



Edinburgh Anthropology Showcase

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A showcase of new writing and
more from Social Anthropology
staff, students, and visitors at
the University of Edinburgh



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Curated by Sophie Haines & Agustin Diz

Antiblackness and Global Health:

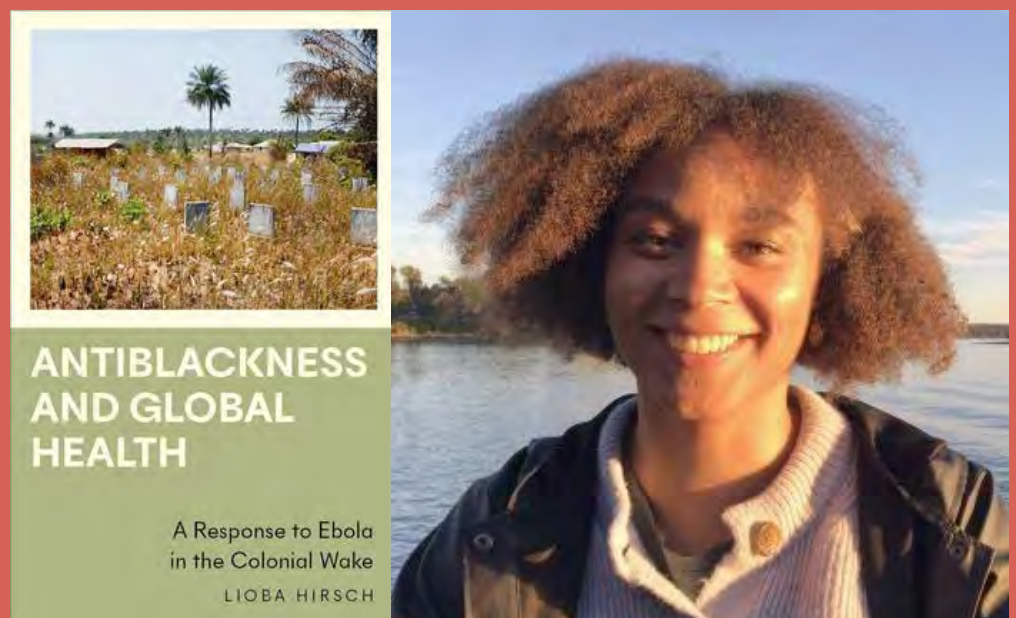
A Response to Ebola in the Colonial Wake

Lioba Hirsch

Antiblackness and Global Health offers a major new account of the 2014-2016 West African Ebola crisis and a radical perspective on the racial politics of global health.

Lioba Hirsch traces the legacies of colonialism across the landscape of global health in Sierra Leone, showing how this history underpinned the international response to Ebola. The book moves from the material and atmospheric traces of colonialism and enslavement in Freetown, to the forms of knowledge presented in colonial archives and in contemporary expert accounts, to disease control and care practices.

As the Covid-19 pandemic has revealed, health inequalities around the world disproportionately affect people of African descent. This book aims to equip critical scholars, medical and humanitarian practitioners, policy makers and health activists with the tools and knowledge to challenge antiblackness in global health practice and politics. The book argues that Black Studies can inform future research on medical interventions in Africa by unpacking postcolonial silences, centring Black perspectives and highlighting the endurance of colonial infrastructures in the present.



Embodying God: ritual, value, and secular-sacred entanglements in Norwegian folk high school education

Jamie Glisson

[*Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*](#)

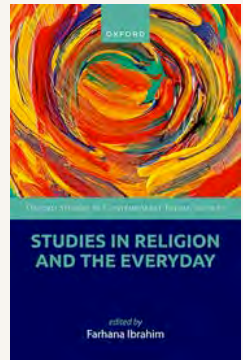
This paper explores the role of Lutheran ritual in value formations in Norwegian folk high school education. Folk high schools, subsidized by the state, offer gap year programs that are meant to instil values in young adult students before they attend higher education or enter the workforce. Drawing upon fifteen months of ethnographic fieldwork at a Christian folk high school in south-eastern Norway, I assess how the school's Lutheran masses were designed to develop values relating to community, experience, and equality by inviting all students and staff, irrespective of their personal relationships with the Christian faith, to participate. I argue that despite prevailing stereotypes of Norway being predominantly secular, the 'hidden sacrality' of Norwegian political and social life was made visible through these masses at the state-sponsored Christian folk high school. I take the body as an analytic, arguing that the school's rituals, designed to encourage students to 'embody God', were situated in students' bodies in such a way that sameness and difference, secularity and sacrality, and faith and doubt could co-exist.



“What Kind of Hindu Are You?” Muscular Hinduism and the Making of Majorities and Minorities

Moyukh Chatterjee

[in *Studies in Religion and the Everyday*, edited by Farhana Ibrahim, Oxford University Press](#)



Hindu nationalism (Hindutva) is often interpreted as the perversion of religion for politics. However, this idea can confound rather than clarify the question of religion (and politics) in India because it is based on the idea that religion is a fixed and immutable theory about the world rather than a form of being in the world. Rather than assume that Hindu supremacy is a perversion of religion, the chapter suggests that Hindu supremacy as performed by Bajrang Dal activists in Ahmedabad, Gujarat is based on crafting a particular kind of everyday religion in public within secular states like India that reinforces and establishes majorities and minorities. Here, religion is not a fixed set of rules but deeply implicated in the genealogy of religion as a form of life in postcolonial states and as a resource for making permanent majorities and minorities in the public sphere, which are recognized as such by the state and the wider public.

Moyukh Chatterjee also published the following blog post for the Social Science Research Council:

The dead ends of Hindu supremacy

Moyukh Chatterjee

[*The Immanent Frame: Secularism, Religion and the Public Sphere*](#)



Intimate polarisation: political divisions within everyday family relationships in Colombia

Gwen Burnyeat

[Contemporary Politics](#)

Political polarisation became a dominant concern in Colombia following the 2016 referendum in which a peace accord signed with the FARC guerrillas was rejected, and subsequent electoral processes in which the referendum identity divides were recycled and evolved. This article explores lived experiences of political divisions within intimate relationships in Colombia, and proposes an anthropological approach to complement the political science-dominated field of polarisation studies. It uses ethnographic storytelling to reveal how political divisions are enmeshed in myriad intersecting divides, including class, race, experiences of armed conflict and interpersonal histories, and draws on the anthropology of politics, ethnographies of the Colombian conflict and feminist scholarship to propose the concept of 'intimate polarisation': a political division felt, perceived or otherwise experienced within intimate, everyday relationships. This approach complicates the binary and normative assumptions inherent in the concept of 'polarisation' and invites a rethinking of the category and its political effects.

