

## **BOOK REVIEWS**



## REVIEW ARTICLE

**Breastfeeding as the New Cultural Taboo**

**Tomori, Cecilia. 2014. *Nighttime Breastfeeding. An American Cultural Dilemma*. New York, Oxford: Berghahn Books. 299 pp. Hb.: \$110.00 / £68.00. ISBN: 9781782384359.**

**Wolf, Joan. 2011. *Is Breast Best? Taking on the Breastfeeding Experts and the New High Stakes of Motherhood*. New York: New York University Press. Kindle Edition. ISBN: 9780814795255.**

In this essay, two books about the current debate on breastfeeding are discussed. *Is Breast Best?* presents one of the rare voices that have challenged the current breastfeeding orthodoxy, which contends that breastfeeding is a superior form of infant feeding and assumes that virtually all properly informed mothers want to and should breastfeed their children. In contrast, Tomori's book represents this mainstream position and contains much explicit advocacy for systemic changes in support of breastfeeding. Tomori criticises Wolf and other feminist authors who are against breastfeeding advocacy (Tomori 2015: 83). Tomori is a modern Marxist, while Wolf draws on a modification of Beck's "risk society" paradigm. Wolf's approach is more theoretical, while Tomori's work is a classic ethnography based on fieldwork. Comparison of these different approaches provides insight into macro-level academic debates and micro-level dilemmas of everyday life. Both authors focus on the American context of breastfeeding. However, they are relevant beyond American borders because the US serves as a kind of a global trend-setter and a principal promoter of breastfeeding, along with international organisations who put pressure on women worldwide to breastfeed.

### **Ethnography of night time breastfeeding**

Tomori's *Nighttime Breastfeeding* explores current trends in sleeping/breastfeeding practice during infant's first year in the USA. Tomori conducted an ethnographic study of night time breastfeeding practice among middle-class parents (18 mothers and 15 partners) in a Midwestern US city during 2006, 2008, and 2009. Tomori argues that nighttime breastfeeding dilemmas provide insight into 'cultural expectations for babies and their relationship with parents, concepts of health and medical authority, and unequal sociocultural political and economic social relations ...' (Tomori 2015: 3).

Tomori discusses moral dilemmas of breastfeeding (and co-sleeping), and the "production" of parenthood through decisions on night time breastfeeding (Tomori 2015). Her approach is imbued with a Marxist "social class reproduction" perspective, with corresponding terminology ("biocapitalism", "capitalist medicine", "capitalist temporal regimes") (Tomori 2015: 168). She argues that only the middle or upper-middle classes can provide resources (financial resources, information) for pursuing longer breastfeeding practice. A father's support for breastfeeding is defined as a generator of class reproduction (Tomori 2015: 168). However, Tomori's position on breastfeeding and capitalism is

ambivalent. On the one hand, she believes that capitalism is hostile to breastfeeding and uses F. Dykes's metaphor of supply-demand in breastfeeding to argue that it reflects the capitalist oppression of women who should meet "production quotas" (Tomori 2015: 39). On the other, Tomori believes that capitalism has commercialised infant feeding, either through formula marketing and "technoscientific innovations", or through now popular commercial wet-nursing (Tomori 2015: 45). Either way, according to Tomori, capitalism is anti-breastfeeding oriented, even though the strongest breastfeeding lobbies is found in "capitalist countries".

Tomori argues that, unlike breastfeeding, which has public and medical support, there is no clear model for infant sleeping (Tomori 2015). American parents are, therefore, caught between at least two models: Ferber's model of solitary sleep with infant feeding on schedule, and Sears "attachment parenting" which promotes breastfeeding on demand and co-sleeping (Tomori 2015: 77). Different approaches to sleep are related to different philosophies of children's personhood: sleeping alone is seen as a way to help a child acquire independence while constant nurturance of co-sleeping encourages a sense of security (Tomori 2015: 203). Furthermore, there is a debate about safety issues of co-sleeping (Sudden Infant Death Syndrome) and the American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP) currently recommends co-sleeping if certain conditions are met (no drugs and alcohol use) (Tomori 2015: 134). Finally, infant sleeping practices are inseparable from cultural taboos about sexuality and incest (Tomori 2015: 139). There is a stigma related to bed sharing. To avoid this stigma, parents are reluctant to report it to health care providers (co-sleeping doubled 1993-2000) (Tomori 2015: 139, 70).

## **Total motherhood in a risk culture**

Breastfeeding is intrinsically linked to a dominant motherhood model in a given cultural context. Tomori and Wolf agree that breastfeeding is inseparable from the concept of "good motherhood". However, motherhood models and breastfeeding standards have changed over time (Tomori 2015). "Sacred motherhood" was rooted in a religious concept of the moral and spiritual duty to breastfeed. This concept was never fully embraced; wealthier women, in particular, were not so willing to breastfeed their children (Tomori 2015: 57).

"Scientific motherhood" originated in the mid-19th century. It laid foundations for the medicalisation of child-care as it was based on a scientific approach to child care practices, regular infant measurements, constant monitoring and time schedules (Tomori 2015: 58). This 'scientific management model for mothering' included the idea of uninterrupted baby sleep and nursery rooms with adequate equipment (such as cribs) that would, from an early age, create a clear separation between the child and its parents (Tomori 2015: 59). Infant formula was initially a part of scientifically controlled infant feeding that:

offered a modern, scientific, and rational method of feeding babies ... With formula, which was produced under scientific, hygienic circumstances, there would be no more worries about the transfer of disease, alcohol, and lower-class or immigrant moral qualities to the child (Tomori 2015: 59).

Once again, the pendulum had swung towards the opposite extreme. An early stage in this change was La Leche League's mid-fifties advocacy for the revival of sacred motherhood, with a slight modification towards "natural motherhood" (Tomori 2015: 62). The "natural" was combined with scientific rigor, research evidence, and official directives by public health authorities (Tomori 2015). This cultural shift is compatible with the New Age return to the organic, the earthy, the genuine and the primordial, based on a "scientific" belief that health and longevity can be controlled directly by proper lifestyle choices. This mind set has formed the basis of "new parenthood" and brought new methods of giving birth, infant holding, changing, feeding, and sleeping, supported by some or no scientific evidence.

According to Tomori, the key characteristic of modern good motherhood is sacrifice. One mother from Tomori's research says that she tried to encourage herself to follow through with pediatrician's advice, even though it was very difficult, by consulting the heuristic: 'if it's more difficult it must be better' (Tomori 2015: 132). Breastfeeding has now assumed the status of moral imperative, indivisible from the conception of good mothering: 'While ideologies of sacrifice are part of discourses of "good motherhood, mothers" negative experiences disrupted idealised images of mothers who joyfully breastfeed despite encountering obstacles' (Tomori 2015: 122). Tomori's respondents were reluctant to admit difficulties in breastfeeding, as if they feared stigmatisation of this socially unacceptable experience. The other side of the coin is an emotional burden: self-blame for not being able to feed baby properly, despite family support (Tomori 2015: 122). Tomori admits that 'parenting ideologies that fully embrace breastfeeding – in mandating the specific form of breastfeeding practices – could be morally oppressive...' (Tomori 2015: 140).

Wolf's interpretation of the modern history of motherhood is similar. The central concept is "total motherhood", which gradually emerged from the foundations of domesticity (a notion that women's primary role is in raising children and maintaining home) and scientific motherhood (an idea that women must be educated by experts in order to properly raise children) and often supplemented by natural mothering (the idea that mothers are uniquely capable of recreating safer, simpler environment that is in fact ideal for their babies). Domesticity is central to total motherhood as it puts the responsibility to optimise the child's life through scientific planning almost exclusively on mothers – fathers, the broader family and social networks and institutions are largely absolved of such obligations. Both of these earlier developments, as well as total motherhood, were almost exclusively middle-class projects and excluded the majority of the female population in their creation (Wolf 2011: 72).

Total motherhood stipulates that mothers' primary occupation is to predict and prevent all less-than-optimal social, emotional, cognitive, and physical outcomes; that mothers are responsible for anticipating and eradicating every imaginable risk to their children, regardless of the degree or severity of the risk or what the trade-offs might be; and that any potential diminution in harm to children trumps all other considerations in risk analysis as long as mothers can achieve the reduction. (Wolf 2011:72)

The initiation into total motherhood begins before babies are conceived, with the not too subtle expectation that it is the future mothers' duty to adequately prepare their bodies for the optimal growth of their not yet (and perhaps never existent) children. In the US, women are advised to get "preconception care", e.g. take supplements, observe nebulous "healthy eating" norms, chart their fertility etc., by major national institutions and popular books and sites (Wolf 2011: 75–6). The pressure is then increased manifold as pregnancy commences. Women are warned that their pregnancy diets will impact the long-term health of their babies through "fetal programming" (Wolf 2011: 80). The unofficial pregnancy bible, *What to Expect When You're Expecting*, advises that the not-yet-born baby's supposed needs must determine every bite the woman takes:

Every bite counts. You've got nine months of meals and snacks with which to give your baby the best possible start in life. Try to make them count. As you raise fork to mouth, consider, 'Is this a bite that will benefit my baby?' If it is, chew away. If it isn't, see if you can't find a bite more worthy (Cited in: Wolf 2011: 78).

As in scientific studies of breastfeeding, the evidence does not come anywhere close to supporting the moral norms that now surround pregnancy; for example, even small amounts of alcohol consumed during pregnancy are considered risky, while studies have shown that 'only about 5 percent of women who drink heavily give birth to babies exhibiting signs of FAS, and "there is no consistent, reliable evidence [...] to indicate that alcohol categorically affects fetal development regardless of the level of exposure or timing of exposure, or absent other factors"' (Cited in: Wolf 2011: 81).

