting the Maya Movement. Yet even within commerce, tourism, migration, social media, and material and knowledge flows, Maya takes on multiple, flexible significances depending on the social, economic, and political contexts.

The tome's second section, a set of chapters by archaeologists, is more cohesive. These authors share a common set of concerns: identifying in the material culture the things that can be used to label ethnic identity, making an argument as to what kinds of identity can be derived from the material evidence; asking if the concept of ethnicity is appropriate; and debating if the ancient Maya used terms of identification that would suggest ethnic identity.

Lisa LeCount's chapter 7 helps refine the understanding of ethnicity as implicit rather than explicit; it can be derived by examining 'dynamic places displaying amalgamated architecture, sculpture, and pottery styles that reflected their border zone status' (p. 175). Damien B. Marken, Stanley P. Guenter, and David A. Freidel's chapter 8 argues that looking closely at elites and subtle differences across localities can shed light on Maya ethnicities. They also raise two important issues: that not everyone who can be ascribed as having a specific ethnic identity embraces that identity (a point that Samson makes in his chapter); and that there are emic and etic orientations of ethnicity, with the emic being especially problematic in studies of the past, as emphasized in Restall and Gabberts' chapter 5.

Although I have been critical about the insufficient discussion of Mayanist ethnographers' research on identity, the authors in this volume make important contributions to Maya studies through their data, which are rich and interesting. I would use the book in teaching without reservation precisely because they provide so much information about the people who have lived in and are living in this region of the world. How to interpret the data is open to debate and, in this respect, all the chapters here are excellent vehicles to begin this discussion.

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Burnett, Scott E. & Joel D. Irish (eds). *A world view of bioculturally modified teeth*. xx, 345 pp., maps, tables, illus., bibliogrs. Gainesville: Univ. Press of Florida, 2017. £118.00 (cloth)

A world view of bioculturally modified teeth, edited by Scott E. Burnett and Joel D. Irish, combines geographically and temporally diverse studies that focus on intentional dental modifications, or the ways in which humans have purposely altered the appearance of the most visible (anterior) teeth for sociocultural or therapeutic reasons. Each chapter interprets the varied forms of dental modifications within modern or ancient societies in terms of both biological and cultural implications – taking a biocultural approach. The types of modifications discussed in the volume include intentional removal of healthy teeth (ablation); filing or notching of enamel; altering tooth colour using plant-based dyes; and installing stone or metal inlays.

The volume is organized by geographical region, with sections covering Africa, Europe, Asia, Oceania, and the New World, opening with a fascinating review of the oldest known evidence for human intentional dental modifications: dental ablation practised by nomadic groups in Northwest Africa beginning more than 13,000 years ago. The authors of chapter 2, De Groote and Humphrey, use a comparison of inter-site prevalence of dental ablation with corresponding age and sex data to infer its role as a cultural norm across the Maghreb region. They speculate that populations may have adopted this practice initially as a medical treatment for febrile illness – specifically, as a way of feeding those suffering the lockjaw effects of tetanus. Bolhofner (chap. 4) points to the same therapeutic motivation for dental ablation in the cases she reports from Ancient Nubia, where ancient texts and historical ethnographical research in nearby regions lend support for her hypothesis. The role of infectious disease in provoking specific cultural behaviours that eventually lead to ideas of cultural identity is an important finding and an excellent example of the depth of insight into ancient cultures provided by biocultural modifications in general.

Several of this volume's case studies reanalyse previously reported cases of dental modification using new or standardized techniques, revealing new information about societies, both past and present. As Irish points out in chapter 3, which reviews dental modification in sub-Saharan Africa, many authors publishing in the last century pushed imaginative hypotheses with racist underpinnings as ethnohistorical fact when discussing the motivations for contemporary tooth modifications. Setting the record straight in these instances is paramount, not only because these misrepresentations of cultural practices may have ongoing detrimental effects within these

living groups, but also because these accounts often inform the hypotheses of ancient motivations for similar tooth alterations. Several of the chapters in this volume illustrate the ways in which isotopic analyses of bones and teeth are now lending their support to the reanalysis and reinterpretation of ancient dental modification practices in terms of the practitioners' diets and migration patterns. The novel data imparted from these studies show promise in solving long-standing debates regarding the origin and spread of dental modifications as cultural norms. Nevertheless, as Burnett points out in his review of modified teeth in the Southwestern United States (chap. 16), the proper identification of dental modifications using standardized criteria is critical to ensure the accurate interpretation of later isotopic research.

A world view of bioculturally modified teeth achieves its stated goal of introducing the reader to the breadth of potential research questions revolving around dental modifications. Previous research foci on incentives and stylistic diversity aside, the chapters' authors pursue questions of the iatrogenic effects of dental modifications on oral health, the role of dental modifications in rites of passage, as well as issues of group identity marking and manipulation. The geographical areas covered by chapters in the book are broad, but tend to cluster in some areas, like Japan and Mesoamerica. The total absence of studies covering South American dental modification practices is one of the volume's only weaknesses. Nonetheless, Burnett and Irish's introduction does a good job of briefly overviewing the practices in areas not covered in the volume. The book's title might also mislead some readers into believing that it includes all types of biocultural dental modifications, when in fact it focuses only on intentional modifications, primarily those done for sociocultural purposes.

This volume is accessible to readers of all levels, with definitions of dental structures and standard terminology in dental anthropology provided in the introductory chapter. The illustrations provide the reader with a sense of the variety of modifications in different cultures, and the charts and tables complement the written analyses presented in each chapter. Readings from the book would usefully supplement any undergraduate course in bioarchaeology, especially those covering cultural body modifications at a diverse geographical and temporal scale.

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Crabtree, Pam J. & Peter Bogucki (eds). *European archaeology as anthropology: essays in memory of Bernard Wailes*. xiii, 271 pp., maps, tables, illus., bibliogr. Philadelphia: Univ. of Pennsylvania Press, 2017. £45.00 (cloth)

Bernard Wailes (1934-2012) studied archaeology at Cambridge, specializing in the early medieval period of Western Europe, and then spent his entire academic career at the University of Pennsylvania. He was one of many Cambridge graduates in the 1950s and 1960s who struggled to find jobs in Britain and chose to take up positions abroad; unlike some other emigrants, however, who moved to Africa, Australia, or New Zealand, he did not switch to the archaeology of his adopted region, but continued with his European studies, especially in later prehistoric Ireland: a lonely flag-waver for European archaeology.

His teaching ranged widely over Old World archaeology, regularly including a course on the prehistoric background to Western civilization. He had arrived in America in the early days of the processual revolution, but remained unconverted, 'never a slave to theoretical fashion' (p. 2), but retaining 'a skepticism of popular trends in archaeological thought' (p. 195). In particular, he was sceptical of processual archaeology's models of social evolution, which he thought too lacking in historical specificity, and too reliant on a limited set of evidence, dominated by the Near East and the Americas. He believed the archaeological and historical record of later prehistoric and early historic Europe had much to offer to such comparative studies and to anthropological archaeology. Influenced by the work of Gordon Childe, Wailes's own interests lay less with the origin of the state, than with the long-term development of agriculture and craft technologies; his excavations at a major 'royal' site of Iron Age Ireland led him to think particularly of ideological authority and ceremonial performance in non-state societies.

Though he published little, Wailes became a bedrock of the anthropology department at Penn, and an inspiration to generations of students as a teacher, dissertation supervisor, fieldwork director, mentor, and friend; he was also a generous host to visiting scholars from Europe. This volume contains ten papers by scholars who had been influenced by Wailes in one or more of these roles, and who have gone on to specialize in various aspects of European archaeology, providing a good sample of the current research interests of archaeologists working in Europe.

The papers consider such topics as resistance to the adoption of agriculture and the possible role of 'disruptive technologies' like dairying and brewing (Bogucki, chap. 1); the integration of archaeological and linguistic evidence, now increasingly illuminated by ancient DNA evidence (Anthony, chap. 2); the problem of inferring religious beliefs from archaeological evidence with minimal evidence for ritual practices (Gilman, chap. 4); and the performative aspect of ritual deposition as a materialization of social relations (Wells, chap. 3). Another group of papers deals with questions related to Wailes's own work at the monumental site of Dun Ailinne in Ireland: a reconsideration of the meaning of the site in the light of the labour involved in repeated rebuildings, focusing on the process of construction and reconfiguration (Johnston, chap. 5); two papers dealing with early medieval Ireland: one discussing agriculture and the bioarchaeological evidence for regional variability in human health (Scott, chap. 7), the other questioning the instrumental view of religion and the dichotomy between sacred and secular sites (Soderberg, chap. 8); and an analysis of the concept of chiefdom and a consideration of its value in understanding the long resistance to the state in Highland Scotland (Ragan, chap. 6). The final chapter by Crabtree (chap. 10) questions the distinction between primary and secondary state formation and explores a comparative approach to Anglo-Saxon England and Hawaii. A rather disconnected paper, though with an ultimate inspiration in advice from Wailes, considers the role of coin evidence in exploring the development of a city, using the records of the old Princeton excavations at Antioch (Stahl, chap. 9).

In a perceptive concluding commentary, Peter Bogucki and Pam J. Crabtree analyse the fluctuating involvement of American scholars in non-Palaeolithic and non-classical European archaeology. It has always been a minority interest, perhaps understandable in the 1950s and 1960s, when the European tradition was predominantly anti-theoretical, seldom rising above banal culture history. Things are now very different, however, with a rich archaeological record developed over the last twenty years and a vibrant discourse embracing many anthropological issues.

The festschrift is a curious relic of academic literature, sometimes with content of dubious value other than as a tribute. This one is a fine memorial to an inspiring, and independently minded, archaeologist, with a coherent argument for the future potential of the European archaeological record and its contribution to anthropological archaeology.

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Douglass, John G. & William M. Graves (eds). *New Mexico and the Pimería Alta: the colonial period in the American Southwest*. xxiii, 428 pp., maps, figs, illus., bibliogrs. Boulder: Univ. Press of Colorado, 2017. £74.00 (cloth)

Based on a Society for American Archaeology symposium in 2012, *New Mexico and the Pimería Alta* presents a much-needed update on current research in colonial and postcolonial period archaeology in the American Southwest, from first contact through to the nineteenth century. The introductory chapter, by editors John G. Douglass and William M. Graves, provides an excellent summary of the Spanish colonial enterprise in the American Southwest and a history of its scholarship, offering a solid contextual framework for the contributions in this volume, while standing alone as great overview that could effectively be assigned as background reading in undergraduate and graduate courses on Southwest archaeology, colonial encounters in the Americas, or Spanish borderlands history. The remainder of the book is divided into three sections, which focus, in turn, on the New Mexico colony from the Rio Grande to the Hopi mesas, the Pimería Alta of northern Sonora and southern Arizona, and comparative perspectives from other parts of the Spanish Borderlands.

The New Mexico section, comprised of seven contributions covering the varied responses of the Rio Grande Pueblos (two chapters), the Hopi (two chapters), and the Comanche (one chapter) to the colonial encounter, as well as the emergence of Hispanic *vecino* communities in the eighteenth century (two chapters), is both diverse and comprehensive, reflecting the longer and more extensive history of colonial period archaeology in that area. Nevertheless, the four chapters in part 2 that engage with recent historical and archaeological research on the missions and presidios of southern Arizona and their Native American hinterlands are particularly welcome, since this area is not included in most overviews of the colonial period in the American Southwest. The final two chapters, by Kent G. Lightfoot and David Hurst Thomas, add important comparative perspectives on the archaeology of Spanish colonialism in other areas of the Spanish Borderlands, specifically Alta California and La Florida. Their authors highlight significant similarities and differences in how Spanish policies

and institutions were implemented, and variously engaged with, or resisted by, indigenous groups in each of these distinct regions of southern North America, especially in the context of existing indigenous political economies and cultural landscapes.

As noted in the foreword by David Hurst Thomas, this volume self-consciously builds on the legacy of his edited three-volume *Columbian consequences* (1989-91), which is widely credited with transforming historical archaeology's substance and practice in the Americas. As typified by the scholarship highlighted in this ground-breaking collection, contributions to the current book employ a broad range of perspectives, research methodologies, evidentiary sources, and interpretative frameworks to broaden and deepen our understanding of how the legacy of the colonial encounter in the American Southwest continues to shape the histories of, and relationships among, the region's diverse peoples and cultures.

As is now characteristic among the most recent generation of archaeologies of the colonial encounter, the volume's authors contest the simplistic dichotomies of acculturation and resistance in order to examine the creative and practical engagements of both indigenous peoples and settler communities with colonial institutions and processes in ways that were not just responsive but also constitutive. Several contributions also complicate the distinction between colonizer and colonized, presenting missions, presidios, *ranchos* and *estancias*, and even pueblos as multicultural spaces where indigenous and colonial actors interacted on an intimate and daily basis in ways that came to redefine social positions, statuses, and identities. Some authors also challenge our standard notions of 'core' and 'periphery', asking whether the American Southwest in the eighteenth century is best understood as the periphery of either a Spanish colonial empire centred in Mexico City, or of a Comanche empire centred on the Great Plains.

This collection's particular strength lies in the diversity of approaches, data sets, and historical sources that are integrated into these various case studies. While some authors focus on the analysis of specific artefact categories (pottery, textiles, faunal remains), others employ broader site-specific, or landscape-based, approaches. Archaeological evidence is integrated with archival sources, including, in at least one case, detailed genealogical information. Finally, several contributions effectively engage with indigenous voices and perspectives on the colonial encounter, as drawn from contemporary testimonies recorded in Spanish documents, as well as surviving oral histories, especially as preserved among the Hopi. The vividness of these modern accounts of events hundreds of years in the past emphasizes that despite the practical agency and survival of many Indigenous American communities in the American Southwest, the historical trauma of the colonial encounter is a persistent and ongoing cultural legacy.

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Hutson, Scott R. (ed.). *Ancient Maya commerce: multidisciplinary research at Chunchucmil*. xix, 376 pp., map, figs, tables, illus., bibliogr. Boulder: Univ. Press of Colorado, 2017. £54.00 (cloth)

With more than 300 pages of illustrated text, and thirteen chapters by seventeen authors coming from different disciplinary fields, *Ancient Maya commerce* presents, in an exemplary manner, the results obtained from over ten years (1993-2006) of collaborative research based on clearly stated research questions. This book aims to interpret the trajectory of Chunchucmil, an exceptional site located on the northwest of the Yucatán Peninsula.

The site was first scientifically documented in the 1970s by the Archaeological Atlas of the State of Yucatán project, and a preliminary study revealed an important paradox: it seems to have been a large and densely populated centre, although situated within a natural environment poorly suited to supporting a large population. The PREP (Pakbeh – from the Yucatec words which signify, respectively, 'wall' and 'street' – Regional Economy Program) was initially launched by Bruce Dahlin, precisely starting from this paradox that had been noticed by his predecessors (chap. 1).

In order to be investigated and eventually clarified, this inconsistency required, first and foremost, the site's integral mapping, giving special attention to its internal organization. This fundamental work, which began well before the first application of LIDAR (laser imaging and detecting) to archaeological mapping, was carefully designed and carried out, following a strict protocol which took advantage of a local tradition: the presence of *mojoneras* (stone markers) on the ground, dividing the fields into *mecates* (20 × 20 m units). This both avoided spatial distortions (checked by GPS), and made it

possible to precisely inventory countless data (registered using the Geographic Information System). Although extremely time-consuming – the total area covered was nearly 12 km^2, recording 7,677 mapped structures, which included mounds and foundation braces, but excluded platforms and stone-piles (*chich*) – the mapping study (chap. 2) resulted in the acquisition of hard-to-surpass knowledge regarding the site's practical reality.

The second essential point that needed to be established was the chronology of habitation, and this was based on the excavation of a representative sample of the settlement components (chaps 3 and 4). It appears that, while people were living in the general area from around 700 BCE until now, about 80 per cent of the site was constructed and occupied during a short period of time: the second half of the Early Classic era (400-630 CE). From there it was possible to cautiously estimate the number of people who lived at the site (chap. 5) and in its hinterland, documented through various regional surveys (chap. 8).

According to Dahlin, Hutson, and their collaborators, Chunchucmil's existence and that of nearby sites during their apogee poses two sets of problems to which the remainder of the book is dedicated. How could such a large population have supported itself, considering that it was probably not capable of being agriculturally autonomous? While the enlightening soil study in chapter 9 stands out, chapter 7 on the population's water supply does not really succeed in answering this question. On what resources (especially in the vicinity – chap. 10) could the site and its hinterland have relied to exchange for those they lacked?

Ancient Maya commerce argues that trade was key. However, the model which is proposed is not straightforward. It resembles a game of three-cushion billiards: Chunchucmil with its hypothetical port (Canbalam) would have controlled the salt production in the Celestun region, which could have been exported south, acquiring in exchange obsidian from Chayal. On the other hand, both salt and obsidian along with some other products, exotic or from near the site (shells, for example), could have been traded east into the interior for maize, which the region was not able to produce in sufficient quantities. Therefore, Chunchucmil's initial success would have been based on its capacity to organize itself as a gateway community within a long-distance maritime trade network (chap. 12).

Finally, according to the volume's editor, the organization of the trade flows would have been based on a market economy (chaps 12 and 13). This is clearly supported by the discovery of a main marketplace, and coincides well with the absence of a centralized political power, possibly promoting a redistributive system. About fifteen families would have dominated the site, each one at the head of a district or neighbourhood. In fact, Chunchucmil's political organization and its functioning are crucial subjects that deserve to be discussed in more detail. Moreover, it could be useful to further investigate the possible role that Teotihuacan played in the creation of the maritime commercial route to the west of the Yucatán peninsula around 400 CE. Whatever it was, the Chunchucmil's success story, although brief, forces us, more than ever, to investigate the economic activities of ancient societies, the Maya in particular.