Gwen Burnyeat also published a blog on the website of the Political and Legal Anthropology Review, about her 2022 book The Face of Peace.

Of Referendums and Rationality

[Political and Legal Anthropology Review](#)

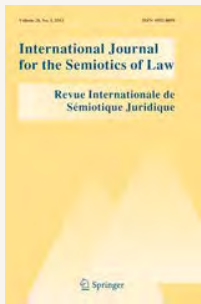


Towards neo-structural socialism? Social profit and dependency in Venezuelan state enterprise.

Aaron Kappeler

[Economy and Society](#)

This paper explores the social profit – a category derived from neo-structuralist economics – as a tool of planning in Venezuelan state enterprises. Drawing on fieldwork on an industrial farm in the western plains, it investigates the potential of this category for liberating Venezuela from its reliance on petrodollars, while facilitating endogenous development. As a metric for resource allocation and cost accounting, the social profit orients the productive and commercial activities of state enterprises towards the recycling of rentier surpluses, alongside provision of goods and services which can defray costs of operation. Yet, contrary to officially stated aims of building a socialist economy at the service of human needs, participant-observation in these sites reveals that the device does not fully negate the tensions associated with the realization of value and that struggles over wages and the intensity of labour continually surface in the enterprises.



Interpretation, translation and confusion in refugee status determination procedures

Anthony Good

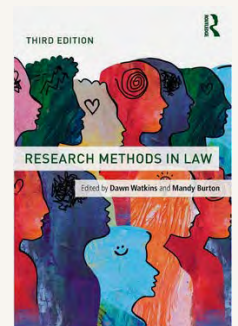
[International Journal for the Semiotics of Law](#)

This article examines the impact on legal processes of the need to use interpreters, drawing examples from refugee status determination procedures in the United Kingdom. It describes the roles played by interpreters in facilitating intercultural communication between asylum applicants and the administrative and legal actors responsible for assessing or defending their claims at the various stages of those procedures. The UK authorities' somewhat naïve expectations about the nature of the interpretation process display little understanding of the practical dilemmas that interpreters face. Much of the confusion and many of the barriers to communication created by the involvement of interpreters reflect the inherent untranslatability of particular notions, and so arise irrespective of the technical competence of the interpreters themselves. For example, dates may be reckoned using non-Gregorian calendars; terminologies for family relationships and parts of the body may be incongruent between the two languages; and there may be no exact indigenous legal equivalents to UK notions such as 'detention' or 'rape'. Different interpreters may therefore give different, though equally legitimate, translations of such terms, creating apparent 'inconsistencies' in the resulting translated accounts. Given the centrality of notions of credibility in asylum decision-making, even quite trivial divergencies over such matters may prove crucial.

Law and anthropology: legal pluralism and "lay" decision-making (expanded version)

Anthony Good

[in Research Methods in Law, edited by Dawn Watkins & Mandy Burton. Routledge.](#)



The anthropology of law is generally concerned with 'legal pluralism', that is, with situations where more than one system of law is observable in a given society. In many post-colonial contexts this plurality is not limited to processes of dispute settlement, but applies also to matters such as land law, natural resource management, property and inheritance, gender relations, and governance. Partly for this reason, the subject matter of legal anthropology is much broader than that of conventional legal scholarship. For example, legal anthropologists study the varied forms of 'legal consciousness' displayed by lay litigants and how these differ from the understandings of legal professionals. When conducting their research, legal anthropologists must also take account of evidence from sources outwith the formal legal arena, including fieldwork observations of legal actors outside the confines of the courtroom. Moreover, the notion of a legal 'actor' itself may need to be broadened beyond the familiar distinction between 'natural persons' and 'legal persons' like business corporations. For example, there are moves in several countries towards granting legal personhood to animals or natural features such as rivers. What counts as evidence may also vary, even in the case of hegemonic, state-sponsored legal systems. In India, for example, astrological findings may be accepted as evidence in some contexts. As these examples illustrate, legal anthropologists cannot presume in advance what activities must be taken into account in their analyses; which actors may have standing in such activities; what kinds of evidence are admissible; or what issues fall within the legitimate purview of local legal procedures.

Seeing Through One Health: The Disaster Economy of Recycling in Post-Earthquake Türkiye

Ann-Christin Zuntz, Ertan Karabiyik , Umut Kuruüzüm, Afnan El-Gayar, Lisa Boden

[One Health FIELD Network and Development Workshop Report](#)

After the 2023 earthquakes in Türkiye, millions of tons of rubble created an unexpected boom in the steel recycling economy. But this disaster economy thrives on invisible, informal labour—often Syrian refugees, women, and the elderly. Hazardous waste was dumped near natural reserves, threatening long-term public and environmental health. In 2024, an RSE Research Workshop Grant allowed the Recycling Ruins team, led by Dr Ann Zuntz and with colleagues from Roslin Institute and Turkish partner organisation Development Workshop, to retrace steel recycling supply chains in southern Türkiye.

