Reviews

Armstrong, Karen. 2004. *Remembering Karelia: A family's story of displacement during and after the Finnish Wars*. Oxford: Berghahn. x + 160 pp. Hb.: £40.00/$59.95. ISBN: 1 57181 650 X.

Borneman, John. 2004. *Death of the father: An anthropology of the end of political authority*. Oxford: Berghahn. xii + 240 pp. Hb.: £40.00/$59.95. ISBN: 1 57181 111 7.

Kaneff, Deema. 2004. *Who owns the past? The politics of time in a 'model' Bulgarian village*. Oxford: Berghahn. x + 220 pp. Hb.: £35.00/$49.95. ISBN: 1 57181 534 1.

The Finnish anthropologist Karen Armstrong has produced a monograph that is unusual in more than one way. *Remembering Karelia* describes a border region stretching between Finland and Russia known as Karelia that today is part of the independent Russian nation-state, but for almost fifty years formed part of the Soviet Union. At the end of the war, almost 11 per cent of the Finnish population of the region (about 420,000 people) were evacuated to Finland while Karelia remained within the territory of the Soviet Union.

What I find fascinating in this study is that while it does not concern Russians and the Soviet state *per se* they are structurally embedded in the Karelians' plight as represented in the diaries and letters of Helena Kuisma and those of her descendants. The book is thus a re-reading of autobiographies re-written by members of an extended family whose roots are traced back to the mythical village of Inkilä. The author and family members visited this site, but as the small team meanders through sites described in the ancestral histories they must come to terms with a sober reality: the Soviet state cared little about history as most buildings, the cemetery and family houses were completely erased. This section is the most moving part of the book as we witness Karelian sites that do not exist any more as villagers' memories of events are placed on a virtual map preserved in written texts of former residents.

Armstrong has given us a milestone study in family history and autobiographical accounts from a region that received has little or no attention from anthropologists. Unfortunately, it seems that Armstrong's manuscript did not receive a possible finishing touch-up job (certainly not by an Europeanist anthropologist) since her latest sources are from 2000, with a few books published in 2001. This hiatus is especially noticeable because while she cites V. Skultans' earlier article she does not cite Skultans' book on Latvians. More glaring is that she misses recent anthropological literature on nationalist imaginary as well.

Incidentally, while Armstrong reveals a strong sympathy for Balibar, Lévi-Strauss, Bourdieu and Heidegger, a host of other scholars on nationalism (E. Kedourie, E. Gellner, R. Brubaker, K. Verdery) are nowhere to be found. However, Armstrong's is not a haphazard study of Finnish patriotism and identity. Despite its one-sidedness, this study is a novel look at the Finnish national community experiencing displacement as the result of World War II, a topic not well known in anthropological circles aside from that of Scandinavia and also Finland. Even more refreshing is the uniqueness of the sources used: Armstrong samples Finnish autobiographical narratives (four volumes in all) from the first half of the twentieth century. For this reason alone, *Remembering Karelia* is a book that nicely compliments that of V. Skultans' published earlier.

Different in scope and nature, the book edited by John Borneman, asks pertinent questions about major ruptures in history as he refers to the dates of 1945 and 1989. *Death of the Father* started as a panel in 1995, followed by several workshops and all the while kept alive as an interactive virtual site (http://cidc.library.cornell.edu/DOF). The central tenet of the volume is that twentieth-century regimes of authority were both totalising in their claims on sovereignty as well as patricentric in their leadership. The authors focus on moments of caesurae: the end of political regimes, and the men who fell with them in 1945, when fascism and Nazism came to an end, and 1989, when Soviet

hegemony collapsed across the former East bloc. Focusing on the personalities and characteristics of the leaders does not, however, imply that this is a volume on psychological anthropology. Only the editor makes a respectful bow to Freud and Lacan without entering into a serious discussion of psychoanalytic theories about the power of the paternal. Similarly, the loss of the father, as in the case of regime collapse, is also untheorised from a psychological vantage point. It would have been nice at least in one chapter to read how psychoanalytic theory would either strengthen or alternatively subvert anthropological analyses about Freud's theoretical paradigm of melancholia and mourning of paternal losses including the nations' 'fall in self-esteem' resulting from injuries suffered through such oedipal losses.

While this edited collection is about history, aside from Borneman's and Di Bella's analyses, most chapters seem rather ahistorical as most authors are firmly anchored to second-hand materials. While most of the authors' footing is sure when describing the past three decades, they walk on tightropes when reassessing earlier events involving these historic figures. This of course forces them to look for new ways of approaching patriarchal leaders, a subject long familiar to historians and political scientists.

Surprisingly, the reader rarely finds statements by the leaders themselves. L. Brezhnev and N. Kruschev wrote profusely and their explanations of their policies and actions were printed in numerous interviews at the time. Similarly, Josif Broz Tito produced volumes, just as N. Ceauşescu did in Romania, even though they all pale in comparison to those tomes published by Lenin and Stalin. None of these works are analysed and only Kideckel cites the speeches of Romania's infamous leader, N. Ceauşescu.

Contributors seem strikingly to manage to omit important works; for instance, previous analyses published on Ceauşescu (G. Almond, D. Deletant, J. Hale, U. Gabbanyi) are not to be found in the chapter on Romania. Similarly, Schoberlein discusses Lenin and Stalin but R. Medvedev and R. Stites had already published on them but their works were not consulted by the author. Reading this discussion on the death of fathers, it is surprising to find that only two of the contributors (Schoberlein and Bringa) cite Katherine Verdery's book on the very same subject.

Most chapters deal with Europe, but there is a single chapter on Japan's Hirohito. Its inclusion, as the editor claims, adds a nice comparison with the European material while it remains rather an *ad hoc* addition. Hirohito, who was dethroned after 1945 by General MacArthur, but not killed, cannot be really compared to Hitler, Mussolini or Ceauşescu who all met their violent deaths without receiving a pompous state funeral like Stalin or Tito. All these were, however, delegitimised as soon as they were dead, but not Hirohito. The volume deals with patricentric regimes but in some chapters women do appear. Kideckel rightly mentions the megalomaniac Elena Ceauşescu. The editor perhaps assumes too much when he claims that in opposition to the 'wicked mother', the leader 'Nicolae became a good father' (Borneman p. 17). In actuality, he was never that. In the chapter on Mussolini we are provided with a treatment of his mistress (Claretta Pettacci) as well as his widow; Bringa discusses Tito's failed marriages (three in all), but his rule over the family, unlike that over the country, remains highly conjectural.

With such a range of figures discussed, other totalitarian fathers are missing. The Habsburg Emperor Francis Joseph, Franco, Hungary's Mátyás Rákosi, Imre Nagy or János Kádár would have been significant additions. Albania's Enver Hoxha, and Gomulka-Gierek-Jaruzelski and Gottwald-Novotny-Dubček were different types of repressive fathers (of Poland and Czechoslovakia respectively) and could have been included, as well as Bulgaria's Todor Zhivkov, Mao-tse Tung, Kim-il Sen, Ho-chi Minh, not to mention Kadaffi and Fidel Castro.

Deema Kaneff, in *Who owns the past*?, offers a refreshing twist for the anthropology of Eastern Europe long thought to be the discipline of village studies. Similar somewhat in concern for history to the Borneman volume, she deals with Talpa, a settlement identified by a pseudonym to which she returns as an ancestral place. Yet, it is not a family ethnography *per se* even though there are constant references to members of her extended family. What makes this settlement especially suitable for an anthropological study is that Talpa is famous in Bulgarian history: it is the native village of the wife of Todor Zhivkov, leader of the country and its communist party. The book focuses on the past – 'the way in which it was represented and utilised' (p. 3) – and how it shapes social and political relationships between members of the community as well as between the community and the state. She uses this notion as an ideological construct for history, folklore and tradition through which Talpians positioned themselves with respect to state power.

In the model village studied, citizens unanimously supported socialist state policy and

ideology and as the changes wrought havoc in collective property and ownership during the early 1990s, support and nostalgia for the good old days became even more observable. Kaneff's study meticulously details the hidden connections to the state with which her ancestral village were able to assure the title 'model village' at the late date of 1987. Actually, this is already a questionable entitlement because Talpa itself was anything but 'model' especially since it was incorporated as Bulgarian in 1878 after the original Turkish inhabitants had left forever. Unfortunately, this interesting aspect of Talpa's history, from the seventeenth century to events leading up to World War II and to the eventual rise of socialism, is offered in shorthand – a mere one-page description. What, for instance, happened before the 1960s? How did the forced collectivisations and nationalisations take place? Why did it seem so natural that the villagers were indifferent to the Church and its prominent place before? We do not really get a sense of why the people of Talpa opted for secular state funerals instead of those administered by the Bulgarian Eastern Orthodox church. Kaneff provides a detailed ethnography of funerals that were on the surface secular, but on closer inspection turned out to be mixed with Christian and pre-Christian beliefs and practices. She claims that 'state views held death to be part of a normal, unrelenting and irreversible law of nature which could not be escaped' and therefore according to local philosophy 'everything that is born, dies' (p. 118). This, however, does not follow logically as an automatic acceptance of secular (socialist) morality concerning death. Such a matter of fact rationality concerning man's death may be ascertained from numerous earlier village studies across the European continent well before state socialism.

Similarly, some aspects of Kaneff's analysis beg the following question: whose perspective is she representing when, for instance, she describes the non-official ritual of Zarezan (local celebration of viticulture in February)? She claims that because it took place in the tavern, vineyard and 'in households or public sites with no historical significance' it remained in the realm of tradition 'which not only lacked historical – and therefore political - significance, but also held an importance which in many ways was based on its conceptual and actual opposition to history' (p. 125). However, a few pages earlier she cites informants explaining religious Zarezan celebrations before 1944 where the ritual was strictly connected to the feast of the local saint (Saint Triffon) where all men participated in a mass before they (together with the priest) progressed to the vineyard where they were sprinkled by the priest. Clearly, these places and practices cannot be called insignificant and apolitical, especially so since the strong anti-Church attitude of the communist party following World War II forced a secular state ideology on the population in order to delegitimise the Orthodox Church. The fact that some villagers during the late 1980s had an indifferent attitude towards such ritual should have been questioned by the author.

Kaneff's study offers scant treatment of Bulgarian minorities, the Turks and the Pomaks in particular. Only in Chapter 6 does she recognise that in Talpa a funeral of a Turkish man took place. However, since she missed the entire event, her one-sided analysis is based solely on what some observers (Bulgarians) told her about this funeral, thereby giving a sense of ethnocentrism to her book with regard to Bulgarian minorities.

The three books under review highlight the fact that the new post-socialist states in Europe are mortgaged to a socialist heritage constantly needing to struggle with their earlier identities, areas of inquiry that will be investigated for some time to come.

LÁSZLÓ KÜRTI
University of Miskolc (Hungary)

Biolsi, Thomas (ed.). 2004. *A companion to the anthropology of American Indians*. Oxford: Blackwell. xxiv + 567 pp. Hb.: £85.00. ISBN: 0 631 22686 9.

