three types of groups resident in their field-sites (Welsh-speakers, non-Welsh speakers of Welsh ancestry, and English immigrants). With this data, they then propose four ideological categories for respondents' cultural values of Welshness.

Community is the final topic under consideration. In a sort of cautionary tale about social scientific over-exuberance with the notion of diaspora, Vered Amit reviews the ways in which the concept has been embraced by postcolonial, postmodern, and globalization theorists. She argues that it needs to be treated more critically and uses the ethnographic example of her research amongst London Armenians to think through the implications of "fragmentation, dispersal, transnational contact and hybridity" (p. 274). Often celebrated as liberating aspects of diaspora, Amit demonstrates how the very same characteristics were worried over by Armenians in London she came to know. Additionally, she convincingly elaborates on how the concept threatens to support primordialism and essentialism within anthropology, two ideologies the discipline has struggled for so long against. Peter Collins' chapter in turn draws on Bakhtinian theory to work through a transition in his work: from perceiving a Quaker Meeting in the north of England as being about religion and ritual to coming to understand it instead as being about "discursive venture" (p. 286). Making community and making Quakerism here come through melding discourses of canon, of localised practice, and of individual action. In the last chapter of this cluster, Nigel Rapport unites fieldwork experiences in a small rural village in Cumbria with his reading of *A Room with a View* to highlight the role of a reciprocal physicality (including working, fighting, playing, gossiping, business, and extra-marital affairs) in the forging of community and of belonging. Within this paradigm, the Church and vicar remain perpetually excluded from the community as there is no physical exchange or bodily "doing" of Church or vicar within community life. Finally, the volume as a whole is capped by Anthony Cohen's epilogue. Cohen traces three stages of development of an anthropology about Britain which serves nicely to historicize and contextualize the authors' contributions within the volume. He also asks "how does the anthropology of Britain enhance our understanding of Britain" (p. 326), and proposes that an anthropological concern with disclosing and interrogating "otherness" has been a significant, ongoing, contribution.

Taken individually, each chapter is imaginative and thought-producing about different aspects of contemporary Britain, and the volume as whole is a good introduction to the range of possibilities offered by anthropology. However, despite Rapport's clear statement that the volume makes no pretence of offering a comprehensive account of "Britishness," I am left wondering why not. In a volume about Britain, it does not seem unreasonable to try and go beyond demonstrating diversity of social life and of research questions. Why are studying sociocultural practices, processes and conditions privileged over trying to say something more generalisable (without needing to be fixed and unchangeable) about Britishness or Englishness or Welshness or Scottishness, or indeed the state of these categories themselves? This question is not directed only at this particular volume, but more broadly at the sub-discipline as a whole (by which I also implicate my own work). Can and should an anthropology of Britain go further to say something broader and bolder about Britishness *et al*, or are these containers just so leaky as to be meaningless? If so, thinking through possibilities as to why this might be the case offers a rich vein of intellectual endeavour to be pursued.

Thomas A. Gregor and Donald Tuzin, eds., *Gender in Amazonia and Melanesia: An Exploration of the Comparative Method*, Berkeley: University of California Press, 2001, 343 pages.

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This is a collection of 14 articles, the first of which is Thomas Gregor's and Donald Tuzin's "theoretical orientation." Even from the Acknowledgments, it is clear that Gregor and Tuzin are proud, and justifiably so, to have produced "...the first book to systematically compare the cultures of Melanesia and Amazonia, and to consider the remarkable parallels and illuminating differences that exist between them" (p. ix). Taking the two regions as one (the imaginary "Melazonia," as Hugh-Jones dubs it) is a big task, and one that I suspect many anthropologists have wondered about, but found too daunting to take further than imagining what might explain those parallels and differences. So I congratulate the editors on putting together this project. They are also to be commended, as are the other authors, for doing what is all too seldom done in relatively large collections of articles: each author specifically engages other contributors' articles; in addition, each article is introduced by a paragraph which briefly summarizes the focus of the article and recommends other articles that could fruitfully be read in relation to it.

Gregor and Tuzin's introduction reviews the history of comparative method in the discipline, particularly in American anthropology. They assert that comparison is indeed possible and, in fact, is anthropology's primary contribution. They choose gender as the organizing principle for their comparison because "...the resemblance among the societies in Melazonia that stands out most dramatically is gender" (p. 8). Moreover, "[Gender] is an inherently integrative subject, bringing together intellectual perspectives derived from such diverse areas as human biology, environmental studies, psychology, social anthropology, and the humanities" (p. 8).

As the editors point out (p. 10), Descola is the only contributor who takes issue with this perspective, arguing that gender is not so central, at least in Amazonia. However, I question the conclusions of a researcher who refers to gender as a "fashionable anthropological topic" (p. 92) and who

describes Jivaroan Achuar co-wives' opposition to a violent husband as culminating in "...even a strike in the kitchen" (p. 100). This sort of comment implicitly degrades the extra-domestic roles of women/wives, and perhaps more so demonstrates an inappropriate application of the domestic/public dichotomy. It also implies an employer/labourer relationship between husband and co-wives which is quite thoroughly inappropriate.