Together with the Turkish artist Nergis Irlı, we produced a visual animation that weaves together fieldwork footage and artistic interpretations of how humans and animals inhabit and work with rubble. We also published a report on how an inclusive One Health approach, linking human, animal and environmental well-being, could inform disaster management focused on rebuilding resilience, not profit. [You can access the animation and report here.](#)



Right to mobility, right to belong: Bottom-up citizenship practices of Syrian refugees in Europe

Ann-Christin Zuntz & Alessandro Columbu

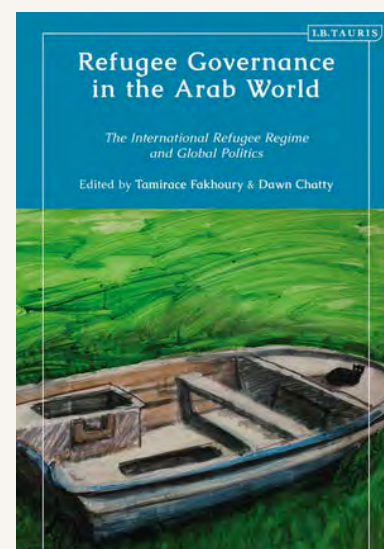
[Migration Studies](#)

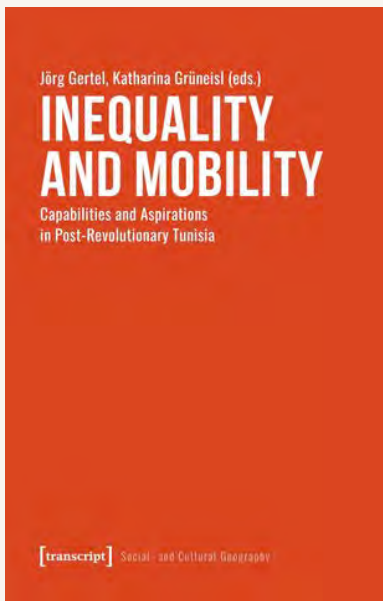
Through a small-scale interview study with Syrians with Swedish citizenship who have either relocated to, or are regularly visiting, the UK, this article sheds light on the nexus between mobility and bottom-up citizenship practices of refugees in Europe. We mobilize the twin concepts of 'affective' and 'instrumental' citizenship to highlight how refugees' quest for belonging and safety challenges usual assumptions about displacement: first, our data defy push-pull models of migration, showing that quick access to naturalization and generous welfare policies attracted some Syrians to Sweden, but were not enough to make them stay. The fact that for those leaving Sweden, the UK was only one possible destination—with other Syrians moving to the Global South—calls into question a hierarchy of desirable destinations with Western and Northern Europe at the top. Second, seen through the lens of affect, refugees' and host states' interactions are not merely legalistic or bureaucratic: while our interlocutors perceived Swedish welfare interventions and political discourse as top-down affective control, they also engaged in grassroots practices of affective citizenship, devising alternative forms of belonging through mobility. Ultimately, affective citizenship can inform ambitions to stay, or move on, regardless of how affluent host countries are. Third, while our protagonists' back-and-forth movements point to the non-linearity of refugee journeys, their use of the UK's EU Settlement Scheme as a deferred 'insurance policy' highlights the complexity of temporalities of displacement. Legal security may not be sufficient to ending refugees' lingering feelings of insecurity, and thus not preclude further mobility-based strategies.

Bread, salt and book-keeping: The shaweesh as the interface between Syrian refugees and the humanitarian system in Lebanon.

Ann-Christin Zuntz, Mackenzie Klema,
Shaher Abdullateef, Esraa Almashhor,
Salim Faisal Alnabolsi, Sinem Sefa Akay,
Bürge Akbulut, Selin Ayaeş , Ertan
Karabiyik, and Lisa Boden.

[in *Refugee Governance in the Arab World - The International Refugee Regime and Global Politics*.
Edited by Tamirace Fakhoury & Dawn Chatty, I.B.
Tauris. Bloomsbury.](#)





Working lives: Syrian refugee women's intimate labour and mobilities in Tunisia.

Ann-Christin Zuntz, Asma Ben Hadj Hassen, Marwen Bouneb

[in *Inequality and Mobility - Capabilities and Aspirations in Post-Revolutionary Tunisia*, edited by Jörg Gertel & Katharina Grüneisl.](#)

In the same edited volume, Ann also contributed a section introduction on mobility and aspiration a dignified life, and co-authored an epilogue on racism in Tunisia. [Available open access here.](#)



Coal's end: energy citizenship and the social fractures of the green transition in Spain's mining basins

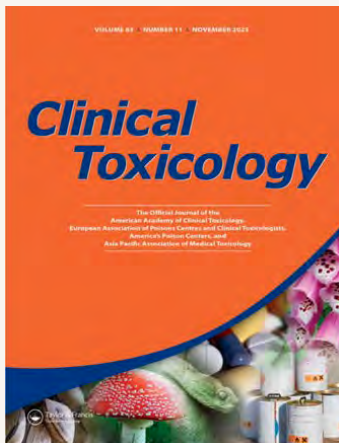
Agustin Diz

[Focaal](#)



For more than a century, coal was central to the configuration of political relationships between citizens and the state in Asturias, Spain. However, since the 2010s, EU-wide energy transition policies have brought about the end of what was once a strategic coal enclave in northern Spain's mining basins. Coal's end has devalued the product and producers of coal and weakened tightly embedded networks of unions, political parties, and workers. Yet, while policy shifts have destroyed Spanish coal production, they have also repurposed coal infrastructure for the distribution of imported coal. This article analyzes the shifting claims, demands, and responsibilities that coal gave rise to and shows how the demise of coal citizenship has led to gendered, generational, and xenophobic fractures. It argues that, as the transition advances, mining ruins and discarded workforces are resignified within novel projects of political belonging, thus giving rise to new forms of energy citizenship.

