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distinctive. One final quibble: the book begins with eight pages of maps and nineteenth-century prints showing indigenous men and women, views of the department of Cajamarca, and a 'general image of altitudes in Peru'. No reference is made to these images at any point in the book. We are not told why the author has included a print of the 'Aguas Termales de Cajamarca', and the maps are not reproduced in sufficient detail to allow this reader at least to extract any information about the location of events discussed in the text. So why are they there?

Disobedience, Slander, Seduction, and Assault does a good job at showing how plebeian men and women employed the language of honour to interpret and defend their own actions. It further helps elucidate the ways in which recourse to the legal system assisted in bolstering the reputation of working men and women even if it did not often result in legal redress. Finally, it provides vivid insights into the (often conflicting) expectations of men, women and the legal system as to what constituted normal life and what was classed as unacceptable aberration. It is less successful in its use of 'research in other regions and periods' to illuminate the history of nineteenth-century Cajamarca, which weakens the clarity and impact of its overall arguments: this book's virtues do not lie in its pathbreaking analysis or theoretical insights. They lie rather in the readable presentation of interesting and careful research on a subject that is central to our understanding of the nineteenth century.

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Watanabe, John M. and Fischer, Edward F. (eds) (2004) *Pluralizing Ethnography: Comparison and Representation in Maya Cultures, Histories, and Identities*. School of American Research Press (Santa Fe, NM) and James Currey (Oxford), ix + 353 pp. £50.00 hbk, £19.95 pbk.

This volume resulted from a School of American Research seminar in 2000 that brought together leading ethnographers of the Maya of Mexico and Guatemala to examine the current state of their field. Maya activists are challenging fashionable anthropological notions, asserting the right to represent their cultural authenticity as derived from the past whilst anthropologists have questioned the idea of 'culture' and disparaged notions of the 'timeless Maya'. Maya peoples are innovating diverse responses to globalising developments in ways unimagined within postcolonial theories of hybridisation and transnationalism. The Zapatista rebellion of 1994 rapidly altered conventional wisdom of the Maya, who now are seen as capable of engineering radical protests of extra-national engagements and who demand to be part of a multicultural nation while still remaining Maya. Given this context, three enormous problems were raised for discussion in the seminar: how (or whether) to represent 'culture', how to account for historical and institutional linkages between global forces and local forms that shape cultural continuities and discontinuities, and how methodologically to approach comparison within the Maya area, given the divergent histories of Guatemala and Mexico since their Independence in the early nineteenth century. As

Bulletin of Latin American Research
vol 25, NO. 1 pp. 146 - 148.
2006

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the editors noted in their introduction (6), 'our discussions returned repeatedly to how we could capture Maya cultural distinctiveness yet diversity without imputing exclusive traits or static continuities or overplaying agentive or hegemonic interests and expediencies'.

The result is what they call 'pluricultural ethnography' grounded in local specificity but attending to cross-boundary connections, what Fischer in his chapter referred to as 'localised globality'. Participants were asked to engage Fred Eggan's method of 'controlled comparison' and to retrieve ethnographic methods that had seemed outmoded for the study of multiple sites, globality and transnational movements. A common theme that emerged was the importance of place in reproducing culture and informing Maya historical consciousness. This enterprise requires a concern for diachrony and a multiscale historical component from the transnational to the local, as even regional histories cannot account for the diversity of cultural processes. The impact of Mexican and Guatemalan histories on Maya peoples is traced in detail by Watanabe in a separate chapter. He demonstrates how revolutionary crises, political factions, and political-economic intrusions have been too simplistically theorised to account for diverse local developments over time as historical transformations, which require a history 'from below'. The history of Maya ethnography comes into play in several chapters, the most illuminating being Jan Rus's recounting of the origins of Evon Vogt's Harvard Chiapas Project. How Vogt and his collaborators came to represent Zinacantan as a closed community following prehispanic customs, in the process disregarding critical factors that inexorably linked the Tzotzil Maya to external institutions, is required reading for Mayanists.