The new motherhood is trying to combine the natural and the scientific, hence its contradictions: there is a permanent conflict between 'being natural' and 'being scientific', but both are based on the general ideology of risk avoidance. Paradoxically, the ideology of risk prevention is risky, because decisions about breastfeeding have to be made in the context of limited and rapidly changing information where risky choice can easily become a next safe choice. Tomori comments that all breastfeeding decisions are placed in a climate of 'moral minefield' (Murphy, as cited in Tomori 2015: 120). Breastfeeding triggers many moral aspects, and it imposes costs, i.e. moral risks, for those who do not breastfeed, but also for those who do: 'in this "moral minefield", there are no "winners"' (Tomori 2015: 136). For example, one conflict is between the new cultural model of "highly engaged paternal persona", which has to be negotiated with the still valid "breadwinner fatherhood". Another dilemma is about co-sleeping and solitary sleeping practice, as discussed above.

Natural mothering adds another twist to the ever more demanding role of a mother in encouraging women to shun modern conveniences (e.g. disposable diapers, canned food, manufactured clothing and formula) in order to minimise risks to their babies. Once again, the inherent trade-offs of such choices, and in particular the time and effort such norms put on mothers are rarely explicitly entertained. As children are born, they become a new and ever expanding source of information to mothers and medical professional in respect to the optimality of their development. Through pediatricians' vis-

its, government campaigns and informal networks, mothers are inundated with the “best and latest” information on what else they can do to protect and support their children and properly fulfill their roles as mothers.

In order to explain the recent changes in breastfeeding practices and total motherhood, Joan Wolf has developed the concept of “risk culture” (Wolf 2011: 52), based on Beck’s concept of risk society (Beck 1992). However, there are differences between the two concepts: whereas Beck is focused on what he considers to be actual, uncontrollable, global risks (for example, nuclear or environmental risks), Wolf is focused on individual efforts to minimise risks, real and imagined, at all costs, and an emerging moral imperative to do so. According to Beck, individuals are destined to live with many uncontrollable risks, whereas Wolf believes that modern individuals generally believe in controlling or at least minimising the risks (Beck 1992; Wolf 2011).

Wolf’s risk culture is a pattern of collective overreliance on quantified risk assessments and apparently scientific evidence in charting one’s life course. In risk culture, lifestyle choices that were previously considered inconsequential are increasingly measured, analysed and compared regarding the risks they pose, especially in regard to health. Since the general public has neither the methodological nor the substantive background to evaluate evidence that purports to show that some lifestyle choices are to be avoided, it essentially relies on second-, third- or fourth- person accounts on what scientific evidence shows, by people such as journalists, popular experts, bloggers or celebrities who are often in not much better position to evaluate them. Within the current risk culture and its plethora of apparently scientific advice and data, a belief that life can be optimised and misfortunes largely avoided through proper behaviour is increasingly common. Therefore, mothers are becoming the main culprit lest anything bad or even less than optimal befalls their children.

## **Science in the service of a dogma**

Science has had a profound effect on breastfeeding attitudes. An important part of the scientific approach to parenting (“scientific motherhood”) was a growing accumulation of evidence about the differences between breastfed and formula-fed infants (Tomori 2015: 64). This evidence attracted other key creators of public health policies to La Leche League’s position: the World Health Organization, UNICEF, the US government, and recently even Michelle Obama (Tomori 2015). Since the 1990s, in new declarations and public health recommendations, formula feeding is no longer considered acceptable as an alternative to infant feeding. Obviously, an important question is whether the scientific evidence truly does give sufficient reason to believe that breastfeeding is substantially better than formula milk.

The two authors do not share the view on science and breastfeeding. Tomori believes in scientific evidence regarding benefits of breastfeeding and also the evidence-based public policies for breastfeeding promotion. This is evident in her expressed worry that, in spite of all efforts, there are still a few “infidels” (one third of them in one public opinion survey) who are prone to believe that formula is as good as mother’s milk (Tomori 2015: 66). As she says, ‘my own reading leaves me quite convinced of the sub-

stantial health consequences of not breastfeeding' (Tomori 2015: 83). Moreover, Tomori advocates for more participation of anthropologists in public health initiatives (Tomori 2015: 241).

Wolf, in contrast, challenges the medical orthodoxy that is used to support both risk-averse culture and total motherhood. Thus far, many studies have attempted to demonstrate the benefits of breastfeeding on infants' health and development and women's health (cf. Quigley, 2012, Beral, 2002). However, the empirical evidence in support of breastfeeding benefits is much weaker than usually assumed. Statistical associations between breastfeeding and various health outcomes in infants (obesity, GTI infections, otitis media infections, diabetes, respiratory infections, cognitive ability, asthma, allergies, leukemia, diarrhea are just some of those studied) are often weak and inconsistent; scientists studying one issue often find weak effects but reinforce the breastfeeding's status by assuming other effects are much stronger (Wolf 2011). In addition, breastfeeding mothers are different from bottle-feeding mothers on a host of variables (e.g. income and education) shown to influence health. Even statistically controlling for these variables leaves the decision to breast feed as a confounding factor; a famous PROBIT study, the largest randomised study of breastfeeding, found, despite measuring plethora of outcomes, breastfeeding to have an effect only on GTI infections and cognitive ability, the latter claim being more suspect (Wolf 2011: 32). Finally, any causal claim for breastfeeding benefits needs, in addition to statistical evidence, a plausible physiological mechanism – all the more so where putative effects of breastfeeding are temporarily far removed from the breastfeeding period. In the case of breastfeeding, however, any physiological understating of the way in which breast milk exerts its effects is severely lacking, except for GTI infections (Wolf 2011: 33). Scientific studies have not shown bottle-feeding to pose anything close to the risk of smoking, to which it is routinely compared.

Not only are many breastfeeding studies poorly designed or otherwise not showing effects anywhere close to those assumed and advertised to the public, the choice of topics themselves also shows a strong pro-breastfeeding bias. For example, several studies have shown that breast milk contains various pollutants, such PCBs, DDT, flame retardants, dioxins, heavy metals, etc., to the point that breastfeeding advocates have admitted that 'if breast milk were regulated in the same way as formula is, it would commonly violate Food and Drug Administration action levels for poisonous or deleterious substances in food and could not be sold.' (Wolf 2011:122). Despite its obvious importance in the context of the widespread and institutionalised exhortation to breastfeed, this kind of research has been discouraged; in words of one prominent breastfeeding advocate: 'When agencies like the E.P.A. decided to monitor the presence of toxins in the environment through breast milk, people like me said, "Please don't do that – it will be misinterpreted."' (Wolf 2011: 122). However, at the same time that these much-needed studies are avoided, dozens of studies are being funded to examine safety of breastfeeding while on medications such as SSRIs (e.g. Hallberg and Sjöblom: 2005) or while suffering from various medical conditions, such as HIV (Dunn et al: 2000).

The role of scientific evidence in risk culture is particularly problematic, because while its methods appear impersonal, the choice of topics, background literature, inde-



pendent and dependent variables reflect not only prevailing scientific paradigms but also broader cultural trends. In addition, statistical techniques involved in establishing effects allow for considerable flexibility by which statistically significant effects are extracted from a massive number of tests, thus leading to manifold increases in false alarms; a rapidly growing body of literature demonstrates just how pervasive this problem is: there is a lively ongoing debate regarding whether less or more than a half of research findings published in medical journals is false (Jager & Leek 2014; Ioannidis 2014). Scientific studies of breastfeeding, with their presumption of breastfeeding superiority and their almost exclusive focus on health benefits for the baby, are by no means immune to this trend.

The emphasis on breastfeeding is putatively driven by scientific evidence of its superiority and in that it presents a culmination of expert-driven, medicalised and quantified culture. The most recent historical wave of breastfeeding enthusiasm was partly driven in response to the expert-driven emphasis on formula. However, as the breastfeeding movement gained steam, it has been incorporated into a long-standing solution of pediatricians' dilemma as to the purpose of their profession as 'baby feeders' (Wolf 2011: 1).

Science and scientists are generally revered as a source of objectivity, but the almost invariably weak effects of lifestyle choices on life outcomes lead to ever-changing and qualifying recommendations, making the aspiration to a risk-minimised life ever harder to satisfy. Nevertheless, some science-supported risk-minimising recommendations do gain public traction. Often they then become an impetus for more studies confirming that recommendation thus creating a positive feedback between science and the public. The result of this process is essentially a moral code rooted in an appearance of scientific certainty but with little actual foundation in the real world.

## **The new taboo and new dissonant voices**

The institutional and cultural pressure on women to breastfeed is overpowering and relentless. The World Health Organization recommends not only exclusive breastfeeding for at least six months but claims that an HIV-positive status is not an obstacle to breastfeeding (WHO 2002; WHO 2010). When women are advised that infant ingestion of breast milk may lead to the possible contraction HIV infection, we have clearly come to the point where breastfeeding has become the new cultural taboo.

Since the 1990s, this pressure has been exerted through an informal coalition for promotion of breastfeeding, consisting of scientists, governments, international organisations, non-governmental organisations, religious organisations, mothers, fathers, and even childless people. In the US, where this pressure is easiest to track and document, it is led by the government and expert bodies such as American Academy of Pediatrics (AAP), popular child-rearing gurus such as Dr. Sears, and women and mothers themselves.

The National Breastfeeding Awareness Campaign (NBAC) conducted throughout the US from June 2004 to April 2006 is an example of this. The campaign was conducted through television, radio and print advertisements, billboards, posters, pamphlets, and websites and, in its final form, after much internal bickering as representatives of formula manufacturers pushed against the most outrageous claims, used, among other things, images of pregnant women log-rolling and mechanical bull-riding with a mes-

sage ‘You’d never take risks while you’re pregnant. Why start when the baby’s born?’ as analogous to formula feeding (Wolf 2011: 109).