"People are afraid of getting injections": feasibility of community-placed atropine auto-injectors in treating organophosphate poisoning in Sri Lanka



Upul Wickramasinghe, Janet E. Perkins, Alice Street, Champika Samaranayake, Theekshana Balasuriya, Erandi Dissanayke, Michael Eddleston, Jane Brandt Sørensen

[Clinical Toxicology](#)

Introduction: Organophosphorus insecticide poisoning remains a major problem in rural low- and middle-income communities. Atropine auto-injectors are used for organophosphorus nerve agent poisoning, but not organophosphorus insecticide poisoning. We explore the social and practical feasibility of introducing atropine auto-injectors in Sri Lankan villages to initiate first-line treatment for acute organophosphorus insecticide poisoning; understand how auto-injectors might be best integrated into the social and spatial context of rural communities with high levels of organophosphorus insecticide use and poisoning. **Methods:** With an ethnographic approach, we combined semi-structured interviews with community members (n = 18) and healthcare workers (n = 9), focus group discussions (n = 5), participatory mapping (n = 3), oral history interviews (n = 7), and ethnographic observations in three rural villages. A collaborative thematic data analysis was performed alongside continuous discussions within the global, interdisciplinary research team. **Results:** Acute organophosphorus insecticide poisoning was not perceived as a major public health concern that would demand an urgent intervention in communities. Following COVID-19 vaccination interventions, findings showed a lack of trust related to new medical injection technologies. Consequently, finding people to handle auto-injectors who had the capacity and willingness to take responsibility and were trusted by the community is a major challenge. **Discussion:** Ethnographic research methods are important and relevant in planning and implementing community health interventions. They contribute to making health interventions more effective and sustainable by analyzing context-dependent and often intractable complex health problems. **Conclusions:** While our findings do not support introducing auto-injectors in the selected communities, it suggests placing them in the ambulances used to transport patients who have ingested pesticides. To further explore the need and feasibility of auto-injectors, similar situational, ethnographic analysis should be conducted in other parts of Sri Lanka and low- and middle-income countries with high numbers of acute organophosphorus insecticide poisoning and limited infrastructure facilities.

The Feminist Cities CoLab

Laurie Denyer Willis (co-director)

The Feminist Cities CoLab is a space for creative working & thinking, funded by the British Academy. As feminist researchers we are concerned with urban violence in its multiple forms, and we are working together with activists and artists to imagine cities differently. We are committed to building just, equitable and anti-oppressive worlds, for all women, men and gender non-conforming people.



Images from the CoLab's zine making workshop in Rio de Janeiro

The Feminist City [Documentary]

Laurie Denyer Willis

Our first film is a collective act of imagining; a weaving together of voices, movements and visions that ask what a feminist city might feel like. It listens for the echoes of care and resistance in streets, homes, and public spaces, tracing the work of those who make the city otherwise. Through shared stories and creative experimentation, the film invites us to dream the urban anew: as a space of relation, tenderness, and possibility.



The documentary can be viewed at the [Feminist Cities CoLab YouTube channel](#)

Vote of Faith:

Democracy, Desire, and the Turbulent Lives of Priest Politicians

Maya Mayblin

What does desire have to reveal about the nature of power? Through a detailed focus on the lives and loves of Catholic priests as they enter the profane world of party politics, Maya Mayblin explores the complex intersection of democracy, patriarchy, and religiosity in Brazil. For over a hundred years, Catholic priests have been running for government office, challenging Brazil's constitutional separation of church and state and its self-image as a modern, secular nation. Priests find themselves walking a tightrope between religious and secular demands in one of Brazil's poorest regions. *Vote of Faith* is a beautifully crafted ethnography based upon decades of fieldwork that tells the story of the ambiguous and frequently transgressive relationship between Catholicism and state governance, a relationship ultimately mediated by kinship, gender, and sexuality.

For the protagonists of *Vote of Faith*, democracy becomes a sphere in which divine will and human ambition compete with one another, a tension embedded in the vernacular concept of faith. In the Brazilian context, faith signifies a complex set of assumptions about the nature of the world, assumptions derived not just from Christianity, but also from Afro-Brazilian and secular ideas about power, causation, and human agency. In combining ethnographic, theological, and feminist perspectives, *Vote of Faith* places desiring bodies at the very heart of Catholicism's complex connection to multiple forms of power and offers provocative new angles on the question of the secular.

The first work by an anthropologist to explore the unique phenomenon of the mayor-priest, this book offers an essential new angle on emerging debates about secularity as the condition of separation of the religious from the political. Brimming with originality, *Vote of Faith* is required reading for those interested in the gendered and sexual dimensions of the secular, the plasticity of religion, and the fundamental nature of the world's largest religious institution.

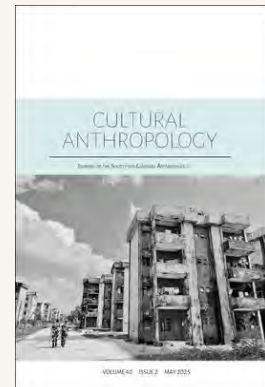


Getting Your Ducks in a Row: Marriage, Protection, and Love without Regret in Virginia

Siobhan Magee

[Cultural Anthropology](#)

Marriage, as a topic of ethnographic and historical exploration, ties together kinship, politics, economics, and faith in complex and significant ways. In the United States, federal and state governments have used legal marriage to create insiders and outsiders along lines of “race,” sexuality, and religion. Those who have not been allowed to marry a consenting partner of their choice have been cast as dangerous, and as threats to the nation. Drawing on fieldwork in the Virginia city of Charlottesville, I argue that protection is a key idiom through which to understand marriage and kinship in the United States. The research took place at the time of the 2017 white nationalist attack on Charlottesville, and discussions of marriage and kinship resonated with wider political questions about what it means to be safe, and how kinship often means loving against and caring against—protecting against—dangers that threaten those closest to us.



Anthropologies of Health Policy

Kaveri Qureshi & Marlee Tichenor

[Anthropology & Medicine](#)

In this introduction to our special issue, we take a wide view of the history and epistemic stakes of anthropological and ethnographic approaches to health policy. Drawing on the history of critical medical anthropology, the anthropology of policy, and critical policy studies, we show how anthropologies of health policy are particularly essential in this current moment, as policy production becomes increasingly abstracted and even more entwined with specific forms of evidence making. Taken together, the contributors of this special issue argue that anthropology’s interventions into health policy are essential in three ways. First, they shed light on the practices of policy ‘communities’, the pragmatic parameters under which they work, and the central logics under which health policy actors are operating. Second, they examine the effects of policy implementation upon those intended to be the subjects of health policy, highlighting the effects of policy for those marginalised by gender, race, and caste. Here, anthropology provides a view into the ‘lived experience’ of those targeted by health policy, but it also demands that anthropologists provide ‘counter-stories’ and ‘counter-evidences’ that dismantle narrow systems of policy knowledge production. Finally, anthropological attention provides an essential lens into the things that carry over in the act of policy reform—the past reverberations and imperial inheritances. Together with our contributors, we call for anthropologies of health policy that work to highlight and dismantle such inheritances.