This is the third volume published in Blackwell's *Companions to anthropology* series, which aims to offer 'comprehensive syntheses of the traditional subdisciplines, primary subjects, and geographic areas of inquiry for the field'. The book comprises twenty-seven substantive chapters, grouped under six headings: environments and populations; political, social and economic organisation; knowledge and expressive culture; colonialism, native sovereignty, law and policy; cultural politics and the colonial situation; and, anthropological method and post-colonial practice. Political issues loom large throughout the book, and for good reasons, which makes the division of chapters into thematic parts difficult, and at a first glance the distribution of chapters under the six themes

appears indeed somewhat arbitrary. However, the reader soon discovers that there is a logic to these groupings, although alternative arrangements might have been equally appropriate.

In the first part, Kenneth Ames and Russell Thornton establish the broader context in terms of ecology and demography. This is followed in part 2 by essays on gender relations (Martha Knack), continuity and change in American Indian politics (Loretta Fowler), indigenous law (Bruce Miller), and culture and economy in the reservation context (Kathleen Pickering). The third grouping brings contributions on knowledge systems (Eugene Hunn), oral traditions (Rodney Frey), religion (Raymond Bucko), music (Luke Lassiter) and art (Rebecca Dobkins).

Parts four and five deal with many very similar issues, but from different perspectives that provide common threads. The political and legal status of American Indians in the 'Lower 48' states – excluding Alaska and Hawaii – is discussed by Thomas Biolsi, followed by a chapter on Alaska by Caroline Brown. George Castile argues that a focus on tribal pasts rather than futures has meant that anthropology has played a surprisingly marginal role in the development of federal policy towards American Indians. Randel Hanson considers the prospects for tribal sovereignty in the context of contemporary political and economic globalisation. The past and present role of treaties for American Indians is examined by Larry Nesper, and Alice Littlefield discusses education, in particular the function of schools as arenas of domination and resistance. The role of anthropologists as 'image-makers', creating and critiquing representations of culture at various levels, is the subject of Pauline Strong's contribution. A critical appraisal of land-based claims and the politics of 'having' a distinctive culture is provided by Kirk Dombrowski, followed by Tressa Berman's analysis of the appropriation of native culture by institutions of colonial power, including museums, and of indigenous people's responses to this. Cultural citizenship, as a way of claiming membership of the larger community as a group with specific cultural characteristics, is discussed by Renya Ramirez in the context of community healing as a political response to colonialism and racism. Cari Kapur's chapter reviewing the situation in Hawaii concludes this section.

The final part raises key issues of anthropological methodology and relates these to the specific context of the anthropology of American Indians in the context of post-colonial practice. Peter Whiteley reviews the complicity of ethnography in the colonial endeavour, but also highlights its subversive capacity. Drawing on case studies of the return of native heritage, language revivals and struggles for political recognition, Les Field sketches some lessons for genuine partnership between communities and academics in an 'applied' anthropology. James Collins assesses the politicisation of native languages as badges of cultural identity, and the different visions that exist with regard to the importance and future of these languages. The way native culture has been documented visually has altered as a result of both advancing technology and changing anthropological theory, and this is considered by Harald Prins with particular emphasis on how native peoples see themselves in, and deal with, these changing representations. Finally, Larry Zimmermann surveys the interactions between American Indians and archaeologists, from early encounters to the significant changes initiated by the 1990 Native American Graves Protection and Repatriation Act, showing how different worldviews have created deep conflicts over native heritage.

Earlier remarks concerning chapter structure notwithstanding, this is an extremely well-produced volume that certainly meets, for the anthropology of American Indians, the series' objective of presenting 'both a contemporary survey of anthropology and a cutting-edge guide to the emerging research and intellectual trends in the field'. Intriguingly, and appropriately, it treats both 'American Indian' and 'anthropology' as 'moving targets'; the reader should approach it in that spirit, as explorative rather than definitive. The authors share a concern that anthropology now and in the future should matter, not just to academics who build careers on it, but first and foremost to native peoples themselves.

ULLRICH KOCKEL
University of Ulster (UK)

Buckley, Thomas. 2002. *Standing ground: Yurok Indian spirituality, 1850–1990*. Berkeley and Los Angeles: University of California Press. xii + 325 pp. Hb.: $50.00/£32.50 ISBN: 0 520 23358 1. Pb.: $19.95/£12.95. ISBN: 0 520 23389 1.

In what is without a doubt a beautifully constructed (and making the world 'beautiful' is an important

theme here) historical ethnography of Yurok and neighbouring peoples' spiritual practices, Buckley touches on a broad spread of issues that range from spiritual training to ideas about wealth, the world, healing and cultural revival, within a subtle analytical framework that pushes dialogue and multi-authorship to the front. This is an ethnographic work that is extremely sensitive to the inherent debt owed to a 'large pool of voices' – Yurok, academic and others – without arrogating to itself any special authority, seeking rather to situate its own interpretations in the 'polyphonic' dialogues it describes (p. 23). It is appropriately punctuated with quotes that bring together and make alive this multiplicity of voices, while maintaining enough 'editorial authority' to allow the reader to be seduced without being bedazzled.

In part 1 of *Standing Ground* Buckley outlines the social and historical milieu of Yurok and neighbouring peoples, and those who have written about them, including 'native authors', anthropologists and the author himself. Particularly interesting is his consideration of the 'changing historical consciousness' (p. 75) of 'native' writers throughout the twentieth century, through a careful analysis of the production and reception of five texts published between 1916 and 1994. These texts, and their reception, reflect not only individual, but also collective struggles to come to terms with, and overcome, 'near-silences' about the legacy of nineteenth-century genocide, spirituality, and the often far-off-the-mark ethnographic representations of outside academics. Unsure of commonplace differences between 'native-authored history and ethnography', Buckley states firmly his intention to 'participate in a conversation that started long before', recognising that 'all accounts are rendered tentative and incomplete by the ongoing . . . diversity of native and anthropological understandings alike, and by the continuing emergence of local cultures through vital and changing historical processes' (p. 84).

It is in this emphasis on change – culture as emergent historical process – that Buckley distinguishes his approach from that of Kroeber, his most formidable anthropological predecessor who dismissed the possibility of 'Yurok cultural survival' by insisting in 1948 that 'no authentically Yurok culture could be said to have existed since 1850' (p. 13). If Kroeber's work epitomises a certain brand of Boasian, salvage ethnography, then Buckley's book is decidedly post-salvage. Yet Buckley also seeks the continuities of Yurok cultural practices and beliefs, and this is most clear in chapters ten and eleven, where he explores both the emergence of the Indian Shaker Church in the first half of the twentieth century, and the later revival of the Yurok jump dance in the 1980s.

Buckley is also driven by a recognition of a deficit in anthropological understanding of Yurok spirituality, which he argues is central to Yurok social organisation. The chapters in parts 2 and 3 (entitled 'testimony' and 'understandings' respectively), provide a sophisticated and historically aware ethnographic account of the inter-relationship of 'thinking and acting' (p. 107) – between the spiritual, mental and physical dimensions of personal discipline and training, of healing and doctoring, and of dancing on 'mountain seats'. He describes a spirituality that is at once social, historical and political; of individual experience but also of collective purpose; and, of course, material, in the arduous physical practises associated with sweat houses, as well as the 'lives' of objects and especially the dance regalia which 'cries to dance' (p. 211); and that is marked by specific points on the mountainous landscapes of north-western California itself. Chapter 6 explores how claims over mountain training sites were articulated in the context of resistance against the proposed 'Go-road'; protests which 'contributed directly to the resurgence of world renewal ceremonialism in the region' in the late 1980s (p. 201).

Although Buckley's eloquent ethnography represents a kind of dialogical, post-salvage ethnography, there remains at the heart of this book an unresolved tension. Buckley is keen to emphasise culture as 'process', yet simultaneously seeks to highlight the continuity of Yurok spirituality. There is a certain timelessness about the narrative, but much more serious is the fact that much of the book is decidedly apolitical. The micro-politics within and between Yurok and neighbouring groups appears only thinly, in scattered places. This is most frustrating in chapter eleven, where, for example, readers are told Hupa activists avoided the 1988 Pecwan dance because they 'were embroiled in a particularly bitter altercation over the formal splitting of the reservation that they still shared then' (p. 277). But there is no further elaboration, so the reader is left with the enduring impression that despite the author's conscious efforts at multi-authorship, he himself was complicit in obscuring some of the nitty-gritty politics of Yurok daily lives. It is unfortunate that, as a result, the kind of processual and emergent culture being promoted by Buckley still appears, at times, romantic and

idealistic, for otherwise this is a book that makes an important contribution to not only Native American studies, but also to ongoing debates about the way that ethnography is practised and written.

JOOST FONTEIN
University of Edinburgh (UK)

Carrier, James (ed.). 2004. *Confronting environments: Local understanding in a globalizing world*. Lanham, MD: AltaMira Press. viii + 198 pp. Hb.: $72.00. ISBN: 0 7591 0562 6. Pb.: $26.95. ISBN: 0 7591 0563 4.

In this collection, Carrier and a team of international researchers work from the perspective of anthropology to reveal the complexity of the way that people understand the environment, a task that Carrier feels has been neglected in previous works. These revelations are premised upon two notions: that there is more to the environment than that deemed to be 'natural', the result being that understandings of the environment should additionally examine, 'landscape as shaped by humans and even the built environment' (p. viii); and that the social interactions of individuals may impact upon the relationships they have with their environments. As with other relationships, those people have with the environment are subject to constant negotiation, with the result that power within them should be acknowledged. This, in turn, may impact on how people relate to the environment and communicate this relationship. In particular, the chapters in this collection show the extent to which local and global discourses intervene and are variously and simultaneously employed by individuals in their relationships with the environment.

The first two chapters focus on the way that tourism has caused local populations to re-evaluate the meanings that they give to the environment. MacLeod examines Bayahibe, in the Dominican Republic, to demonstrate that power dynamics are at work in the definition of space, which has constantly been contested throughout history, not only with the onset of tourism in the region. Economic wealth is instrumental to power, with the meaning of the environment being dictated by the wealthy. Theodossopoulos's chapter, a study of the conflict between conservationists and local tourism on Zakynthos, shows how the impact of social context on the relationship between humans and the environment may result in diverse, and conflicting, views of the same environment. Underlying these conflicts are diverse understandings of what is deemed to be 'nature' and 'natural'.

The third chapter by MacDonald also deals with the impact of tourism on a local community. However, rather than focus solely on what the environment can mean to the individual, this chapter commences a more thorough investigation into how these relationships are negotiated. MacDonald's primary concern, using as his main example ibex hunting in Northern Pakistan, is how the discontinuities between local knowledge and global ecology are resolved, in this case, through the redefinition of social relations.

Kirby demonstrates further how the meaning of the environment is negotiated, studying how people move from positions of detachment to engagement with the environment. Prompting this, in the case of individuals in a Tokyo community, is the experience of toxic illness, with the response that they start to employ global discourses on environmentalism to translate their bodily symptoms, and further, to pursue environmental justice. Carrier continues to challenge universal environmental thought by showing that environmental views can be shaped and constrained by institutional environments. Taking as his example ex-patriots living in Jamaica, he demonstrates how personal histories may be transformed under institutional pressure. Transforming private into public in this manner, their efforts at conservation achieved greater power, credence and, consequently, persuasion in particular social contexts.