These advertisements were meant to provoke anxiety in mothers regarding bottle feeding. To achieve that goal, the benefits of breastfeeding compared to bottle-feeding were greatly exaggerated. Specific risk-ratios that would, at least in principle, allow the public to understand the modest magnitude of breastfeeding effects, were not included for fear of muddling the message. In line with the total motherhood ideology, the perspective of women was ignored, and it was assumed that any benefits to babies justified any cost to the mother. In short, in the US, a major national, government-led breastfeeding campaign proceeded as if breast-milk was an absolute good and no trade-offs were involved: the risk of not breastfeeding was compared to those of activities many orders of magnitude riskier, and the burden was placed on mothers without any consideration of cost or trade-offs it involves.

This collective mind set is influencing science as well. Many clearly important research topics relevant for breastfeeding are not explored. As Wolf said, breastfeeding ‘serves as a repository for numerous cultural anxieties ...’ (Wolf 2011: 137). Child-centred and benefit-oriented research on breastfeeding has created a biased perspective. There is no elaboration of the “cost side”: emotional stress, disturbed sexual relations with spouses, time management, career sacrifices, and physical burden of taking over the household labor so that mothers could focus on around the clock breastfeeding. Even an anthropologist is reluctant to deal with the subject of breasts’ dual nature, i.e. as a sexual and a non-sexual object. Tomori admits that her study design was not made to adequately address the father’s perspective and, in particular, sensitive issues of sexuality and breastfeeding (Tomori 2015: 166). Men’s “kin work” is only analyzed as part of the support needed for breastfeeding practice: ‘Men’s contributions to the breastfeeding relationship can help overcome the lack of structural and cultural support as well as mitigate moral challenges generated by breastfeeding’s embodied praxis’ (Tomori 2015: 166). Tomori has at least acknowledged that the issue of sexual relations between partners after childbirth was not adequately discussed in childbirth education classes (Tomori 2015: 152).

Also, opportunity costs of mother’s time, short-term earning costs and long-term career costs (Rippeyoung et al. 2012) are rarely addressed. The economic side of breastfeeding is studied only with respect to obstacles to breastfeeding. The effects of breastfeeding on parental economic status are much less frequently discussed. Only recently have the costs of breastfeeding from parental point of view (emotional, physical and social) been recognised as a valid research subject (Murphy 1999; Wolf 2011; Forster 2010; Marshall, Godfrey & Renfrew 2007).

As a result of this biased approach, a mechanistic perspective is dominant in research on breastfeeding. It focuses on the external conditions and does not take into account internal factors (for example, the everyday drudgery of breastfeeding, even when mothers breastfeed successfully). For example, Tomori reports that many systemic actions have been taken to promote breastfeeding (for example, lactation breaks at work) and advocates for social policies, “conditions” that should enhance breastfeeding: community mother-to-mother programs, changes in the healthcare system, clinician train-

ing, employer-established paid maternity leave, changes within the family (Tomori 2015: 69, 242). Here, the emphasis is placed on those factors that impede breastfeeding, while women's desire to breastfeed is assumed. None of these policies tackle the emotional and personal costs of breastfeeding, which is not always completely "joyful", even when managed by well-off, educated, and highly devoted, two-parent teams. Another issue is whether systemic changes would actually make a difference. For example, Serbia has a low breastfeeding rate (only 14% of children are breastfed exclusively for six months) despite one-year paid maternity leave guaranteed for formally employed mothers (UNICEF 2011).

The ambivalence of feminism towards breastfeeding represents the crucial example of (not) breastfeeding taboo (Galtry 2000; Schmied 2001). Sometimes, feminists would even trade gender equality ideals for breastfeeding. For example, in Norway, feminist organisations were against the tripartite model of parental leave, because quotas for fathers would affect breastfeeding (Korsvik 2011). Tomori has identified two opposite positions regarding breastfeeding: one group of scholars (e.g. Hausman) sees breastfeeding as a liberating practice; the other camp (for example, Wolf or Kukla) is criticising breastfeeding promotion as a form of oppression that imposes constraints on women's choice (Tomori 2015: 82).

Currently, the "pro-choice breastfeeding" position is trying to swing back the pendulum. Wolf is one of the leading critics of this new taboo in academic, policy and popular debates on breastfeeding. Many feminist papers criticise the biased information about breastfeeding (Knaak 2006; Casazza 2013; Murphy 1999; Wall 2001; Wolf 2011). Along with the critical re-interpretation of breastfeeding medical evidence, feminists now also question the child-centered model of breastfeeding that neglects the costs of breastfeeding for caregivers, following the words of Rosin: breastfeeding is 'this generation's vacuum cleaner – an instrument of misery that mostly just keeps women down' (Rosin, cited in Tomori 2015: 144).

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**Constable, Nicole. 2014. *Born Out of Place. Migrant Mothers and the Politics of International Labor*. Berkeley: University of California Press. 259 pp. Pb.: \$29.95 / £19.9. ISBN: 9780520282025.**

Women's labour migration from global South to global capitalist centres received considerable attention in the previous decade, bringing to light the highly gendered patterns of international migration. Underscored by global inequality, women from poorer regions became increasingly attracted to work as nannies, cleaners, health workers, caregivers and entertainers in the wealthier parts of the world, prompting a myriad of micro and macro social processes in both the sending and destination countries. In her recent monograph, Nicole Constable turns to one aspect of this phenomenon: to women not only as workers but as human beings finding and losing love, giving birth, creating and sustaining families, forging friendships as well as battling loneliness and betrayal in a bustling Asian metropolis. Hong Kong, with its complex colonial and neocolonial histories, provides a setting for this nuanced and subtle account of Indonesian and Filipina "foreign domestic workers" (FDW) and their "being in the world" (p. 32).

Constable's main arguments are seemingly simple: although (similar to guest-workers programs around the world) domestic workers are welcomed to Hong Kong as workers and not as people and citizens (p. 13), they never can be only workers. They find innovative ways to form relationships and keep sexual and family lives, albeit often of fleeting nature and without long-term prospects. Furthermore, although "domestics" are crucial for the prosperity and "good life" of Hong Kong citizens, they are excluded from the same rights and citizenship. The laws and policies are put in place to regulate these women to stay in the city only as workers and only for the specific period, determined by their employment (p. 177). Too often, these regulations have the opposite effect, turning these women into over-stayers and illegal workers. Finally, their attempts of forming family life in Hong Kong often put into motion a "migratory cycle of atonement", a repeating cycle of migration and re-migration to alleviate economic pressures of the family back home and to avoid the social stigma of being a single mother in more traditional settings of their places of origin.

Through a "critical phenomenological approach" (p. 41) elaborated in the second chapter, the author examines the above arguments by highlighting everyday experiences of not only the women, but also children and men she met during two-year fieldwork research. Her deeply engaged research discovers the maze of policies in the sending as well as destination country that provide constraints and opportunities for migrant women and their countless, fast changing and often inventive strategies to navigate through these. She begins by framing FDW within the centre-periphery relations of Hong Kong and two of its less fortunate neighbours: Indonesia and the Philippines. In the countries of origin, FDW are in public discourse and imagination both crucial providers and vulnerable victims or/and immoral women. This understanding builds on accepted norms of patriarchy and femininity upheld by dominant religions in respective countries; Islam in Indonesia and Christianity in the Philippines.

In Hong Kong, on the other side, the employers ideally want women who are ‘obedient, nonassertive and whose sexuality is nonexistent or nonthreatening’ (p. 58). The government thus prohibits workers from bringing their family members with them and institutes various requirements (e.g. the requirement to live with the employer or obligatory use of agencies with often exorbitant fees) to achieve a submissive workforce. As Constable notes, this goal is harder to meet with Filipinas who are in general better educated, have stronger social networks and more experience with Hong Kong’s bureaucratic system than with often younger and less educated Indonesian women, who are relative newcomers on the scene. While the FDW predominantly come from one of the aforementioned states, the partners and fathers of their children in Hong Kong have much more diverse backgrounds: they are of African, European, American or South or East Asian origin, most often are Hong Kong permanent residents or asylum seekers and work in service, trade or construction.

The central chapter looks at practices regarding reproductive behaviour: contraception, abortion, birth, and adoption. The author’s good rapport with the FDW community enables her to go beyond commonsensical explanations for women’s taking or not taking contraceptives, deciding on abortion or giving children up for an adoption. It reveals gendered norms of behaviour regarding romance, being a good parent and a pious individual. Furthermore, as she argues in the following two chapters, not only women’s norms but also the state determine the conditions and outcomes of reproductive behaviour. Specifically, the state’s regimes of immigration and wider social control emphasise heteronormativity, i.e. the access or inclusion to local citizenship is contingent on the nature of woman’s and child’s relationship with the man and his status as permanent resident, refugee, asylum seeker or illegal immigrant. Here Constable, using De Certeau’s notion of tactics, illuminates FDWs’ strategies not only to stay in Hong Kong, but also to buy time, writing ‘the longer the mothers delay their return, the better opportunity they have to exert control over the circumstances of their return’ (p. 192). In the meantime, some women decide to be at least “Hong Kong happy” understood as a distinct experience of migrants’ impermanent and short-term attempts to find a kind of ‘normalcy’ as lovers, mothers and wives.

In the concluding chapter, the author further illuminates how going home can often mean exchanging one set of gender oppressive expectations for another. Rare are the women who find empowerment through past experience and who resist ‘the migratory cycle of atonement’ (p. 216) by which they try to prove to themselves and their families that they are worthy or/and want to redeem themselves for possible earlier migratory failures. Nicole Constable’s close account of FDWs’ lives, strategies and experience thus convincingly shows the blessings and dark sides of migration and points to the responsibility of both, sending and receiving states, to see these women not only as workers but also as human beings.