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Urton, Gary. *Inka history in knots: reading khipus as primary sources*. xvii, 293 pp., maps, figs, tables, illus., bibliogr. Austin: Univ. of Texas Press, 2017. £23.99 (paper)

Khipus are among the most challenging-to-comprehend recording devices ever created in human history. While the decimal system at the base of their numerical records has been understood since the beginning of the twentieth century, many aspects of their use remain mysterious, and it is still unclear how the knotted cords would have functioned in the administration of the Inka Empire or how they encoded non-numerical information. Gary Urton, Director of the Harvard Khipu Database Project and a leading scholar in the field of khipu studies, sums up the results of his lifelong interest in his most recent book, *Inka history in knots.* In Urton's words, khipus do not 'constitute a three-dimensional cord version of a "true writing system" – i.e., one in which signs denote the sounds of a language' (p. 238); rather, they are a form of semasiography that employs non-language-based signs. By detaching khipus from writing systems, it becomes possible to get rid of both the 'alphabetic prejudice' (p. 9) that prevented sixteenth-century Spaniards from properly understanding and describing khipus, as well as the still-prevalent idea that they represent an imperfect script.

Quite paradoxically, once freed from these theoretical burdens, khipus can be studied as primary historical sources. This forms the most interesting aspect of Urton's book: while narrative non-decimal khipus might encode a linear,

event-based history, accounting khipus record a 'structural history' or a 'history of structures' (p. 5) of the kind pursued by the *Annales* school of French historiography, based on the study of quantitative data deriving from sources like censuses or demographic records. In Urton's view, the structures incorporated into the knotted cords would reflect fundamental features of Andean sociopolitical organization and 'mental makeup' – or *mentalité* – such as 'dualism, complementarity, triadism, and quadripartition' of hierarchically arranged elements (p. 18). Drawing on a Foucauldian lexicon from the field of New Accounting studies, Urton contends that quantitative khipus encoded 'generative discursive formations' (p. 29), shaping and being reciprocally shaped by the structures of empire. Through the creation and public oral enunciation of khipus, Andean societies and their relations of power would have been continuously constituted and instantiated at various levels (local, regional, imperial). Since accounting is a form of exercising hegemonic power, cord keepers would have acted as creative agents of state governance, shaping a system of 'power-knowledge' (p. 22) that constituted the state itself.

Basing his decipherment on an internal, structural analysis – whose basic mechanisms he had already detailed in his previous *Signs of the Inka khipu* (2003) – Urton proposes exciting interpretations of various khipu archives. These archives include a pair from Atarco (Nazca) encoding the dual structure of a village; a set of calendric khipus from Laguna de los Cóndores (Chachapoyas) recording the distribution of the labour force over twenty-four synodic lunar-like periods; a three-tiered set of accounting khipus from the Palace of Puruchuco (Lima); and groups of khipus apparently recording the offerings brought to the pilgrimage centre of Pachacamac or the products stored at the Inkawasi administrative centre. At least fifty or sixty khipus seem to be censuses recording members of households, while others could have encoded complex forms of Andean spatial and ritual organization known as *ceque* systems, whose study had been pioneered by the late R. Tom Zuidema, to whom Urton's book is dedicated.

The use of khipus endured at least until 1585, when they were prohibited by the Third Lima Council. For instance, among the most intriguing interpretations proposed by Urton, we can mention a possible colonial census that records the demographic collapse of a Chachapoyan community over a fifty-year period, and a close match between an alphabetical census written in the Santa Valley in 1670 and a census-like (and perhaps Rosetta Stone-like) khipu. Urton's compelling interpretations about the use of accounting khipus provide a fresh look at the old anthropological debate on the relationship between structure and history, and are also promising as a first step towards the writing of a new *Annales*-like indigenous history of the Inka Empire. At the same time, thanks to Spanish colonial sources based on indigenous accounts, we also know that the Inka recorded a more narrative history, celebrating the deeds of great men. When we are able to decipher the narrative khipus – and the way in which names, toponyms, and items' categories were encoded into the numerical ones – we will probably also be able to read this kind of history. In *Inka history in knots*, Urton anticipates that he will write another book about narrative khipus; it will be eagerly awaited.

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Vogel, Melissa A. *The Casma city of El Purgatorio: ancient urbanism in the Andes*. xxiii, 274 pp., maps, tables, illus., bibliogr. Gainesville: Univ. Press of Florida, 2016. £82.95 (cloth)

A series of prehistoric states and cities flourished very early in the pre-Hispanic Andes in the first millennium BCE. Their origin and nature have formed the basis for critical research questions for several generations of archaeologists. Generally the theories used to understand the first states in the Andes derive from regions in other parts of the world, and consequently many represent Eurocentric hegemonic models. This has begun to change in recent years. In the north coast of Peru, we have seen a plethora of new archaeological data that have generated important theoretical and methodological approaches. On this coast, where the famous Moche and Chimú states arose, Melissa A. Vogel's *The Casma city of El Purgatorio* focuses on one site, El Purgatorio, the capital of the proposed Casma state that developed between 700 and 1400 CE.

Chapter 1 addresses the key concepts of city, state, polity, and so forth. Multiple theoretical approaches from the most classical (political economy) to the most postprocessual, especially phenomenology, are employed to obtain a better reading of the Casma state. The second chapter presents the geographic, climatic, and political scenario in which pre-Hispanic societies developed, especially on the north coast. The main societies that flourished here, and which were the Casma state's ancestors (such as the Moche) and contemporaries (the Wari, Late Moche, Lambayeque, Chimú), are discussed and

placed within the context of the emergence and existence of Casma society.

Chapter 3 describes the site of El Purgatorio. Here, the definition of the political organization of the Casma society is relevant for the later development of the book: 'Based on current data, at minimum the Casma state consisted of a heterarchical confederation of regional elites united by common cultural practices, whose degree of political autonomy remains unclear' (p. 70). Chapter 4 describes and analyses the urban environment. Vogel demonstrates how the builders of El Purgatorio chose a strategic place, designed a city, and how it was used and modified by its inhabitants. The comparison of El Purgatorio with other metropolises such as Moche or Chan Chan highlights some similarities but, above all, it makes evident the particularities of its architecture. The sectorization of the El Purgatorio site based on its functionality helps to contextualize the social relationships that would have been woven into this city.

Chapter 5 covers the study of religion and ritual in Casma society, which, although not very explicit in their material culture, are evident in some designs on their ceramics and can be inferred through funerary practices. The analysis of architecture, especially from a phenomenological perspective, also allows us to understand some of the mechanisms of control of the built space from multiple viewpoints. Chapter 6 reminds us that in economies without fixed-price markets, such as the Andean pre-Hispanic ones that were controlled and administered by the elites, a main problem was the maintenance of a large population dwelling within their cities. In particular, the elites controlled the different types of specialists within the city, both directly and indirectly. The understanding of how the elites appropriated the work of the commoners is significant because this is a topic that is not generally addressed in the archaeological literature and one which Vogel tackles very well here.

The focus of chapter 7 is on participation and perceptions. The analysis of the architecture and of the funerary contexts allows the author to ascertain the living conditions of her residents. Establishing these characteristics and social relationships gives an interesting weight to the anthropological analysis of the city. Chapter 8 places El Purgatorio within the economic and political relations that existed between different, contemporaneous societies of the north coast, especially at the level of ceramics and textiles. Similarly, shared funerary practices and foreign raw materials indicate a relationship with other areas of the Andes and beyond. Although many of Vogel's interpretations remain as hypotheses, the picture of the Casma state and its interaction with other societies that she presents is plausible. The final chapter reaffirms the data on the nature and particularities of Casma society and its main city, framing it within Andean prehistoric processes.

The Casma city of El Purgatorio provides an ambitious archaeological and anthropological set of explanations based on an extensive study of local material evidence and a regional comparative study. More field research and nuanced economic and political theory would be necessary to understand this and other pre-Hispanic Andean polities. Nevertheless, Vogel's book contributes, both empirically and theoretically, to the process of understanding the nature and particularities of Andean cities and states, a topic that will remain relevant to archaeologists for many more generations.

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Weiss, Elizabeth. *Reading the bones: activity, biology, and culture.* xix, 183 pp., bibliogr. Gainesville: Univ. Press of Florida, 2017. £85.95 (cloth)

In her preface to *Reading the bones*, Elizabeth Weiss asks its central question: '[D]o skeletal activity indicators reveal past people's activity patterns, or do biological factors influence these markers in ways that make reconstructing activities impossible?' (p. xi). This query rests at the core of decades of research in the fields of bioarchaeology and human skeletal biology. Do measurements and observations of human skeletal remains reveal genetic relationships, environmental effects, or some combination of both? How can this knowledge be utilized in thoughtful research programmes to elucidate past issues of the human condition? This new book provides many answers to these questions and establishes a sound foundation to explore others.

The central substantive chapters focus on the following themes: bone biology, cross-sectional geometrics, entheseal changes, osteoarthritis, stress fractures, and activity indicator facets. These topics are well chosen and capture the major issues in 'reading the bones'. Along the way, the discussion covers most other areas of research relative to the proper interpretation of data from human skeletal remains. The glossary provides a resource for those who do not understand the terms employed. The literature cited is up-to-date and necessarily vast (414

entries). A comprehensive index offers a search mechanism for topics of special interest.

The first two chapters provide the basic information on skeletal growth, remodelling, and biomechanics needed to understand the conditions discussed later. The information presented in these chapters is tedious but clearly written and absolutely necessary for a book on this topic. Terms are defined and the narrative provides a thorough foundation on just how bones form and are shaped by the processes and activities described in subsequent chapters. All bioarchaeologists who attempt to interpret human remains must understand these basic principles relating to bone formation and modification. Many of the conditions described in this book carry historical labels relating to presumed cause. A true understanding of causal factors producing these conditions is rooted in the basic principles discussed in chapters 1 and 2.

The literature review includes many global examples of conditions detected and interpreted from various epochs of the past. Perhaps more importantly, key publications are presented from many fields, including genetics, forensic science, sports medicine, orthopaedic medicine, and clinical and experimental science. This comprehensive, academic approach reveals that some conditions are predominantly hereditary while others are indeed related to activity and culture. While speculation can be entertaining, Weiss argues for a focus on solid science in interpretation. To take an example from my own research, facets on the superior surfaces of the metatarsals clearly are produced by extreme bending of the toes. However, do these alterations reflect a habitual kneeling posture, food preparation techniques, or, in modern times, office use of inappropriately sized chairs? In short, many such conditions found on skeletal remains can be produced by a variety of activity types, therefore interpretation and diagnosis should be conservative and cognizant of the complexity involved. Circular reasoning must be recognized and avoided.

I recommend this book to all anthropologists who study human skeletal remains. It provides detailed information on many skeletal alterations that may be linked to past patterns of activity. The volume also includes a robust, critical discussion of the complex factors that lead to such alterations, including the ageing process and sexual dimorphism. Perhaps most importantly, the book invites debate on lesion interpretation and elucidates the key research needed for more precise diagnosis. This volume offers abundant information for all those entering this academic area of anthropology. It also challenges us to think critically and invest in experimental research that will make us more adept at 'reading the bones'.

Douglas H. Ubelaker *Smithsonian Institution*

Wynn, Thomas & Frederick L. Coolidge (eds). *Cognitive models in Palaeolithic archaeology*. xi, 240 pp., maps, figs, tables, bibliogrs. Oxford: Univ. Press, 2017. £58.00 (cloth)

The ten chapters of *Cognitive models in Palaeolithic archaeology* will be helpful to readers unacquainted with the several books and articles published by its editors and authors, or for those wanting to keep up to date with recent developments in their thinking. Archaeologist Thomas Wynn and psychologist Frederick L. Coolidge have collaborated over many years, and set up the Center for Cognitive Archaeology at the University of Colorado at Colorado Springs (UCCS). Their books and publications have been a source of inspiration to me and others. Admirably informative are Wynn's introductory chapter 1, and chapter 2 on the expert cognition model by Wynn, Haidle, Lombard, and Coolidge. Also noteworthy are Wynn, Overmann, Coolidge, and Janulis's penultimate chapter 9 on ordinal thinking, Coolidge and Wynn's epilogue (chap. 10), and Overmann's chapter 5 on materiality.

The book's other five chapters repay study. Chapter 3 by Barnard, Davidson, and Byrne develops Barnard's elegant theory of human cognitive evolution; Hodgson's chapter 7 extends his interesting insights on prehistoric visual cognition, and is complemented by Martín-Loeches's 'Art without symbolic mind' (chap. 6). Malafouris's chapter 4 on the embodied mind is thought-provoking and challenging. Cole's prolix chapter 8, a consideration of British hand-axes, stretched my patience and would have benefited from ruthless editing.

Wynn defines evolutionary cognitive archaeology as 'a branch of prehistoric archaeology that focuses on the evolution of the human mind', deriving 'interpretive power from a variety of explicit cognitive science models and has begun to describe the elaborate mosaic that was hominin cognitive evolution' (p. 1). He also correctly notes that '[a]rchaeology and cognitive science share little in the way of a common intellectual history. It is not that the two disciplines are hostile; they just have rarely encountered one another in pursuing a shared goal' (p. 1); as well as that 'there continues to be a great deal of loose reference to symbolic

culture' (p. 15). Wynn recounts in masterly fashion the contributions made in recent years by palaeoneurologists, evolutionary psychologists, and primatologists, and how, in consequence, evolutionary cognitive archaeology has developed various 'cognitively grounded approaches to interpreting archaeological remains' (p. 13), which include neuroarchaeology, cognitive neuroscience, developmental psychology, information processing, social cognition, symbolic approaches, and non-Cartesian approaches. He concludes, reasonably, that the mosaic pattern they offer implies that '[t]he human mind did not evolve gradually as a unified problem-solving computer that increased in capacity. Instead, different cognitive abilities had different evolutionary trajectories' (p. 16).

Chapter 2 describes the expert cognition model of complicated behaviour that once learnt can be performed seamlessly with minimal attention. We are reminded that expertise cannot be contained neatly within long-term memory, short-term memory, or even working memory alone. Nevertheless, it was frustrating to be told that '[p]rocedural memories are the predominant component of technical expertise (and perhaps the basis for all expertise, but that is an argument for another paper) and thus of particular relevance' (p. 25). Haptic procedural memory is the elephant in the room, and a chapter on this subject would have been welcome. Instead, attention is devoted to long-term working memory, asserting that its evolution in archaic humans overcame limitations of storage capacity in working memory by coupling it to long-term procedural memory. Psychological criteria for assessing expert performance are applied to four Palaeolithic behaviours: stone-hammering by apes; Oldowan stone-flaking; Levallois prepared-core technology; and composite tool-making. Incomprehensibly, given Wynn's lifelong concern with Acheulian handaxes, bifacial flaking is omitted. Yet published neuroscientific analysis of cerebral functional connectivity between students learning, respectively, Oldowan and Acheulian stone-flaking implies that subtle differences exist involving procedural memory versus declarative memory (know-how) and perceptual motor versus cognitive skill (knowledge about), suggesting *different* cognitive strategies were being tried out *differently* during the respective learning activities. Perhaps the first handaxes, 1,750,000 years ago, reflect significant cognitive developments in our genus *Homo*.

The penultimate chapter, 'Bootstrapping ordinal thinking', is a thoughtful and articulate reflexion that regards the existence of Palaeolithic beads as perhaps enabling an extension of working-memory capacity by tallying distances walked. Perforated shells, possibly for the stringing of beads, come from African Middle Stone Age sites where early *Homo sapiens* made them. They are present also in a European Mousterian assemblage, attributed to Neanderthals, at Cueva de los Aviones (Spain) dated to 115,000 years ago. In the epilogue, the senior authors note: '[T]he final encephalization of *Homo sapiens* (not to mention Neanderthals) was accompanied by no clear cognitive developments' (p. 217).

The book is commendable and worthwhile and I recommend it to all who are interested in the evolution of human cognition during the Palaeolithic. It is a pity it is not longer, however; a few more chapters by non-UCCS contributors could have made it a more useful teaching aid.

Michael Walker *Murcia University*

Borders, borderlands, and nations

Agier, Michel. *Borderlands*. ix, 186 pp., bibliogr. Cambridge: Polity, 2016. £15.99 (paper)

Michel Agier's latest work marks a natural progression from the subjects developed in his previous publications. Themes from his earlier work focusing on the lives of those found in border situations are drawn together in *Borderlands* and translated into a set of methodological and theoretical principles from which to build an anthropology of the cosmopolitan condition. This condition provides a lens through which to 'understand the world around us' (p. 83), amidst the complex interplay of hyper-globalized social systems, the neoliberal individualization of the self, and the proliferation of borders.

This new volume is steeped in the technical language of its conceptual framework, the aim of which is to stimulate a renewal of methodological tools within anthropology. For this task, Agier draws his theory from sociology, political science, and philosophy, while meandering significantly into the history of anthropology, as well as relying on his own experience as an ethnographer in refugee camps across the world. In so doing, he situates his arguments firmly within the theoretical landscape, whilst forging a new path for anthropology through the immense proliferation of ideas currently circulating within the interdisciplinary field of border studies.

In fact, as the reader makes his or her way through the text, the meaning of Agier's title becomes inverted: 'borderlands' giving way to something closer to 'land of borders', where we encounter the border tirelessly across all modes of being. The border is not only pervasive, but also central in understanding the place and the involvement of the people within it. The progress of the reader from an initial impression of a straightforward 'borderland' produces an almost unconscious experience of decentring, mirroring that of Agier's overarching theoretical proposal: a shift in the gaze of anthropology towards the border itself. This border encompasses all in-between places in temporal, spatial, and social dimensions; it emerges as a liminal space that brings identities, places, and cultures into relation.

