

INTRODUCTION

CROSSING HISTORIES AND ETHNOGRAPHIES

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Mutual engagements between anthropology and history have become common if not standard practices within both disciplines. The key question for many anthropologists and historians today is not whether to cross the boundary between their disciplines but how—or indeed, if—the very idea of a disciplinary boundary should be sustained. The field and the archive, methodological spaces that traditionally stood for anthropology and history respectively, no longer belong exclusively to either discipline. Today few anthropologists and historians will contest this viewpoint. While the methodological spaces may still be differentially prioritized (an anthropologist who does no fieldwork remains almost as marginal within anthropology as a historian who never entered an archive would be in history), there is an emerging consensus that the field and the archive are mutually constitutive and that each can in certain circumstances be approached as a version of the other—the field as a kind of archive, the archive as a kind of field.

Timor-Leste, this volume argues, constitutes a particularly compelling case for the interdependence of ethnographic and archival research in contemporary anthropological and historical practice. We take the rich and complex history of colonialism and anthropology in Timor-Leste as an exemplary site for a general reflection on the encounters between the archive and the field, and between European and indigenous historicities. This country's unique and unusually long colonial history—combining centuries of singular Portuguese colonialism with two decades of dramatic military occupation by and East Timorese resistance to Indonesian forces—offers a vantage point (beyond the common and hegemonic British, German, French, and Dutch examples of colonial states) from which to reflect upon the interdependences between history and anthropology. In 2002,

Timor-Leste, comprising the eastern half of the island of Timor, became the first new nation-state of the twenty-first century. This was the outcome (unexpected, except, perhaps, to the East Timorese) of a long and complicated history of colonial entanglements. Over some five hundred years, local communities on Timor have engaged with increasingly intrusive outsiders; they have responded in various ways, reflecting local conditions as well as the particular projects of the colonizers, by selectively incorporating and adapting elements of the foreign systems, by reworking preexisting social and cultural forms, and by actively and more and more collectively resisting foreign political domination.

Timorese encounters with Europeans date back to the sixteenth century, when Portuguese traders and missionaries first visited the island. After the conquest of Malacca in 1511, the Portuguese expanded their military influence and trading networks throughout maritime Southeast Asia while simultaneously confronting Dutch rivalry. By the mid-sixteenth century, Portuguese soldiers, traders, and missionaries had settled in the islands of Solor and Flores—and afterward Timor, attracted there by the imagined wealth of its most famous local product, sandalwood. European presence in Solor and Flores gave rise to a powerful mestizo ruling class, the so-called Topasses (also known as “Black Portuguese”). The Topasses dominated the early settlements, either independently or on behalf of Portugal, and strongly expanded their authority over parts of Timor in the seventeenth and eighteenth centuries. There, meanwhile, Catholic missionaries had successfully Christianized some indigenous rulers, who saw in their alliance with European foreigners and their conversion to Christianity an opportunity to increase their powers. Following the Portuguese victory over the prestigious realm of Wehali in 1642, Portuguese influence in western Timorese domains increased, and finally in the early 1700s the first governor was appointed to Lifau. Portuguese expansionism, however, was limited by competition with the Dutch (established firmly in Kupang since the 1650s) as well as by Topass claims to de facto overlordship in the island. In 1769, pressed by both Dutch and Topasses, the Portuguese governor abandoned Lifau and retreated to Dili, where a small but durable Portuguese stronghold was established in eastern Timor. By then, however, the Portuguese position in the region had steadily deteriorated; in Timor it had contracted dramatically. Dutch hegemony prevailed across the archipelago; the golden days of Portugal’s Asian Empire had come to an end. In the 1800s, Portugal’s domains in Southeast Asia were reduced to scattered settlements in Solor, Flores, Oecussi, and East

Timor. In 1851, in an act seen by many as a marker of imperial decline, Solor and Flores were sold to Holland. Thereafter, based in Dili, the Portuguese laid their territorial claims over East Timor and the Oecussi enclave alone.

Portuguese colonial authority was extended and consolidated over the late nineteenth century through a series of violent military campaigns, but Portugal remained a relatively weak though long-lasting colonial state. First in 1859 and finally in 1913, after almost three centuries of struggle for control of Timor, the Portuguese and Dutch governments reached agreement over colonial borders, thereby stabilizing a longstanding division of the island, with the Portuguese in the east and the Dutch in the west. In 1912–13, the kingdom of Manufahi and its allies led the largest and most devastating anti-Portuguese uprising in East Timor. The Portuguese military emerged victorious, after which a series of important changes in the structure of colonial administration and its relations with indigenous systems was enacted. Previously recognized as indigenous polities within Portuguese administration, the *reinos* (kingdoms) and their Timorese rulers holding royal titles were replaced by a new administrative ordering, which was based on a network of *sukus* that, nonetheless, continued to integrate native ruling lineages. The tribute system that formerly structured the colonial state and its galaxy of *reinos* was abolished and replaced by a head tax. Coffee cultivation in state-controlled plantations expanded. This process, however, was interrupted during World War II. In 1941–42, the country was invaded by Allied and then Japanese forces, and only in 1945, following the Japanese defeat, did Portuguese administration resume. After the war the Portuguese Estado Novo dictatorship invested in the “reconstruction” of the country. It also gave former nationalistic ideologies of imperial grandeur a new impetus and continued to claim East Timor—then renamed Timor Português (Portuguese Timor)—as an integral part of Portugal’s national empire. Anticolonialist ideologies, the Cold War, and the long shadow of the new Republic of Indonesia, independent from the Netherlands since 1949, fell over the isolated colony and put Portugal’s administration under growing international and regional political pressure. Decolonization, however, began only in 1974, following the overthrow of the Salazar/Caetano regime in Portugal, and was disrupted in August 1975 by a brief bout of civil fighting, during which the Portuguese colonial administration physically abandoned the province, only to be replaced by a militarized Indonesian occupation that lasted until 1999.

International interest in the inhabitants of the island of Timor first emerged during the nineteenth century, in the context of inquiries

into the racial and civilizational condition of Oceanic peoples. Travellers and observers were fascinated and intrigued with the human social, linguistic, and physical heterogeneity that was contained in such a relatively small territory. Thus, in spite of its remoteness and size, Timor epitomized for decades the puzzlement of Europeans with the ethnoracial and ethnolinguistic complexities of the “Malay Archipelago.” Notwithstanding this long, multifaceted history of early ethnological and colonial engagements, however, eastern Timor first became known in the modern anthropological literature later in the twentieth century for the internal complexity and resilience of its social and cultural systems. The structuralist-inspired ethnographers who conducted fieldwork in Portuguese Timor over the 1960s and early 1970s were oriented primarily toward the synchronic, and while they acknowledged that extralocal forces had long penetrated local lives, their accounts tended to foreground the stability and resilience of the indigenous systems. Anglophone anthropologists could be acquainted with Evans-Pritchard’s motto—a central methodological question, Evans-Pritchard suggested provocatively in 1950, is “whether social anthropology . . . is not itself a kind of historiography” (Evans-Pritchard 1950: 121; see Hicks, this volume)—but in practice their studies gave little or no attention to colonial history and archival documents; instead they followed the then-fashionable approaches of structural analysis. History, when addressed at all, appeared largely in the form of (potentially) disruptive events from outside that were “absorbed” within local cultural orders, such that, as Lévi-Strauss had put it, these cultures could experience change as continuity. The synchronic emphasis reflected a wider tendency within the discipline, one that was coming under scrutiny and would be challenged with mounting intensity over the ensuing decades. A number of anthropologists and historians began to use archival sources (dominantly Dutch language materials) together with oral traditions and indigenous texts to explore colonial history in Bali (Wiener 1995; Schulte-Nordholt 1996) and the Lesser Sundas (Fox 1971, 1977; Barnes 2013), including Timor (Fox 1982; McWilliam 2002). But most of these mutual engagements of anthropology and history coincided with the closure and isolation of Timor-Leste. Between 1975 and 2000, Indonesian occupation of Timor-Leste restricted access to the country and impeded researchers from outside from conducting systematic research there, creating what has been described by Gunn as an “ethnographic gap” (Gunn 2007). With the end of the occupation in 1999–2000 and the restoration of Timor-Leste’s independence, a new generation of anthropologists has been re-exploring the country as an ethnographic

field site, resulting in many rich and creative works (for overviews see McWilliam and Traube 2011; Nygaard-Christensen and Bexley 2017; Viegas and Feijó 2017). Earlier interest in Austronesian topics has been renewed, and new themes emerge, reflecting the epistemic and political issues posed by nation-building, postconflict challenges, social change, and “development,” to form what is now a lively interdisciplinary field of Timor-Leste studies.