In the final two chapters of the collection, the focus is on the nature of distinctions between the local and the global. Berglund questions the assumed universal nature of these distinctions, specifically the position of the national in opposition to the local. Using the case of Finnish environmental debates, she argues that the national is inherent in both the local and the global, further complicating the alleged distinction between the two. Milton continues on this theme through her examination of the change in British environmentalism over the course of the 1990s. In particular, she shows how, while local understandings of the environment initially held legitimacy, the latter is now gained from a broader, more abstract attachment, transforming local understandings. People's understandings of place are in constant flux, operationalised by particular events, showing that global processes significantly

impact on the national contexts of environmentalism.

Josiah Heyman concludes the collection with an overview of the chapters. He sees that there is an ongoing struggle for power in environmental discourses, with the local and global emerging as both specific and dynamic. Individuals adopt global environmental discourses as tools. As a result, globalism impacts on understandings of the environment, even at the most local of levels. By critically examining the role of the local and global within the lived experiences of the environment, this collection is a valuable addition to the debate on environmental understanding in the social sciences.

MICHAELA LORD
University of Hull (UK)

Coleman, Simon and Peter Collins (eds.). 2004. *Religion, identity and change: Perspectives on global transformations*. Aldershot: Ashgate (Theology and Religion in Interdisciplinary Perspective Series). xii + 214 pp. Hb.: £45.00. ISBN: 0 7546 0450 0.

Se référant à une conception de l'identité comme processus dynamique et intersubjectif, les coordonnateurs de cet ouvrage se proposent d'aborder un certain nombre de questions qui se posent aujourd'hui dans le champ du religieux. Une approche postmoderniste de l'identité conduit à penser les affiliations, en particulier les affiliations religieuses, dans les termes d'une déterritorialisation et d'une détraditionalisation. Cependant, c'est à partir d'expressions localisées du religieux en Grande Bretagne que les différents auteurs analysent les articulations à l'œuvre dans le monde globalisé, entre religiosité et différents modes de construction identitaires.

L'ouvrage regroupe un certain nombre d'interventions présentées dans le cadre du groupe de sociologie des religions au cours de la réunion de l'Association britannique de sociologie à Durham en 1999 et un certain nombre d'autres articles choisis en fonction de leur possibilité de couvrir l'ensemble des pratiques religieuses et des zones géographiques du Royaume Uni.

Le lien établi entre identité religieuse et ethnicité met en lumière les formes jusque là marginales du religieux et conduit à repenser les formes dominantes comme étant plurielles, complexes, transcendant le groupe local et même l'Etat-nation. Simon Coleman et Peter Colins donnent le ton, en commençant leur introduction par une description de la fête hindou rassemblant plus de 15 000 personnes, dans un parc situé au nord-est de Londres en 2001. Cette fête, à laquelle l'archevêque de Canterbury et le prince Charles ont apporté leur bénédiction et où le premier ministre fit un discours saluant la complémentarité du religieux et du national, montre l'intrication des différents processus identitaires. Ils ne sont pas seulement d'ordre religieux mais aussi générationnels, ethniques, nationaux et globaux. La manifestation d'une foi spécifique offre l'opportunité de proclamer un réseau d'appartenances plus complexes, rassemblant Gujaratis et Bengalis, hindous et chrétiens, leaders britanniques et asiatiques. L'un des acteurs de cette fête, un prêtre hindou vient du catholicisme irlandais et sa référence à cette origine est caractéristique d'une nouvelle conscience de soi et d'un nouveau rapport à l'autre. Il est également représentatif de la multiplicité des appartenances et d'une nouvelle condition de l'existence religieuse dans la grande Bretagne contemporaine.

Cette manifestation éclaire le caractère changeant et non exclusif des frontières identitaires qui est développé dans les différentes contributions. Elles sont répertoriées en fonction des groupes religieux considérés mais elles traitent de thèmes transversaux comme religion et identité nationale ou religion et migration. Plusieurs articles mettent l'accent sur les changements auxquels les églises chrétiennes doivent faire face, en raison de la perte du sens d'appartenance à une communauté paroissiale et de la fragmentation des constructions identitaires individuelles et collectives. Le rôle du clergé est conduit à se transformer avec celui des paroisses et à s'adapter aux demandes des fidèles, concernant en particulier l'ordination des femmes et des homosexuels. C'est aussi la déconnexion entre religion majoritaire et identité nationale qui conduit les institutions à une réorientation de leurs activités – le cas de l'église galloise qui se consacre à la préservation de la culture locale – et à une diversification des religiosités, invalidant le paradigme de la sécularisation.

L'articulation entre religion et ethnicité s'exprime de façon visible dans les manifestations – festivals ou parades – organisées par les mouvements chrétiens qui représentent des groupes charismatiques, comme les immigrants caribéens évangélistes, ou des groupes radicalisés, comme les protestants de l'Ordre de l'Orange en Irlande du Nord. Ces mouvements produisent des formes de

spatialisation identitaire à travers le marquage de territoires et la séparation avec l'autre, société majoritaire ou voisins catholiques. Les religions «immigrantes» enfin - islam, hindouisme ou sikhisme – offrent une grande visibilité tout en ayant une influence sur la culture nationale britannique. L'analyse de ces productions identitaires religieuses remet en question le paradigme occidental de la modernité et de sa vision essentialiste de l'autre. Elle met en lumière, au contraire le pluralisme des identités aboutissant à l'émergence d'une sphère publique musulmane, par exemple, comme ce fut le cas au moment de l'affaire Rushdie. La fluidité et l'hétérogénéité des identités religieuses ressort des recherches ethnographiques sur la mobilité des affiliations.

L'intérêt de cette somme réside dans l'effort de déconstruction des catégories, généralement associées au religieux, comme la tradition, l'identité prescriptive ou la mémoire collective. Elle le fait à partir d'analyses localisées des relations complexes entre institutions et formes de religiosité, d'une part, pluralisme culturel et affiliations individuelles, d'autre part, dans un monde globalisé.

ANNIE BENVENISTE
Université Paris 8 Vincennes Saint-Denis et Laboratoire URMIS/CNRS (France)

Dalsgaard, Anne Line. 2004. *Matters of life and longing: Female sterilisation in northern Brazil*. Copenhagen: Museum Tusculanum Press. 253 pp. Pb.: DKK. 275. ISBN: 87 7289 901 8.

In *Matters of life and longing*, Anne Line Dalsgaard explores the role, perception and experience of tubal ligation among poor Brazilian women, situating sterilisation within a context of surviving poverty and seeking a better life. In so doing, Dalsgaard attempts to broaden scholarly approaches to fertility, taking 'into account the fact that giving life (or not) to new human beings acquires meaning from life as already lived' (p. 33). Dalsgaard draws on phenomenologists such as Merleau-Ponty, Schutz and others in establishing recognition as the central theme of her analysis.

The author has taken care to translate her interlocutors' words in a manner that seems to follow very closely the sense of the original Portuguese, not – as is often the temptation – cleaning up idioms or digressions. (A caveat: the use of 'abortion' for *aborto*, a word which – as Dalsgaard mentions – can mean either miscarriage or abortion, seems incautious; it would have been better to leave the word untranslated to emphasise the ambiguities.) As a result, the quotes ring true and, taken in conjunction with her meticulous descriptions of Camaragibe society, do an excellent job of giving the reader, in Susanne Langer's terms, a sense of 'felt life'. Dalsgaard's own constant presence within the text is a further, and intentional, reminder to the reader that her findings come out of her own interactions with the people and place she studied, and were not produced in a vacuum. In line with this aim, Chapter two is an honest and often poignant description of the realities of doing ethnography, as Dalsgaard analyses her own relationships with informants using the same critical eye she later turns on Brazilian social worlds. Chapter three, an ethnographic setting, permits the author to reflect on what home and hometown mean to her subjects: both comfort and limitations.

Chapter four explores why sterilisation has arisen and remains prevalent in the Brazilian context. Brazil's caesarean section rates are some of the highest in the world, as more pregnancies are defined as high risk and as struggling doctors opt to schedule births and earn the higher caesarean fee. One result of this high rate is that sterilisations become 'medically necessary' after three caesarean births. Caesareans also became a common 'cover-up' for elective sterilisations, which were only unmistakably legalised in 1997. It is in this chapter that the real depth of Dalsgaard's analysis appears; she shows how relatively recent transformations in Brazilian society, from rural and agricultural to urban and industrial, meant that high fertility is no longer desirable. In response to these changes, despite the non-existence of a public family planning program or population policy, Brazil's birth rate declined sharply. Far from being pawns of the increasing urbanisation and medicalisation of their society, Brazilian women frequently choose sterilisation as a method of gaining some measure of control over an uncertain world. The women consistently call the operation tubal ligation rather than sterilisation, a linguistic choice which, as Dalsgaard emphasises, paints a woman as still essentially fertile – central to her role as wife, mother and friend.

Chapter five returns to the theoretical anchor of recognition, positing that both caesareans and sterilisations have the effect of making a poor, powerless woman into someone who is worthy of social recognition. Following on this, Chapter seven

situates tubal ligation within the social relations that make up a woman's world, asking what it symbolises to the social network of which a woman is a part. Dalsgaard argues that to be a good mother, a woman must bear only those children she can afford to raise; to be a good daughter, a woman must take care not to impose a severe economic burden on her own mother, who might one day become responsible for the children should the woman remarry.

The author's discussion of politics is somewhat limited (pp. 85–7) which becomes frustrating when it is revealed that many women (nearly one third of Dalsgaard's survey respondents) were able to be sterilised only when a politician paid for or carried out the procedure, ostensibly in exchange for votes (pp. 115–18, 188). This seemingly common act suggests that there is in fact a deep connection between global and national population policy, municipal politics and local sterilisations, and it would have been helpful to see a sharper analysis of these relatively unexamined connections between political capital and the female body. Overall, though, it is a pleasure to read the writing of someone so clearly enthusiastic about her fieldsite and interlocutors, the importance of her research, and the anthropological project more generally.

JESSACA LEINAWEAVER
University of Manitoba (Canada)

Eriksen, Thomas Hylland. 2004. *What is anthropology?* London: Pluto. 180 pp. Hb.: £40.00. ISBN: 0 7453 2320 0. Pb.: £12.99. ISBN: 0 7453 2319 7.

As anthropologists battle to define a place for their discipline and for themselves in a rapidly changing world, one of the ways of doing so is to produce introductory textbooks that aim to explain to the broader public what anthropology is all about. *What is Anthropology?* is an introductory text intended for this purpose. Written by Thomas Hylland Eriksen, and published in Pluto's 'Theory, Culture and Society' series, this little book is intended as an introduction to the topic both for students with no background in anthropology and for laypersons. The book is a product of Eriksen's considerable experience as a teacher (not only in his native Norway, but also in various places around the world where he has lectured in recent years) who is well aware of some misrepresentations and misunderstandings that the discipline confronts almost on a daily basis. As such, its language and arguments can seem deceptively simple; Eriksen tackles some very important issues, but at the same time presents his own idea of what anthropology is all about, with all the risks of being misunderstood and misrepresented himself.

