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**Front-page:** Quichua girl from Napo region in Ecuador" (photo by Aleksandra Wierucka, 2012)

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# CONTENTS

# The significance of cows in Indian society between sacredness and economy

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## Abstract

Cows are still considered holy to the people of the Hindu faith across the Indian sub-continent. In this paper, the authors discuss details of the religious, historical, economic, cultural and sociological significance of the sacred cow in Hinduism. The authors also suggest options to use the sacred cow for the enhancement of eco-friendly living in India in the near future.

KEYWORDS: Hinduism, cow protection, religion, culture, economy, society, India

## Introduction

The Hindu religion recognises the rights of animals to co-exist with humans; therefore, people are taught to love, nurture and worship them. The religion promotes the belief that various Hindu gods and goddesses incarnate in various animal forms. In the past, kings and emperors used various species of animals in their emblems to show their respect. Many festivals in India are still being celebrated to honour different animals (Agoramoorthy & Hsu 2006).

From a source of milk to a provider of labour and religious inspiration, cows often play a prominent role in Hindu society. To the population of 900 million Hindus spread across the Indian sub-continent and elsewhere, the cow is a holy animal that cannot be harmed. The faith first evolved near the Indus River valley nearly 3,000 years ago; respecting the cow remains a central theme in the daily lives of the Hindu faith even today. Many scholars say early Hindus ate beef, but ultimately came to see the cow as sacred to be esteemed and not eaten. India's legendary leader of the nonviolence movement, Mahatma Gandhi said, 'If someone asks me what the most important outward manifestation of Hinduism was, I would suggest that it was the idea of cow protection' (Gandhi 1927).

In this paper, we discuss the sociological, cultural and religious implications involving the sacred cow in Hindu society in India. We also suggest some strategies for the potential future use of sacred cows to enhance eco-friendly living in India.

# Sacred animals of Hinduism

The Hindu religion generally considers all life forms as sacred, and various species ranging from the tiny insect to gigantic elephant are regarded as equally sacred (Agoramoorthy 2009a). The long list of sacred animals mentioned in the ancient Sanskrit scriptures cover major taxa, including invertebrates (bee, butterfly, mollusc, spider), fish, reptiles (crocodile, lizard, snake, squirrel, turtle), birds (eagle, falcon, crow, crane, goose, hawk, owl, peacock, swan, dove), and mammals (bat, bear, wild boar, buffalo, bull, cat, cow, dog, deer, elephant, fox, goat, horse, leopard, lion, monkey, rat, tiger, rabbit). Moreover, Hinduism has developed sanctity by association for animals such as the swan, eagle and bull that serve as the vehicles of the principal Hindu deities, namely *Brahma*, the creator, and *Vishnu*, the protector, *Shiva*, the regenerator: all three make up the trinity of Hindu Gods. Some of the animals are sacred themselves, such as *Hanuman*, the monkey God, *Naga*, the snake God, and *Ganesh*, the elephant God. Major Hindu temples across India still maintain captive elephants, since they play a role in religious rituals (Majupuria 2000).

The concept of the reincarnation of Vishnu is intriguing, since it represents in a way the theory of organic evolution involving animals. In order to indicate the aquatic origin of the life forms, Vishnu incarnates in the form of *Mathsya* (fish), followed by an amphibious *Kurma* (turtle). The next incarnation *Varaha* or wild boar is a terrestrial mammal, depicting how life transferred from the aquatic habitat to the terrestrial environment. Subsequently, *Narasimha* represents a beast's attempt to attain a human form, which is followed by *Vamana*, a pigmy human. In the incarnation of *Ramachandra*, perfect human qualities are identified, while the last one, *Kalki*, represents the human destruction of the planet giving poor attention to nature (Haigh 2006).

Several mythical stories are associated with the sacred animals of India; for example, the eagle is worshiped while pigeons are the favourite animals of *Yamaraja*, the god of death. He rides on a bull water-buffalo when he visits Earth. *Karthikeya*, the younger son of *Shiva* uses peacock for his transportation while the goddess *Saraswati*, who possesses the powers of speech and wisdom rides a swan. The crow is unique among birds as well since it is well-versed with the happenings in heaven, so people with desires towards paradise try to please it. The deer is associated with many mythical stories as well; *Vayu*, the air god's chariot is pulled by a pair of deer; *Indra*, the ruler of the heavens employs *Uccha-ishrava*, a snow white seven-headed flying horse as his vehicle. Similarly, the Sun god's chariot is being pulled by seven red horses (Waghorne 1999). Prehistoric animals such as the crocodile are also given importance in the religion. It is believed that the river Ganges depends on a crocodile for her frequent visits to the Bay of Bengal from the Himalayas. Moreover, the mythical elephant story is well-known: when an elephant named *Gajendra* was attacked by a crocodile while crossing a river, it screamed for God's help, and Vishnu appeared on his vehicle, *Garuda* (eagle) and destroyed the hungry reptile.

Although there are 238 species of snakes throughout India, it is only the cobra with its two-eyed hood that is worshipped widely. The worship of snakes in India is intriguing. *Adisesha*, the king of snakes is the couch of *Narayana*, a form of Vishnu as he lies on the ocean. The snake can be seen around the neck of *Shiva*, the Hindu supreme God.

Furthermore, snakes made of stone are found throughout most of the Hindu temples in India. In the western state of Maharashtra, a celebration called *Naag-Panchami* is specifically devoted to the worship of cobras. Similarly, snake worship is called *Jhampan* in the eastern state of West Bengal (Gupta 2006).

## The mythical cow

The cow is the most sacred of all the animals of Hinduism. It is known as *Kamadhenu*, or the divine cow, and the giver of all desires. According to legend, she emerged from the ocean of milk at the time of *samudramanthan* or the great churning of the ocean by the gods and demons. She was presented to the seven sages, and in the course of time came into the custody of sage *Vasishta*, the teacher of Ram (hero of the epic Ramayana). Her legs symbolise four Vedas; her nipples four *Purushartha* (or objectives, i.e. *dharma* or righteousness, *artha* or material wealth, *kama* or desire and *moksha* or salvation); her horns symbolise the gods, her face the sun and moon, and her shoulders *agni* or the god of fire. She has also been described in four other forms: *Nanda, Sunanda, Surabhi, Susheela* and *Sumana* (Ganapathi 2005).

Legends also state that Brahma gave life to priests and cows same time so that the priests could recite religious scriptures while cows could afford ghee (clarified butter) as offering in rituals. Anyone who kills cows or allows others to kill them is deemed to rot in hell as many years as there are hairs upon his body. Likewise, the bull is depicted as a vehicle of Lord Shiva: a symbol of respect for the male cattle.

The *Nandi* (bull) located at the Shiva temples at Thanjavur, Rameshwaram and Mahabalipuram are the most venerated bovine shrines in the Tamil Nadu State of southern India. Similarly, large numbers of pilgrims also visit the 16th century bull temple at Bangalore (Karnataka State) and 11th century Nandi temple at Kajuraho (Madhya Pradesh State). The Vishwanath temple of Jhansi built in 1002 AD also harbours a large bull (Ganapathi 2005).

The cow was revered as a mother goddess in the Mediterranean civilisations. The cow became celebrated in India, first during the Vedic period (1500–900 BCE) as a symbol of wealth. Bulls were sacrificed to the gods, and people ate their meat. Nonetheless, the slaughter of milk-producing cows was prohibited. The *Rig veda* refers to the cow as *devi* or goddess. Although meat-eating was permitted in the Vedic period, the scriptures encouraged vegetarianism. An example is the Laws of Manu, which states that there is no sin in eating meat, but abstention brings great rewards (Buhler 1964). In the Mahabharata, *Bhishma* (grandfather of the leaders of warring factions) observes that the cow acts as a surrogate mother by providing milk to human beings for a lifetime, so she is truly the mother of the world. The *Puranas* state that nothing is more religious than the gift of cows. In the epic Ramayana, *Rama* was given a dowry of many cows when he married *Sita* (Dutt 2009).

The sanctity of cow may have been based on economic reasons. During the Vedic period, cattle played a significant source of wealth for the predominant pastoral communities, which is similar to the *Masai* tribe in East Africa today. The five key "products" of the cow include milk, curds, ghee butter, urine and dung; they are used in daily lives,

worship and rituals. Cows provide milk that helps to sustain lives of adults and children. The milk by-products such as yoghurt, buttermilk, butter, and ghee are an integral part of people's daily diet in India. Cow dung is widely used for fuel in rural areas; people also use the dung to clean house floors and walls; cow dung has been scientifically proven to have antiseptic value. Hindus do not share the Western repulsion towards cow excrement, but instead consider it a natural beneficial product. Being tame, cattle are an excellent beast of burden; they pull carts, and plough the field to plant crops. Even after death, their skins are useful to human.

## The conflict between sacredness and economic use of cows in contemporary India

The cow remains a revered and protected animal in Hinduism today and people of the Hindu faith refrain from eating beef. Most rural families across India have at least one dairy cow. Despite their sacred status, cows do not appear to be much appreciated in the day-to-day lives of people in India. For example, they roam around city streets where they have to rely on garbage from gutters for survival. Recent report indicates that large numbers of cows in major cities die due to eating plastic bags (McNamee 2009). In some places, it is considered good luck to give a cow some snack, bread or fruit before breakfast. A person can be sent to jail for killing or injuring a cow as per the animal protection law.

However, as most of India's cities have been overcrowded in recent decades, cow-friendly attitudes and policies have posed some problems. For example, Delhi city's 13 million people have to share the streets with 40,000 cows, often leading to complaints, since they spread trash by ripping garbage bags; they also dangerously snarl traffic. Consequently, officials have employed cowboys to round up the roaming cows to move them outside city limits, sometimes to special reserves where they are cared for. Although city leaders may not give up until the vast majority of the cows are moved out, sceptics argue that some of the cows return to their home turfs within days of being moved (Chomchuen 2009).

Cows are honoured across India at least once a year known as *Gopastami* or cow holiday; they are washed and decorated in the temple and given offerings with the hope that their gifts of life to humanity will continue. Nonetheless, animal activists complain that cows are being abused during transportation to slaughterhouses after long and torturous journeys in trains and trucks or on foot. Slaughtering cows is permitted in two states: West Bengal in the east and Kerala in the south. It is illegal to transport them across state lines. India's USD 2 billion leather export industry depends on 4,000 tanneries and leather-goods factories scattered across the nation; they depend on cattle. Therefore, the government overlooks the sacredness of the cow and continues to promote the leather trade. Animal activists suggest that lifting the ban on slaughter may deter the deadly illegal transport across state lines because poor villagers can no longer afford to keep unproductive cows, and suppressing it may cause greater misery. However, such a drastic step may provoke anger of the cow-lovers of India, so politicians will avoid making any statements that might upset them.

Prominent spiritual leaders in India have recently led a long march on foot from the town of Kuruksetra (land of teachers) where Lord *Krishna* (a manifestation of Vishnu) spoke the gospel of *Bhagavad Gita* (song of God and message of spiritual wisdom). Many people joined the 25,000 km walk over a period of 108 days from 30 September 2009 to 17 January 2010 that went across India to convey a message: 'Saving cows is saving India's soul.' According to legend, Kuruksetra was the site where *Brahma* created the universe, and where the book of Manu was written, which contains all the knowledge related to the creation of the universe (Buhler 1964).

On the last day, religious leaders of Hinduism, Islam and Christianity voiced their unity for cow protection. The gathering included leading saints and scholars namely Sharkarcharya (leader of Hindu monasteries of Advaita), Baba Ramdev (yoga guru), Swami Dayanand Saraswati (renowned Vedanta scholar and saint), Mohanrao Bhagwat (leader of Rashtriya Swayamsevak Sangh), Jain Muni Pavitra Sagarji Maharaj (Jain sect leader), Ashok Singhal (leader of Vishwa Hindu Parishad), Bhante Gyan Jagatji (Buddhist saint), Bhadant Rahul Bodhiji (Buddhist saint), Maulana Bashir Qadri (Islamic leader), Haji Taiyab Qureshiji (Islamic leader), Swami Sahdev Das (Krishna Consciousness Society), and Suresh Oberoi (renowned actor). They unanimously urged the government of India to impose a ban on cow slaughter throughout India by enacting a law in parliament and also recognise the cow as India's national animal (Dasa 2009).

In fact, India already has a national animal, the tiger, and the national bird is peacock or peafowl. Accordingly, declaring the cow as a national domestic animal appears to be reasonable. Nevertheless, whether the government will agree to the appeals of religious leaders and scholars has yet to be seen. Critics argue on the other hand that such a proposal would undermine India's commitment to religious tolerance and secularism, although cow protection has the support of leading saints and religious leaders from all sects.

For example, the Islamic leader, Maulana Bashir Qadri, stated that if cow slaughter is to be banned only with the signatures of the Muslims and the cow to be declared as national animal, then millions of Muslims will come forward to support it. He appealed to Muslims in India to support the cow protection initiative.

Similarly, Baba Ramdev said that until 1760, there had been a total ban in India on cow slaughter, prostitution and drinking alcohol. However, with the advent of the British rule, the forbidden practices of Hinduism were given the legal status by Robert Clive (British colonial administrator). As a result, there are 36,000 slaughter houses and 32,000 liquor shops across India today. He reiterated that to save future generations, returning to the lifestyle of Hindu ancestors and adhering to righteous ways of life in society is essential (Dasa 2009).

## Future non-conflicting green energy potential of cows

India harbours the largest domesticated bovine population (294 million) in the world that includes cows, bullocks, buffalo and calves (Ravindranath et al. 2000; Tata Energy Research Institute 1997). Based on the mean annual average dung yield (fresh weight) of 4.5 kg/day for cattle and 10.2 kg/day for buffalo, the total dung production is estimated to be 659 tons annually, with cattle dung accounting for 344 tons and buffalo dung accounting

for 315 tons (India's Animal Husbandry 1997). Only about 40% of the dung is used as fuel in rural areas. The quantity of dung used annually in the existing 2.7 million family type biogas plants is estimated to be 22 tons. Biogas is a method of producing methane gas from organic matter. It can be used by rural people as fuel for cooking food items, with less impact on forest ecology. The biogas technology harnesses the natural process by creating an artificial environment via a biogas plant, which provides conditions for natural bacterial action leading to methane gas production. The digested organic matter "slurry" is removed by an outlet, which can be used as a natural fertiliser for crops.

The potential for household biogas units in India is 12 to 17 million. However, only 4 million biogas plants were installed by 2011. Thus, the impact of household biogas plants in sustainable development is yet to be fully realised in rural India (Ravindranath et al. 2000; Agoramoorthy & Hsu 2008). Firewood collected from forest areas still serves as the main fuel consumed in India and peoples' dependency on firewood has serious detrimental effect on the local ecology due to the unsustainable removal of natural forest vegetation. Energy use projections indicate that India's rural communities will continue to use bio-fuel (firewood, dried dung, and biogas) while urban areas will switch to LPG, kerosene and electricity (Sarma et al. 1998).

We studied 125 household biogas plants in villages during 2001–2005 in three states, Gujarat, Rajasthan and Madhya Pradesh in western India, to record data on the impact of household biogas plants on local ecology and community (Agoramoorthy and Hsu 2008). The biogas plants were established by a local non-profit agency, the Sadguru Foundation, to help rural people to promote natural resources management (Jagawat 2005; Agoramoorthy 2009b). Our study showed that the annual average reduction of firewood was 638 kg/household, reflecting a drastic reduction from 1048.9 kg before using the biogas plants to 410.6 kg afterwards. Each household's impact on the forest for firewood collection after the biogas plant was reduced to 61% (0.7 ton per household). A total of 80 tons of firewood from natural forest nearby was spared by the 125 households each year. It clearly showed the enormous potential of household biogas plants in relieving ecological stress in forest areas of rural India.

After people started using biogas, kerosene usage was reduced by 62% (from an average of 121 litres/year reduced to 46 litres/year. Interestingly, chemical fertiliser usage was also significantly reduced by 50% (from an average of 472 kg/year reduced to 235 kg/year) easing toxic pollutants on soil and the associated ecosystem (Agoramoorthy & Hsu 2008). Before the establishment of biogas plants in villages, the cost of firewood and kerosene in most households exceeded the annual salary of a rural Indian family. Thus, people were often forced to harvest firewood from the forest illegally. Biogas plants, being an eco-friendly affordable technology, safeguard local forest resources.

The negative impacts of chemical fertilisers to soil and ecology are also well known (Hall & Robarge 2003). After the biogas plants were established in villages, the need for chemical fertilisers reduced, and farmers were seen increasingly using the organic slurry as natural fertiliser for crops, which enhances topsoil health in agricultural areas promoting healthy agricultural and terrestrial ecosystems in villages. The organic manure helps in retaining soil fertility and productivity, especially in the ecologically fragile drylands of western India (Agoramoorthy 2009b).

# Conclusion

To overcome the degradation of natural resources in developing countries such as India, with a population of over one billion inhabitants, is not all that easy (Starke 2008). Therefore, it is about time for India's religious leaders, politicians and policy makers to relook into the availability of millions of cows across India so that religiously non-conflicting strategies can be promoted towards sustainable development in rural areas. Wandering cows can be rescued and rehabilitated at government/corporate-managed ranches where their dung can be harvested daily to promote cost-effective biogas technology. Such ranches can serve not only as animal shelters but also as educational centres to promote public awareness on cows, Hinduism, renewable energy, rural economy and sustainable development. When the energy potential of the cow dung is fully realised in the country, people will not allow their cattle to roam aimlessly on the streets. Furthermore, the alternative renewable energy source of cow dung will significantly reduce pressure on India's forests, soil and associated terrestrial ecosystems, ultimately mitigating global warming while enhancing ecological conservation. If the above proposed suggestions are implemented, the Indian society can resolve two issues: cows can continue to remain to be worshiped and they can at the same time be economically useful. This contemporary animal-friendly developmental approach will bring religion and economy closer once again.

# Acknowledgments

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## Povzetek

Po celotnem indijskem podkontinentu ljudje hindujske vere krave pojmujejo kot svete.
V prispevku avtorja prdstavljava detaile religiozne, zgodovinske, ekonimske, kulturne in
družbene pomembnosti svete krave v hinduizmu. Na podlagi analize tudi predlagava rabo
svetih krav za izboljšanje okolju prijaznega življenja v Indiji v bližnji prihodnosti.

KLJUČNE BESEDE: hinduizem, zaščita krav, religija, kultura, ekonomija, družba, Indija

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# Anthropometric variance in humans: Assessing Renaissance concepts in modern applications

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## Abstract

Visual analysis of human anatomical and segmental variation are valuable tools for analysing and modifying exercise positions for movement efficiency, health, and safety. The most widely known visual technique for determining whether a body segment is long, short, or normal is based on da Vinci's 1487 Vitruvian Man. In the more than five centuries since, human height has changed. This pilot study explores whether the change in stature affects the validity of da Vinci's original estimations of anthropometry relative to modern populations. The present day data deviated across all Vitruvian segments. Of the nine male and six female subjects, none matched the model, thus indicating the need for further investigation on a larger scale. Male segmental lengths were more different from the Vitruvian standard (p=0.0002) than female segmental lengths (p=0.2457). However, it was noted that da Vinci's estimations were within one SD of the present means; thus, the model may still be cautiously applied as a guide for health professionals.

KEYWORDS: anthropometry, health, exercise, da Vinci, Vitruvius

## Introduction

Teaching and coaching exercise have always carried with them an element of interpretive anatomy with three distinct applications. The most recognised use is the easy selection of appropriate exercises in order to applied controlled stress to the specific anatomical structures in which adaptation is desired; cardiovascular, pulmonary, skeletal, neural, and muscular structures being the most relevant. A second common use is the identification of individuals with anthropometric dimensions associated with success in sport (Pipes 1977; Kansal et al. 1980; Grimston & Hay 1986; Claessens et al. 1998; Bourgois et al. 2000; Crossland et al. 2011). It is commonplace to see sport coaches select potential athletes for a sport or a specific position within a sport based upon physical dimensions. This is most common in school-age and high school sport, where the coach is initially presented with no other means of selection or information other than stature.

A third application, albeit a less recognised, but likely more significant application, is being able to evaluate an individual's unique anatomical structure and place it in a position that 1) is correct for producing efficient movement through a task-appropriate range of motion and 2) provides a foundation for safety (Kilgore et al. 2009). Both of these points have become poorly attended to in the educational framework that provides the typical gym visitor their expert, personal trainer or coach.

As there is a relative dearth of academic literature related to this topic, it is quite common to find one-size-fits-all approaches to teaching exercise positions in a majority of the authoritative professional literature (American College of Sports Medicine 2006; National Strength & Conditioning Association 2008). It is unfortunate that highly regarded guides for health and fitness professionals do not provide any means for a new clinician, trainer or coach to develop a functional concept of how to adapt exercise positions for individual variations in anthropometry. Indeed, any consideration of anthropometry (other than height, weight, and the derivative Body Mass Index) is absent from virtually all health and fitness curricula. Adding to the informational void are exercise anatomy texts and university courses specifically designed for fitness professionals lacking functional and applied anthropometry instruction relative to movement.