Agier locates two stages of this encounter: first with alterity and then with power. In the former, the border joins the self with the other in 'relative degrees of foreignness' (p. 59) as varied as the complexities of culture. Though this process may reify the positioning of the self to the other, the indeterminate nature of a border creates an opportunity to 'break with the natural order of things', bringing subjects into new forms of relation. These moments occur in a residual space, or anti-structure, dynamically resolving in and out of what Agier defines variously throughout the text as the hierarchical ordering of essentialized identity assignments: the structures of power.

In *Borderlands*, the relationship between power, identity, and subjectivity is theorized in the momentary other-subject: focused on irruptive actions occurring in the anti-structure which transform the subjugating order or 'influence the definition of the place of each [subject] in the world' (p. 154). On the one hand, this theory of political subjectivity avoids the danger of reducing, a priori, potential practices to categories of resistance or the dislocation of dominant norms (these would form part of the subjugated subject); on the other, it draws emphasis away from the dynamic nature of political struggle, in which power is continually negotiated and renegotiated at the borders of hegemony. It is difficult to imagine such sustained forms of political struggle building from fragmented moments of subjectivity.

Important to note is the open and foundational nature of *Borderlands*. There is theoretical work to be done in order to capture, with epistemic equality, the array of practices that entangle power, identity, and subjectivity. Concepts that deal with the dynamic relationship of structure and anti-structure, scattered throughout the text, are predominantly introduced and then left untheorized. Whilst this reinforces the methodological commitment to situational ethnography, it also makes it difficult for the reader to unite Agier's politics of the subject with the wider conceptual framework of *Borderlands*. The seeds of this project can be found in the book's final paragraph on the political dimension of the other-subject, which alludes to the formation and staging of subjectivity that is associated with irruptive efforts to 'regain the initiative' from outside of the subjugation of a regime (p. 145). Exploring the relationship between these modes of subjectivity and subject formation has the potential to widen the decentred gaze beyond transformative moments to encompass complex and diverse modes of political exchange. This brings anthropology firmly into ground previously held by political science and psychoanalytic studies; an encounter that may disrupt either system of thought.

Nicholas Cullen *University of Cambridge*

Büscher, Bram. *Transforming the frontier: peace parks and the politics of neoliberal conservation in Southern Africa*. xx, 290 pp., maps, table, illus., bibliogr. Durham, N.C.: Duke University Press, 2013. £17.99 (paper)

The critical discourse on conservation as a tool of exclusion by the elite is well established in anthropology, human geography, and environmental history. In particular, the conflicts between conservationists and indigenous communities are particularly well articulated within the context of indigenous communities (e.g. M. Chapin, 'A challenge to conservationists', *World Watch* **17: 6**; M. Dowie, *Conservation refugees*, 2011; M.D. Spence, *Dispossessing the wilderness*, 1999). Within this genre, Bram Büscher's monograph provides a focused case study of how conservation also intersects with international politics in border zones. *Transforming the frontier: peace parks and the politics of neoliberal conservation in Southern Africa* suggests that conservation and peace-building can be co-opted by the broader economic hegemony of neoliberal ambitions, which is congruent with other works in this area as well (see J. Fall, *Drawing the line*, 2005; H. Suich, B. Child & A. Spenceley, eds, *Evolution and innovation in wildlife conservation*, 2008).

Using a focused case study of the Peace Parks Foundation and its establishment of the Maloti-Drakensberg Transfrontier Conservation Area between South Africa and Lesotho, this book

lays out a detailed history of conservation in post-apartheid South Africa. This was a time of great optimism where international donors, both public and private, were lavishing resources on the region. Nelson Mandela's iconic persona as a Nobel Peace Laureate was harnessed by tycoon Anton Rupert to put forward a new vision of peace parks that was predicated on economic development through tourism. The namesake foundation which he helped to create was unabashed in its proclamation that in its view conservation was an instrumental means, for achieving economic development across African borders, rather than an end in itself.

Although Büscher's critique of conservation and peace-building is plausible, he does not provide a tangible alternative model apart from stating at the end that 'tackling and targeting radical roots' would enable a more positive form of conservation (p. 232). Such statements have their roots in neo-Marxist geography and political ecology and have played an important role in diagnosing maladies of power asymmetry in society. Yet they do not in and of themselves provide a treatment forecast for these maladies of neoliberalism. To his credit, Büscher unpacks the notion of neoliberalism in terms of its varied amorphous definitions and is most concerned with the commodification of nature and community interests. However, when there is entrenched inequality already in the world, harnessing the capital of the elite for community development inevitably requires some courting of this wealth by civic organizations such as the Peace Parks Foundation. Such a strategy could thus also be considered a soft power approach to equalizing disparities through disarming and charming the elite rather than enabling them.

Perhaps the most important contribution of this work is how Büscher problematizes the frontier. He states that the notion of political borders as frontiers is simplistic and draws us into an insightful discussion of frontiers that spans a vast literature in environmental history and human geography. In particular, he is concerned about the transcendence of political borders being used to mask other frontiers of wealth distribution and opportunity for communities. In this regard, *Transforming the frontier* could have perhaps spent more time on examining eco-regionalism as a paradigm for considering conservation. Natural science discourse has clearly defined watersheds and ecosystems as important boundaries in the analysis of effective conservation management. How might such a prioritization process for conservation intersect with community needs?

Ultimately, conservation and development are likely to lead to some level of sub-optimality towards either goal, but collectively such a process of balancing costs and benefits may prevent the destabilizing of conflict. Though conflict can be an important and effective force of change, it must be navigated through constructive mediatory processes and institutions. To this end, peace parks should not be summarily dismissed, despite the failings of their particular manifestations in some contexts. Conservation has an aspirational goal to create common denominators and thus aims for co-operation between parties that might otherwise distrust each other across tribal or national fault-lines, and this is admirable. Books such as Büscher's appropriately caution against sanguine assumptions about peace and conservation, but should be viewed as diagnostic rather than deterministic in their assertions.

Saleem H. Ali *University of Delaware*

Frank, Andrew K. & A. Glenn Crothers (eds). *Borderland narratives: negotiation and accommodation in North America's contested spaces, 1500-1850*. 217 pp., bibliogrs. Gainesville: Univ. Press of Florida, 2017. £75.50 (cloth)

Borderland narratives is an essay collection that opens perspectives on North American history from the sixteenth century until the 1850s from the viewpoint of various borderlands. The time-frame is characterized by many large-scale events in American history: in the sixteenth century, European conquerors entered the area and founded the first colonies; in the seventeenth, systematic migration from Europe to North America began; in 1776, the United States declared its independence and went to war with Britain; and the nineteenth century saw US territory expand. Moreover, in the 1850s, the country was heading towards civil war owing to the growing disputes between the states. Thus that decade provides a convenient endpoint to the volume. The aim of this collection, edited by Andrew K. Frank and A. Glenn Crothers, is to examine the so-called 'American narrative' in a way that focuses on the various geographical, social, cultural, and ethnic frontiers, as well as borderland processes and the individuals who were working and living in these liminal spaces. Through this objective, the collection connects to the multidisciplinary field of border studies.

The book's contributors examine various borderlands through the micro-level perspectives

of individuals and groups: Ohio Valley Indigenous peoples (Harper, chap. 1); Seminoles and African-Americans in Florida (Frank, chap. 2); southeastern natives (Boulware, chap. 3); missing people (*los desaparecidos*) in the early Texas borderland (Gerona, chap. 4); religious borderlands (Pasquier, chap. 6) and Protestants in the Ohio River Valley (Mulder, chap. 7); and African-Americans at the racial borders (Mergenthal, chap. 5) and at the 'American border' (Winch, chap. 8). The research materials include biographical documents, letters, diaries, personal narratives, interviews, travel literature, newspapers, and speech manuscripts in addition to official documents, such as court and congressional records.

These essays show how the various borderlands become visible in the interactions between people; manifested in the conflicts and fears, disappearances and deaths, changing social and economic networks, allegiances, encounters between cultural and religious phenomena, as well as in encounters between different values and ethnic groups. On the one hand, borders appear as the geographical margins of administrative areas. On the other, and more interestingly, they appear as places of encounters and as historical processes where individuals with their own motives, life-histories, and goals are paramount. When viewed from the latter perspective, the borderlands appear to be different from the frontiers as defined by those who established the boundaries for administrative and national purposes. In fact these borderlands are not necessarily clear or easy to recognize: they may appear as messy, flexible, permeable, and continuously changing.

Writing the American narrative with a focus on both the various processes at the edges and borderland peoples is simultaneously an inspiring and a challenging task. The collection shows intriguingly how the historical 'grand events' affected the micro-level, and the essays present fascinating case studies on such processes. For an international audience, the essays are also somewhat challenging: recognizing the various borderland territories and geographical locations is not necessarily easy for readers unfamiliar with North American history and geography. Additionally, for the scholars of the multidisciplinary field of border studies it would have been interesting if the writers had explicated their findings within the theoretical and conceptual frame of border studies as well. Frank and Crothers' introduction creates a starting point for a conceptual, theoretical discussion, as it outlines a short history of the frontier and borderland concepts in the North American context from the early twentieth century onwards. This chapter defines the borderland as a place, a process, and as the shared concept in the book. Further considering each chapter's contribution within a broader theoretical and conceptual framework would have opened the collection to a wider discussion within border studies.

The 1990s witnessed a 'new wave' in border studies, with the field moving in the direction of increasing multidisciplinarity. Within this context, one of the functions of micro-level historical approaches is the attempt to comprehend the historical processes that have led to the contemporary situation. Thus, studying historical borderland processes and their causes may allow us to apprehend contemporary processes such as the development of unofficial social networks or conflicts. In this respect, *Borderland narratives* is a very topical collection given our modern situation, one in which people migrate in increasing numbers across many borders temporarily, or more or less permanently, and meet in various new borderlands.

Tuulikki Kurki *University of Eastern Finland*

Hannerz, Ulf & Andre Gingrich (eds). *Small countries: structures and sensibilities*. vi, 346 pp., figs, bibliogrs. Philadelphia: Univ. of Pennsylvania Press, 2017. £56.00 (cloth)

Small countries is a collection of essays produced by a diverse group of sixteen anthropologists focused on multiple aspects of the question of what it means for a country to be both relatively and absolutely 'small'. This is posed as a search for commonalities, or 'family resemblances' (pp. 10-11), among small countries. The editors treat country as a fuzzy concept, and remain 'theoretically uncommitted' (p. 2) to its precise meaning. Sometimes countries appear as thinking and feeling agents themselves with self-images, but most often the agents are people living in the country, or its diaspora. The various authors explore how a variety of social and cultural structures might be related to country size, and how size affects people's sensibilities, what they experience, think, and feel about their country.

In the absence of a framing theory, this may strike a reader as much too nebulous, but this admittedly open-ended approach works effectively because it is applied to an abundance of high-quality ethnographic and historical material. The authoritative individual chapters are the book's major strength. Ten of the authors are

affiliated with academic institutions (Norway, Sweden, Austria, New Zealand, Serbia, Singapore) or governments (Abu Dhabi, United Arab Emirates) in small countries, and their collective field experience is extensive. The result is a rich assortment of intriguing possibilities that such and such a condition might in some way be related to country size, or then again perhaps not, because there are always exceptions. Such uncertainty may be annoying, but it also presents many opportunities for a closer look and more formal hypothesizing.

Ulf Hannerz and Andre Gingrich's introduction is a helpful overview of the size issues explored throughout the book. The chapters are grouped into five parts by common themes, such as the meaning of nationhood, countries aspiring for success, being and becoming small, and so on, but in the absence of a broader theoretical perspective, the logic of these groupings is not always obvious. Most chapters treat single countries, but some draw interesting comparisons between countries, such as between Austria and Switzerland (chap. 8), or Israel and Cuba (chap. 6), Yemen and Palestine (chap. 14). Chapter 3 considers Scandinavia as a cluster. Extremes of country wealth range from Abu Dhabi (chap. 13), ranked as richest, to impoverished countries such as Yemen and Palestine. The big question is always in whose eyes the comparisons and ranking are being made, and why they matter.

All of these countries (except Palestine) are politically independent sovereign states and members of the United Nations. The Maldives and Belize (chaps 10 and 11, respectively) are at the bottom of the population scale with about 4 million people. The upper limit hovers around 10 million people, with Yemen as an outlier, having a population approaching 28 million, including the diaspora. Yemen is poor and small relative to its more prosperous and powerful neighbour Saudi Arabia, even though their official populations are almost the same.

Throughout the collection, the principal methodology is qualitative, emphasizing imaginaries, narratives, alterity, and othering. This is primarily a cultural approach, with authors speaking, for example, of the 'cultural management' of a country, and of countries as commercial 'brands' (pp. 26-7), in effect competing with other countries for market share, especially over tourism and investment. Given the explicit focus on size, there is a curious avoidance of quantification, statistical analysis, or use of maps, graphs, or tables that might highlight issues of scale in a way that others might test or elaborate on. This is significant given the extent that objective inequality may increase with demographic and economic scale. Structures and sensibilities appear to be culturally and historically contingent, and thus do not lend themselves to strong theoretical conclusions, but significantly a few chapters do explicitly attribute them to elite decision-making. The Serbian elite (chap. 9), for example, may have chosen war in the 1990s to create 'a great Serbian state' rather than promoting benefits for the populace.

The authors carefully navigate several fine lines. They seek to avoid the problem of methodological nationalism, which would treat the nation-state as a natural, unproblematized analytic unit. However, treating a country as a government or jurisdiction with a particular territory would open up many more possibilities for exploring the significance of size. Likewise, explicitly considering the significance of absolute size of population and economy would be useful if the relationship between scale and human well-being were the issue. Area specialists and students concerned with contemporary issues will find much to engage their interest here.

John H. Bodley *Washington State University*

Issues in medical anthropology

Berend, Zsuzsa. *The online world of surrogacy*. x, 255 pp., bibliogr. Oxford, New York: Berghahn Books, 2016. £85.00 (cloth)

The online world of surrogacy examines the discursive construction of an ethos of surrogacy on the website surromomsonline.com (SMO). Zsuzsa Berend focuses on the way surrogate mothers navigate 'questions about relatedness and motherhood, the commodification of life, and the usefulness of surrogacy contracts' (p. 1) in the course of posting about their own experiences as well as reflecting and advising each other about how they should act and feel while pregnant with their IPs' (intended parents) children. The book contains five chapters and a conclusion. The first discusses the website and methods. Chapter 2 focuses on the journey (of shared love) between the surrogate and intended parents. Chapter 3 is on contracts. Chapters 4 and 5 are on money and gifts, respectively.

Although Berend does reference the anthropological literature on surrogate motherhood, which tends to prioritize kinship issues, her account centres on social economic questions about the market and emotional reactions to the commodification of intimacy. She does have some interesting things to say about

relatedness nonetheless. After simply asserting that pregnancy is 'a social relationship between a woman and her baby' and that 'maternal feelings are contingent' (p. 72), she shows how the women on the website discursively discount pregnancy and genetics as defining parenthood. It is desire (the motivation of the IPs) that makes mothers and fathers. Bonding is strongly discouraged between the surrogate and the foetus/baby but encouraged between her and the IPs. Although Berend writes convincingly about this aspect of the discourse of surrogate motherhood, it is important to keep in mind that SMO is a pro-surrogacy website, and that it is situated in the eponymous on-line world. How well does discourse in the cloud, on a platform that supports this industry, reflect what happens to the people involved during the course of their more mundane lives?

While she seems to regard this on-line dialogue rather uncritically at times, Berend does address methodological issues. Perhaps disappointingly for anthropological ethnographers, though understandable given that she is a sociologist, Berend proceeds here from the standpoint of interpretative sociology. She takes the 'grounded theory' position that 'the social world studied through fieldwork is inherently narrative-bound' (cited on p. 72). As sympathetic as many of us may be to this stance, it is important to ask whether SMO is indeed a social world, or merely a fragment of one. That criticism aside, the posts on the site do enable us to see at least something of the agency that surrogates exhibit while defining the practice of surrogate motherhood. The reader can appreciate how the women encourage or discourage certain specific attitudes and practices relating to the subjects of the individual chapters. Berend supplements these on-line observations with a long email correspondence that was carried on with one surrogate mother. The correspondence allows for a more interactive, key informant-like dimension to the book than the posts do by themselves.

Aside from the issue of bonding with the IPs rather than the foetus, Berend covers some other points that anthropologists may find particularly interesting. One concerns the role of the surrogate's husband. His consent is relied upon for the pregnancy to proceed, and the fact that his sacrifices during its course are appreciated is clear. However, we cannot penetrate beyond one surrogate's account of her partner's co-operation to his motivations and experience of surrogacy by reading posts on SMO. Economic questions, covered in chapter 5, about compensation (what it is correct to ask for and what kind of monetary consideration is illegitimate), provide an extensive focus for the book. This 'Gift' chapter concentrates on what sort of exchange surrogacy entails. Morality, care, sacrifice, and its limits get more attention in this chapter than the Maussian questions about reciprocity that anthropologists might prioritize. These queries are not missing, but, of course, the relationship between the parties, the continuance and/or termination of that surrogate/IP bond, cannot be fully explored through an analysis of website discourse.

The online world of surrogacy succeeds in showing how the women on SMO use the website 'to fashion, negotiate and make sense of' motherhood (p. 236). The book does a good job of relating 'gift and market exchange and . . . their practical and moral implications' in the context of this simultaneously intimate, bureaucratic, market-orientated, and contractual industry (p. 236). As Berend notes, now that Facebook and similar on-line platforms are increasingly replacing websites like SMO, new opportunities to explore this on-line world present themselves. Without more conventional ethnographic data, however, the interrelations between the virtual and the real remain uncertain.