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**Moberg, Mark. 2013. *Engaging Anthropological Theory. A Social and Political History*. London, New York: Routledge. 360 pp. Pb.: £24.99. ISBN: 9780415809160.**

From the beginning of *Engaging Anthropological Theory*, Moberg directly addresses an audience of freshman students in a motivating way, conveying a strong sense of identification with the discipline. He gives a great deal of his own background information as well as other anthropologists' private lives, and shows how biographies and socialisations influence 'objective' ideas. As several examples from contemporary daily life in academia allow the reader a look behind the scenes, the reader becomes familiarised with the discipline's founders along the way.

The first chapter deals mainly with the history and philosophy of science. The influence of political forces in the creation of so-called "scientific" knowledge is at the very centre of this chapter. Moberg summarises the different assumptions about knowledge and its production with a focus on the ideas of empiricism advanced by Bacon, Hume, Kuhn, and Popper, while also touching upon linguistic relativity and the fallacy of objectivity. The author argues that knowledge/truth and its pursuit (research) proceeds within a given paradigm and political and emotional commitments to what one believes is important, thus raising questions about the independence of science. The way in which Moberg refers to himself makes for joyful and authentic reading and is a welcome change from the oft-used scientific third person narrative.

In the second chapter, Moberg continues to evaluate claims and critiques of knowledge about and the representation of human beings. He reinforces scepticism about the scientific status of the discipline first raised by the postmodernists and uses ethnographic examples (specifically, the disputes between Redfield and Lewis or Mead and Freeman) to make clear that personal biases, goals, identities, language proficiency and personal values can heavily influence what anthropologists do, see, and write. There are many more difficulties in anthropology than in the natural or laboratory sciences as the subject-object distinction is not strictly possible. Therefore, the author critically engages with several pitfalls and dangers of social research commenting on interviewer effects. He then outlines the dangers of cultural relativism and raises fundamental epistemological questions.

In the third chapter, Moberg turns to anthropology's prehistory, to 'perspectives on human difference that originated well before the formal origins of the discipline.' He begins with classical antiquity, from Xenophon over Pliny the Elder and moves to medieval models of physical difference, Ibn Khaldun in the Arab world, the Atlantic slave trade, and to Pope Paul III's *Sublimis dei*. Trans-oceanic voyages by Polo and Columbus, Christian missions and a growing evidence of cultural diversity that consequently developed are also taken into consideration. The author lays out the assumptions shared by Enlightenment philosophers that remain the basis of today's behavioural sciences. He describes the nature-nurture debate and how evolutionary theories and racial determinism have been changed, to finish with examining at length the founding sociologist Auguste Comte.

The fourth chapter is about Marx's systematic critique of industrial capitalism and social change. It reads like an introductory chapter to Marxist theory with a few examples relating to daily life. Moberg analyses the developments that Marx could not have foreseen and which eventually inhibited the revolution he had predicted. After depicting the social theory of dialectical materialism, he lays out the concept of hegemony heavily influenced by Antonio Gramsci.

In the fifth chapter, Moberg focuses on Durkheim, his "cult of the individual", and his rejection of economic determinism. Durkheim's thoughts on (anomic) suicide in relation to religious orientation are laid out and his ideas regarding society are compared to those of Marx, though Moberg makes clear that he does not believe in their explanatory power. He then turns to Weber and the Protestant work ethic. Moberg points to the danger of using the social theorist's categories and concepts as a motivating force they seek to explain. He argues that materialist and functionalist theories overlook human agency and subsequently discusses the theories of Giddens.

The following chapters address the role evolutionary theories of culture played in 19th century anthropology. Their focus is on the first self-identified anthropologists, Tylor and Morgan, and compares their ideas with those of Spencer and Darwin. Moberg briefly discusses (racist) "armchair theories" about unilinear evolution and Social Darwinism, which he argues, is a misnomer. The author explains why such ethnocentric paradigms were so pervasive in the Anglo-Saxon intellectual landscape. He then retells Boas' biography, his opposition to anthropological generalisations and discrimination of minorities (possibly due to his own background, being a Jew in Bismarck Germany and living as an immigrant in the U.S.) and continues with an account of Boas' students Wissler and Kroeber, Benedict and Mead. Moberg then contemplates Freud's influence on psychological anthropology and differing perspectives on (cultural) evolutionary models.

In the following chapters, the author critically reflects on British functionalism and the feud between the two major thinkers, Radcliff-Brown and Malinowski, then touches on Gluckmann, Goffmann, Bourdieu and Barth.

The twelfth chapter deals with more contemporary materialist and ecological approaches that are consistently linked back to the ideas of Harris and closes with a few words about political ecology. The next chapter is about theories that are related to idealist perspectives from the mid-to-late 20th century, specifically French structuralism (including Lévy-Strauss), symbolic or interpretive anthropology (mainly Geertz and Turner), and ethnoscience or cognitive anthropology.

The following chapter assesses the "project of modernity" and post-structuralism, or rather postmodern epistemologies, with a focus on Harvey and his thoughts on time-space compression.

The final chapter considers approaches from hermeneutics and deconstruction with a focus on the Foucauldian notion of knowledge as power. Moberg brings together postmodern claims about knowledge and the cultural representation of "the other". Postmodern sensitivity to voice, representation and power is a welcome corrective to traditional approaches and has moved cultural anthropologists towards more reflexivity.



The whole book brings the history of anthropological thought to life. It becomes clear from the very first page that this is not a typical theory textbook, as each chapter is peppered with the author's personal anecdotes and experiences. He manages to combine this with ethnographic snapshots from across the world, historical events, and socio-political developments, though mainly from a U.S. perspective. He confidently juggles with the thoughts of the "big thinkers" that have influenced anthropology. It is easy to follow his arguments as the language and structure is very clear and at the end of each chapter, he invites the reader to "quiz yourself" with true or false questions about the previous chapter. While Moberg offers detailed information about the intellectual ancestors of anthropology and most of his way of writing is engaging in fact, some sections are tiring when he gets lost in details, not to mention endnotes and additional digression in grey boxes, as if he wanted to bring in every single detail he knows. Without being condescending to an introductory audience, Moberg clearly and interestingly explains the big names and concepts, and imparts an understanding of fundamental ideas.

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**Partridge, Damani J. 2012. *Hypersexuality and Headscarves Race, Sex, and Citizenship in the New Germany (New Anthropologies of Europe Series)*. 189 pp. Pb.: \$24.95. ISBN: 9780253223692.**

In *Hypersexuality and Headscarves*, Damani J. Partridge, associate professor of Anthropology and Afro-American and African Studies at the University of Michigan explores the relationship between citizenship, rights, and identity politics. More specifically, he examines the lives of “noncitizens” in the reunified post-1989 Germany, with emphasis on how body politics is related to exclusion, citizenship and social control mechanisms by the new German nation. While the fall of communism and the German reunification was a time when the ‘possibility of universalised unity seemed greatest’, the author focuses on the upsurge of nationalism and violence against ‘noncitizen workers, students, refugees, and racialised subjects, who experienced the most intense impossibility of belonging’ (p. 25). In many cases, these groups, as well as Partridge himself, have risked being physically attacked by neo-Nazis merely by leaving their houses.

In addition to an introductory chapter, a conclusion, and an epilogue, the book consists of five loosely related chapters. These cover topics as diverse as EU policies, citizenship, racism, Muslim headscarves, “black bodies, street bureaucrats, and hypersexual returns”, West German schools, “guest workers as leftover bodies”, and “travel as an analytic of exclusion” (p. 144). The cover shows images of a veiled woman and of a half naked, “hypersexualised” black man as examples of what Partridge understands as noncitizen bodies subject to ‘persistent acts of exclusionary incorporation’ (p. 144).

Exclusion can be seen as a ‘way of keeping people out, even while keeping them in’ (p. 24). As Partridge shows, this can take many forms. The purpose is to shed light on how “technologies of exclusion” operate, a term which denotes the ‘social technologies of governance, representation, and population construction that have the effect of (sometimes unwittingly) managing and producing noncitizen bodies’ (p. 19). Noncitizens are those excluded from full citizenship because their bodies are different, non-white and “foreign”.

Partridge’s take on this is that there are “technologies” in Germany (and Europe) that exclude those bodies deemed biologically non-German at work, not merely in social policy and through laws. ‘Noncitizen production’ also takes place in pop culture, asylum camps, neighbourhoods, schools and dance clubs, which Partridge approaches as places where the Other is eroticised and consumed (p. 20).

The author claims that European and German efforts to learn from the past (“genocidal forms of exclusion”) actually produce new forms of exclusion. In his view, ‘claims that seem to demonstrate the ability to learn from past atrocities [“genocidal forms of exclusion”] actually produce a semi-legitimacy for supranational forms of exclusionary violence’ (p. 24). The German reunification is interpreted as an “ethno-patriarchal return” that produced many new noncitizens. While acknowledging that the German law on citizenship from 2000 means a shift away from a blood-based idea of belonging and citizenship, Partridge maintains that universalism carries with it a range of injustice that necessarily compromises the Other and keep people out.

Partridge questions Agamben's distinction between 'bare life and political life' and suggests that there is maybe no 'outside to political life' (p. 137). This is problematic. The dissolution of the distinction between the political and non-political is that the term "political" can be applied to almost everything. In turn, that makes the term imprecise and reduces its analytical value. Moreover, the presumption that all human interaction is normative and political in character easily reduces persons to containers of ideology. In the case of white ("White") German women who have sex with, fall in love with or marry African men (Chapter 3), for example, Partridge interprets this as German 'street bureaucrats' participating in exclusionary practices of hypersexualisation of black ('Black') bodies that incorporates them into the German society in a way that produces noncitizens, to use the author's own terminology.

This begs the question of how Partridge would explain the hypothetical case that all white German women would refuse to get involved with black men. In general, one may discuss the utility of theoretical tools that potentially allow the same explanation of opposite phenomena. Moreover, while questions of citizenship and "hypersexualisation" (or just sexualisation?) obviously are part of the story in some of the cases under scrutiny, Partridge's approach is disappointingly one-sided.