Exacerbating the problem further is the fact that the majority (more than 70%) of practicing health and fitness trainers do not have degrees in health promotion, exercise science, physical education, or other exercise-related degrees (Malek et al. 2002). Despite their lack of education, this group generally refers to the same authoritative academic literature for guidance in practice as do professionals in academia; however, they are much more likely to refer to materials from popular magazines, or word of mouth (Stacey et al. 2010). Consequently, other than learning basic nomenclature from static anatomical representations of the human body, it is unlikely that the average non-university educated health and fitness trainer or coach will be afforded the opportunity to develop an understanding of even the simplest of anatomical applications in exercise. This broadens the problem, affecting both the professional's competency and the quality of teaching and coaching received by the trainee.

The end product of either route to professional practice is that health and fitness professionals are not presented any means to detect anatomical variations or instructions on how to accommodate them. In essence, they will be ill prepared to determine whether someone has longer than normal legs, shorter arms, etc., and how to modify exercise technique to accommodate the identified variations in relatively static exercise (Figure 1). This observation and shortcoming extends to ambulatory exercises, as limb length exerts a powerful influence on gait and velocity transitions (Monteiro et al. 2011).

Identifying a shortcoming within a curriculum of professional preparation is one thing, but how do we approach a solution? Is there a reference standard that can be used in this application? The establishment of body segment length norms has been theorised for at least 5000 years. The ancient Egyptians used two standards; the first was the distance from the ankle to the floor. A human was proposed to have 21.25 of these units in overall height. Later, the measurement unit was changed to the length of the middle finger (digit 3), and human height was stated to be 19 of these units.
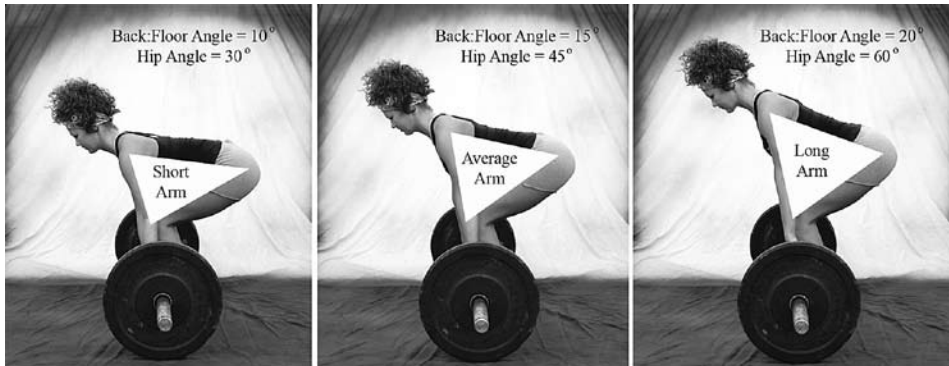
*Figure 1: The effect of arm length variation on start position for the deadlift. At the start of the deadlift, the navicular bone, bar, and the most medial and inferior aspect of the scapular spine are aligned in order to produce a straight bar path during ascent. A simple variation in arm length effectively changes the constituent joint angles enabling that position (reprinted with permission from Kilgore, 2010).*

Polyclitus, in about the 5th century BC, developed a model of human proportions based on the width of the hand at the metacarpal-phalangeal joints. This enabled production of proportional representations of human in his sculpted works. In this model, the human body was 20 units in overall height. In the first century BC, the Roman architect Vitruvius proposed that the height of the average human was equal to his outstretched arms, fingertip to opposing fingertip. During the Renaissance, the work of Vitruvius was further developed into likely the most persistent and widely recognised descriptive model of human dimensions produced.

One of the most familiar and easiest methods of determining if an individual deviates from 'normal' anthropometry has been to use the historical concept of normal human dimensions created by Leonardo da Vinci (circa 1487). Virtually everyone is familiar with the *Vitruvian Man*, da Vinci's diagram of human proportions, centre of mass, and centre of gravity (Figure 2). It is used symbolically in logos for health and exercise professionals, academic units and medicine around the world. It is a convention used in art instructional programs around the world as a method towards creating proportional representations of the human body.

In application within the exercise arena, by using da Vinci's model, one can simply use an individual's head length as a basis for body segmental analysis and compare the results to those that da Vinci concluded were typical for human dimensions and proportions.

Referencing da Vinci's notes and illustration provide the following dimensional observations:

- from the top of the head to the bottom of the chin is one-eighth of a man's height;
- a man's height is four cubits, which conveniently is eight heads in overall length;
- the length of the outspread arms (wing span or reach) is equal to his height, or eight head lengths;

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- the width of the shoulders is a quarter of a man's height, or two head lengths;
- the distance from the elbow to the armpit is one-eighth of a man's height, or one head length;
- the distance from the elbow to the tip of the hand is a quarter of a man's height, or two head lengths;
- the torso, from sternal notch to the level of the hip joint is two-and-a-half head lengths;
- the upper leg is two-and-a-quarter head lengths;
- the lower leg to the ground is two head lengths;
- this widest point of the hips is one-and-a-half head lengths.
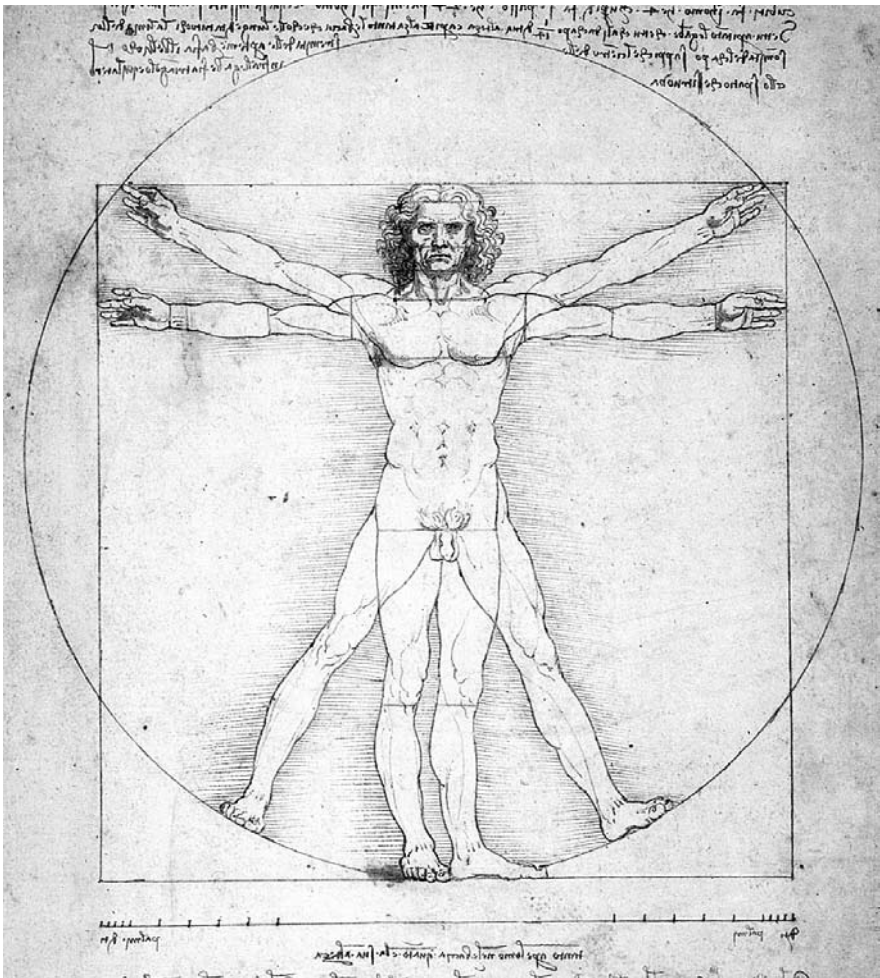


*Figure 2: da Vinci's Virtuvian Man (Uoumo Vitruviano). From the collection of the Gallerie dell'Accademia, Venice, Italy.*

Using the Vitruvian diagram, a field practitioner can visually, and rapidly, determine if a body segment is different from da Vinci's prototypical human male. The ability to make such rapid assessments is valuable. However, while da Vinci's works are genius and legendary, do five-hundred-year-old assessments of human dimensions apply today as they did during the Renaissance? It is commonly known that Westerners (Caucasian/European) have been becoming progressively taller. From the Renaissance to as late as the 1800s, average male height was likely between 5'6" and 5'8" or 167.6 and 172.7 cm (Steckel 2004). The dimensions of the 19th century male were estimated in a study of five male subjects to be 5'8" or 172.7 cm (Harless 1858). The contemporary male is approximately 5'9'–5'11" or 175.3–180.3 cm (Ogden et al. 2004; Sveriges Officiella Statistik 2007; Corbett et al. 2008). Therefore, a central question is whether the changes in body stature since da Vinci's original estimations of segmental dimensions remain valid in modern populations.

A pilot study was designed and carried out to examine this question and determine the need and feasibility of attempting a larger scale examination.

## Materials and methods

### Subjects

Nine adult Caucasian males and six adult Caucasian females volunteered to participate in this pilot study. The males averaged 24.2 years of age (± 13.9), the females 31.0 years of age (± 13.9). Male height was 182.4 cm (± 7.3). Female height was 164.2 cm (± 9.6).

### Methods

First, head height was determined by measurement from the base of the chin to the highest point on the crown of the head of each subject. This distance formed the base unit of analysis. Each individual's head length was used in assessment of their segmental lengths. The methodology was approved by the relevant institutional review board and the following measurements were then taken:

- *Overall body height* – measured in a standing position, from the inferior calcaneous at the floor to the highest point of the skull;
- *Wing span* – measured with the arms outstretched parallel to the floor, the tip of digit three (middle finger) to the opposing digit three;
- *Shoulder width* – measured from acromio-clavicular joint (point of the shoulder) to acromio-clavicular joint across the breadth of the back;
- *Hip width* – measured at the widest point at the level of the acetabulum (hip joint);
- *Upper arm* – measured from the acromio-clavicular joint to the point of the elbow (olecranon);
- *Elbow to finger tip* – measured from the olecranon to the distal end of the third digit;
- *Torso* – measured from the suprasternal notch to the level of the acetabulum;
- *Upper Leg* – measured laterally from the acetabulum to the middle of the knee joint;
- *Lower leg* – measured laterally from the middle of the knee joint to the floor.

## *Analysis*

The data was analysed through simple descriptive statistics (means and standard deviations). The resulting group means were compared to the values derived from da Vinci's original descriptions and illustration. A paired t-test was performed on the segmental lengths (in cm) between those derived from the Vitruvian Man diagram and those measured in the subjects of the present study.

## **Results**

The data clearly demonstrates a variance in overall body and segmental dimensions relative to those derived from the Vitruvian man diagram. Beginning with the base measurement unit, the head, it is obvious that cranial dimension has changed in the past five centuries. da Vinci's model provides an average head height of 20.96 cm (167.6 cm in body height divided by 8 head lengths in body height). The males in the present study had an average head height of 23.9 cm (± 1.71). Female head height was 21.4 cm (± 1.71). If da Vinci's original model's scaling method is still applicable, the change in skull dimensions should not alter the other dimensional relationships.

*Table 1: Male mean height and segmental dimensions in centimeters*

| Measure | Male | | SD | Female | | SD | da Vinci |
|---------|------|---|-------|--------|---|-------|----------|
| Height | 182.46 | ± | 7.31 | 164.25 | ± | 9.59 | 167.68 |
| Wing span | 189.22 | ± | 18.71 | 167.64 | ± | 10.30 | 167.68 |
| Shoulder width | 54.72 | ± | 11.98 | 41.91 | ± | 3.94 | 41.92 |
| Upper arm | 37.80 | ± | 6.05 | 20.96 | ± | 6.96 | 31.44 |
| Elbow to finger tip | 49.74 | ± | 5.17 | 36.67 | ± | 3.31 | 41.92 |
| Torso | 61.68 | ± | 13.05 | 52.39 | ± | 5.74 | 52.4 |
| Upper leg | 47.75 | ± | 7.17 | 47.15 | ± | 7.16 | 46.11 |
| Lower leg and foot | 50.74 | ± | 10.34 | 41.91 | ± | 4.38 | 41.92 |
| Hip width | 43.77 | ± | 11.17 | 31.43 | ± | 6.63 | 31.44 |

As anticipated, the females were smaller in all values with the exception of the upper leg, which had nearly identical measures. The segmental measures differed between males and females (Tables 2 and 3) and both experimental sets of observations deviated from those proposed by da Vinci. No single subject, male or female, conformed precisely to the Vitruvian dimensions (Table 4).

*Table 2: Male subjects segmental dimensions expressed in head lengths*

| Subject | Height | Wing span | Shoulder width | Upper arm | Elbow to fingertip | Torso | Upper leg | Lower leg | Hip width |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 7.50 | 7.75 | 1.75 | 1.25 | 1.75 | 2.25 | 1.75 | 2.25 | 1.50 |
| 2 | 8.50 | 7.25 | 2.25 | 2.00 | 2.50 | 3.75 | 2.50 | 3.00 | 2.00 |
| 3 | 8.10 | 8.40 | 1.50 | 1.75 | 2.00 | 2.25 | 2.25 | 2.25 | 1.25 |
| 4 | 7.60 | 7.80 | 1.75 | 1.75 | 2.00 | 2.25 | 2.00 | 2.25 | 1.25 |
| 5 | 8.00 | 7.75 | 2.25 | 1.50 | 2.00 | 3.00 | 1.50 | 2.00 | 2.00 |
| 6 | 7.25 | 7.50 | 3.25 | 1.25 | 2.00 | 3.00 | 2.25 | 1.50 | 2.75 |
| 7 | 9.00 | 9.50 | 2.25 | 1.75 | 2.25 | 2.75 | 2.00 | 2.75 | 1.75 |
| 8 | 7.50 | 7.75 | 2.25 | 1.50 | 2.25 | 2.50 | 2.00 | 2.25 | 1.50 |
| 9 | 7.00 | 7.25 | 2.00 | 1.75 | 2.00 | 2.00 | 2.25 | 2.00 | 1.75 |
| *Mean* | 7.83 | 7.88 | 2.14 | 1.61 | 2.08 | 2.64 | 2.06 | 2.25 | 1.75 |
| *STD* | 0.57 | 0.70 | 0.50 | 0.25 | 0.22 | 0.55 | 0.30 | 0.43 | 0.47 |

*Table 3: Female subjects segmental dimensions expressed in head lengths*

| Subject | Height | Wing span | Shoulder width | Upper arm | Elbow to fingertip | Torso | Upper leg | Lower leg | Hip width |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| 1 | 7.50 | 8.00 | 1.75 | 1.75 | 2.00 | 2.00 | 2.00 | 2.00 | 1.50 |
| 2 | 7.00 | 7.00 | 1.75 | 1.25 | 1.75 | 2.00 | 1.50 | 2.00 | 2.00 |
| 3 | 8.25 | 8.25 | 2.00 | 1.75 | 2.25 | 2.50 | 2.25 | 2.25 | 2.25 |
| 4 | 7.00 | 7.25 | 1.75 | 1.25 | 2.00 | 2.00 | 2.25 | 2.00 | 1.50 |
| 5 | 8.00 | 8.00 | 2.00 | 2.00 | 2.00 | 2.50 | 2.00 | 2.50 | 1.75 |
| 6 | 8.50 | 7.50 | 1.50 | 1.25 | 2.00 | 2.50 | 2.50 | 2.00 | 1.50 |
| *Mean* | 7.71 | 7.67 | 1.79 | 1.54 | 2.00 | 2.25 | 2.08 | 2.13 | 1.75 |
| *STD* | 0.64 | 0.49 | 0.19 | 0.33 | 0.16 | 0.27 | 0.34 | 0.21 | 0.32 |

*Table 4: Comparison of experimental observations to Vitruvian dimensions (data presented in head lengths)*

| Dimension | da Vinci | Males | Females |
|---|---|---|---|
| Overall body height | 8.0 | 7.7 | 7.7 |
| Wing span | 8.0 | 7.9 | 7.7 |
| Shoulder width | 2.0 | 2.3 | 1.8 |
| Hip width | 1.5 | 1.8 | 1.8 |
| Upper arm | 1.0 | 1.5 | 1.5 |
| Elbow to fingertip | 2.0 | 2.1 | 2.0 |
| Torso | 2.5 | 2.6 | 2.3 |
| Upper leg | 2.2 | 2.0 | 2.1 |
| Lower leg | 2.0 | 2.1 | 2.1 |

Statistical evaluation with a paired t-test between the segmental lengths from da Vinci's illustration and the modern male mean values for the same segments demonstrated a significant difference (p=0.0002). Similar statistical treatment of the present female data suggests that there is not a statistical difference between da Vinci's male model and these female values (p=0.2457). As one would expect, a comparison of segmental means between males and females was significantly different (p=0.0002).

## Discussion

A partial description of normal human anthropometric variation has been sporadically examined in large scale studies (Daniels 1952; Gordon et al. 1988; Yao et al. 1991, Park et al. 2011). Most of such studies have had specific intents relative to military occupational needs or were part of correlative studies examining potential contributing or detracting anthropometric variables relative to health. A complete description of segmental anatomy was not part of these studies. It has been previously noted that there has not been a systematic or comprehensive evaluation of civilian anthropometry (Kroemer et al. 1988). In the author's literature research in preparation for this manuscript, there was no available research or theoretical manuscripts that were current and directly addressed normal segmental construction in a format similar to that presented by da Vinci. The most similar parallel data was that of Harless, who performed an analysis of five males to produce a set of average dimensions (Harless 1858). There were also no academic or professional articles regarding segmental recognition techniques for use by allied health or fitness professionals relative to the teaching of exercise.

There has been changes in human segmental dimensions since the time of da Vinci (Table 5). Although the present data is different, it remains within one standard deviation of da Vinci's proposed values. While different from the Vitruvian Man, the present data remains crudely similar. This suggests that da Vinci's model may still be a valid approximation of segmental proportions for artistic reference in the creation of depictions of the human body. It may also serve as a health or fitness practitioner's rudimentary mental image, or template, of what "normal" can look like and enable the modification of exercise technique to accommodate detected variations in segment lengths. It is therefore prudent to consider the inclusion of this model in health and fitness professional preparatory materials for students in academic programs and presentation of the model in the popular exercise media in order to reach those fitness professionals who rely on those magazines for guidance.

However, the Vitruvian Man does not accurately describe the modern human body's dimensional lengths and relationships; therefore, further analysis is warranted. Gender was not considered in da Vinci's model, and the present data indicates that scaled female segmental lengths follow a similar pattern as males with the exception of a more narrow shoulder dimension, and are in fact fairly close to the values suggested by da Vinci.

Although the present study is based on a larger subject pool than in previous similar works, a much larger subject pool is needed for verification of all findings of this preliminary study.

*Table 5: Comparison of the present data to that of Harless (1858) and to da Vinci's Vitruvian Man model*

| Subject set | Height | Wing span | Shoulder width | Upper arm | Elbow to fingertip | Torso | Upper leg | Lower leg | Hip width |
|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|---|
| Present data | 182.4 | 189.2 | 54.7 | 37.8 | 49.7 | 61.7 | 47.8 | 50.7 | 43.8 |
| Harless (1858) | 172.7 | - | - | 36.4 | 50.2 | 64.5 | 44.9 | 48.9 | - |
| da Vinci (1487) | 167.6 | 167.6 | 41.9 | 21 | 36.7 | 52.4 | 47.1 | 41.9 | 31.4 |

This paper is intended to be an exploratory evaluation of da Vinci's model as a functional tool for health and fitness professionals. In application, the deviations seen here suggest that it will be commonplace to see from a quarter to half a head's length segmental variance between individuals throughout the axial and appendicular anatomy. Not a single subject in this study possessed the dimensional relationships put forth by da Vinci. This strongly suggests that practitioners must become competent in adjusting exercise positions on an individual basis in order to maximise exercise efficiency and safety. It also indicates that consideration of a single exercise position as correct for all individuals is likely to be a flawed approach, consideration of anatomical orientations and external physical influences must be taken into account.

The small subject pool pilot data presented here, along with the scarcity and discontinuity of related anthropometric research, underscores the value of conducting a larger scale evaluation of human dimensions in order to update the Vitruvian concept to modern dimensions. Such an endeavour will lead to a better understanding of the visual analysis of human segmental variation and provide clinical and field practitioners an objective comparative tool for use in the field to aid in teaching and analysing exercise technique and movement.

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## Povzetek

Vidna analiza človeške anatomske in segmentalne variacije so pomembna orodja za analizo in modifikacijo vadbenih položajev, ki izboljšujejo učinkovitost gibanja, vidike zdravja in varnosti. Najbolj znana vidna tehnika za določanje kratkosti, dolgosti ali normalnosti telesnih segmentov temelji na da Vicijevi skici vitruvijskega moškega iz leta 1487. V več kot petih stoletjih pa se je višina ljudi povečala. Ta pilotska študija proučuje, ali je ta razlika v telesni višini vplivala na veljavnost da Vincijevih izvornih antropometrijskih ugotovitev na sodobnih populacijah. Sodobni podatki so pokazali na odklone na vseh vitruvijskih segmentih. Nihče izmed devetih moških in šestih ženskih merjencev ni ustrezal modelu, kar nakazuje potrebo po nadaljnjem raziskovanju na večjem vzorcu. Segmentalne dolžine moških so se od vitruvijskega standard razlikovale bolj (p=0.0002) kot segmentalne dolžine žensk (p=0.2457). Vseeno pa je opazno, da so bile da Vincijeve ocene znotraj enega standardnega odklona od trenutnega povprečja, zaradi česar bi lahko model z omejitvami še vedno služil kot merilo strokovnjakom na področju zdravstva.