In the historical literature on eastern Timor, however, an anthropological turn has been slow to arrive. Throughout the twentieth century, historical writing on Timor was a gauge of imperialist and nationalist interest, or else of anticolonial motivations. At the same time as anthropologists were emphasizing synchrony, the historians’ primary orientation toward the diachronic was expressed in approaches based on written documents alone that largely overlooked Timorese cultural understandings to the privilege of nation-oriented histories, while tending to over-represent—except perhaps for occasional historical curiosity surrounding the case of the mixed “Portuguese-Indigenous” rulers, the Topasses (Boxer 1947; but cf. Hägerdal 2007, Andaya 2010)—the imprint of European “presence” in the island. In Portuguese historiography, in particular, documentary evidence and accounts of past events abound, but too often their significance is read from a Luso-centric perspective, in some cases ideologically nationalist and colonialist until at least 1974 (Leitão 1948, 1952; Oliveira 1949–52; but compare with Matos 1974; Figueiredo 2011; especially the wider Asianist perspective of Thomaz 1994). Besides, with exception made perhaps to the poet, colonial official, and ethnographer Ruy Cinatti, Lusophone writings on “Timor Português” in the late colonial period were loosely connected to the main themes that fueled the Francophone and Anglophone debates on the anthropology of Eastern Indonesia (cf. Castelo 2017). Kelly Silva’s chapter in this volume, for example, documents the utter lack of familiarity with the anthropological literature on the part of both Portuguese and Timorese “anti-barlaque” intellectuals in the early 1970s, while even the intellectual defenders of indigenous exchange practices seemed to ignore international literature that would have supported their position. From 1975 to the end of Indonesian occupation in 1999–2000, “anticolonial” historical accounts critical of Portuguese rule retold colonial chronology, only to emphasize European wrongdoings, neglect, and brutality over time, and thereby celebrate the longevity of Timorese opposition and “resistance” to foreigners (Pélissier 1996; Gunn 1999). Notwithstanding its valuable documentary revelations, such historiography was rarely in dialogue with ethnographic ac-

counts. Moreover, the hiatus in field research during the Indonesian occupation of Timor-Leste was accompanied by a gap of another sort: an archival ethnographic gap, a scarcity of archive-grounded studies on the country's colonial history. After independence, a new wave of historical studies appeared, and scholars now show stronger concern with the oral record and the multiple and different forms of accounting for Timorese history (cf. Gunter 2008, 2010; Hägerdal 2012a, 2012b, 2015, 2017; Kammen 2016; Barnes, Hägerdal, Palmer, 2017; Roque 2017). With regard to Timor-Leste, the field and the archive until quite recently remained distinct disciplinary provinces; anthropology and history seemed to lead separate lives.

The current volume gives expression to a growing recognition of the irrelevance of this separation. It both reflects and contributes to an ongoing process of cross-disciplinary reciprocities within and beyond the study of Timor-Leste, and it moves that process forward, addressing the achievements, limitations, and promises of field and archival research for anthropology's future as a discipline. Combining analytical insight and solid empirical research, the authors reflect on the inextricable historicity of field research, while offering original perspectives on the significance of reading colonial archives and events in connection with oral accounts and field data, and of reading current ethnographies in relation to colonial knowledge and archival records. Together they reconsider these broader issues in relation to a diversity of critical topics, including the production and interpretation of colonial ethnographies, the encounter between documentation and oral histories, the enduring presence of memories of colonial warfare, and the meanings of Timorese sacred heirlooms to their Timorese owners and European collectors.

Crossings

Ricardo Roque is a historian-turned-anthropologist, developing a new understanding of Portuguese colonialism in Timor in the form of a historical ethnography of colonial encounters (Roque 2010). In Elizabeth Traube's ethnography (Traube 1986), based on research conducted in the early 1970s, he had found a valuable resource for recovering indigenous voices that were largely suppressed in Portuguese colonial documents. But while he appreciated Traube's work for its ethnographically grounded attention to indigenous agency, he also called attention to its incompleteness: observing that indigenous political practice had long been entangled with the Portuguese colo-

nial regime, he insisted on the need to use colonial sources as well as ethnographic ones in order to gain access to the historical encounters that had provided the matrix within which the cultural discourses described in Traube's ethnography had been formed. Although Roque is not a field ethnographer, his research visits to Timor-Leste have provided him with interpretive energy for reading the colonial archives. In his dissertation, inspired by Traube's insights, he was moved by the idea of treating the colonial archive ethnographically; more recently he is also exploring "the field" as a generative site for the historical imagination. In 2012, as part of a team project on the history of colonial anthropology in Timor-Leste, he used Portuguese documents from archives in Lisbon to prompt interactions with concrete East Timorese places, stories, and people in the field. These interactions complicated his prior assumptions about the Portuguese historical record itself, feeding back into archival work at home. His chapter in this volume, as well as the chapter in collaboration with Lúcio Sousa, is an effort at thinking through these intersections, experimenting with a kind of field-based historiography.

Traube was not an utter stranger to the Portuguese *arquivo*. She had visited several of the collections in Lisbon as a graduate student in preparation for conducting fieldwork. Yet this archival research (the basis for a master's paper on colonial history) was not closely connected to the field-based project on "social and symbolic dualism" that she came to Portuguese Timor to pursue in 1972, and her dissertation presented an overwhelmingly synchronic perspective on Mambai society (Traube 1977). The occupation prevented her from returning to the field before publishing her dissertation-based monograph. In the milieu of the 1980s, a return to the archives would have been a plausible alternative to follow-up fieldwork and might have encouraged a more historical anthropology reflective of the wider disciplinary turn that was by then underway. She did not, however, make that turn, and the book, like the dissertation, relied almost exclusively on ethnographic material. In her case, at least, the disjunction between ethnography-as-fieldwork and archival research that McWilliam and Shepherd call attention to in this volume reflected a gradual withdrawal from Timor research rather than any sense that colonial history was irrelevant to contemporary social formations. Indeed, the book ended with a critical acknowledgment of its lack of historical understanding. After political events made new fieldwork possible, Traube returned to Timor-Leste where the neglected historicity of the discourses and practices she had previously studied seemed to confront her at every turn. One index of her perspectival shift was

her belated recognition that a narrative tradition she had received as a “tale” in the early 1970s appeared to have both shaped and been shaped by historical events. Her chapter in this volume represents an effort to rethink ethnographic materials in relation to historical processes. It relies heavily on Roque’s work, which was in turn indebted to her earlier ethnography.

These personal stories about our intellectual passages to each other’s work are indicative of the kind of crossings between historiography and ethnography that this volume intends to navigate and address. We emphasize the active term “crossing” in our title since we are seeking to explore the *mutual* productivity of archival research and ethnographic fieldwork. We ask how fieldwork is inherently a journey into colonial archives; how archival work with colonial documents is, also, inherently a fieldwork undertaking. In the zone of intersection between the field and the archive, ethnography and historiography can intimately combine and productively short-circuit each other. Hence our concern is not simply with using archival documents in the context of ethnographic methods, as in otherwise valuable literature on ethnographic methodology (cf. Hammersley and Atkinson 1995; Brettell 1998; Gracy 2004). Our concern is to put forward an approach to archive-as-field and field-as-archive as one encompassing research and analytical endeavor. Moving in, with, and across archival and field data; written and oral materials; European and indigenous epistemologies; dusty colonial documents and face-to-face encounters, we seek to generate the sort of detailed and intimate understanding of temporally situated social worlds, and of time itself as a social artifact, that anthropology and history commonly pursue. Thus, this volume argues for a specifically blurred genre of “historical anthropology” (cf. Axel 2002; Dube 2007). It makes a case for a form of ethnography that implies a form of historiography, the writing of history/ies, based in the field and in the archive simultaneously.

In what follows we contextualize the chapters in relation to our reading of anthropology’s engagement with history, temporality, and the knowledge politics of colonial archives in the last four or five decades (for surveys, see also, for example, Faubion 1993; Axel 2002; Brettell 2015: 11–35; Roque and Wagner 2012). We identify three main directions, or “turns,” in this sustained process of engagement between history and anthropology with regard to colonialism: a wider disciplinary turn to *history* and temporality as analytical and methodological sensitivity; a turn to colonial *archives* as a politically charged field site and as historical subject in its own right; and a turn to indigenous agency and the ethnographic study of *historicities* in the plural,

the manifold social and cultural ways of being conscious of, and performing, (colonial) pasts, presents, and futures. We then introduce the chapters in relation to what we propose as three research strategies for translating these concerns into concrete studies of the historicities of colonialism through field and archive methodologies: following stories; following objects; following cultures through archives.