Since the idea that everything is political permeates the book, it would have been better to discuss it in the beginning. Conceptual clarification is often lacking. A major weakness of the book is that the text is often so obscure that it is hard to understand what Partridge actually means. At least this reader is unable to understand formulations like 'integration – also referred to as incorporation ... or exclusionary incorporation' (p. 135). This is one reason Partridge's analysis comes across as less convincing.

Partridge asserts that German and European norms of citizenship exclude people with "bodies" that the majority consider foreign and in various ways deny full integration in the nation even when they are "incorporated". At the same time, he emphasizes the 'articulations and production of noncitizen bodies' (p. 134). Noncitizens become noncitizens because their bodies are different, but this difference is also seen as a social, cultural and political product. This might be a correct description of a two-way dynamics, but could also conceal a circular argument. The book would have benefited from a narrower focus and a more rigorous data analysis. The data are not adequate to substantiate all Partridge's claims because his focus is not only the excluded, but the regimes and technologies seen as the cause. Still, the book does provide certain insights into the lives and experiences of those who in different ways are or feel excluded.

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**Suhr, Christian and Rane Willerslev (eds.). 2013. *Transcultural Montage* (afterword by George E. Marcus). New York, London: Berghahn Books. 300 pp. Pb.: \$49.95/£32.00. ISBN: 9780857459640.**

*Transcultural Montage* first attracts a reader with its appearance. On the front cover is a photograph of multiple eyes, a cluster of projectors, looking at every passing visitor of an installation in Geneva's ethnographic museum. The cover is made from a smooth and soft material. The format and weight, however, make it inconvenient for travelling. The book is a dynamic collection of many perspectives about the art of montage. It offers a variety of uses of this art and critical engagements with it. The book has four parts, each having an additional thematic focus to be addressed in relation to montage: Montage as an Analytic, Montage in Writing, Montage in Film, and Montage in Museum Exhibitions. The different styles in both writings and themes make the book itself an artefact of montage of the present times.

'What is montage?' would be the first question to ask. In this volume, we learn that montage implies the joining, assembling, mounting, and displaying together different elements in a variety of combinations. There is a cinematic, museum, or design montage. All of them deal with the elements of rupture and continuity, and visible and invisible spaces. Probably the best known to all is the cinematic montage, which has a long history in filmmaking. In French, *montage* refers to film editing. It is a synonym for cutting the footage into separate sequences or shots and joining them back together into a new composition. As early as in the 1920s, the filmmakers became aware of the power of montage. We learn in the book about the American, Soviet, and British montage traditions. It was the Soviet school that emphasised dynamic, often a discontinuous juxtaposition of the sequences creating a so-called "intellectual montage". The representatives of this style were Dziga Vertov and Sergei Eisenstein, whose experiments and concepts have become a classic for many contemporary film schools. The book discusses these montage traditions together with the styles in ethnographic cinema. It compares disruptive and linear montage, challenging the ethnographic and transcultural values of the final outcomes.

It is the long takes and observational method that we became accustomed to in an ethnographic portrayal. As Alyssa Grossman writes in the eleventh chapter of the book, the long take becomes a cell in a montage. The longer is the sequence, the more disruptive it becomes. The "in-camera montage" that Grossman advocates (p. 204) provokes sensations of immediacy and distance by its ruptured continuity. We could say that 'to a certain extent, montage is already prefigured in lived experience', as Andrew Irving writes in the fourth chapter (p. 77), which means that we use the techniques of montage in our everyday lives without giving much thought to it. We frame, cut away, get a closer look at something, and we move through different sound ambiances. An ethnographic film usually shows these kinds of things without much interruption by the actual editing. An ethnographic film contains less general information, attempts to complete an action within a single shot, rather than trying to show all the scenes in short, dramatic rushes with superfluous value. The priority goes to the open interaction between the portrayed people and ethnographer. The style of long takes and in-camera montage were also known to the members of the Italian neorealism and French *cinéma vérité*. The priority in

these styles goes to the given, less rule-bound and constructive method than customarily seen in a feature or documentary films. In the thirteen chapter, Anna Grimshaw defends the observational filmmaking typical for the ethnographic style and argues that it poses ‘an important challenge to existing conceptions of cinema’ as well as giving ‘a radically different way of thinking about and doing anthropology’ (p. 235). It is doing by looking and consequently watching that we learn about the different socio-cultural domains. Montage, as Catherine Russell points out in the ninth chapter, consists of construction as well as deconstruction. A good ethnographic film balances both. She goes on to say that ‘cinematic montage is more than a formal device, more than a metaphor, but an unstable cultural form in itself’ (p. 180).

‘The key value of cinematic montage derives’, in the authors’ view, ‘from its capacity to disrupt the normative space of naturalistic film footage, thus allowing for a sudden burst in the experience of a multifaceted reality’ (p. 6). The authors also argue that ‘montage provides a technique for evoking the invisible through the orchestration of different perspectives encroaching upon one another’ (p. 4). Emmanuel Levinas and Maurice Merleau-Ponty are two thinkers whose ideas about the invisible and otherness inspired the authors of the book to assemble a rather unusual collection. Some of the chapters contradict each other, which makes a reader ‘experience a multifaceted reality’ (p. 6). The volume is meant to stimulate the readers in creating their own ideas and combinations from the variety of themes. This reviewer is of the opinion that Anne Line Dalsgaard’s chapter, entitled *Being a Montage*, is related to Alyssa Grossman’s *Filming in the Light of Memory*. Why does this reviewer see a link between those two chapters? Both of them deal with the embodiment of lived experience. While one through the written words, the other through long takes in the film. Both are existential in their epistemological sense. This reviewer could imagine using Dalsgaard’s chapter as voice over in Grossman’s film about the memory.

*Transcultural Montage* fulfils the expectations of a reader as much with its contents as it does with its appearance. A couple of things, however, crossed this reviewer’s mind when reading the book. One important topic to discuss would be film’s velocity and how has the montage changed according to it throughout the past decades. Another issue would be to experience the exhibitions that are presented in the fourth part. They should be seen and felt in order to get the sense of the three-dimensional world. The concluding words in the volume belong to George E. Marcus and his afterword: *The Traffic in Montage, Then and Now*. He summarises well what montage does and this reviewer concludes this review with his words: ‘[M]ontage, more than other avant-garde forms of juxtaposition and editing of images, encourages thought and insight about the process of doing, of workshop, of-analogously-fieldwork and being immersed in observations-being-made-into-representations. Montage captures this labour conceptually and as process’ (p. 305). The book is valuable to read for those who are interested in and deal with the contemporary montage practices across the political and cultural boundaries whether it is in a film or a museum.

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**Fassin, Didier and Samuel Lézé (eds.). 2014. *Moral Anthropology. A Critical Reader*. London and New York: Routledge. 388 pp. Pb.: £32.99. ISBN: 9780415627276.**

It seems that nowadays everybody is talking about morality, using words and images relating to it. Didier Fassin and Samuel Lézé provide their readers with the opportunity to dwell on the topic of moral anthropology with their anthology ranging from works dating to previous centuries and up to very recent papers. In this reader, anthropological and philosophical engagements with morality are combined, in which philosophy is crucial as a discipline that has long been reflecting on the topic and which has inspired many anthropological works. With their anthology, Fassin and Lézé attempt a critique of moral anthropology while simultaneously demonstrating how intensively morality emerges in the field of anthropology. Despite targeting a mainly scientific audience, the book is also relevant to a general audience interested in moral or ethical questions.

The book is divided into five main parts, with an additional introduction by Didier Fassin and a conclusion by Samuel Lézé. Each main part has an introduction, which provides the reader with a general overview of the articles presented in it. Significantly, it links the content of each part with the anthology as a whole. This puts the selection of the articles and their placement in the anthology into a contextual relationship.

Each paper is accompanied by a biography and bibliography of the author with a synopsis of the main content of the article. This omnipresent guidance by Fassin and Lézé facilitates the navigation and understanding of the book and allows the reader to be selective.

The first part, *Foundations*, is divided into two sections: *Legacies of moral philosophies* and *Premises of a science of morality*. In the first section, influential works from moral philosophy on anthropology are presented. The spectrum ranges from Immanuel Kant's *Groundwork of the metaphysics of morals*, offering general basics concerning ethics and morality, to Michel Foucault's *Morality and practice of the self*, which examines morality on three levels: morality as a 'moral code', as 'the morality of behaviors' and as 'the manner in which one ought to form oneself as an ethical subject' (p. 41). In the second part, the groundwork of social science on ethics and morality is presented, including amongst others works by Émile Durkheim, Max Weber and Bronislaw Malinowski, which elaborate the interrelations between morality and society, politics, religion and law.

*Positions* is the second section of the anthology. In the attached introduction, Fassin states that there are three principle anthropological and philosophical ways to look at morality, namely the "relativist", "universalist" and "pragmatist" positions (p. 87–8). Two main questions are posed here, which are central for anthropologists interested in morality: 'What is morality?' and 'What should be made of the diversity of morality?' (p. 87). The first question is the main topic of the following subchapter *The location of the moral*, where different definitions of morality and ethics are explained. The second question inspired the selection of the papers for the subchapter *Ethical relativism in question*, where the debate between Clyde Kluckhohn and Clifford Geertz over relativism is presented. Furthermore, with works by Bradd Shore and Steven Lukes, new approaches to this debate are examined relating to morality and moral diversity.

The third part of the book revolves around the title *Descriptions*. Fassin states in his introduction that anthropologists have always been dealing with morality, although the use of the term itself is a new trend, producing new works on the phenomenon. Two of them are the content and title of the included subchapters: *Local ethics* and *Moral economies*. The first part mainly comprises authors who preceded the aforementioned development, such as Lila Abu-Lughod and Michael Herzfeld, revealing their roles as pioneers on the subject and indicating something about the progression of an anthropology of morality. The second part is influenced by the fact that the concept of moral economies is highly diverse and differently interpreted. In order to capture this, the editors present two different theoretical approaches, which were developed by historians and complement them with articles, which are influenced by the particular tendency.