La datafication des politiques de santé et l'écosystème des données numériques de santé au Sénégal

[The Datafication of Health Policy and Health Data Ecosystems in Senegal]

Marlee Tichenor

[*Anthropologie & Santé*](#)



The demands of global health actors weigh on the health systems of countries that receive global health funding, particularly on digital data infrastructures for health, which are formed to carry out two, often opposing, processes. More important for donors are the data they can use to justify their health investments to their stakeholders, while recipient countries seek data to shape domestic health policies. These conflicting objectives result in fragmented and incomplete information systems in countries that rely on global health funds for data infrastructural support. In this article, Senegal's universal health coverage policy is used as an example –alongside global discourse—to show how Senegal's data health ecosystem is established and maintained.

Chagossian Endangered Material Knowledge and the Prospect of Indigenous Advocacy in Museums

Chrisyl Wong-Hang-Sun

[*Journal of Museum Ethnography*](#)



This paper is based on a presentation for the Museum Ethnographers Group Annual Conference (2024), and draws upon my ethnographic research in 2023 exploring the perceptions of native Chagossians in Mauritius over the migration of descendant Chagossians to the UK. A key conclusion was the concern that as Chagossians migrate to the UK, their cultural practices and momentum to regain their homeland could fade. Reflecting on this, my positionality as a British-Mauritian and Chagossian descendant, and my former role as a Project Curator for the Endangered Material Knowledge Programme at the British Museum, I explore the prospect of museum ethnography as an integral and important space for Indigenous activism and advocacy. I argue that museums, as guardians and gatekeepers of material knowledge can play a role in validating, testifying for, and disseminating the lived experiences of forcibly displaced peoples like Chagossians through their material culture. I also present the complexities in doing so, and I establish the need for the inclusion of those to which the knowledge originates.

(Im)mobile intimacies: Commodities and marriage at the crossroads of Asia

Grace H. Zhou

[*Feminist Anthropology*](#)

This article follows traders and entrepreneurs that live and work between Kyrgyzstan and China's northwestern region of Xinjiang. Looking specifically at Islamic marriage and business partnerships forged between persecuted Uyghurs and their Uzbek partners, it argues that commodity-mediated forms of transnational intimacy create spaces of safety and possibility in the face of political oppression, carceral violence, and gendered limitations. These transnational mobilities are forged in spite of structural immobilities. Taking seriously the imbrications of objects and people, it advances a view of intimacy as a multi-scalar, trans-subjective, and multiply entangled field of relationality.



Poets Resist, Refuse, and Find a Way Through

Grace H. Zhou, Christine Weeber, Alma Simba

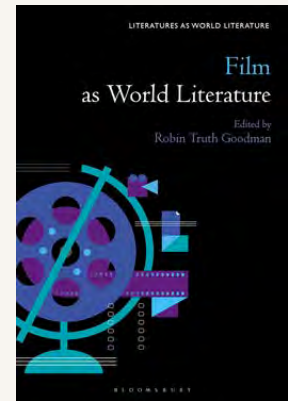
[*Sapiens*](#)

Introduction to a themed collection of anthropological poetry on how poets trace the contours of power to critique colonialism, environmental destruction, and social violence while transforming the landscape of possibilities.

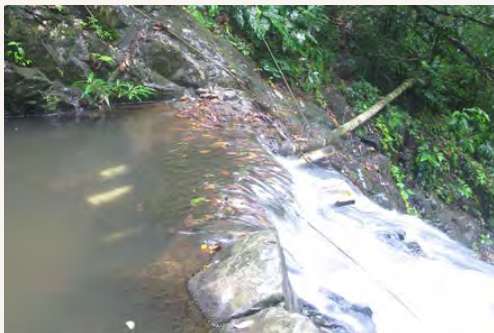
Cinematic Word Machines: Grove Press Pictures an Incurable World

Richard Baxstrom

[in *Film as World Literature* edited by Robin Truth Goodman. Bloomsbury](#)



Between 1949 and 1986 Grove Press published in the United States a range of otherwise diverse works that collapsed the formal and aesthetic differences between literature and cinema and undermined the presumed coherence and singularity of the subject and the world. This chapter will establish this claim through a close analysis of several representative Grove publications: William S. Burroughs's Nova Trilogy (The Soft Machine [1961/1966], The Ticket That Exploded [1962/1967], Nova Express [1964]); Marguerite Duras's The Ravishing of Lol Stein (1966); and Samuel Beckett's Film (1964). Cinema and literature bind in a dialectic of treason in these works, dissolving the coherence and singularity of each domain by oscillating between and within them, transgressing what we mean by cinema or literature. Owner Barney Rosset's approach to running Grove Press is a key element in grasping this claim as he actively operated as a curator seeking to curate the incurable. He did this by publishing works that blurred the lines between technologies of expression and that expressed the incurability of the modern subject via forms of aesthetic self-alienation. This constitutes Grove's widest philosophical and aesthetic legacy.



Towards a Minor Logistics: Community and Ecology in a Watershed Project

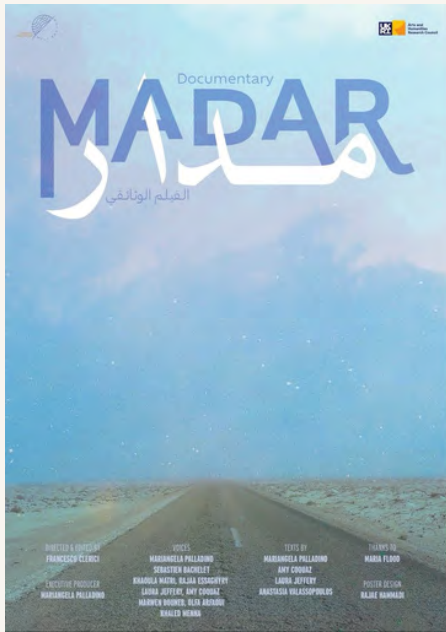
Sophie Haines

[Theory, Culture & Society](#)

This article proposes a reconfiguration of logistics thinking, through attention to water provisioning and protection in the context of diverse economies and ecologies. With reference to a community-based watershed management project in rural Belize, I discuss how elements of this initiative at once accompany extractive resource management and reveal its limits and alternatives. Challenging a teleology of optimization, the participants' coordination efforts and ethical negotiations draw attention to logistics in an alternative register: historically grounded; relational; involving compromise among people and with more-than-human agencies. This rural water system is not historically positioned 'before' the reach of globalized supply chains – indeed its landscape is steeped in enduring colonial-extractive legacies. Instead, I suggest a typology of logistics (including community and ecological forms) to account for the uneven effects and percolations of industrial logistics, and for the situated politics of moving, sustaining, and mediating water, people and ideas across fields of difference.