Hal B. Levine *Victoria University of Wellington*

Crowley-Matoka, Megan. *Domesticating organ transplant: familial sacrifice and national aspiration in Mexico.* xiv, 316 pp., illus., bibliogr. Durham, N.C.: Duke Univ. Press, 2016. £19.99 (paper)

The transplantation and exchange of organs has been a long-standing concern for anthropology. It is a domain ripe for cultural excavations, but remains, as Megan Crowley-Matoka cautions, readily associated with dark or illicit activity, particularly in Mexico, where illegal activities are often assumed to be part of a dominant narrative. *Domesticating organ transplant* tells us a different kind of story, one that locates the giving and receiving of organs in the everyday routines and ritualized practices that link together the nation, the family, and the institutions of medicine.

Crowley-Matoka's fine-grained ethnographic research shows how the field of transplant medicine acquires rich significance beyond its unique operations and arrangements. More than a biotechnical strategy to manage the country's growing problem of chronic kidney disease, transplant medicine has been coupled with Mexico's drive towards modernization and development, in a desire to evidence how far the

country has extricated itself from traditionalism and dependency. Such ambitions, however, have been thwarted by the vagaries of the nation-state itself, which is characterized by both a disintegrating and poorly resourced healthcare system and a partially developed transplant infrastructure. The latter has profoundly shaped whose organs – those from living or dead donors – best serve the transplant enterprise.

This book unsettles the boundaries between modern and traditional in material and symbolic ways. The ubiquity and material presence of El Niño Doctor (baby Jesus as physician) as the guiding hand of transplant surgery stands as one iconic example of the ways in which transplant medicine traverses the frontiers between belief and knowledge, between the metaphysical and the scientific, and between the familial and the institutional.

It is, however, within a context of haphazard resourcing that the bioavailability of organs-for-transplant (or, as Crowley-Matoka more aptly terms it, their 'bio(un)availability', p. 29) has created an exceptional and pivotal role for the Mexican family as the main source of organs. Over 80 per cent of kidneys are provided in this way. Living-related organ donation invokes a particular type of cultural story about, and role for, *la familia Mexica* as a restorative and therapeutic force when contending with the Mexican state's inadequacies. Embodied by another popular icon and trope, that of *la mujer sufrida* (the long-suffering mother), the giver and protector of life, both public and institutional discourses and imaginaries of transplant medicine are thus infused with the spirit of sacrifice.

Despite the symbolic background that underpins much of the book's ethnography, Crowley-Matoka does not solely concentrate her analysis on this. It is, instead, the research's empirical grounding and her focus on domestication which provide the core argument for the book. Organ transplantation, we are told, is domesticated in two senses: as part of the occasioned familial obligations to give life, and of the Mexican state's natural resources. Yet though domestication and its corollary, the feminization of healthcare, are central to the provision of organs for transplant, what this might imply, in practice, is far from self-evident and cannot be assumed from either dominant or cultural discourses. Women, for example, despite widely held assumptions, do not donate more organs than men; while the family, as a relied-on source of care and support, is shown to be 'messy, conflictual and shot through with brutal unequal dynamics of power' (p. 61). *Domesticating organ transplant* confronts head-on the complexities and contradictions bound up with family life in Mexico, and, through it, re-specifies the work and arrangements of transplant medicine as a situated – rather than an abstract – cultural concern. This is skilfully organized around the pursuit of a fundamental ethical question: how to live?

The problem of how to live resonates profoundly through this carefully crafted and reflexive text. Its sheer simplicity undoes our preoccupation with organs as either gifts or commodities – as the book's theoretical argument attests. The supply of, or access to, organs is never a given, but one which must be weighed against a family's capacity and learned agility to move things along, to work through the bureaucracy of healthcare, and to leverage social relationships by whatever means necessary.

Domesticating organ transplant neither eulogizes the Mexican family nor disparages the limits of care. It also does not fully politicize the provision of healthcare. It does, however, provide us with a richly textured ethnographic terrain from which to make sense of transplant medicine as a sited concern and everyday accomplishment for patients and their doctors – one which urges us to move beyond an analysis of the healthcare industry to the world outside the clinic.

Ciara Kierans *University of Liverpool*

Kreager, Philip & Astrid Bochow (eds). *Fertility, conjuncture, difference: anthropological approaches to the heterogeneity of modern fertility declines*. 345 pp., map, figs, tables, bibliogrs. Oxford, New York: Berghahn Books, 2017. £92.00 (cloth)

Philip Kreager and Astrid Bochow's edited *Fertility, conjuncture, difference* is a convincing continuation of critical discussions which began in the mid-1990s about, on the one hand, using anthropological approaches in order to understand the heterogeneity of modern reproductive change and, on the other, the possibilities for creating an anthropological demography. This effort is tackled in the volume's extraordinary introduction, in which the editors outline the innovative research strategy – combining conjunctural action and compositional difference – needed to unravel the continuing diversity of fertility world-wide. The editors hold that focusing on social context, vital for reproductive decisions, 'enables consideration both of agency and social structure'; while focusing on the difference in reproduction among various subpopulations leads to placing 'actors

and conjunctures in relation to wider fertility change' (p. 2). Within this framework, the volume's contributors combine ethnographies with historically documented contexts, question the conventional boundaries of the units observed, and challenge some assumptions of the theory of modernization that still underlies demographers' research design.

The first five chapters uncover what the editors term 'relations between subpopulations as mechanisms of reproductive change' (p. 16). Addressing Namibian fertility decline, Pauli (chap. 1) discusses the reproductive behaviour of three female subgroups. Analysing their different socioeconomic backgrounds and the conjunctures that shaped their reproduction decisions proved to better explain their fertility differences than observing marriage or class as independent variables. Combining church records and ethnography, Walters (chap. 2) suggests a 'moral demography' (p. 74) framework for explaining reproductive decision-making as structured by 'moral dispositions' in a subpopulation of members in a Catholic parish in Tanzania. Roche and Hohmann (chap. 3) give a detailed account on how two subgroups in the south of Tajikistan have used nuptiality, fertility, and migration 'to maintain groupness against the efforts of Soviet modernization and national homogenization' (p. 102). Heady's contribution (chap. 4) on the possible links between changed patterns of social interaction and ultra-low fertility rates among the locals of a northeastern Italian valley is a credible example of how to link the ethnographies, theories, and comparable demographic statistics of a wider region. He provides an alternative model for the demographic behaviour of a particular subpopulation, which does not differ from the average pattern of the entire population. Randall, Mondain, and Diagne (chap. 5) discuss 'the pitfalls of pre-classifying responses' (p. 165) in demographic surveys. Through interviews, the authors examine men's notions of fertility control in a Senegalese town, in which Islamic gender values prevail, to demonstrate which of women's justifications for controlling fertility were acceptable to men, and how women exploited the 'health loophole' (p. 185) to negotiate with their husbands an access to contraception.

The next four chapters discuss how intertwined historical and personal conjunctures can lead to reproductive decisions that alter life courses. Van der Sijpt (chap. 6) summarizes life histories from an eastern Cameroonian village of women who found themselves in different circumstances when encountering unplanned pregnancy. The author proves that 'a woman's navigation never happens independently from the dynamic navigations of those around her' (p. 210), thus offering 'new avenues for theorizing the interrelationship between individual agency and the surrounding structural contexts' (p. 213). Bochow (chap. 7) discusses 'reproductive disruption' and postponed childbirth among educated professionals in the context of rapid fertility decline and economic growth in Botswana. She demonstrates that lower fertility in urban areas fits classical modernization theories' assumptions about decreasing fertility in modernizing societies. However, lower national fertility proves to be related also to women's role in the context of nation-building and correlates with HIV prevalence. Similarly, Kroeker (chap. 8) demonstrates how socioeconomic changes 'have altered Lesotho's societal structure and fertility control' (p. 270). Although sexuality remains a male domain, women still decide on family planning but, unfortunately, not yet on their reproductive health. Hukin (chap. 9) tackles the preferred use of 'traditional contraception' among urban, higher educated, and wealthier women in Cambodia. The author shows that examining women's active choices in tandem with their social context proves that their decisions are far from illogical, as demographers might expect when contrasting traditional with modern contraception.

The last two chapters provide a remarkable epilogue which meticulously reflects the entire collection. Demographers Charbit and Petit (chap. 10) discuss 'the complementarity of demography and anthropology' (p. 311), explaining the still 'irreplaceable' demographic methodologies at the local level, while the anthropological demographer Johnson-Hanks (chap. 11), whose model of vital conjunctures inspired the volume's contributors, offers a step forward, reflecting on the composition-conjunctures framework for further exploring difference and fertility in population studies.

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Mobilities

Cole, Jennifer & Christian Groes (eds). *Affective circuits: African migrations to Europe and the pursuit of social regeneration*. x, 354 pp., illus., bibliogr. Chicago: Univ. Press, 2016. £26.50 (paper)

Affective circuits brings together eleven essays on African migrations to Europe by some of the most

prominent anthropologists in the field, as well as by other promising early-career scholars. Despite the great variety of topics covered, there is an impressive coherence across all contributions. Cross-border marriages, remittance practices, transnational childcare, and other less commonly studied issues in the field of migration, such as drug smuggling, fashion, and transnational therapy management, are approached through the lens of affective circuits. This concept, as proposed in the introduction by Jennifer Cole and Christian Groes, refers to the social formations that emerge from the exchange of material resources, emotions, money, ideas, and persons.

Affective circuits span across state borders and connect African migrants in Europe with their families in Africa and elsewhere. The circuit metaphor directs our attention to the multidirectional and circular flow of resources and, therefore, offers a way out of conventional approaches to migration as a linear process between sending and receiving settings. Furthermore, this analytical framework emphasizes the affective character of the various exchanges taking place between and within Africa and Europe. These circuits are affective not only because emotions participate in the various exchanges but also because these exchanges affect the relations of those participating in them.

The quest for a valuable personhood, social recognition, and new forms of authority is central to understanding migrants' motivations for participating in affective circuits. Various chapters in this book document how migrants attempt to reposition themselves from the periphery to the nodal centre of such circuits. For example, for some African women, starting a relationship with, or marrying, a European man provides them with material resources that allow them to take care of their family members in Africa, gaining their respect and appreciation (Groes, chap. 7; Cole, chap. 8). Julie Kleinman (chap. 10) shows how Malian migrants' engagement in short-term exchanges in Paris enables them to participate in long-term transnational exchanges with their families in Africa and transform themselves from a 'little brother to a big somebody' (p. 22). Even the involvement of young Guinea-Bissau men in drug smuggling provides them with opportunities to make it in life, comply with obligations towards kin, and achieve a respectable status, albeit at great risk (Vigh, chap. 9). Although the collection includes studies of parent-children relationships, particularly how parents craft belonging through their children (Feldman-Savelsberg, chap. 2), it lacks the perspective of the migrants' children in Europe, the so-called 'second generation', and their reasons for participating or not in affective circuits that reach their parents' country of origin.

The role of the state appears to be central in the regulation of affective circuits and may slow down, block, facilitate, or change the direction of the numerous flows and transfers. For example, European states' legislation requires the legal relation with the biological parents to be dissolved before a child is adopted, causing tensions with Ghanaian fosterage practices that accommodate multiple parenthood relations. This has an impact on the transnational circulation of children and the relations of care between the children and those claiming to be their parents (Coe, chap. 1). Nevertheless, the state's regulations do not always have the intended outcome. Increasing restrictions on certain types of labour migration valorize the family, and especially marriage, as one of the few relatively accessible routes for cross-border mobility and create a fertile ground for the emergence of transnational polygyny (Neveu Kringelbach, chap. 6).

Besides the state, different moralities, such as kinship ideologies (Kea, chap. 3; Sargent & Larchanché, chap. 4) and religion (Fesenmyer, chap. 5), shape migrants' engagement in affective circuits and inform their decisions about what to send, to whom, and what to anticipate in return. The participation of migrants in affective circuits is not only a product of kinship solidarity and love but it can also be motivated by a sense of obligation and fear. The book's contributors demonstrate the often asymmetrical character of exchanges as well as the unequal position of men and women in affective circuits.

Affective circuits is an important addition not just to the literature of migration studies and the anthropology of Africa. It offers a very useful analytical tool for the study of personhood, kinship, exchange, and transnationalism which could lead to new theoretical and empirical explorations. The theoretical robustness of this volume, grounded on fascinating multi-sited ethnographic studies, makes me confident that this collection will soon become a classic. Finally, the book is well written and suitable for teaching at the graduate and undergraduate level.

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Di Giovine, Michael A. & David Picard (eds). *The seductions of pilgrimage: sacred journeys afar and astray in the Western religious tradition*. xxi, 266 pp., maps, tables, illus., bibliogrs. Farnham, Surrey: Ashgate, 2015. £70.00 (cloth)

Michael A. Di Giovine and David Picard's edited *The seductions of pilgrimage* frames its subject within the three Abrahamic traditions. The volume's main focus is on the relationship between 'seduction' and the journey. According to the editors, sacred tours intentionally, deliberately beguile 'naïve' pilgrims and lead them astray, changing their motivations – thus resulting in their seduction. The volume consists of a foreword by Elsner, an introduction by the editors, and nine substantive chapters. The introduction attempts to frame the volume within the concept of seduction. The editors distinguish between 'seductions *from* pilgrimage' and 'seductions *of* pilgrimage' (p. 17). In the first, the pilgrimage itself is a tool of seduction, while the second refers to the pilgrimage environment, which could lead the devotee astray.

The volume begins with Coleman's discussion of seduction and sexuality at Walsingham from a historical perspective (chap. 1). Explaining that linking faith and sexuality has long been a part of Walsingham's allure, he concludes that sexuality and seduction have always been linked, even though their meanings have shifted along with religion itself. Feldman (chap. 2) discusses the seduction of Jewish-Israeli tourist guides leading Christian Holy Land pilgrimages, focusing on the ways in which guides can be tempted by the Christianity of the pilgrim groups. In chapter 3, Klimova examines the seductiveness of a Greek Orthodox monastery in Arizona. She argues that Russian Orthodox pilgrims coming from Southern California long for a more pure and authentic spiritual experience. Chapter 4, by Kreinath, takes us to Hatay, the southernmost region of Turkey, and discusses the important topic of inter-religious pilgrimage sites. Visits to such sites are a unique feature of the social and cultural life of a region inhabited by Arab and Turkish Sunnis, Arab Alawis, Greek Orthodox, and Armenian Christians. The seduction in the veneration of the saints of these inter-religious sites relates primarily to the features they have in common: they combine providing succour to the poor and needy through their ambiguous identities.

Dubisch (chap. 5) analyses another important contemporary practice: New Age pilgrimages. She emphasizes that all pilgrimages seduce, but New Age journeys promise not just a different place but also a different time. The narratives of these places – more or less archaeological sites now – help to form a vision of a past that offers an alternative to the contemporary world and constitutes its critique. In chapter 6, Badone steps away from spirituality to explore touristic representations of the Gypsy pilgrimage to Les-Saintes-Maries-de-la-Mer, France. The travel imagery of this site offers potential visitors a vision of a world characterized by freedom from the constraints that regulate their behaviour at home. The seductive discourse about the sites also offers an encounter with nature, regional culture, and the exotic Other through the annual pilgrimage of European Roma people.

Di Giovine (chap. 7) analyses the manifestations of suffering at the Sanctuary of St Padre Pio in San Giovanni Rotondo, Italy, which serve to induce contemporary Catholic pilgrims into undertaking the journey to the shrine. Chemin (chap. 8) considers one of the most famous contemporary European pilgrimage sites and routes: Santiago de Compostela. He focuses on mechanisms of seduction as a way of asking questions about modern pilgrimage practices. These mechanisms refer to events or circumstances that attract someone to something but also away from something. Chemin argues that no pilgrim has well-defined motivations for pilgrimage and that these are not always as rational and clear-cut as researchers would like them to be. In the last chapter, we are taken to a place where very few have gone: outer space. Weibel argues that many astronauts see space travel as at least partly religious in character, and, for some, spaceflight is described in terms that evoke pilgrimage. She also demonstrates that human spaceflight can be characterized as a pilgrimage of seduction since it promises danger, the opportunity to open oneself to divine intervention, to experience a divine view of the earth, and the feeling of being both materially insignificant and spiritually significant.

This volume consists of very interesting, well-written, and strong contributions by fine scholars in the area of pilgrimage studies. Yet, reading these contributions, I could not avoid wondering how useful seduction is as an analytical category. If I read the volume's framework correctly, to be seduced means that you are being fooled because of your lack of knowledge or understanding. However, since pilgrimage is a very particular practice that is voluntary and personally motivated, I do not believe that any pilgrim who has a clear agenda and goes to some site with very particular motives can really be seduced.

Mario Katić *University of Zadar*

Elliot, Alice, Roger Norum & Noel B. Salazar (eds) (afterword by Simone Abram). *Methodologies of mobility: ethnography and experiment*. viii, 207 pp., maps, illus.,

bibliogrs. Oxford, New York: Berghahn Books, 2017. £67.00 (cloth)

Mobility has recently emerged as an important theme in the social sciences. At its heart lies a concern with the diverse ways in which people, places, and things move, and their consequences for understanding social phenomena. Whilst a world shaped by mobility has been a long-standing focal point of anthropological inquiry, *Methodologies of mobility* turns to a relatively under-examined dimension: the conceptual and methodological implications of mobility-related research. How might participant observation and other data collection, the relationship between researcher and participant, and, most significantly, ethnographic thought be revisited through the challenges posed, and opportunities offered, by methodologies of mobility? This volume is a rich intervention addressing these questions.