The fourth part is called *Confrontations* and addresses the topic of moral confrontations, as indicated by the title. These confrontations arise in the encounters between the anthropologist and the studied, the so-called “other”. Such confrontation can also be experienced by the anthropologist when he or she studies his or her ‘own’ society, or in the interaction with other anthropologists. There is another side to moral confrontations, the one where war and charity projects meet or development projects and traditional morality encounter each other. Fassin and Lézé cover these topics in the subchapters *Critical situations* and *Practical tensions*.

The fifth and final part of the anthology is called *Prescriptions* and is guided by two main questions: ‘What moral stances do they [anthropologists] adopt?’ and ‘What ethical practice can we expect from the discipline?’ (p. 298). The chapter is divided into two parts: one called *Moralising the world?* the other *Codifying the discipline?* These include works by Nancy Sheper-Hughes, Didier Fassin and David Price, and also include the ethical code of the American Anthropological Association (AAA).

The summary of the main chapters of Lézés and Fassin’s anthology on moral anthropology demonstrates how carefully the editors have chosen the papers for the reader. Beginning with Kant and Nietzsche and arriving at the AAA’s ethical code from 2012 they reveal the historic depth and recent evolution of the anthropology of morality. This variety of articles offers a great introduction to moral anthropology. However, each of the 44 articles or extracts of articles are only a few pages long, thus enabling the reader can only quickly dive into the particular topic before being forwarded to the next paper. However, this also makes the anthology an excellent summary of the whole field, and it provides a sound starting point for research on moral anthropology.

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**Long, Nicholas J. and Henrietta Moore. 2013. *The Social Life of Achievement*. New York, Oxford: Berghahn Books. 238 pp. Hb.: \$95.00 / £60.00. ISBN: 9781782382201.**

On the International Day of Happiness, March 20<sup>th</sup>, one of the websites (<http://www.dayof-happiness.net/happy/>) devoted to this day argues that happiness is not about consumption, beauty or fame, and not about growing the economy, but about giving, relating, exercising, appreciating, experimenting, direction, resilience, emotion, acceptance, and meaning. There is no particular reason to disagree, but at the same time, what is the “direction” and “appreciation” for one person may be the opposite experience for another person. There are many ways to experience those hints of happiness, because they depend on various factors that situate human sense of well-being *here and now*. This book is not about happiness *per se*, but it is about its achievement that is so ‘resistant to definition’ (p.3).

Achievement is one of the norms that should help to measure humans’ engagements with the world. Moreover, it is presumed that whatever one has achieved a pleasant sense of achievement should be experienced, but the reaction, effect or importance of achievement are unpredictable matters. In order to explore the concept of achievement, focussing on ‘the entire social life of achievement’ is suggested (p. 26), because such approach would inform us how imaginatively the world is experienced, as much as before and after the materialised achievement.

The volume consists of a complex theoretical overview of ‘the social life of achievement’ by Nicholas J. Long and Henrietta L. Moore and of ten chapters: the first five focus on affective, physical, embodied forms of experience, and the next two on linguistic transmission of knowledge about it; the final chapters explore how achieving maintains and transforms person’s relations in the world. The authors of this volume do not provide normative definitions of achievement, because they are more interested in how achievement is grounded in a complex human sociality through self-making, self-stylisation, and self-understanding in a particular time and place.

The social lives of achievements are represented through culturally, socially and emotionally diverse case-studies, and the authors suggest that they are more than hedonistic principles, and what is recognised as achievement is an intersubjective and ethical matter, which depends on various dynamic relational factors.

For example, Kathleen Steward focuses on her mother’s life and is interested in ‘how individuation itself happens and how a self achieves whatever counts as “a life”’ (p. 31). Rebecca Cassidy writes about gambler Brian, and how betting on horse races has changed since 1960; it is an enquiry on how the embodiment and materialisation of betting within broader political and economic changes are related to individual reformulations of how achievement is understood and enjoyed.

The next chapter discusses opportunities to acquire performative masculine social identities and reputation by attending bird-racing. Birdsport, which is a sport of luck, is an affective way for men in Guyana to provide and experience a common ground of passion, masculinity, and personality. This common ground circulates different regimes



of achievements and can be heard through a ‘trained’ bird song, or be expressed as an ability to transport or trade birds.

Nicholas Lang analyses achievement as a highly political issue by focusing on what makes a person “an achiever” in various official contests. He questions how in the Indonesian province of Kepri a political agenda may shape beliefs about achievement: how it should be experienced, understood and responded to.

Joanna Cook examines how achievement in meditation practice is understood as “non-self”. Though “non self” is an opposite of what is generally considered to be personal achievement, the author understands it as a personal-making process within cultural and religious narratives that are transforming “meanings”, which are always dialogical and emerging in practices. Olga Solomon explores the relation between autism and success and questions whether particular talented people happen to be autistic, or their success is because of autism. Another chapter is dedicated to the role of money in private equity activities among successful businessmen in the UK.

Susan Bayly focuses on personal success and affective collectivities during the transformation period in Vietnam. By linking families and patriotism, she unpacks how achievement is a diverse and dynamic concept, which coexists with spiritual, commercial, scientific, and empirical realms. The next chapter discusses middle-class culture and schooling, and illuminates how an educational system produces individual achievements through the “hidden/unwritten curriculum” in systematic, relational and ideological schooling conditions. The final thought-provoking chapter is about the experience of achievement as loss by Black girls in American high schools.

In different ways, the volume offers theoretical and conceptual analysis of context-specific experiences and perceptions of achievements. However, there is no concluding section that links diverse chapters. The editors of a book hoped that the readers would individually figure out the conceptual toolkit (promised in the introduction chapter), which would help to understand the nature and effects of achievements. This reviewer is not sure if the toolkit could be grasped, but certainly she has learnt that the focus on the social life of achievement could show various “ways of being” beyond a broad and common scale of “culture”. This reviewer recommends this volume for graduate students and scholars who are interested in the themes of well-being, norms, success, and anthropology of emotions or achievements within various cultural, political environments and economic regimes around the world.

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**Flesher Fominaya, Cristina and Laurence Cox (eds.). 2013. *Understanding European Movements. New Social Movements, Global Justice Struggles, Anti-Austerity Protest*. London, New York: Routledge. 263 pp. Pb.: \$46.95. ISBN: 9781138025462.**

This edited volume is driven by the concern to develop a richer narrative in understanding European Social Movements and propose to discuss and to take European Social Movements seriously and on “its own terms”. What is meant by “own terms” is at least partly answered in their publication, for which they collected 15 essays by 22 authors from 11 different countries.

Sociologists Flesher Fominaya and Cox suggest not dealing with European Social Movements as counterparts to the US experiences in social theory. Rather, they propose to enrich academic research by evolving non-English literature and incorporating European national characteristics while also not missing transnational and global dynamics. The writers from France, Italy, Germany, Spain, Iceland, USA, Hungary, Denmark, Netherlands, Belgium, Ireland and Great Britain whose essays are included in the publication are mainly employed in the social sciences. The analyses are based on ethnographic and historical research throughout Europe. The contributors are spinning webs between concepts of identity, culture, place, autonomy, democracy, protest, development, society, transnationalism, solidarity and community within their research. They are climbing around in this web, attempted to find the next connecting thread, or even the master frame that binds all social movements to one another. All these different own terms, i.e. different contexts and different specific national histories, make this publication unique and inspiring in terms of bringing up examples of social commitment from European citizens.

The editors start in the first chapter by illuminating parts of the theoretical and philosophical history of social movements in Europe from 1960 onwards. After that, the contributors to the publication highlight the eventual precursor role of European movements to contemporary anti-globalisation movements in the second chapter in the form of six essays. They also involve “the movement of movements”, the Global Justice Movement (GJM), whose roots, networks and founding ideas are spread all over the world. The third chapter continues with a closer look at the construction of culture and identity of the European GJM, bringing up examples of cultural diffusion, collective identity and growing transnational tendencies in social uprisings. Finally, the last chapter describes new Anti-Austerity protest in Iceland Greece and Spain.

In the first part, *European theory/European movements*, the editors introduce some famous thinkers and theorists who engaged with or against social movements. They describe how these battles were central to democracy in European history. In addition, Cox and Flesher Fominaya raise a plea for a distinctly European approach in social theory, which should help stop analysis in isolation from the objects of interest, and rather start to contextualise and historicise movements and reflect and shape a wider reality. Self-confidently, the editors are this harsh critique and, fortunately their publication marks a step into the direction they claim to be the right one. They have produced an academic anthology written by people who got involved, who got into contact with their objects of interest and curiously investigated some rooms of the ever-growing large building of social movements from the inside.

However who are these objects of interests? This is what part two is all about and could be described as the constitutive core of the publication. Seven essays are collected under the heading of *European precursors to the Global Justice Movement*. These case studies and comparative accounts take the recipients along into the very reality of social movements in Europe in their specific national contexts. Many authors explain that the fairy-tale version of *one* Global Justice Movement (GJM), the so-called ‘movement of the movements’, is not adequate because the GJM is more of a result to be explained and not to be given characteristics. The question to be answered is from where it originates.

France and its peasantry rose up at the turn of the millennium, preparing fertile soil for the GJM, acting as a milestone for social protest around the globe, and the anti-nuclear movement in Germany shaped the strength and development of global movements. Finally, all of the movements seem to have had an impact on transnational protest. That is what creates an exciting flavour for all of the contributions. Sommier and Fillieule beautifully summarise the question of which movement was the most important forerunner for the GJM in concluding that there is no *one* transnational movements ‘but a mosaic, an amorphous collection of various mobilised groups characterised by the history and special nature of their national roots ...’ (p. 58).