Maghreb Action on Displacement and Rights (MADAR)

The MADAR Project - co-directed by Mariangela Palladino (Principal Investigator, Keele) and Laura Jeffery.



In January 2025 the AHRC GCRF Maghreb Action on Displacement and Rights (MADAR) Network Plus hosted a 3-day MADAR Festival in the Ritz Cinema in Casablanca (Morocco) to showcase research findings and creative outputs from members of the network and associated around migration and vulnerability across the central Maghreb region of Algeria, Tunisia, and Morocco. The event brought together researchers, journalists, NGOs, UN representatives, students, artists, and translators from across Morocco, Algeria, Tunisia, Italy, Germany, South Africa, and the UK. The MADAR Festival featured insightful discussions on migration and protection needs, structured around three key themes: freedom of movement, vulnerabilities and rights, and research methods. Sessions highlighted best practices, innovative initiatives, and lived experiences, sparking engaged conversations. Alongside panels, the MADAR Festival showcased documentaries and art films, including *En suspens*, *Field Flowers*, *BOZA!*, and works from The Minority Globe's Organic Knowledge project. Art installations, photography exhibitions, and short films further enriched the program, offering creative perspectives on migration.

In June 2025, the MADAR Network launched its MADAR documentary.

There are also recent publications related to the network's research:

Migration in the Maghreb

Mariangela Palladino, Laura Jeffery, Sébastien Bachelet & Mairi O'Gorman

[*The Journal of North African Studies*](#)

This editorial introduction offers an overview of the research presented in the special issue which collates a series of research articles, research notes, commentaries and an interview by an interdisciplinary and cross-sectoral selection of authors based either in academic research institutions or in civil society organisations (CSOs). The article foregrounds the significance of this special issue in bringing a critical mass of expertise on migration across the Central Maghreb into comparative perspective. It also offers reflections on the impacts of existing and emerging policies on vulnerable displaced people and the implications of carrying out fieldwork in vulnerable settings, highlighting how these methodological and ethical challenges informed research and its outputs. The editorial introduction outlines common threads which emerged from contributions to this special issue – gendered experiences of migration, integration (and its discontents), and im/mobilities in the Maghreb – and situates them in relation to the existing literature.

Vulnerability workers: vulnerability and precarity in Morocco's migration welfare sector



Laura Jeffery, Mehdi Azdem, Abdeslam Ziou Ziou &
Sébastien Bachelet

[The Journal of North African Studies](#)

This article examines how concepts such as vulnerability and precarity play out in the migration welfare sector in Morocco, both as motivational concepts that mobilise action and as critical lenses through which to examine the sector itself. The article takes as its starting point the insight that people engaged in migrant assistance work in Morocco operate in a sensitive political context and are vulnerable to ambiguous and often fraught relationships with (state) authorities. The contributions of this article are twofold. First, it reveals the role of vulnerability itself in the moral career trajectories of a new emergent category – mostly female – who we term vulnerability workers. Second, it argues that vulnerability workers are themselves vulnerable to a plethora of personal, interpersonal, and structural challenges in their roles. These include gendered emotional labour, high workloads, poor work/life balance, lack of resources, lack of stability in the target population, contradictions between official objectives and ongoing practices, and precarious working conditions. It concludes that working conditions in the migrant welfare sector warrant attention, not least because the precarity of vulnerability workers has the potential to exacerbate the vulnerabilities of migrants themselves.

#Vairal Phenomenon Hero Alom: Social Media, Bad Taste, and Digital Politics in Bangladesh

Lotte Hoek & Paul James Gomes

[Journal of Bangladesh Studies](#)

Hero Alom is a Bangladeshi media entrepreneur whose online content has generated a huge, often negative, response. The response to his public presence, frequently expressed in a violent, gendered, and classed rhetoric of taste, appears outsized compared to the low production value music videos and short films he produces. In this article we analyse this virulent response to Hero Alom's content as an index of broader transitions in media infrastructure in Bangladesh that has reorganised the possibilities for crowd politics in the country. We suggest that in the conjoined transformation of media infrastructure and legal controls on public speech, Hero Alom uses the under-determined aspects of new media to produce a style of publicness that gathers online and offline crowds of supporters and detractors. Part of digital circulation machines, his style of publicness provides insight into the centrality of publicity to public order and political presence in Bangladesh



Historical Vertigo: Art, Censorship and the Contested History of Bangladesh

Lotte Hoek

[in *Freedoms of Speech: Anthropological Perspectives on Language, Ethics, and Power*, edited by Matei Candea, Taras Fedirko, Paolo Heywood and Fiona Wright. University of Toronto Press](#)

In this chapter, I analyse the unexpected closure and censure of the exhibition 'Age of Saturn' (Omar Chowdhury) in Bangladesh 2016. Taking my cue from Age of Saturn's distinctly unreliable narrator, I theorize the experience of censorship as a dizzying, disorienting feeling that impels and propels, rather than stalls, one's unsteady account of the past. To do so, I present a close reading of the content and closure of Age of Saturn and show how these elicited a set of disorientations that befell artist, collaborators, spectators, and authorities, as well as myself as I tried to narrate and analyse these events. I describe that disorientation as "historical vertigo": a condition of disorientation that befalls one when narrating a history that can only be experienced and told within the terms of its own repression or censorship.



When do forests matter?

