# BOOK REVIEWS

**REVIEW ARTICLE**

**A Very Personal Anthropology of Mary Douglas**

**Fardon, Richard (ed.). 2013. *Mary Douglas. Cultures and Crises. Understanding Risk and Resolution*. Los Angeles, London: Sage. xiv + 325 pp. Pb.: $52.00. ISBN: 9781446254677.**

**Fardon, Richard (ed.). 2013. *Mary Douglas. A Very Personal Method. Anthropological Writings Drawn from Life*. Los Angeles, London: Sage. x + 318 pp. Pb.: $52.00. ISBN: 9781446254691.**

The two books discussed here are both dedicated to the legacy of one of the most original and influential anthropologists in the second half of the 20th century. The work of Dame Mary Douglas (1921-2007) marks a turning point in the British social anthropology, as it represents a gradual incorporation of structural and symbolic elements into the then-dominant functionalist paradigm. In this, she followed Sir Edmund Leach (1910-1989), but (for the variety of reasons) perhaps went even further – especially in later discussing what German sociologist Ulrich Beck (1944-2015) later labeled 'The Risk Society' – and this makes her very much our contemporary, and also makes one appreciate even more the effort that Richard Fardon (Professor at SOAS, who has written extensively about Douglas, as her Literary Executor and "official" biographer) has put in editing these important volumes. The theoretical insights and methodological rigor that she employed in her research also make Douglas very useful for interpreting some of the perplexities of our everyday, globalised world, with all the challenges that we confront on a daily basis. I will point to some of them in this review essay, although, obviously, the best course of action, and the easiest way to appreciate the scope and importance of her work, would be to read the original texts. In doing so, I will also refer to several recent monographs that deal with the history and theory of sociocultural anthropology.

## Historical setting

After attending school at Sacred Heart Covenant in Roehampton (London), Mary Douglas (born Margaret Mary Tew) completed a degree in philosophy, politics and economics at Oxford in 1942. Influenced by Evans-Pritchard (1902-1973), whose ideas were already setting the tone for a radical revision of British structural functionalism, and following a brief period of work for the Colonial Office, she came back for the graduate studies to the Institute of Social Anthropology at Oxford in 1947. She completed her B.Sc. degree in social anthropology in 1948 and defended her D.Phil. thesis in 1953. According to Adam Kuper,

> … she was always a Durkheimian, convinced that rituals and cosmological notions were bound up with social norms, and as a student at Oxford she had been particularly inspired by the lectures on taboo of Franz Steiner. (Kuper 2014: 121)

Kuper also notes that she made a gradual change in her theoretical orientation, from claiming 'that Evans-Pritchard had anticipated anything that was valuable in Lévi-Strauss's theories' to eventually becoming 'something of a Lévi-Straussian, if an idiosyncratic one' (2014: 121). Douglas's own original fieldwork among the Lele of Kasai (in what was then Belgian Congo) also brought her in contact with Belgian and French scholarship, so Eriksen and Nielsen write that she became 'a bridge-builder between French and British traditions' (2013: 124). Along with Leach, she became the most prominent representative of the "structural turn" in British social anthropology in the early 1960s, sharing ideas and frequently commenting on each other's papers, although the two of them came from radically different starting points, as Leach was a convinced atheist, and Douglas a devout Roman Catholic. Douglas was also a contributor to Leach's ground-breaking edited volume on *The Structural Study of Myth* (Leach 1967).

From the early 1960s, she combined Durkheimian sociology with a critical approach to cultural patterns that different societies produce, focusing on developed Western societies and their relation to 'natural symbols' (Douglas 1966). A particularly interesting aspect of her research has been a re-evaluation of the symbols of ancient Israel, leading her to critical assessment of some parts of the Old Testament – especially the book of Leviticus (Bošković 2010: 144-145).

In retrospect, it is interesting to note that Douglas is the only prominent British social anthropologist who got away with using the "C" word, perhaps because of the time that she spent at two American universities, Northwestern and Princeton. The notion of "Culture" had traditionally been criticised and almost despised by all British social anthropologists, who found it extremely irritating, preferring "social structure" instead. Therefore, they were more than happy to leave this tricky concept to their North American colleagues.

## Douglas as an engaged anthropologist

Fifty years after its initial publication, it is difficult not to overstate the importance of the *Purity and Danger*. In this brilliantly written and well argued book, Mary Douglas not only presented a convincing comparative perspective for interpreting symbols in both "traditional" and "developed" societies, but also did this in such a way as to engage her readers similarly to the way that Ruth Benedict did three decades earlier, in *Patterns of Culture*.

> The book combines an almost orthodox structural-functionalism with a symbolic analysis drawing on structuralist and psychoanalytical models. … In both books [*Patterns of Culture* and *Purity and Danger* – A.B.], the concern is with group identity and values; but whereas Benedict restricts herself to the symbolic aspects of culture, Douglas links symbols to social institutions […]. She sees symbols as means of social classification, which distinguish categories of objects, persons or actions, and keep them separate. The order of the classificatory system reflects and symbolizes the social order, and 'intermediate', 'unclassifiable' phenomena come to represent a threat to social stability (Eriksen and Nielsen 2013: 124–5).

Human beings, Douglas claimed, essentially 'yearned for rigidity' (1966: 162). They wanted to organise all things around them in coherent and non-contradictory segments, resulting in attempts to classify everything into neat, well-ordered, and well-organised systems. However, at the same time, human beings are also very well aware that, after all, these processes of classification, there is always something that eludes them, something "in-between," and "dirt" is an inevitable product of things that somehow just evade ordering. In order to resolve this paradoxical situation, and turning to some specific rituals, human beings need to understand a need to move beyond divisions and contradictions, beyond the need to classify everything, in an effort to reach the 'at-onement,' as she nicely put it (1966: 169).

This take on liminality goes way back in anthropological research (probably to Van Gennep), and Douglas shares it with her contemporary Victor Turner (1920-1983). Over the years, she was also present as what I would like to describe as a public (or engaged) intellectual, speaking on different issues, but also taking the opportunity to re-work some of her ideas and reinforce some arguments, using prominent figures from the history of social anthropology. For example, in one of her lesser known texts, Douglas used William Robertson Smith's (1846-1894) ideas related to 'the triumph of gods over demons to the triumph of man over wild beasts' (quoted in Douglas 1995: 274) to demonstrate how 'a change in society, not a change in technology' influenced a development of a particular type of rationality, as outlined in the Old Testament (1995: 276). She proceeded to make a point about reconsidering what many would interpret a very conservative, gender-biased view present in the Bible (especially in Leviticus), avoiding 'ethnographic dazzlement,' and concluding that 'the emotions which their [demons – A.B.] interventions serve to allay are grave fears of community dissolution and the anguish of divided loyalties' (1995: 292).

In another of her highly influential books, *Natural Symbols* (1970), Douglas formulated a "group/grid" analysis (dealing with how clearly was an individual's position defined within boundaries of a group / how clearly defined was an individual's role with regard to the whole system of social obligations and responsibilities) that has profoundly influenced some important theoretical concepts (like *cultural theory*), but also the ways in which we perceive the role of individuals in societies in which they live and the issue of the whole Durkheimian (that is to say, collectivist) legacy of sociocultural anthropology.