The third chapter focuses on cultural processes involved in forming the GJM. In these four contributions, the writers highlight the concept of identity and cultural characteristics of European transnational protest. Collective identity, autonomy, and diffusion connect these essays’ contents and differences in the written style and thrilling writer-teams shape the form of presenting the topic. The writers characterise Europe as a contagious space where transnationalism and border-crossing are part of the cultural identity.

The fourth part gives an inspiring insight into three exciting movements of recent years, such as the Icelandic Sausage Revolution, the Indignados movement in Spain and the Tunisian uprising in connection to the Greek Anti-Austerity mobilisations. In Kerman Calvo’s conclusions of the Spanish 15-M movement in his essay, he states: ‘Close attention to this social movement could well give us new clues to reconcile ideas about change and continuity that are increasingly relevant in dealing with a systemic political and economy crisis that is shaking all element of the social fabric’ (p. 251). This might be transferred to lots of the movements.

To summarise, this book sets a focus to the obviously lacking academic field of social analysis of movements in Europe and engages scientists to move themselves out of their offices and creates a diverse and rich narrative for more fruitful lines of inquiry about European movements. Social Movements might contain strategies, ideas and methods to save the social fabric from tearing. Concerning the diversity and pluralism that is shown in this book, one can definitely perceive European movements to be vanguards of transnational protest.

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**Crawford, Lizabeth and Katherine Novak. 2014. *Individual and Society. Sociological Social Psychology*. London, New York: Routledge. 547 pp. Pb.: \$89.95. ISBN: 9780415889872.**

The textbook deals with the “sociological kind” of social psychology. ‘What makes this book unique’ is explicitly defined in the introductory chapter: ‘Most social psychology textbooks are psychological in orientation ... Of those social psychology textbooks that are sociological in orientation, most focus solely on symbolic interactionism ... and the qualitative research’ (p. xxiii). According to the authors, the key innovation of the textbook is the equal treatment of all three traditions in sociological social psychology: symbolic interactionism, social structure and personality, and group processes and structures (p. xxiv). The organisation of the textbook follows the authors’ primary strategy, so the differences among three traditions are discussed throughout the book.

Both the form and the content of the textbook contribute to the primary goal of educating undergraduate students about sociological social psychology. The book is well-written and excellently designed. It consists of 13 chapters divided into two parts. Part I presents theoretical perspectives and research methods in sociological social psychology, including all three major positions: symbolic interactionism, social structure and personality, and group processes and structures. Part II deals with the specific topics in sociological/psychological social psychology: socialisation throughout the life course, self and identity, emotions and social life, deviance and social control, mental health and illness, personal relationships, prejudice and discrimination, social influence, social constraint, and collective behavior. Methodology is discussed thoroughly in comparative perspective, and the advantages and criticism of each methodological solution are presented in each chapter of the textbook.

Many appropriate educational tools are used to enhance student’s better understanding of the presented content. Diagrams, tables and glossary at the end of the book are used for that purpose. Furthermore, every chapter contains the *Chapter Summary*, with key facts presented in a table, narrative summary (*Key points to know*), *Terms and Concepts for Review*, and finally, *Questions for Review and Reflection*. In order to help students become familiarised with a specific theoretical approach, each chapter contains boxes with well-chosen examples of relevant research studies and original questionnaires so that students can understand the methodological dimension of the presented approach. For example, the *Twenty Statements Test* introduced by Kuhn and McPartland can be found on p. 82. *What do you think?* boxes conveniently provide insight into multiple layers of the acquired knowledge by referring to everyday life and personal experience.

The authors had another important educational goal: to emphasise and clarify differences between psychological and sociological social psychologies. Their intention is in line with a long tradition of the divided science of social psychology. However, the question is whether the differences between sociological and psychological approaches to the studied subject matter are adequately addressed. The intention to keep psychological and sociological domains separate has proved to be somewhat artificial: psychologi-

cal side of the concept of self-esteem is not discussed, only the *Rosenberg Self-Esteem Scale* is presented, and another accepted scale created by a psychologist (the Coopersmith Scale) is not mentioned (p. 214). Sometimes, drawing the lines of separation just contribute to students' confusion. For example, disciplinary differences in the study of stress are explained as micro(psychology) vs. macro(sociology) perspective (p. 312). The micro-macro dualism is used as the key marker of psychology-sociology difference, which is often misleading, especially within the presented sociological framework of micro orientations in sociology (symbolic interactionism, ethnomethodology). In contrast, the contributions of each of the three schools are emphasised in every domain, even though some adjustment could be done based on the actual contribution of each approach.

Finally, it seems that sociological social psychology is not a consistent discipline, but more a combination of separate paradigms, which are very different and do not even share the same research interest (e.g. qualitative orientation of Symbolic Interactionism vs. quantitative orientation of Social Structure and Personality paradigm). The authors are attempting to set a common umbrella for three approaches within sociological social psychology, instead of acknowledging and clarifying some more natural relations with psychology (in the case of socialisation) and identifying the subtle differences between almost indistinguishable sociological orientation of Group Process and Structures and studies in psychological social psychology (experiments, group tasks). In addition to that, the psychological concepts used are not always properly explained, even though an average student of sociology is not very likely to be familiar with them (*cognitive schema* is defined only in the Glossary, and there is no definition of *cognitive bias*, (p. 216, 219, G-520)). Another question can be raised regarding the presented topics of emotions, mental illness, and social deviation. These topics rather belong to the specific subdisciplines of the sociology of emotions, or the sociology of (mental) health. It is not clear why should these fields be incorporated in social psychology.

The textbook provides solid basics of social psychology for undergraduates in sociology, but it can also be recommended to the students in other fields: psychology and anthropology. In general, the textbook follows the historical parallelism of sociological and psychological social psychology at the expense of better identification of the cross-sectional dimension. The authors should have paid more attention to the implied interdisciplinary perspective of social psychology. It seems that the old tensions between sociology and psychology persist (e.g. the Durkheim-Tarde debate in 19<sup>th</sup> century). Perhaps the complementary nature of sociology-psychology relation should be better addressed in a curriculum for the future sociologists.

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**Konopinski, Natalie (ed.). 2014. *Doing Anthropological Research. A Practical Guide*. London, New York: Routledge. 152 pp. Pb.: £21.99. ISBN: 9780415697552.**

*Doing Anthropological Research*, edited by Natalie Konopinski, offers the reader a practical guide to doing short-term anthropological research that is specifically addressed to advanced undergraduate and graduate students. The volume covers key aspects of conducting research projects, whether these are library-based, based on secondary sources, and/or ethnographic fieldwork.

The sequence of chapters reflects the chronological progress and stages all research projects entail. Tobias Kelly's article (Chapter 1) begins with how to start generating ideas for research, to formulate an adequate research question, and to discuss criteria for selecting an appropriate field site. In contrast, the last article, by John Harries, (Chapter 8) focuses on fashioning a plausible argument and includes tips on planning to write and getting it done. However, in her introductory chapter, the editor emphasises that the practice of doing research is less linear since many research activities take place concurrently and cannot be completed one after the other. To address this fact, each chapter includes a series of key points to highlight the most important aspects and suggestions accompanied by questions that allow to reflect one's own experience at particular stages of the research process. These elements enable quick orientation and selective reading according to the reader's immediate requirements. In addition, the reader follows two fictional students and their respective anthropology projects throughout the chapters. Thereby, typical issues and challenges at all stages of research become vivid and tangible, and students will find themselves familiar with many of the situations described.

Chapter 2 by Laura Jeffery and Natalie Konopinski is about designing a research proposal and planning a project more concretely. The article introduces issues such as primary and secondary research methods, ethical considerations, and language proficiency, which are discussed in detail throughout the following chapters of the book. Furthermore, the authors provide suggestions on setting up a realistic timetable and research budget (particularly if empirical data-gathering will take place abroad).

Neil Thin (Chapter 3) highlights the importance of secondary research since secondary information informs primary research and forms a key element of ethnographic analysis. He gives advice on how to achieve an unbiased portfolio of sources and on making systematic use of secondary data.

Chapters 4 and 5 by Joost Fontein are about doing ethnographic fieldwork. By discussing the work of four anthropologists, Chapter 4 explores the broader question of how anthropological perspectives shape fieldwork methods without arguing in favour of a certain approach. Thereby, the reader shall be enabled to judge on what kind of methods a project will require. Chapter 5 addresses the practicalities of doing fieldwork, such as where and how to live, methods for data gathering and recording, and the importance of language.

Ian Harper (Chapter 6) examines ethical responsibilities to informants, colleagues, and to the broader public at large. In addition, ethical considerations reappear throughout the book, e.g. concerning data protection and risk management (Chapter 2)

and the dissemination of research findings (conclusion by the editor). Whereas the authors take into account that each situation is complex and unique in some way and avoid panaceas and giving the “right” answer. Instead, they encourage students to make considered and justifiable decisions.

Chapter 7, by Lotte Hoek, examines how to organise and analyse the data gathered in the field or library. The author argues that ‘analysis in anthropology is an idiosyncratic practice’ (p. 103), often unsystematic and creative, and focuses on interpreting qualitative data and linking them with theory.

Theoretical debates play a subordinate role since the book aims to ‘leave the lecture theatre behind’ (p. 2) and function as a guide to the practical skills and tools needed to design and conduct a research project. However, despite the fact that many anthropology projects include doing ethnographic fieldwork in postcolonial contexts and countries of the Global South, the volume fails to adequately address the emotional dimension of the fact that many fieldwork situations are entangled in the “politics” of role and resource allocation. The debate on social positioning as part of subject production seems theoretical but may become highly relevant on a practical level when students arrive at their study site. How an ethnographer and an informant perceive one another influences their relationship and how anthropological knowledge is generated. Informants may produce strategic narratives according to their underlying interests and motivation to support the research project. Experiencing the ‘politics’ that shape interactions while doing fieldwork can cause emotional distress, such as feeling overburdened when being faced with informants’ expectations that go far beyond the research objective although the purpose of the ethnographer’s presence has been discussed beforehand. Of course, it is difficult to prepare for situations of this kind, but students should be aware of their emotional implications and how these, in turn, influence the nature of data. Fontein touches some of these aspects in Chapter 4, when he points out that ‘the ethnographer him or herself is the central tool of research’ and that self-reflection is ‘the means by which fieldworkers hone their tools to suit their research projects’ (p. 60). Moreover, Hoek states concerning data analysis that ‘Data is constructed, the anthropologist is positioned’ (p. 105). However, the emotional dimension of dealing with postcolonial continuities in “the field” remains largely unaddressed.