KLJUčNE BESEDE: antropometrija, zdravje, vadba. da Vinci, Vitruvius

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# The non-formal education and migration of the Aeta, an indigenous tribe in the Philippines

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## Abstract

This research into the non-formal education of the Aeta, an indigenous tribe in the Philippines, who became migrants after a volcanic eruption, highlights the significance of community-learning models for the purpose of integrating migrants into a society. The community education system, in which the Aeta are involved, found its inspiration in the Danish model of folk high schools and Freire's "Pedagogy of the Oppressed". Their programmes are prepared according to principles of flexibility and inclusiveness. The findings of an analysis of the non-formal education system show that the literacy programme is integrated into community education and activities, which encourages the inclusion of indigenous people in adult learning, and thus also the development of active citizenship, empowerment, an evolving community and the preservation of the Aeta culture.

KEYWORDS: community education, non-formal education, Aeta, Zambales, indigenous people, para-teachers.

## Introduction

A study of the community education practices involving the Aeta, a Philippine indigenous people in the province of Zambales on Luzon Island, was carried out from 2008 to 2010 and has provided some new findings about indigenous community learning. The Aeta (also spelt "Ayta") are an indigenous people of the Philippines and one of the oldest groups of inhabitants. They are scattered in the mountainous regions; their neighbours also call them "Pugut", which means "forest spirit"; this name could be related to animism. According to Early and Headland (1994), there were approximately 31,000 Aeta living on various

Philippine islands. The community group where this field study took place consists of approximately 750 members. Their language is Zambal, which is spoken by about 2000 people, and they are part of a community of LAKAS (an abbreviation of *Lubos na Alyansa ng mga Katutubong Ayta ng Sambales* or Alliance of Indigenous Ayta in Zambales).

The Aeta are included among the so-called *negritos*. This name comes from a Spanish term negrito, meaning "little black person". The Aeta are small in stature (women are approximately 140 cm tall), and they have a decidedly dark complexion and curly hair.

In the 16th century, when the Philippines were conquered by the Spanish, the Aeta moved from the lowlands into the mountains. On account of their peacefulness, they moved away from the conquerors. The Aeta of the Zambales region used to live on the slopes of Mount Pinatubo, a dormant volcano, where they developed their culture and their language, Zambal. After the 1991 volcanic eruption, they were forced to move to the lowlands, i.e. their former homeland. There, however, they feel like newcomers, as it is now a different linguistic environment. The Tagalog language is used, as it is the most widely spread language in the Philippines. There is one more difference in the lowlands: the prevailing culture demands literacy.

In our research, we were interested in the education system that was organised to facilitate their integration into the population group they were being resettled into, so they could function in the community and participate in its decision making. We referred to research findings in the field of literacy, which claim that community education contributes to the development of resilience and empowerment (Street 1986; Mezgec 2006).

The idea for this case study evolved in our meetings with education leaders of the Aeta community. The first contact was made in Denmark in 2007, when one of the authors of this article spent half a year at the International People's College in Helsingør. This led to a meeting with twenty members of the Education for Life Foundation (ELF), a Philippine non-governmental organisation, who explained that they foster community education in local communities (*barangays*). Their wish is to spread literacy among adults, develop their abilities for inclusion in the wider community, and to provide knowledge to children and adolescents that would allow them to enter the formal school system. We agreed to carry out a field study, which started in 2008. This was the first study concerning the education and learning of the Aeta. The research focused on the non-formal community education system developed during the time when they moved to the lowlands. The concept of community education and active citizenship was selected as the theoretical starting point of our research into non-formal education.

## Community education

For many years, community education has been related to development, and it is well known in theoretical discussions and in practice throughout history (Field 2009; Thompson 2002; Lawson 1998). The best-known models are community schools in the USA and Danish adult education centres (*folkehøjskole*) and cultural courses, developed by Freire. All these models advocate education as the only ethically acceptable way of activating people so that they work and think for the common good of all.

Community education developed in various forms in response to various types of problems or needs: economic (poverty), cultural (preservation of language) and political (empowerment and ability to participate in society). One of the main principles of community education is encouraging people to actively participate in society and educating those groups that otherwise would not enter the formal education system (Lawson 1998). Community education is a process of transferring power and developing social justice and respect in a community; it is based on social learning and active participation.

The concept of community education incorporates the work of Freire (2009) and is currently connected to the practice theory and the community of practice as developed by Wenger and Lave (Wenger 2010). The ideas of community education are continuing to develop and create phenomena and connections. Especially distinctive are its connections to the contemporary trends of multiculturalism and the concept of social minorities. The purposes behind community education vary, but all models emphasise community development, taking care of social and cultural capital, overcoming isolation and exclusion, or the delivery of relational goods. Relational goods, as defined by M. Nussbaum (2010), are goods that cannot be produced or enjoyed solely by a single individual.

Community education can be defined as non-formal education as well as social development work, for which it is typical to work with individuals and groups in their local environment. Educational content is connected to the development of functional literacy skills, to the development of information skills as well as with vocational lifelong learning opportunities. Community education programmes are also carried out in the fields of health, environment protection (ecology) and critical citizenship. All of the above mentioned indicate a connection between community education and active citizenship.

## Active citizenship

Citizenship is usually understood as a political and legal status and an aggregate of the characteristics developed by an individual to be able to successfully function in society. The notion of active citizenship, according to Podmenik (2003), evolved in the early Renaissance in Italian city-states, where people were divided into common folk and aristocrats; however, there were issues of common interest to both groups. When conceptualising the idea of active citizenship, one encounters different views and, due to their diversity, it is not possible to settle on one single definition of active citizenship. Let us merely point out that it is often narrowed down to refer to political action, which is only one dimension of actively participating in society. When choosing a model that would capture the multidimensional character of active citizenship, we decided in favour of a model by the Dutch author, Veldhuis (2005), who based his thinking and his model on the theory of Arendt. According to Veldhuis, the dimensions of active citizenship and related education are interdependent with the four basic social subsystems that he defined as: the political-legal, social, cultural and economic dimensions.

Corresponding to individual dimensions, there are also different goals of education. The political-legal dimension implies that education should be aimed at concepts of democracy, understanding political structures and political participation, decision-making processes at a national and international level, and the electoral system. The cultural di-

mension implies that education should promote an understanding of the function of the media, developing cultural heritage, encouraging intercultural experiences, and the strengthening of literacy and other skills. The social dimension of citizenship implies education regarding the protection of human rights, bringing together different social groups and the development of social cohesion. The economic dimension is shaped by different aspects of the (market) economy and refers to education to improve professional qualifications, to increase employability, to raise awareness of the ecological aspects of the global economy, and of consumer rights.

Both of the concepts mentioned above, community education and active citizenship, emphasise educational goals in the following areas: co-decision making and participation, self-determination, social inclusion and social justice. Furthermore, they emphasise the importance of cooperative interaction between education providers. Various agencies, societies, and authorities can contribute to community education and local development.

## Research methodology

This research is based on a case study method. There were several reasons for this: first, there was no previous research on education in the LAKAS community. The second reason was the fact that we explored actual practices in a real life context; therefore, it was not possible to draw clear lines between a phenomenon and its environment. The line between the context and the phenomenon researched was not clear enough to allow us to single out the phenomenon. The third reason was the need for flexible planning, since the subjects and events examined could not be prepared in advance; therefore, we had to adapt to them. Also, the focus of interest of our research was the Aeta in the LAKAS community, which is why this study could be classified as a single holistic case study (Yin 2003; Flyvbjerg 2007).

## Data collection

The main method of gathering data was fieldwork, which included observation and interviews with education providers and participants of educational programmes. In the interviews, we took into account the advantages and disadvantages of narrative methods, which highlight the subjectivity of reality, we also took into consideration the recommendations by methodologists who specialise in the research of everyday life (Muršič 2011; Merriam 2002). In order to follow the principle of triangulation, we gathered data in several ways.

During a three-month stay in the Philippines, we observed life in the community and kept a diary (a field diary and a diary of reflections). The process was also meticulously photographed. In addition, we also conducted interviews. We conducted fifteen non-standardised interviews with different people concerned: organisers, providers, and participants in the community's activities. During some interviews, an interpreter was present. In most cases, those were Avelino Cielo-Bobby (educator in the Education for Life Foundation's programme (ELF)) and Helen Abarra (coordinator of the teaching personnel in the LAKAS community). The method of documentation analysis was also applied. We

analysed reports on the work carried out in previous years and various articles, published by the ELF education providers between 1999 and 2008. When all the data was gathered, a preliminary analysis was conducted, and themes were defined; a thematic analysis then followed. During the analysis and interpretation of data in 2009 and 2010, we also wrote several e-mails to obtain additional explanations from the educators. That was used as validation procedure for some respondents.

## The Aeta, migration and non-formal education

The Aeta live in a close-knit community, their way of life is characterised by their care and concern for the entire community, and is reflected in their mutual support and solidarity. They help each other in all areas of life: they build houses together, cultivate the land, they learn together, and frequently, they also cook together. The Aeta are known for their particular method of farming; they grow sweet potatoes, bananas and vegetables. They are also known for their forms of alternative medicine.

This case study focuses on a group of Aeta in the province of Zambales, who together, make up the LAKAS community. The LAKAS community was founded in 1984 by the Aeta people in the province of Zambales, who wished to change the situation of the Aeta. After the eruption of the volcano, the number of Aeta in the lowland area increased, and the tasks of the community became more complex (spreading literacy, the inclusion of migrants). The Aeta live in local communities, called barangays.

In the province of Zambales, there are 31 barangays; the Aeta live in 11 of them. These barangays are mainly in the area around the Pinatubo volcano. The LAKAS community consists of approximately 150 families or 750 people and, according to seismologists' forecasts, they cannot return to the volcano mountain. People we spoke to, however, told us that many Aeta keep returning to their mountain and that in particular some older ones, who had lived on Mount Pinatubo their whole lives, have never adapted to life "in civilization", and so want to go "home". Some have already done so, and some are going back soon, some might go in the future.

The centre of the LAKAS community is located about 50 km from the Pinatubo volcano. It is built as a village, with all the facilities relevant to community life. In the centre of the village, there is a playground, surrounded by a kindergarten, school, library, administration building and a community area with benches, for community meetings.

During the second evening, in this area, the researchers were surprised as they performed a welcome dance:

> Carol takes me to the centre of the community where they are all dressed in their traditional clothes. In his address, the headman explains that they have prepared a programme and they will dance for me. I am slightly shocked because I didn't expect it. The evening turns out excellently. We laugh a lot. In the end, I dance, too. Dances relate to the imitating of animals, so each dance is named after a certain animal, such as the Butterfly dance, the Eagle dance, the Fish dance, etc. (Authors' diary notes, 9 March 2008).

> The animal dances are connected to animism. They are performed prior to hunting

or collecting shellfish; on the one hand, the dance is an apology to the animal they are going to catch, yet on the other, it is an appeal for the hunt to be successful.

Missionaries started coming in the 1960s, so that now the majority of Aeta are Christians; however, this does not preclude them from keeping their dances and other cultural traditions. In this case, the animal dances were performed as a form of welcome. They live modestly in their homes:

> Animals, such as chickens, dogs, and cats, in some places I even saw piglets, live together with the Aeta in their homes. Their little houses are simple and are built from bamboo. I, however, actually only slept in houses made of brick. All houses are poorly insulated and consist of only one level. The village was peaceful. After ten o'clock at night, things completely settled down. We woke up between six and seven in the morning. The majority of them departed to their fields to take care of their crops (Authors' diary notes, 10 March 2008).

The Aeta did not use written language, their first contact with literacy occurred in the 1980s when, in 1982, the Sisters of St Francis came to Mount Pinatubo and started the first literacy programmes and health education sessions to help improve the survival rates of children. At the time, only one third of children survived to reach 15 years of age. Since the Aeta were illiterate and were unfamiliar with the monetary system, locals who came to buy their land and their produce often cheated them. Since they have moved to the lowlands, the Education for Life Foundation takes care of improving their literacy.

Helen T. Farnularca, a para-teacher for adults who has been teaching them since 1969, says that it was easier for them on Mount Pinatubo because they had their own land and they lived in an environment they knew. Since they did not adapt to their new environment, life became harder for them after they moved to the Zambales lowlands. She noticed that they did not know how to trade their produce and set their prices; they could not sign their names, or read information on electoral candidates and their political statements to decide on whom to vote. They could not read instructions for the use of medications, and therefore could not use them, nor could they help their children with their learning.

Helen T. Farnularca says that she wants to help people who never attended schools to be at least able to read and write. She said:

> It's in my heart that I have to help my people if I have knowledge and I am able to spread it. Since we live in a community, each of us shares our knowledge and skills with others' (Interview with Helen T. Farnularca, 14 March 2008).

## Education for Life Foundation (ELF)

The ELF organisation was established in 1992, and it has been particularly active in community education. It is the founding member of E-Net Philippines, which is included in the Education for All (EFA) network. Edicio dela Torre, the head of ELF, and also the president of this extremely beneficial Philippine civil society network, is endeavouring to

bring education within everybody's reach. Also involved are both the Asia Pacific Bureau of Adult Education and the Global Campaign for Education, which are international networks consisting of various civil communities active in the Education for All movement.

A representative of the Education for Life Foundation (ELF) met with Aeta leaders after the eruption of the volcano, when they had to deal with local authorities and cope with different social circumstances than what they were used to on Mount Pinatubo. Together, they started preparing educational programmes, mainly aimed at spreading literacy, community development, and learning about the protection of land ownership rights. They lead programmes like the Grassroots Leadership Courses (GLC) and also theatre workshops. The theatre workshops that we observed were led by Avelino Cielo-Bobby, though students also participated. In 2006 and 2007, students from the Conservatory of Music and from the College of Fine Arts and Design of the University of Santo Tomas assisted, as recorded in the annual reports (Annual reports of the Lakas community 1999-2008).

In the LAKAS community, the Education in the Alternative Learning System (ALS) programme (Teves 2009) is conducted by para-teachers who do not have regular academic teaching credentials, but have completed a training course; this takes place once a year. We learnt that they only had to master reading and writing; they are not required to have pedagogic skills. Para-teachers in the LAKAS community are themselves members of the Aeta people. This particularly facilitates the learning of participants who have insufficient knowledge of Tagalog, which is the official language of education in the Philippines, as the para-teachers are able to use their language, Zambal, to assist them. Educational programmes are conducted in two languages: Tagalog and Zambal. The English language, taught in all secondary schools (attended by students from 12 to 16 years of age), is also present.

Educational programmes are developed according to people's needs; however, education is also influenced by social conditions. What is essential for community education is the so-called 'Grundtvigian moment', a name coined by Edicio dela Torre, the president of ELF. He explains it as a specific political and social situation that occurs in a country's development process. That situation provides the moment that enables the introduction of Grundtvig's ideas. The situation that provides such an opportunity is when part of the social elite becomes open to reforms in the society, to allow them, perhaps even encourage them or at least not obstruct them. A moment becomes a Grundtvigian moment when individuals from various social strata no longer remain observers, but use the reforms to assume responsibilities themselves and become active participants and push the reforms over the boundaries set by the elites. Dela Torre explains that such a moment in the Philippines seemed to happen after the fall of Ferdinand Marcos, who was the president of the Philippines between 1966 and 1986. Afterwards, the new political elite were ready to accept reforms. Prior to that, all calls for reform that came from barangays were suppressed.

With the establishment of a democratic system, conditions to empower barangays were set, which in 1992 led to the establishment of the non-governmental organisation, Education for Life Foundation (ELF). The educational environment is defined not only by the migration of the Aeta from the Mount Pinatubo slopes to the lowlands and their illiteracy, but also by social changes.

# Types of programmes and the organisation of the education system

The Aeta are involved in two important programmes; the Grassroots Leadership Course (GLC) and the Alternative Learning System (ALS). Besides these two programmes, there are other forms of adult education. From 1999 to 2007, several seminars, workshops and courses were carried out in the LAKAS community, as evidenced by the annual reports on community work. We can list the following: a public-speaking course for leaders, a fire safety seminar; workshops on the production of organic soap, detergents, syrups, baskets according to traditional methods; workshops on the production of honey, paper, candles, flutes, beds; herbal medicine workshops; meetings with health care workers, intended for the women of the community; and there were also several artistic and theatre workshops. In the LAKAS community, some educational activities were aimed at promoting organic agriculture: for example, the production of organic mangoes.

## Education of leaders in communities

The Grassroots Leadership Course is a six-week programme. This is a 'course for active members' of barangays and is intended for leadership training. Participants in the course develop skills of negotiating with the authorities. They acquire communication skills that should also enable them to solve conflicts within barangays. This programme is actually widespread in the Philippines and has been completed by more than 2000 people. It is notable that men and women are included in equal numbers. The inclusion of women is intentionally encouraged.

May Rendon-Cinco, a grassroots educator, said:

Since there is no educational material, it is the ELF educators who develop it. They work for one year on one textbook. First, they prepare the theoretical part, while the second part consists of practical advice and tasks. During its creation, a textbook is discussed with individuals; the textbook is then adapted to the needs of a community in response to problems appearing in specific communities. The second part of the textbook is thoroughly adapted to the community to which it is sent; therefore, each community gets a different one. Authority to use the textbook is granted to those who have passed our GLC course. Those who have passed the GLC course with us are allowed to take the textbook into their community and use it to teach their fellow villagers. Now, our students are already teaching their own people (Interview with May Rendon-Cinco, Manila: 6 March 2008).

Textbooks are written in Tagalog. The course is designed to encourage skill development; therefore, they use role-play and other methods that, as closely as possible, reflect situations in which the programme participants can find themselves.

There are groups who reached an agreement with local authorities about various options to improve the quality of their lives (for example, the building of a bridge). They learn to negotiate, which makes them active participants in the community (Interview with May Rendon-Cinco, Manila, 6 March 2008).

## Spreading literacy

Another noteworthy programme is the Alternative Learning System. It is intended for young people and adults who have not finished primary or secondary school. The programme is carried out throughout the Philippines, but the programme to be presented here has been adapted for the Aeta. This also includes the language; one of the teaching languages is Zambal, the native Aeta language (not only Tagalog).

The programme covers the teaching of the basics of reading, writing and arithmetic. The programme is implemented by the Department of Education of the Philippines. In 2003, the Bureau of Alternative Learning System of the Department of Education accepted the adapted programme which has been (and still is) carried out in LAKAS, as a pilot study. In 2005, the adapted programme was also officially recognised. Since that year, individuals are allowed to sit for official examinations at the end of the programme. This is the *Accreditation and Equivalency Test* (Department of Education 2005). The decision to take the examination is voluntary. It is the young who want to continue their schooling, and who mainly decide to sit the examination. Older people who only want to learn basic writing, reading and arithmetic usually do not sit the exam. The examination is recognised by the Department of Education, which means that non-formally acquired education is linked to, and recognised, as well as formal education.

## Para-teachers

The programme takes place in the community, so Helen Abarra, the coordinator of the para-teachers for adult students, first looks for the active individuals in barangays and presents the work to them. Those who are interested in teaching can become para-teachers. They have to pass a training course; generally, this is the six-week programme: the Grassroots Leadership Course. The teaching facilities are provided by the barangay, and all relevant details related to the implementation of the programme are agreed to by the group. Para-teachers receive a small amount of financial support.

Helen Abarra, who is not an Aeta, coordinates ten para-teachers who carry out the ALS programme in several villages of the LAKAS community. She herself finished the six-week Grassroots Leadership Course. In the 1980s, she moved to Mount Pinatubo and after the volcano erupted, migrated together with the Aetas to the lowlands. Her family lives at the centre of the LAKAS community and is integrated into the community's life; for example, they celebrate Aeta festivals and wear traditional clothes on such occasions.

Epang Domulot is also a para-teacher for adults. She is an Aeta and wishes to help adults of her community because she feels that, as an Aeta, she has always been discriminated against. When they lived at Mount Pinatubo, they did not have to deal with discrimination, but at secondary school, she felt discrimination. Children teased her by saying that she was a 'monkey from Mount Pinatubo' and that she should return there. If she worked on a computer, they asked her why she bothered as there were no computers in the mountains and so she would not need it. Epang particularly emphasised how happy she was to be able to help the adults of her community with their education. She noticed that they are now able to go to polling stations themselves. Now they can read each candidate's

election information and decide whether to vote for that candidate. She finds it essential that they are aware of and do exercise their right to vote, and that they are able to decide independently which candidate to vote for.

Both teachers mention that an important achievement of Aeta emancipation is that they have learnt the systems of measurement they need to use when selling their produce. Epang said that before, without that knowledge, Filipinos often used to deceive them.

Beside programmes for adults, they also organise programmes for children who are not enrolled in state schools. In interviews, teachers said that they wish to encourage children to enter formal education through non-formal programmes. They also organise a kindergarten for children. Carol, the head of the kindergarten, says that she never knows how many children will come, since some children go to the fields with their parents.

In non-formal education, attendance is not obligatory for everybody. Even in the ALS programme, a person may stop attending if they wish to do so. Some children in the community have attended neither an ALS school nor a regular state school.

## Women and their participation in education

Women are included in leadership programmes (GLC), and they are also present in the majority of literacy programmes (ALS). In their 2002 annual report we can read:

> Women are constantly busy with bringing up children and other things, in the background there is always the thinking that women do not develop individually and that men and their needs are always in the foreground. In the foreground is also the thought that men are more capable of learning and education. But now both of us are aware of how important it is for women to develop as this is important for the development of the entire community (Annual reports of the Lakas community 1999-2008).