The book is divided in two parts; the first one ('Entrances') presents a general introduction, some key concepts, an outline of the importance of fieldwork, as well as basic ideas of four major 'forefathers' (Boas, Mauss, Malinowski and Radcliffe-Brown). In the second part ('Fields'), Eriksen discusses in some detail reciprocity, kinship, nature, thought and identification — what seem to be the 'core concepts' in his idea of anthropology.

It should be clear from this very brief outline that his presentation will seem very convincing to some, and less to people who disagree with him. For example, why include the 'core concepts' mentioned above and not some others (like politics)? Why not include in greater detail some of the very influential more recent theorists, such as Leach, Geertz or Strathern? It seems obvious that any one of us who teaches history and theory of anthropology will have some other topics or theorists that we believe should find their place in this kind of general text. However, this is first and foremost *an introductory text,* meant to explain certain key terms to a non-specialist. As such, it serves its purpose well, presenting anthropology as a lively and exciting field that deals with many important aspects of contemporary life. Each section also introduces a couple of important theorists and provides a few recommended readings, which helps the general introductory character of the work. The book avoids scholarly jargon, which should make it very accessible.

Some of the minor problems of this type of work are related to its main strength: the level of generalisation. For example, Lévi-Strauss' work *La Pensée sauvage* is referred to through an English translation (from 1966) – even though it is widely recognised today that this translation is extremely bad (bad enough for the translator not to be signed in that edition!). Also, Malinowski certainly did not 'invent' fieldwork (as popular anthropological imagination would have it) – he took to the Trobriand islands the edition of *Notes and Queries* edited by W. H. R. Rivers, with detailed instructions based on Rivers' intensive fieldwork among the Todas in 1901/2 (and was probably also aware of the pioneering efforts by the Russian

geographer, N. N. Mikluho-Maklaj, in Papua New Guinea in 1871/72). Another problem has to do with the publisher's attempt to get the book out as soon as possible, resulting in some inaccuracies: for example, Franz Boas was not born in 1864 (p. 13), but in 1858 (so it would be quite interesting to compare his intellectual trajectory to that of Émile Durkheim, born in the same year)!

However, even with these minor criticisms, this is an important, lucid and highly readable book that certainly serves its purpose in presenting anthropology in a broad and accessible manner for the general public.

ALEKSANDAR BOSKOVIC
Institute of Social Sciences,
Belgrade (Serbia & Montenegro)

Forment, Carlos A. 2003. *Democracy in Latin America 1760–1900: Volume 1, Civic selfhood and public life in Mexico and Peru*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press. xxx + 454 pp. Hb.: $35.00/£24.50. ISBN: 0 226 25715 0.

At the end of this book, Forment states his point boldly: 'the greatest strength and the greatest weakness of democratic life in nineteenth-century Latin America stemmed from a single source: antipolitics, the tendency for citizens to live with their backs toward the state' (pp. 441–2). Forment finds that Latin Americans broke with colonial traditions and built their own democratic habits in the face of poverty, civil war, bureaucracy, and so on. However, these democratic habits were different from those of Europeans and North Americans. New Englanders relied on *doux commerce* to turn private vice into public virtue, French Republicans looked to state governance to turn particular interests into the general will, while Latin Americans drew on but modified the colonial Catholic opposition of egotistical passion and civilised reason. Association was the key to reason, they concluded, and they formed voluntary associations of all kinds. They did so, Forment argues, in civil and economic society, which they were anxious to defend from an authoritarian state. However, because they did so 'with their backs toward the state', Latin Americans left the political terrain to authoritarian governments. This distinguished the Latin American experience from the experience of Europe and North America.

This is itself a provocative argument. But Forment is also quite specific about the periods and regions in which Latin Americans cultivated these democratic habits. To begin with, he focuses this first volume on Mexico and Peru, arguing that associations were more common in Mexico than in Peru. Within each country, rather than focusing on the capital city, he also looks at associations in particular regions. Moreover, he covers a very wide range of associations, ranging from banks to voting clubs, from self-help to community development groups. Crucially, he produces a detailed classification of these, breaking them down into civil society, economic society and political society. This also enables him to compare democratic practices in different periods of the nineteenth century. He argues, for example, that in Mexico there were relatively few associations in political society, but that associational practices in civil and economic society developed up to the 1880s, when they were repressed by President Porfirio Díaz.

In the process, Forment provides an impressive corpus of information about the period. The bulk of this comes from an exhaustive trawl of national and provincial newspapers, across two countries and over a century, for mentions of voluntary associations. Not only does the book have an interesting argument, in other words, but it offers a great deal of fresh information. The author also draws on numerous studies by other scholars, including many regional studies, and gives useful summaries of various bodies of literature.

That said, I did find myself wondering what all this really added up to. To begin with, Forment admits that he focused on the 'vanguard', ignoring the authoritarian 'periphery', and it is difficult to get a sense of how prevalent these democratic habits were. He is also lumping together under the rubric of 'associations' a vast array of organisations, even if he does break these down into different categories. At times he is too keen to play the numbers game, complete with graphs measuring civic spirit. Moreover, he does not always explain how these associations connected with each other, although he does provide some tantalising glimpses. For example, he makes some reference to public debates within particular associations, he discusses the public intellectuals who address national concerns, and he provides a fascinating reference to the 'chain of scribblers' that linked local with national intellectuals. But I would have liked to see him pursue these connections further and to assess whether these associational practices added up to some kind of national civil society. He might have

engaged, for example, with the work of the anthropologist Claudio Lomnitz, who argues that the Mexican public sphere remained highly fragmented in the nineteenth century and that 'public opinion' was conjured out of the air by a handful of national intellectuals and politicians (*Deep Mexico, silent Mexico: An anthropology of nationalism* [University of Minnesota Press, 2001]).

Another doubt concerns the municipal townships that feature heavily in Forment's material and yet are not much considered in his analysis. Are these municipal townships part of the state? Or are they associations – perhaps not voluntary but still associations? He gives many examples of municipal townships working closely with voluntary associations – was this an exception to the politics of antipolitics? It used to be a commonplace that the early modern tradition of urban citizenship was replaced by national citizenship and there are still some scholars who argue this position. Others have disputed this, however. Tamar Herzog, for example, has argued that urban citizenship survived alongside the development of national citizenship in nineteenth-century Spain (*Defining Nations: Immigrants and citizens in early modern Spain and Spanish America* [Yale University Press, 2003]). Given that the Spanish urban tradition was used as a template for New World colonisation, it is possible that this was also true in some areas of Latin America. This is not something that has been much addressed in the literature – Forment offers much pertinent material but he does little with it.

The book should still be of considerable interest to scholars of citizenship and democracy, wherever they work and in whatever period.

TREVOR STACK
University of Aberdeen (UK)

Forte, Maximilian C. 2005. *Ruins of absence, presence of Caribs: (Post)colonial representations of aboriginality in Trinidad and Tobago*. Gainesville: University Press of Florida. xv + 283 pp. Hb. $59.95 ISBN: 0 8130 2828 0.

Indigeneity is an important anthropological topic: conferences are held, papers delivered, positions debated. Part of the reason for this is the growing visibility of people like Amazonian Indians, Maoris, Australian Aborigines and the ranks of North American groups that claim indigenous status and the rights that they say accrue with it. The spread and changing nature of these claims to indigenous status have led to a concern with a political economy of indigeneity that approaches it in a broader frame than that of descent and cultural continuity.

Forte's book is a sustained political economy of indigeneity in unlikely territory, the island Caribbean, where the native population is commonly supposed to have disappeared early in the colonial era. More specifically, Forte is concerned with a set of people who claim indigenous status as Santa Rosa Caribs, centred on Arima, in Trinidad. These people are an interesting case: they cannot be distinguished physically from their neighbours, the most distinctive aspect of their ancestry appears to be links with Spanish-surname settlers, many of their rituals are recently borrowed from groups in Central and North America.

Forte does not aim to adjudicate the indigeneity of these people. Instead, he describes the ways that indigenous people in Trinidad (primarily termed Caribs, fierce and cannibalistic, or Arawak, friendly and non-violent) and in Arima have been understood by others and understand themselves. The records of this understanding begin with Columbus and run through different colonial and national regimes, supplemented by Forte's extended field work and practical involvement with the Santa Rosa Caribs in the years around 2000. A central feature of these understandings is the work of cultural brokers who seek to represent these people to others, in Trinidad and elsewhere.

Forte's question, then, is how the category 'Carib' survived and became associated with a set of people in Arima. The book provides two complementary answers, informed by the same analytical approach. One is concerned with the historical record, in which those identified as indigenous are relatively silent and the processes at work are relatively invisible. The other is concerned with what Fortes studied in the field, where the actors and processes were especially visible.

The details of Forte's answer are too voluminous to present. Broadly, though, the category was shaped over time in different ways that reflected the interests of non-Caribs (Caribs and their descendants being silent in most of the historical record). Early Spanish imperial bans on slavery exempted cannibals: suddenly Caribs (as cannibals) were highly visible. The Catholic Church sought to secure its missions in the area: Caribs disappeared

and good-tempered Arawaks blossomed. Sugar plantations run by the English flourished: Caribs and Arawaks disappeared and African slaves and Indian indentured labourers appeared. Trinidad became independent, and Caribs (as fierce resisters of colonisation) appeared once more. And so on.

This broad-brush history is complemented by Forte's description of cultural brokers from his field research. With this we can see in detail the positions, resources and constraints that shape the way that their representatives present Santa Rosa Caribs to the world. Here, UN declarations and foreign funding meet desires in the tourism industry for profitable attractions, desires in government to provide historical roots for the country and its people, desires of North American indigenous groups to find profitable investment opportunities. The intersections of such forces are mediated through a handful of Carib advocates, concerned for the well-being of their fellows, the success of their cause, their own authority amongst the Santa Rosa Caribs and their relationships with those outside the group.

This book will appeal to two sets of people. One is those interested in indigeneity. They will be attracted by its sustained study of a claim to indigeneity that has attracted little attention. They also will be attracted by its analytical focus, the ways that the existence of the Santa Rosa Caribs springs from the articulation of, on the one hand, the category of indigeneity, and, on the other, the interests and positions of people and institutions in Trinidad and elsewhere. It will also appeal to those concerned with the Caribbean, a region where colonisation and creolisation are central topics, explored in terms of those from Africa, India and Europe. In its specific consideration of Trinidadian Caribs, and in the implications of that case for the rest of the region, this book complicates that academic rendering and alerts Caribbeanists to changes beginning to occur with growing claims to indigeneity by sets of people and by states seeking roots that transcend Columbus's arrival.

JAMES G. CARRIER
Indiana University (US) and Oxford Brookes University (UK)

Gibson, Thomas. 2005. *And the sun pursued the moon: Symbolic knowledge and traditional authority among the Makassar*. Honolulu: University of Hawai'i Press. xi + 262 pp. Hb.: $52.00. ISBN: 0 8248 2865 8.