## Douglas as our contemporary

The "public intellectual" persona is most visible in the volume *Cultures and Crises*. The book is divided into three parts: *Cultural Theory* (the concept for which one of her long-standing collaborators, Michael Thompson, is primarily responsible), *Culture and Climate*, and *Institutionalized Risks*. Of the thirteen chapters in the book (all papers published after 1993), those in the second and third parts are also written in collaboration with different scholars, which creates a unique, almost dialogical, atmosphere. This also makes this volume an example of a successful collaborative effort by Douglas and eleven other scholars (twelve, if one includes Fardon) – a splendid opportunity to reformulate

and rethink concepts and ideas very much related to our lives and daily concerns. For example, when discussing approaches to climate change, in the article originally published in *Daedalus* in 2003, Douglas, Thompson and Marco Verweij conclude:

> Does global warming put the future of the world at risk? Is time running out? Or should we take our time in order to investigate and evaluate soberly the possible risks presented by greenhouse gases?
>
> We don't have answers to these questions. But our cultural theory teaches us that vigorous debate among rival perspectives is the best way to address them. That is because the issue of global warming will never be resolved simply by making a rational choice on strictly scientific grounds. It is a battle, as well, between groups of actors with different perceptions of time that derive from conflicting ways of organizing and justifying social relations (Fardon 2013: 144).

This is a very good example of the critical analysis that takes into account different actors' perspectives and points of view. This also shows that answers to some of the more complex questions of our time sometimes demand a step back, away from heated polemical arguments. For the world in which we live is too important and too fragile to be left to people screaming at each other. Perhaps the important first step could be listening what different actors have to say. Critical considerations of risk in different institutional settings not only make for new applications of the "group/grid" analysis but in many instances (like studying terrorism from a Cultural Theory perspective) seem perhaps even more appropriate and fruitful today than when originally published. The same probably goes for Douglas's plea (or stating the obvious) that we have had enough about 'traditional culture,' because there is 'no such thing as traditional culture' (Fardon 2013: 285).

The second volume, *A Very Personal Method*, presents twenty-five chapters (including two interviews), in five parts plus an *Epilogue*, almost from Douglas's entire career (the earliest paper reprinted here was originally published in 1959). This volume offers valuable insights into the development of her main ideas, as well as her ongoing theoretical debates with some of her contemporaries. For example, Kuper notes that, even with their ideological disagreements, Leach for a time referred to the 'Leach-Douglas theory of taboo' (2014: 123). This book includes some of the gems of Douglas's anthropological writing and argumentation and, more importantly, brings to contemporary readers some valuable papers that are not very easy to find in their original publications. It also nicely combines personal narratives (including essays on her father, as well as on her grandmother – as we all are very much determined by the families that we come from and societies in which we live) with skilful portraits of some contemporary anthropologists (Part 4, *Contemporaries: Steiner, Evans-Pritchard, Lévi-Strauss, and Clifford Geertz*). Part 3, *Taboo and Ritual*, although one of the briefest in terms of space, will be of particular interest to anyone interested in understanding her ideas about the key concepts of her research, as they were formulated in three papers published between

1964 and 1968. Of course, some historical considerations are still vital – like the fact that Douglas was very much annoyed by what she perceived to be the Second Vatican Council's "anti-ritualist" position.

These two volumes present her as very much our contemporary, and explain why she was, according to Fardon, the most widely read British social anthropologist of the second half of the 20th century. Fittingly enough, especially given the topics that they cover, both of the volumes finish with two beautiful "Endpieces" – the first one, with Oscar Wilde's '"Selfish Giant," and the second one, with the Brothers Grimm's "Golden Fish". Perhaps the last sentence in the second one can be applied to illustrating the presence of the concepts that Mary Douglas developed in her anthropological career spanning sixty years: 'And there they live to this very day' (p. 308).

## References

Bošković, Aleksandar. 2010. *Kratak uvod u antropologiju. [A Brief Introduction to Anthropology.]* Zagreb: Jesenski i Turk.

Douglas, Mary. 1966. Purity and Danger: An Analysis of Concepts of Pollution and Taboo. London: Routledge & Kegan Paul.

Douglas, Mary. 1970. Natural Symbols: Explorations in Cosmology. London: Barrie & Rockliff, Cresset Press.

Douglas, Mary. 1995. Demonology in William Robertson Smith's Theory of Religious Belief. In William Johnstone (ed.), William Robertson Smith: Essays in Reassessment. Sheffield: Sheffield Academic Press, pp. 274-292.

Eriksen, Thomas Hylland, and Finn Sivert Nielsen. 2013. A History of Anthropology. 2nd edition. London: Pluto.

Kuper, Adam. 2014. Anthropology and Anthropologists: The British School in the Twentieth Century. 4th edition. London: Routledge.

Leach, Edmund (ed.). 1967. The Structural Study of Myth and Totemism. ASA Monographs, 5. London: Tavistock.

ALEKSANDAR BOŠKOVIĆ
*University of Belgrade and Institute of Social Sciences (Serbia)*

**Inhorn, Marcia C., Wendy Chavkin and José-Alberto Navarro (eds.). 2014. *Globalized Fatherhood*. New York, Oxford: Berghahn Books. 419 pp. Hb.: $120.00/£75.00. ISBN: 9781782384373.**

This intriguing collection of essays on the way men from different geographical settings and cultural contexts engage in fatherhood is intended to fill a gap in social science literature, where women have overwhelmingly been the focus of attention. Regarding parenthood, tendentially research has dealt with women as mothers and caretakers, somehow eclipsing fathers out of the picture. Whenever fathers have been studied, they have mostly been white and middle-class, part of conventional Western nuclear families.

This volume is intended to address this omission by taking as its main subject men as fathers, exploring the principles that inspire their fatherhood; their intimate wishes and concerns, as well as the practices and attitudes that shape their way of relating to their children. The reader delves into different situations and contexts, each portraying different notions of fathering, as well as strong values that impinge and mould fathers' actions or determine their inaction, showing how strong cultural diktats may impede men's full realisation as fathers, giving rise to internal struggles and painful frustrations when prospective fatherhood does not turn into reality. One of the book's recurrent themes is the thoughtfulness and careful considerations fathers and potential fathers voice, anticipating future crisis or working to minimise impending problems, shedding light on the willingness to fulfil the parental role with an array of stratagems and considerable planning. Equally recurring is fathers' flexibility and willingness to bend strong cultural notions of gender, and adapt to ever-changing economic and social landscapes. A number of contributions consider the intersection of fatherhood with masculinity and men-as-fathers' response to life-altering events such as infertility, illness, migration, and war. The use of reproductive technologies and its consequences on the self-perceptions of prospective fathers is well represented. What the material provided shows is a diverse picture of emergent masculinities that include enactments and embodiments of fatherhood in a context of continuous and profound change, affecting both the social world and the family structure. Together with heteronormative, conventional family formations, the book portrays emerging forms of family constituted by gay couples, shedding light on both biological and social fatherhood and on the reasons why, for some, one eclipses the other. The book gives visibility to an otherwise silenced cohort of men in their role as fathers in locations as varied as Asia (Japan, Indonesia, the Philippines, Vietnam, China), the Middle East (Gaza, Iran), South America (Peru, Mexico) and Africa (Nigeria) in addition to Europe (Spain, Turkey, the U.K.), the U.S. and Australia. It is divided into eights parts with different sub-themes, each containing two chapters; the authors are social scientists engaging in interdisciplinary fields, ranging from medicine and public health to demography and social policy.

As the useful and valuable *Introduction*, by Inhorn, Chavkin, and Navarro, points out, the book offers a variety of tropes and a new vocabulary to theorise fatherhood, conveniently summarised in a Table (pp. 8-11) highlighting the key themes. These undoubtedly offer valuable tools to approach not only fatherhood but also gender and

kinship more broadly, enriching and deepening its gaze on the family in the rapidly evolving, global and transnational social landscapes of the 21st century.

