

a comparative historical-cultural pursuit, emphasizes the author, allows us to get “a more nuanced” cultural understanding of “global inequality.” Put in anthropological operational terms, it means carefully selecting and discussing cogent ethnographic studies for assessing how the globalizing forces impact, and generate responses from different peoples. Thus, McGill argues, inequalities are “produced by [the] people, rather than ... occurring by some natural or accidental means” (11); and the “economic inequality ... on a global scale” must be “insistently” tracked transnationally and nationally until we reach “to a set of ... local concerns” (14).

The succeeding chapters are largely organized from the global general to the locally particular accounts of different inequalities. Chapters 2 and 3, for example, sketch an historical and anthropological “overview” of globalization and “a basic interpretation” of global economic inequality, with attention to selected anthropologists’ (e.g., Eric Wolf, Sidney Mintz, and Michael Taussig) distinct contributions. Such works also showed how ethnographies “meaningfully” further describe and comparatively analyze inequalities found, for example, in rural Mexico and in a US town with “corporate hegemony” (24–26). A similar approach is taken to account for the social and moral character of global wealth and international debt (e.g., with the International Monetary Fund; pp. 34–40) under neoliberalism. Chapter 4 tackles how economic and social inequalities of “gender” tend to overlap and reinforce each other both locally and globally. However, gender identities across divergent globalizing societies are today far more complicated than any earlier simple transnational programs and policies would envisage (48–50).

The same message comes through, chapter 5 shows, when the human rights of those dominated and discriminated are tackled within and across different inequalities-grappling nation-states. Once again, the cultural reality is globally far more complicated, yielding contending, often only ambivalent “rights talk” discourses. This is so whether it is the increasingly immigrant-sensitive U.S., the European Union or, as some appropriate ethnographies show, it is Malawi, Zimbabwe, South Africa, or Brazil (53–63). Chapter 6 takes up export of welfare programs from the hegemonic liberal Western democracies to poorer countries (e.g., as rich Denmark exports its poverty-reducing program “Bolsa Família” to Brazil and to post-Apartheid South Africa). How, on the ground, thus messages for political equality fare amid entrenched, even increasing economic inequalities.

Finally, chapters 7 and 8, as McGill shows, wrestle with inequality “more specifically from the point of view of everyday life,” especially by meaning-transforming “local contexts through organized [resisting or protesting social] action” (14). If here China is a distinct example of a fast industrializing, most populous country, then postcolonial Africa, *horizontalidad* Argentina, and the unequal health care systems struggles in such rich countries as U.S. and U.K. still exemplify some distinct cases of global inequalities (e.g., see 82–85, 92–99).

In a short conclusion (101 f.), a recurring anthropological message for studying the prevailing “global in-

equality” is underscored: “... there remains a deeper point regarding inequality and ethnographic methods” (101). Inequality is as inherent in human relationships as there is also “no perfect form of equality that will relieve us of this problem” (101); nor is there a “completely *globalized world* for us to look forward to” (102).

Unfortunately, the author does not fully articulate his shaping of the book’s text. His working intellectual assumptions in selecting the instances of global inequalities, major globalizing centers, and of the ethnographic selections remain rather scattered and all too brief. With such a discussion, the book would have become more accessible to both the college and general readers. I also would have wished that the author had given more space to excellent ethnographic studies on the distinctly unevenly globalizing US political economy and culture, for example, during the eventful 2010–15.

In all other ways, as a college textbook, this publication is fully dedicated to furthering classroom pedagogy on an important topic. It includes an excellent list of “References” for its readers to follow up further relevant literature. To the students, it provides appendices on “additional readings and films” while also suggesting some “study and essay questions” (103–110).

R. S. Khare

**Malik, Aditya:** *Tales of Justice and Rituals of Divine Embodiment. Oral Narratives from the Central Himalayas.* New York: Oxford University Press, 2016. 295 pp. ISBN 978-0-19-932509-2. Price: £ 74.00

Kumaon, a central Himalayan region of the Indian state of Uttarakhand, is the abode of Goludev, the God of Justice and the local presiding deity. Since Goludev has the capacity to know what is hidden from human view, his devotees seek to “realize justice in the concrete yet shifting condition of lived reality” (88). This book, enriched by extensive detailed descriptions of Goludev’s life history, devotees’ written petitions to Goludev, rituals featuring dancers whom Goludev embodies, and dialogues between possessed dancers and gurus, explores the meaning of justice, how residents of Kumaon attempt to create a balance in their lives through the restoration of justice, and how the worship of Goludev “compels us to reconsider” certain assumptions accompanying theories of modernity (138). These include, for example, the notion of the autonomous individual, the kind of agency wielded by such an individual, the capacity to get by in the everyday world “without recourse to extraordinary kinds of agency and knowledge, choice and free will,” as well as “the broader issues of what works and what doesn’t work and what lies at the source of workability” (138). The author, who expresses his desire to engage a phenomenological approach to understanding these issues in the context of Goludev worship, asserts that justice is “a malleable conversation that emerges continually in practices and discourses human beings create in their everyday lives and situations” (1). He illustrates this in part by describing how written petitions to Goludev entwine the stories of the petitioner’s own suffering with the injustices detailed