From a conversation with Helen Abarra, we learn that the young and women are included in the ALS programmes. She particularly pointed out that she supports the "liberalisation" of women and added that men too want women to attend these programmes. This testimony to the fact that these programmes, as well as being providers of non-formal education in the LAKAS community, are oriented towards the empowerment of all members of the population.

In the annual reports we also find that, at various meetings, women were encouraged to speak about themselves and their own lives. Various meetings with health care workers are organised for women, as well as workshops for the production of syrups and other products according to traditional recipes. Women can sell these products and thus provide themselves with a little bit of economic independence.

## Elements of the Aeta culture in theatre workshops

From the point of view of both community education and the concept of active citizenship, it is indispensable to include the culture of the local population in educational programmes. We have already shown that the literacy programmes are adapted for particular environments, that the Zambal language, together with Tagalog and English, is used. The element of culture was the most clearly expressed in theatre workshops.

Theatre workshops are a distinct form of non-formal education and are known under various names. The theatre that is the most developed in the Western world is Boal's 'theatre of the oppressed', which encourages people to actively participate.

In the LAKAS community, theatre workshops were carried out on the ELF's initiative and with the support of the barangays, in which the Aeta live. Local volunteers play a vital role. The purpose of these workshops is to raise awareness of the significance of Aeta culture; thus the idea and realisation of the workshop and the performance afterwards are based on Aeta customs.

A five-day workshop, which was part of observational field research, included various elements. Its purpose was to prepare a theatre performance. Participants (all were Aetas) had never previously seen a theatre performance. At the preparatory meetings, they discussed the feelings they experienced listening to selected rhymes, poems, and then they started to prepare a screenplay.

Each day, the workshop started with a prayer and ended with an evaluation. Bobby, the workshop leader, says that they wish to have a different cast each time. In this way, they can raise awareness of the importance of Aeta culture, which is the essence of the workshop:

> Today they perform the play and rehearse its details. Bobby surprises me a lot with his presence. If he was reserved during some conversations in Manila, here he comes alive and radiates positivity. His performance is very dynamic. I feel that participants respect him a lot, since they earnestly listen to him and then carry out what they agreed on. Scenes include dancing, singing, playing (Authors' diary notes, 19 March 2008).

Scenes selected for performance, are connected to various customs of Aeta culture (marriage) and everyday life events from life on Mount Pinatubo (the Pinatubo eruption, evacuation):

> If I found some of them to be shy in the beginning, I now notice that shyness has disappeared. They shout loudly whenever necessary, they dance and sing joyfully. They put on their traditional clothes. Girls have big coloured scarves wrapped around their bodies and boys have simple pieces of cloth covering only their loins (Authors' diary notes, 20 March 2008).

During workshops, food for all participants is prepared by women of the community. Facilities are provided by the LAKAS, while the catering is financially covered by one of the barangays. The purpose of the workshop is, among other things, the preparation for a performance that will take place in a month at a local festival.

In an interview, Avelino Cielo-Bobby said that he tries to awake in people their desire for expression and to return to the roots of their tribe through the methodology of theatre. Through workshops, he tries to promote awareness in individuals that their culture is meaningful and that it is important that it comes from within. This involves a complex process that helps indigenous people to understand themselves and their roots; they learn to appreciate themselves and their origins and thus find it easier to overcome

various obstacles in life. The theatre workshop methods selected, which are known from Freire's community education model and which developed into the theatre of rebellion, are deliberately used, so that people can feel and express their thoughts, feelings, experiences and preserve their customs.

## The development of activities in the community in reference to four dimensions of active citizenship

We were interested in how non-formal education contributes to the development of various dimensions of active citizenship. Educational practices contribute to the development of competence in all four dimensions. At the level of the political dimension, links between education and activities in a political party to represent the interests of the Aeta are evident. Moreover, the competencies of negotiating and advocating for the rights of the Aeta are crucial, as Noel Domulot, a law student, pointed out in an interview.

When individuals achieve literacy, they can read candidate information statements themselves. Almost all para-teachers who educated adults within the framework of the ALS programme emphasised that they find it extremely important that those community members who learnt to read and write can independently vote for their political representatives in barangays. During educational programmes, they also discuss why it is necessary to advocate for their own interests and, with the help of their political representatives, to stand up for them in barangays.

Carol D. Jugatan pointed out how beneficial it is that 'some can go to vote' now. When she used the word 'some', it was in reference to the fact that those who cannot read could not vote (which in 2008 still meant the majority of people in the LAKAS community).

The LAKAS community strives to respect human rights and the rights of specific social groups: for example, Desiree D. Carbonel specifically mentioned that he fights for the rights of the gay community in his barangay.

From conversations, it can be concluded that those people who adapted to life in lowlands and are active in their barangay are politically active. Those who are set on returning to Mount Pinatubo are not interested in political decision-making. Most LAKAS inhabitants often return to Mount Pinatubo to work on their land, and also because they feel the most at home there.

The development of competencies within the cultural dimension can be observed in theatre workshops. These methods develop an awareness of their way of life. They try present the knowledge they have and their culture to others (in the Philippines and abroad).

Narrating tales about their experiences of discrimination is important for their cultural identity. We can hear many stories about discrimination, as told by Carol D. Jugatan, Epang Domulot, Roselyn J. Cabalic. They experienced a significant deal of mocking from young people, but they never felt discriminated against by schoolteachers. Carol D. Jugatan said that classmates at school said she was 'like a monkey.' This remark refers to the fact that the Aeta have a close connection to nature and have dark curly hair. Classmates also laughed at them when they had difficulties with the Tagalog language, but they also

spoke and pronounced Zambal in a different way. She said that at university the situation was better, since the professors presented the Aeta as a special group.

The social dimension is intertwined with the cultural and political one. The main purpose of community education in LAKAS is to integrate the indigenous migrants from Mount Pinatubo into the local population and to combat social exclusion. They also try to present their activities to other inhabitants of Zambales and Pampanga: for example, they sell their products in Botolan; the theatre performance that was created as a result of a theatre workshop was intended to be presented at a local festival and at the festival of theatre groups of the province of Zambales.

The LAKAS community is connected with certain non-governmental organisations that help them, and with some non-Aeta inhabitants who work with them, such as, for example, Helen A. Abarra, who lives in the community with her family, although none of them are Aeta. They have established connections with Australian aborigines. In their library, they have quite a significant amount of material that bears witness to the collaboration of the Aeta with Australian aborigines. Such connections are beneficial for them, as they face similar problems (such as problems regarding land ownership). They would like to protect their land, so they negotiate with the authorities. They would like authorities to prepare an official document for them, testifying to their ownership of the territory on which they once lived on Mount Pinatubo, so that they may return if they wish. The LAKAS community, therefore, strives to negotiate with state bodies and the knowledge that they acquire through education in both of the mentioned programmes is useful in this process.

In discussions with Noel Domulot, we learned that the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act is not completely clear. All Aeta communities meet and exchange experiences, since they have similar problems related to land. They have a subordinate position in relation to the state, as their property ownership rights on Mount Pinatubo are not protected.

## Connectedness and solidarity

Members of the community are very much connected and they work for the common benefit of all, which is evident in various actions. One of the reports contained a note that Epang Domulot received a monetary award at a literary competition for the best essay on experiences related to the Pinatubo volcano eruption. She dedicated the whole sum to the schooling of children from the community. In the annual report for the period October 2000 – September 2001 she proposed that an important factor in the functioning of the community was their working as a team as 'they only survived by standing side-by-side and helping each other' (Annual reports of the Lakas community 1999-2008).

Jerlyn, a teacher of children, says how she noticed that children were idle at home, yet they did not want to attend a state school, so she started teaching. She teaches to bring education closer to local children, as she knows that at a school organised within the community, they will feel better, and after such an experience of school, they will be able to join the formal school system.

Noel Domulot tells a story about an Aeta lawyer from the LAKAS community

who sold their land, and now there are mines open in that area; this was greatly resented by the community. 'He was ensnared by money,' says Noel. 'It is unfair of him not to work for the benefit of the community' (From discussions with Noel Domulot, March 2008). This is an example of a lack of solidarity, which members of the community dislike and find inappropriate.

## Economic dimension

Members of the LAKAS community mostly work in the fields. They grow various crops that they later sell. Women sell organic soaps, detergents and other products and thus earn some money. Economic emancipation is evident in the actions of individual women who, by making baskets, flutes and beds, try to earn some additional money. They supplemented the knowledge they already had with techniques that enable them, for example, to make longer-lasting soap.

Every morning, Tubag Jugatan goes to work to Botolan. Non-Aeta inhabitants, such as Helen Abarra, are employed as ALS programme coordinators. Her daughter works in the local hospital as a nurse. We did not identify any other LAKAS inhabitants who went to work outside of their community. Every day, they work in the fields and grow crops for the community and the market.

## Conclusion

The forms of non-formal education in the LAKAS community have the characteristics of community education, and are led by non-governmental organisations and active individuals. All non-formal educational activities are organised so that they are adapted to the Aeta, particularly in regards to the methods of their execution. Most educational activities are conducted by people from the Aeta community. The LAKAS community has a well-structured programme of non-formal education that covers various age groups (a kindergarten, a school for children and two adult programmes). In the programmes, they use their native language, Zambal. We can confirm that their characteristics make them similar to the ideas discussed by Freire, which is evident at three levels: emphasis is placed on local education and the use of methods that bring education closer to all groups, particularly those who would otherwise not experience it; education is organised for community leaders and groups of people primarily with the purpose of solving common problems; they follow a "community action-based approach", developed in Freire's culture circles with the intention of connecting educational activities with efforts to build a democratic and inclusive community.

On account of their acquired literacy, people can become actively involved in political life. Education helps them fight for their own local community, connects people within a community and assists them to realise their interests.

Filipinos are distrustful of politicians because of negative previous experiences (Ferdinand Marcos, Estrada, Gloria Macapagal-Arroyo). They find the political system extremely distant; they are the most familiar with the local organisation of the barangays. There is where their people and their lives are; they see an opportunity to realise their interests there, so it is vital that community education takes place in barangays.

The children's programme is intended to encourage children to enter the formal school system, which children mainly avoid on account of experiences of discrimination. Within the Alternative Learning System, children's literacy and their motivation to return or to enter formal primary schools are supported. Because of their specific lifestyle, the Aeta have problems in wider Philippine society, so inclusion in the formal education system presents quite an effort for them, particularly because they feel discriminated against. The existence of discrimination may be one of the reasons for the development of community education within the LAKAS community.

Community education can also foster isolation due to its alternative nature. Community education was developed because of the people's need to adapt to changes more easily, but it can also mean closing themselves within their own group, since the education takes place within a closed community. Social integration is particularly mentioned by the children's teacher who wanted the children to go to a formal school and thus become part of the wider social community and life in Zambales.

The non-formal education system is the community's responsibility; it seems that the state transferred this responsibility mostly because it is cheaper owing to the large amount of voluntary work required. It is clear that community education is extremely valuable; therefore, professionally qualified teachers should also be involved in order to continue its development.

The non-formal education system assists in the development of a sense of *empowerment* and helps them take care of their common interests. The activities of the individual are primarily focused on the community and its welfare. Education gives them the ability to protect their land. Information in the article entitled *Aetas finally granted ownership* (Mennen A. Valdez 2010) testifies to the fact that the Aeta have succeeded in protecting their land at Pinatubo.

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## Povzetek

Raziskava o praksi neformalnega izobraževanja pri filipinskih staroselcih Aeta, ki so zaradi izbruha vulkana postali migranti, kaže na pomen modelov skupnostnega izobraževanja pri vključevanju migrantov v družbo in predvsem na pomen opismenjevanja. Skupnostno izobraževanje, ki se razvija pri Aeta, se je inspiriralo z modelom danskih ljudskih visokih šol in Freirejevo pedagogiko zatiranih. Pri pripravi programov sledijo principu fleksibilnosti in inkluzivnosti. Ugotovitve analize neformalnega izobraževanja, ki je potekala v sklopu terenske raziskave na Filipinih, kažejo, da je program opismenjevanja integriran v skupnostno izobraževanje in delovanje, ki spodbuja inkluzivnost okolja za staroselce s pomočjo izobraževanja. Prek tega pa spodbuja razvoj aktivnega državljanstva, razvoj skupnosti in ohranjanje Aeta kulture.

KLJUČNE BESEDE: skupnostno izobraževanje, neformalno izobraževanje, Aeta, Zambales, para-učitelji

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# Oral budgeting in rural Macha, Southern Province, Zambia

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## Abstract

Implementing and adhering to a documented budgeting process has proven to be a challenge within the rural cooperative organisation of Macha Works in Zambia. Although the organisation has an untainted track record of sound financial practices over many years, diffuse budgeting interactions lead to confusion on both sides of the cultural divide. This case study is based upon interviews and ethnographic observations in the Macha environment and describes and analyses findings on a local budgeting process. The main findings include the discovery of existence of oral budgets and cultural aspects inhibiting the writing down or transmission of written budgets in local peoples' everyday life.

KEYWORDS: oral budgeting, Macha, rural Zambia

## Introduction

Intercultural interactions often give rise to palpable tensions. Conversations from outside Africa with persons within rural Africa can leave both ends at a loss to know what is going on. Culture clashes are a source of a great frustration. They encourage judgemental behaviour and often end with dissolving of partnerships, especially when dealing with money.

First encounters in the area of finances often involve budgeting. This paper deals with this subject of budgeting from a rural African perspective. Most of the findings are hidden from a casual, Western viewpoint and the purpose of this paper is to provide insight derived from direct observation, experience and findings at the organisation called Macha Works in rural Zambia.

Budgeting processes imply an uncontested and universally understood *modus operandi* for financial discussion and interactions. However, analysing budgeting in rural Africa reveals a local understanding that is altogether foreign to understanding in more affluent areas. Maranz for example deals with the issues of budgets and budgeting from individual perspectives (Maranz 2001). His book contains specific and witty observational evidence of money issues, albeit focused on foreign individuals' interactions with Africans on a personal basis. In Macha, work on behavioural issues in resource allocation produced a generic insight into the relational component in local economics, the so-called *relatio-economics* (Sheneberger & van Stam 2011). Assessment of the pervasiveness and value of

orality in research augmented that work (van Stam, 2012). Works on culture and organisations like Hofstede (Hofstede, Hofstede & Minkov 2010) and Trompenaars (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner 2011) provide the theoretical basis to assess cultural viewpoints. The framework of Trompenaars proved useful during the analysis of this research.

This work is valuable as a contribution to – and builds bridges for – cooperation in a world characterised by globalisation and a growing number of entrepreneurs entering the international market. The study includes an assessment using Trompenaars' theoretical model (Trompenaars & Hampden-Turner 2011) to explain cultural differences.

Community members in the village of Macha, Zambia, have worked together in a cooperative effort since 2003. They built a communications network connected to the internet (Matthee, Mweemba, Pais, Van Stam & Rijken 2007; Johnson, Belding & Van Stam 2012). The work grew to incorporate projects in transport, health, education, community projects, agriculture, and more. Works also extend to seven other rural communities in Zambia. The organisation works with appropriate financial systems and succeeds in maintaining a consistent and certified clean bill of conduct.

From the outset, the Macha community adhered to the view that activities are best developed by those living in the area (van Stam 2011a). Macha Works aims for so-called "local talent" to take the lead. The focus is on actions that depend on what the community deems necessary, and implementation of solutions that work and make sense in the local context.

## Study design

The philosophical paradigm for this research is phenomenological; it utilises qualitative research methods. The research endeavours in-depth assessments of social phenomenon and contemporary events focused on phenomenologies in the community in rural Macha. It takes place in the form of both structured and unstructured interviews and ethnographic observations over an extended period of nine years. Interviews with foreigners interacting with rural Africa on budgeting contribute to, and corroborate with local findings and observations. As a member of the local community since 2003, the author has unique access to the Macha community, and Macha Works' leadership in particular.

## Findings

People in rural Macha, in general, consider a *written budget* a rare and often bewildering artefact. When asked about it, one respondent suggested: 'Everything in our culture is oral. Written budgets thus do not exist.' All interviewees alluded to the fact that *oral budgets* do exist throughout the community. On an individual level, work starting without a budget is common practice. However, this practice is regarded as unwise. Interviewees consider it good practice to discuss budgets.

Often individuals mention their first exposure to budgets during their secondary education. For most students, that period involves attending boarding school. It requires taking responsibility for a personal budget to make it through school. Further, persons expect budgets to feature at the professional level or for 'activities done by the government.' They

mention that exposure to a professional or formal setting instils and broadens understanding of written budgets, and a deepening of appreciation of budgeting in general.

The preferred and normal practice in rural areas is oral budgeting. At the local, rural, and individual levels, they are practical and common. Probing revealed that an oral budget contains a lump sum monetary amount or an amount of produce, for instance 50 kg bags of maize. Oral budgets emerge from experience only – they include the history, whether individual or communal, and information from memory. From the words of a respondent oral budgets do not take into account interests or inflation: 'A farmer knows the budget for seeds and fertiliser; when a farmer observes growing of weeds, he knows the budget for weeding.'

In case of building, the family knows the budget for a family shelter, mostly relying on experiences from other persons. In oral budgeting, a builder contracts the work and gets paid according to the budget upon completion of the contract. The builder sources materials on credit from suppliers and labourers. Payment of the agreed price for these resources happens upon completion. In such a situation, the budget normally fits. Respondents recognise that foreign viewpoints might consider payments too much ('budget too high') or too little ('budget too low'). However, such sentiments are not appreciated. A budget represents shared knowledge and thus a shared responsibility. By definition, it indicates the desired level.

Respondents mentioned 'breaking down of the budget' as the main difficulty in oral budgeting. Such activity is risky, as it might lead to unresolvable problems when the breakdown of the budget appears to be not fitting the oral budget. Breaking down of the budget is often avoided to limit the possibility of shame.

Oral budgets link to persons. Respondents estimate USD 10,000 as a maximum for an average person, and USD 100,000 the maximum for large-scale rural farmers. Budgets over that size are unusual. If budgets are larger, the solution could be to separate budgets into smaller, independent budgets. This assures containment of problems to a separate unit in case of financial issues.

In Macha, many private individuals have built new houses in recent years. Respondents suggested this is due to the inspiration of the many community initiatives by organisations like Macha Works in Macha. Such initiatives inspire and provide a history of knowledge for budgeting. This deposits experience into a collective mental repository of (oral) budgets. Several respondents mentioned that writing, e.g. involving written offers, by definition arising from town, makes costs of supplies much higher.

Respondents regard written budgets as relating to cases of 'institutional budgeting,' which take place in 'formal organisations,' primarily the national government. Other organisations that might require written budgets should be government-recognised, registered organisations with "experienced people in their field of work".

Respondents expect written budgets to suffer from a large amount of hidden information. This refers to experience of details of underlying, governing laws or all paperwork being unknown or only partly known. Therefore, in their view, by definition written budgets may contain partial information only. This expected mismatch in budgeting and the high probability of an external stakeholder erupting in anger when such mismatches

surface, are drawbacks to written budgets.

Probing the question of the distinction between individuals and "professional organisations apart from the government", and the differences between formal and informal organisations unearthed feelings of resentment. This highlights the perceived artificial distinction, designed to shield the "class of professionals" from the "class of ordinary people". Interviewees in rural areas mentioned that they also consider themselves professionals. They felt oral budgeting to be an appropriate, albeit undervalued, part of the planning of a work.

Community members regard oral budgeting as the primary practice. They feel well equipped to support the processes involved. However, in the case of a request for a written budget, community members deem that such a request must be put to, and handled by the government.

Probing into how to deal with cases requiring a written budget from an individual in rural Macha, respondents elaborated on a lack of comprehension of the request, or lack of financial literacy. Limited numerical skills hamper the process of developing and writing down a budget "in professional situations". There is awareness of a skills gap. External people "on the receiving end" are known to work with numbers, writing, and numerical tools from an early age. The notion 'I have not had those opportunities' is strong, while training by such external persons instils the thought of 'I will never be able to reach that level.'

There is consciousness of the gap between the haves and the have nots, instilled from an early age. At school, respondents recall segregation of resources with people from outside the rural area (e.g. foreigners or community leaders like doctors). As a result of this, any writing, and especially a written budget, involves apprehension and strong feelings of inferiority. There are palpable fears of unknowns such as 'Can the budget be correct?' or 'Can the writing ever be acceptable?' A default reaction, labelling a piece written communication as "poor work done", is being anticipated. This results in a pervasive shyness to communicate with written budgets.

As there is little experience with writing, it takes much effort and is readily put off. Furthermore, there is little experience of reading, and so there is clear surprise when community members read texts and go through written budgets. Any detailed response to a written text is regarded as inundating and a sign of disapproval. This leads to further feelings of inferiority and fuels a desire to withdraw.

## Discussion

This paper reveals the existence of oral budgeting and explains its distinction from written budgeting. The findings build upon early work in Macha (van Stam 2012). It aligns with the fact that the local community relies on historical information for most of its interactions (van Stam & Mweetwa 2012). The availability of oral budgetary information depends on history and relationships.

Oral budgets are well positioned for the rural environment. They level the financial value of activities or assets and thus harmonise financial issues for community members.

