conservation et de stockage bien rodé. On ne mélange pas les catégories...Les années médiocres, les bières cérémonielles sont minimalement brassées et la bière du marché très réduite. En période de disette, un système d'entraide d'urgence est institué. Les Dogons produisent donc volontairement et très consciemment des surplus pour la consommation ostentatoire de bière lors de certaines cérémonies. L'administration de ces stocks individuellement produits est laissée au chef de lignage pour les cérémonies lignagères et à des officiels pour les distributions prestigieuses, surtout lors des funérailles du hogon, le chef sacré d'une entité territoriale.

Le dernier chapitre montre comment un homme dogon peut devenir célèbre par des distributions voyantes de bière. La richesse matérielle doit se montrer par de telles occasions. Elle peut l'être du vivant de quelqu'un, surtout s'il organise un rituel prestigieux destiné à pleurer les ancêtres collectifs de son lignage qui avaient disparu ou avaient été tués à la guerre, ou s'il est un grand chasseur ou encore un tisserand émérite. Ces distributions prestigieuses ont disparu récemment mais elles ont été reprises par les catholiques à l'occasion des mariages où le nouveau mari distribue des jarres de bière de manière ostentatoire. Après son décès, un homme sera remémoré selon les jarres de bière distribuées à ses funérailles dans lesquelles s'engloutira son héritage ainsi transformé. C'est donc la maîtrise de la bière qui confère de l'importance. Les titulaires d'offices sont ceux qui contrôlent les plus grandes distributions et les hommes ordinaires contrôlent les cadets en demandant des paiements en bière pour l'initiation des jeunes gens. Les masques exigent aussi leur tribut de bière des cadets. Les aînés contrôlent la bière mais, arrivés à ce stade, il leur faut boire modérément. Pas étonnant dans ces circonstances que beaucoup rechignent et tentent de retarder leur accession à ce stade ultime le plus tard possible. Cette maîtrise de la bière va de pair avec l'autorité diffuse qu'ont, au sommet de l'échelle, les porteurs de titres, le hogon et le *lagan*, suivis des aînés sur les cadets qui contrôlent la distribution et la consommation différentielle de la bière de mil. Mais les jeunes contestent aujourd'hui cet ordre des choses en buvant entre eux autre chose que de la bière de mil qui est, au contraire, un facteur d'émancipation sociale et économique pour les dolotières. Ces émancipations sont une manifestation d'individualisme, d'abord apparu en ville, qui rejoint aujourd'hui la campagne.

Si la bière de mil dogon permet et recommande de «boire avec esprit », ceci s'est transmué et prolongé chez l'auteur en une autre qualité. Cette bière dogon lui fait aussi « écrire avec esprit». Le style est sûr, limpide et frais comme une bonne bière, les titres et sous-titres sont tout à fait accrocheurs et pertinents. On ne s'ennuie pas une minute à la lecture de ce gros ouvrage qui semble, à le voir, rébarbatif, mais qui se laisse déguster avec délice jusqu'à la dernière goutte.

Bertell Ollman, *Dance of the Dialectic: Steps in Marx's Method.* Urbana and Chicago: University of Illinois Press, 2003, 232 pages (paper).

Reviewer: *Christopher Krupa*
University of California, Davis

Bertell Ollman has spent the past three decades reconstructing Marx's methodology and finding the most approachable ways to present it to audiences not necessarily trained in the specialist language of Marxist philosophy. It was Ollman, after all, who in 1978 released the anti-Monopoly board game "Class Struggle" to help, says the game box, "kids from 8-80" "prepare for life in capitalist America." *Dance of the Dialectic: Steps in Marx's Method* continues this project. This book is a compilation of selections taken from Ollman's previously published books and articles, re-arranged as a general primer on the dialectical method that he claims to be both indispensable for understanding Marx's analysis and necessary now for demystifying the hidden workings of 21st-century capitalism. As a treatise on method stripped of many of the technical discussions that have long occupied Marxist scholarship (such as value), this potted version of Ollman's theories shows just how provocative his work can be for anthropologists seeking to throw *our own* methodological heritage up for reconsideration.

Ollman has always wanted to distinguish sharply between the tools investigators use to interpret social reality and those they use to explain it. With respect to Marx's work, this translates to reading the *Grundrisse* and the 1844 Manuscripts differently from *Capital* since they were written for different purposes: the former to identify the objects of analysis, the latter to help others understand these findings. Ollman is more interested in the former, where he sees Marx using dialectics like a geneticist might use a microscope, an instrument that in the right hands makes the invisible visible. The central objects thrown to light by dialectics, however, are not objects at all but relations and histories sedimented for the moment as "things." As the author explains, "Dialectics restructures our thinking about reality by replacing the commonsense notion of 'thing' (as something that has a history and has external connections with other things) with notions of 'process' (which contains its history and possible futures) and 'relation' (which contains as part of what it is its ties with other relations)" (p. 13).