Historical Turns in Anthropology

In a programmatic essay, Bernard S. Cohn presented a conjuncture between history and anthropology as a means of self-realization for both disciplines. “I am going to suggest,” he wrote, “that history can become more historical in becoming more anthropological, that anthropology can become more anthropological in becoming more historical” (Cohn 1980: 216). On the anthropological side of the chiasmus, Cohn argued that the change would redefine the object of knowledge. Rather than objectifying non-Western cultures as static, atemporal systems that had persisted largely unchanged, historical anthropologists would approach them as dynamic outcomes of temporal processes, mutable products of human actions and events; they would shift “away from the objectification of social life to a study of its constitution and construction” (Cohn 1980: 217).

Evans-Pritchard had urged anthropology to mend its “breach with history,” but Cohn articulated conceptual foundations for rapprochement. His emphasis on the processual character of social life resonated with a wider tendency that was gathering force in anthropology and other disciplines at the time, what Sherry Ortner (1984) subsequently dubbed the “practice turn.” The rubric included a set of approaches aimed at developing less rigidly deterministic models of social life; premised on an interplay between systems or structures and action and events, they sought to accommodate agency and contingency and to account for change as well as continuity over time. Practices, culturally patterned sequences of social action that could be concatenated into events, were defined as sites where culture is continually made, remade, and sometimes transformed by the participants. The practice turn was implicit in Cohn’s assertion: “Since culture is always being constituted and constructed, so it is also always being transformed” (Cohn 1980: 217). But if practice was a key concept in historical anthropology, not all versions of practice theory emphasized history. Temporality, Nicholas Thomas observed, had come to be regarded “as constitutive of rather than marginal to social and cultural systems,”

but diverse scales of time were under consideration (Thomas 1996 [1989]; see also Fabian 1983). In *Outline of a Theory of Practice*, a work that helped solidify the practice turn, Pierre Bourdieu sought to recover the time of lived experience as it was manifested in strategic manipulations of the tempo of social action, such as delaying or speeding up responses to provocations embodied in challenges and gifts. “But there are other time scales,” Thomas noted, “such as the time of historic entanglements with intrusive systems, or the longer time of prehistoric social evolution” (Thomas 1996: 102).

Historic entanglements were Cohn’s focus. Dialogue between anthropologists and historians was to generate a common subject matter as well as a common epistemology, and Cohn identified colonialism as a primary subject. He proposed a focus on the cultural dynamics of colonial encounters, defined as the interactions between colonizers and colonized as each engaged in representing the other and themselves to the other within what was to be viewed as one analytic field (Cohn 1980: 217–18). A key charge for historical anthropology was thus to overcome the discipline’s “strange reluctance,” as Talal Asad had put it, “to consider seriously the power structure within which their discipline has taken shape” (Asad 1973: 159).¹

Heightened attention to colonialism and its consequences was not limited to anthropology and history. Cohn’s emphasis on the cultural dynamics of colonial encounters suggested both the influence and the limits of Edward Said’s *Orientalism*, a work that helped to initiate a discourse-centered critical postcolonial tradition and ultimately laid the basis for a novel interest in the investigation of colonial archives (Said 1978). Colonial knowledge, in Said’s critique, is constructed by the colonizers who represent the colonized as the West’s inferior Other, and its force is such that the colonized come to see themselves in its terms. “Culture” or “discourse” thus came to be seen as a central (if not *the* central) aspect of the domineering power apparatus of Western empires. Postcolonial criticism then emphasized the condition of colonial records as inherently power-saturated locations where knowledge and power met for the sole benefit of European colonial rule. This has sometimes led to excessive textualism, to skeptical visions of the possibility of history as a knowledge project focused on the past, and to strong critiques that deny colonial records the possibility of providing signs of the agency and voices of the colonized and the “subaltern” subjects (Spivak 1985; Chakrabarty 1992; Dirks 2015; but cf. O’Hanlon and Washbrook 1992; Young 2002). Yet in Cohn’s programmatic formulations, by contrast, the colonized can use indigenous cultural resources to represent the colonizers and to reimagine themselves in a

colonial world. Nevertheless, even Cohn focused his historical anthropology of colonial India on the ways in which state-authorized forms of knowledge both misrepresented and transformed Indian culture (Cohn 1987, 1996). Rather than as ways to access the past or retrieve indigenous voices, colonial documents, images, and texts were approached as discursive formations that made manifest “the categories and operations of the [colonial] state itself,” as political expressions of Western desires to master the world (Dirks 2002: 58; cf. Foucault 1972: 145; Ballantyne 2001; Mathur 2000).

The Anthropology of Colonialism and the “Archival Turn”

A voluminous field of studies then prospered around the study of colonialism and its forms of knowledge in the wake of Cohn, Said, Foucault, and the postcolonial critiques. Many anthropologists shifted focus from conventional ethnohistory and “precolonial” societies to the historical study of Western colonialism’s cultures as revealed in and through its archives. Anthropological field sites expanded to include the vast documentation generated by Europeans and by the knowledge-hungry machineries of the colonial state. South Asianist scholarship on the British Empire in India epitomizes this focus on colonial archives as the heart of European knowledge as power. In this vein, anthropology’s historical turn equaled a critical inquiry into the politics of the archival legacies of colonialism. This orientation was championed by Nicholas B. Dirks, who had been Cohn’s student. “Colonial knowledge,” as Dirks asserted in a characteristically polemical statement, “both enabled conquest and was produced by it; in certain important ways, knowledge was what colonialism was all about” (Dirks 1996: xi). Dirks developed his approach along Foucauldian lines, arguing that the colonial state in India made ethnographic knowledge into one of its primary cultural technologies of rule; in British India, a “revenue state” gave way to a type of “ethnographic state” (Dirks 2002, 2001). Dirks’s most detailed and extended case is the colonial engagement with caste (Dirks 2001). He argues persuasively that caste was the vehicle by which British colonial officials and ethnologists detached Indian society from history and recast it as a timeless system fundamentally different from the West. By defining caste as religious rather than political (obscuring how it straddled the European distinction) and as the paramount source of Indian social identity (rather than one mode of identification among others), colonial ethnologists constructed Indians as an essentially “spiritual” people with no rational political system of their own, dependent on

Europeans to bring them into modern history. Dirks attributes enduring consequences to the colonial construction of caste. Anticolonial nationalists, he argues, absorbed the idea of India's essential difference into their demands for independence, while twentieth-century scholarship continued to treat caste as what defines and differentiates postcolonial Indian society.²

Yet caste "as we know it," Dirks reiterates, is not a timeless traditional reality but the product of colonial history. Dirks has forcefully established the colonial state's investment in an "ethnographic archive" as a form of governmentality, and his case for anthropology's complicity with colonialism merits attention. However, his position is, in many respects, too extreme.

Dirks's critics have seen a tendency to elide colonial constructions of caste with indigenous articulations (see Sivaramakrishnan 2005; Dube 2004). Even orientalist knowledge and categories (including the caste category), some scholars have argued, can also to some extent be regarded as an indigenous product (Bayly 1999; Bayly 1996; Waggoner 2003). In subordinating the diverse and fluid meanings of caste in Indian social life to a monolithic, supposedly determining European vision, Dirks's theory arguably overestimates both the unity and effects of colonial knowledge forms. It is by now well-established that "European" discourse and the archival record cannot be approached as a homogenous whole (see Thomas 1994; Bayly 1996; Cooper and Stoler 1997). Hans Hägerdal's contribution to this volume is a useful reminder of this point. Although "the written materials for periods of colonial domination [in East Timor] were frequently produced in a Western or Western-derived context," Hägerdal notes, the European accounts of the early days of conquest in Timor are far from homogeneous. Portuguese and Dutch agents, for instance, produced strikingly different versions of conquest events, which need to be evaluated against one another. Colonial ethnographies are also not simply manifestations of colonial strength and state imperatives; to presume this would be a reductionism of the variety, richness, and even contradictory nature of colonial ethnographic knowledge, as Rosa's and Viegas and Feijó's chapters, for instance, here demonstrate.

Arguments for the internal incongruences of colonial archives have been strongly articulated in works framed by the so-called "archival turn." In recent years the tendency to treat colonial archives (and consequently colonialism itself) as coherent blocs has been countered by a new wave of archival ethnographies of colonialism, representing what some scholars have termed an "archival turn" (Stoler 2009; Geiger, Moore, and Savage 2010: 4; see also Ladwig et al.