Historical information provides for budgeting information only. As a consequence, oral budgeting is an obstacle to change and changing the manners of the past is difficult. Oral budgeting in this sense ensures that current practices continue.

A high level of self-denial also takes place in the handling of written texts. A respondent stated: 'Lots of texts are being written, but few are being sent so as to avoid the chance of being charged with "poor work done".' This response is congruent with the notion of a "shame culture" and behaviour as witnessed by Freire (2000).

Oral budgeting involves a top-down process. It delivers a lump sum figure, set by experience, through people in history. Oral budgeting might involve evasion of budget breakdown in anticipation of significant difficulties involving shame, when a breakdown and the total amount deviate. It is a relational activity, while breakdown represents a universalistic or individualistic activity. The latter is not prevalent in the rural culture of Zambia's Southern Province.

An assessment in line with Trompenaars (Trompenaars & Voerman 2009) reveals particular issues at play in seven theoretical distinct areas. The first one is Particularism vs. Universalism – oral budgeting resonates with universalism as budgets reside in the collective and information flow through relationships and history and breaking budgets down is seen as unproductive. The second one is Communitarianism vs. Individualism – conform communitarianism, contractors, as all community members, know and accept an oral budget as leading. There is no conscious quantitative assessment of the budget being "low", "enough", or "high". The third one is Emotional vs. Neutral – the chance of the label "poor job" by outsiders is an emotional block pre-empting sending out texts, including budgets. The fourth one is Diffuse vs. Specific – the diffuse relationships involved in oral budgeting ensure certain levels of effectiveness of results in the constrained and complex rural society. The fifth one is Ascription vs. Achievement – organisations are, by definition, ascribed as a separate entity from people in rural communities. This combines with ascription of "professionals", "experts", and "suppliers" from town who write offers providing a barrier for participation in a written budgeting process. The sixth one is Synchronic vs. Sequential – a formal budgeting process implies a sequential process of execution, which restricts the synchronic need for inter-changeability of actions during the execution phase. The last, seventh one is External vs. Internal Control – budgets link to external control parameters. History supplies the budget since personal history and information gathered through relationships set the budget. It is *de facto* fixed.

## Conclusion

This study reveals the existence of oral budgets as the prime planning tool in rural Macha. This process differs significantly from processes involving written budgets. Written budgets represent a concept related to government activity and it is detached from people in rural areas. In the rural community, budgets include experience in relationships, and do not necessarily link to the aggregation of budget items. This study reveals significant detachment and apprehension to file a written budget, to avoid feelings of inferiority, and the opening up of a chance to be shamed.

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## Povzetek

Implementacija in spoštovanje dokumentiranega proračunskega procesa sta se v vaški kooperativni organizaciji Macha Works v Zambiji izkazala za velik izziv. Čeprav ima organizacija skozi leta neomadeževano zgodovino zdravih finančnih praks so razpršene proračunske interakcije povzročale zmedo na obeh straneh kulturne ločnice. Pričujoča študija primera temelji na intervjujih in etnogafskih opazovanjih v okolju Macha in opisuje ter analizira izsledke lokalnega proračunskega procesa. Glavni izsledki se nanašajo na obstoj ustnega proračuna ter kulturnih vidikov, ki lokalne ljudi odvračajo, da bi v vsakdanjem življenju zapisali ali prenašali zapisane proračune.

KLJUČNE BESEDE: ustni proračun, Macha, ruralna Zambija

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# The changing understanding of the Huaorani shaman's art

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## Abstract
The Huaorani live in the Ecuadorian part of the Amazon region. Their culture differs from others of the region in many aspects; in recent decades, it has been affected by changes that were inevitable after their official contact with Western culture in 1958. Drawing on fieldwork with an Ecuadorian Huaorani clan, this paper explores some difficulties in understanding the shaman's practices in this small scale society. The argument is that the accounts given by the researchers during last fifty years differ from each other, and that this makes almost impossible to talk about "traditional" and "contemporary" Huaorani shamanism at present.

KEYWORDS: indigenous shamanism, Amazonian culture, Huaorani

## Introduction
Today, the meaning of the word *shamanism* depends on who is using the term. There are almost as many varieties of the term as there are researchers. Some of them would agree that traditional shamanism still requires research, as it is still not easy to comprehend. It is possible that in the case of traditional shamanism we should be talking about *shamanisms*, as they change and differ from each other.

## Methodology
This paper explores the art of the shaman from a small community of the Huaorani[1] tribe that lives in the eastern part of Ecuador. It is based on data collected during fieldwork conducted in the Huaorani group between 2007 and 2012, and on scientific literature. The data was verified by anthropological interviews and by participant as well as non-participant observations that were in turn extended by information collected from local informants and cultural experts.

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[1] The word *Huaorani* (people) is the plural form of the noun *Huao* (man) in Huao Terero language.

# Cultural background

The Huaorani live in the westernmost part of the Amazon basin, relatively close to the Andes, in Ecuador. Researchers are not in agreement concerning the origin of this group. Some of them have suggested that the Huaorani are part of the Zaparo tribe[2] that had separated and adapted to life in the depth of the forest[3] (Zeglier-Otero 2004: 30). Other researchers have stated that the lack of stories about migration in Huaorani oral traditions excludes any possibility of definite determination of their origin (Yost 1981: 97).

The language used by this group, Huao Terero, presents additional difficulty. It is an isolated language, and it does not have any resemblance to other languages of the area (in spite of the long-term contact and trade that Huaorani were doing with the neighbouring tribes). There is an additional difficulty in the interpretation that points to the hypothesis of the Huaorani arriving to the eastern part of Ecuador from an unknown direction in the middle of the 19th century.

There are still many shortcomings in knowledge about the tribe. The Huaorani made official, peaceful contact with the outside world in 1958. Of course, earlier they had known of the presence of Mestizo and white people in the area and were trading (and fighting) with other tribes, but every stranger was considered an enemy; therefore, there were no closer contacts with people other than from their tribe (Rival 2002: 46–67).

The Huaorani have existed in the Ecuadorian social structure only for about fifty years, but at this point it is already impossible to reconstruct their culture from the time before the contact. Researchers have collected various amounts of information over these fifty years (Rival 2002: Davies 1996: Zeglier-Otero 2004; Robarchek & Robarchek 1998: Yost 1981; Cabodevilla 1999), but some of it was inconsistent or applicable to only some of the clans.

The Huaorani are tropical forest horticulturalists as they grow fruits and vegetables in small fields outside the villages. They grow mostly *chonta* palms,[4] manioc (*Manihot esculenta*) and plantains (*Musa paradisiaca*). Some food is also gathered from the forest. Formerly, it was thought that indigenous peoples were only exploiting the forest, but it has been proven that some of the trees cannot reproduce without human intervention, which leads to the conclusion that the natives actually "farm" the tropical forest and plant useful species of trees and other plants (Rival 1998: 635–52).

The Huaorani also used to hunt using blowpipes with curare-treated darts and spears. Hunting equipment was made of chonta palm wood, which is exceptionally durable and hard. A meat diet was supplemented with fruits and vegetables; a meatless meal was and still is considered not to be a proper meal at all. Of course, today the Huaorani also eat different Western food, such as rice, which is highly popular in Ecuador, and other products that were not available to them before.

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[2] Zaparo live to this day in the eastern part of Ecuador. Some time ago they were neighbours of the Huaorani from the western side. Single people speaking Zapara language live in Quichua villages (Paymal, N., 1993, p.186).

[3] The Zaparos' villages were located on the river banks while the Huaorani's were on the hilltops, far from the rivers and later roads.

[4] There are two species of palm that are called chonta in the Amazon: chontaduro (*Bactris gasipaes*) and chonta pambil (*Iriartea deltoidea*). Their wood is very hard and natives use it in various ways.

As mentioned before, the Huaorani villages were located deep in the forest. Today, due to the need of communication, villages are often set next to the river or the airstrip (or both). One village typically consists of one clan. Formerly the clan (*nanicabo*) occupied one house – a five meters high building, made out of long poles covered with palm leaves. Members of the clan are united by blood ties and social commitments, for example food sharing. Food is shared within the nanicabo first and then any leftovers are shared with other clans.

Sources are most concerned about the tribe's war practices (e.g. Robarchek & Robarchek 1998) due to the importance of this aspect in the Huaorani life. Warfare, blood vendettas and revenge for the death of the relatives were quite frequent in their history. Today, it remains the theme of a majority of the stories and memories because the Huaorani do not wage war in its traditional sense anymore, except one clan that has refused any contact with Western world (Cabodevilla 2008; Wierucka 2010: 292).

Changes in many aspects of the Huaorani life took place mostly due to the arrival of the missionaries to the area and to historical events that spread throughout the Amazon region. Natives suffered from the moment Spanish conquerors set their foot on this land. First, the diseases that indigenous people were not immune to, later the exploitation, slavery and planned genocide. The Huaorani have had their share of all of the above, especially of the activity of rubber merchants working on the *haciendas*, who often seized indigenous people and forced them to work. Many Huaorani died in the process.

The situation became even worse after the discovery of oil in the Amazon. Today the natives fight an unequal war with the oil companies (Ziegler-Otero 2004). The activity of major companies in the Amazon also leads to long-lasting changes in tropical forest environment and Ecuador's unique biodiversity is especially vulnerable. It is quite common to hear about threats that the tropical forest faces, yet at the same time we forget about the people who actually live in the forest and are part of it. More than any other indigenous group, the Huaorani are threatened by deforestation as their whole way of life is still connected with the forest. There are about 1500 Huaorani today, and the number is increasing; there were only about 600 Huaorani in 1990 (Rival 2000: 244).

## Social structure

In order to discuss the role of the shaman in the Huaorani society and changes in his art, the surrounding social structure should be discussed. According to the Huaorani, people are first divided into two groups: *huaorani*, which includes people born from Huaorani parents and speaking the Huao Terero language and *cohuori*, which means *strangers* and includes all people coming from outside of the tribe despite their attitude (formerly the term also included spouses and children from mixed marriages). Inside the *huaorani* category (the term itself means *people*), a few subgroups are found, e.g. *huarani* (others, which includes Huaorani coming from other ancestors) or *arorani* (includes all Huaorani that can be married to one another).

There is no hierarchy inside the huaorani group. There is also no chief or any other person that would hold power over the rest. There are some people in the clans that are

more respected (like a shaman or an experienced warrior), but there is no power connected with it. Huoarani society is egalitarian, and everybody is equal in all aspects of life. It also means that everybody is independent and responsible for oneself and is treated like that by other members of the clan.

Traditionally the status of the shaman also was not connected with any power. It has changed slightly over the years, but the practice and the art of the shamans have changed also when compared with the knowledge previously gathered by other researchers.

## Change triggers

The main changes in the Huoarani culture come from three sources: the activity of the missionaries, contact with other groups, and the activity of the oil companies in the area. Some of them might not affect the practice of shamanism directly. Nevertheless, many aspects of the culture have changed because of these triggers, which also resulted in shamanism changing.

The missionaries had the main influence on the religious life of the tribe. Sources usually just state that the first peaceful contact with the Huoarani was made in 1958, and it sounds quite straightforward. Nevertheless, closer study of the Huoarani history reveals the circumstances of this "peaceful contact". It has been described in detail many times (Ziegler-Otero 2004: 51–68; Wallis 1980; Cabodevilla 1999: 318–26; Davis 1996: 257–67), so a general outline will suffice here.

Protestant missions have been present in the Amazon since the Second World War and the peak of their activities occurred in the 1950s. Conversion of the "savages" became an objective worth the highest sacrifice. The year 1956 was a crucial one: after finding the Huaorani villages from the air and "softening" the people with gifts dropped from the planes, five American missionaries landed on the river bank in the Huaorani territory (Cabodevilla 1999: 319–32; Robarchek & Robarchek 1998: 152; Ziegler-Otero 2004: 61). It was the final stage of "operation Auca", which aimed to "civilise Indians".

All five missionaries were speared to death by the Huaorani. Their bodies were found on the river bank. The story had wide publicity, especially in the United States where the missionaries gained the status of martyrs. The direct outcome of these events was "peaceful contact" made two years later, in 1958, by the Summer Institute of Linguistics.[5] The main activists were two women connected with the dead missionaries, one of them was a widow, the other a sister.

Most popular stories about these events do not give the whole view. In the 1950s, the Huaorani met with hostility directed at them from anybody who came to their territory. Many members of the group were killed by poachers, loggers, gold diggers and

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[5] Summer Institute of Linguistics (SIL) today is known under the name SIL International. It came to existence in the United States in year 1934 with the purpose of preparing missionaries for work with indigenous people. It is Christian organisation that aims to study and document less known languages of the world, but the main activity of the organisation is missionary and because of this first text that is usually translated onto indigenous languages is the Bible. SIL operates in many countries; in many of them, it has been expelled due to its destructive influence on indigenous cultures.

rubber tappers. In the first decades of the twentieth century, the long lasting isolation of the tribe suddenly came to an end and at the time any stranger was considered an enemy. The Huaorani were not treated with much decency by other people; therefore, their hostility is understandable. Later activities of the cohuori did not improve the situation much; organising the Protectorate in 1969 and the resettlement of most of the clans from the area had a destructive influence on the culture. During those times, the activities of SIL brought much damage to the tribe (including diseases and poverty, enabling the entry of oil companies to the area, the disappearance of some traditions and so on); at the same time, researchers clearly state that one of the outcomes of the missionaries presence was the cessation of the warfare between the Huaorani clans (Yost 1994: 351; Robarchek & Robarchek 1998: 151–63).

The activity of missionaries undoubtedly influenced the traditional religious practices: a majority of Huaorani are Christians now and shamanism can be found mostly in clans that do not live within the Huaorani Territory (created in 1996).

The history of oil extraction and its influence on indigenous people of the Ecuadorian Amazon have also been analysed (Ziegler-Otero 2004: 68–73; Robarchek & Robarchek 1998: 95–6; Rival 2000: 254–61; Cabodevilla 1999: 283–304, 411–38; Dematteis 2008). The problem started in 1937 when the oil reservoirs were discovered in Ecuador. Since then, the situation of indigenous people has been deteriorating. Oil companies were buying subsequent pieces of land, contaminating the forest and water with petroleum waste. The road was built right into the heart of the Huaorani territory, which enabled the export of crude oil out of the forest, but at the same time it resulted in the arrival of many strangers into the Huaorani land. An important moment for the tribe throughout the fight with oil companies was the creation of their own Organizacion de las Nacionalidades Indigenas de la Amazonia Ecuatoriana (ONHAE), which focuses on negotiations with the government and oil companies in order to protect indigenous rights (Ziegler-Otero 2004).

## Traditions of Huaorani shamanism

The data collected by researchers gives an unclear picture of the Huaorani shamanism. The description below is a compilation of different papers (mainly Yost 1981; 1994; Rival 2002; and Robarchek & Robarchek 1998) combined with the outcome of my research done in the Huaorani group (2007–2012). Nevertheless, the data is inconsistent and leaves much for further exploration.

Many researchers write about the Huaorani shamanism at some point, but (as mentioned above) their accounts differ. One thing that is consistent in all of the reports is the fact that traditional shamanism mostly had to do with jaguar spirits. They were helping people when asked for it by the shaman. The so-called "jaguar father" is chosen by jaguar spirits (when he is in mature age), which enables him to communicate with them (Rival 2002: 79; Yost 1981: 353). The jaguar spirits chose the man of whom they wanted to be "sons". They came to him in his dreams and then, after some time, they adopted him as their "father" (Rival 2002: 79).

Usually, the chosen man has to have near death experience in his childhood or adolescence. After contact with the jaguar spirits, he is called *menye waempo* and his wife,

who becomes "jaguar mother", is called *menye baada* (Rival gives the name of *meñera* that is supposed to come from the word *miñe* (jaguar) and *bara* (mother); 2002: 198n.12). They are "jaguar parents" and, as Yost puts it, they can send the jaguar spirits in order to find the game or check on the welfare of the relatives who live further away (1994: 353). This type of a shaman is described in most sources.

Some sources, however, also mention the other type of a shaman, called *ydo*, who actually acts as a sorcerer. I feel that *sorcerer* is not an appropriate name for any shamanistic practice; nevertheless, this designation is used by the Robarcheks (1998: 112) when describing the practices of an ydo. He is supposed to bring sickness and death to other people of the tribe using his spirit helpers, called *wenae* (Yost 1981: 113). Only the ydo himself is able to undo the damage he has done. People fear the ydo; therefore, he practices his art in secrecy. If he agreed to cure somebody who was supposedly hurt by an ydo, it would mean that it was in fact himself who hurt the person. Confirming his identity would result in his death; his tribesmen would kill him out of fear. The ydo is supposed to be responsible for most sicknesses and also sudden deaths or those that cannot be explained.

The identity of the menye waempo does not have to be concealed, and he can practice his art openly. People can express their gratitude towards the jaguar father, but at the same time he does not have a significant role in the group. His position is not connected with any power and, except his ability to communicate with the spirits of the jaguars, he is a regular member of the clan.

Both types of shamans drink *ayahuasca* (a brew of *Banisperiopsis caapi*) that in the Huao Terero language is called *mii*. The *menye waempo* drinks it only once, at the beginning of his practice, and the ydo drinks it every time he wants to perform his art (Robarchek & Robarchek 1998: 112). Both shamans also use chants in order to perform, and each of them has their own tune.

## Shamanistic practice and art

My research done in one of the Huaorani clans brings some different data to that collected by researchers in previous years. This may be due to changes that the Huaorani culture has undergone over the previous decades.

The shaman in this particular group is called *miñe*. He claims that there are only two miñe left. The word meñera, as described by L. Rival (2002: 198n.12), according to my informants is not the designation of the shaman, but of the state of connection with the jaguar powers.

The miñe listens to the jaguars; when they are close, he chants in order to get into the trance that enables him to travel with the spirits. The shaman usually travels on the shoulder of a bigger jaguar, and a smaller one is always around. He cannot refuse to meet the jaguar spirits when he feels the power rise in him and feels the urge to chant in order to follow the jaguars. The journey with them might last a long time; afterwards, the shaman can remember very little of it or sometimes even nothing at all. The only limits he talks about during his trance are that people cannot ask him to see the dead or to travel to other villages to check on the relatives, because the shaman could kill other people while in the meñera state. However, he can travel anywhere and can find the needed place or game or

to find out what is going to happen. He can stop this journey at any point by drinking some water, after which he finds himself back in his hammock.

The shaman's services to the people are connected mostly with healing. For this, he usually uses herbs, so he does not have to go into a trance, but there are some sicknesses that can be cured only with the help of the jaguar spirits (these are mostly fever or vomiting). The miñe can cure any physical illness; he never uses mii for his practices.

Interestingly, a shaman in this group was not "called" by the jaguar spirits, as mentioned by other researchers. His powers were given to him by his grandfather; in turn, he will transfer his powers to other clan members. First, it will be his son-in-law and his daughter-in-law, and later they will transfer powers to shaman's grandson. The latter is too young to undertake the shamanistic responsibilities, but his uncle (the shaman's son-in-law) and his aunt (the shaman's daughter-in-law) will keep the power until he is ready. All three of them had near-death experiences as tradition demands. During their illness, the shaman prepared special herbal decoction that purified them. While they were healing, he told them that when they would be healthy again, his powers would stay with them. In a way, they already have the powers now, only they cannot use them yet. It will change when the shaman dies, but it is also subject to conditions: they will be able to use the power, but they have to be sure they can transfer their power to somebody else, and that they can easily transfer it to the particular, chosen person. The shaman emphasised that the power can be transferred by mistake while healing a sick person; thus, his successors have to make sure they have control over it. The conscious transfer has to be done in a relaxed atmosphere, and the person that is about to obtain the power has to have faith and trust towards the shaman. As the shaman put it, there is no space for anger.

When the current shaman passes away, all three of the chosen people can use the power, but they can also decide not to act upon it and only one or two of them can practice using it.

The power of the shaman is connected with the jaguar spirits, so the shaman has already given one of his jaguars to his grandson (which does not imply that he travels with only one now; he still works with the both of them).

As my informants pointed out, the distinction between the miñe and ydo is still valid. The power of the miñe is supposed to be greater than that of the other one. There is also the notion that the miñe does not use ayahuasca at all. The shaman I interviewed mentioned that he tried to work with it, but it did not have much influence on him and did not help him with the healing of the sick people. Using ayahuasca makes the miñe angry, and then he cannot practice his art in peace.

The shaman also recalled the myth about the appearance of the ayahuasca vine in the world. He told the story about the family that was collecting the nests of oropendolas.[6] People climbed the vines up the tree in order to reach the nests. At the end of the work, the vine was cut, but one man was left behind on the tree. He was worried that he would not be

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[6] Oropendolas are different species of the *Icteridae* family. Their nests are basket-shaped and hang from the ends of the branches of the tall trees.

able to get down and then a person appeared on the sky talking to him. The person turned into a boa, and it wanted to help him to get down. The boa came closer and arranged his body down the tree trunk so the man could get to the ground. The boa said that the man has to cut its head when he reaches the ground and that it will start to bleed. The boa ordered the man to come back later to the tree as a good vine would appear out of its blood. When the man came back later, the ayahuasca vine was growing on the tree trunk.

The Huaorani culture gives the account of the ydo shamans who brings damage and death to the people, and they work exclusively under the influence of ayahuasca. The recalled myth also portrays the damage and death that was brought upon the boa (on its own demand) so that the new vine could appear. There is the connection between the practices of the ydo and the mythological ayahuasca vine origin; as the man in the myth inflicted death to the boa in order to gain the vine, the ydo inflicts illness or death on his people in order to gain benefits.