The other chapters reveal convergences and divergences in the intersection of often conflicting interests and intentional actions. Some focus on local communities while others examine major topics across broad regions. Victoria Bricker explores how Mexican national policies have differentially impacted attitudes towards Maya languages in Chiapas and Yucatan and the likelihood that these languages will survive. Christine Kray focuses on the Bible as a point of convergence of interests of American missionaries, Mexican government institutions and Yucatec Maya in her explanation of why the Summer Institute of Linguistics developed in Mexico rather than in Guatemala. June Nash analyses three different Chiapas Maya premises for 'autonomy' and how they were differently shaped by local relationships with the hegemonic national political party (PRI), contrasting them as a whole to similar movements in Guatemala. Gary Gossen locates the annual Carnival ceremonies in Tzotzil-speaking Chamula within a larger context of native discourse on community-state relations in Chiapas, out of which the Zapatista rebellion also emerged. In their chapters Victor Montejo and Edward Fischer examine the impact of economic transformations on local ideologies in two highland Guatemala areas, of Jakalteq and Kaqchikel Maya-speakers respectively. They employ dissimilar perspectives that in part reflect the variant local conditions and different responses to globalisation, but the seemingly contrary approaches also manifest the complexity of the issues at hand.

Indeed, the seminar participants reached no unified decision on mapping future goals for Maya researchers. Nevertheless, in the concluding chapter Asian specialist Richard Fox elucidates the significant contributions they made to anthropology and

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history more generally, beyond Maya studies. Because of the wealth of available ethnographic detail and the fact that the Maya have long been postcolonial, Mayanists have the opportunity to examine the different ways continuities in belief and practice are fostered, in spite of or because of external forces. They must thereby treat continuity itself as something to be explained rather than taken for granted. In sum, this book is a must-read for anyone interested in the Maya – past as well as present – but it deserves the much broader audience interested in ethnography, culture theory and postcolonial anthropology.

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Knab, Timothy (2004) *The Dialogue of Earth and Sky: Dreams, Souls, Curing, and the Modern Aztec Underworld*. University of Arizona Press (Tucson, Arizona),
[6] xiii + 181 pp.

Much to his credit, from the onset *The Dialogue of Earth and Sky* whilst Timothy Knab relates his own initiation into the field of study presented in this book, he also establishes one important tenet for the reading of this work as well: 'When I began the process of learning the way of the Most Holy Earth [...] It required a suspension of disbelief and a commitment of service to the world of the ancestors and its children [...]' (6). This ability to look at the world in a new light becomes invaluable to the reader who endeavours to become acquainted with the information in this particular text. In many ways what the author presents to the reader is a case study of how two healers, Doña Rubia and Don Inocente, used their knowledge to cure the human soul. Knab, as one of their apprentices, relates to us their teachings, practices, shared belief system, history, and this knowledge's wider application to their community in Mexico's Sierra of Puebla, San Martin.

In Knab's prologue, he details how, in the village of San Martin, he came to know about the healer's tradition discussed in this work and subsequently, how he learned that what he thought was a profession destined to extinction actually had other followers in other regions of Central Mexico as well. Although, this text is a specialist book that deals with ideas that could definitely appear obscure to the uninitiated, Knab's writings do provide a unique view into an often overlooked and secreted aspect of Mesoamerican culture.

Chapter One 'Earth and Sky, Body and Soul' outlines the 'three levels of the cosmos' (sky, earth, and underworld) as well as the three aspects of the soul: notonal, noyollo, and nonagual ('my breath soul, my heart soul, and my animal alter ego') and explains their relationship. Knab details the pre-Colombian Cosmo vision encountered in Mesoamerica and explains how this aspects of this belief system have been preserved up until present day, specifically with regard to the belief in Tlaloc: 'the deified embodiment of the earth in the pre-Colombian pantheon' (17). One of the more useful aspects he brings forth in this chapter is to emphasise the difference between the soul in the Aztec conception and the theological view created from the Spanish renaissance