2012). Ann Stoler, in particular, has argued that this new orientation implies a “move from archive-as-source to archive-as-subject” (Stoler 2009: 44). In contrast with both positivist research and postcolonial discourse analysis, ethnographies of colonial archives oppose totalizing, monolithic, and textualist approaches with an emphasis on the fragmented, ineffectual, and tensional aspects of colonialism and its forms of knowledge. Record keeping was often “thin,” erratic, and episodic, and the colonial production of knowledge was marked by fluidity and complexity. Furthermore, in these approaches the archive becomes not simply a place where information is stored, fixed, and extracted but a space that has a specific history and agency. Rather than mere *objects* and depositories for historiographical retrieval, archives come to count as active *subjects* of history in their own right; “not as sites of knowledge retrieval” as Stoler writes, “but of knowledge production” (Stoler 2002: 90). “Ethnography in and of the colonial archives,” Stoler adds, “attends to processes of production, relations of power in which archives are created, sequestered, and rearranged” (Stoler 2009: 32). It is to ethnographies of specific documents and records that one is called to turn attention; to ethnographies of archival fragments and tensions, and to what these fragments and tensions produce and make visible—as well as what they hide and conceal. Such ethnographies of colonial archives make manifest not simply the strength but also the anxieties, vulnerabilities, and failures of colonialism. A fine-grained engagement with records counters excessive weight given to Western knowledge as a form of domination. Rosa’s and Roque’s chapters in this volume provide further examples of this point. As Roque demonstrates, Portuguese imaginaries of Timorese war magic in the *Arbiru* ceremony stemmed from a sheer sense of extreme isolation and political fragility. In Rosa’s chapter, the Portuguese records may reveal colonial prejudice and practices of theft and destruction of Timorese sacred objects, but the same records also allow for destabilizing readings of the colonial endeavor: for the missionary impetus to eradicate indigenous appropriations of Catholicism was also inherently “self-destructive.”

Attention to the incomplete and fragmentary condition of colonial texts, words, and categorizations, their vulnerability to failure, is a crucial part of treating colonial histories across the archive and the field. By contrast, excessive emphasis on a direct connection between knowledge and domination can result in the attribution to archival materials of a kind of uncontested and absolute power that some colonizers’ fantasies presumed but that actual documents and words in fact never possessed. This volume, therefore, adopts a critical but more

nuanced approach to the epistemological and political potential of European-authored colonial archives. To borrow freely from Carlo Ginzburg's methodological encouragements (1999), we see documents neither as "open windows" (as in the positivist credo) nor as "walls" (as some postcolonial skeptics would have it), but as conceptually generative materials that, after careful and critical perusal, can pave the way for a variety of fresh understandings. The chapters by Traube, Viegas and Feijó, and Silva, for instance, show plentiful examples of how Portuguese colonial writings might be reread productively and put to generative use in new anthropological interpretations. In her contribution, Kelly Silva unearths a colonial ethnographic debate on the East Timorese social institution of marriage exchange (*barlake*) and acknowledges its value for her own ethnography in contemporary Dili. Viegas and Feijó similarly revisit the valuable ethnographic texts of Father Rodrigues on the king of Nári, while Elizabeth Traube, in her turn, finds in the Portuguese missionary Barros Duarte's accounts precious and unexpected elements to understand her own ethnographic encounters with Timorese stories of outsiders. In addition, the chapters included here offer abundant evidence of the inscription of Portuguese colonial archives in dynamics of violence, exploitation, and coercion—but also of the vulnerability of colonial formations themselves. They do so without losing sight of the contextual nature of power relations; without dismissing *a priori* the interpretive potential of Portuguese-authored records; and without withholding the possibility of reading in these same records Timorese cultural notions and forms of agency, including their complex entanglements with colonial outsiders.

The critique of colonial records, we believe, should include considerations of the active role of indigenous people and cultures in the making of both actual historical events and the written records themselves. In some cases, colonial records express entangled intercultural processes that—notwithstanding their inextricable political nature—can include both European and indigenous conceptions, agents, and social worlds. Archival records, in other words, open up rich ethnographic spaces that do not simply mirror the European mindset (Roque and Wagner 2012; see also Ladwig et al. 2012). However, to effectuate this methodological gesture requires a move *away* from colonial archives as mere demonstrations of European culture and power and a move *toward* archives as potential holders of indigenous signs. In this respect, anthropological scholarship on the Asia-Pacific region has been pursuing an approach that emphasizes the "entangled" character of colonial archives and of the historical encounters

between colonizers and colonized; it provides a valuable complement to the above tenets of the so-called “archival turn.”

Anthropology of Entanglements in the Asia-Pacific

In the history and anthropology of the Pacific Islands, a differently inflected approach to colonial encounters has emerged since the 1980s. Adapted to the geographical reality of what Bronwen Douglas calls an “island sea,” it starts from the assumption that long histories of population movements, expansion, contacts, and exchanges had shaped the cultures that European colonizers encountered (Douglas 2015a).³ The cultural distance in colonial encounters was far greater than in precolonial intra-island contacts, and the European colonizers became increasingly committed to transforming the local cultures; nevertheless, for islanders, colonialism was a new engagement with an outside world that had always been recognized within local cultural schemes.⁴ Such engagements unfolded in various ways, conditioned by both the particular projects and the material and symbolic resources of the competing European powers who entered the region and on those of the diverse, internally divided indigenous groups. The approach is particularizing rather than totalizing, aimed at understanding colonialism as a global phenomenon through what Nicholas Thomas calls local “histories of entanglement,” produced by both the colonized and the colonizers in concrete moments of encounter (Thomas 1991).

As even a cursory survey of the field is beyond the scope of this introduction, we use an argument between Nicholas Thomas and Marshall Sahlins to illustrate one of its characteristic concerns: the role of indigenous agency in colonial encounters. In a pair of articles published in 1992, Thomas set out to debunk the essentializing and dehistoricizing tendencies that were still pronounced in the anthropology of the Pacific (Thomas 1992a, 1992b). His focus was on traditional customs by which villagers collectively defined themselves in opposition to Westerners, to which ethnographers and villagers alike were prone to attribute a timeless quality. Like Dirks, Thomas argued that ethnographic phenomena of this sort have been historically shaped in colonial encounters. One of his primary examples was a Fijian custom of exchange known as *kerekere*, widely regarded as emblematic of “the Fijian way.” Based on his reading of colonial archives, Thomas argued that *kerekere* only became an emblematic custom over the latter half of the nineteenth century, in the course of the establishment of indi-

rect rule, when the British, who translated it as “begging,” began to call for its abolition on the grounds that it discouraged individualism. In reaction, according to Thomas, Fijian chiefs embraced the newly objectified custom as a positive marker of collective identity, opposing their noble generosity to the selfish practices of the whites who buy and sell. On the Fijian side, this re-articulation of a preexisting practice involved a “work of imagination” in which some Fijians participated more than others (Thomas 1992b: 220).⁵ Thomas saw it as an “invention of culture,” not in the sense of conscious manipulation by which Hobsbawm and Ranger had differentiated “inauthentic tradition” from “true custom,” but rather in Roy Wagner’s sense of culture as creative process (Hobsbawm and Ranger 1983; Wagner 1975; on the contrastive notions of cultural invention, see Clifford 2013).

Sahlins, however, as the ethnographer who had supposedly overestimated the custom’s longevity, took issue with Thomas’s historiography and what he took to be its theoretical implications (Sahlins 1993, [1993] 2000). He faulted Thomas’s time-line, using early 19th century references to *kerekere* as distinctively Fijian to argue that Fijians themselves had initiated the process of objectification prior to their contact with the Europeans. In this reading, a collective identity that revolved around reciprocity was not a product of the colonial encounter, but something brought to it by Fijians, who then further elaborated it. As Sahlins put it, this reading accords Fijians “an autonomous, positive role in their self-representation” and in the negative assessment of European habits that it evoked (Sahlins 1993: 860).

This was an argument between intellectual allies, and each took pains to acknowledge the importance of the other’s contributions. Nevertheless, Sahlins charged Thomas with overestimating the impact of colonialism and underestimating indigenous agency and autonomy, and he concluded with a strong warning: “We cannot equate colonial history simply with the history of the colonizers” (Sahlins 1993: 864; [1993] 2000: 486). Thomas, who had made this very point numerous times, was understandably vexed, and he strongly denied both charges in his response (Thomas 1993, 1991; see also 1997: 29). However, he posited a difference in their respective understandings of the cultural dynamics of colonial encounters. Sahlins, he argued, had elevated to a general principle the idea that indigenous people had sufficient agency and autonomy to assimilate “external offerings and impositions” into pre-existing cultural schemes, whereas the effect or lack of effect of colonial intrusions, he asserted, must be a matter of historical inquiry. Thomas argued further that assimilation

of the new to pre-existing forms presupposed a type of situation restricted to the early stages of colonial contact, when European power was relatively restrained by limited interests as well as by local resistance.⁶ With sustained contact and the establishment of a formal colonial state, the conditions of cultural reproduction change, and a new dynamic emerges in which external offerings are understood in something closer to the terms in which they are presented; or, as Thomas also put it, indigenous people learn from their contact experiences, as when they couch their own identity and resistance in terms made available by the dominant. Sahlins, who has indeed focused on early contact in much of his best known work, acknowledged that conditions of local cultural reproduction change “for the worse” under a colonial state that mobilizes both coercive and persuasive techniques of control. However, invoking Ranajit Guha’s characterization of the subaltern period in South Asia as a “dominance without hegemony,” he portrayed the state’s persuasive power as limited and emphasized the capacity of the colonized to evade or subvert coercive restrictions by adapting their cultural traditions (Sahlins 2000 [1993]: 491–92; Sahlins 1993: 864; Guha 1989).