People in the village where the fieldwork was carried out were aware of the presence of the ydo in the other village. His name was known, and they were afraid of him. They also pointed out that (as stated by some authors, e.g. Yost 1981: 113) nobody would dare to attempt to kill the ydo. They fear him too much; he would probably know beforehand that the killing was planned and would take necessary precautions.

Traditionally Huaorani shamans did not have any power in the society, but the new reality forced the current one to take the initiative. Now he acts as the clan's leader. He still cannot tell anybody what to do, but he has the authority in his clan, and the whole tribe acknowledges him as a leader for all internal affairs. His nephew undertook the role of the leader for all external affairs, but he always consults his decisions with the elders of the clan, especially with the miñe.

The shaman's new acquired power will be soon put to the test. Members of his clan usually do not undermine his decisions when they concern local schools or tourists, but the shaman planned to leave the village in which they have lived in for almost ten years. There is not much game left, and closer gardens are already almost infertile, but there also is an airstrip. Once it was illegal, today it serves as a main source of money; tourists prefer to fly to the village instead of travelling by boat for almost three days and nowadays tourists are the main source of money for the tribe. The shaman does not approve of it, and he wants to leave the village, to return to his father's land where, as he puts it, there will be nobody but the Huaorani. Lately, his plans had to change even if he is tired of the airstrip village. His people do not want him to leave, and he does not want to leave his children and grandchildren behind. They would not follow him to the forest, especially the younger generation that knows a different, modern reality. The clan would be divided, and the shaman does not want to contribute to this. However, the old way of living that is so much praised by the shaman is in contradiction with his views on the modern innovations that his clan is benefiting from. For example, electrical power was brought to the village by Municipio Aguarico in May 2012. The miñe emphasises that he very much likes the lights, that the whole village looks nice during the long evenings.

# Conclusion

The outcome of my research reveals inconsistencies in the data collected by researchers over the years. Even the designation for the shaman is various in different sources. There are older texts that describe mostly the practice of two kinds of Huaorani shamans: ydo and menye waempo. For example, they appear in James Yost's text from 1981, but in the same author's text dated 1994 only one kind of shaman is mentioned: the ydo. In the book by Carolyn and Clayton Robarcheks (1998), both shamans are described (they use the word sorcerer for the ydo) and Laura Rival in her book (2002) gives the description only of the menye waempo (calling him meñera). A few other texts about the Huaorani do not mention the practice of shamanism at all. My research brings the designation of the miñe, as it was given by my informants. This raises questions about our whole understanding of shamanistic practices in Huaorani culture. What can we comprehend if even the description of the shaman is so diverse? The diversity of data makes the understanding of the shaman's practices extremely complicated and may lead a researcher to false conclusions. The interviews with the cultural informants and even with the shaman himself also raise subsequent questions; the gathered data can only relate to this one case and cannot be considered the rule for the whole tribe. The lack of a solid base of knowledge about the traditional Huaorani shamanism makes it impossible to follow all the changes that it has undergone. At the same time, it gives us some assumptions to interpret the influence of contact with the Western culture on the cultural changes of the tribe. Shamanism is one of the most crucial elements of this culture – let us hope it will be so for many years to come.

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## Povzetek

Huaoraniji živijo v ekvadorskem delu amazonske regije. Njihova kultura se od ostalih kultur v regiji razlikuje v mnogih vidikih. V zadnjih desetletjih nanjo vplivajo spremembe, ki so bile neizbežne po njihovem prvem uradnem stiku z zahodno kulturo leta 1958. Prispevek, ki temelji na terenskem delu z ekvadorskim klanom Huaoranijev, proučuje nekatere težave v razumevanju šamanskih praks v tej majhni družbi. Utemeljuje, da se opisi raziskovalcev, ki so nastali v zadnjih petdesetih letih, med seboj razlikujejo in da to onemogoča obravnavo "tradicionalnega" in "sodobnega" šamanizma Huaoranijev v sedanjosti.

KLJUČNE BESEDE: staroselski šamanizem, amazonska kultura, Huaorani

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# CRITICAL ESSAYS

# Thirty years of multiculturalism and anthropology

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## Abstract

On 5 February 2011, the Prime Minister of the UK, David Cameron, announced at a public conference that 'State multiculturalism [had] failed.' This was just one of the best known episodes that highlighted the return of "multiculturalism" as a topic of public debate. Multiculturalism represents a widely discussed concept in anthropology: a concept that sparked heated critiques and allied the discipline with a rejection of this concept. Distinctly from the past, in recent years, anthropologists appear to have become protagonists of the contemporary discussion about the future of multiculturalism. In this article, I will provide a brief history of the relationship between anthropology and multiculturalism, and show the reasons that brought anthropologist from the sound condemnations of the 1990s to the recent active engagement of this discussion. In doing so, I will show the changed political and intellectual agenda that underpinned this transformation.

KEYWORDS: multiculturalism, anthropology, conflict

## Anthropological uneasiness

Multiculturalism is one of those concepts that made generations of anthropologists year feel uneasy over the past thirty years. In order to understand the reasons for such a perception, a short definition is needed. While in the previous thirty years, other disciplines in humanities and social sciences debated, clarified, and deepened this concept, as Turner observed in the early 1990s, cultural and social anthropology kept out of this heated discussion. It was often judgemental of the entire debate, which was frequently labelled as monumental, ontological 'no-sense' (Turner 1993).

This critical position may surprise some. At the end of the day, was not anthropology that discipline that taught the diversity of cultures? That just respect and dignity that must be guaranteed to any of them? Anthropology is indeed that discipline, and those are the main teachings that it offered to modern thought. However, it is in the long debate about culture and diversity that distinguished anthropology that we can find the principal motivations that induced anthropologists to oppose to multiculturalism: a concept that they considered limited and narrow.

To understand this position, which too easily risks appearing to be another academic oddity, it is necessary to clarify two points: First of all, what culture is, at least in anthropology; secondly, what the archaeology (cf. Foucault 2002) of multiculturalism is.

## Culture and anthropology

'What's culture?,' though. This is a question that has animated all the history of modern anthropology since the 19th century. A fundamental definition was given by Taylor in 1871: 'Culture, or civilisation, taken in its broad, ethnographic sense, is that complex whole that includes knowledge, belief, art, morals, law, custom, and any other capabilities and habits acquired by man as a member of society' (1903: 1).

This definition *per se* tends to define culture as a sort of fixed set of immutable traits that would presumably distinguish a particular social group or community. In other words, culture is all the traits that differentiate a Nuer from an Inuit, a Chinese person from an Argentinean.

For more than a century, the anthropological paradigm of culture was linked to that idea and based on the conviction that every society, every social group was marked by some particular characteristics that clearly distinguish it from other social groups. It was a definition, an ideology that was based on the interpretation of local community and social groups as immutable cosmos that were stable and static in time. These convictions were the epistemic pillars for the discipline. However, they were based on social premises that might have been true in the time of the colonial empires, but did not mirror the complexity of modernity.

In the post-World War Two world, as an effect of decolonisation and the increase of infra- and trans-state mobility, those pillars crumbled. Thanks to the studies of post-colonial thinkers such as Fanon (1961), Said (1978), Asad (1973) since the 1960s, researchers recognised that local communities were far, far from being a static cosmos. Religious, political and kinship systems change in time and adjust themselves to the necessities of contemporary times. From this recognition, a new conceptualisation of culture that opposed the classical one by Taylor was raised. Culture became interpreted as a fluid, changeable, positional reality. Since the 1980s, with the tools of deconstructivist critique, the concept of culture was revised up to the point to negate, in some cases, the meaning of such category. To the eyes of a post-modern anthropologist, such a thing as culture does not exist. There are just fluid networks of relations self-regulated on the basis of arbitrary principles where individuals transmitted knowledge. For the innate fluidity of these nets, moreover, every individual may be part of multiple networks and, in so being, she would make the knowledge of each network dialogue with the one transmitted within others. Thus, she would be able to make networks interact and mutate.

## The birth of Multiculturalism

This vision of culture clearly opposes the concept of culture that underpinned the idea of multiculturalism that had been created and spread since the 1980s. In fact, multiculturalism became a fundamental concept in the public and political debate in that decade, as it was a response to the introduction of the concept of "culture" imposed by the "new right" of Thatcher and Regan. Since the end of the 1970s, in the same years when it was proclaimed that 'such a thing as society [did] not exist,' culture became the fundamental ideological hinge of the immigration policy both in the UK and the US, and more broadly of their

entire political discourse. In that context, it was affirmed that to become an "American" or a "British" person, one had to be an American or a British. In other words, an individual had to embody a particular set of intangible social and behavioural characters defined as culture. If we consider what we said about anthropology, this idea of culture appears to be the direct descendent of Taylor's: it was not acknowledging the fluidity of knowledge; instead, even worse, it was affirming a principle of superiority of a particular culture over all the other forms of knowledge and lifestyles (Wright 1998).

As an answer to this ideology, multiculturalism was introduced into the public debate by movements and left-wing parties. In their perspective, multiculturalism was to reaffirm the respect towards any form of culture and to denounce publicly the iniquity of any imposition of a culture over another. However, in so doing, it did not unhinge the post-Taylorian concept of culture employed by the new right; instead, it was adopted and became part of the DNA of multiculturalism. This is the reason for the opposition of anthropologists to multiculturalism, and the reason that this concept was scarcely debated until the previous decade.

## 9/11

Ten years ago, however, we experienced a change both in meaning of multiculturalism and the attitude of anthropology towards it, because, ten years ago, something historic happened: 9/11. This event was, first of all, a turning point for the international political debate that also caused a radical change in the political use of the word culture. Where in the 1990s a certain belief in an inter-cultural egalitarianism had become widespread, in the previous decade we have seen the rise of a form of new-Orientalism. In other words, the public debate was radicalised by highlighting the differences among communities, among cultures. A renovated form of cultural discrimination spread: the one that is based on the contraposition between "Western" and "Christian" against "Oriental" and "Islamic" culture. It may be superfluous to add that in the West the former was presented as the good and just, to be imposed also with the use of force to anyone would have opposed it. I recognise I am generalising, and apologise for it. Unfortunately, this generalisation is not so far from what happened (Carrithers 2008).

In this political context, multiculturalism has revived and become a theme of extreme relevance. It has become a trans-disciplinary debate to which also anthropology is taking part. In this case, the aim of this debate is not just a problem of policy (Prato 2009). It aims to defuse the ideological machine that has been structuring in the previous decade (Wright 1998). This debate is still on-going. It is continued in academia as well as outside of it.

## Conclusion

Coming to a conclusion, in this perspective, the only suggestion I would like to give you is to not repeat the mistakes of the past. In our reasoning, let us try to abandon an idea of culture as set of fixed distinguishing traits, which is also at the basis of post 9/11 ideology. Instead, let us try to consider a fluid idea of culture made with knowledge in motion, where people are places of contact, creation, propagation of knowledge towards other individuals that, in their turn, are also places of contact, creation and propagation of kno-

wledge towards other individuals. Perhaps in this way, we will be able to find those new and fresh resources we need to break the ideological iron cage in which the West and the world are living and to prove that multiculturalism, as the claim that we all are members of one diverse humanity, is far from being failed.

## Acknowledgement

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## Povzetek
Predsednik britanske vlade, david Cameron je 5. februarja 2001 naznanil: 'Državni multikulturalizem je propadel.' To je bila ena izmed najbolj znanih epizod, ki je poudarila vrnitev "multikulturalizma" med teme javnih debat. Multikulturalizem v antropologiji predstavlja široko obravnavan concept. Je concept, ki je sprožil vroče kritike in združil discipline v zavrnitvi tega pojma. Za razliko od preteklosti pa so v zadnjih letih antropologi postali protagonisti trenutne diskusije o prihodnosti multikulturalizma. V prispevku predstavljam kratko zgodovino odnosa med antropologijo in multikulturalizmom in razkrivam razloge, zaradi katerih so antropologi prešli od ostrih sodb v devetdesetih letih 20. stoletja k dejavni vključitvi v debate v zadnjem času. V argumentaciji bom prikazal na spremenjeno politično in intelektualno agendo, ki je botrovala tej preobrazbi.

KLJUČNE BESEDE: multikulturalizem, antropologija, konflikt

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**BOOK REVIEWS**

**Vullnetari, Julie and Russell King. 2011.** *Remittances, Gender and Development. Albania's Society and Economy in Transition.* **London: I. B. Tauris. xiv + 232 pp. Pb.: £56.50. ISBN: 9781848854871.**

This book is certainly a path-breaking study from various perspectives. First, it offers a clear and valuable analysis of several highly significant aspects of the socio-economic transformation process that Albania has faced during the post-communist years. Second, it provides a valuable theoretical approach, by 'gendering remittances' and by looking at the migration and migrant's life through gender lenses. Third, it provides a list of useful recommendations, which primarily are addressed mainly to various policy-makers in Albania, but which could positively influence the implementation of effective means and measures also in other similar cases.

The book contains an introduction and seven chapters. Its authors have also included a series of illustrations as well as two maps. The introduction contains a general overview of the story behind the preparation of this book, a description of the methodology of the research and the sites where research was conducted, as well as the authors' concern about several ethical issues related to the research on remittances and the gender, privacy and confidentiality of respondents.

The second chapter offers a theoretical discussion of the four key concepts used by authors: gender, migration, remittances and development. The authors devalue as simplistic the approach that sees women as better remitters than men and call instead for a more cautious and in-depth analysis that takes in consideration the influence of gender in the ways social structures are built, and social links are established.

The third chapter contains an overview of the migration process in Albania since 1990. It provides a chronology of the events, rich data that include the numbers of migrants and the level of the remittances per year, as well revealing several shortfalls of the up-to-date migration studies in and outside Albania.

The fourth chapter includes an in-depth analysis of various types of transnational households of migrants originating from southern Albania who work and live in Greece. The authors continue this micro-scale analysis in the following chapter by focusing especially on the relationship between remittances and gender.

In the sixth chapter, the authors extend the range of their analysis by including development as the fourth component. They pay attention to salient elements of social life, such as social development, non-monetary transfers, socio-political and technological remittances, which influence and are influenced by the link between the micro- and macro-scales.

In the seventh chapter, the authors expand the range of their analysis, by focusing on the relationship between gender, remittances and development on local, regional, national, but also on international levels. They pay attention to the effects the remittances have on economic development in Albania, and also provide an analysis from the perspective of stakeholders in Greece.

The shift towards recommendations becomes more evident in the final chapter, which contains a set of important conclusions. The authors present several final remarks on

the basis of their findings, revise the sustainability of some key theoretical assumptions, and, finally, draw recommendations relevant for policy makers both in and outside Albania.

Many scholars have emphasised that Albanian society is one of the most patriarchal societies in Europe and as such is facing a rapid and multidimensional process of modernisation, which has affected with both massive urbanisation as well as re-traditionalisation efforts. Vullnetari and King go far beyond the limits of this assumption and in this respect their study bears a significant relevance. More than any other study on post-communist Albania, this book brings a human perspective on how people have or are coping with the effects of the social change in their lives. Migration from their underdeveloped country was and in many cases is still seen by many Albanians as a mean towards improving people's lives. Indeed, it has been so for many Albanian migrants and their families; the statistical data Vullnetari and King provide leaves no doubt about that.

Migration has radically affected social relations in Albania and remittances are one of the best tools to study this change and the effects it has on people's lives. In their study, Vullnetari and King provide a thorough analysis that reveals how migration through remittances has affected development, and thus also the gender relations. However, they deserve particular praise for their efforts to escape any determinism, and for their approach, which is firmly based on data from the field. This has allowed them to present the variety of the ways Albanian are coping with social change during the post-communist period.

Of equal relevance is the theoretical contribution this book brings in the field of migration studies. Vullnetari and King shift the focus of analysis from, so to speak, biologically determined approaches, condensed in the question 'Are women better remitters than men?', to a more sociologically and anthropologically oriented approach, i.e. towards gender roles and relations. The methodology the authors propose and have successfully applied in their research takes in consideration the effects of gender roles on the household, the kinship context, and the cross-generation relations in order to expand the spectrum of analysis in order to include local, regional and national development. This book shows without any doubt that only an interdisciplinary approach and multi-layered research will allow to fully grasp the complexity and diversity of social relations in a migration-dominated society like the Albanian one. As such, this book will be highly valuable not only to those who specialise in Albania, but also to sociologists, anthropologists and political scientists and scholars specialising in migration studies.

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**Peterson, Mark Allen. 2011.** *Connected in Cairo. Growing up Cosmopolitan in the Modern Middle East.* **Bloomington and Indianapolis: Indiana University Press. 263 pp. Pb.: $24.95. ISBN: 9780253223111.**

Mark Allen Peterson offers a deeply engaging and timely analysis of the complex socio-cultural, religious and economic trajectories that have shaped young upper-class Egyptians in the decade prior to the 2011 uprising. Through a series of detailed ethnographic portraits of educational spaces, children's magazines, coffee shops and fast-food outlets, Peterson's book furthers our understanding of the many ways in which class identities – and the particular lifestyles and social expectations they harvest – are imprinted upon young people from a tender age. In particular, Peterson brings to light how education, in the Egyptian national context, is a powerful cog in a broader rigid social class system that works to crystallise and consolidate class identities. Interestingly, by maintaining a sensitive distinction of the how social practices that create class identities change between level of education (primary/higher), but also type of education (private/public/private-national/ private-international), Peterson makes a unique and insightful contribution to Arab cultural studies and anthropology.

Although researchers within these subject-domains have engaged the question of class, they have often approached class as a socio-economic blueprint of behaviour and lifestyle; a rigid category that pre-exists people's agency and thus forces them to act in predictable and standardised ways. What Peterson successfully does through his in-depth ethnographic fieldwork is engage with *individuals* that can never be disassociated from the hierarchies and inequalities of the class system, yet perceive and make sense of them "selves" and their subjectivities in unique and varying ways. Such an approach makes relevant not only differences across classes, but also brings to the fore the fluidity of class boundaries and thus the internal contradictions that inevitably exist between people *within* class categories. For instance, through Peterson's engagement with Cairo's American University, we are introduced to how female students often choose to defy the liberal, Western-inspired social practices prevalent in this elite institution. They prefer to physically express their piousness and the potency of their Islamic faith by adopting the *niqab* (face veil) − even if it does challenge the dress policy put in place by the university's (largely American) faculty and administrators.

Importantly, Peterson resists subscribing to an over simplistic approach that reduces the upper-classes to westernised propagators of globalisation opposing any type of localised association. Instead, through a multi-dimensional analysis of young Egyptians' daily 'linguistic codes and registers, bodily comportments, and other practices…' (p. 12) the author thoughtfully considers the struggles these young elite face as they attempt to negotiate complex and often contradicting identities. Such identities are at once modern and cosmopolitan, yet also conform to the more rooted specificities of local religious and cultural practice. For instance, by examining class in juxtaposition with gender, the reader is made aware of how strict codes of religious morality have a significant bearing on upper class women's mobility and their presence in public space, even though they are part of Egypt's Westernised, elite class network.

Furthermore, Peterson's well-contextualised, thickly described case studies propose a framework for understanding cosmopolitanism that transcends the vantage point of Western liberal democracies from which many studies and conceptualisations of cosmopolitanism have arisen. Rather than approaching cosmopolitanism as a "fixed conception" characterised by a particular definition of what it *should* or *ought* to be, Peterson offers a bottom-up understanding of cosmopolitan as an everyday practiced identity which is lived, embodied and performed in unique ways. Such an in-depth micro-analysis of everyday cosmopolitanism in Cairo engages with the complex and multifarious ways in which the global is produced from *within*, and thus takes its meaning only *through* local religious, cultural and linguistic practices.

In addition, the case studies presented in this book engage with a very specific, almost exclusive type of cosmopolitanism preconditioned by wealth, prestige, transnational mobility and the consumption of expensive Western products. Nevertheless, Peterson makes the salient point that this should be regarded as only one *type* of cosmopolitan identity in Cairo that exists alongside others articulated on the basis of different class, gender and religious affiliations. In this way, Peterson makes sure not to define cosmopolitanism as an identity exclusive solely to privileged classes, but also not to de-value the decidedly different cosmopolitan associations and networks managed by the working class.

Although the main argumentative thread of this book in no way glosses over the complexity of young Egyptian identities, but successfully portrays how they are framed within systems of class, gender, religious and urban organisation and control, the author's use of the term "authentic identity" may be questionable. The claim that young elite Egyptians are searching for "authentic" identities almost implies that the "modern" forces of globalisation threaten these rooted authenticities. Furthermore, the concept of "authentic" identity fails to denote that identities can never be pure as by virtue of an ubiquitous cross-cultural exchange through globalisation, migration, imperialism and media communication, they are naturally comprised of a range of different cultural and temporal influences. Whether or not one agrees with Peterson's choice of terminology, however, the crux of his argument neatly captures common struggles endured by young people in the developing south as they negotiate the contour and limits of their globalisation. Indeed, in the face of a bombardment of cultural stimuli from the West, while having a reflexive awareness of their position within global hierarchies, young Egyptians are ever in search of a unique yet rooted sense of self that allows them to locate themselves in a world both immediate and faraway.