This book about various sources of knowledge in South Sulawesi, today a province of the Indonesian nation state, is designed as a historical and comparative work. Drawing partly on his earlier research on the Philippines and on his comparisons of Austronesian societies, Thomas Gibson finds that a 'cosmology of the Java sea' is still traceable in today's mythologies and rituals of local societies in this area. After identifiying these earliest traces in the myths of South Sulawesi, especially in the southeastern tip of the province where he conducted field research in the late 1980s, Gibson advances chronologically by examining the influence of regional and global powers on origin myths as well as on royal and life-cycle rituals of the Makassar and Bugis of South Sulawesi. Accordingly, he develops a picture of manifold symbolic connections in the region, starting with the era of the regional empires of Sumatra and Java (seventh to fifteenth centuries) up to the emergence of global powers and modern institutions through European colonialism, and Islamic and Nationalist modernism. In short, this book is a great endeavour of disentangling the diverse layers of meaning prevalent in South Sulawesi's symbolic realm.

Theoretically Gibson is concerned with a particular question prominent in cognitive anthropology, i.e. to what extent symbolic systems account for unequal power relations in hierarchical societies; when symbols strike the path 'from cognition to ideology', as Maurice Bloch put it. Gibson is also engaged in a critical dialogue with that author. For him, Bloch too easily judges rituals as manifestations of ideological domination. In order to distance himself from such a view Gibson develops a concept which he calls 'symbolic knowledge', as distinguished from practical and ideological knowledge. Whereas practical knowledge is mainly non-linguistic and acquired through bodily engagement in everyday life (learning a trade, for example), symbolic knowledge reaches from the most embodied forms like ritual and oral myths to explicit forms such as written documents. Ideological knowledge, in turn, is only 'the use of symbolic knowledge to acquire and maintain power' (p. 21). Gibson's argument rests primarily on his analysis of the rituals of the local, disempowered nobility he could witness during his fieldwork. In fact, the families concerned still conduct their rituals, often in a very private manner. Obviously this practice is difficult to interpret as an

effort to manifest or legitimate political authority. For Gibson, this reveals that rituals contain more than strategies of power: in particular, their function is more comprehensive in providing symbols for negotiating one's way in the world, being part of what he calls symbolic knowledge.

In what I consider the book's second major argument, Gibson claims that this complex, broad symbolic system comprises 'competing ideal models' of regional political authority. He detects six models of this kind, which he sees as coexisting to this day. They correspond to the six periods in the history of South Sulawesi analysed by the author. Although he promises the reader that he will cover the role of Islam in South Sulawesi more closely in another publication, he nevertheless also identifies six 'Islamic models of political authority'. Indeed, Islam is treated a bit halfheartedly in this book. Yet Gibson's final attempt to relate the ideal models of authority based on local and regional traditions with those Islamic models brings another tradition to the fore which is of no less importance for the predominantly Islamic population of South Sulawesi, especially when it comes to their life cycle rituals.

This book is highly informative and rich in textual and ethnographic material concerning the history of the symbolic realm of South Sulawesi. It is a detailed account of what we might call, following Appadurai, the 'ideological flows' crisscrossing this region over the course of time. In turn, Gibson's broad concept of 'symbolic knowledge' is debatable and – along with his critique of the work of prominent cognitive anthropologists – will hopefully give rise to interesting discussions in the field.

MARTIN SLAMA
Commission for Social Anthropology, Austrian Academy of Sciences (Austria)

Kalipeni, Ezekiel, Susan Craddock, Joseph R. Oppong and Jayati Ghosh (eds.). 2004. *HIV and AIDS in Africa: Beyond epidemiology*. Malden, MA: Blackwell. xviii + 398 pp. Pb.: $29.95. ISBN: 0 631 22357 6.

HIV and AIDS in Africa: Beyond epidemiology is a comprehensive examination of the AIDS crisis in Africa. With contributing authors ranging in disciplines, including medicine, demography, sociology, anthropology and epidemiology, the book is able to cover a vast array of topics that have been previously neglected in academic discourses. The first section of the volume provides a brief history of the disease in Africa with contributions from Brooke Grundfest Schoepf and John Lloyd Lwanda. The following section, offering a regional overview, includes articles by several of the editors discussing HIV/AIDS in Eastern, Southern and West Africa. In the third section, 'Social Issues', Anne V. Akeroyd offers an insightful article concerning occupational factors pertinent to the transmission of HIV/AIDS. Also in this section is an informative article concerning the roles of the IMF and World Bank, written by Peter Lurie, Percy C. Hintzen and Robert A. Lowe. In the fourth section, research methods, ethics and agendas are explored by Mike Kesby, Carolyn Baylies and Susan Craddock. The final section is placed appropriately as it deals with the repercussions and impact of AIDS. Noerine Kaleeba's article captures the trauma left by the AIDS virus, while David Eaton's article explains how AIDS is understood in public lives. Jayati Ghosh, Ezekiel Kalipeni and Emma Guest conclude the volume with articles on the growing problem of AIDS orphans. Using the unique perspectives and backgrounds of the contributing authors, the editors have successfully demonstrated that HIV/AIDS must be approached in a multidisciplinary fashion in order to understand and eventually stem the spread of this epidemic.

The scope of the book looks beyond the biology of HIV/AIDS and focuses instead on human patterns and interactions in order to understand the increase of the disease's prevalence. Through this holistic approach, HIV/AIDS is understood as not only a medical and biological phenomenon but also as an entity that is contracted and sustained through cultural conditions, values and subsequently societal behaviour. By avoiding a purely scientific approach to the study of the disease many popular medical beliefs are dispelled, including racist stereotyping asserting that Africans have 'created' the HIV/AIDS crisis through promiscuity and/or ignorance. Most importantly the editors of this volume counter the theory that people need only to be 'more informed' in order to protect themselves from infection.

This book also contradicts the popular medical ideology, which attributes the spread of AIDS to 'risk groups', namely migrant workers and prostitutes, and instead demonstrates the susceptibility that all Africans face due to

conditions of extreme poverty. Through an extensive discussion of colonialism, globalisation and Structural Adjustment Programmes, the editors highlight the role the Western world has played in the predicament exhibited in Africa today.

Lending itself to the discipline of anthropology, the book focuses at length on cultural values in Africa. Its contributors have thoroughly described popular African media messages, religious ideologies and myths circulating in African cultures. Gender inequalities are also explored, as are the common issues that arise in relationships among both adolescents and adults. Specifically, the use of sex as a bargaining tool, or as an economic survival strategy is discussed in terms of its relevance to the spread of HIV. The book clearly outlines the disadvantages women face due to their secondary place in many African cultures by providing substantial material concerning the 'feminisation of poverty', a condition currently pervading in Africa. While this volume offers some insight into prostitution, details of commercial sex work and the regulation thereof, particularly in regions of Africa where it is legal, is somewhat sparse.

What is refreshing in regard to this work is that the editors have taken both an academic and personal approach in their attempts to grasp the influence of this epidemic. With excerpts from personal journals, poetry, and the commentary on the potential impact that AIDS will have upon Africa, this academic book can be called both humanistic and sincere. As the editors explicitly state, the research agenda on HIV/AIDS needs to be shifted away from 'sexual behaviour'. Both politicians and policymakers alike need to adopt the view that individuals are knowledgeable concerning the disease yet unable to protect themselves because of social or economic disadvantages. The message of this volume is that those most affected by AIDS need to be considered in both research and prevention and treatment: the authors state that grassroots movements may be integral to coping with the disease since they are formed from the 'bottom up' by the individuals whom AIDS affects most. In conclusion, this volume successfully condenses a plethora of information while at the same time including feasible recommendations to a burgeoning crisis that deserves far more attention from the international community.

LINDSAY REBECCA SPRAGUE
The Queen's University Belfast (UK)

Komter, Aafke E. 2005. *Social solidarity and the gift*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. xi + 234 pp. Hb.: £40.00/$65.00. ISBN: 0 521 84100 3. Pb.: £14.99/$23.99. ISBN: 0 521 60084 7.

Halfway through Martin Amis' novel *London fields* (London: Vintage, 1999) one of the main players, Guy Clinch (a good guy, we are told – or a nice one, anyway), helps a blind man cross the street only to have something strange happen: at the far kerb the blind man taps his way towards the nearest wall and dips his head and weeps. Guy hastily offers further help, but is ignored and dithers in a rising panic as passers-by reproach him. Confused and embarrassed, he slinks off home. Later that day, recovered, he recalls something he has read somewhere – the story of the anthropologist and the starving tribe (most likely a reference to Colin Turnbull's *The mountain people*) and of the tears prompted by a fleeting kindness the visitor shows to an old woman:

> The present seemed perfectly bearable – indeed, hilarious – until you felt again what it was like when people were kind. Then the present was bearable no longer. So the old woman wept. So the blind man wept. They can take it, so long as *no one* is kind. (Amis 1999: 222)

There's gratitude for you.

What is it then, to be kind? This is the question Aafke Komter sets out to answer in *Social solidarity and the gift*. Kindness signifies commonality and also generosity, and the book is a study of both; Komter is especially interested in the ways in which commonality and generosity cross tracks, coalesce and fortify one another. The book is interdisciplinary in intent, seeking to bring together sociological and anthropological theory (on solidarity and the gift respectively) into a productive synthesis. Although much of the book has been published elsewhere, piecemeal – in various journals and edited collections – this material has been brought together with the purpose of creating a whole greater than the sum of its parts, and Komter is successful in this: the book is of a piece and coherent. Chapters are set within a cumulative, three-part structure, as follows: Part I focuses on the meanings, motives and patterns of gift exchange; in Part II theories of gift giving and solidarity are brought together; Part III considers changes in contemporary solidarity prompted by processes of individualisation, diversification and globalisation.

Social solidarity and the gift is a book of categories (kinds) and models; types – of giving, of commonality, of motives for either – are identified throughout. Early on, Komter outlines a four-fold model of the basic forms of human relations, in which the following (psychological) motivations are at work: community sharing – relations of equivalence in group membership; authority ranking – relations of inequality and asymmetry; equality matching – egalitarian relationships between peers; and market pricing – relationships informed by rational choice and utility considerations. These, it is suggested, can be recognised in motives for giving. This scheme provides a framework for much that follows, and is combined with basic dimensions of commonality as the book builds towards a theoretical model of solidarity, set out diagrammatically in the final pages. Here Komter identifies a movement (in 'contemporary', 'Western' societies) away from organic solidarity and towards a 'segmented' solidarity in which volantariness replaces necessity and mutual dependency. These are grand themes, yet the book is best described as modest, in both tone and content. The language is spare – and consequently elegant; the argument careful and reasonable; the overall approach 'analytical rather than normative . . . meant as a tool to understand why solidarity takes different forms . . . [and not] as a signpost for future solidarity' (p. 12).

Although the book aims at an interdisciplinary understanding, it rather more presumes an anthropologically uninformed readership than a sociologically uninformed one; much of the anthropology is elementary, in both senses – foundational and unelaborated. It is not a book that brings a depth of ethnographic material to the issues under discussion. Where I found the book too modest – limited, really – was in its treatment of the 'negatives' of reciprocity, the exclusions and hurt that kindnesses can bring about and do (such as Guy Clinch encounters). Komter is undoubtedly sensitive to the negative complexities of solidarity and gift-giving, but these are more often noted than elaborated on. Nonetheless, *Social solidarity and the gift* is a thoughtful exploration of where it is that kindness gets you, and will be of use and interest to a wide social scientific audience, if less so to a particular, anthropological one.