The volume contains a revealing and concise compilation of issues relevant for conducting a research project and is a good companion throughout the overall progress. Its strength lies in the authors’ experiences as teachers and supervisors of student research projects across many areas of social and cultural anthropology. Hence, the book succeeds in sketching many of the highs and lows, the dilemmas and challenges that students are likely to face while carrying out research. To conclude, it can be said that *Doing Anthropological Research* is a valuable read for students who are preparing, conducting, and writing an anthropology research project.

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**Belting, Hans. 2014. *An Anthropology of Images. Picture, Medium, Body*. Princeton, Oxford: Princeton University Press. 216 pp. Pb.: £19.95. ISBN: 9780691160962.**

*An Anthropology of Images* is a wonderful insightful account of a new anthropological theory for interpreting human picture-making. In this book, Hans Belting presents the inspirational and revolutionary but also controversial look at pictures that are linked with our mental images and bodies. He offers to look at a body as a “living medium” from a new research perspective. Above all, the author provides us with a critical presentation of contemporary media studies. Therefore, it gives a stimulating discussion of “embodied” images and the domain of images.

The book has been diligently translated by Thomas Dunlap. It has a well-considered composition and consists of six chapters and an introductory chapter entitled *A New Introduction for the English Reader*. The first one, *An Anthropology of Images: Picture, Medium, Body* reviews specialist literature on image and picture to show the confusion of words and meanings. This is important, Belting openly criticises those points of view that do not capture distinctive features of image and picture. It reveals a shortage of image research that has to be complemented by a new concept of media. However, the problem is a lack of systematic reflection on the types of definitions and their vices. The presented examples of theoretical perspectives’ drawbacks are not exhaustive. However, the author formulates cogently new and remarkable definitions of title image, picture, medium, and body to present interplays between them. They are free from imperfection, chosen and mentioned by him. Simultaneously, he pays particular attention to understanding differences between the ways of thinking about their essences. It is worth emphasising that the author presents the entirely new Pictorial Theory and Media Theory. Nonetheless, Belting’s theories are not coherent with other theories in the field of media studies and anthropology because they are extended to ‘missing links’ (p. 11) between the refreshed theoretical categories. Therefore, the presentation of the author’s theories and their inherent components against a background of the other theories with their typical advantages and disadvantages seem to be so crucial, but it remains as the challenge for Belting and other researchers.

The second chapter, *The Locus of Images: The Living Body* continues the idea of the human body understood as a “living medium” for images. The previous one is necessary to understand that study, so they need to be read in sequence. The author concentrates on body’s capacity for imaginations, supernatural “visions”, dreams, and memory to show its functions. He presents the models of explanation that one useful for analysing the visual type of sources. Many diverse examples show possible ways of for the usage of Belting’s devices. However, there are also theoretical assumptions of the research.

Therefore, the following four chapters contain separate case studies that may be acknowledged merely as the introduction into large-scale research. Nevertheless, they are important for readers because they show the ways of the theoretical approach application. Thus, a central concern of the author is to prove the usefulness of his theories. The third chapter, *The Coat of Arms and the Portrait: Two Media of the Body* traces stages of



portraits' analysis. There, Belting gives the examples to interpret them in accordance with his Pictorial Theory and Media Theory. Moreover, he depicts the history of the modern human portrait to prove that both images of the body, and images of the person are artists' conscious acts and express themselves in ways that are characteristic of their times (p. 62). The author makes the readers aware of the contexts' niceties analysis.

The next chapter entitled *Image and Death: Embodiment in Early Cultures. With an Epilogue on Photography* shows roots of human picture-making (p. 84). It offers a new look at well-known visual sources in order to notice their far unnoticed features. Belting devotes much attention to relations between the presence and absence of the dead in various cultures, which makes the contribution to the development of art history.

The fifth chapter, *Media and Bodies: Dante's Shadow and Greenaway's TV* reveals the interplay between media and bodies the most thoroughly. The author chose to review only one aspect of the image, the relation of the image to the shadow. Belting uses Dante Alighieri's *Divine Comedy* as the vehicle for testing his conceptions (p. 125). Moreover, he frames appearances of the nature of original as well as electronic pictures and ways of stimulating and also simulating our mental images. Passing other theoretical categories in empirical research over is not a mistake but it narrows the analysis's perspective.

The last chapter, *The Transparency of the Medium: The Photographic Image* contains an examination of the ways of photography's social using and private meanings. It presents the connection between photographs as the 'archives of images' (p. 148) and the beholder, especially his life experiences. Undoubtedly, the author makes good use of demonstration of photographs from all over the world and different times to show properties of the long prehistory of picture-making.

Despite the disadvantages mentioned, the book constitutes a highly inspiring work to new research in the field of art history, media studies, and anthropology. Belting succeeds in showing his original and fascinating Pictorial Theory and Media Theory. In addition, he clearly demonstrates how to use them. It overcomes common ways of analysing visual sources and presents astonishing results. Its reading can thus be recommended to all those interested in images research.

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**Blanco, Maria-Jose and Ricarda Vidal (eds.). 2015. *The Power of Death: Contemporary Reflections on Death in Western Society*. New York, Oxford: Berghahn. 260 pp. Pb.: \$100.00 / £63.00. ISBN: 9781782384335.**

This volume aims to combine the study of the contemporary aspects of death as entertainment with death as the natural end of life (p. 4). It also combines disciplines and approaches to the study of death from arts and humanities and social sciences. Perhaps this is one of the reasons that in some chapters death is taboo and generalised while in others it is omnipresent and individualised. Death in this volume is observed from various points: music, the visual arts, exhibition practice, the media, literature, serial killers, longevity, euthanasia, cemeteries and bereavement; in some cases, intimately personal and in others from institutional perspective, all with reference to Western society (p. 4). The essays are organised around five broad themes: *Death and Society*, *Death in Literature*, *Death in Visual Culture*, *Cemeteries and Funerals*, and *Personal Reflections on Death*.

The main weft that goes through almost all chapters of the volume is that the diagnosis of death's disappearance from everyday life is no longer valid. Several authors argue that death has returned to public consciousness with renewed power after a period of suppression (for example chapters 4, 9, 10, 18, etc). This may be true in the context of the presence of death in Western everyday life, but this cannot be used as a general statement about the presence of death in Western society, as this volume clearly shows. In sports, art, music, media and literature, death has never left "the building". In all these different practices, death has been present and inspiration during the period of 'the pornography of death' (Gorer 1955). It is true that in the Western societies individual death was marginalised and institutionalised with the changes in everyday life. However, at the beginning of 21<sup>st</sup> century it seems that it is more present and individualised than ever (see chapters 16, 17, 18).

From this reviewer's point of view, the volume gives an overview of different contexts in which death has a different role and is in a different position. It seems that depending on the everyday life context death adapts its vernacular meaning. A good example of that is chapter by Lala Isla, who compares between death customs of UK and Spain and focuses on changes that happened in the previous thirty-five years, or the customs of her childhood in Spain which was at that time more "traditional" culture and UK were modernisation changed everyday life and customs much sooner than in Spain (Chapter 17). The same thing can be observed throughout the volume. Chapters focusing on more traditional communities are presenting case studies that could be observed in older anthropology of death literature with topics about funerals and new roles of some traditional elements in modern contexts (Chapter 13), while chapters coming from societies that went through changes earlier problematise death and its role in art, sport, literature where it is mostly present in those societies (see chapters 3–14). This reviewer would observe as the final stage of death relationship in the West were the way we die becomes a personal decision; see Chapter 16, by Natasha Lushetich, and Chapter 18, by Briony Campbell

In a way, the volume takes us on a journey from funerals with elements of native faith, through adaptation of funerals in modern times and new circumstances in which old traditional elements are selectively being used in new practices such as Guineans and Bangladeshi funerals in Lisbon (Chapter 15); to societies in which death is not present in everyday life but is aestheticised and “happening to someone else”; and finally coming to chapters about euthanasia and “dad project” in which people confront their own death in very personal way with no institutions and/or customs, beliefs, practices, surrounded by their family and friends, and they decide when to die (Chapter 16), and how to die (Chapter 18).

This volume shows that perhaps death was not, and is not, a taboo in the modern Western world but it merely exists on a different level. Looking at the coverage of the chapters it seems that death as distant death, imagined and aestheticised is still prevailing in the Western world since only a few chapters focus on individual dying and dead body. It seems that death at one side is slowly emerging from a familiar context and becoming institutionalised and alienated, and on the other side it is becoming private and personal more than ever. Reading this volume, we could conclude that death rituals and practices are constantly going through transformation depending on the context in which they exist.

From a technical point of view, it is commendable that chapters reference each other although chapters are very diverse, looking at different aspects of death and dying, and coming from broad range of disciplines. Nevertheless, the reader gets a feeling of integrated and interconnected volume.

This very interesting and inspiring volume has but one weakness. Discussing death in Western society, problematising dark tourism and commemorations (visiting places connected to death as a tourist or a pilgrim, or as a tourist/pilgrim) such as Holocaust concentration camps, World War I and II commemorations, graves of celebrities and national heroes (secular pilgrimage) is unavoidable. These very important practices of the Western (but not just Western) world should have their place in this volume.

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