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**Collins, Michael. 2012.** *Empire, Nationalism and the Postcolonial World. Rabindranath Tagore's Writings on History, Politics and Society.* **London and New York: Routledge. 212 pp. Pb.: £85.00. ISBN: 9780415593953.**

The 150th anniversary of the birth of Rabindranath Tagore in 2011 provided an impetus for many scholars and translators across the world to engage afresh with the vast output of one of India's foremost creative artists and thinkers of the modern era. If Amit Chaudhuri's *On Tagore: Reading the Poet Today* marks one such original attempt to engage with Tagore as a modern(ist) poet, sidestepping the obdurate and unhelpful categories of mystic and seer, Michael Collins's book promises to be an enduring contribution to our critical understanding of Tagore the modern-day thinker. Though one would not wish to draw too artificial a boundary between the two, this book, coming from a historian specialising in the intellectual history of empire and decolonisation, is primarily concerned with presenting 'Tagore as an intellectual' (p. 22) within a global historical framework of the second half of the 19th and the first half of the 20th centuries, and emphasising Tagore's keen sense of (creative) agency against the backdrop of colonial domination.

Motivated by the argument that postcolonial historiography has not accorded Tagore the intellectual standing he deserves, this book strives to explain, on the one hand, why 'Tagore has been consistently misunderstood, misrepresented, sometimes ignored, and in many respects diminished as a writer and thinker' (p. 1). On the other hand, it attempts to locate more precisely Tagore's importance for historians, political scientists and theorists of modernity, postmodernity and post-colonialism alike. It does so by laying out Tagore's 'distinctively universalist philosophy' (p. 22), aimed as a critique of certain aspects of modernity, and an alternative to both empire and nation. 'Tagore can help us better understand some of the failures of postcolonial theory,' (p. 14) claims Collins at the outset.

Offering by now a standard critique of Said's unfortunately essentialist take on "the West" vis-à-vis "the Orient" or "the East", Collins goes on to acknowledge Said's latter-day shift to a more nuanced approach to the ways in which the colonised contested the supremacy of Western hegemony. In *Culture and Imperialism*, Said devoted an entire chapter to intellectuals of decolonisation from various parts of the globe committed to a larger search for liberation, and Tagore is included in the ranks of the likes of C. L. R. James, Neruda, Cabral, Yeats, Fanon and others. Collins, however, questions the *lumping* together of these individual thinkers on the grounds that they are dubbed "nationalist," even though their response, according to Said, comprises nationalist resistance "at its best" because it is always critical of itself. Collins insists that in Tagore's case resistance at its best must be delinked from any notion of "nationalist." Given how difficult it is for (Indian) historians and Tagore scholars to this day to think outside the nationalist/patriotic framework when it comes to a national icon such as Tagore, it seems nothing short of revolutionary to have Collins proclaim outright that 'Tagore was *not* a nationalist in any analytically useful sense of the term' (my emphasis) (p. 15). It is precisely this claim that allows for bringing Tagore into a fresh historical focus. A prominent part of the book is therefore devoted to author's rigorous analysis of Tagore's uncompromising critique of the modern idea of a nation, the nation state and its ideological corollary of nationalism, particularly after the Swadeshi movement went into decline.

Moving beyond the limits of both postcolonial and subaltern paradigms, with their respective "imperial-national" and "elite-subaltern" dichotomies, Collins strives for 'a fully contextualised historical analysis of [Tagore's] actual ideas or activities' (p. 3). The portrayal that emerges is at once more complex and controversial. Here is a man guided by a fundamental belief that there is an inherent impulse in us – beyond instrumental reason and self-interest – for 'creative, active love, which leads us to bonds of unity with our fellow men' (p. 157). Tagore is thus portrayed in his acute concern for both "coloniser" and colonised." He cannot accept the idea of "one West" or a purely negative critique of the Enlightenment, and adopts a view of Indian history that suggests that India "belongs" to no one. These are not novel propositions in themselves, but Collins deserves to be credited for his more systematic and rigorous analysis of existing debates combined with an intellectual historian's linking of context and text. The extensive use of primary sources turns this into a path-breaking book. It is also what engenders certain new insights. As Tapan Raychaudhuri states in his foreword to the book, Collins brings 'a genuinely new contribution to our understanding of the relationship between Gandhi and Tagore' (pg. xvi). He also does away with some erroneous assumptions regarding Tagore's winning of the Nobel Prize and the English *Gitanjali,* and puts the much-discussed and misunderstood relationship between W. B. Yeats and Tagore in perspective for us.

Aside from his engagement with archival material, Collin's healthy suspicion of secondary sources has also led him to some very interesting discoveries. For example, a letter to C. F. Andrews written in July 1915, in which Tagore refers to Gandhi as 'a moral tyrant' for thinking he had the power to 'make his ideas prevail through the means of slavery' (p. 87), was excised from the sanitised 1928 book version *Letters to a Friend*. Likewise, a number of essays published in *The Modern Review* in which Tagore lays out his more controversial take on the West and India are found to be missing from Sisir Kumar Das's authoritative compilation of Tagore's English writings. Such omissions preclude the possibility of a more complex historical understanding of Tagore's unconventional position on empire and modernity.

Tagore's "anti-politics" that sees British rule in India as essentially 'a failure of imagination and intellect' (p. 13) went on to assume a concrete face in a "politics of friendship" across the colonial divide. Collins devotes a third of the book to analysing Tagore's interactions with some key individuals from the Anglophone world. The cultural elite of the colonial power, with W. B. Yeats at its helm, are shown to have instrumentalised Tagore for their own essentially Eurocentric endeavour of a cultural revival in need of a spiritual injection from "the East". The friendships Tagore forged in colonial Britain were many and guided by various motivations – C. F. Andrews and Edward Thompson, who came to live in India and learned Bengali, professed a different kind of attachment to Tagore than did Yeats – but they rarely questioned the underlying imperial power relations. The conflicts of class, race, religion and nation posed a great challenge to a transnational politics of friendship that was supposed to transcend them. Collins's book is no doubt a timely publication for bringing Tagore's complex answers to the age of empire and nation into new focus.

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**Crehan, Kate. 2011. *Community Art: An Anthropological Perspective.* Oxford and New York: Berg. 224pp. Pb.: £19.99. ISBN: 9781847888334.**

Crehan's excellent and accessible book examines the work of the "Free Form Arts Trust" in the United Kingdom. This forty-year-old trust sought to bring art to working-class communities, but did so in a different way than other projects: the art was done with and for the people living in the communities. These efforts engaged preconceived ideas on art, perspectives held by both viewers and artisans, and in doing so developed a social commentary on communities and the art establishment.

The trust had several motives in launching community participant art projects. Crehan points out that those in the working class were sceptical of contemporary art and that to overcome this perspective, artists had to establish a relationship with people in the community, using this understanding to form a definition of the particular community. In many ways, the trust was conducting ethnographic fieldwork by working with community members to develop an understanding of self-definition that could be used to guide future interactions and facilitate the exchange of ideas.

An interesting and critical element both of Crehan's narrative and the concept of community art is the presence of two art forms: performance and visual. At first, community art efforts in the United Kingdom included both forms. Crehan points out that performance art had an advantage in that theatre held a more entrenched position in British cultural identity. However, the performance arts, as they were involved in community arts projects, were not as open to community participation and thus ran afoul of the uniting concept of community art. Crehan highlights how performance workshops held during community festivals were open to professionals only and that despite drawing in newly minted theatre students who wanted to try something new, the lack of community participation caused a rift and destined the trust and similar activities to be visually focused from that point. Further, Crehan notes that the performance artists were more interested in radicalism and commentary, a move that the visual artists thought might alienate some and pose an issue for the group's charity status in the eyes of the government.

The motives of these efforts were more than merely artistic; rather art, as it often is, was a vehicle for a broader social philosophy. Social change, change in social policies, and developing partnerships were all elemental to the community art efforts. However, changes came at all levels and presented unique issues. An interesting facet of the Trust's efforts was its rejection of the art establishment, a move that led to issues of defining expertise, a concept of paramount value and importance to the mainstream art community. Expertise is a sensitive issue. Crehan writes, 'The reality is that "expertise" does not simply mean a given bundle of skills and knowledge: those skills and knowledge have to be socially recognized' (p. 29). In art, this recognition comes in the form of gallery showings, study, and public recognition. What happens when an artist produces a piece that is not in a traditional gallery, but in non-art spaces like community areas? This requires a shift in a values system regimented by centuries of tradition, but when it does change, the exchange of ideas and perspectives between experts and non-experts is transformative.

Crehan does an excellent job of getting the reader to understand the complexity of

this entire movement. As the performance artists left and the movement focused on visual arts, these efforts were further refined and geared toward addressing the built environment. As noted above, the art establishment was generally dismissive, but some of the gallery crowd liked the idea of art outside of four walls. Redefining environment and making previous distressed areas more visually appealing seems straightforward and clear, but it is rather complicated considering the need for community participation and influence. Crehan notes that these projects sought to have professional levels of construction, and in creating something more durable, the artists needed to understand the community as the piece would most likely be present for decades.

The great value of Crehan's work, which at its core is a study of a process of community identification and expression, is that it highlights something that has been missing from several community art movements in the United States and elsewhere. Unlike the work of the trust, community art efforts seen by this reviewer have not involved the community closest in proximity to the art. Rather, the efforts consisted of an outside entity (planning board, charity, or other effort) bringing in art and placing it in an established community with little or no input or participation. This is not the process of empowerment that fuelled the trust; rather it is a missionary effort, one that seeks to force conformity.

As students (and protectors) of culture and the human condition, anthropologists must recognise that there are groups near us that need understanding, study, and assistance. Anthropologists can play a critical role in helping community efforts understand the people in the community and can facilitate efforts to include them in shaping their space. Thankfully, Crehan's book, through its study of the trust, shows the way.

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**Geertz, Armin W. and Jeppe Sinding Jensen (eds.). 2011. *Religious Narrative, Cognition and Culture: Image and Word in the Mind of Narrative.* Sheffield: Equinox. 336 pp. Pb.: $24.99. ISBN: 9781845532956.**

This is a comprehensive work bringing together scholars from various disciplines – anthropology, linguistics, psychology and religious studies – to reflect on what essentially may be termed basic human questions about self, mind, brain and being human, i.e. having the capacity to reflect, to symbolise and (most importantly) to construct narratives, engage in dialogues and be able to imaginatively visualise things that may be referred to as "counterintuitive". As human beings, we have brains that can cognitively interpret and understand a world that is not material, but constructed by us and also made meaningful by us.

The emphasis throughout this book attempts to cover a wide range of narratives from the *Biblical Exodus* to the *Mahabharata, The Satanic Verses* of Rushdie to the creation of life history myths by astrology and supernatural beings in the virtual world; it is on the social world and the need for communicating with others that is seen as an integral part of evolving to be human. The interface of the brain with the social world is seen, for example, as "outside in" rather than "inside out". In other words, rather than the brain being a machine/robotic mechanism, it is now increasingly seen as something that has developed in response to the fact of being social, in relation to others rather than in inward isolation. Thus, the brain is recognised as remaining plastic almost throughout a person's life, especially if the external environment is continuously changing.

Such is the importance of the environment, to be conceptualised in social, symbolic, semiotic and cultural terms that a changing environment can keep the process of socialisation running throughout a person's life, raising questions about the relationship of self and society. Changing narratives continue to reinvent the sense of self and personhood, and anchorage may be found in myths of religion, astrology or even virtual life worlds.

As pointed out by Merlin Donald in this volume, the human brain developed the ability of conscious thinking specifically by being liberated from its biological memory limitations. In other words, to be human is to be able to transcend the biological to be able to develop a cognitive world based on collective thought enabled by culture and social living. Literacy, for example, plays a key role in changing the cognitive capacity of the brain. By storing knowledge outside of human memory, the entire process of knowing becomes liberated from authoritative control and finds free expression. Thus, as Chris Sinha points out, writing introduces a person to abstract cognitive attitudes and rather than depending on an authoritative source, as when knowledge is oral; it becomes centred in a neutral text that frees the individual learner to think independently. The externalisation of memory and the use of various technologies for storage have had serious implications for human development.

The major focus of the book is on religion, however, and how religious narratives become powerful vehicles for the cognitive development of self, culture and human society. The very ability for narrative construction comes to a human child early in life, primarily as a result of socialisation through interaction with others who tell stories. This storytelling enables the creation of sense of continuity and helps a child to develop of sense of self in

relation to others and ultimately a sense of connectedness and continuity not only with one's own life history, but with a social and even global history. Such a sense of continuity builds up in humans a sense of being part of a larger whole, a sense of purpose and being that is both transcendental and adaptive; religious narratives in particular do so by their need fulfilment and sense of collective self.

Evolutionary biology and linguistics provide a basic theoretical framework for the majority of papers in this volume,,but several focus on purely cultural theory as it relates to religion. From Durkheim and Marcel Mauss on one hand, to the "hard science" of neurotransmitters of the brain on the other, the theoretical tools used by the scholars are varied. Yet most come to the similar conclusions, that the human mind is not to be understood in terms of engineering but as something transcendental and free from mechanical constraints.

The evolutionary adaptations of humans have not been to use their already-developed organs for forming culture and society, but rather it is the need to be in society that has been the adaptive mechanism; to fulfil this requirement, other aspects (such as brain and language) have developed in the way they have. The ultimate lesson to be learnt is that we are humans because of our human qualities of communication, empathy and cooperation and sharing. An fascinating experiment done on the neurotransmitters of the brain indicates, for example, that the brain shows signs of well- being and harmony when a person takes a decision that is cooperative and in adjustment to fellow beings rather than being competitive. The message is clear: it is an evolutionary advantage to be harmonious and social rather than being individualistic and competitive. In other words, humans have evolved to be sociable, and religion is one way in which this collective mind is achieved.

This book makes for heavy but engrossing reading. Every chapter (18 in all) is specialised and makes use of a different kind of theory, and it is intriguing to note that varieties of approach lead to more or less similar conclusions. It is not meant for lay readers and is mostly suitable for a serious researcher and senior scholar. Nevertheless, it has much to offer to a person seriously considering questions regarding what is it to be human, both in a social and psychological sense. What is the self, what is consciousness, and what is the direction of human development for the future? It stimulates intellectual curiosity and attempts, at the same time, to answer a variety of questions that often come to us reflectively and speculatively.

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**Hegeman, Susan. 2012. *The Cultural Return.* Berkeley: University of California Press. 172 pp. Pb.: $44.95 / £30.95. ISBN: 9780520268982.**

In *The Cultural Return,* literary scholar Susan Hegeman tracks the rise and fall of the so-called "cultural turn" across different academic disciplines since the post-war period. After depicting key concept(s) of culture in academia during the previous decades and some examples for culture's persistent popular ubiquity, the introduction lays out the structure of the book.

The first chapter deals with the cultural turn of the 1980s and '90s when a lively debate about the meaning and utility of culture as an analytical concept was fought. Particularly due to its connotations of spatial and historical fixity, an impressive number of academics from across the political spectrum have repudiated the concept. Hegeman systematises five common complaints, which notably came from anthropology and literary studies since that time. She claims to uncover the complaints' inconsistency and to demonstrate that they rather reflect larger concerns and trends. However, the author does not succeed to contextualise and explicitly explain some quotations, and her arguments in this regard are not fully convincing.

Throughout the following pages, the author argues that the idea of culture is dialectically intertwined with the concept of modernity: it mediates between parts and wholes; between the universal and the particular; the global and the local; the structural and the contingent; between aesthetic and quotidian; and the present and future. Because it is essential to recognise the historical specificity of what those parts and wholes are, in the second chapter Hegeman exemplifies that so-called "mass culture" needs to be relegated to the decades preceding World War II. Only by historicizing various meanings and usages of the concept of culture can its political power be understood. Apart from this not being a new finding, a part of this chapter is a reprint of Hegeman's article published in 2000.

In the third chapter, the author depicts the rise of the concept of culture from the mid-twentieth century structuralism to the explosion of cultural theories in the '80s and '90s. She turns to the Cold War era and argues that "culture" became such a keyword because it seemed to offer a conceptual resolution to the central conflicts of that time. Though the concept had its greatest impact in this period, she notes that the pre-war period should not be neglected as a crucial site of the formation of the modern cultural concept. Hegeman demonstrates how the academic discourse has been in dialogue with larger concerns – political, fiscal as well as ideological – of its historical moment. She similarly argues that the recent rise of academic interest in or rather a return to professional ethics, cosmopolitanism, aesthetics and close-reading can be accounted to neo-liberalism, intensified class division and the corporatization of universities.

The subsequent chapter addresses the problem of national and, as an analogy, disciplinary borders. With the turn away from the nation-state, the discipline of American Studies had to reconfigure itself. Hegeman addresses and compares the anthropological rejection of "culture" and the late anxieties in American Studies over the concept of "America". As America is insufficiently reflective of the postnationalist habitus of American Studies, culture is insufficient for anthropology's exploration of human diversity. Hegeman

points out that there is not much point in changing names of disciplines or "getting beyond" their subjects, in particular because of the popular rhetoric attached to them. Rather, she calls for a strategical deployment of both "America" and "culture", possible as spaces of struggle and possibility, in our current times of globalisation.

In the fifth chapter, Hegeman presents one interdisciplinary attempt to develop a conceptual frame for coming to terms with current global realities – the turn towards religion and belief. "Culture" is often allocated to the enlightened "West" whereas "belief" is allocated to "the Other", to those still outside of "modernity". She argues for a rejection of this romantic fantasy and for a complex conceptualisation of culture's relationship to the narrative of modernity.

In the last chapter, Hegeman sums up how culture has historically functioned in a number of registers. She points out the continuing relevance of "culture" as a meaningful concept and category of analysis, and advocates for the acknowledgement of local articulations of culture. It is shown that "culture" is now deployed in international definitions of human rights; thus, there is still a useful and informative relationship between vernacular and technical usage of the term "culture".

In summary, Hegeman tries to develop a positive and socially progressive idea of culture – a concept that is acceptable and useful for both scholarly research and popular discourse. She finds the calls to dislike or to get beyond culture nonsensical as one cannot wave away several centuries of intellectual history. In the current moment of global change, including mass migrations and terrorism, political, but also vernacular rhetoric about 'culture' has become more complex and strident. The author warns the reader that rendering the concept of culture as meaningless might concede cultural determinists, both propagandists and scholars, who then happily shape the discourse. Instead of ceding the discourse to those who use "culture" to explain a host of ills, it is crucial to responsibly intervene into public discourses.

The six chapters following the introduction can be read separately, as the author does not present one main argument, but rather erratic essays approaching the topic from different angles. Although the chapters are well referenced, this reviewer thinks that the author does not fully present her points concisely and convincingly. While some of her thoughts are certainly interesting and original, a lack of definitions and the absence of newer publications on the culture debate, both with regard to theories and policies, make this book less appealing to those who wish to gain a clear understanding and to have an up-to-date overview of the cultural turn(s) in academia and their influence on the public.

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**Kreinath, Jens (ed.). 2011. *The Anthropology of Islam Reader.* New York: Routledge. 420 pp. Pb.: £27.99. ISBN: 9780415780254.**

This collection of essays draws attention from the usual Western focus on Sufi practices and should more correctly be titled *The Anthropology of Sunni Islam* as all articles are based on fieldwork conducted among Sunni Muslims. A particular strength of this reader is its coverage of a wide range of countries, and a comprehensive range of featured issues. The introduction to Islam includes some of the most authoritative authors – Gilsenan, Geertz, El-Zein and Asad – and their seminal texts.

The section on anthropological approaches on Islam is followed by discussions of the five most important Muslim practices. I was particularly intrigued by the article by Schielke and his insistence on studying ambivalence, ambiguity and fragmentation in religion and its practices. For example, he contends that striving for purity and perfection as demanded by religion often results in fragmentation and internal contradictions because believers cannot live up to such high ideals. Furthermore, Ramadan frequently becomes a period of excessive feasts and expensive gifts, undermining in this way its central message of asceticism and quiet reflection. By the same token, Scupin writes how, by undertaking the pilgrimage, Thai *hajj* pilgrims increase their prestige, which might have favourable economic consequences for them.

This book has substantial sections on methodological issues and representing fieldwork experiences and analysis. Unfortunately, many of the criticisms about understanding and representing Islam raised in the articles of Varisco and Said apply to this book itself. Even though several authors in this collection argue against seeing Islam primarily as orthopraxy, the book is organised around discussions on the five central Islamic practices as if its sacred book and sayings – Q'uran and Hadith – did not exist. Furthermore, as this is a book about Islam as religion, there are not many examinations of 'ongoing power plays resulting in political instability, economic disparity, cultural defamation, and misplaced self-interest' (p. 325). Because of the ascribing of such primacy to religion, the reasons for any socio-economic and politics failures tend to be ascribed to Islam.

In my view, seeing Islam as an all-encompassing *sui generis* phenomenon (e.g. Ahmed in his chapter argues Islamic anthropology as a distinctive paradigm) is ethnographically dubious, theoretically unproductive and ultimately Orientalist. I agree with the arguments of Tapper in this collection and want to stress that seeing societies primarily through the lens of religion to which many or most belong implies that Islam is the most significant focus and determinant of the lives of its adherents. This might not be the case. Saying that Islam is only one of many religions that people adhere to is not denying that this religion has inspired civilisations and continue to inspire around one billion people. It means that we can study it comparatively not only with other similar Islamic practices in different countries, as in this book, but also with other similar phenomena.