The section on *Corporate Fatherhood* considers the attitude to parental leave policy in European (Browne) and Japanese (North) corporate work, showing how corporate constraints inhibit parental involvement, despite some changes in fathers' approaches to fatherhood.

In the section on *Transnational Fatherhood*, Leinaweaver highlights the concept of father-as-provider and compares and contrasts the Spanish adoptive fathers of Peruvian children with Peruvian migrant fathers, forced by circumstance to leave their children behind and exercise their fatherly duties from afar. Lam and Yeoh deal with long-distance mothering and the figure of left-behind fathers in Indonesia and the Philippines, illustrating new forms of the construction of intimacy between dispersed family members.

In the section on *Primary Care Fatherhood*, Thao shows the implications of female labour migration for stay-at-home fathers and their struggle to adapt to changing gender roles in Vietnam. The chapter by Birenbaum-Carmeli, Diamand, and Yaman presents the challenges faced by Palestinian fathers from Gaza, forced to cross the border to accompany their sick children to Israeli oncology hospitals for long-term treatment. These fathers transcend traditional gender roles and effectively provide constant care for their children, despite their difficult circumstances.

The section on *Clinical Fatherhood* includes Wentzell's chapter on Mexican men and their willingness to enact "progressive" masculinity and "modern" fatherhood by embracing a holistic vision of health following their participation in a study of HPV transmission. Kahn and Chavkin's chapter addresses the enduring primacy attributed to the male gamete in their consideration of sperm marketing in the U.S. and the legislation on third-party sperm use elsewhere.

The section on *Infertile Fatherhood* shows, through Gürtin's chapter, the centrality of procreation as a crucial life goal for Turkish families, illustrating infertile couples' engagement with ART processes, and the strict prohibition on donor sperm use. Inhorn's contribution demonstrates the incidence of male infertility amongst Arab men and their willingness to engage in multiple costly reproductive technology practices abroad, highlighting emergent masculinities that contemplate both conjugal and fatherly love.

In the section on *Gay/Surrogate Fatherhood*, Dempsey considers the use of commercial surrogacy by Australian gay men, and how their concerns over their children's future inform their selection of oocyte donors and surrogates, and their post-birth relationships with them. Rudrappa describes U.S. and Australian gay men's involvement with commercial surrogacy in India and its implications, considering that surrogate mothers are inaccessible due to local legislation. Parenting is accomplished through the careful and systematic building of "caring communities" for the benefit of the children.

The section on *Ambivalent Fatherhood* includes Smith's material on Igbo-speaking Nigerian fathers and the complex and contradictory pressures they endure through contrasting values of masculinity and of fatherhood. Tremayne's chapter offers a glimpse of Iranian fathers and their traditional patriarchal, controlling, authoritarian

role, which remains largely incontestable given the danger of losing face, with severe social implications. Often paternal authority justifies psychological and physical violence towards disobedient children.

In the final section, *Imperiled Fatherhood*, Greenhalgh elucidates the social and personal risks faced by Chinese bachelors, victims of the one-child policy social engineering. Doubly stigmatised for being single and rural, they are considered a burden that impedes the nation's modernisation. Finally, Kilshaw's chapter is devoted to U.K. veterans suffering from Gulf War Syndrome and their painful feeling of being damaged and toxic, that extends to their experience of both masculinity and fatherhood, powerfully impacting family life.

This engaging and comprehensive collection will be appreciated not only by kinship, gender and family studies scholars but also by anyone interested in contemporary ethnographic anthropology.

GIOVANNA BACCHIDDU
*Pontificia Universidad Católica and ICIIS (Chile)*

**Steyn, Juliet and Nadja Stamselberg (eds.). 2014. *Breaching Borders: Art, Migrants and the Metaphor of Waste.* London, New York: I.B. Tauris. 298 pp. Hb.: £58.00. ISBN: 9781780762593.**

What borders do authors have in mind when discussing the metaphor of waste? Where could the intersection between art, migrants and "waste" be? Is the metaphor of waste really just a metaphor? What or who is being wasted? These are just a few questions that might rush through readers' minds before starting to read this excellent collection of articles entitled *Breaching Borders: Art, Migrants and the Metaphor of Waste*. The book, edited by Juliet Stayn and Nadja Stamselberg, is a collection of eleven essays written by leading scholars and also less well-known researchers in political philosophy, post-colonial and cultural studies, art, translation, policy making, and sociology. Social scientists, including Zygmunt Bauman and Nikos Papastergiadis, or art theorists like Marina Gržinić , Charles Green, Anthony Gardner and others, translator Karen Seago, or Christian Sørhaug, who based his essay on a recently completed PhD on globalisation, are all committed to deconstructing conventional notion of borders, to thoroughly rethink migration and identity theories, to reflect on 'waste' and discourses of art, politics, nationalism and belonging.

In the *Introduction* to the book, editors Stayn and Stamselberg describe in a very intense and compact manner the main aim of the book and provide a background for this uncommon set of topics. In *Breaching Borders*, authors 'explore figurations and re-articulations of migration to unpack assumptions of migrant identity as "waste" that go undeclared at the borders of discourse.' (p. 1) One common feature of this collection of articles is that they try to shed light or provide fresh insights into the 'potential catastrophe of wasted human existence'. They are focused on 'the marginal, the migrant and the impact of policy at the core of European dysfunction'. (p. 1) To make a point, authors are intentionally depicting migrants unilaterally, as homogenous masses destined to be wasted/become waste in the centre or at the verges of Fortress Europe.

As the central metaphor, waste provides several starting points for discussion. The authors, using different approaches, explore challenges of migration, modernisation, integration, identity, belonging and history. Editors reveal that the inspiration or initial idea for the *Breaching Borders: Art, Migrants and the Metaphor of Waste* came from two different, though related sources: a book (Zygmunt Bauman, *Wasted Lives: Modernity and its Outcasts*; worth considering as excellent further reading) and an art exhibition (*Raising Dust: Encounters in Relational Geography*, curated by a novelist and editor Richard Appignanesi). Both distinguished authors contribute to *Breaching Borders* by shaping the discussion on waste in connection to politics and art. Bauman writes of wasted lives as modernity's collateral casualties. His philosophy gives the current "migration crisis" in Europe yet another perspective. Human talents, skills and eventually lives of many are wasted in the nowadays current global problem of human redundancy, and people are indefinitely kept in refugee camps or ghettoised in the name of order building and economic progress.

Looking at art and artistic expression, Nicos Papastergiadis calls attention to a new paradigm on mobility and writes about the role of art in imagining multicultural communities. Starting from the notion, that art 'always plays a critical role in our understanding of politics and ethics' he presents two case studies on recent art projects where artists address 'the extreme points of mobility and territory in the construction of agency' (p. 57).

Due to this review's space limitations, all papers cannot be taken into account. For that reason, I will point out only two more papers included in the *Breaching Borders* anthology. In first, Europeanness or European identity, as pictured in twenty-five short films in the project *Visions of Europe*, is revisited by Nadja Stamselberg. In the other, Christian Sørhaug is focusing on the consumption, waste, and identity of indigenous Warao people of the Orinoco Delta in Venezuela.