In their extensive introduction, Alice Elliot, Roger Norum, and Noel B. Salazar show that to 'capture and understand a planet in flux' (p. 3) requires methodological innovation as well as insights from disciplines other than anthropology. Yet they and others in the volume point out that anthropological commitments to thinking about mobility go back to some of the discipline's earliest scholars. Whilst Marcus's discussion of multi-sited ethnography remains a central reference point, Malinowski's take on the liminal positioning of anthropologists and their emphasis on theoretical boundary crossings can be seen as an important precursor to questions of mobility-related fieldwork. One might also turn to more contemporary methodological iterations, including those by Appadurai and Kopytoff, to think through the journeys of things, tracing their complex mobilities and working productively with the tensions between following one's object or subject of study and conducting emplaced research, as is highlighted by Lucht (chap. 6) and Vasantkumar (chap. 3). Similarly, Ingold's approach to human movement as a whole, emerging through his work on lines, the meshwork, and dwelling, can be seen as an engagement with questions of (im)mobilities. As the editors suggest, how to conduct meaningful research in which problems guide the methods employed is a crucial question anthropology should ask.

Methodologies of mobility goes beyond 'a mere methodological exercise' to frontstage 'issues of scale and ethics, geographic boundaries and social imaginations, class and gender, material culture, and interdisciplinarity' (p. 3). These are encapsulated in the rich spread of chapters. For instance, Österlund-Pötzsch (chap. 1), through an analysis of the fieldnotes of Finnish-Swedish ethnographic expeditions at the turn of the nineteenth century, argues that movement was a key feature of the early ethnographer's work. Leivestad's (chap. 2) work on caravan residents in Spain points to multiple scales of mobility – from notebooks to tiles to the house dwelling itself – bringing into focus associated concerns with mobility as potential. Vasantkumar (chap. 3) picks up on the theme of dwelling, asking whether one can draw boundaries between dwelling and travel. The chapters by Andersson (chap. 4), Lucht (chap. 6), and Vium (chap. 8) turn to migrants and how their mobilities allow us to think of conventional ethnographic methods differently. The fieldsite, Andersson argues, is extended, composed of different border regimes, social networks, and imaginaries. What emerges are not fixed identities, but different 'modalities of migranthood' (p. 95). A 'borderline ethnography' (p. 90) posited by Andersson reaches across interfaces and disciplines, and mirrors the practices of border workers' own methods. These methodological commitments find resonance in Lucht's chapter on snowballing and the recruitment of research participants, and Coates's (chap. 5) reflections on embodied movement as a means of connecting social worlds. Walton (chap. 7) traces such connections through remote methods and Iranian digital photography, whereas Vium draws on photography as a research method to create collaborative dialogues between researcher, migrant, and the viewer of images.

Whilst wide-ranging, the diversity of chapters makes this edited volume a pleasure to read. Its strengths lie in the insights it provides for understanding mobility on a number of levels, ranging from questions of space, scale, and time to bodies and materiality. In doing so, the book comes a long way in overcoming some difficult challenges. As Abram reminds us in the afterword, this includes the pitfall of mobility becoming a 'blanket approach' (p. 195) to everything opposed to stasis. The perspectives presented here avoid this trap by making the important point that immobility is integral to movement rather than its binary other. A significant consequence is that mobile methodologies can be political, giving voice to precarious lives and enabling people to frame their identities in less binary ways.

By presenting mobility as a complex entanglement of movement, stillness, and

practice in relation to specific methodologies, this book directs new questions towards near-classic anthropological themes. *Methodologies of mobilities* convincingly illustrates not only that anthropology offers up exciting ways to understand mobility, but that many of the challenges emerging through the turn towards mobility have had helpful past iterations within the discipline. Read this volume for its excellent ethnographic coverage of a complex set of methodological and conceptual challenges at the forefront of mobility research.

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Feldman-Savelsberg, Pamela. *Mothers on the move: reproducing belonging between Africa and Europe*. xvi, 243 pp., map, illus., bibliogr. Chicago: Univ. Press, 2016. £21.00 (paper)

Mothers on the move is an intimate account of Cameroonian mothers carving out spaces of belonging through child-bearing and child-rearing practices as they move within and between Cameroon and Berlin, Germany, aptly framed through the concepts of reproductive insecurity, belonging, affective circuits, and legal consciousness. It is a well-written and extremely timely book that speaks both to contemporary debates within anthropology, migration studies, and gender studies, and to raging public debates in Germany and elsewhere in Europe around questions of migration and integration.

Pamela Feldman-Savelsberg follows Cameroonian women who have moved to Berlin as they search for a partner, get married, get pregnant, and give birth in an unfamiliar environment (chap. 3); as they seek to cultivate a sense of 'Cameroonian-ness' in their children while also pushing them to succeed within the German education system (chap. 4); and as they forge extra-familial support ties in Cameroonian home-town associations (chap. 5). In the final, concluding chapter, Feldman-Savelsberg skilfully turns her gaze away from mothers on the move and instead uses their experiences to reveal how the shadow of the state is felt through its rules, administrative organization, and interpersonal interactions. This shift works very well, and draws attention to the state as a regulating force in these women's marital and reproductive lives.

By way of introducing her ethnographic material, Feldman-Savelsberg draws on previous fieldwork in urban and rural Cameroon in order to trace the challenges around reproduction and belonging that these women have faced throughout colonial and postcolonial history as a result of migration within and beyond Cameroon (chap. 2). This gives the book a unique historical depth and allows Feldman-Savelsberg to interpret the predicaments of reproduction and belonging of Cameroonian mothers in Berlin in light of several generations of Cameroonian mothers before them. She could have taken this even further had she actually followed the daughters of the women with whom she had previously worked, or had she made her interlocutors in Berlin speak more explicitly about the lives of their mothers. As it stands now, the connection between these different groups of women is not entirely clear, other than that they face similar challenges, which is true for many migrant women in Germany and Europe more generally.

Conversely, the apparent lack of ethnographic connection between Cameroonian mothers in Berlin and a previous generation of Cameroonian mothers in rural and urban Cameroon accentuates how migration separates young mothers-to-be from their more experienced kin and sometimes from the fathers of their children, further increasing women's reproductive responsibilities. This justifies the sole ethnographic focus on women rather than men on the move. However, by largely excluding men from her analysis, Feldman-Savelsberg also runs the risk of reproducing stigmatizing stereotypes of African men as unreliable lovers, husbands, and fathers, whereas a more solid focus on Cameroonian men could have deepened our understanding of how gender roles within the family are reproduced through Cameroonian migration and German welfare provision.

Feldman-Savelsberg uses four different concepts to highlight different aspects of the experiences and strategies of Cameroonian mothers in Berlin: reproductive insecurity, to link the political and economic conditions that render social and biological reproduction insecure to the anxieties through which this insecurity is felt; belonging, to shed light on how family, community organizations, and juridical structures shape mothers' sense of (non-)belonging; affective circuits, to capture the social networks mothers create to circulate money, goods, moral support, and fostered children; and legal consciousness, to show how developing a sense of how the law works was a way for Cameroonian mothers to overcome reproductive insecurity and a sense of non-belonging. Feldman-Savelsberg adroitly weaves these concepts through the different chapters, allowing the reader to follow the arguments throughout.

The book could have benefited from a final chapter to tease out the theoretical contributions of these concepts rather than presenting them as mere tools that summarize her findings. However, even without such a final chapter, *Mothers on the move* stands as a valuable contribution and is highly recommended both to scholars working on the nexus of migration, (transnational) family life, and the state and to a wider non-academic audience interested in such issues. The book is ethnographically innovative and sensitive to both Cameroonian and German histories against which Cameroonian mothers on the move shape their own and their children's lives.

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Sanders, Rita. *Staying at home: identities, memories and social networks of Kazakhstani Germans*. xiv, 256 pp., map, tables, illus., bibliogr. Oxford, New York: Berghahn Books, 2016. £78.00 (cloth)

Rita Sanders' *Staying at home* investigates understandings of nationality among people who have migrated several times. German-speaking settlers first began arriving in Russia in the late 1700s, attracted by the expansionist policies of Catherine the Great. They enjoyed greater rights than Russians, and eventually received special status through the formation of the Volga Republic. Following the aggression of the German Wehrmacht during the Second World War, the USSR deported the Volga Germans to Siberia and Central Asia. Since the fall of the USSR, 80 per cent of Kazakhstan's Germans have relocated to their 'historic homeland'. Given this demographic shift, how do the Germans who have remained in Kazakhstan (re)interpret ethnicity and belonging?

Weaving together different conceptual schools, Sanders shows ethnicity to be at once based on cultural grounds, a resource, an outcome of categorization and power struggles, a product of individual life experience, and a cultural schema. She draws on fieldwork in Taldykorgan in southeast Kazakhstan, life stories, analyses of networks, and cognitive tests such as pile sorts, in which people sort different nationalities into groups. Through these methods, the author 'addresses the core questions of when, how, and why people identify themselves as German and when and why not' (p. 15). For those who remained 'at home' in Kazakhstan, she argues, their understandings of their 'Germanness' do not rely on German state discourse. Instead, they are increasingly 'find[ing] expression in a Kazakhstani German or Kazakhstani identity' (p. 4).

Sanders begins by exploring individuals' memories of deportation and resettlement, and offers a typology of identities: Soviet, Kazakhstani, Russian-German, and Kazakhstani-German (part I). She then considers how people understand nationality by relying on origin, religion, language, and 'mentality'. She finds that Germans celebrate their ethnicity in private, while downplaying it in public. This seems to fit with the national policy of 'friendship of the peoples', which treats ethnicity as apolitical (part II). Despite having close kin in Germany, few of Sanders' respondents listed their family abroad in their personal networks. The author further explores individuals' feelings of belonging to the Kazakh state as well as their situational identification as Germans or Russians (part III). Finally, she reveals the contradictory impact of German and Kazakh state policies. For example, funding from Germany to a local organization, the 'German House', aims to strengthen people's ties to Kazakhstan. It has the effect, however, of encouraging emigration. Then, even as the German House complies with Kazakhstan's nationality policies, its affirmation of ethnicity hinders identification with the Kazakh state (part IV).

The strengths of this book lie in the author's analytical approach, creative methodologies, and the breadth of her empirical work. Sanders offers an important perspective on migration by looking at how it impacts those who do not leave. By triangulating what people say with how they think and behave, she points to the contradictions inherent in everyday understandings of ethnicity and belonging. Her findings reveal a central paradox: by staying at home, Kazakhstani Germans feel more German. Moving to Germany, however, reveals to them their differences from Germans there.

Yet the book's thick description of Kazakhstani Germans comes at the cost of theory-building beyond the case. While showing *how* people identify as Germans, Sanders does less to answer *when* and *why* they do. She offers factors that – at times – correspond to how people identify, including generation, friendships with Kazakhs, and elite status. Likewise, her four proposed identity types sometimes correspond to people's social networks. These associations, however, do not add up to a coherent framework about ethnicity and migration. To be fair, Sanders does not 'intend to advocate for a single concept of ethnicity'; rather she wishes 'to combine the

above-presented ideas and theoretical thoughts [ethnicity as culturally based, as resource, etc.]' (p. 14). However this additive model cannot account for why ethnic expressions vary or appear as they do when they do. The book further aims to elaborate 'social (transnational) networks, the flows of support, the meanings transmitted by such networks' (p. 3). By only studying Taldykorgan, Sanders focuses on how Germans who returned to Kazakhstan or who never left recall those abroad, rather than investigating actual interactions or flows. Indeed, she notes the risk of assuming transnational networks rather than analysing them. Nevertheless, she speaks of '(fragile) transnational relationships' (p. 145) rather than, as her evidence often suggests, the relative absence of such relationships.

In sum, *Staying at home* promises an in-depth study of Kazakhstani Germans that raises the important theme of belonging across borders. It should serve as a springboard for theorizing about concepts such as ethnicity, nationhood, and transnationalism.

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New directions in theory

de Brosses, Charles, Rosalind C. Morris & Daniel H. Leonard. *The returns of fetishism: Charles de Brosses and the afterlives of an idea; with a new translation of On the worship of fetish gods*. xvi, 425 pp., bibliogr. Chicago: Univ. Press, 2017. £26.00 (paper)

Drawing on European accounts of African rites, the French philologist Charles de Brosses (1709-77) coined the term 'fetishism' for what he referred to as a 'primitive' form of religion. His thoughts on the topic were published in French in 1760 and have not been translated into English until now, although they were the point of departure for more than 250 years of extensive, influential deliberations in fields as diverse as philosophy, comparative religion, political economy, psychoanalysis, and anthropology. This volume, compiled by Rosalind C. Morris and Daniel H. Leonard, contains three major parts: Leonard's translation of de Brosses' text (eighty-eight pages); a thirty-nine-page introduction by the translator which explains and contextualizes its main arguments; and Morris's 186-page essay on the long history and various uses of the concept.

Leonard explains that de Brosses' main point was to persuade his readers that the worship of objects and animals in non-modern cultures and civilizations was to be understood as a worship of those objects and animals themselves, rather than in terms of 'figurism': that is, as symbols or allegorical manifestations of abstract ideas. Subsequent applications of fetishism have in various ways dwelt on how humans relate to objects. Morris's essay is a sweeping, largely chronological review of selected ideas – sometimes of tenuous relevance to the term – from a long list of philosophical and anthropological thinkers, including Kant, Hegel, Comte, Marx, Freud, Lacan, Mauss, Lévi-Strauss, Foucault, Baudrillard, Deleuze, Derrida, and Latour. Tribute is recurrently paid to the central contributions of William Pietz. Anthropologists will also recognize references to scholars such as Haddon, Taussig, Coronil, Godelier, Appadurai, Descola, Viveiros de Castro, and other theorists whose perspectives Morris weaves into her narrative.

The translation of de Brosses' text is the primary and chief merit of the book. Although exceedingly erudite and often sophisticated, Morris's wide-ranging review pursues too many philosophical distractions and idiosyncrasies to retain an analytical focus on the modalities of human-object relations that de Brosses and his many successors have problematized. Instead, it reads more like an elegantly phrased orientation in the history of cultural theory than a commitment to rigorous and critical analysis. For an interdisciplinary range of academics intrigued by the analytical potential of the concept of fetishism, it can be difficult to follow the entangled deliberations on everything from eighteenth-century theology through political economy to surrealist art. Rather than using the occasion to focus more systematically on this semiotic and political conundrum as a pervasive obstacle to human emancipation, Morris's ambition seems to be to cover every possible aspect of its identification, from colonial constructions of exotic otherness to phenomenological reflections on the diversity of cultural experience.

The final concession to Latour's endorsement of fetishism is symptomatic of the absence of a coherent critique of the political utility of semiotic confusion. It is completely incompatible with Morris's own sympathetic reviews of Marxist critiques of the economic games in which we all participate. To submit to money and commodity fetishism is diametrically opposed to Marx's project of applying de Brosses' concept to expose the illusions of capitalism. A central preoccupation of the discourse on fetishism is

whether abiotic material objects can in themselves be animate and purposeful, or merely causal in a mechanical sense, even if they are perceived by humans as loci of agency. This issue demands clear positioning and cannot be straddled. Marxist theory unequivocally rejects vitalism as a mystification of power, and this volume would have gained from consistently endorsing a similar stance.

Morris's mobilization of semiotics is restricted to the French tradition and curiously silent on Peirce and the ambiguities illuminated by his distinction between symbolic and indexical signs. Couched in this idiom, de Brosses' argument was that fetishes are indices rather than symbols, whereas Marx's insight was that money and commodities are incorrectly understood as indices, although they signify social relations of exchange. Marx's contribution was to show how our preoccupation with the manipulation of objects underpins relations of exploitation by deflecting our attention from them. The continued political relevance of the concept of fetishism lies in its capacity to reveal such illusions, rather than in providing intellectual fodder for cultural theorists. This said, the translation of de Brosses is welcome and Morris's essay is useful for historians of cultural theory. Nevertheless, the volume would have gained from focusing on a succinct definition of fetishism in politically challenging terms.

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Graeber, David & Marshall Sahlins. *On kings*. xv, 536 pp., map, illus., bibliogr. Chicago: Univ. Press, 2018. £22.50 (paper)

David Graeber and Marshall Sahlins, two of the most important anthropological thinkers of our time, have published a collection of essays on kings. Its unfortunate association with Hau notwithstanding, this book is bound to become a classic. Graeber and Sahlins make good on the promise of developing an anthropological theory of kingship. They work through an impressive range of ethnographic data and develop theories of universal validity on this basis. Although some of their concepts and conclusions come close to classical ideas of European political philosophy about sovereignty, states of exception, or the king's two bodies, references to Thomas Hobbes, Carl Schmitt, and Ernst Kantorowicz are rare, and for good reason. What Graeber and Sahlins achieve in their essays is that change of perspective that is the benchmark of anthropological theory. Rather than smuggling in some European Enlightenment thinker through the back door, they develop their own theories on the basis of their review of ethnographic and historical sources.

The fundamental tenets of the theory of kingship that Graeber and Sahlins develop are the following:

1. Kings are imitations of gods, rather than gods of kings.
2. Stranger-kingdoms and galactic polities were the dominant form of the state before the nation-state.
3. The politics of kingship always rely on external relations. These relations are extensions of the principles of stranger-kingdom and galactic polity, and include serial stranger-kings, galactic mimesis, and the schismogenesis of galactic polities.
4. Sovereignty is based on a constitutive war between the people and the king.
5. 'Divine kingship' proper can be established only after the king has won over the people, whereas 'sacred kingship' (or 'adverse sacralization') corresponds to a situation in which the people win against the king.

The fundaments of these arguments were laid out in two essays previously published in Hau: Sahlins's lecture on the original political society, and Graeber's long essay on divine kingship among the Shilluk. The book unites those two texts (now chapters 1 and 4) with several further essays from each author, including a long text by Graeber on the 'prehistory of sovereignty' drawing on the Hocartian leitmotif of the transition from ritual organization to kingship. Only the introduction is co-authored, and every other chapter is authored by either Graeber or Sahlins, who speak in their own distinctive voices throughout the book.