What differentiates these positions is not the relative importance accorded to indigenous agency but the particular forms of agency they foregrounded. Thomas’s distinction between assimilation to prior categories and what people learn from contact experiences elucidates, for instance, the difference between incorporating Catholic icons and practices into indigenous ritual systems (see Rosa, Traube, Viegas and Feijó, this volume), and the indigenization or creative appropriation of Christianity by self-avowed converts (see Hoskins 1993; Douglas 1995; Keane 2007; Bovensiepen 2016; Traube 2017). In the first case, the foreign origins of the incorporated elements are likely to be symbolically marked, while in the second they tend to be effaced. Both, however, attest to a capacity for cultural inclusion characteristic of Pacific peoples who, as Margaret Jolly has argued, are “accepting of both indigenous and exogenous elements as constituting their culture” (Jolly 1992). A certain openness toward outsiders was implicit in indigenous systems of rule, or “stranger king formations” as Sahlins (2012) calls them (see also Biersack 1991: 13; Douglas 1992; Henley and Caldwell 2008), which treat the incorporation of external authority as a principle of political life. In the Timor region, we argue below, stranger kingship provides a critical lens for understanding historical interactions between indigenous political systems and colonial rule.

Indigenous and European Strangers

In island Southeast Asia and throughout the Austronesian-speaking world, rulers are widely represented as descendants of outsiders whose arrival (often from overseas) and interactions with the people of the land (identified as autochthons or as earlier settlers) alter the structure of the realm (Fox 2008). There are many variations in the pattern, with regard to the origins of the strangers, the roles they assume, and the relative statuses of outsiders and insiders, which are highly contested and often fluctuate according to the positions from which the narrated events are viewed; for instance, those who claim “outside” origins may define the arrival of their ancestors as the founding event in the formation of the realm, whereas descendants of “insiders” may valorize an earlier time and state when their own ancestors presided (see Reuter 2002: 24). If, as Henley and Caldwell observe (2008: 165), the pattern can legitimize rule of actual foreigners (including, in some cases, colonial powers), it is also a charter for the representation of indigenous (or assimilated) rulers as foreign.

On Bali, for instance, the rulers of the precolonial *negara* are represented as descendants of Javanese ancestors who conquered Bali long before the Europeans arrived and established their sovereignty, embodied in such regalia as the *keris*. On the basis of largely ethnological materials, Clifford Geertz (1980) formulated his model of the nineteenth century Balinese *negara* as a “theater-state” in which royal rituals were spectacular performances of a power that rulers did not actually possess; this is illustrated in his much quoted phase, “power served pomp, not pomp power” (13). Margaret Wiener (1995) has suggested that Geertz’s sharp distinction between imaging power and exercising it reproduces historically particular Dutch colonial perceptions of Balinese rulers as mere “spiritual overlords” with little actual influence. Using sources that include colonial archives, Balinese *babads*, and ethnographic interviews, the historian Henk Schulte-Nordholt (1966) has replaced Geertz’s notably atemporal model with a historical account of the rise and fall of the kingdom of Mengwi. Like Wiener, he presents ritual not as an alternative to but one aspect of royal power, and he challenges Geertz’s portrayal of Balinese kings: rather than remote and passive icons of the sacred, they were practical actors who actively cultivated extensive networks of personal relations with both subordinate satellites and allied rulers of other *negara*. While large-scale rituals were one way of maintaining their influence, warfare was equally important. Represented as the protectors of the *negara*, Balinese kings defended it against human enemies as well as hostile spiritual beings.

On Bali before colonial conquest, stranger king ideologies seem to have underwritten elite attitudes of condescension toward the Dutch; the *puputans* (ritual suicides) of 1906 were arguably less acknowledgments of Dutch superiority than dramatic recognitions that Balinese kings had somehow lost the support of their spiritual allies. East of Bali, in the Lesser Sundas, the early colonial period was lengthy, the level of political integration was relatively low, and the presence of mutually hostile competing colonial powers complicated the situation. Multiple arenas of interaction emerged between indigenous polities and colonial groups around trade, war, religion, and justice. In his master study of the early colonial period on Timor, Hans Hägerdal (2012a) draws on both Dutch and Portuguese archives, as well as oral histories, to explore the extent of European influences and the culturally mediated interests of local rulers in both resisting the strangers and allying with them. On the one hand, offering martial resistance to powerful foreigners indexed the power of local rulers, many of whom appear to have represented themselves as indigenous strangers. On the other hand, the colonizers were donors of regalia and titles, external signs of sovereignty that elevated the recipients, and they could be drawn into the indigenous systems as stranger kings themselves. The title of Hägerdal's book is an allusion to rulers allied with the Dutch from the 1650s until the twentieth century; they represented themselves as lords of the land who paid deference to the lords of the sea (2012a: 5).

Neither the Dutch nor the Portuguese fully understood the political relations among the indigenous polities, but from the seventeenth century there was a notion that many of them paid some form of allegiance to the rulers Sonbai in the west and the Great Lord (*Nai Boot*) of Wehali in south-central Belu. These figures are referred to as "Emperor" or "Kaiser," and their prestige was sufficiently recognized to justify a (Topass-led) Portuguese attack in 1640–41, in which the centers of both realms were burned and the rulers forcibly converted to Christianity. But if the position of these polities (whatever its nature) was weakened, their prestige endured; descendants of Sonbai continued to be a source of opposition to the Dutch, while Wehali accepted titles and other signs of recognition from both colonial powers (Fox 1982: 31). Narrative traditions recorded by anthropologists in the twentieth and twenty-first centuries attest to the enduring importance of these and other realms in local regard.⁷

While indigenous myths cannot be projected backward as historical fact, they do suggest certain enduring principles of organization that appear to have both informed and been transformed over the course of

colonial history. Ethnographic research has documented a variety of stranger king traditions that tend to align in various ways with “diarchic” divisions between ritual and executive functions of rule (see Cunningham 1965; Schulte-Nordholt 1971; Therik 2004; Fox 2008; Traube 2011 and this volume; Bovensiepen 2014). Roles that Balinese kings combined are more often divided on Timor, and preeminence is in many cases attributed to ritual authority. But ritual authority on Timor has assumed distinctive forms. Balinese stranger kings claimed a great and powerful empire as their source, represented as a repository of limitless power; on Timor, various ruling houses to the west and east claim descent from male ancestors who were sent out from Wehali; or in a variant of the theme, their ancestors acquire spears from Wehali (Bovensiepen 2016). Unlike Majapahit, however, Wehali, in its own self-representations (see Therik 2004) gives away the power of rule, retaining only ritual authority; as the ultimate “navel” of the land, Wehali is the center of centers, like the royal court of a *negara*, but the center was symbolically empty; the Great Lord of Wehali was dark, immobile, and symbolically female; he was surrounded by active male executives who regulated external affairs; they were responsible for warfare and for annual delivery of harvest tribute to the center, in return for the ritually maintained fertility of the land.

Polities associated with Wehali are often represented as female centered, like their source, organized around similarly passive ritual figures whose counterparts are active, masculine executives. Such origin narratives recount a process that Fox (2008) has described as the “installation of the outsider inside,” wherein indigenous strangers from Wehali arrive in a new realm; displace, or in some cases drive out, the presiding “lords of the land”; marry their daughters; and come to represent the inside. A classic expression is when Sonbai, represented as the younger brother of the Wehali executive ruler, is installed in Oenam as the immobilized “sleeping lord” (*atupas*). Further west, however, the femininity of the centers becomes less pronounced in myth and, by extension, in political life (Schulte-Nordholt 1971: 372–74). Andrew McWilliam (2002), in a meticulously detailed historical ethnography of the Atoni domain of Amanuban in the southwest of present-day West Timor, has elucidated the political process underlying the symbolism. He shows how over the nineteenth century the Nope clan ruler of Amanuban had attenuated the diarchic division within the center by combining male governance with ritual control of fertility; when one of his satellites, the head of a warrior clan, rebelled and established his own center (a common strategy in symbolically centered but weakly integrated and unstable Southeast

Asian polities), he did so as a strongly masculine ruler who combined political power with control over the cult of warfare, the masculine pole of ritual life, while delegating fertility ritual to a subordinated “lord of the land,” the one whose role the Nope ruler had usurped. In Amanuban, McWilliam argues (1996: 164), leaders were able to use headhunting to consolidate political power.