Stamselberg, questioning the existence of ethics behind the aesthetics of *Visions of Europe*, carefully analyses, categorises and interprets all 25 films with the aim to 'challenge the relations of belonging that exclude'. (p. 73) Using Derrida's notions she questions the established concept of belonging and calls for the reinterpretation of European identity. Sørhaug's paper is worth mentioning for two reasons: placed at the very end of the book it is in juxtaposition to all previous articles in the book not only by the perspective it takes on waste, but also by the title, *Foraging for Love*. By showing that consumption of foreign goods by the Warao people is connected to the ideas of the self and also that garbage has value, Sørhaug argues against the traditional interpretation of indigenous peoples as passive victims of globalisation. Instead, he sees them as active participants in the process in which garbage/foreign goods are appropriated to fit their everyday lives. With the words of editors: in his argumentation '"waste" is transformative and translated into an active force of self-identity'. (p. 21)

The authors in *Breaching Borders: Art, Migrants and the Metaphor of Waste* are actually 'breaching borders' in several aspects. They are breaching arbitrary borders between social sciences, humanities, and arts; they study and discuss unconventional interrelations between different discourses, notions, and challenges; and confront the reader with (to some extent) disturbing political and cultural meanings of migration. Additionally, their argumentation is breaching even those thin and resisting lines between migration and mobility, arts and politics, local and global, modernism and post-modernism.

This collection of essays is richly illustrated with black and white photographs taken from different art projects dealing with migration, identity, belonging and other related subjects. It is a welcomed re-evaluation of "les grand concepts" in contemporary migration and identity studies, and therefore a must-read material for the students, activists and academics alike.

KRISTINA TOPLAK
*Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts (Slovenia)*

**Schechter, Kate. 2014. *Illusions of a Future: Psychoanalysis and the Biopolitics of Desire.* Durham: Duke University Press. 288 pp. Pb.: $23.95. ISBN: 9780822357216.**

The role of psychoanalysis and psychotherapy in shaping the modern and then the postmodern/neoliberal self has been the subject of much debate in the social sciences. Following Foucault and Nikolas Rose, much attention has been paid to the way in which analysts and therapists become technicians for the creation of particular kinds of subjectivities. Less attention has been paid to the subjective self-shaping of therapists themselves and the processes by which a particular kind of personhood is cultivated as the tool through which other persons can be reshaped. James Davies' excellent ethnography of psychoanalytic training at one of London's most prestigious institutes is a notable exception. Schechter's new monograph describing the changing nature of the Chicago psychoanalytic community marks a valuable addition to this short list.

Schechter's main focus is on the effects of neoliberal reforms upon the relationship between analyst and patient and subsequently upon the self-identity of the psychoanalyst herself. In the post-war years, conventional long-term psychoanalysis was often the only form of mental health intervention available and it was supported largely through medical insurance programmes. This meant that the analyst was able to maintain what she might consider to be an appropriate distance from the patient who could become emotionally dependent upon the analyst in order for the therapist to interpret their transferences of unresolved childhood traumas on to the analyst. In recent decades, however, health insurers have moved towards a financially driven desire to limit analysis or replace it with quicker, cheaper and more "evidence based forms of therapy. As a consequence, the ability to do "proper" psychoanalysis of at least four sessions a week has dwindled, as few private patients can afford such regular commitment to long long-term analytic work. The psychoanalysts have gone from a position of self-appointed superiority over other therapists to one of anxious self-doubting, constantly questioning whether or not they or their colleagues are "really" doing analysis anymore, or are "just" doing therapy instead when they are seeing patients over a short term or at weekly intervals. When the psychoanalyst becomes increasingly openly dependent on her patients for whatever number of sessions she can convince them to commit to, then what does this dependence do to the relationship that classical analysts liked to cultivate of one-way dependency of the patient upon the analyst and her interpretative skills?

This question of the relationship between patient and analyst is at the heart of the problems that analysts face in the world of neoliberal accounting that seeks to discipline the analyst as much as it seeks to use the analyst as a tool to discipline others. By removing the analyst's financial independence, it makes the analyst dependent upon the patient in a manner that throws the nature and meaning of the analytic relationship into doubt. Schechter describes how these changes have led many Chicago psychoanalysts to focus more on how the analytic relationship itself is the factor leading to therapeutic change: a shift in focus that is viewed with considerable scepticism by many who argue that it is the interpretation that they can offer from a position of expertise in the course of long-term intensive psychoanalysis that is central. Schechter does a good job of describing the ways

in which the rise of the relationship, 'can best be understood through an examination of the organiational contexts of its emergence' (p. 5), by which she means the neoliberal reforms of insurance-provided healthcare in the USA.

There would be a danger in pushing this analysis too far, however. Although Schechter illustrates well how Chicago psychoanalysts have been driven to query the importance of the analytic relationship versus analytic interpretation, in creating a "relational" and "neoliberal" form of psychoanalysis, the move towards the relational and away from expert interpretation has a long history in psychotherapy more generally. It is, for example, the central tenet of Roger's development of "person-centred" psychotherapy in the 1940s. Roger's break from the idea of therapist as expert interpreter and his proclamation that the quality of the therapeutic relationship was the fundamental factor not only predates the schisms going on amongst contemporary Chicago psychoanalysts, but it has been immensely more influential on how therapy is practiced, Rogers being widely regarded as only second in importance to Freud in the history of psychotherapeutic practice. It may have been the influence of neoliberal reforms that pulled some classically trained analysts down from their Olympus of interpretative expertise, but it would be a mistake to draw from this the conclusion that the move to the relational more generally is simply an opportunistic adaptation to changing forms of economic governance. Likewise, although Schechter does an excellent job of outlining how neoliberal reforms have led to an intensification of the relational in this particular therapeutic community, it is easy to construct a picture that might view this as the exception rather than the rule. The introduction of National Institute for Health and Care Excellence (NICE) guidelines governing the availability of mental health support in the UK are often derided as being part of a neoliberal restructuring of government health services in the UK. Furthermore, one of the main reasons for that criticism, from advocates of psychodynamic and person-centred forms of therapy alike, is that their desire to promote short term, cost effective and allegedly "evidence based" forms of therapy, leads to a stranglehold for therapies such as Cognitive Behavioural Therapy (CBT), in which relationship is downplayed in favour of the implementation of a toolbox of techniques designed to fix the patient's faulty thought patterns in the course of six sessions.

None of this should detract from the excellent job that Schechter has done in this book of outlining the changing self-perception of this particular analytic community and how those changes are intimately tied in with the changing political, economic context within which they operate. For anyone interested in exploring new angles on the meaning of contemporary psychotherapy or neoliberal subjectivity then this well-researched and intellectually provocative book will be a valuable addition to the debate.

KEIR MARTIN
*University of Oslo (Norway)*

**Fuglerud, Øivind and Leon Wainwright (eds). 2015. *Objects and Imagination. Perspectives on Materialization and Meaning (Material Meditations Vol. 3).* 270 pp. Pb.: $34.95. ISBN: 9781782385660.**

The volume *Objects and Imagination. Perspectives on Materialization and Meaning* in the series *Material Mediations: People and Things in a World of Movement* is a collection of articles exploring the importance of social imagination in the study of material culture, aesthetics and art and is intended as a contribution to the 'material turn' in the social sciences (p. 1-24). The editors are Øivind Fuglerud, Professor of Social Anthropology at the Museum of Cultural History at the University of Oslo, and Leon Wainwright, reader in Art History at the Open University (UK), Kindler Chair in Global Contemporary Art at Colgate (New York), and editor-in-chief of the *Open Arts Journal*.