There is quite a bit of overlap, for instance on sinking states, on stranger-kings, and on divine kingship – but then also quite some divergence, as might be expected. Sometimes the reader is left wondering how each author would have responded to the other's arguments. Would it be possible, for instance, to reinterpret Graeber's constitutive war between the people and the king as 'culture in practice' à la Sahlins? Thus there occasionally arises the impression that actually there are two books here: one is Sahlins's tome on stranger-kings and galactic polities (especially chap. 4 on the Mexica and chap. 6 on core-periphery relations), while the other is Graeber's work on sovereignty (especially chap. 2

on the Shilluk and chap. 7 on the genealogy of sovereignty).

Both Graeber and Sahlins beg the reader's indulgence for repeating themselves (e.g. pp. xv, 402), yet this plea is rhetorical, of course. While sometimes it might be necessary to restate important points, some repetition could have been deleted by more thorough editing (e.g. the summaries of the galactic polity that include the same references, or the identical paragraph-long quotation from Tambiah on pp. 233 and 355).

However, these are minor quibbles that have nothing to do with the world-historical questions that Graeber and Sahlins pose, ranging from the nature of the 'original political society' to the 'prehistory of sovereignty'. Each essay in the volume deserves its own set of responses and debates. The state of the 'original political society' is obviously not what is commonly understood as a 'state'. If there are indeed hierarchies and command structures in the cosmos of egalitarian societies, what does that mean for the politics of egalitarianism among those humans who do not make fundamental distinctions between humans and spirits? Would it be possible to create an inventory of cultural and social patterns that allow for the exercise of sovereignty (e.g. kings as strangers, scapegoats, infants, and clowns)? What are the implications of the temporal and spatial limitations of sovereignty, and the constitutive war between the people and the king, for our understanding of popular sovereignty? In this book, Graeber and Sahlins propose a compelling theoretical framework through which to understand the glory of kings, and every anthropologist should read it.

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Mosko, Mark S. (foreword by Eduardo Viveiros de Castro). *Ways of baloma: rethinking magic and kinship from the Trobriands*. 473 pp., map, illus., bibliogr. Chicago: Univ. Press, 2017. £30.00 (paper)

Mark Mosko has been doing fieldwork on Kiriwina Island in Papua New Guinea for more than ten years in close collaboration with the high chiefs of the area, making *Ways of baloma* a product of teamwork with named chiefs, who are handlers and mediators of *gulagula* or 'sacred knowledge'. The tome covers many of the sources on the anthropology of the Massim region, and it is as much an extensive literary study of the work of Bronislaw Malinowski and others as it is an ethnographic study.

The book's central argument is well made and focuses on the centrality of spirits for all aspects of life on Kiriwina, or, at least, in the way the lineage chiefs conceive of it and for the way this defines their chiefly roles. Mosko was adopted into the chiefly Omarakana clan as the younger brother of the paramount chief Pulayasi and together they came to the realization that spirits play a far greater role than had been acknowledged by previous Kiriwina anthropologists. They build a good case for saying that in such a society as the Trobriands, or even in Melanesia more generally, there is much more substance to such issues previously dismissed as 'magic' and 'spirits' for an understanding of kinship, lineage, and social structure. Their ethnography therefore presents a view of social ontology wherein spirits really *participate* in and, to some degree, govern social relations.

Mosko thus demonstrates that spirits, not magicians, are the real agents in *megwa* magic rituals. *Baloma* spirits are given a much more central place in the analysis than in Malinowski's original work, since the invisible world, the *Tuma*, plays a much more prominent part in the visible world, the *Boyowa*, than he recognized. For every aspect of life or vitality, what is called *momova*, is essentially and inalienably connected to the invisible counterpart life form in the *Tuma*.

An implication is that the vital integrity of the *dala* lineage is created through the sharing of magical capacities, spirits, and powers. Another important aspect is what this does to a view of ceremonial prestations. With the participatory presence of the spirit world, Mosko shifts the language from exchange to sacrifice, since ritual is not merely about reciprocity between kin but part of the reproductive relations with spirits, and the constant need to recycle human substance through spiritual substance. Mosko's insistence on these aspects of Melanesian life are of great importance, against those accounts that reduce social life in Melanesia to only the transactions and interactions visible to the anthropologist. I think we can generally recognize many points here also made elsewhere in Melanesia – in John Layards' accounts from Vanuatu, or Simon Harrison's or Roy Wagner's accounts of other PNG societies, just to mention a few – but Mosko's agenda is strictly to establish that this is also the case for Kiriwina. He therefore chooses to under-communicate that these insights are quite mainstream in Melanesian ethnography.

That said, I think it is wonderful to finally have an ethnography that systematically and

specifically unveils the life of ancestor spirits in Melanesia. Unfortunately it takes about one hundred pages of theoretical considerations before we get to the heart of the matter. I would have preferred a purely empirical account expanding on the hundred pages at the centre of the book. This could also have allowed for a serious examination of the politics of *baloma*, particularly in regard to the PNG government's policies against magic, or the Christians' claim that God is the only *baloma* allowed.

The overly detailed and constant returns to Malinowski's corpus, as well as the toying with the New Melanesian Ethnography (NME), whatever that is, actually detract from the greatness of the ethnographic materials. Instead of being another important milestone from the Trobriands, the book runs the danger of becoming a footnote to Malinowski's biography and to a regionalistic Melanesian anthropology. Read in the right way, however, I think *Ways of baloma* should be of great interest to students and teachers of anthropology, especially those interested in the role of spirits in kinship and leadership, or the history of the discipline, and the place of the Trobriands and Melanesian ethnography in it.

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Wade, Peter. *Degrees of mixture, degrees of freedom: genomics, multiculturalism, and race in Latin America*. xii, 331 pp., maps, figs, illus., bibliogr. Durham, N.C.: Duke Univ. Press, 2017. £20.99 (paper)

Based on a collaborative ethnographic project carried out in Colombia, Brazil, and Mexico between 2010 and 2013, *Degrees of mixture, degrees of freedom* is Peter Wade's most recent effort to examine, from a comparative perspective, the strange career of the concepts of race and mixture in Latin America. Entering upon this well-trodden scene is a new element: genomic science, which promises (or so we think) another way of conceptualizing ancestry and national populations. This single-authored book is a companion to Wade's co-edited *Mestizo genomics* (2014), which discussed the project's findings.

How, the book asks, does the emergence of genomic science articulate with the tangled histories and discourses around race in the region, and to what degree do ordinary citizens engage with new 'genetic idioms' in the context of their (increasingly multicultural) social orders? The research, carried out by teams in each country, focused on a variety of actors and their discursive products: lab scientists, government officials, activists, journalists, policy-makers, and focus groups (mostly university students). As a theoretical frame, Wade engages with an accessible version of assemblage theory and the notion of topography, both of which allow him to analyse the way in which old concepts, most notably *mestizaje* (race mixture), are rematerialized and repositioned in emergent social networks.

Divided into three parts, the book first addresses the goals and methods of contemporary genomic science and then tackles the mid-twentieth-century history of genetic science in the region. Chapter 1 unpacks some of the central assumptions, units of analysis, sampling strategies, and theoretical models that have informed genomic approaches to the study of human variation. Cultural anthropologists may find this a useful primer in genomic science, as it shows the way in which different models generate different ways of conceptualizing ancestry. Wade introduces a paradox whose enduring power informs Latin American discourses on race and animates this book's overarching thesis. New genomic discourses, he argues, echo the old and familiar Latin American narratives that figure *mestizaje* as erasing the idea of 'pure races'. Yet, also like those old narratives, the concept of geographically bounded source populations easily maps onto and reinvigorates the race concept. Thus, the tired tale of essential difference and hierarchy is rematerialized.

In part II, Wade examines large-scale genomic projects in Colombia, Brazil, and Mexico and shows how such projects have been organizationally structured; how they have been presented to the public; how they have articulated with the politics of multiculturalism; and how their findings have been disseminated, absorbed, and, in some cases, debated. The case of Brazil is particularly dramatic. In a surprisingly even-handed discussion of recent controversies around affirmative action in Brazil, Wade details how geneticists have contributed to the argument that since it is scientifically impossible to determine who is black in Brazil (as race doesn't exist to begin with), it is therefore nonsensical to institute racial quotas as a means of providing equitable access to higher education. In this scenario, a scientifically informed discourse that denies legitimacy to the race concept also works to deny legitimacy to anti-racist policies. Wade finds that in all three nations 'the mestizo both invokes and disavows race at the same time'

(p. 171). We see continuities where we might have expected to see transformation.

In part III, Wade unpacks the research on mitochondrial DNA and Y-chromosome DNA – research that seems to lend support to the old discourse that figured Latin American nations as the outcome of the sexual encounter between European men and African and indigenous women. What is problematic, Wade argues, is that the scientific discourse provides 'little hint that such relations would also have been located within highly skewed power relations and involved direct violence and coercion' (p. 211). Another chapter examines how 'ordinary people' in Colombia and Mexico talk about diversity, and what role genomic science might play in such talk. Here again, genomic information proves to be less transformational than we might have expected, as it 'tends to be persistently redomesticated into the family of existing concepts as they circulate through different public domains' (p. 257).

Aside from being of significant interest to Latin Americanists who focus on race and ethnicity, and to those in science and technology studies, *Degrees of mixture, degrees of freedom* may prove valuable to scholars who aim to document the social and political impacts of genomic research. Chapter 9, especially, with its quoted snippets from ordinary people, is notable for reasons Wade himself does not emphasize. As many US Americans and Europeans lurch towards a revitalized white nationalism, the Latin American fuzziness on race sometimes looks – despite the absent presence of old ideas and many damaging hypocrisies besides – like a gesture, a reach, towards a differently imagined future.

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Wilkis, Ariel. *The moral power of money: morality and economy in the life of the poor*. xii, 206 pp., bibliogr. Stanford: Univ. Press, 2018. £24.99 (paper)

Ariel Wilkis's *The moral power of money* contributes to the study of money in general, and of money in Argentina in particular, and more specifically of the uses of money in popular sectors. The book is a refreshing analysis of the lives of contemporary Argentina's poor, who are not usually approached through the way they use cash or how money is 'lived'. The volume also is a revised translation of *Las sospechas del dinero*, published in 2013 in Argentina. The change of the title's *sospechas* (suspicions) to moral power expresses a great transformation in both texts: the Spanish edition argues that Latin America is a sort of testing ground for money's materiality; the English version discusses the study of the world of the poor as it is configured through kinds, or 'pieces', of money (p. 20) more broadly.

The question is not how well people use money, but rather on how it 'works'. Wilkis states: '[T]he subject of this sociological study ... is not money but rather the social orders it produces and responds to in the world of the urban poor in greater Buenos Aires' (p. 5). Through applying Zelizer's theory on the sociology of money and Bourdieu's idea of capital, Wilkis claims to be constructing a sociological theory of the 'moral capital of money', which he lays out in his introduction. He uses the idea of moral capital as another subtype of Bourdieusian symbolic capital. The moral component of this form of capital depends on meeting social obligations in order to have one's virtues acknowledged by others. Money establishes moral hierarchies among people.

Moral capital is constructed vis-à-vis different pieces, and these categories structure the ethnography's six chapters: lent money; earned money; donated money; political money; sacrificed money; safeguarded money. These groupings also are used as pieces in 'the puzzle' which builds 'the book's argument' (p. 4). In this way, Wilkis follows Jane Guyer's invitation 'to be motivated by ... puzzles and questions' (in Mauss's *The gift, expanded edition,* 2016: 24). However, this means that his categories can differ from *native categories.* This is a methodological and epistemological decision. His intention is to expand the sociological model of multiple monies by considering the moral dimension of money as a fundamental part of power relations.

According to Wilkis, moral capital plays out in different spheres and generates social differentiations. His position is not to evaluate the good uses (or amounts) of money. On the contrary, he shows it as a living process. Through striking, generous descriptions we are carried through the labyrinths of the Villa Olimpia neighbourhood in Greater Buenos Aires. The reader follows Mary and her family, and with them discovers the different pieces of money, the different hierarchies and relations that monies create and that are created by monies.

By analysing the moral and social relations of, and created by, each piece of money, the author demonstrates the way moral orders and hierarchies are constructed. The notion of puzzle and multiple pieces within moral spheres allows us to understand power relations and different

evaluations of how money is earned and spent. As the object is the construction of sociological orders *through* money, it is sometimes hard to follow these pieces and to understand if the categories are constructed by their origin, the way they are used, or by the 'field' in which each piece has its moral power. It is possible that lived complexity makes such differentiation impossible. How do these pieces of the puzzle change shape and transform into other pieces? How are they assembled in different ways?

Such queries are a result of Wilkis's analytical position; while the researcher assembles the puzzle in one way, flesh-and-blood people can make multiple other patterns. Following Bourdieu, it is possible to say that each moral piece works in a particular sphere and generates a set of relations, but money also works more broadly. The possibility of convertibility is not denied in the book and is present in many chapters, especially in chapter 6. It is possible, then, to think of money not only as a thing itself (see S.E. Hutchinson, *Nuer dilemmas*, 1996) but also as the pieces of a multifarious, assembled puzzle.

Wilkis's volume reveals new ways of perceiving poor people's lives in Argentina and contributes to the understanding of how money denotes social and power relations and hierarchies. Any researcher interested in the power of money as a social and analytical tool must read this wonderful book.

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Politics

Farfán-Santos, Elizabeth. *Black bodies, black rights: the politics of quilombolismo in contemporary Brazil*. xx, 196 pp., illus., bibliogr. Austin: Univ. of Texas Press, 2016. £21.99 (paper)

In *Black bodies, black rights,* Elizabeth Farfán-Santos makes clear her alliance with the *quilombola* movement, which fights for the rights to territory and self-determination for the Afro-descendants in Brazil known as *quilombolas*. This alliance is critical for her work with Grande Paraguaçu, a pseudonym for an easily identifiable *quilombola* community, which was accused of fraud in Brazil's mainstream media. This ethnography stands as a rebuttal to the lies told in the national media. She argues that *quilombolas*, once officially recognized by the government, now find themselves in a worse position as they are targeted by smear tactics, lawsuits, slander, and violence; these attacks help to explain why of the thousands of *quilombola* communities formally recognized, only a small percentage have actual titles to land.

In the opening preface, drawing from critical race theory, feminist critiques of the research process, and the need for researchers to reject 'neutrality', and so position themselves and explain their positionality, Farfán-Santos declares her 'solidarity' with *quilombola* communities in Brazil. Her commitment to the *quilombola* cause is an outgrowth of her own lived experience of racism and exclusion, thus she explores race, colourism, and racism in Latin American through her own experiences as a 'Mexicana and Chicana' (p. x) with 'dark-brown skin' (p. ix). Her positionality heeds the call from critical race theory, feminist, and applied scholars to challenge neutrality and objectivity, situate knowledge in social contexts, and develop alternative models to knowledge production, often in collaboration with oppressed communities. Certainly, with Nancy Scheper-Hughes as her adviser, one can understand her affinity with activism and advocacy in her anthropology.

In chapter 1, Farfán-Santos negotiates the various histories of *quilombos* in Brazil, acknowledging that the current fights between large landowners and *quilombola* communities are over contemporary land rights and as well as about understandings of history. Farfán-Santos attempts to shift *quilombo* history from one that is solely about past armed resistance in rural communities to an account that includes contemporary communities situated near large estates. In an extensive literature review in chapter 2, she details the twentieth-century Brazilian history of race, including Nina Rodrigues's support of eugenics and whitening; Gilberto Freyre's theorizing on racial democracy; and Black resistance to racism exemplified in the Unified Black Movement. She also addresses twenty-first-century policies to address racial inequality. This chapter will be familiar to those versed in the history of race in Brazil.

Chapter 4 details the legal recognition and land titling processes for *quilombos* in Brazil, making it more akin to an ethnography of bureaucracy. The chapter would be important for those who want to understand the process of recognition and titling of land, as well as the contradictions within such a system in Brazil. While Farfán-Santos stands in solidarity primarily with the *quilombolas*, many of the interviews were conducted with governmental officials from INCRA and the Palmares Cultural Foundation,

both of which are involved in the certification and titling of land procedures. As such, chapter 4 is an ethnographic review of governmental processes together with the intellectual question of how *quilombola* identity fits within these processes.

Chapters 3 and 5, then, are the most interesting chapters, where *quilombolas*' voices and stories are at the forefront. Farfán-Santos calls for the privileging of their everyday experiences. One can glimpse *quilombolas*' daily life through the use of thick description, participants' voices, and vivid photographs. Chapter 3 temporarily sets aside the many intellectual debates detailed throughout the rest of the book to tell a few simple, engaging tales that effectively draw readers into the *quilombola* community. Chapter 5 is the most heart-wrenching, with *quilombolas* narrating stories of their suffering; of police- and landowner-backed raids and violence; evictions; the destruction of crops; and the false allegations that take an emotional, mental, and physical toll on them.

The alignments, or solidarity, that Farfán-Santos appeals for are those in which critical race theorists, feminist, and applied anthropologists have been engaged all along. Applied anthropologists in particular use their knowledge to conduct interventions and change the social world. Curiously, the author's applied anthropology remains vague. What does she do for *quilombolas*? How does she intervene to assist them? Where is her activism? These questions are left open. The next steps for her as an engaged anthropologist would be to move beyond alignment and towards application, advocacy, and activism. What she does not leave open is her solidarity and her commitment to correct lies in the media about a struggling *quilombola* community. Given the precarious situation of *quilombolas* in Brazil, this work is very much needed.

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Grossberg, Lawrence. *Under the cover of chaos: Trump and the battle for the American right*. xv, 165 pp., tables, bibliogr. London: Pluto Press, 2017. £14.99 (paper)

After over two years of Trumpism in America, I, for one, am tired of Trump's barrage of chaos, diversion, racism, ethnic discrimination, and religious intolerance. From the declaration of his candidacy until the US presidential election in November 2016, I wrote scores of anthropologically contoured blogs about US political dysfunction, pride of civic ignorance, and Trumpian histrionics. As a New Year's resolution, I vowed to avoid writing about Trump in 2019. Alas here I am, like Claude Lévi-Strauss at the outset of *Tristes tropiques* (1955), about to write about a topic – Donald Trump and the American right – that I wanted to avoid.