Zeynep Oguz

[Environment and Planning D: Society and Space](#)

This article traces how forests in Turkey acquire meaning through their entanglement with nationalism, securitization, and racialized governance. The catastrophic wildfires of 2021, which destroyed over 150,000 hectares along the Aegean and Mediterranean coasts, became a site where ecological devastation was quickly translated into nationalist paranoia. Refugees and Kurdish insurgents were accused of arson, and fire was narrated as evidence of invasion, conspiracy, and betrayal. These claims drew on deeper histories in which forests have been managed through militarized strategies—burned during counterinsurgency operations, surveilled for signs of fugitivity, and recast as threatened zones in the service of territorial control. Building on the concept of “political forests,” the article shows how wooded landscapes in Turkey function as terrains of belonging, where ecological crisis intensifies nationalist claims, legitimizes violence, and reinforces exclusionary forms of governance. The 2021 fires illuminate the ways forests matter as stages for securing identity, policing movement, and naturalizing punitive state power.



This article is part of a special collection edited by Chloe Ahmann and Zeynep Oguz:

Everyday and emergent ecofascisms

Chloe Ahmann and Zeynep Oguz

[Environment and Planning D: Society and Space](#)

Absent Presence

Giulia Liberatore, Leslie Fesenmyer & Ammara Maqsood and collaborators

[A digital project on imaginings of and relations across difference in Palermo, Nairobi and Karachi](#)

The digital project was launched in April 2025 in Palermo at UCL. The website was co-created with Ammara Maqsood at UCL (who curated the Karachi part) and Leslie Fesenmyer at Birmingham (curator of the Nairobi section). Giulia Liberatore worked on the Palermo section with photographer Kate Stanworth and artist Stefania Artusi. Giulia will be showing it as art of a conference on Religious Encounters and Creative Practice in Edinburgh in January 2026.



The project was also launched with a photo essay in Hyphen:

The hidden Muslim past of Palermo

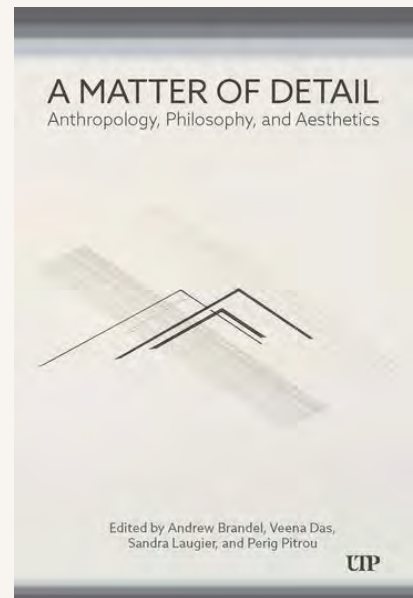
Kate Stanworth & Giulia Liberatore

[Hyphen](#)

Detailing Scenes of Ordinary Grief across Ethnography and Poetry

Lotte Segal

[in *A Matter of Detail. Anthropology, Philosophy, and Aesthetics*. Edited by Andrew Brandel, Veena Das, Sandra Laugier and Perig Pitrou. Toronto University Press.](#)



With this chapter I ask how grief becomes ordinary? This question has been a stowaway in my work for many years of examining how family members, spouses, mothers, sons and daughters have dealt with the violent loss of their kin in Palestine. I have hitherto struggled to make sense of the way in which grief in this context is somehow always present. Thinking about how I learned about ordinary grief in Palestine, I have in re-reading some of my material been struck by the role played by details so small that they might easily be overlooked but which nonetheless mean the world for how my interlocutors inhabit their ordinary world with grief, and do not simply overcome it. Overall, the chapter hopes to unsettle the assumption that just because something is ordinary it is somehow less painful.

Lotte Segal was also co-author of the following correspondence published in The Lancet:

No health without aid and development

Charlotte Hanlon, Martyn Pickersgill, Seth Amanfo, Harry Campbell, Anna Chiumento, Jeff Collin, Michael Eddleston, Liz Grant, Ewen Harrison, Aisha Holloway, Sumeet Jain, Stephen Lawrie, Angus Macbeth, Chelsea Morroni, [Lotte Segal](#), Nadine Seward, Rosie Stenhouse, Robert C Stewart, Harish Nair



[The Lancet](#)

Lotte Segal was also co-author of a chapter in the following edited volume::

Antropologens etiske arbejde: Om at udøve etnografisk diplomati

[The Ethical Work of the Anthropologist: Practicing Ethnographic Diplomacy]

Laura Emdal Navne, Lotte Buch Segal,
Rikke Horne Fischer og Pernille Sikker
Hansen

[In *Antropologiske projekter: En grundbog*, edited by H. Bundgaard, C. Rubow, & H. Mogensen. Samfundslitteratur](#)



....and contributed to a Book Symposium in HAU:



At Home with concepts on the Chars: Book Symposium on Naveeda Khan's River Life and the Upspring of Nature