In addition to the editors' introduction, the book contains eleven chapters with empirical studies, grouped into three thematic parts that are overlapping, Museums (I), Presence (II), and Art (III), as well as a list of illustrations, notes on contributors and an index. The cover shows a detail from Ahmet Moustafa's work *The Attributes of Divine Perfection* (1987), displayed at the St Mungo Museum of Religious Life and Art in Glasgow, thus illustrating Saphinaz-Amal Naguib's article *Materializing Islam and the Imaginary of Sacred Space* at the same exhibition (p. 64-80).

In the words of Birgit Meyer, Professor of Religious Studies at Utrecht University and one of the contributors, the purpose of the book is to 'take objects as entry points to synthesize the still quite separate fields of inquiry into materiality, on the one hand, and imaginaries, on the other' (p. 160). The question, according to the editors, is the 'specificity of the social imagination as it produces human relationships and comes to have a distinctive impact on them' (p. 20).

Each chapter is a case study that sheds light on the intersection between imaginaries and materiality, in a variety of contexts and cultures: contemporary Iroquois art (Sylvia S. Kasprycki, Chapter 1), two exhibitions in Switzerland and Denmark (Peter Bjerregaard, Chapter 2) and one Islamic art exhibition in Scotland (Saphinaz-Amal Naguib, Chapter 3), remittances to the Mbuke of Papua New Guinea (Anders Emil Rasmussen, Chapter 4), national rituals among Tamil migrants in Norway (Stine Bruland, Chapter 5), food presentations among Tongans (Arne Aleksej Perminow, Chapter 6), battles with ghosts in Southwest China (Katherine Swancutt, Chapter 7), Christian objects and imagination in Ghana (Birgit Meyer, Chapter 8), art in urban Aboriginal Australia (Fiona Magowan, Chapter 9) and in Tamil Nadu (Amit Desai and Maruška Svašek, Chapter 10), and whiskey advertisements in India (Tereza Kuldova, Chapter 11).

A common thread that runs through the different case studies is how the 'material world comes into being, how its objects are seen and used, and how they acquire and change value and meaning' (p. 1). Fuglerud and Wainwright suggest a model for understanding 'what the object *is* in any meaningful sense of the word' (p. 20). This has four concentric circles, with "object" in the centre, marked by dotted lines, probably signalling its openness (Figure 0.1, *Objects and imagination*). The next circle is 'situated production, creativity, individual imagination', with 'institutional field' around it, and the

'field of the socially imagined' in the outer circle.

Some of the case studies are informative, for example, Birgit Meyer's study of 'how pictures matter', a material approach to religious imaginaries, grounded in solid empirical research of Christianity and media in South Ghana (pp. 160-186). Meyer analyses the role of pictures and media in practices of religious mediation and shows how the Ghanaians' engagement with cheap, mass-produced Jesus pictures and props 'shapes the habitus of the people involved' (p. 178). In addition, the religious images prepare the ground for their religious experiences by enabling the worshippers to see "beyond" this world. As such, she convincingly argues, this case shows that 'imaginaries not only represent the world', but also 'take part in making it' (p. 162).

Stine Bruland's chapter (pp. 93-110) on national symbols and objects in the *maveerar naal* ritual performed by Tamil migrants in Oslo discusses the importance of aesthetics in people's understanding and experience of the world. The ritual in question is performed by Tamil supporters of the Liberation Tigers of Tamil Eelam (LTTE), which carefully stages it. For that reason, it follows the same pattern in the Tamil diaspora worldwide, where it gains its power from its ability to meaningfully bridge the gap between the homeland and the migrants' daily life and grievances in exile. Moreover, Bruland notes, it paves the way for continued support for the LTTE.

Katherine Swancutt's study of protective magic, ritualised warfare, and exorcism among the Nuoso in South China is an analysis of efforts to control troublesome ghosts (pp. 133-159). In ritualistic battles, plant and animal products are used to lure the ghosts into firing range, a trap in which they can be exorcised. This is done by transforming the adversaries' ghostly effigies into mere symbols or representations. However, as there is always a risk of ghostly counter-attacks, the exorcism also involves 'imaginative precautions against the possibility that ghosts could hijack the effigies, "animate" them and overturn their ontologically safer status as mere representations' (p. 157). Swancutt's chapter is thus a fascinating study of the complexities of the human imagination.

Sometimes the theoretical discussions in the book are very vague in character, or state the obvious, for example when the editors in line with Howard Morphy write that the 'knowledge, interpretations and experiences that people bring to bear on objects cannot be reduced to individual agency, nor can they be thought of as contained in the objects themselves' (p. 5). Whether fuzzy terms like "social imagination" and "social imaginary" really bring the analysis forward is debatable. In any case, *Objects and Imagination* offers some original studies and interesting examples of 'how the material embodies and influences our idea of the social world' (cover).

CECILIE ENDRESEN
*University of Oslo (Norway)*

**Brown, Michael F. 2014. *Upriver. The Turbulent Life and Times of an Amazonian People*. Cambridge, Massachusetts, London: Harvard University Press. 321 pp. Pb.: $29.95/£22.95/€27.00. ISBN: 9780674368071.**

This beautifully written book is the personal story of the journeys of American anthropologist Michael Brown, a seminal scholar on leadership in Amazonia, to the Peruvian Amazon: firstly, in the 1970s when he lived with the Awajún people, and then in 2012 when he returned to the site of his earlier fieldwork. The title of the monograph, *Upriver*, is highly appropriate as the Jivaroan-speaking Awajúns live in the upper water sources of the Amazon. Moreover, "upriver" also constitutes a metaphorical reference to the challenges confronting these people, which are similar to those of other indigenous groups in the region. *Upriver* is both topical and timely because the people followed by Brown's narrative are pivotal figures in Peruvian indigenous politics.

The book is divided into two parts, the first supplying rich details of the community and its events during Brown's first fieldwork in 1976–1978, and the second focusing on the period between 1980 and 2012. Part I, comprising approximately two thirds of the book, presents lively yet careful descriptions of the characters and their personalities, taking the reader into the field, while Part II analytically relates the case study to theories dealing with the development of the state, hierarchical societal systems, and (de)centralised power; it also provides greater contextualisation within global and Peruvian politics.

The organisation of the chapters makes the book a dynamic reading experience. For instance, in Chapter 5, entitled *Puzzle Pieces*, the author brings together topics that at first may seem dissonant, such as marriage practices, beer-drinking parties, forced entry to the world of bureaucracy, land titles, and money, to produce a harmonious compendium. The following chapters demonstrate how Christianity is lived in Amazonian indigenous society, noting that while its acceptance often reduces the consumption of fermented manioc beer and the practice of seeking visions through the use of shamanic plants, fear of sorcery and witchcraft accusations remain. In the more analytical Part II, it is argued that sorcery continues to exist due to lack of trust in communal relations and because it provides comfort when facing illness and death (p. 221). The author posits the life of the Awajún as unstable; there have been so many setbacks from epidemics, exploitation, and colonial suppression that the people no longer feel secure, rather recognising sorcery even in intimate relations.

The Awajún are known not only for combativeness, the practice of sorcery, and violence, but also for a high rate of suicides, a subject which Brown addresses in this book although he has preferred not to discuss it in his previous publications. He regards suicides and attempts or threats to commit suicide as a reaction to frustration, not receiving enough assistance, and weak relations among kin. Ethical questions are also brought under examination as Brown openly writes about his critical position in a field in which children are accused of sorcery and people seek revenge with murder. *Upriver* also reveals women's attitudes to their private relationships. Brown's partner, Margareth, joined his fieldwork at one point, providing him with knowledge of women's expectations

and opinions regarding their spouses and the future of their children, and also the secrets of caring for their gardens.