Even so, Lawrence Grossberg's *Under the cover of chaos* is essential reading for anyone – especially public scholars – who needs to refine their take on the current political dysfunction in the United States. In the chaotic fog that constitutes the contemporary political climate and social life in America, Grossberg attempts, largely successfully, to show politically conscious scholars a way to respond to the madness. Rather than panic, he suggests that progressives think, analyse, and understand profoundly the political culture of the American right. No matter how satisfying it might be to organize, resist, and march, he argues that these tactics have had a questionable impact on contemporary political dysfunction.

> If progressives are to change the vectors of historical change, we will need strategies that get the nation from where it is to where we want it to be, and that means knowing a great deal more than we do about where the country – and the various constituencies across various dimensions – actually is (p. xiii).

The strategy Grossberg offers in this book is to recount a particularly frightening story about the crumbling infrastructure of America and, by extension, global democratic institutions. He skilfully tells the story of how Trump has used chaos and diversion to erode the power of such American political foundations as the two-party system, the system of checks and balances, and, perhaps most importantly, the rule of law. Through a chaotic barrage of cultural messaging, Trump and the New Right have overpowered the media and flooded the public sphere with culturally contoured messages that create social division and a culture of hate.

> Culture has become the dominant level of social existence (over both politics and economics); it is culture that mediates – and occasionally pre-empts – politics and economics, so that rather than thinking about political economy, we need to start by thinking about political cultures and the cultures of economy (p. 114).

In short, Trumpism is a cultural politics that requires a different and more iconoclastic response. Trump understands how to use media to manipulate cultural themes to his advantage

and expand the reach of his authoritarianism. Critics of Trump, Grossberg suggests, need to sift through the chaotic debris that pollutes the public sphere and offer cultural responses: culturally contoured counter-narratives that appeal to the heart as much as to the head.

The key question that Grossberg asks is: '[W]hat kind of appeals are we making? How can we reach people "where they are" and move them, however slowly, in the direction we desire?' (p. 144). For him there are no short-term solutions. Like my West African mentors among the Songhay people of Niger, Grossberg suggests that we take the long view, a long-term strategy, for change is a slow process.

Under the cover of chaos is a brilliantly argued book. It represents the mature, careful, and wise thinking of one of our most insightful cultural critics. Nevertheless, I wonder: who will read it? Clearly, Grossberg's trenchant story will resonate with cultural studies scholars, anthropologists, sociologists, political scientists, and a self-selected group of undergraduate and graduate students, as well as with progressive activists. As brilliant as it is, however, this volume is not likely to have the audience appeal that it deserves.

One strategy, of course, is to extend the powerful analysis found in *Under the cover of chaos* to social media. When I have blogged about contemporary cultural, ecological, and political issues, the blog posts have sometimes reached 250,000 readers. Other scholar-bloggers reach even larger audiences of readers. Perhaps the counter-narratives need to be conveyed more vigorously in blogs, podcasts, documentary films, and media installations. Beyond Grossberg's powerful book, this tack might be a productive way of taking slow and sure steps towards a brighter future.

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Lazar, Sian. *The social life of politics: ethics, kinship, and union activism in Argentina*. xi, 243 pp., illus., bibliogr. Stanford: Univ. Press, 2017. £23.99 (paper)

Sian Lazar's *The social life of politics* is based on fieldwork with a series of activists (*militantes*) from two Argentinean national unions that bring together employees from different sectors of the national public administration: the Unión Civil de Nación (UPCN) and the Asociación Trabajadores del Estado (ATE). The book investigates how practices of self-cultivation, such as self-care, ritual, commensality, or sociability (containment), contribute to the development of collective and individual identities and the continuance of *militancia* (labour activism).

Lazar's central argument is that activists are ethical and political subjects. She does not focus – as several researchers on labourers have done – on the workers' movement or on the workers themselves (their demands, their working conditions), but on their forms of political life. The narrative thus covers a series of daily practices, ways of understanding politics, militancy, personal ties, forms of 'care', and so on. Lazar also asks what makes certain types of political responses possible, and how is activism understood and experienced? She notes that it is central to explore 'the conditions of possibility for such mobilization', and suggests that 'the capacity to mobilize in this way affords considerable strength to collective organizations, even though in this particular instance they failed in their immediate political goal. The capacity lies in the intimate, personal, and family aspects of political activism' (p. 3).

The book suggests that it is necessary to go beyond failed political goals. Political life for Lazar is an interlinked process of *militancia* and *contención* (containment). She defines the former as '[t]he practice of activism as well as being a group ... How individuals create and understand themselves and others as political actors located in a particular time, place and family and consisting of a particular set of values, dispositions, and orientations' (p. 4). *Conteción*, meanwhile, refers to 'the cultivation, or calling forth, of values such as vocation, love, passion, and so on, happened through collective processes' (pp. 4-5).

According to Lazar, one crucial aspect of these collectives is kinship. ATE and UPCN undertake practices of 'kinning ... as a means of bringing their political community into being through ritual, shared cultural activities, therapeutic relationships, educational spaces, and political action. They create political communities founded in large part on kinship or kinlike relations' (p. 16). This book contributes to the anthropological literature on kinship not only as a given but as it is produced. The relationship between ethics-politics and kinship-care opens the investigation to the multiple ways kinship constructs ethical political subjects. This discussion leads to two different lines that are examined in the book. Lazar describes how calling on kin can be a way of getting and maintaining a job; and then analyses moral/ethical and political actions in relation to the idea of the family.

For Lazar it is important to understand contemporary forms within a historical context,

and so she considers an extensive literature on Argentina's trade unions as well as the ideals of Peronism. This leads Lazar to a discussion of the state. The two unions that she studied brought together state employees. Militancy and containment not only describe the political life of these organizations, but also are processes that manage what could be considered the most bureaucratic form of the nation-state. It is interesting to consider both the social and institutional fabric of the state and the particularities of a union whose interlocutor is the state. Are unions for, against, or part of the state?

Another of the many merits of the book is that analysis of people's ethical and political subjectivities allows us to comprehend how *militantes* live and to understand their actions. Through analysing the everyday life of *militantes*, the book explores an important issue regarding unions: the production of hierarchies and decision-making. Although from the outside hierarchies can be seen as fixed and impossible to question, Lazar shows the way personal relations produce negotiations. At the same time, seeing politics and *militancia* as ethical projects allows us to appreciate the importance of actors within these hierarchies.

In sum, *The social life of politics* considers the way in which ethics and forms of subjectivization can vary according to ways of seeing the world, of feeling, of understanding commitment, militancy, care, and agency, all of which lead to politically different forms of *militancia* and *contención*. Lazar's book is valuable for two reasons: it is a detailed ethnography of Argentinean unions and an important contribution to our understanding of the social life of social movements.

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Theory and method

Bakke, Gretchen & Marina Peterson (eds). *Between matter and method: encounters in anthropology and art*. xviii, 226 pp., illus., bibliogr. London: Bloomsbury, 2018. £24.99 (paper)

A while ago now, some artists began to take 'the fieldwork turn', to make the social dimensions of their work a central component of their practice. This trend continues to grow: 'No sign of abatement', British arts bureaucrats tell me. Waves of this move have reached anthropologists, who have chosen to swim with the tide. The borderlines of art and anthropology were indistinct in late Victorian times. Why not blur them again?

Gretchen Bakke and Marina Peterson's edited *Between matter and method* is the latest in an intriguing series of recent editions presenting contemporary activity in this fertile zone. Unlike its predecessors, which focused on artists dissolving this divide, this book concentrates on anthropologists' incursions into that variously mapped area. The contributors follow artistic practice, valuing process more than product.

In the editors' terms, contributors 'embrace the inchoate, . . . resisting both form and container' (p. xiv). With nods towards 'the ontological turn', they consider novel assemblies of objects, events, and bodies which may, or may not, make sense at first glance. This method is called 'mattering' (p. 230), its careful adjustments 'attuning' (p. 77): any outcomes are suggestive, not definitive. Bakke and Peterson wish to discern 'an otherworldliness already present in this world' (p. 14). Contributors attend to neglected aspects of human life which, although already studied by a few, have yet to gain mainstream purchase: especially, the need to rethink conventional divisions of the sensorium, and the phenomena we start to perceive when we do. Overall, the key tone of the contributions is one of collaborative, playful improvisation, where any criteria of 'success' or 'failure' are left to the reader.

Rather than plod my way through each chapter, I highlight those which struck me most. Stewart (chap. 2) gives an evocative, well-written piece on the verbal styles of West Virginians facing the butt-end of their work-battered lives in a region of no employment, where 'running their mouths' appears a locutionary act against the meaningless chaos they've been left in. Is the emerging anthropology of ruins an ethnographic future for our neoliberal days?

Greene (chap. 3) writes of the late punk artist GG Allin, flinger of faeces at small but paying audiences. His performative logic, however, was more emotional than excremental: reviewing Allin's non-ironic, unhappy commentaries about the human condition makes Greene wonder if hate is not a neglected collective phenomenon.

Of all the contributors, Dumit (chap. 4) is most aware that too many aesthetic experiments can easily be branded depoliticized 'micro-utopias'. He skirts that trap by dwelling on political dimensions of improvisation. He argues that Afro-Americans were and are forced to improvise in order to appear non-threatening to whites. Dumit writes his contribution as an inspiring set of unsettling games, demonstrating the emancipatory power of improvisation: perfect

for pre-fieldwork research students, and many of us professional academics as well.

Murphy (chap. 6) queries contemporary ethical codes, worrying what 'harm' and 'intervention' might mean. These are important lessons for students, and a central reason why collaborative forms of fieldwork have to be thoroughgoing, not merely one-off payments of lip service.

In chapter 9, Peterson explores the cultural constitution of 'sound' and 'noise pollution', and the physical dimensions – air density, fog – which can affect our understanding of both. This chapter counterpoints with Dibs's (chap. 11) performance-orientated piece. She reworked field recordings of a park into 'compositions', then broadcast the result back into the park while the audience tested twigs, rocks, cones, for their resonances. The interaction of the audience and sounds situated each other, creating a sense of 'being in'.

Between matter and method is a deliberately experimental collection, with most contributors eschewing conventional modes of exposition: in particular 'Another world in this world', a mid-book series of innovative one-page pieces by individual contributors originally produced through the more interactive sessions of the workshop on which this collection is based. All these pieces are invitations to rethink our ways of working, both methods and outcomes. The play continues elsewhere with talk of whales, bloating, and fat, and a flick-book, at the bottom-right of all odd pages, of a breaching whale against a gloomy cityscape.

The contributions are short. There might be teasing, but no padding. The participants in this fun project set themselves a tough task: how to urge others to be playful without being overly directive in the process. There is much mention of bodily processes, mainly the usually overlooked ones. But farting remains oddly neglected. Isn't there yet a place for reports of backchat? For aren't we all gasbags, producers of hot air?

Jeremy MacClancy *Oxford Brookes University*

Ryan, Michael J. (foreword by Thomas A. Green). *Venezuelan stick fighting: the civilizing process in martial arts*. xxi, 162 pp., fig., illus., bibliogr. Lanham, Md: Lexington Books, 2016. $80.00 (cloth)

Michael J. Ryan's *Venezuelan stick fighting* is a survey of Venezuelan fighting methods (*garrote*) using the stick, knife, and machete, conducted through interviews in multiple sites for seven months in 2005, and six weeks in 2013 (p. 15). Ryan's opening pages co-opt the language of Elias in *The civilizing process* (1939). Describing himself as a veteran martial artist in his introduction, Ryan says, 'I have been beaten down, stomped on, and body slammed more times than I care to remember' (p. 16). At Los Angeles punk rock shows he 'would regularly get drunk and high and get into a number of fights' (p. 16). Thus in chapter 1, 'This is garrote', Ryan avows a 'phenomenological approach' (p. 26), and then describes the creolized origins of garrote as an amalgamation of martial techniques adapted from (mostly) Iberian and (some) English sword fencing, through the African slave trade, maroon diaspora, and the Canary Islands.

Chapter 2, 'The civilizing of a nation', iterates a brief history of Venezuela from 1499 to the 1950s. Regarding methods, chapter 3, 'Sites and pedagogies of garrote', introduces *vista* (awareness) and the *palo por palo* (blow for blow) response to slights, insults, and attacks (p. 52). Ryan complains that he was taught an unworkable version of the Siete Lineas style, bemoaning a divide between genuine fighting skill and fake 'performance', where real skills are concealed from outsiders, to instead reveal *la batalla*: 'the folkloric, performance-oriented [ritual, theatrical, dance] mode of garrote' (p. 59). Chapter 4, 'Secrecy and deception in garrote', expresses Ryan's exasperation with 'stonewalling' (p. 69), and his shift to a different style of garrote. His discussion of deception and disambiguation here unfortunately neglects the arguments in James C. Scott's *Weapons of the weak* (1987).

'Belonging and the role of honor' (chap. 5) announces yet another apprenticeship. Since Ryan 'trained with a number of different teachers', he was advised 'to train only one lineage a day as not to be confused how to move' (p. 84). Acknowledging his difficulties, Ryan remains optimistic: 'In the long and intimate disciplined training, the teacher/student relationship often transforms into a deep and lasting friendship' (p. 85). Yet hopping from place to place in order to learn, Ryan manages to recount only basic levels of training in awareness and footwork (p. 82). It seems the author struggled to belong, to achieve depth in his social relationships, and profundity in the training.

Just as he hops about from style to style, he also skips through anthropological themes: masculinity, joking, and honour. Chapter 6, 'Forging the warrior habitus', reads like pop anthropology. The author claims of his training that 'a high level of neuro-programming [induces] an alternate state of consciousness, where, while

dealing with current challenges, I could simultaneously access the past through traditional responses while imagining the future through innovative yet technically efficient and effective counters to any attack' (p. 100). In a subsection, 'Entering the dark side', Ryan discusses *guapos* (lit. good-looking street fighters). The dark side is 'cultivated callousness to the suffering of others' (p. 105); yet he writes: 'Where the loco is carried away by the emotional event of an encounter, a jugador harnesses his emotions, coldly analyzing the situation, watching in delight and satisfaction as he inflicts pain on the opponent' (p. 108). So, which is it? Cold analysis is not weighed against neuro-programming.

Chapter 7, 'The creation of national patrimony', misses the opportunity to return to, and debate, Elias. Chapter 8, 'Concluding thoughts', seems to reveal the entire venture as some kind of parody. The author condemns himself. Taking 'a long, deep, and manly swig' of Cocuy, he felt 'a scholarly obligation to stay in the village and . . . took a few laps around the plaza . . . pretending to be an attentive, curious, and serious anthropologist' (p. 139). Manly swig, indeed!

To some readers, the book might seem brave and valiant; to others, self-righteous, hypermasculine, and mishandled. Multitudinous accounts of entry/exit from stick fighting communities expose unwitting difficulties in the application of ethnographic methods. In a footnote (p. 65: 7), Ryan also acknowledges difficulties gaining access to female *garroteros*, who avoided him. Tellingly, while Thomas Green's foreword praises this new look at 'vernacular martial arts', it also opens by noting that it 'does not break new ground' (p. ix). Nonetheless, for all its flaws, I would still recommend *Venezuelan stick fighting* as it collates useful materials, provides some interesting descriptions, and opens a site for reflection.

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Suzuki, Yuka. *The nature of whiteness: race, animals and nation in Zimbabwe*. xiv, 210 pp., illus., bibliogr. Seattle: Univ. of Washington Press, 2017. £25.99 (paper)

Scholarship on whiteness, and white belonging in Africa, has grown steadily in recent years. While, historically, work on belonging has focused on indigenous people's claims to or attempts to reclaim belonging (often in relation to land), demands to belong made by descendants of white settlers have only recently begun to garner anthropological interest. This awkward postcolonial problematic is particularly relevant in Southern Africa. Yuka Suzuki's *The nature of whiteness* examines these constructions through the production and management of wildlife in Zimbabwe. In particular, she focuses on white Zimbabwean farmers living in the remote western region of Matabeleland in the years immediately preceding Zimbabwe's Fast Track Land Reform Programme.

The idea of white settlers constructing belonging through the environment is not new. However, in Suzuki's work, the 'ability to manage the environment was constitutive of whiteness itself' (p. 13). Here 'nature was utilized not only physically, but also metaphorically, in establishing belonging' (p. 13). Situated alongside one of Zimbabwe's biggest national parks, white farmers in Mlilo shifted from fraught attempts at cattle ranching to promoting wildlife and establishing their farms as private conservancies in the early 1990s. As their land ownership claims were increasingly threatened, conservation became a 'depoliticizing tool' (p. 9) through which white identity and claims to belong were refigured.

The book thus begins with an examination of the connections between discourses of race and nature. Not only is there an attempt on the part of white farmers to naturalize a racial hierarchy, but metaphors from nature are used to this end. Suzuki covers a number of themes: nostalgia for a pre-independent Zimbabwe; the valorization of white settler 'origin' stories; and the need to constantly police racial boundaries on the farm. Unsurprisingly, despite strong racist narratives, close working relationships with black farmworkers constantly blur the boundaries between white and black, worker and friend.

Chapters 4, 5, and 6 constitute the substance of this work. Just as rumblings about the land question began to threaten the legitimacy of white land ownership in Zimbabwe, these farmers moved into wildlife production. This enabled them to publicly 'rearticulate their businesses in increasingly apolitical and moral terms' (p. 91). Nature and its protection are constructed as politically neutral, an original thesis that no doubt applies to many other settings across the world. Animals play a key role in this construction. The integration of work on human-animal relations within the nexus of race and politics in Zimbabwe makes chapter 5 the most compelling.