R. H. Barnes (2013) detects an analogous pattern in status relations on Flores, where the ancestor of the raja of Larantuka, another stranger king who traced descent to Wehali, remained external and mobile in relation to an indigenous lord of the land over whom he claimed superiority. Barnes suggests, on the one hand, that legends about stranger kings from Timor can be taken as evidence of historical inter-island contacts that date back before the advent of the Portuguese and Dutch. On the other hand, he observes (51), “they are remarkably reminiscent of events during the period of European contact that closely affected the buildup of Black Portuguese influence on Flores and Timor.” Indeed, the Topasses aggressively inserted themselves into local polities as stranger kings of a distinctive sort: light-skinned, speaking a foreign language and practicing a foreign religion, they contracted alliances with native rulers by marrying their daughters, but without giving up their superiority as active, masculine, martial leaders. E. Douglas Lewis (2010), on the basis of a careful review of the evidence for stranger-king traditions throughout the Timor area, has argued that their occurrence, along with that of the associated diarchic divisions, correlates with areas of Topass influence. According to Lewis, diarchic divisions between ritual and executive rule were not a fundamental feature of eastern Indonesian cultures; they were contingent historical effects, which developed in some societies but not in others, strongly conditioned by interactions with “real” foreigners.

Lewis’s argument is suggestive, and his characterization of diarchy as a division between “religious” (or “ritual”) versus “secular” rule is clearly appropriate in the case of the Topasses, who presented themselves as the temporal defenders of Christianity. Twentieth-century relations between “traditional” ritual authorities and colonially appointed native administrators might also be characterized in this way. But we would see this as a transformation of earlier indigenous schemes based in concrete idioms such as gender, space, mobility, and luminosity. In other words, the “active” (male, outer, mobile, shining, celestial) pole of indigenous Timorese polities is not well translated as “secular” (any more than is the warrior aspect of Balinese kingship), though it would seem that executive rulers were historically “secularized,” to the same degree that colonial officials constructed (and

largely dismissed) indigenous ritual leaders as “religious.” Indigenous executives better fit with European notions of rule, and their functions (especially warfare, pre-pacification, but also justice) could be both emphasized and gradually detached from the complementary functions of ritual authorities. But if native rulers would gradually become more like European ones, the Europeans also seem to have partially modeled themselves on indigenous stranger kings. Stranger kingship, Henley and Caldwell emphasize (2008: 165–66), has a practical as well as a cultural logic, particularly evident in adjudication: because of their greater impartiality and lack of involvement in local conflicts and rivalries, strangers may make good mediators, and colonial officials frequently cultivated this potential attraction. In Sulawesi, the VOC not only institutionalized but ritualized their role as judicial arbiters (172–73; see also Henley 2004: 99–100). On Timor, Portuguese colonial officials engaged in what Roque has described as a kind of parasitic colonial mimesis: having appropriated headhunting as a military strategy (Roque 2012, 2018), they devised over the second half of the nineteenth century a colonial system of justice and a form of mimetic governmentality that incorporated indigenous elements, implicitly framing themselves as a more dignified version of indigenous executive rulers (Roque 2015).

In sum, stranger kingship, to our minds, exemplifies the complex processes of entanglement that characterize colonial encounters across different periods. In the regional context of Eastern Indonesia, it is an important analytical framework for understanding colonial histories and the effects of European imperialism, on local cultural terms. Thus, in research strategies concerned with crossing oral records and archival sources, the contingent patterns of mutual incorporation within outside-inside cultural idioms of power must be taken into account. On Timor, indigenous peoples incorporated colonial outsiders into cultural schemes, while colonial officials actively inserted themselves into indigenous systems as they understood them, becoming so entangled, as Thomas would say, that, contra Thomas, no clear line can be drawn on the indigenous side between assimilation of the foreign into preexisting schemes and understanding the foreign in the terms in which it presents itself.

Ethnographies of Historicity

Ethnographic histories use field and archival sources to construct less Eurocentric perspectives on colonial contacts as they were, and some-

times still are, experienced by indigenous people. But there are other histories. “The same event,” Greg Dening contends, “is possessed in culturally different ways” (1995: 24); or, in Marshall Sahlins’s phrasing, “The different cultural orders studied by anthropology have their own historicities” (1985: 53). “Why” therefore, asked postcolonial scholar and historian Dipesh Chakrabarty, “must one privilege the ways in which the discipline of history authorizes its knowledge? . . . It is a question asked seriously by many historians today” (italics in original; 1998: 22). Ethnographic historians challenge the equation of history with written texts by recognizing other modes of archiving the past, including oral traditions, places, artifacts, and dances (see also e.g., Rosaldo 1980; Fox 2006 [1997]; Shorter 2009). Expanding the archive in such way expands the concept of history to include diverse cultural forms, different ways of linking, or combining, past, present, and future, what Francois Hartog calls “regimes of historicity” (Hartog 2015). Consequently, the assumption that not only the ways of remembering the past but also the very notions of history and time are culturally diverse has inspired a wealth of scholarship concerned with “historicity” as an ethnographic object in its own right. “Whereas [the Western conception of] ‘history’ isolates the past,” propose Hirsch and Stewart in a similar vein, “historicity focuses on the complex temporal nexus of past-present-future. Historicity in our formulation concerns the ongoing social production of accounts of pasts and futures” (Hirsch and Stewart 2005: 262). Pacific scholars and Amazonianists, in particular, have engaged with the rich performative realm of indigenous and vernacular historicities by which people understand and articulate their own sense of time—including events of colonial contact (see Ballard 2014; Whitehead 2003). The turn toward historicity as plural offers a valuable critique of Western notions of historiography as one culturally specific form of making past-present-futures rather than a universal mode and thus questions conventional history writing in colonial studies (see Chakrabarty 1998). “An anthropology of history,” Stephan Palmié and Charles Stewart also recently suggested, “extends the exploration of how history is conceived and represented to take in non-Western societies, where ethnographic study can reveal local forms of historical production that do not conform to the canons of standard historiography” (Palmié and Stewart 2016: 208).

Several chapters in this volume explore this mode of ethnographic sensibility toward indigenous historicities of the colonial. They do so by bringing up tensions as well as juxtapositions and coexistences between and across Portuguese and Timorese forms of addressing colonial pasts. Colonial histories are not simply contained in Portu-

guese texts and archival documentation; they are continuously processed, changed, and organized by East Timorese people, on their own cultural terms. East Timorese forms of imagining, narrating, and performing past, present, and future do not always conform to the Portuguese orderings of time and events. Judith Bovensiepen's contribution on "different perspectives" on colonial warfare especially brings this point into light: in Portuguese and Timorese records one finds sharply contrasting notions of "destruction" and "victory" of the kingdom of Funar in the colonial period. But relation as well as difference can also be found. For example, in his account of the Portuguese myth of *Arbiru*, Roque similarly exposes the disjunctions between European and indigenous versions of death and victory while also exhibiting the relational nature of such nonetheless distinct ways of conjuring up the colonial past. Yet these chapters also make a point of further general significance for the ethnographic study of historicity in what "colonial" processes are concerned. The study of Timorese understandings must not be divorced from an engagement with the Portuguese written record. Indigenous perspectives need to be complemented by or interwoven with histories from the colonizers' perspectives that elucidate not only their disciplinary projects and condescension to the colonized but also the "anxieties of rule," moments of uncertainty, disorder, and elision when boundaries are unstable (see also Dening 1996, 2004; Fabian 2000; Stoler 2009; Roque 2012). Central to these histories is, then, the question of their relation to the archives. On the one hand, ethnographic historians have showed the multiple ways through which the colonial past can be stored, arranged, and performed, beyond conventional archival texts and Western historiographies. On the other hand, we argue, inasmuch as colonial archives remain a primary destination for field researchers, the exploration of indigenous forms of history cannot simply do without European documentation.

Especially in what concerns societies marked by processes of colonization, the anthropology of history requires ethnographic fieldwork as much as it requires ethnography of the archive as site of production of colonial knowledge. The ethnography of colonial historicity, in other words, cannot give the colonial archive away. It does not oppose archival to vernacular, nonetheless; it does not presume the priority or privilege of one form of historicity over another, for it does not mean to sift "truth" from "fiction"; instead it seeks to articulate their reciprocal dis/connections, fissures, and juxtapositions. This volume therefore proposes that following historicities of "the colonial" in East Timor and elsewhere requires attention to the junctures, the gaps, and the

relationships between, and within, European and indigenous cultural forms of crossing past, present, and future. From distinct standpoints, all chapters in this volume embrace this challenge.