Several Awajún have become prominent political actors in Peruvian indigenous politics, some of them well-known cosmopolitan figures who travel extensively abroad. Many Awajún have entered universities, aiming to boost the value of their knowledge and ways of knowing in academia. Despite criticism of the actions of the Catholic Church and American missionaries, the author reminds readers that religious groups active in the rainforest introduced literacy to indigenous peoples, which has provided them with an empowering tool for registration and participation in the issues concerning them. Paperwork seems only to increase through governmental policies and bureaucracy in the world of the projects.

As the author explains in Part II, by the time of his return to the Alto Mayo after 30 years, the region had transformed so greatly that, due to increasing colonial settlements and agribusiness, it was difficult to locate all the Awajún settlements of his previous fieldwork. It has been claimed that the Peruvian government has parcelled out 72% of its Amazon rainforest area to logging and petroleum companies, and the subsistence economy of the Awajún has been altered dramatically. Urbanisation has impacted many groups, and large numbers of people are now mobile, shifting between towns, villages, and semi-urban settlements. Thus, the book offers crucial insights into the social reality of the local people and their struggle during a time of profound alteration.

Awajún leaders (e.g. Eduardo Nayap) have been pivotal figures in pressuring the government to instigate free and prior consultation affected groups whenever any economic acts are planned for indigenous territories, and also to improve the quality of education. Practice, however, is far from theory. In 2009, for instance, a violent incident occurred in Bagua when mostly Awajún and Wampi protesters started a peaceful demonstration, only to be attacked by police using firearms. In contemporary turbulent times, the Awajún are increasingly finding comfort in different religious groups as well as from their shamanic plants.

The fact that Brown reflects on his experiences over a long period of time makes this book as an extraordinary trip to the heart of the tropics. In contrast, entering into greater detail about personal histories in the contemporary period would have balanced the book better and, in addition, the reader might have expected the shamanic practice of visualisation to be explored more deeply. The practice ‘proclaim a vision’ (p. 118, 262) could have received the same in-depth attention as the author gives to an examination of sorcery, ritual speech, and suicides, for example. Nevertheless, the book is an easy and fascinating read, and it is warmly recommended to anyone interested in Peruvian Amazonia, environmental, economic, and legal anthropology, and ethnographic practice itself.

PIRJO KRISTIINA VIRTANEN
University of Helsinki (Finland)

**Smith, Katherine, James Staples and Nigel Rapport (eds). 2015. *Extraordinary Encounters. Authenticity and the Interview*. New York, Oxford: Berghahn Books. 205 pp. Hb.: $70.00/£43.00. ISBN: 9781782385899.**

This volume is entirely dedicated to the research method of conducting interviews. The interview is analysed as a social event, capable of unearthing subjectivities that are not discernible in everyday social interaction. In the *Introduction*, Staples and Smith argue that close attention to the interview itself might tell more than the raw data collected through it. In this perspective, the interview is approached as the analytical category itself throughout the book.

In *Chapter One*, Caplan argues that anthropologists should want to write biographies as they carry the potential to facilitate communication beyond the discipline. After giving both an autobiographical and a biographical account of the life of a man he knew for almost four decades, Caplan compares the two. Based on this empirical data and included letter correspondence, he manages to depict how larger political and economic developments proceeded, and how ambiguous concepts such as "globalisation" and "modernity" percolate down in one man's life. The author aims at writing a biography rich in detail that shall serve as a testimony to future generations and also give back data and insights to the host community. In this context, he cautions anthropologists about a myriad of practical and ethical concerns that arise if the subject has, as in this case, already passed away.

In *Chapter Two*, Niehaus suggests utilising biographical narratives in addition to data created through synchronic methods. After presenting an exemplary life story of a South African HIV-positive man, he argues that the life stories of ordinary people enable researchers to gain insights into complex lives and domestic realms that usually remain covered. Thereby scholars can unveil the disjunctions between concrete acts, normative notions, and representational models.

Staples argues in *Chapter Three* for a commitment to nuanced, multi-layered biographical accounts beyond the obvious. In a similar vein to the previous chapter, he argues that people with leprosy in India are used to telling their stories well adjusted to the representatives of potential donors to attract funding. However, too often such accounts have been taken as objective representations of reality. Staple argues that while these accounts *do* give insights into the politics of representation of the leprosy-affected, they reveal little about the subjects' actual lives. He advocates for biographical interviews that occur in both different places and stretch out over much more than a single telling to avoid the (re)production of conventionalised life stories. He concedes that such life history accounts are not more true or unmediated, but rather that the researcher can extract more nuances of the interviewee's life experience when they are no longer obliged to conform to an overarching narrative structure. This case reminds the reader not to reduce the interviewee to their essentials as related to the story's focus, in order not to produce "case-histories".

The following chapter deals with banter in joking relationships that are difficult to capture. "Having a barter", the witty exchange of insults with harmless intentions on

the one side and without taking offence by the counterpart, mostly remains unexplained, happens effortlessly and is pleasing. The exchange itself is more telling than the offensive, often politically incorrect words uttered. To elicit this inexplicable insider understanding, Smith conducted impromptu, unstructured interviews with members of a social club. She claims that the unstructured interview is particularly helpful to acquire an awareness of this unreflected, embodied routine practice. Using illustrative short interview excerpts, the author uncovers the characteristics, underlying mechanics, and language of the performative acts of bartering, and lays out the social dynamics involved. She argues that the socially indexical language when engaging in bartering does re-affirm the legacies of injurious language, but also challenges and subverts negative, stereotypical constructions attached to those performing.

In the fifth chapter, Trias-i-Valls portrays the interview as a social exchange by critically reflecting on the process of oral and filmed interviews with children. Although some parts read like an introduction to "interviewing children", most parts are characterised by exaggerated and unclear language. Drawing upon ethnographic research on gift exchange, the author proposes an *altermodern* approach to children's perceptions, experiences and expressions of time and recommends focusing on the delays, fractures, and challenges to adult logic. She argues that doing "interviews" is less about technique, reflexivity, and ethics, but more about the local temporality of children's responses to our shared world with them.

In the next chapter, Okely claims to assess fieldwork accounts elicited from over twenty anthropologists in informal interviews. Although she extracted experiences from fellow anthropologists, she does not reflect on the methodology applied. The large majority of this chapter amounts to an accumulation of her complaints based on her frustrating experiences with 'hegemonic multidisciplinary ethics committees' (p. 128) that censor and assess anthropologists. This is much different from the past when no ethics committee existed to block our "fieldwork" or linked doctoral grants to rigid, less holistic approaches in which semi-structured interviews are dismissed as not easily controllable. In contrary, as Okely argues, it is the free-ranging narrative of interviews that can bring new knowledge, precisely because it is unpredictable and opens creative and unforeseen research avenues, including serendipity. Instead of collecting data from a distance through assumed "objective" procedures in "uncontaminated" settings, researchers shall exploit a shared identity and residence and participate and engage in reciprocal exchange instead of performing a "detached interrogations" in order to gain provable insights. Okely's contribution sums up epistemological debates fought out, and reads more like a commentary gives insights behind the scenes of academic life characterised by bureaucracy and competition.