Lotte Buch Segal

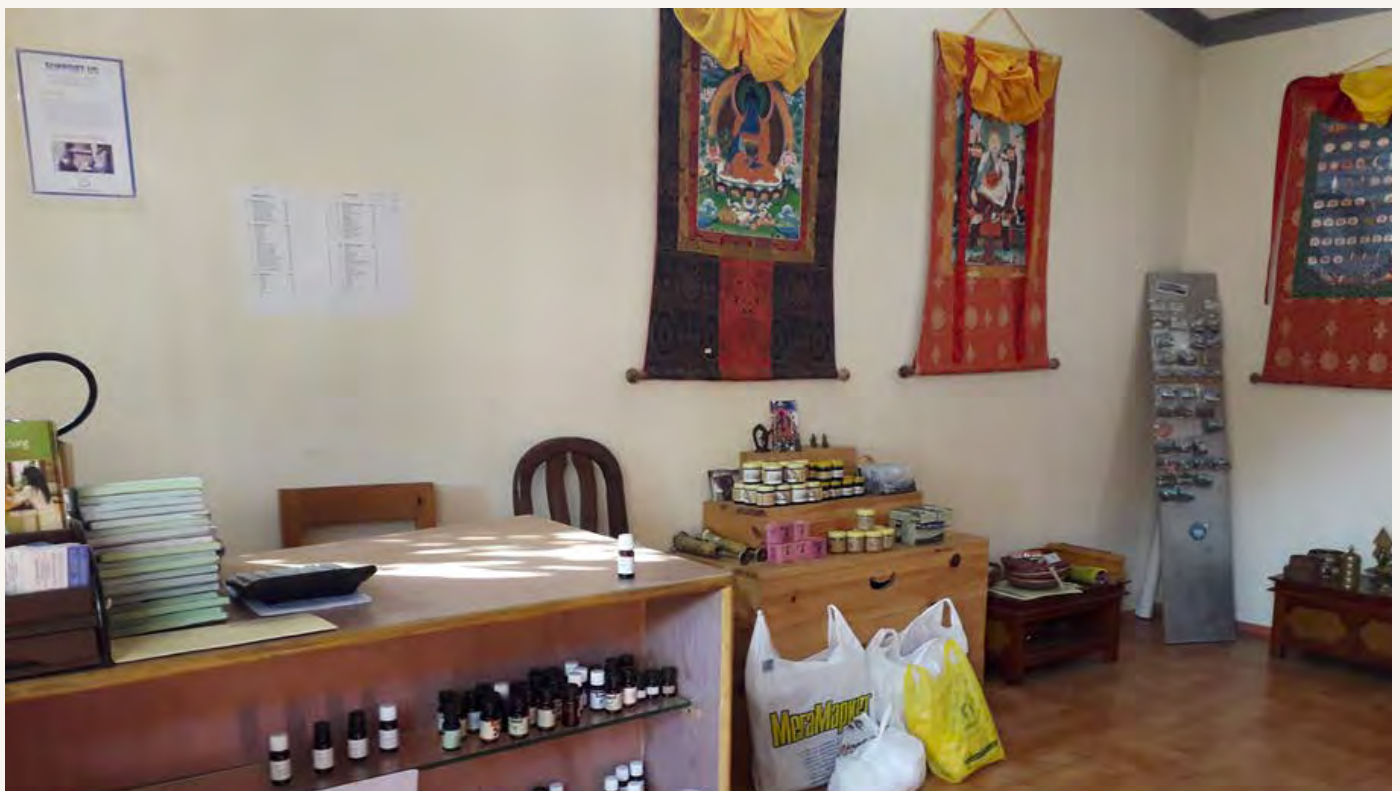
[HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory](#)

Engaging transnational expertise: creating Sowa Rigpa supplements between South Asia and Europe

Patricia Mundelius & Julija Sprisevska

[*Frontiers in Human Dynamics*](#)

Attempts to facilitate Sowa Rigpa practice in European countries are fairly recent and mostly happen under precarious circumstances, especially since the restrictive legal environment severely limits access to Sowa Rigpa medicinal preparations. Another issue is the incompatibility of common Sowa Rigpa pharmaceutical preparations in the form of powders and pills with modern lifestyles and tastes that, simple as it may seem, presents a major practical challenge for Tibetan medicine in the west. To remedy these limitations and incompatibilities, some more innovative ways of medicine production emerge that are supposed to increase accessibility. Looking at small-scale transnational collaborations between practitioners, laboratories, and companies as complex multi-sited entanglements, this paper follows the emergence of Daknang Herbal Products as a low-key industrial aspiration between Latvia and Nepal that attempts to realize calls for innovation and seeks to explore novel paths of engaging Sowa Rigpa medicinal preparations as food supplements in European contexts. By examining Daknang's path toward the establishment of Sowa Rigpa pharmaceuticals as self-medicated reformulated extracts produced in Europe, this paper addresses the questions to what extent Sowa Rigpa medicines need to be transformed to enter western food supplement markets, and what kind of concerns and moral discourses about 'negative aspirations' surround the innovation of established forms of medicinal preparations. The aim is to show that looking at transnational business collaborations offers interesting perspectives for the Asian medicine industry that tend to be overlooked due to their small-scale nature, but which are nevertheless involved in the innovation of Asian medicines for global markets.



Army of the Vulnerable: Raising it, Fighting with it, Caring for it in Postimperial Britain

Alexander Edmonds

[*American Ethnologist*](#)

Since ending conscription in 1963, Britain has fought its “small wars” with professional soldiers from deprived areas of the country, many recruited under the age of 18. During the 21st-century war on terror, these personnel were deemed vulnerable, at heightened risk of psychosocial harms, and entitled to more protection. Vulnerable soldiers bring a dangerous vulnerability into the state. While postimperial Britain relied on them to fill infantry units in an army with chronic personnel shortfalls, they pose thorny political and governance problems that I examine in three military spheres: recruitment, warfare, and mental health care. State violence is often seen as causing vulnerability in marginal groups, but when the state's own agents become vulnerable, they can disrupt its very capacity to exercise legitimate violence.



Translating Worlds, Defending Land:

Collaborations for Indigenous Rights and Environmental Politics in Amazonia

Casey High

In 2019, after decades of ecological damage from oil, Waorani people took to the streets of Amazonian Ecuador to protest drilling on their ancestral lands. Working with international activists, lawyers, and other Indigenous groups, they successfully sued the government for selling oil concessions without prior consent. Placing their struggle for territorial autonomy in the global spotlight, this unprecedented legal victory for environmental rights by an Indigenous people reflected the new forms of collaboration emerging in contemporary Amazonia. *Translating Worlds, Defending Land* explores how Waorani collaborations, whether with environmentalists or academic researchers, bring about new possibilities, challenges, and imaginative horizons.

Based on fieldwork over a period of twenty-five years, Casey High interrogates what these engagements mean for Indigenous communities and how they offer critical reflection on collaboration as a concept, method, and practice. The alliances, misunderstandings, and conflicts that emerge in these contexts challenge the assumption that productive collaborations reflect—or require—shared purposes, generating important implications for an engaged anthropology open to reconsidering what constitutes ethnographic knowledge and who it is for. As some young Waorani adults become not just community leaders or environmental citizens, but also skilled researchers and ethnographers, translating between Indigenous understandings of land and the Western language conservation, they create a powerful new voice in international environmental politics.