TOM HALL
Cardiff University (UK)

Lee, Richard B. and Richard Daly (eds.). 2005. *The Cambridge encyclopedia of hunters and gatherers*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press. xxiv + 511 pp. Pb.: £24.99/$34.99. ISBN: 0 521 60919 4.

This exhaustive volume celebrates the history, culture and resilience of hunter-gatherer peoples around the world. The editors, Lee and Daly, refer to this encyclopaedia as an 'experiment in international anthropological cooperation' (p. xix), and with contributions from eighty-eight anthropologists in the field of hunter-gatherer studies, including such luminaries as Nurit Bird-David, Tim Ingold, Harvey Feit, Laura Rival, Jane Goodale, Alan Barnard and Howard Morphy, their experiment has indeed been a success. The encyclopaedia is split into two broad sections. Part I ('Ethnographies') divides the world into seven geographical regions: North America, South America, North Eurasia, Africa, South Asia, Southeast Asia, and Australia. Part II ('Special topic essays') examines hunter-gatherer life under three headings: Hunter-gatherers, history and social theory; Facets of hunter-gatherer life in cross-cultural perspective; and Hunter-gatherers in a global world.

Part I of the encyclopaedia provides an introduction to many of the world's hunter-gatherer peoples, both those who continue to practise a hunter-gatherer way of life, and those who did so until the recent past. Each section begins with a general anthropological introduction to the region, followed by a chapter on each region's archaeology. Some of these introductions explore hunter-gatherer groups within the social and historical context of that particular region more generally, while others merely summarise the ethnographic descriptions of the ethnographies that follow. The archaeological chapters, while fascinating to read, at times seem misplaced, as they explore the pre-histories of peoples who may or may not have any link to the contemporary hunter-gatherers discussed throughout the remainder of the volume. For each region, there then follow chapters on individual hunter-gatherer groups. Each of these follows the same pattern, providing introductions to history, ecological setting, economy, kinship, politics, religion, current situation and organisation for resistance. Each chapter concludes with a reading list, and some chapters also include a film list.

These ethnographies provide a general introduction to some of the world's contemporary hunter-gatherer peoples, and reflect more general

regional interests. For example, the South America section concerns itself with the subtle distinctions between hunter-gatherers and horticulturalists, while much of the African section reflects an ecological approach to hunter-gatherer studies. This part of the encyclopaedia reveals the variation in colonial encounters and the variety of ways hunter-gatherers have dealt with these. The second part of the encyclopaedia steps away from these individual case studies, to explore issues of hunter-gatherer life more generally. There are essays on such topics as sociality, the myth of the market, gender, ecological knowledge, shamanism, music, art, health, the colonial encounter, nation states and indigenous rights. Each of these essays explores the many similarities amongst the world's hunter-gathers, reflecting on past and continuing colonial experience, and celebrating the on-going resilience and strength of hunter-gatherer peoples worldwide.

As a general introduction to the field of hunter-gatherer studies, this encyclopaedia is an invaluable resource. Each chapter contains extensive reading lists to guide the general student towards further studies. The introduction to the volume (pp. 1–19) is incomparable. It presents hunter-gatherer life in an unbiased manner, highlighting both positive and negative aspects of contemporary hunter-gatherers cross-culturally, neither idealising nor romanticising their experience or world-view. This introduction alone would be an excellent resource for undergraduate anthropology students. The encyclopaedia in general avoids victimising hunter-gatherers; instead, it emphasises their continued struggles to maintain cultural integrity in the face of continuing global challenges.

The choice of hunter-gatherer groups included at times seems arbitrary, and perhaps reflects the availability of authors willing to contribute to the encyclopaedia rather than the presence of hunter-gatherers in a given region. This leads to some parts of the world receiving more coverage than others. In a small number of cases the ethnographic material is dated, with authors acknowledging that the ethnographic present is, for example, the 1930s (Chukchi and Siberian Yupik) or the 1970s (Aka Pygmies). Much has changed for hunter-gatherers in the past few decades, and this paucity of up-to-date information on such issues as settlement or subsistence patterns reduces the impact of these chapters. A few special topic essays also fail to deal with more recent phenomena, such as the decline in hunter-gatherer health that has resulted from lifestyle and dietary changes. Even in the six years since the publication of the original hardback edition of the encyclopaedia hunter-gatherers have seen many changes in their lives, and I look forward to a second, up-dated edition.

This extensive piece of work, containing 128 illustrations and sixteen maps, is a must for any anthropological bookshelf, providing an introduction to specific hunter-gatherer groups, and presenting some of the most recent ideas in hunter-gatherer studies.

MARTINA TYRRELL
University of Aberdeen (UK)

Matory, J. Lorand. 2005. *Black Atlantic religion: Tradition, transnationalism, and matriarchy in the Afro-Brazilian Candomblé*. Princeton: Princeton University Press. 376 pp. Hb.: $60.00/£38.95. ISBN: 0 691 05943 8. Pb.: $26.95/£17.50. ISBN: 0 691 05944 6.

At one point in his study *Black Atlantic religion: Tradition, transnationalism and matriarchy in the Afro-Brazilian candomblé*, J. Lorand Matory presents himself to his readership as a 'son' of Ogum, the god of war and iron: 'He rules my head and molds my personality. He makes me strong like steel. Because of him, I am a pathbreaker, ever ready to invent or organise something new, to look at things in a new way. I detest administrative duties and the excessive quotation of classics. Let me see and judge with my own eyes' (p. 246). So who knows – maybe the radicalism underlying this historical ethnography is not the result of Matory's training at the anthropology department of the University of Chicago (always described to me as a place where one learns how 'to throw one's weight around'), or due to the author's evident engagement with issues of identity politics (as understood and articulated in the USA).

Whatever the reasons, the fact is that *Black Atlantic religion* does not offer a fine-tuning of existing understandings of the forces that have shaped candomblé in its present form. There are no cautious additions to the research findings of other scholars in this field, and no polite invitations to consider a complementary perspective.

Instead, Matory makes a point of offering radical revisions. He does so with verve, and one cannot but be impressed with the audacity of a single mind

that sets out to cover the vast expanses of the Black Atlantic, charting a long history of translocal dialogues between West Africa, Brazil and the Caribbean. Moreover, research findings are used to redirect pretty much *all* the major debates in candomblé studies (and beyond). Whether it is the discussion about the emergence of the characteristic stress on 'purity' in cultural self-representations of candomblé's dominant 'Nagô' tradition; the issue of female leadership in the candomblé temples; the debate about the continuous presence of non-African spirits such as *caboclos* in a cult that publicly seeks to restore its African make-up; or the links of candomblé with the nationalist and regionalist politicians in Bahia; Matory claims that it all has been misconceptualised and misunderstood and steps in to set things right.

Doing so, in Matory's view, means first and foremost acknowledging black agency as the prime force in the formation of present day candomblé. The author fiercely opposes studies *à la* Herskovits, in which cultists are mindlessly acting out the religious scripts of African origin for no other reason than that these scripts have survived in the Americas. He is equally dismissive of the seminal work of Beatriz Góis Dantas (and other 'deconstructionists'), which – so Matory claims – suggests that cultists are merely enacting the scripts of nationalist politicians and intellectuals who needed black bodies to embody their dream of Brazilian miscegenation. What these authors all failed to recognise is the commitment and capacity of a black itinerant merchant elite that travelled back and forth between Bahia and the African West Coast, and managed to capture the imagination of the community of believers in Bahia with visions of a 'Yoruba renaissance' taking place in distant Lagos, and thus offered alternative, African-centred models of self-making. This particular understanding of black agency in the formation of candomblé leads to the second major revision Matory seeks to establish: the acknowledgement that candomblé as we know it today is less a product of 'place' than of 'translocal' dialogues.

I agree with Matory that both black agency and translocality merit more attention in candomblé studies. I do not see, however, why we should give primacy to these factors over issues of 'place', or the involvement of white politicians in the candomblé universe. A complementary approach, that does justice to the important work done by others, certainly is to be preferred to Matory's self-proclaimed and somewhat coquettish controversiality. Moreover, the author seems to be so keen on 'inventing something new' that at times one suspects his data have been put under a lot of pressure to make his argument stick. For instance, the scale and intensity of a nineteenth-century 'translocal dialogue' between Bahia and the coast of West Africa is never substantiated beyond a number of individual travellers, which leaves many questions to be answered as to how the dissemination of the 'Yoruba renaissance' took place beyond these priestly conversations. Equally problematic is the fact that the candomblé discussed by Matory is in fact a very particular segment of a widely heterogeneous field – and whereas some temples are certainly engaged in translocal dialogue, others are first and foremost oriented toward issues of 'place'.

All of this is not to say that I have not learned a lot from this study. I have. And I'm sure that in my further writings on candomblé I'll be always curious to know what the son of Ogum had to say on this or that issue.

MATTIJS VAN DE PORT
University of Amsterdam (The Netherlands)

Niezen, Ronald. 2004. *A world beyond difference: Cultural identity in the age of Globalization*. Oxford: Blackwell. xii + 225 pp. Hb.: £50.00. ISBN: 1 4051 2737 6. Pb.: £14.99. ISBN: 1 4051 2690 6.

This volume is a thought-provoking, intellectually exciting analysis of the quest for a global borderless society. Usually globalisation is associated with science, technology and speed in communication and the process of bringing American cultural products such as Microsoft and CNN to marginalised societies in rural locations. Niezen suggests that globalisation, like culture, is a 'potpourri of intangibles that constitute identity and way of life' (p. 35). Globalisation represents the invention of a tradition that is universal and cosmopolitan.

There are many tensions inherent in the construction of a global identity: for example, between cultural univeralism and particularism. However, such oppositions should not be regarded as stark contrasts or dichotomies as they frequently draw inspiration from one another. This book considers conflicts inherent in intellectual streams of thought such as human rights and postmodern movements. As an anthropologist, one of the most interesting dimensions of the book for me is

Niezen's ethnographic analysis of societies that re-assert traditional identities using the tools of universality.

Cultures, and in particular traditional cultures, have been perceived as rooted in a particular place. The locality was of primary importance and one's culture could only be authentically experienced in a home context. There was and is a presumption of dichotomy between tradition and modernity, between old-fashioned lifestyles and modern technology which feeds the general impression that ultimately globalisation and modern technology will eliminate traditional languages and cultures. Many prophets of doom insist that satellite television and computers homogenise and Americanise traditional cultures and spread the use of English among non-English-speaking populations.

Yet Niezen's analysis suggests that this is not necessarily the case. His ethnographic examples focus on the activities of a Muslim reform movement in West Africa and the use of technology by groups such as the Crees in Northern Canada or the Sámi in Northern Europe. Many traditional communities have begun to appreciate the potential benefit of modern technology for the communication of their culture, which is no longer confined to a particular location. For example, the growth of a feeling of community among Sámis in the Arctic Circle has been made possible through technological innovations. In particular, the use of radio has overcome physical distances and borders in a new way. Radio has provided a new and international tool for the communication of Sámi culture and protects it against the overwhelming force of other Scandinavian and international cultures.