Where Ollman's work becomes most useful for anthropologists is in his ability to translate this focus on "social relations as subject matter" (p. 23) from epistemology into a research program, from methodology to method, without losing any of its richness. The core sections of the book, chapters 2 through 5, offer a new coupling of Ollman's trademark "philosophy of internal relations" with the process of abstraction as an instruction for, in his words, "putting dialectics to work" (p. 59). This involves commencing a to and fro procedure which entails first of all abstracting things and social positions into the relations that constitute them, secondly tracing how the transformations of each over time involve changes in the inter-

connections between them, and finally re-abstracting them into some level of generality to identify latent patterns, tendencies and points of conflict. To Ollman, this simply follows how Marx deconstructed the social premises of the key units of bourgeois society, such as the commodity, labour and capital, while still using them as place-holders to expose the many contradictions inherent to capitalism. But Ollman adds considerably to the method he ascribes to Marx, if only in parsing out the many layers of investigation needed to undertake an analysis of such magnitude. He brings new concepts (such as extension, identity, vantage point) in to the fray and invests older ones (such as contradiction, totality and form) with new meanings to build a most applicable arsenal of conceptual tools that will help orient us, probably with greater ease than any of Marx's texts, in unpacking the dense social fields we are prone to find in our sites of research.

By the time we reach the final Steps (four and five) in Ollman's exegesis we find ourselves already partnered with him in the dance. Here, as dialectics are escorted out into the worlds of debate and case study, their movements come to seem somewhat familiar if not altogether repetitive. But even as Ollman's song seems to remain the same, he throws up new melodies to catch our ear. The two gems of the book's latter half are only tangentially related to the themes of the first, a novel essay on Marx's historical method ("Reading History Backwards") that convincingly debunks accusations of its teleology, and a fascinating chapter on the Japanese State that finds the basis of its social legitimacy to be dispersed among a capitalist bureaucracy, the emperor and the country's mafia.

Much of Ollman's charm comes from his unwillingness to relinquish a mode of investigation that, by today's standards, may seem slightly antiquated. The method he advocates is unabashedly structuralist, demands a detailed analysis of grounded social relations, and appears almost oblivious to the directions materialist theory has taken lately via postmodernism, post-structuralism and cultural studies. In a sense, *Dance of the Dialectic* reads as a refreshing antidote to the recent turn in political economy toward studying diffuse forms of power, amorphous rationalities of governance, and discursive modes of subject formation. Readers may wish, however, that Ollman chose to engage more directly with writers of this ilk, rather than debating only fellow dialectical theorists like Roy Bhaskar (chap. 10) and the Systematic Dialectics school (chap. 11), which do nothing to show how instructive his work can be for analysts attempting to construct more grounded and dynamic engagements with power in contemporary class societies, neo-liberal or otherwise. Despite this book's commitment to explaining the nuances of *Marx's* method and working through concepts traditionally rooted in political economy, it will be compelling for any anthropologist about to enter the field and, particularly with respect to the first half, would make a valuable contribution to a course on research methodology.

Sherry B. Ortner, *New Jersey Dreaming: Capital, Culture, and the Class of '58.* Durham and London: Duke University Press, 2003.

Reviewer: *Thomas Dunk*
Lakehead University

In *New Jersey Dreaming* Sherry Ortner describes and analyzes the life courses of her classmates from Weequahic High School in Newark. The story that is told is for the most part a common American tale of postwar upward mobility and success. With a few exceptions, the children of the mostly Jewish workers and small independent business people that comprised the class of '58 have fared very well. The majority of them are now part of the professional middle class and have moved far beyond their childhood neighbourhood in New Jersey. Raised in a culture that celebrated self-improvement and getting ahead, it appears most students internalized these values and have lived them out. There are a few rebels in the mix who have lived what Ortner refers to as "counterlives," dropping out of the competitive race to success, and not everyone discussed in the book has lived a charmed existence, but the overall picture is one of success.

Ortner explains the upward mobility of her subjects in terms of the interplay of the internalization of relevant values by individuals and the broader social movements (feminism, civil rights) and structural changes in the economy (growth of the service sector, growth of the new middle class) that were part of the postwar American experience. She carefully tries to keep class-based cultural issues in focus without ignoring the ethnic, racial and gendered dimension of social experience. Indeed, she explicitly critiques the tendency to ignore class in favour of race, ethnicity and gender in much social science.

As one of a relatively few efforts to "bring class back in" at a time when class has been abandoned as a useful analytical category by many, this book deserves the high praise which George Marcus bestows in a book jacket quote. But his claim that the book "makes one of the most important sociological arguments in recent years on the dynamics of class in post-World War II American society" is arguable. Perhaps, it is more a statement about the impoverished state of such analysis in the U.S. While the book is certainly an enjoyable and interesting read, the argument itself is rather flat. True to her anthropological roots, Ortner prefers native class categories over those imposed by social scientists. In opting to employ the concepts of her research subjects, Ortner reflects the natives' point of view. This certainly has the advantage of helping us understand the world as they do. This approach, however, also leaves us stuck in middle-class common sense thinking and as such, limits a more critical understanding of American society. Ortner's argument can be summed up as follows: the class of '58 was not homogeneous. Some people had more cultural capital than others and that influenced their experience of school and life after school but for the most part they were very successful because they worked hard, were committed to get-