

seen as neither positive nor negative, but simply a theory of how technology and the webcam seamlessly embed themselves into everyday communication practices, and “become an ordinary aspect of being routinely human” (13).

Using these notions of polymedia and attainment, it was obvious to Daniel Miller and Jolynna Sinanan that webcam was not simply developing a significant role among new media technologies. Webcam was, in fact, so deeply embedded in everyday social practices that it had “arrived” already. As a result, Miller and Sinanan set out to explore these everyday social practices from an anthropological perspective in order to understand webcam’s use in mediating social encounters and relationships.

The authors’ discussion of self-consciousness draws on the work of Goffman, and is interesting in that it identifies our desire to see ourselves as others do. At the same time, their discussion encourages us to think reflexively about the concepts of “I” and of “me” as elements of the self. And that is exactly what webcam does in everyday life; it enables us to monitor and transform the self that is seen by others (46).

The trick with notions of intimacy is that for many of us the word webcam raises sordid and seedy imaginings of the hidden sex trade, and yet now webcam, as Miller and Sinanan explain, has moved past this to become part of the mundane and ubiquitous global communications network. Webcam is now part and parcel of our everyday lives through the use of Skype and FaceTime, etc. Webcam has even been adopted by those groups of people previously resistant to using new media technologies, such as the elderly. The authors go further by narrating snapshots of intimacy in which the “always on” webcam changes our focus from “intense concentration on the other person” to the exposure of “the routines, presumptions and hidden collusions” that lead to a more complete sense of intimacy (80, 81).

The book itself is worth a read, not for the depth of theory, since the explanations are sometimes broad, but it certainly provides a sound basis for a wider discussion on what it means to be human. This traditional anthropological approach to understanding the practice and experience of webcam is demonstrated to be a valuable tool in better understanding our uses of new media. In this, the book is successful: it situates studies of new media “within the embrace of anthropology” (190).

Denise M. Carter

Mori, Akiko (ed.): *The Anthropology of Europe as Seen from Japan. Considering Contemporary Forms and Meanings of the Social*. Osaka: National Museum of Ethnology, 2013. 198 pp. ISBN 978-4-906962-01-3. (Senri Ethnological Studies, 81)

“The Anthropology of Europe as Seen from Japan” is the first edited volume in English on the topic by Japanese anthropologists. Together with an introduction by the editor, Akiko Mori, and an opening chapter by Jeremy Boissevain, the contributors examine the meanings and practices of the social within European societies. The eleven chapters are organised into four sections. The first part

discusses the dynamic of “Social Change and the Construction of Community” with a focus on the people of Malta, England, and Northern Ireland. The second section examines the interplay between “Solidarity and Individualism” among French villagers and farmers, and the elderly in Finland. The third part turns to the subject of “Cultural Manifestations and Communal Entities” in Spain, Turkey, and Malta. The book closes with two commentaries on the volume by Joy Hendry and Gergeli Mohácsi, both European anthropologists of Japan. In her introduction, Akiko Mori explains that the aim of this book “is to seek a new epistemological approach” for the study of Europe as well as “a new way of thinking about contemporary society” (3). To do so, these Japanese anthropologists come together to examine people’s ideas and practices of the “social” or “what they want to have in common” whether they may be new incomers in rural Malta (Boissevain) or England (Shioji), victims of political violence in Ireland (Sakai), farmers in France (Miura and Nakagawa), the elderly in Finland (Takahashi), actors of heritage politics in Spain and Turkey (Takenaka and Tanaka) or even pilgrims in Malta (Fujiwara). Their works echoes the Scott Lash’s argument that “one is not born or ‘thrown,’ but ‘throws oneself into’” communities.

The first merit of this volume is to make accessible in the English language Japan’s anthropological scholarship of Europe. Via their consideration of the social, the authors cover a broad spectrum of issues including class, memory and violence, economy, globalisation, welfare, heritage, pilgrimage, identity, and politics. Not being an expert of most of the other fields or the anthropology of Europe, I will abstain from commenting on the merit of each contribution. As a specialist of memory, trauma, and storytelling, however, I would suggest that an example of the excellence of their scholarship is Sakai’s chapter on the making of the social in the context of political violence in Northern Ireland. Her article is an excellent treatise of the relationship between the making of memory and imagined community, breaking the gap between individual and collective memory. Considering the quality of many of these articles, I highly recommend these collections of essays to any specialist of the themes analysed or/and of Europe.

Another important contribution made by this volume is its initiation to “mutual anthropologies.” Since 1978, the National Museum of Ethnology of Japan has published over 80 volumes as part of its Senri Ethnological Studies enabling ethnographic and intellectual exchanges between Japanese anthropologists, visiting academics, and a wider international audience. Building on this tradition, this latest volume is the outcome of a workshop held at the museum on the 29th January 2011 when Japanese anthropologists of Europe discussed their findings with their European counterparts mentioned above. The idea behind this publication is thus also an exchange between Japanese anthropologists of Europe and European anthropologists of Japan. It aims at breaking down the dichotomy or the boundary between the researcher and the subject of the research or the observer and the observed. As Joy Hendry points out in her commentary, this exercise is

indeed fairly common for European anthropologists who often present and discuss their own findings with Japanese scholars while in the field. This encounter with the “native anthropologist” has the potential to enhance both the ethnography and the analysis tremendously. As such, this volume could contribute to the current debate about symbiotic anthropology initiated during the 2015 Conference of the Association of Social Anthropology of the UK and the Commonwealth in Exeter.