In Chapter 7, Lopes presents an action-research project in which she shared a political agenda with the interviewees – the unionisation of sex workers. Lopes provides a brief introduction to the origins and definitions of action research, linked to a case study. She points out that being involved, instead of a detached observer, can trigger return questions during the interview, thus inverting roles: The interviewee turns the table on the interviewer and leads the interview. Swapping roles can shorten the distance

and challenge power relations involved in non-participatory research. In what she terms "bottom-up ethnography", interviewees are not merely contributing to someone else's career, but also have a stake and possible benefits. Similarly to previous chapters, she has shown that interviews can provide spaces in which social norms or expectations can be resisted.

The book under review is a critical reflection on the interview as a productive site of encounter and brings about a powerful, new appreciation of the interview as both an effective method as well as an analytical category. It comes as an apt addition to clinical how-to guides and as an anthropological counterpart to critical reflections on the same, offered by sociologists. Most chapters make an easy and interesting read as the contributors of this edition manage to bring together ethnographic details with theoretical consideration on interview contamination and biases. The book under review gives many impulses to both academic and non-academic interviewers and offers new food for thought and debate with regard to knowledge traditions and claims to understanding. *Extraordinary Encounters* is an enjoyable book, not only suitable for students and teaching, but also for researchers in the field". Readers will be more aware and appreciate the interview and the interviewee in new ways. This will possibly encourage them to attempt unstructured or even disorganised interviewing.

DAVID PARDUHN
*University of Hamburg (Germany)*

**Amit, Vered (ed.). 2015. *Thinking through Sociality. An Anthropological Interrogation of Key Concepts*. New York, Oxford: Berghahn Books. 210 pp. Hb.: $90.00/£55.00. ISBN: 9781782385851.**

This book is an inspiring reflection on the conceptual grounds of anthropology. The umbrella concept of sociality is addressed through the six related "key concepts": disjuncture, fields, social space, sociability, organisation, and network. Each concept is elaborated in one of the chapters written by Vered Amit, Sally Anderson, Virginia Caputo, John Postill, Deborah Reed-Danahay, Gabriela Vargas-Cetina, and Nigel Rapport (*Epilogue*).

Why did the authors select these concepts to explore sociality? They are the so-called 'mid-level concepts', between the particular and general level: 'each concept is good to think with for some issues and situations, but it is not intended to cover all or even most of the ways through which sociality is revealed' (p. 8). The analysed concepts are not intended to 'serve as a master theoretical framework', (p. 8). They are chosen because they have proved to be useful. This is evident in many chapters, since the authors use their research experience to show different ways to operationalise these concepts.

In Chapter 1, Vered Amit discusses the concept of *disjuncture*. The author differentiates between the theories that conceptualise disjuncture as extraordinary (what Latour has named "sociologists of association"), and the opposite approach, in which disjuncture is 'the starting point, rather than the end point of analysis' (p. 30). Among the "sociologists of association", there are three perspectives: historical transformation (Durkheim, Simmel, the Chicago School, Beck), community formation (Barth, Cohen), and the "transitions between states of being" approach (Victor Turner). Within the opposite approach, Bruno Latour, Karin Barber and Michel de Certeau are interested in how rules, institutions, and organisations are possible, without taking them for granted. Several examples from the ethnography of disjuncture are used in the chapter: long-term disjunctures (international consultancy jobs), or everyday disjunctures found in public places (such as coffee shops).

In Chapter 2, John Postill argues for a more plural notion of *field(s)*, beyond Bourdieu's famous concept. Besides the Gestalt tradition, as a precursor of the modern concept, another three traditions are proposed: Lewin's social-psychological theory, DiMaggio and Powell's inter-organisational theory, and the Manchester School of anthropology (Victor Turner). Postill mentions his research that was conducted in the Malaysian suburb of Subang Jaya (the "internet field" and residential affairs) to show the applicability of the hybrid notion of field (Bourdieu's and the Manchester School's conceptualisations).

In Chapter 3, Debora Reed-Danahay discusses the concept of *social space* and its correlates (the concepts of network and field) within the "spatial turn" in anthropology. This turn has brought about a new understanding of borders and physical space: less rigid borders with changeable endurance. The authors who have contributed to this debate are Gluckman, Geertz, Evans-Pritchard, Redcliff-Brown, Levi-Strauss, Barth, Goffman, Sorokin, Simmel, and Lefebvre. Bourdieu's notion of space is described in detail, even though his concept is

rather used as a model for social stratification, than for description of physical space. In order to illustrate Bourdieu's notion of social space, Reed-Danahay refers to her ethnographic study of the "flag protest" among Vietnamese immigrants in the USA.

In Chapter 4, Sally Anderson explores the heuristic potential of *sociability*. The chapter starts with a discussion about differences between the concepts of sociality and sociability and then moves on to the notion of sociability. Simmel's ideal type of sociability is discussed in detail: his idea of pure sociability, which is form-focused and separated from "goal-oriented life", is criticizised for not corresponding to ethnographic experience. Anderson discusses another critical aspect of the notion of sociability: distinguishing the heuristic and normative aspect. The polythetic nature of the concept is presented through different examples, including a study of neighbourhood sociability among middle-class Israeli women or a study of friendship sociability in high schools in Canada.

In Chapter 5, the concept of *organisation* is presented by Gabriela Vargas-Cetina. The author discusses several related concepts: organisation, corporation, cooperative, and (ephemeral) association. Vargas-Cetina focuses on the anthropological understanding of organisation: 'any group of people could become an organisation, in the sense of having common purposes.'

In Chapter 6, Vered Amit and Virginia Caputo analyse the concept of *network* in anthropology. The authors differentiate between the two conceptualisations of network in anthropology: personal (the Manchester School) and structural/cultural (closer to sociological legacy). The works of Clyde Mitchell (the Manchester School), Castells, Latour, Strathern, and Riles are discussed in this chapter. However, the contemporary co-existing discourse on social capital in sociology and economics is neglected (for example, discussion on children's social capital in British sociology). An interesting example of operationalisation is given in the closing remarks: a study of children's networks in an after-school programme at a Canadian community centre, based on the "new paradigm" in the sociology of childhood (children are studied as social actors).

What makes this book relevant for the field of anthropological theory is primarily its purpose: initiating a discussion about the concepts that are shared among the social sciences and identify the anthropological value-added. However, sometimes it seems that sociological tradition remains predominant (Bourdieu, Latour, Simmel). The book could be more coherent, especially regarding the implied links between the meta-concept of sociality and other concepts. Cross-referencing is necessary  discussions about similar concepts (network and association). However, some interesting linkages are made in the chapters about the social space and field, and also in the *Epilogue* written by N. Rapport. The *Epilogue* is an original synthesis of the six concepts through a very inspiring excursus on Montaigne. Finally, the book is evidently influenced by the authors' preference for certain theoretical positions (Latour and Bourdieu). It would be interesting to read another similar book about the conceptual grounds in anthropology, which would aim to re-evaluate different mid-level "key concepts" under a different "umbrella concept".

SUZANA IGNJATOVIĆ
*Institute of Social Sciences (Serbia)*

**Mlekuž, Jernej (ed.), Damir Josipovič, Mojca Kovačič and Dimitrij Mlekuž. 2015. *Venček domačih. Predmeti, Slovencem sveti [A Medley of National Favourites. Things That Make Slovenes Shine]*. Ljubljana: Založba ZRC. 192 pp. Pb.: 16.00 €. ISBN: 9789612547714.**

The book *The Wreath of the National* is the final result of the basic research project *Imagined Material Culture. Reflection on the Spread of the Nationalism in the Company of Material Culture*. It connects studies of nations and nationalism and studies of material culture as it treats symbolically, conceptually and discursively highly charged objects – the Carniolan sausage, the accordion, the Vače situla and the gibanica cake – which occupy a special place in the imaginaries of Slovenian nationalism.