Following Colonial Historicities

This volume brings field and archive together as part of one single analytical and methodological strategy. It points toward a form of historical anthropology that is concerned, on the one hand, with tracing colonial historicity and its varied cultural and political manifestations—as embodied in written documents, in oral narratives, in bodily practices, and in material culture, for example—and, on the other hand, with combining archival methods (the study of written documents) with field methods (the direct observation of people's "cultures" and social lives) in the creation of such descriptions. The organization of the volume also expresses our concern with identifying and proposing distinct ways of exploring this historical anthropological sensitivity. As such, the volume is organized into three parts that are representative of three methods or approaches for studying colonial historicities with and across archival and field materials. Though we present them as analytically distinct, they can obviously be variously combined in research design and practice.

Following Stories

Part I, "Following Stories," approaches the field as an archival zone saturated with storytelling, and of origin stories, in particular. On Timor, local knowledge of the past is organized in narratives that recount how the world as a whole or some contemporary social formation (such as a house group, a village, or higher-level political unit) originated and came to assume its present organization. The protagonists are not always human: rocks, trees, and cultigens, for instance, as well as sacred heirlooms of various sorts, may have origin stories that are similar in form to ancestral narratives. A common form is what James J. Fox (2006 [1997]) calls "topogeny," a recitation of an ordered sequence of place names: these provide condensed accounts of the travels of the various narrative protagonists, their winding journeys, itineraries, or paths across the land, passing through named places, some empty and others already inhabited. Inasmuch as such narrated place names may be attached to specific locations, topogeny shapes a distinctive regime of historicity wherein the past is always in

a sense potentially present, inscribed in inhabited space; a topogeny, as Fox puts it, “represents a projected externalization of memories that can be lived as well as thought about” (2006 [1997]: 8). Verbal and nonverbal forms of memory are mutually implicated, as narratives of the past give significance to the lived landscape of place, and named places can evoke accounts of past events. Time and space are also interwoven within ancestral narratives, where protagonists are distinguished in terms of their temporal order of appearance, as elder/younger, autochthonous inhabitants/immigrants, or first settlers/late arrivals. Precedence in time does not always confer precedence in status in origin narratives; rather, narrative interactions between the ancestors, often involving the display of sacred heirlooms, provide models for contemporary status relations, which are spatially embodied in the layout of houses and settlements. Whether articulated in narratives or materially embodied, such constructions of the past are dynamic and contested; what is shared is not a single version of the past but an idea that knowing the past is critical to understanding the present.

Ethnographers encounter indigenous stories in various forms, ranging from formal verbal performances to informal, allusive comments about how a given title or heirloom was acquired, or about what happened in some particular setting. All these stories have complex relations with written archival documents, of tension and contradiction, as well as connection. The chapters in this section cross a variety of oral narratives with written accounts. This method unravels multiple historicities, conflicting perspectives on the past, the contemporary politics of historical narration; it does so by bringing archival and field data into contact and into dialogue, in a sort of cross-cultural analysis of distinct practices of historicity.

Elizabeth Traube focuses on two narrative traditions that were repeatedly recounted to her as part of the histories of two Mambai villages where she conducted much of her research. One is an origin story that she had been following since her first fieldwork in the early 1970s; the other is a story that had in effect been following her over this same period, despite her stubborn efforts to ignore it. The first, known as the “walk [journey] of the flag,” incorporates Portuguese colonialism into an ancestral origin narrative about the acquisition of regalia of rule and the establishment of political order; the other describes what is presented as the first encounter of the indigenous people with foreign missionaries and its unfortunate aftermath involving the execution of one of the foreigners. In the chapter, Traube approaches both narrative traditions as devices for incorporating

outsiders into local cultural orders. But rather than positing and foregrounding a preexisting cultural system capable of absorbing external “events,” as she had done in her monograph, she emphasizes the “eventful” character of storytelling itself as a situated practice embedded in contested status relations. To this end, she endeavors to historicize both narrative traditions by crossing her ethnography with archival texts, including accounts of Portuguese colonial practices highlighted in Roque’s work, accounts of missionary activities in the region over the late nineteenth century, and Portuguese missionary records of Timorese cult practices in the 1960s and 1970s.

Claudine Friedberg revisits her remarkable collection of Bunaq origin narratives to argue for the intrinsically political nature of Timorese ancestral traditions. Bunaq speaking populations occupy an area in central Timor that spans both sides of the colonially created border; Bunaq are one of several peoples on Timor who speak a non-Austronesian language, but whereas the others (Fatuluku, Makassae and Makalero) are located in a contiguous area in the east, Bunaq are surrounded by speakers of Austronesian languages. Both Friedberg and Antoinette Schapper (2011) emphasize that Bunaq see themselves (and are seen) as different from their neighbors, Kemak to the north, Mambai to the east, and Tetum to the south and west; nevertheless, their linguistic and cultural practices attest to a long history of engagement in which Bunaq have extensively borrowed and adapted Austronesian concepts and cultural forms. Indeed, their designation of their ancestral narratives as *Bei Gua*, literally “footprints” or “itineraries of the ancestors,” suggests that Bunaq have adapted the topogeny, a cultural form that occurs throughout the Austronesian world.

Friedberg, who first did research between 1966 and 1973 in Bunaq regions on the Indonesian side of the border, received multiple versions of these ancestral narratives from their acknowledged guardians, “masters of the word.” The itineraries she follows begin in a celestial realm, where the primordial ancestors are born and receive power tokens from their parents; the ancestors descend to earth, where they scatter across the land of Timor. According to Friedberg, many of the places they visit, including those ostensibly located on Timor, are not geographically identifiable (a contrast with Austronesian topogenies), and several of the ancestors also make trips to “other-worldly” realms overseas where they acquire wealth and wives. Friedberg cautions against trying to reconstruct historical reality from the texts, that is, reading them as simple reflections of the westward migration and expansion of Bunaq speakers out from a “core region,” which Schapper

locates in the northeast of their contemporary territory (Schapper 2011: 168). Rather, the texts give access to themes and principles that would have shaped and been shaped in historical interactions among Bunaq houses and between Bunaq and other ethnic groups. There is some dispute over whether non-Austronesian speakers anteceded the Austronesians on Timor (the conventional view) or arrived after them (as McWilliam has argued for Fatuluku), though linguistic evidence from place-names supports the former view in the case of Bunaq, according to Schapper (2011: 182). Be that as it may, Friedberg shows how some contemporary Bunaq regard themselves as descended from mythic immigrants and assert claims to status on that basis, in effect appropriating the Austronesian mythology of the stranger king.

Ricardo Roque examines stories about a more recent past, oral and written stories concerning a Portuguese colonial officer who was killed by Timorese in 1899, to explore how Timorese cultural materials became incorporated into colonial mythologies of conquest. For the Portuguese storytellers, of course, “myth” was the discourse of the Other; their own stories constituted truthful praise of a martyred hero, an accurate chronicle of the event. Roque shows that maintaining the distinction between “myth” and “history” entailed denigrating the version of the event attributed to the Timorese while elevating the official Portuguese version and erasing the processes of its formation. In what the Portuguese recognized as the indigenous “mythic” version, Timorese adhered to “magical beliefs” in the potency of the heroic victim and were so overwhelmed by his death that they surrendered posthaste, snatching defeat out of victory; Portuguese versions of the events affirm their own “historical” character by explicitly rejecting this “popular belief” in magical agency while selectively and partially incorporating elements from Timorese oral traditions, including the poetics of place so central to indigenous discourse on the past. The making of “the *Arbiru*” (a name supposedly attributed to Duarte by Timorese, from a Tetum term connoting power and disorder) was an intercultural process in which Portuguese poached on local stories and ritual practices. The site where the officer was said to have died was commemorated in an official ceremony created over half a century after the event, in the wake of an abortive 1959 uprising against the colonial state. Grounded in oral stories that had been circulating for decades within the Portuguese community, the ceremony projected a mythic story of colonial supremacy and Timorese loyalty into an uncertain political present.

Methodologically, Roque crosses archival records of Duarte’s death with memories and oral history that he collected from former colo-

nial officers in Lisbon. He subsequently followed the story in post-independence Timor-Leste, where he met with Timorese descendants of some of the protagonists. These conversations, supported by findings of other ethnographers, make clear that the mythmaking process was never controlled by the Portuguese; its ritualization notwithstanding, the colonial “myth of conquest” did not prevent Timorese from understanding Duarte’s death in other terms, for instance, by incorporating it into a narrative of resistance to foreign rule.