In contemporary times, many traditional societies have become idealised. Unrelated indigenous groups in different continents appeal to a collective identity which is part of a global movement for the protection of traditional native communities. These indigenous communities appeal to international law to protect them from further marginalisation by state-nations. The extent of this global movement can be discerned from a sample of non-governmental organisation such as the Native American Rights Fund, the Grand Council of the Crees, the Innuit Circumpolar Conference, the Russian Association of Indigenous Peoples of the North and the Sámi Council.

In his analysis of the James Bay Crees, Niezen explores their increasing use of computer technology for traditional language preservation. The James Bay Crees have developed a cultural programme that includes the promotion of indigenous language on the Internet. In response to the challenges posed by the dominance of English and French in Quebec, the Cree Regional Authority has developed a Cree Cultural Institute which is devoted to language preservation. One of its more significant initiatives has been the cultivation of computing resources which facilitate the Cree syllabic alphabet.

While there are growing indications that a cosmopolitan society is emerging, there is a counter-cultural trend towards communities that seek self-definition and self-determination. Dreams of a perfect society invariably encounter resistance from those who consider their own way of life as almost perfect. While concepts such as liberation are regarded as universally desirable, how does this accommodate societies that ignore principles of individual dignity or freedom? How can one 'impose' the concept of freedom on other groups without moral compromise? How can one imagine a global borderless society that is composed of groups that loosely combine cultural and political self-determination?

This book poses questions rather than providing answers. It examines many inherent complexities in the globalisation process and alerts the reader to cultural and counter-cultural trends that enhance one another. It suggests that instead of obliterating particularism, universalism is re-defining it. But the reverse is also true and particularism is also impacting on universalism. The author presents many inspired, thought-provoking challenges to the reader and one cannot but be impressed by the logic of his arguments.

MÁIRÉAD NIC CRAITH
University of Ulster (UK)

Poluha, Eva. 2004. *The power of continuity: Ethiopia through the eyes of its children*. Uppsala: Nordiska Afrikainstitutet. 217 pp. Pb.: 270 SEK/27.00 €/ £18.95/$32.50. ISBN: 91 7106 535 0.

Instead of analysing processes of social change, as is usual, Poluha, a Nordic social anthropologist, investigates (the power of) continuity in Ethiopia in her interesting new book. The book, she says, is 'an attempt to identify and understand mechanisms that promote continuity and change in a hierarchical

society' (p. 13). It is, unfortunately, not attractive to study continuity, she says, because development is generally considered as positive change, while continuity is 'thought of in negative terms, referring to conditions in the past'. Her monograph relies heavily on the concepts of cultural cognition, cultural schemas, power and discourse (pp. 17–18) and is clearly inspired by the theoretical work of Strauss and Quinn, who in turn have interpreted Bourdieu's concepts of cultural capital and habitus in quite innovative ways. Poluha has done extensive fieldwork in Addis Abeba, mainly through participant observation and discourse analysis, and her monograph indeed represents an important contribution to youth research in school class contexts. Her monograph is very descriptive and detailed as she quotes the young informants at length, and this style of writing and the structure of the book gives the reader a lively and intricate impression of the field but, unfortunately, not as strong an insight into the theoretical framework of the study.

Poluha is, in accordance with postmodern research methods, very present and subjective in her own fieldwork. She refers to different kinds of expected and unexpected problems and barriers in her daily communication with the Ethiopian children and their teachers at school. Her discussions on the subject of social and political hierarchies in the Ethiopian society are very elaborated and stimulating, but they refer rather uncritically to a Swedish/Nordic ideal of equality, which is definitely not an explicit aim in other regions of the world. The Swedish model is not more 'natural' than the Ethiopian, even if it is more developed and democratic from a Western point of view. Poluha is courageous and she engages herself in the life of her informants, for example she supports a young girl's revolt against the conservative discriminating rules of the Ethiopian school and society. It is interesting to follow the fieldworker's idealistic work, but as anthropologists we know that societies should be understood on their own terms (Fredrik Barth); cultural patterns should be put in context in order to avoid narrow etic conclusions. This point doesn't make Poluha's strong efforts in the field less valuable, but she should, I believe, be more reflexive about the implication of her cultural background in the judgement of Ethiopian hierarchical systems.

Be that as it may, this monograph is gracefully written and methodologically thorough. Poluha manages convincingly to present the complex relation between political/cultural continuity and change of regimes and formal political ideologies. Students and researchers of Ethiopian and East African studies have got an important monograph with new scientific perspectives on children's role in the political development of societies in Poluha's book, which is provocative and ambitious, and which strongly propagates the value of democratic traditions: 'when there is a system which, even if hierarchical, allows for discussion and the spread of information, and there are secure and predictable rules of the game, these circumstances can only be seen as preconditions which make change possible, in Ehiopia and elsewhere' (p. 202). Poluha uses children as a window onto the hierarchical relations of society. The hierarchical system is sub/superordination, she says, based on gender, age and social status. Poluha has the individual in focus: 'Change perpetually occurs in individuals who all have their own personalities and do change as a result of their experiences' (p. 197). I like the book because it not only describes the context (society and culture), but also gives possible answers to fundamental questions regarding social continuity and change. Poluha says that the power of continuity is so strong that change is, in Ethiopia and many other countries 'an exception rather than a rule' (p. 202). Children reproduce the dominant Ethiopian cultural schema (p. 24). Egalitarianism is therefore not easily introduced in Ethiopia – at least not egalitarianism in our 'modern democratic state' definition of the concept. Continuity of hierarchical traditions is stronger. Poluha's book shows us how important it is to take the younger generations into consideration in this discussion – a group too often forgotten or ignored in fieldwork.

FIROUZ GAINI
University of the Faroe Islands (Faroe Islands)

Salemink, Oscar. 2003. *The ethnography of Vietnam's central highlanders: A historical contextualisation, 1850–1900*. London and New York: Routledge Curzon. xxviii + 383 pp. Hb.: £70.00. ISBN: 0 7007 1570 3.

When Salemink studied anthropology in the 1980s the recent history of Vietnam was still a topic that aroused considerable interest. Dissatisfied with the way Marxist analysis dealt with ethnic minorities he decided that he wanted to study that issue in Vietnam. He wrote a masters thesis on the French

ethnography of the Central Highlands, studied Vietnamese in Hanoi and started a Ph.D. project in 1989. His original research was expanded to embrace archival sources and interviews with key informants in the US as well as in Vietnam. It resulted in a number of articles in edited volumes and journals that formed the basis for his doctoral dissertation defended at the University of Amsterdam in 1999. In the meantime he had become Ford Foundation Program Officer in Vietnam.

Although it is not unusual in the Netherlands to be awarded a Ph.D. degree for a collection of separately published articles, Salemink rewrote his material and presented it as consecutive chapters. Admittedly he was hard-pressed for time and as the present book appears to be an almost unchanged version of his Ph.D. thesis this may explain a certain amount of unnecessary repetition as well as minor deficiencies in the bibliography and some surprising omissions in the index. It is a pity that the publishers did not provide more editorial assistance which would have resulted in a better book. Indicative of their negligence is that on the cover the period dealt with is 1850–1900, whereas this should have been 1850–1990!

The book consists of a number of case studies of how at various times typical ethnographic discourses were generated and used. For Salemink these cover almost any kind of knowledge or practice used by outsiders who wanted to dominate the inhabitants of the Central Highlands. They were designated Montagnards by late colonial French and US scholars, a term which is also often used by Salemink, although their language and culture are far from homogeneous. However, in practice his description was limited by access to existing records and secondary sources, supplemented by interviews with surviving 'ethnographers' and some oral history research among their subjects. As a result, his study is biased towards the production of conventional ethnographies, be it in the encyclopaedic 'manners and customs' genre, or as customary law manuals for colonial officers, or accounts inspired by theoretical notions of academic anthropology. Their reception and use receive much less attention. For instance, when writing about reports of the École Française d'Extrême-Orient Salemink notes that 'records on the practical use of the ethnographic reports, and their impact on the perception of the Montagnards are lacking' (p. 86). It is also unknown to what extent officials used ethnographic notes of Catholic missionaries, although Salemink believes that this was a case of 'unconscious transfer of knowledge' (p. 50).

If Salemink had expanded his timeframe to include the relation between ethnography and the current Ford Foundation aims in upland Vietnnam his analysis could have become reflexive in an interesting way. According to its website (consulted 01/05/05), 'In the Ford Foundation's experience the most effective approach to reduce poverty and disadvantage is to find ways that individuals and household can acquire [,] protect or improve assets.' One way to do so is to focus on 'marketing systems that efficiently transform the goods and services of the uplands into jobs and money'. However, Salemink's own analysis of the present government's sedentarisation programme suggests that this strategy is doomed to failure. It certainly does not contribute to his avowed ideal of 'the opening up and democratization of the anthropological discipline' (p. xvi).

When it comes to making theoretical sense of his findings Salemink positions himself in the tradition of critical anthropology developed by Scholte and Fabian, and jointly with Pels applied by him to the history of anthropology in relation to colonialism. The high level of abstraction which characterises their argument may be appropriate in an introduction to a set of conference papers, but appears less useful when Salemink reduces 140 years of ethnography of the Central Highlands to 'an ongoing struggle for hegemony between evolutionist and relativist perspectives' (p. xv). This kind of analysis runs the risk of having to be qualified by a detailed and subtle historical contextualisation to such an extent that its claims become unconvincing. However, it is a merit of this book that Salemink provides abundant evidence to enable one to come to such a critical conclusion.

JAN J. DE WOLF
Utrecht University (The Netherlands)

Stewart, Pamela J. and Andrew Strathern (eds.). 2005. *Contesting rituals: Islam and practices of identity-making*. Durham, NC: Carolina University Press. xx + 239 pp. Pb. $30.00. ISBN: 1 594600 077 5.

Contesting rituals is a collection of essays documenting the importance of ritual for practising

Muslims. This focus on 'ritual' provides a very wide umbrella under which the contributions – which differ greatly in concern, scope, and style – find their place. As the title suggests, one theme that runs through several of the volume's chapters is controversy over the proper performance of certain rituals, particularly with regard to the role of women as religious actors. Many of the contributions offer interesting insights into aspects of Muslim religious practice, their situatedness in wider social contexts, and change over time. But while this editorial policy has the merit of showing the great variety of 'ritual' practices in the Islamic tradition, this wide focus is also the chief limitation of the volume. Although the editors cite an interest in gender issues and Sufism in their brief introduction, the volume lacks a more sharply defined unifying theme or problematic. The down-side of using ritual as a broad thematic umbrella is that it retains little analytical value: it remains unclear what distinguishes ritual from other forms of practice. For me, this lack of a more clearly defined project, which would tie the individual contributions together, makes *Contesting Rituals* at times a less than satisfying reading experience, despite the quality of many of the volume's chapters.