The world over, animals are 'used as mechanisms to cement power and privilege' (p. 109). Suzuki focuses on four different typologies of animals within this context: charismatic animals (lions), reinvented animals (African wild

dogs), criminal animals (elephants), and domesticated animals (cats and dogs). Here animals' meanings and uses shift with time and political need. Animals are utilized symbolically both by the ruling party and as a form of political critique against it. Additionally, many animals were killed by war veterans occupying farms in these areas in the early 2000s as a form of protest against white farmers.

In conclusion, Suzuki examines contestations around the place of wild life and conservation within the country as a whole as it stood on the brink of economic and political crisis. Wildlife was one of Zimbabwe's largest tourist industries, and private game conservancy played a key role. The protection of wildlife became an arena for defining the state's accountability and governance. However, once held as politically neutral, wildlife conservation became increasingly entangled with national politics, a shift that has seen the demise of private game conservancies in the country.

Suzuki's work captures an important moment in Zimbabwe's history and makes a significant contribution to work on whiteness, race relations, and human-animal relations within anthropology. The book covers a lot of ground in a short space; both its main strength and weakness. There are several instances where important topics are broached but quickly glossed over, and at times it feels as though breadth of content has been prioritized over depth. The question of what 'nature' is, exactly, is not directly addressed, nor how it is distinguished from anything else. Nevertheless, Suzuki captures well the internal schisms within the white farming community, something others writing on land reform and Zimbabwean politics have largely failed to do. By bringing human-animal relations into conversation with contemporary nationalist politics and constructions of race, Suzuki has produced a compelling ethnography that should find its way onto courses covering human-animal relations, development studies, and race.

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Venkatraman, Shiram. *Social media in South India*. 244 pp., tables, figs, illus., bibliogr. London: UCL Press, 2017. £35.00 (paper)

Today's social media are often shaped by interconnected media tribes keen to represent their respective public and private rituals through the power of the 'selfie'. This, consequently, attunes most visual and digital anthropology scholarship to issues of continuity and similarity when analysing concurrent global, regional, and personal identities, whether through examining Facebook postings about high school reunions in Amarillo, Texas, or birthday parties shared via Skype by European migrant workers. It is within this context that Shiram Venkatraman argues successfully, in *Social media in South India*, that long-established communication norms shared by cultures with deep-rooted social traditions and kinship hierarchies often overwrite new social media and digital literacy.

Based on his doctoral dissertation, and relying on fifteen months of fieldwork and several interviews, the volume presents a convincing argument about how social media currently mirrors – rather than challenges – traditional narratives of Indian cultural hierarchies; with off-line social structures and mores being reflected and respected by on-line alliances within similar caste, class, occupational, and gender orders. Subsequently, these new media are passive communication tools rather than being a globally outreaching, norm-breaking, and self- and community-empowering apparatus.

While focusing on numerous case studies from South Asia – some well argued, others fittingly illustrative – Venkatraman presents a credible and often revealing discourse on the subcontinent's approach to, and use of, social media. For instance, Mr Selva's 'Facebook suicide' following his sister befriending, on-line, a man from a lower caste is undoubtedly a familiar story to most young Indian men caught between the freedom to communicate that is granted by social media, and the ubiquitous, millennia-old normative behaviour that is respectful of caste- and gender-specific family honour codes. Building on similar examples, the author argues convincingly that most social media networks reinforce on-line Indian cultural categories and social divisions.

Written with attention to the ethnographic detail, be it oral history, visual record, or on-line behavioural patterns shaped by social media trends, this monograph is a contribution to current scholarship in both cultural and digital anthropology. First, it complements UCL Press's 'Why we post' series (2016-17), which comprises works by nine authors following a similar anthropological investigative template (i.e. a fifteen-month-long fieldwork in specific locations around the world) while aiming to assess common or divergent social media protocols regarding issues of gender and visual identity, politics, economy, and education, whether in Southern Italy, Brazil, Turkey, Chile, China, England, or Trinidad. The research team's co-authored volume *How the world changed social media* (2016) presents a summary of the

proposed methodology and the rationale behind it alongside highlights of the research findings – a timely guideline for those wanting to understand some of the ways in which social media countenances familiarity within global communication frameworks. Second, it lends an anthropological perspective to the role played by social media in determining or deterring ideological and identity hierarchies in contemporary India – a topic also considered recently, albeit with a focus on the political dimension, by Shaili Chopra (*The big connect*, 2014) and Ankit Lal (*India social*, 2017).

Venkatraman's book also merits praise for his choice of a distinctively complex socioeconomic context: the Panchagrami, a cluster of five villages near Chennai that borders the Information Technology Highway. This is a 200-year-old area that has been experiencing rapid urbanization since the early 1990s. It consequently offers rich ethnographic material for the study of the ongoing cultural and digital literacy clashes between traditional, caste-bound, rural families and the newly settled employees of IT companies established by the Government of Tamil Nadu. The author presents, in a convincing and well-argued discourse – albeit often in a somewhat arid and formulaic style – several key findings pertinent to the understanding of, for example, 'online otherness'; public (Facebook) versus private (WhatsApp) digital personae; 'Facebook fictive kinship'; Twitter users seen as elitist members of the 'most public platform'; and mundane specific on-line protocols such as the morning greetings used to collect 'karma points' (p. 202). While *Social media in South India* could be pigeon-holed as the product of a circumscribed exercise in visual ethnography and social anthropology, anchored in the methodology of an academic project, it nevertheless offers both valuable research sources and reliable investigative perspectives on the contemporary representations and constructions of global media (selfie) tribes.

Annamaria Motrescu-Mayes *University of Cambridge*

Trust, mistrust, and secrets

Archambault, Julie Soleil. *Mobile secrets: youth, intimacy, and the politics of pretense in Mozambique*. xx, 183 pp., illus., bibliogr. Chicago: Univ. Press, 2017. £22.50 (paper)

Mobile secrets is based on various fieldwork periods conducted by Julie Soleil Archambault between 2006 and 2012. The author mainly spoke with young adults in the suburbs of the small town of Inhambane on the Mozambican coast. Through participant observation and semi-formal interviews with young people, and more formal interviews with key figures engaged in intimate relationships, such as church leaders, healers, doctors, police officers, local officials, a musician, and the Minister of Youth and Sport, Archambault maps the strategies and ideals related to intimacy, secrecy, and respect through assessing the role of the mobile phone in these young people's lives.

The mobile phone is regarded as a prized possession and a crucial tool for creating and maintaining social and economic networks, but it is also a means to 'play on regimes of truth', embellishing reality or concealing people's activities (p. 21). As the title of the book suggests, Archambault focuses on the third role of the mobile phone, thereby clearly qualifying the 'techno-enthusiasm' (p. 6) that largely governs information and communications technology for development (ICT4D) approaches.

The mobile phone is only seldom used to access useful information or to connect to development-related activities in the realm of education, health, economics, politics, and so on. As Archambault points out: 'Mozambicans commonly describe the phone as *being* development. That is to say that they see the phone as an index of development more than as a driver of development' (p. 41, original emphasis). Furthermore, many people experience a huge discrepancy between 'what technologies *can* do and what they *do* do' (p. 41, original emphasis). Indeed, the subverted usages of the phone run counter to the expectations prominent in development circles.

Young adults in Inhambane play on the politics of uncertainty with the phone: it can be used privately and individually, it can be put in silent mode, and its messages can be deleted. Thus mobile phones tie in with a range of strategies to keep up appearances and/or to maintain respectability. In the words of many Inhambane people, 'to conceal is respect' (p. 61). Archambault mentions the cover of darkness; the hiding of goods in black plastic shopping bags; depending on loud music in bars to 'muffle conversation'; the early morning practice of sweeping that erases all traces in the sand; and the high fences surrounding homesteads – often functioning both as a means to indicate that there is something worth hiding and to conceal. Most people in Inhambane in fact have 'more to hide than to display' (p. 60), be it disreputable

activities related to sexuality or crime, or their shame over the lack of access to basic needs. Through the theme of intimacy, the author views issues of courtship, sex, and money in precisely this light of concealment.

To study everyday practices and mundane references to the mobile phone in Africa is not new, as Archambault points out herself. There also exists a rather abundant anthropological literature on secrecy. Archambault adds to this by focusing on the notion of secrecy in connection to the mobile phone, and by studying everyday practices connected to secrecy (p. 68). Her analysis of youth, intimacy, secrecy, and the mobile phone is interesting as such, but stands rather disconnected from the wider history of colonialism, warfare, and postcolonial socialism in Mozambique (though see pp. 44-54). Furthermore, the author could have benefited from the discussions on honour and respectability in Africanist history. Some of the literature specifically dealing with social relations and mobile telephony in Africa is not mentioned: the published thesis of Siri Lamoureaux (*Message in a mobile*, 2011) comes to mind, but also the early article by Jean-Aimé Dibakana ('Social uses of cellular telephones and new forms of sociability in the Congo', *Politique Africaine* **85**, 2002).

Moreover, while Archambault spent seventeen months in Inhambane, and returned for several visits between 2008 and 2015, there is no in-depth description of the context, the people involved in the fieldwork, and the activities and discourses of which the author became part. Although the examples she presents of her fieldwork are to the point, and the subject of mobile telephony in Africa is approached from an innovative angle, the present 160 pages and the fact that much of the material presented has already been published before do not do justice to the lengthy fieldwork period and the existing literature on the subject. Obviously, Archambault has a deep understanding of the context and of the theoretical implications of her work, but one wonders whether in this case a more profound monograph had to give way to the pressure to publish. In any case, this reader was hoping for more.

Inge Brinkman *Ghent University*

Broch-Due, Vigdis & Margit Ystanes (eds). *Trusting and its tribulations: interdisciplinary engagements with intimacy, sociality and trust*. xii, 282 pp., bibliogr. Oxford, New York: Berghahn Books, 2016. £67.00 (cloth)

Trust is perhaps to sociology what kinship has long been to anthropology: elusive, difficult to pin down, but somehow nothing else works without it. It is maybe surprising that while sociologists have spent the last few decades grappling with problems of institutionalized and interpersonal trust in the context of late modernity, anthropologists have had relatively little to say on a phenomenon arguably inherent to the workings of societies everywhere. Vigdis Broch-Due and Margit Ystanes's *Trusting and its tribulations* is an attempt to change that and to encourage anthropologists to engage seriously and critically with trust as produced, understood, and experienced.

Their starting points are deliberately open and exploratory: they resist the temptation to pin down and pre-impose a definition of trust, instead encouraging the contributors to the volume to start from the empirical and allow theoretical formulations to emerge. The result is an eclectic mosaic of work, ideas, and concepts, with examples drawn from a wide range of empirical contexts, using historical as well as contemporary examples. Since the starting points are so diverse, comparison and dialogue between the various chapters can be difficult, but that is a necessary consequence of such an empirically grounded approach. Moreover, some important themes emerge from the collection. Most insightful, in my view, is the emphasis in several of the chapters that builds on Broch-Due and Ystanes's invitation to think about the 'inter-subjective space of social anticipation' (p. 24) conjured up by *trusting* as a verb, and the '*performativity* of "trusting", of practices, doings and actions' (p. 33).

These ideas are taken up in what is the stand-out piece of the volume: Haas's brilliant account from Mongolia (chap. 3). Why, she wondered, did her informants continue to put their trust in public officials who had betrayed their trust in the past? As first, she 'thought that . . . in a small, close-knit community from which they did not see any possibility of escape, they might not have another choice' (p. 88). However, further research revealed that something else was at work. Trust was not a passive state that implied vulnerability on the part of a person. Rather, the act of trusting had generative qualities, by conferring on the other an obligation to *become* trustworthy. Thus the act of trusting is also a moral one. In contrast with Western assumptions, whereby the assessment of trustworthiness logically precedes the act of trusting, in Mongolia, the two concepts merge through action.

Also fascinating is Geschiere's chapter on witchcraft (chap. 2), in which he takes issue with

the assumption that trust is highest within the intimate sphere of home and family. Indeed, he argues, it is precisely because of the ambivalence in those relationships that witchcraft practices and accusations pervade the domestic sphere. Based on his work in southeast Cameroon, Geschiere tells us that '[f]or the Maka the family is the self-evident core of trust and solidarity; yet precisely this inner circle is haunted by the image of the witch who strikes from close by' (p. 60). Likewise, Broch-Due, writing about the 'animal witches' among pastoralist Turkana, challenges the idea that trust and reciprocity are taken-for-granted values within the intimate core (chap. 4). Ystanes (chap. 1) goes further, in her work in Guatemala, by calling into question the idealized distinction between the home as a safe, trusting space and the street as a morally risky one. In practice, she argues, the distinctions are blurred and moral risks pervade the home.

Other important and fascinating themes raised in the volume include the gendered nature of trusting (explored by Mintz-Roth and Heyer, chap. 5); trusting within social hierarchies (Chopra, chap. 9); and the roles of affect and emotion – a theme running through many of the contributions. Taken together, they do not offer a neat or coherent 'answer' to the problem of trust and trusting, but this is not the aim. Instead they expose the messiness, ambivalence, and ambiguities inherent in social relationships whereby uncertainty is always present.

Occasionally, I felt that the treatment given to the work of sociologists and other social scientists was unfair. It is simply not the case that, within other social sciences disciplines, trust was an assumed, taken-for-granted, universal 'thing in itself', as the editors suggest (p. 3). Neither is it the case that sociologists and political economists all view individuals as singular, self-interested 'rational actors', with no place for intersubjectivity and emotion. At times, the editors' uncompromising refusal to attempt to pin down the concept was frustrating as well. That said, this is a great book and one which I found to be immeasurably valuable. It is an extremely rich, ethnographically grounded, and carefully theorized set of accounts which will be an important springboard for anthropologists and others to take up and pursue in their own work.

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Carey, Matthew. *Mistrust: an ethnographic theory*. xiv, 128 pp., bibliogr. Chicago: Hau Books, 2017. £19.00 (paper)

Matthew Carey's *Mistrust* is among the rarest of academic works in that we wish it were longer. What this volume accomplishes in 109 terse pages is impressive and provocative. Carey begins by arguing that 'perhaps no concept so federates the disparate caucuses of modernity as trust' (p. 1), and he proceeds from there through four chapters to show how its nominal opposite, mistrust, can just as well serve as a foundation for social relations – especially in the High Atlas of Morocco. This ethnographic context casts a revealing light on Western assumptions about the vitality, necessity, and goodness of trust. This is not an ethnography in the classic sense, but 'an ethnography of [the] hypothesis' (p. 13) that our faith in trust is naïve. The book prompts us to understand that mistrust, as grounded in a particular view of human nature, has its virtues. 'Rather than being a necessary enemy of tolerance and freedom, [mistrust] can also enable them' (p. 40).

The introduction demonstrates how trust is variously considered in disciplines ranging from psychology to economics, and introduces the claim that in the High Atlas, 'mistrust . . . contributes . . . to a philosophy of rugged autonomy and moral equality that assumes other people to be both free and fundamentally uncontrollable' (p. 10). Chapter 1 begins with the observation that 'at the most basic level, speech and even language itself are predicated on a certain minimal form of trust' (p. 15). Following Grice's 'theory of implicature' (p. 16) and his four maxims said to be necessary for conversational communication, the book presents limits and subtleties from the Moroccan context. Since Carey's interlocutors evince that you cannot really know people, and because local speech conventions and cultural mores conform to this belief, much that we think we know about the basic substrate of human interaction is called into question.

Chapter 2 moves onto the treachery of friends. In short, trust is fragile. If you believe you know somebody, and your friendship is founded on that belief, betrayal of any serious sort can be fatal to the relationship. So while trust in the constancy of character has been extolled from the Scottish Enlightenment through contemporary neuroscience, we are told that because 'betrayal is a fact of human life' (p. 53), friendships based on mistrust can prove enduring – even more so than those founded on (misplaced) trust. Chapter 3 pursues this thesis into the realm of politics, and is subtitled 'Anarchism as realpolitik'. Carey quickly dismisses Gellner's classic, segmentary description of High Atlas life, but also the

'institution-heavy Franco-Moroccan' alternative (p. 65). The author finds instead a weak 'political technology or mode of sociality that can be adapted to the situation at hand' (p. 73), one that is not concrete enough to even be considered an institution. The ephemeral political modalities that emerge in the High Atlas are 'an unintended consequence of . . . practices born of mistrust' (p. 79) rather than a rational anarchism grounded in a sensible distrust of concentrated power.

Chapter 4 traces a politics based in mistrust out to Ukraine and then back to Morocco with the intention of showing how 'the social and institutional infrastructures of everyday life help shape and enable prevailing imaginaries of mistrust' (p. 85). Mistrust emerges in Ukraine as a tendency towards conspiracy theories, while in the High Atlas it finds expression in 'betrayal by the familiar other that is the witch' (p. 85). Importantly, this is not a general Moroccan phenomenon, but one confined to the country's 'uttermost rural hinterlands' (p. 97).

Overall the book is convincing in its claim that 'mistrust can emerge at the confluence of particular ideas of personhood, practices of communication, and conceptions of the limits of knowledge' (p. 107). *Mistrust* also demonstrates fascinating ways this thesis cuts through a variety of scholarly arguments. We would want to hear far more about several of them, not least about competing theories of communication and the way the ethnographic material fits with other contemporary research. For instance, Jews are mentioned several times and it would be interesting to see Carey's argument brought to bear on Aomar Boum's *Memories of absence* (2013). Likewise, Carey's characterization of High Atlas men as suspicious might be complemented or complicated by work like Katherine Hoffman's 'Suspicion, secrecy, and uncomfortable negotiations over knowledge production in southwestern Morocco' (in *Encountering Morocco*, 2013). In sum, this short book stands to have a big impact, not least among ethnographers of the region, who will be called on to grapple with its fundamental claim.

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