The main shortcoming is hitherto located from the title itself “The Anthropology of Europe *as Seen from Japan*.” Somewhat misleading, the phrase “as Seen from Japan” suggests that there is something distinctively “Japanese” about their approach to the “social.” However, neither the introduction nor the individual chapters explicitly reflect on the way in which their being Japanese anthropologists might influence their approach. Mori introduces to the founders of anthropology in Japan but, when it comes to discussing the social, limit her discussion to non-Japanese anthropologists. Except for the work of Takahashi, there are indeed very few references to the works of Japanese scholars throughout the book. Moreover, although Mori informs us that the term “social” does not really have its direct equivalent in the Japanese language, she regrettably does not go as far as to provide a clear understanding of the various meaning of the social within Japanese society. I trust that this mutual reflexivity around the idea of the social will be most desired in the future. Indeed, the reader might be best advised to keep in mind the original title of the workshop, “What It Means to Be ‘Social.’ A Study of the Anthropology of Europe.” And as such, this publication has certainly opened the door for further exchanges between anthropologists of Japan, Europe, and beyond.

Sébastien Pennmellen Boret

Moskowitz, Marc L.: Go Nation. Chinese Masculinities and the Game of Weiqi in China. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2013. 184 pp. ISBN 978-0-520-27632-1. Price: € 19.95

Board games are immensely popular in contemporary China: people just about everywhere play Mahjong, and other games such as Chinese chess (*xiangqi*) are also extremely common. *Weiqi* – usually called *go* in the West, following its Japanese name *igo* – is slightly less widespread. It requires professional skill and training, and there are numerous schools and competitive leagues in China, Korea, Japan, and other countries. Marc Moskowitz’s book is an anthropological study of this game that introduces the reader to *Weiqi* in contemporary China and provides an analysis in terms of masculinity and nationalism in practices related to the game.

Moskowitz provides a detailed ethnography of the game, as he experienced it in professional schools and in Beijing parks. He studied with teenage students in a Beijing *Weiqi* school and played with locals in parks and elsewhere. After a riveting introduction, the reader is offered a four-page general summary of the transformations of Chinese society since the 1980s. There are a few similar passages in the book, offering brief descriptions of

general social changes (see, for instance, the summary of Chinese discourses on population quality, *suzhi*, starting on page 100). They can be instructive to the non-specialist, for China scholars they might appear somewhat hasty.

In terms of the description and analysis of the game itself, Moskowitz’s focus is mainly on the interactions when playing the game, and specifically on the cultural models performed in *Weiqi*. The strengths of this book lie especially in the lively descriptions of the learning and playing of *Weiqi* amongst children and teenagers in Beijing. Moskowitz provides vivid descriptions of their enthusiasm for the game, but also the pressures they face to succeed, and the disappointment of failure. Even though fieldwork was relatively short for anthropological standards (six months in 2011), some of the ethnography is very rich in detail, especially about his own learning process.

Moskowitz’s main focus is on the imageries, values, and norms of masculinity and Chineseness that are reproduced in *Weiqi*. And there is no doubt that these are important aspects of the game. *Weiqi* is frequently identified with Chinese ways of thought, or even Chinese culture as a whole. It is generally seen as an expression of civilized masculinity, and the gentlemanly ideal of “*wen*” masculinity (as different from the more martial ideal of “*wu*”). Moskowitz is also keenly aware of the possible class differences between teenage students in *Weiqi* schools and working class players in parks. In the latter games, it is also a different kind of masculinity that is negotiated, one that is more openly combative and flamboyant.

But here is also a main weakness. If we follow the author’s argument that some of the imageries of *Weiqi* can tell us a lot about senses of masculinity and nationalism in contemporary China, it remains questionable how complete an analysis that focuses mainly on one (however important) board game can be. The values of masculinity and Chineseness that appear in playing *Weiqi* and talking about *Weiqi* are reflections and mirrors of values and norms that are produced in other social arenas. Young boys (and girls) also learn elsewhere about similar values, and their performance. But these other arenas – probably the family is crucial here – are largely left out of the picture.

This relates to another crucial point about masculinities and nationalism, namely, that the actual imaginaries of masculinity and Chineseness that appear in *Weiqi* are played out between on-stage and off-stage performances; and the latter, off-stage performances, are sometimes radically different from what is publicly declared and shown (as Confucian sophistication, for instance). Moskowitz does point out that cunning and flamboyance can be part of the game, and that aside from gentlemanly ideals, warrior-like stereotypes are also represented in the game. But the tension between gentleman and warrior, on-display and off-stage, public and private, is not at the centre of the analysis. Instead, Moskowitz concludes that *Weiqi* can be all these things at once – the game “simultaneously occup[ies] a range of historically and culturally nuanced fantasies and desires that revolve around what it means to be a Chinese, a man, a person of greater worth” (p. 48, last sentence of the book).

The strength of Moskowitz’s book is that he meticu-