In the opening chapter, which is also one of the volume's strongest contributions, Kelly Pemberton examines the role of women as spiritual guides at two Indian shrines associated with Sufi saints. She shows that although their role is limited by formal legal (*shari'a*) injunctions prohibiting women from becoming Sufi *pir*s (or *sheik*s) themselves, they can play active and creative roles in the administration of ritual practice and spiritual guidance of devotees. This active role itself is dependent both on the mobilisation of the women's social status and association with male religious authority (notably of husbands and sons), and on the flexible interpretation of restrictions to female religious practice.

In another highlight of the volume, Susan Rasmussen examines the changing character of *albaraka* (blessing power) among Tuareg herbalists and Marabouts in Niger. Rasmussen's complex and ambitious study shows how the changing socio-political dynamics in Niger, which over the past decades have undermined many of the social arrangements that had stabilised traditional forms of *albaraka* power, have led to new ways in which *albaraka* is evoked and exercised. For instance, Rasmussen notes that while '[m]ale medico-ritual healer's *albaraka* is becoming more politicised in nation-state level violence . . . female specialists' *albaraka* is becoming more "hygienically" based' (p. 97). The chapter by Alaine Hutson offers a further study of African Islam, examining the limited but nevertheless changing space available for women to participate in Sufi Muslim practices in Kano, Northern Nigeria. Hutson shows that during the twentieth century a number of female practitioners have successfully challenged the exclusion of women from active participation in Sufi orders. According to the author, a crucial role in this opening was played by the recurring visits of foreign Muslim women who held the title of *shaykha* (female sheikh) and alerted both men and women to the possibility of a more active role for women practitioners.

Anna Gade's chapter on Qur'an recitation competitions in Indonesia documents one of the most striking features of the global Muslim revival movement of the past decades. As in Muslim majority countries, in Indonesia a nation-wide system of Qur'an recitation has emerged that has galvanised a growing audience, a hierarchy of experts, and performers. Gade's paper shows how the tournament system has become a venue in which practitioners can self-consciously cultivate – and are urged to cultivate – a long-term engagement with Qur'anic recitation as a form of religious practice. As Gade also shows, however, the format of the competition, which requires practitioners to become highly professional in their approach to Qur'anic recitation, makes them open to the charge of practising 'for the competition' rather than for the merit of the recitation itself.

Sean Robert documents the crucial role ritual performance has acquired in the nationalist project of the Uyghur, a stateless group living in the Kazakhstan–China borderland. Drawing on a variety of influences (Muslim, Soviet and other), Robert shows how these ritual performances provide the only space in which a Uyghur nation comes fleetingly but recurrently into existence. Shampa and Sanjoy Mazumdar's chapter is concerned with the importance of religious ritual in the endeavours of Muslim immigrants to California to create Muslim homes. They show that in the context of immigration, where public spaces for the affirmation of shared religious commitment are largely absent, the domestic as a site for religious practice, and as a protected sphere of continual affirmation of Muslim commitment, acquires particular importance. In the closing chapter of the volume, Liyakat Takin discusses Shi'i practices associated with visiting shrines of the imams. He ague s that the practices associated with the

pilgrimage are an amalgamation of diverse origin and function with a wide range of effects and implications. Among the most salient of these effects are the drawing of sectarian borders and, conversely, the affirmation of Shi'i historical narratives and social solidarity.

HEIKO HENKEL
The University of British Columbia (Canada)

Tsing, Anna Lowenhaupt. 2004. *Friction: An ethnography of global connection*. Princeton, New Jersey: Princeton University Press. 376 pp. Hb.: $59.50/£38.95. ISBN: 0 691 12064 1. Pb.: $17.95/£11.95. ISBN: 0 691 12065 X.

The book under review is an exciting contribution to the growing genre of global ethnography. The author, Anna Lowenhaupt Tsing, achieved some fame with her *In the Realm of the Diamond Queen* (1993), which already has become something of an anthropological classic. In *Friction*, some of the protagonists and themes of this classic make a repeat appearance. Once again we find ourselves in the Meratus Mountains of Southern Kalimantan in Borneo, Indonesia, where Tsing has conducted intermittent fieldwork over the past twenty-five years. *Friction*, however, is not an ethnography of this or that place. It is an ethnography of global connection that takes the reader along a path that winds across space and time. Tsing takes us through landscapes of extraction, patiently explaining the cultural logic of swidden shifting cultivation. She lets us accompany her to trans-shipment centres for exotic woods and on hikes with Indonesian students. She unveils to us an international gold scam, the 1955 Asia-Africa Conference that was held in Bandung, and the New Order regime of President Suharto. She backtracks the globalisation of nature, which involved early modern botanical classification, nineteenth-century preservationism (as advocated by people like John Muir), the global climate regime that created such issues as global warming, and the various institutionalisations of environmentalism. Tsing analyses how globalised tropes like 'nature' are being localised in terms that reflect specific histories and local, regional and national contexts.

At issue is how various local, national, and global actors – actors like the national and regional political elites, the International Tropical Timber Organization, Indonesian student clubs for 'nature lovers' (*pencinta alam*) and the Meratus Dayak – interpret and engage with biodiversity. These actors are in the habit of using universal concepts. Rather than writing against the universal (a common anthropological reflex), Tsing wants to understand its cultural and political dynamics. *Friction*, then, is 'an exploration of ethnographic methods for studying the work of the universal' (p. 1). Tsing does this not just by presenting different narratives and perspectives, but by focusing on the difference between narratives and perspectives. How, she asks, could diverse actors collaborate in protecting the rainforests of Southern Kalimantan despite their disagreements about 'what are supposed to be common causes and objects of concern' (p. 246). Her conclusion is that difference within common causes should be considered instances of what she terms 'productive confusion' (p. 247). Rather than looking or striving for homogeneity in social relations and political activism, both analysts and activists need to understand that *friction* constitutes the very nature of social and cultural interaction: 'A wheel turns because of its encounter with the surface of the road; spinning in the air it goes nowhere' (as it says on the dustjacket). Friction is 'the awkward, unequal, unstable, and creative qualities of interconnection across difference' (p. 4).

The metaphor of friction will probably also be an appropriate metaphor for how some readers take to Tsing's book. Her ethnography of global connection may be expected to rub some readers the wrong way on at least two accounts. Anthropologists with a penchant for ethnographies that wallow in intimate details of people's private lives will be disappointed to find little to nothing of such details in *Friction*. Others, who would like anthropology to approach a social science, are likely to object to Tsing's cultural-studies style of writing. In particular, the social scientists among us may react to Tsing's carefree handling of words like 'liberalism', 'governance', 'rationalization', 'order', 'cosmopolitan' and 'globalization'. Viewed from a different angle – for instance that of conceptual history and global discourse theory, two fields of study Tsing herself contributes to greatly – it would have made sense to investigate the polysemy, contested nature and incantatory power of these and similar concepts, rather than to define them in accordance with specific post-colonial knowledge claims. This would also have been in keeping with Tsing's realisation that, in the face of a 'multiplicity of knowledge claims', we should get 'our

knowledge into as good a shape as possible' (81). What we are left with, then, is the difficult task of deciding on what grounds to judge what is 'as good a shape as possible'.

In any case, we are invited by Tsing not only to consider the possibilities of an ethnography of global connections, but also to rethink the possibilities of political advocacy. Her critique of power-resistance narratives on the grounds that they have a paralysing effect, and her discussion of how universal-particular, top-down-bottom-up dialectics open up political spaces, may eventually turn out to be the most valuable lesson anthropologists have drawn from a reading of *Friction*.

RONALD STADE
Malmö University (Sweden)

Van Dongen, Els. 2004. *Worlds of psychotic people: Wanderers, 'bricoleurs' and strategists*. London and New York: Routledge. viii + 263 pp. Hb.: £60.00. ISBN: 0 415 30390 7.

This book offers insight into psychiatric patients' situation in contemporary Western society. In many ways, this is a depressing insight as it demonstrates that there are still substantial obstacles to overcome in creating a liberating and respectful attitude to and life for some of the most vulnerable members of our societies. Psychiatric treatment is ruled by distancing practices and notions grounded in the still, or perhaps increasingly, dominant biomedical approach to mental illness. Van Dongen demonstrates how the psychiatric perspective splits the patient into a 'healthy' and a 'sick' part, and that the latter is silenced and intended to be tamed or eliminated through the treatment regime.

The book was first published in Dutch in 1994 and is based on the author's five years of ethnographic fieldwork in a Dutch psychiatric hospital. During two periods in the late 1980s and early 1990s Van Dongen immersed herself in the life and various activities of two psychiatric wards, and took a more focused approach to study the interaction between patients and therapists, using audio- and video-recordings of one-to-one therapeutic conversations. The structure of the book reflects this, presenting two distinct blocks of empirical data and discussions placed between the introduction and theoretical context in chapters one and two and the conclusion in chapter ten. The discourse-interactional data are presented in chapters three to six, and the data on the subjective life worlds of the patients are presented in chapters seven to nine.

It was my impression that the two datasets could have been better integrated, or that they perhaps each could have been afforded more attention. Given the book's title it felt wrong to have to get to page 149 before being introduced to the experiential worlds of the psychiatric patients. Up till that point the author takes us through careful examinations of recorded conversations between therapists and patients, illustrating how, again and again, patients' experiences and perspectives are being overpowered and corrected, or simply overheard and ignored. This detailing of power and resistance in the therapeutic interaction provides important empirical evidence to critique psychiatric practice. Van Dongen makes it evident why patients may feel overpowered, belittled and disrespected. They are simply not listened to and taken seriously. The author suggests that one reason for this may be the increasing focus on treating the patients' behaviour, rather than affording attention to the meaning patients ascribe to their psychotic experiences.

In the last half of the book Van Dongen provides some detail on the lives and personalities of a few of the people living for shorter or longer periods as patients on the psychiatric wards. However, these descriptions remain rather superficial and never really succeed in getting under the skin of individual lives. The feeling of these peoples' elusiveness is reflected in one of the book's key messages: that psychotic people engage in 'cultural nomadism', wandering 'from one cultural "pasture" to another' (p. 184). As 'bricoleurs' they use whatever they find to describe the world, only to discard it subsequently. While undoubtedly true in many respects, there are, in my view, some serious problems with this analysis and the more general approach taken in the book. Firstly, by using the term 'psychotic people' the book contributes to the 'othering' of people with mental health problems, presenting and reifying them as a certain category of people, sharing a certain experiential 'world'. This is accentuated by the author's frequent and crude generalised claims about 'psychotic people'.

A related problem is that the book does not seem to provide any real insight into psychotic experiences. Van Dongen appears to assume that everything these people do, say or experience by definition is part of their 'psychotic world', and she does not acknowledge the episodic nature

of psychosis. In her critique of the psychiatric separation of 'sick' and 'healthy' parts of patients she seems to have forced herself into the opposite position, resulting in a static and essentialist representation of people who have experienced psychosis. In this perspective there is no possibility for people to take a 'healthy' approach to find meaning in their psychotic experiences or to live their lives without these being labelled as 'psychotic'.

When preparing the book for this English edition it could have benefited from being rewritten, taking into consideration the most recent relevant publications. Nevertheless, this remains a valuable book providing empirical evidence on patients' encounter with therapeutic interventions to supplement the growing anthropological research on the experiential and sociocultural aspects of mental illness.

JOHN AGGERGAARD LARSEN
University of Surrey (UK)