The most striking is the editorial written by Jernej Mlekuž and entitled *The Nose and Two Ears of the Nation* following Ernest Gellner saying 'a man must have a nationality as he must have a nose and two ears' (1983: 3). It brings a (sometimes even too) brief overview of the most frequently covered studies of nations and nationalism and the role of material culture in the (re)production of nationalism. The author states that in the process of nationalisation (and formation of its culture and traditions) some material objects were selectively used for its representation. Those objects were imagined top-down, by elites, but were appropriated by the wider public. Objects which glitter to the nation are therefore material objectifications of those ideas and requests that are aimed at defining the nation by objective criteria. These objects are not important merely due to their symbolic, representation value, but also due their materiality, by which author refers to Mary Douglas and Baron Isherwood (1979) and to David Miller's process of objectification (1987). Therefore, nationality is not just imagined but also objectified.

The first paper, *Imagined Carniolian Sausage – in Time, Space, Language and Mouth* by Jernej Mlekuž, presents the role of the Carniolan sausage in the formation and development of Slovene national consciousness from the Spring of Nations until the labelling of it with protected designation of origin in 2008. It has thus not become an outdated identification element, but is living and continuous identification and communication element, which belongs to several generations, participates in a variety of (not necessary harmonious) traditions and has inherited several legacies.

Mojca Kovačič, the author of the article *In the Land of accordion – nationalization of the accordion in the Slovenian context*, presents the history of the introduction of that instrument to folk bands in the 19th century, in pop-folk bands in the 20th century, and its current striking role among the nationally-representative objects.

Dimitrij Mlekuž shows – by employing Latour's (1993) actor-network theory and Gell's technology of enchantment (1992) – in the paper *The Lord of the Vessels – the Situla and the Slovenes* the outstanding part that belongs among the variety of different objects to the Vače situla. Such a role is (among others) a legacy of its age as nations and nationalisms need the past and therefore archaeology (as well as and other historical sciences) in order to reveal, document, and construct national heritage.

The last paper with a title that is polemical at first sight but explained in the text – *The Layer (Gibanica) Cake – Ritual Dish of the Upper Class of the Old Slovenes*

*(Staroslovenci)* by Damir Josipovič shows that *gibanica* was not merely (as all the above objects) employed in the process of ethnonational emancipation, but it also objectifies several problems of nativness. The *gibanica* cake entails regional indicator to Prekmurje (hereby Old Slovenes, referring to the old Slovene language (*staroslovenščina*)) which is complementary to the mainstream Carniolity (or Young Slovenes (*mladoslovenci*). At the same time, *gibanica* refers to the stratification of the society, to the culinary influence of the Jewish inhabitants of Prekmurje, and as a traditional speciality guaranteed (and not as protected geographical indication, as stated by the author) the *gibanica* cake constructs the non-negotiable boundary of the Sloveneness in Prekmurje towards the Croatness of Medžimurje despite the common geographical and cultural origins.

ŠPELA LEDINEK LOZEJ
*Research Centre of the Slovenian Academy of Sciences and Arts (Slovenia)*

**Brulotte, Ronda L. and Michael A. Di Giovine (eds.). 2014. *Edible Identities: Food as Cultural Heritage*. Surrey, Burlington: Ashgate. 237 pp. Hb.: £65.00. ISBN: 9781409442639.**

Not only do art, architecture, traditional celebrations show who we are to others, simple things such as food also do that, especially now the food tourism is so popular, and even organisations like UNESCO pay attention to food as part of culture and people. This compilation of essays concentrates on food as a major part of culture, how it unites people and also how it makes them distinct. The book provides deep insights and analysis of 21st-century problems concerning food heritage and covers the current situation. The authors of essays write about traditional food in modern times and its consumption and the role of it as cultural heritage. Many chapters are devoted to the role of food as cultural heritage in other fields, mostly tourism and economics, and how it influences these fields. The book gives specific case-studies from many countries that describe the struggle of organisations and government offices who want to promote a specific food as an item of cultural heritage, the impact of recognised heritage food on tourism and it explores the cases connected with UNESCO Intangible Cultural Heritage.

The book's fourteen chapters written by different authors focus on food-related heritage problems in Europe, South and North America, and Japan. Most of them concentrate on local food recognition as original and extraordinary in order to distinguish specific regions, cultures, or national identity. For example, Cristinas Grasseni essay *Of Cheese and Ecomuseums: Food as Cultural Heritage in the Northern Alps* is about disagreement on the names of cheeses that resulted in local competition between the producers. It showcases the struggle and problems producers face to get their production recognised as cultural heritage. Additionally, Greg de St. Maurice researches food recognised by its origin region in the case of Japan's Kyoto vegetables known as *kyoyasai.* He examines the effort of local farmers and organisations to promote the vegetables and the results that include the region's economic growth. Fascinating research is done by Miha Kozorog, which showcases Slovenian Salamander brandy, he writes about the background of this famous drink, how it is found only in Slovenia, and how it attracts the interest of tourists. It is a unique case, since Salamander brandy is more a legend than a true drink, but its fame has high value in Slovenian culture.

Several chapters are presenting cases in the context of UNESCO's List of Intangible Heritage, for example, *French Chocolate as Intangible Cultural Heritage* by Susan Terrio, this research concentrates on how to get French chocolate and artisanal chocolatiers' work recognised globally as French heritage and why it should be done. This book also covers the German Federation of the Bakery Trade struggling to get German bread recognised; the article by Regina F. Bendix reveals a story of local organisations trying to show how special German bread is and the politics that prevent it from happening. In her research, Clare Sammels illustrates examples from Mexico and France, how the UNESCO List of Intangible Heritage influences the traditional food concept and marketing; here, a concern is the great difference between traditional homemade food and the food presented by restaurants as traditional. In a similar manner, the chapter

on *Caldo De Piedra* (traditional Mexican stone soup) by Ronda L. Brulotte and Alvin Starkman is about the food is included in the heritage list; it attracts much attention and is a good means of profits for locals. However, although the soup is traditional, there are inconsistencies with the recipe, and this creates tension on a local level.

Another part of the book is on the consequences of already known food, how it influences the tourism and local economy and even politics. An interesting article is the chapter on *Cucina casareccia*. It explains how a place can become a tourism attraction for thousands of people who also want to enjoy local cuisine with local stories and work of tourism offices and local government. The author writes how the food is promoted to the tourists and how the locals earn from this food tourism and its backgrounds. Very deep research and a description of the problem is given by Eric Castellanos and Sarah Bergestresser in Chapter 13. Their research is on the production and consumption of corn product in Mexico, throughout history, and the influence of political decisions on staple foods in the Mexican diet. It examines the results of importing corn from the United States, how it has influenced agriculture, how modernising tortilla production changed the social status of women and how it influenced tortilla consumption over the years in general.

Overall, the book gives very deep insights into today's situation with explaining case studies and researchers' comments. Most of them give not only the current situation and analyses of the problem but also gives insights from a historical point of view, which is very helpful. A reader should keep in mind that the research is mostly done in Europe (Italy, France, Spain and Slovenia) and South and North America, so it gives more concentrated information on these regions but not the global situation.

ASNATE STRIKE
*University of Latvia (Latvia)*