Many of the articles (including Bonnemère, Hill and Biersack) focus on "male initiations" as "making men" (Papua New Guinea case studies) as opposed to "renewing the cosmos" (Amazonian examples). This difference is then related in interesting ways to differing ideas of the origins of the cosmos and of living species (Bonnemère, 41). Hill compares "marked" and "unmarked cults" across the two regions, and looks also at the parallels in childbirth rites. Biersack (rather unfairly) criticizes Turner and Van Gennep for not seeing the reproductive politics in male-focussed rituals. In her analysis of a ritual practiced by the Paiela of the Papua New Guinea Highlands in order to grow boys' hair and bodies,she makes an original point that the goal is to make them into not men, but husbands. One might reasonably ask, though, whether it is indeed making them into potential fathers instead, and whether that is an important distinction to draw.

Fisher, Conklin and Strathern all focus on definitions of personhood, variously taking into account bodily substances, age, age roles, and same-sex and cross-sex orientations. Jolly adds a consideration of sexuality, fertility and food in South Pentecost, Vanuatu. For a collection that uses the term "Melanesia" in its title, Jolly's is the only piece that is based on ethnographic research outside of Papua New Guinea. Brown also introduces some material little noticed in the literature: cases in which women or girls have taken prominent leadership roles in religious movements. As in Jolly's article, there is welcome attention paid by Brown to historical alterations in sexuality and gender.

With Hugh-Jones' article, the volume returns to "male cults" as fields of sociocultural conceptualization—of bodies, both male and female, and their substances, of the flow of life through reproduction. Roscoe interprets male cults as efforts to establish and maintain a masculine identity based on strength; Gregor and Tuzin show how difficult this is to accomplish. As they put it, they try to show how "...the cult reflects an effort, at times desperate, to hold together an all-too-fragile masculine self" (p. 309).

Gregor and Tuzin provide a short concluding chapter which puts it all into focus very nicely. I did have a good chuckle, however, at their assertion that in much of Melazonia, "Gender is still King" (p. 340). How ironic to use such a Western masculinist metaphor for non-hierarchical societies in which gender relations are a site of such contestation, as evidenced especially in their own article (chap. 13).

Overall *Gender in Amazonia and Melanesia* is a theoretically sophisticated, ethnographically rich resource. There is still some tendency, however, to prioritize men's rites, even though many of the authors do acknowledge the important roles of women, even in those so-called "men's rites." As Jolly puts it, "...we still tend to naturalize and dehistoricize maternities, while we proliferate types of 'men' (big men, great men, men-men, clan-men) and culturalize and historicize paternities. The varieties of women, femaleness, and maternities are more rarely plotted and, if they are, are typically seen as derivative (cf. Strathern, 1988)" (p. 191). Nonetheless, this volume represents the anthropologist's anthropology, fascinating for those who crave ethnographic detail and the thrust and parry of contrary interpretations. It is a great text with which professionals can continue the debates and on which graduate students can cut their intellectual teeth.

One reservation remains, especially with students in mind. For my liking, too few of the articles come to grips with historical change in gender relations and with contemporary circumstances and cultural experiences, Jolly's and Brown's articles being notable exceptions. It might be argued that, given the book's purpose, this was not required; but it is certainly possible that where much change has occurred much light could be shed on that same purpose by looking at the nature of that change. Gregor and Tuzin themselves recognize this when they note that the gender inflections of the Ilahita Arapesh "...are extreme even by New Guinea standards, brought about by the latter's sudden increase in settlement size and social complexity" (p. 340).

Andrew Strathern, Pamela J. Stewart, Laurence M. Carucci, Lin Poyer, Richard Feinberg and Cluny Macpherson, *Oceania: An Introduction to the Cultures and Identities of Pacific Islanders*, Durham, NC: Carolina Academic Press, 2002, 249 pages.

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The material is presented in three independent parts: "The South-West Pacific" by Strathern and Stewart (67 pp. of text), "The Eastern Pacific" by Feinberg and Macpherson (53 pp.), and "The West Central Pacific" by Carucci and Poyer (52 pp.).

In their very brief Introduction to the volume, Strathern and Stewart reject the common anthropological areal terms—Melanesia, Micronesia and Polynesia— in favour of compass directions, except where they use the older terms in quotations marks, to signify their dissatisfaction with them. Feinberg and Macpherson are of a different opinion, as indicated by the quotation marks they place on the phrase the "Eastern Pacific" in the title of part 2. Strathern and Stewart say that the sections ("parts") into which the book is divided "... correspond to geographical, historical, and cultural differences within the region as a whole, but we do not stress these broad divisions as such." Yet, having named the parts of the book for those divisions does indeed give stress or emphasis to them.