in Goludev's life history, and complements this description with that of various accounts of injustice he himself and his family experienced. A major focus of the book are rituals (*jāgar*) wherein dancers become embodied by Goludev and devotees have the opportunity to engage in dialogue with Goludev speaking through the dancers. The phenomenon of the dancers so embodied has conventionally been termed "possession" and the author notes that the topic of possession has proved fascinating to the point of near obsession to many scholars of multiple disciplines who, nonetheless, have fronted their discussions of the topic with the conviction that possession (e.g., a human possessed by a deity) is not a reality. He questions the legitimacy of the term *possession* by taking to task these disciplines (especially anthropology) for utilizing "categories and conceptual frameworks that are inextricably tied up with the colonial and postcolonial enterprise of scholarship" (159) and, thus, of being conceptually constrained by modernity. The author argues that in the Indian cultural and religious context, the ontological basis of Upanishadic and Vedic thought provides for a non-dualistic understanding of possession. This would imply that such a visitation by a deity in a human body suggests the instantiation of "alterity" or the notion of "another" as opposed to "other." In this way, possession should be understood as a bodily practice forcing "us to rethink modern notions of agency and subjectivity" (162) and to forego the term possession in favor of "*transformative embodiment*, which includes body, consciousness, and the variable spectrum of being" (179). Thus, in a *jāgar*, the deity and the dancer "are not distinct" since they "both manifest themselves and express their agency through the human body," which, in turn, "is not distinct from consciousness" (178). This is indeed an intriguing interpretation of Goludev's embodiment of a ritual dancer, but, as an anthropologist, I must ask several simple questions which would not, in my understanding, stray too far from what constitutes the conditions of the possibility in a phenomenological analysis – namely, would the devotees of Goludev attending the rituals in search of justice agree with the author in his interpretation of Goludev's presence in someone's body? Would they indeed seek out Goludev if it was not Goludev alone whom they were addressing, but some subjective hybrid of Goludev and an ordinary mortal? Moreover, the author does refer to non-deity determined states of possession wherein the relatives of an individual possessed by a malignant spirit attend a *jāgar* to determine the identity of that entity in order to realise justice for that individual through the expunging of that spirit. In the case of malignant spirits, then, would the possessing entity not be regarded as an "other" that must be expelled? This reservation aside, the book is fascinating, beautifully written, and offers a wealth of ethnographic material that would excite the envy of anthropologists, and engage South Asianists, folklorists, philosophers, Religious Studies scholars, historians, and general readers.

Marcia S. Calkowski

**Muckle, Robert J., and Laura Tubelle de González:** *Through the Lens of Anthropology. An Introduction to Human Evolution and Culture.* Toronto: University of Toronto Press, 2016. 384 pp. ISBN 978-1-4426-0863-4. Price: \$ 79.95

This book provides a clearly organized and well-written introduction to anthropology on the traditional American four-field model. It achieves this in a very efficient manner, canvassing the field in less than 350 pages. It is, as advertised, "[b]eautifully illustrated throughout" with the now standard pedagogical aids of glossary, learning objectives, summary, and review questions (back cover). It is intended for use as an introductory textbook at the undergraduate level. The authors are experienced instructors working in community colleges in Canada and the U.S.A., and their writing expresses ideas in a straightforward manner. The book has the elegant, focused economy that significant experience teaching the subject to undergraduates can bring. Subtle continuities weave together a discussion that has a coherent, overarching vision.

The first chapter introduces the four-field approach (plus applied anthropology), and gives some discussion to issues of globalization and indigenous rights, along with a brief history of the field from a North American perspective. The concluding chapter focuses on a single issue – sustainability – and uses that issue to illustrate the holistic vision of anthropology, integrating ecology, demography, and food production. The heart of the book consists of twelve chapters that introduce human evolution (three chapters), human prehistory (three chapters), culture and language (two chapters), and sociocultural anthropology (four chapters). The balance between biological anthropology and archaeology, on the one hand, and sociocultural anthropology, on the other, is roughly fifty/fifty.

The 63-page discussion of biological anthropology opens with a chapter on primates. Considerable attention is given to taxonomy, but there is some discussion of primate behavior and evolution. This is followed by a conceptual chapter on science and evolutionary theory. The main thread moves from Darwin (natural selection), to Mendel (genetics), concluding with the modern synthesis (adding mutation, genetic drift, and gene flow). Chapter four concludes this section with a discussion of human biological evolution that quickly and efficiently reviews the hominin fossil record (including up to date references to Denisovans, floresiensis, and gene flow between Neandertals and sapiens). Conceptual issues addressed include lumpers and splitters and the concept of race (a topic that is addressed again in chapter eight, on the concept of culture).

Human prehistory also receives 63 pages of discussion distributed across three chapters, but the conceptual framework of archaeology receives less emphasis than descriptive culture history, and the section has a largely chronological structure. Chapter five spans more than two million years, from the origin of the genus *Homo* to 20,000 years ago (fitting in discussions of fire, cooking, lithic technology, art, and ideology). Chapter six brings the discussion forward to 5,000 years ago, emphasizing the development of food production with a North Ameri-