For example, if the editor did include Bourdieu's chapter on symbolic capital from his Kabylie ethnography, then Cooper in her discussion of how Hausa women enhance their status by singing about hajj would not make a call to 'let go of traditional understandings of profit maximisation' (pp. 208–209). Bourdieu's argument about symbolic capital, which

has been around for the last 35 years, could help her better understand how her Hausa women turn their "audible", "moral", "spiritual" and "religious"capital into elevated social status (symbolic capital). Similarly, I was not convinced that Mahmood in her discussions on female prayer groups in Cairo mosques challenges prevailing understandings of self, agency and ritual. Instead, it appeared to me that it fits into Lincoln's theory on the rites of transformation during which the women do not gain new, elevated social status, but have to learn to internalise and love their socially prescribed roles.

I would have particularly liked to read examinations on how Islamic values and precepts are negotiated and challenged in the contemporary modern world. Werbner's article is the only one examining ritual sacrifices among Pakistani migrants in the contemporary UK. Attempts have been made to also include conceptual fields other than religion, but they are mostly tentative. Benthal discusses the politics of almsgiving in Palestine and Jordan, and Weiss Islamic voluntarism in Northern Ghana. Let us hope that future works will examine Islam in relation to societal factors in conceptually comparative perspectives. Then, all failures of socio-economic and political factors will not tend to be ascribed to Islam.

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**Lindenfeld, David and Miles Richardson (eds.). 2011. *Beyond Conversion and Syncretism. Indigenous Encounters with Missionary Christianity, 1800–2000.* New York and Oxford: Berghahn Books. 328 pp. Hb.: $95.00 / £55.00. ISBN: 9780857452177.**

The vocabulary we use has a profound influence on the ways in which it is possible for us to understand the world. This seems to be the fundamental motivation behind the recently published volume *Beyond Conversion and Syncretism.* The volume has as its aim to study 'the ways in which different indigenous peoples have responded to the intrusion of foreign Christian missionaries into their worlds', and the 'strategies and processes by which this negotiation typically takes place' (p. 2). The objective is to develop a more nuanced picture of such encounters than the vocabulary currently in common use, especially the notions of conversion and syncretism, can convey.

The volume delights by its broad geographical and denominational range. The articles discuss cases from North and Central America, Africa, Asia and Australia, often by comparing two cases from different continents. The missionaries often being Europeans, South America is the only continent not discussed in the volume. The Christian denominations covered vary from different branches of Catholicism, African Churches and Baptism, to the Anglicans, Methodists, Pentecostals and Presbyterians.

The book is divided into two parts, the first dealing with conversion and the second one with syncretism, although it is clear – as the editors of the volume also state – that the processes of syncretism and conversion are very much intertwined. In the chapters of the first part entitled Conversion and its complexities, Saurabh Dube looks at conversion in the context of Central-Indian people's autobiographies and biographies through the notion of vernacular translation. Mathews Samson continues with autobiographical accounts and discusses the interplay between context and agency, or the space between the processes of conversion and the potential convert, among the Guatemalan Maya population. The focus is on people's production of their ethnic identity, or Maya-ness. Elizabeth Elbourne concentrates on the interaction between imperial militaries, Christianity and alliance politics in the borderlands between New York and Six Nations territory, on the one hand, and Cape Colony of Southern Africa, on the other. She shows how conversion to Christianity was different for the colonised peoples in frontier zones than for those in settled colonial states. In his chapter, Richard Fox Young discusses Robin Horton's Intellectualist Theory in relation to the reconversion of Tamil Christians into Shaivite Hinduism and argues that rather than explaining conversion to Christianity, Horton's theory does better in explaining reconversion back to traditional religions.

The second part of the volume, *Syncretism and its alternatives*, consists of five chapters. In the opening chapter Joseph M. Murphy looks at one "syncretistic" case in the context of Afro-Cuban religion and argues that the well-established correspondence between the orisha-spirit Shango and the Catholic saint Santa Barbara is not just a way to veil fundamental beliefs in the age of oppression, but that it rather 'extends and enhances the social and spiritual possibilities of their devotees' (p. 139). Anh Q. Tran's chapter deals with a literary source called *Conference of Four Religions*, which claims to be a record of a religious meeting or debate among representatives of four religions, having taken place

in 1773 in Vietnam. David Lindenfeld compares the Chinese Taiping and the West African Aladura movements, and introduces the term "selective inculturation" to describe the processes of syncretism taking place within them. In her contribution, Sylvia Frey looks at the processes of acculturation in the context of Catholic French nuns evangelising a black diasporic community in New Orleans in the 18th and 19th centuries. Finally, Anne Keary compares missionary encounters in north-western America and Eastern Australia and the ways in which the colonial constructs and practices in each case influenced the identity politics of the parties involved.

Whether intentional or accidental, four chapters out of nine in the volume use intercultural and intercontinental comparison as a tool for approaching the topics under study. Furthermore, two of the remaining chapters develop their analysis through the comparison of biographical narratives. Comparison as a method appears therefore as one central theme in the volume and, as such, it would also have deserved to be discussed more profoundly in the introduction. It is, however, briefly discussed in some of the contributions, such as those by Lindenfeld and Keary.

In general, the volume would have benefited from a more purposefully written introduction. Perhaps because of the different disciplinary backgrounds of the editors, the introduction has been left somewhat unformed. Instead of discussing in-depth the previous uses and theorisations of the volume's key terms, conversion and syncretism, in the humanities and social sciences in general, the editors have decided to take, in my view, a more superficial introduction to the uses of the terms in the fields of history, anthropology and religious studies. Moreover, the discussion in relation to religious studies leans heavily on theological approaches disregarding the existing theorisations in the field of (more humanistic-oriented) religious studies.

Furthermore, the introduction fails to bring together and lift up the highly interesting topics and approaches commonly addressed by the majority of the chapters. Among the most important theses is the interplay between the macro- and micro-levels of culture. Most chapters approach this interplay from the point of view of colonial structures' influences on missionary encounters and on the domestication of the Christian religion. Through the comparison within and between chapters, the volume offers its readers a possibility to study and to better understand the relationship between colonialism and missionary Christianity as well as the ways in which different colonial settings influence the processes of intercultural encounters, identity formation, and religious change. Another topic many of the chapters at least implicitly discuss, and which still remains under-theorised in social sciences, is the collective aspect of conversions to Christianity. To what extent, under what conditions and how can conversion be considered and understood as collective action?

In general, the volume offers a wealth of material for those interested in missionary and cultural encounters, conversion and the processes of domestication of Christianity. It also forms thought-provoking reading for scholars and students of historical and present day Christianities.

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**Ní Laoire, Caitríona, Fina Carpena-Mendez, Naomi Tyrrell, and Allen White (eds.) 2011.** *Childhood and Migration in Europe. Portraits of Mobility, Identity and Belonging in Contemporary Ireland (Studies in Migration and Diaspora Series).* **Surrey and Burlington: Ashgate. 197 pp. Hb.: £55.00. ISBN: 9781409401094.**

This book claims to provide a much needed focus in migration studies – children's own perspectives on their lives on the move. On the backdrop of assumptions that migrant children are subjects of integration, require support in language acquisition and need protection, this is an extraordinarily enticing promise to anyone working with children's migration research. The authors propose an analysis of how children exert their agency in racialised, ethnicised, gendered, and classed processes intersecting with their migrant status. They argue that children are required to be highly adaptable and consequently develop strategies for making sense of their place in the world, and are active cultural mediators and decision makers in families.

The book has seven chapters. The introductory chapter and a general portrayal of migrant childhood in Ireland (Chapter 2) stand out with an impressive literature analysis, taking into account authors' disciplinary background, in human geography and anthropology. Second, portraits of childhood and migration are provided in four different groups: African/Irish, Central Eastern European, Latin American and Irish children in returning migrants' group, followed by a synthesis of findings in the last chapter. Altogether, 194 children aged 3–18 participated in the study. Children were approached as competent research participants and methods included artwork, mapping, photography, play-and-talk, group interviews.

Broad secondary source and discourse analysis prove their strength in some parts of the book. For example, they allow presenting a strong case of how relatively low numbers of migrant children with African backgrounds are brought into public discourses on how migrant children became a milestone in negotiations of citizenship, nationality and reproductive practices of female asylum seekers in Ireland.

However, the depth of qualitative analysis varies in this book's chapters. In my opinion, the qualitative analyses of Irish returning migrant children (Chapter 6) outshines those devoted to analysis of African/Irish and CEE children. The experiences of Irish return children are characterised by recounting quotes, better contextualised data on the relative invisibility of middle-class children, who are nevertheless subjected to multiple othering due to their migration experience and themselves form and claim their identity in different contexts. How children play with *difference* is well illustrated, e.g. in the following quote: 'If I'm talking to an American person, I say I am Irish; if I'm talking to an Irish person, I'd probably say I'm American' (Michelle, aged 11, quoted in p. 148.)

The fifth chapter on Latin American children in Ireland, in my judgment, was the best written in anthropological accounts. Fina Carpena-Mendez explains in nuances how the new configurations of doing family on the move come into existence, and presents a good discussion on how adolescents have learned acceptable ways of what to say and how to exercise agency in varied frames of references. Importantly, the author pays particular attention to interpreting silences, interruptions, and how children feel parents' anxieties as

in the following emotional excerpt from a daughter-mother conversation: from the daughter: 'Mom, let's go back to Argentina or Toronto [...] I don't like this place, I just have one friend; everything else is forgettable'; and mother, who later added to the researcher that 'This is the first time in long time that Estrella [daughter] vomits her discontent' (p. 117).

This book provides several noteworthy findings, both specific to the groups in the research and generally about migrant children in Ireland. The authors emphasise how children recognise and subvert processes of marginalization, and argue that agency and creativity emerge from the gaps in the control exercised over children lives by adults. Children perform and embody belonging by language code switching in different interactional spaces. Most importantly, it is well discussed how the material life is lived here and now by interpreting the meaning what children attach to the consumerism culture: music, fashion or watching popular sport events.

Several shortcomings should be mentioned. In my judgment, the research would have benefited if more attention had been paid to deeper analysis and more time spent with probably fewer participants; this could have yielded more valuable, deep trust-based qualitative data.

Short quotes from interviews with children contrast sharply with the dense analysis of existing scientific texts presented in the book. Methods are not sufficiently explicitly reflected; if the main focus was on meaning given to processes of, e.g. mapping and art work, I wanted to find it in the text. What exactly can researchers learn and how we can improve further research by applying these methods? The authors attempted to focus on other aspects of children lives apart from ethnicity, but migrancy and ethnicity-related themes remain dominant in the presented researchers' conversations with children. In my reading, the texts often lack observational 'glue' to explain what has been seen and understood by a researcher and how can it be interpreted.

Ethical considerations are seriously taken into account, and the authors should be acknowledged for that. However, the blurred faces in photos left me perplexed. Are the faceless pictures the only way how we can ethically represent lively everydayness of children? The authors stress that children speak with enthusiasm about school, friends, weekend-time spaces, but I was unable to hear it in their own voices. For example, when reading about the spatial practices of children, I really desired to have richer descriptions that would 'take me walking among those places'.

Moreover, the authors repeat themselves, and this left an impression that the book would have benefited from more careful editing. Having said that and despite its shortcomings, this book is a valuable source of literature analysis and original data obtained through a challenging work of adult researchers on migrant children experiences in Ireland. Simultaneously, it encourages to research more in detail how children work as agents of change in negotiating mobile identities and what wider implications it brings for social change on various scales.

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**Barnard, Alan J. and Jonathan Spencer (eds.). 2010.** *The Routledge Encyclopaedia of Social and Cultural Anthropology. Second Edition.* **London: Routledge. x + 855 pp. Pb.: $65.00. ISBN: 9780415809368.**

The publication of the second edition of the Routledge Encyclopaedia of Social and Cultural Anthropology, almost fifteen years after the first edition, offers a useful addition to the toolkits that practitioners and students of the discipline already have for their research. In the words of the editors 'this book aims to meet some of the need for an accessible and provocative guide to the many things that anthropologists have had to say', (p. xii) and it appears that they achieved in this task. In producing the volume, 134 authors were involved: a vast array that encompassed supportive anthropologists, such as Maurice Bloch, Michael Herzfeld, and Ralph Grillo, and younger scholars, 'whose work', in the auspices of the editors 'would become the core knowledge of the discipline in years to come' (pg. viii). Since I cannot do justice to the work of all the authors, I will restrict this review to presenting the structure of the book and propose some general comments.

Although without the extension of other encyclopaedias, such as Birx's Encyclopedia of Anthropology (2006), this volume aimed to presents some of the key themes, areas of research and traditions of anthropology. Distinct from other encyclopaedic works, such as Ingold's Companion Encyclopedia of Anthropology (2002), structured as a handbook and aimed at presenting the cutting edge of anthropological debate, Barnard and Spencer's volume is a reference book, also suitable for undergraduate students and non-specialist researchers interested in grasping the state of art of the debate on crucial topics and the meanings of anthropological keywords, or the history of some of the principal schools of the discipline. In the words of the editors, the book is: 'a guide and an introduction, a map which will help them find their way around the anthropological landscape rather than an authority set up to police what counts as anthropologically correct knowledge about the world' (pg. xiii).

Like the first edition, the Encyclopaedia is divided into main three parts. Part I (pp. 1–173) includes 275 main entries listed in alphabetical order; Part II (pp. 724–53) is a bibliographic dictionary that include 300 profiles of leading figures who have been influential in the development of anthropology; finally, Part III (pp. 791–855) is a glossary of 600 terms used in anthropological jargon, such as "habitus", "stratification" or "cognate".

Hence, the volume offers three different tools to the readers for their research and studies, which are able to clarify questions and portray the state of art of an anthropological debate. In this process of research, particularly precious is the meta-textual apparatus that enrich the main entries and the biographical profiles. All of them are provided with a short list of key readings to further and complete the researches.

In its attempt of present a state of art of socio-cultural anthropology, the book deals with a vast array of subjects, spanning from "Aboriginal Australia" (by Robert Layton and Megan Warin) to "Youth" (by Deborah Durham). Analytically, they include ethnographic surveys of the main socio-geographical areas explored by anthropologists, present the history of different international anthropological traditions and some of their most influential scholars, present some of the main sub-disciplines, and explain key features

of the theoretical apparatus of social and cultural anthropology.

Since the first edition, new entries have been included in order to fill the gaps left in the previous edition and to reflect substantial transformations the have occurred in anthropology in the previous decade and the establishment of new sub-fields, such as medical anthropology, or new disciplinary interests and methodology. For example, among the new entries we can find "diaspora" (by Vered Amit), "neoliberalism" (by Andrew Kipnis), "multi-site ethnography" (by Matei Candea). Where, on one hand, the extension of the theme treated is able to portray the vastness of the areas of enquiry of contemporary anthropology, on the other, it results in a lack of the in-depth focus that can be found in specialised encyclopaedic works such as Lee and Daly's The Cambridge Encyclopedia of Hunters and Gatherers, (2004), Ember and Ember's Encyclopedia of Medical Anthropology (2004) or Harrington, Marshall and Müller's The Human Economy (2006). In this respect, the volume appears as a possible first tool, particularly fit the early stages of research, that does not substitute more specific publications.

Moreover, this publication still appears quite anglophone-centric. The claim of internationalism that sustains the volume is achieved by the editors, 'by combining "social" and "cultural", the American and the European' (pg. xii). Although in doing so they 'tried to indicate our desire to produce a volume that reflects the diversity of anthropology as a genuinely global discipline' (pg. xii), the result is an implicit equalising between "global" and English-speaking. This tendency, particularly marked in the first edition, is somehow stemmed through the inclusion of new entries about "other" international traditions such as the Scandinavian (by Jonathan Spencer), the Japanese (by J.S. Eades) or the Latino-American (by Sian Lazar). Unfortunately, the ideas that arose in those countries or geographic areas are scarcely put in correlation with the ones produced by English-speaking scholarship outside the boundaries of the historio-graphic entries. Thus, although the existence of other anthropological traditions is acknowledged, the volume ends up portraying a "global" anthropology whose propulsive and creative motors is anglophone-centric, i.e. a position that is being increasingly challenged and a globality through juxtaposition that is just starting to experiment with new grounds of integration.

In sum, in spite this remark, the Encyclopaedia appears to be a good resource with many excellent contributions. It is a useful tool for students and scholars starting their research on new topics or wanting to know more about the discipline, its fields of research and different scholarly traditions that distinguish it.

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**Collins-Mayo, Sylvia and Pink Dandelion (eds.). 2011.** *Religion and Youth (Theology and Religion in Interdisciplinary Perspective Series in Association with the BSA Sociology of Religion Study Group)*. **Surrey and Burlington: Ashgate. 302 pp. Pb.: £16.19. ISBN: 9780754667681.**

Affected by the worldwide processes of globalisation, lived worlds, including the religious aspect, have gone through drastic changes. Young people tend to absorb, produce and represent on-going socio-cultural transformations. *Religion and Youth* is an ambitious interdisciplinary publication that offers comprehensive information about the central aspects concerning the contemporary situation.

The volume covers twenty-seven articles by scholars from various academic fields (sociology, religion studies, educational studies, theology, anthropology, criminology, psychology, and Latin American studies). The contents are laid out in six thematic sections. Old and new methodological perspectives are introduced in parts: I (*Generations and their Legacy*) and VI (*Researching Youth Religion*). Through a macro-level survey of research, the articles give an idea of the large processes in few western countries in Part II (*The Big Picture: Surveys of Belief and Practice*). Some insights into micro-level individual religious experiences are also present in Part III (*Expression*). Moreover, the discussion of the most outstanding theoretical issues concerning the modern religious field, such as identity and faith transmission, are included in Parts IV (*Identity*) and V (*Transmission*).

Sylvia Collins-Mayo, one of the two editors, opens the discussion in the introductory text about the widely studied secularisation theme by asking the fundamental question: if young people are less religious than before or if some new substituting forms of spiritualities exist (p. 2). Looking for answers to this question Flory and Miller describe current youth religiosity as "expressive communalism", a contemporary form of spirituality that underlines simultaneously individual experience and search for sense of belonging (ch. 1, pp. 9–15). The article also points out another important factor: multiple influences of new digital media in religious worldviews among contemporary youth. Furthermore, Beckford summarises the central aspect considering digital media and religion in the volumes foreword: 'it can foster *bricolage* and the creation of do-it-yourself types of religion and spirituality that manage to combine intense subjectivity with emergent collective identities' (p. xxiii).

Traditionally, the sociology of religion has based its analysis on the generational or cohort group studies that are introduced and discussed in the volume from different perspectives by Flory and Miller; Collins-Mayo and Beaudoin; Voas; Lynch. Voas points out that the key concepts in sociological youth religion studies, such as generation and cohorts, are complex terms and not always applied in similar ways among scholars. He also reminds readers that emerging demographic alterations can also influence religious change in modern societies, in addition to variation among cohorts (pp. 26–27). Lynch continues even further and criticises the whole of traditional generation studies, suggesting that fragmented contemporary societies should be researched, not only horizontally by looking through the vast cohort groups, but also vertically, by giving more attention to gender, class, sexual orientation and migration phenomena (p. 37). As the quantitative

method has strong roots in sociology of religion, it gains one whole section in the volume (Part II). Other methodological approaches are also included in Part VI, about sensitivity in field research (Collins-Mayo and Rankin), different levels on participation (Abramson) and the gender perspective (Aune and Vincett). Interesting qualitative visual method is also introduced in the article by Dunlop & Richter.

Sometimes, the quantitative method is indeed the only way when the aim is to get a large sample of data. However, as the authors often admit, there exist some diffi-culties when interpreting and making conclusions through this type of research material. Frequently, the survey settings narrow the possibilities to observe cultural details, and can lead the research to a quite different conclusion compared to the situation where qualitative fieldwork would be included. As our contemporary societies are evermore multicultural, penetrated by global socio-political processes, the study of religion should definitely go, as much as possible, to the grass-root level and concentrate in defining the contextual settings, as it is in these changing local settings that contemporary religious and spiritual ideas emerge and are put into action.

The contents of this volume ably represent some parts of the Western world, with details from England, Wales, USA, Australia, Scandinavia and even from South Africa and Brazil. Still it largely lacks a "non-western" presence. However, Pirjo K. Virtanen's article delights the reader with its geographical focus on young Amazonian Indians in Brazil. Virtanen finds that shamanic practices are the most powerful instruments in creating and building social networks among local native youth. In many non-Western cultures, the impacts of Western politics, market forces and cultural influences are as apparent as they are in the West. Moreover, in many cases it is exactly through this kind of processes that people become more interested of their own ethnic or national origins. Hence, for emigrants in the West and for post-colonial country citizens back in their homelands, religious aspec-ts seem to continue as an important factor in the construction of contemporary identities.

Concluding the journey with the scholars in *Religion and Youth,* Pink Dandelion affirms that in the West young people differ crucially from their parents in questions of religion and spirituality and consequently there exists a radical difference in the construction of religiosity compared to the earlier generations. Secularisation seems to exist primarily in relation to traditional religious institutions, and accessibility to digital technology has a profound influence in the processes of youth spirituality. Moreover, new forms of spirituality reflect neo-liberal consumerism and the search for new communities.

Because of the global inter-connections between and within cultures, it would be intriguing to look more extensively across the geographical and cultural borders, by means of understanding the dynamics between local cultural differences, globally recognisable religious-like ideas and globally spread influences in the religious phenomena.

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