Contrasting accounts of the past also figure in Judith Bovensiepen’s chapter, which focuses on the village of Funar in the mountains of central Timor. According to Portuguese sources, Funar was the object of at least one and possibly two colonial campaigns mounted by Governor Celestino da Silva, who launched and presided over the “pacification” of the interior in the late nineteenth century. Although Celestino himself seems to have left relatively scant correspondence regarding Funar, there is one surviving reference to an attack on it as motivated by the rebellious and generally unruly nature of its inhabitants. But one of his strongest critics, an ardent Republican who wrote under the pen name of “Zola,” depicted the charge of rebellion as a mere pretext. According to Zola, Celestino had attacked Funar for personal profit, and the village had been utterly destroyed in the ensuing campaigns. Bovensiepen, who conducted fieldwork in post-independence Funar, is less concerned with the disparity between the two archival accounts than with the way both were contradicted by stories told to her in Funar, which made no mention of either a local rebellion or colonial persecution. Whereas Roque encountered Kemak Timorese who proudly associated themselves with an ancestral tradition of resistance, Bovensiepen received accounts broadly reminiscent of what Traube had found among neighboring Mambai, insofar as many people in Funar represented the Portuguese colonial period as a time of relative peace in which Funar had benefited politically, a situation usually associated with “loyal allies” rather than unruly rebels.

Bovensiepen’s strategy is to treat both Portuguese and Timorese accounts as hybrids of what are conventionally distinguished in Western culture as “myth” and “history.” Thus, while Zola’s melodramatic account of a clash between a corrupt colonial regime and innocent Timorese reflected and reinforced antimonarchical Republican mythmaking, the story may nevertheless preserve traces of events that have been suppressed in Funar oral traditions. Those traditions, moreover, are no more homogeneous than the written accounts. The first story that Bovensiepen was told about Funar’s amicable interactions with the Portuguese colonial state legitimized the authority of the current

ruling house; but one day, a certain place she happened to pass by prompted her companion to refer to a story that seemed to contradict much of what she had been told by local elites. Once alerted to the variation, Bovensiepen went on to elicit a counternarrative to the official version of Funar's historical relations with the colonial state. Triangulating Zola's written account of Funar's destruction with the divergent local narratives, Bovensiepen is able to relate competing accounts of the past to an enduring conflict over the distribution of rule that was exacerbated by colonial policies of indirect rule.

Following Objects

Part II, "Following Objects," represents a specific modality of our "following stories" approach that grants methodological priority to material culture or the natural environment as materializations of different forms of historicity of colonial encounters. Here the focus is less on the way verbalized stories emerge, circulate, and change than on the ways through which "ancient" things and landscape become mediators between past and present, embodiments of certain narratives and conceptions of time. It focuses on objects and features of the landscape—such as scepters, flags, or houses, but also trees, rocks, or cultivated plants—that embody conceptions of time and are endowed with certain agencies for articulating the past, present, and future. Just as the field is saturated with storytelling, it is also saturated with a material world of things that condense and precipitate stories—a material world that, in some instances, can itself constitute a form of storytelling, in its own right. In the context of East Timorese cultures and their encounters with the Portuguese colonizers, ancestral objects and sacred heritage, frequently endowed with spiritual qualities and potent agencies, are especially good to think about the performance of colonial historicity in this manner. Many of these material objects can be approached as intercultural products, as kinds of entangled objects (Thomas 1991). A wealth of things that the East Timorese were to understand as powerful autochthonous materials in their origin stories, such as flags and drums, for example, were Portuguese in origin.

In his chapter, Frederico Delgado Rosa follows the Portuguese missionaries' violent clash with the Timorese appropriations of Catholic objects as *lulik* materials in the 1930s–50s. By revisiting the archive of early twentieth-century missionary ethnographies, Rosa explores the Catholic priests' obsessive rejection of religious syncretism, while aiming at the "historical reconstruction" of an untouched "precolonial" native religion. Central to these imaginaries of radical alterity

was the pejorative vision of Timorese religion as immoral, savage and virtually orgiastic, a vision of which the ultimate embodiment, in the missionary view, was the Timorese cult of *lulik* objects. Accordingly, in contrast with the then-current theories of Catholic missiology, missionary authorities in Portuguese Timor (notably Father Abílio Fernandes) followed an inquisitorial practice of abduction and “systematic destruction of some of the most tangible elements of the ‘Timorese religion,’” including setting *lulik* houses and objects on fire. Timorese converts were forced to hand over their precious *lulik* items, sacred heirlooms that constituted important connections to ancestry and spirituality. Yet, as Rosa demonstrates, such acts amounted as well to a gesture of “self-destruction.” For among the *lulik* objects stored in the burned houses were such things as images of Catholic saints and statues of the Virgin that at some point in the past had been integrated into the communities’ sacred heritage. Although missionaries saw the treatment of such objects as a horrifying “degeneration” of Catholicism in native hands, their presence is in fact indicative of complex forms of religious syncretism. A prime example of such complexity, Rosa argues, was the Timorese cult of Saint Anthony in Manatuto, known as “Amo Deus Coronel Santo António.” An ancient figure of this saint had been transformed into a *lulik* possession that was customarily revered by the Manatuto *moradores*, indigenous companies of auxiliary soldiers who served the colonial government in the event of war. Father Ezequiel Pascoal in the 1930s studied this cult in a series of rich ethnographic vignettes. In contrast to Fernandes’s destructive approach to *lulik*, however, Pascoal claimed such indigenous appropriation of the saint constituted a victory of Portuguese colonization, and as such the Manatuto cult was not persecuted. The underlying theme of these approaches to religious materiality, however, was the systematic denial of any sort of blending between Catholicism and Timorese conceptions: “The problem of the centuries-old interaction between ‘Timorese religion’ and Christianity was resolved,” Rosa concludes, “through its negation.”

Combining their own field ethnography with a reanalysis of the works of a distinct group of missionaries—the Salesians among the Fataluku in the 1940s–50s—Viegas and Feijó offer a complementary counterpoint to Rosa’s reflections on the tensional religious exchanges in colonial Timor-Leste. The authors start from their field observations of a recurrent presence of both Fataluku ritual funerary posts and Christian crosses in indigenous mortuary practices and cemeteries. Viegas and Feijó then trace the origins of this form of “parallel coexistence” back to the negotiated nature of the historical encounters

between Salesian missionaries and the Fataluku after World War II. In this remote eastern region, the Catholic missionaries were latecomers, and the relationship they ended up establishing with local communities was characterized by “ambivalence and tension” but also, above all, by “negotiations” and mutual concessions. The authors concentrate on the fascinating case of Father Rodrigues’s published studies on the king of Nári in the late 1940s. In this work, they argue, one can find a form of colonial ethnographic encounter marked by conversation, in which a mode of cohabitation between Catholicism and Fataluku religiosity was encouraged rather than denied. Although instances of burning and destruction of *helura* (equivalent to *lulik*) objects also occurred in the region, the authors suggest indigenous cooperation could be involved, such that destruction of *helura* “may have constituted a rite of separation, resolving dubious situations regarding the true owner of the objects.” Through following crosses and funerary posts across archival records and field encounters, Viegas and Feijó finally put forward an interpretive hypothesis about “structures of coexistence” between different (rather than syncretic) religious formations in Timor-Leste: “The post and the cross can be seen as an index to that structure, where world-views are partially integrated but also kept side by side on parallel.”

The colonial engagements with Timorese *lulik* material culture is the theme of Roque and Sousa’s chapter, centered on an enigmatic Timorese display of *lulik* heritage in the context of interactions between Portuguese colonial anthropologist António de Almeida and the ritual keepers of the house of Afaloicai that took place in Baguia in 1957. In particular, the authors consider the complex texture of entangled meanings concerning the *lulik* stones that the Timorese keepers brought to Almeida’s attention in that encounter. By moving between fieldwork in Baguia and the analysis of Almeida’s records and publications, Roque and Sousa revisit that field encounter to address the dissonances between the interpretation of the stones as prehistoric evidence by the anthropologist in the 1950s and the local cultural understandings of these materials as potent ritual objects and signs of power. In 1960, a few years after his return from Timor, António de Almeida published a scientific article reporting on his discovery of certain archaeological evidence of prehistoric cultures in “Portuguese Timor”: a set of so-called “Neolithic stones” from the village of Afaloicai. In the article, Almeida described in some detail the encounter that led to his examining and photographing of the stones, and he gave details of the names and ritual status of their Timorese keepers. The authors thus reconsider the entangled meanings of this historical

encounter, both in the light of Almeida's scientific interests in archaeology and the convoluted local political struggles of the late 1950s in "Portuguese Timor." While the anthropologist's peculiar fixation with the stone objects (in detriment of other ancient sacred objects displayed, such as Portuguese flags) can be regarded as an instantiation of his theories of an untouched East Timorese prehistoric racial past, the ritual keepers' presentation of the stones, by contrast, possibly made manifest an autonomous claim of the Afaloicai to ritual and political power. The authors finally reconsider Almeida's encounter in relation to contemporary field materials and ask what sort of histories about the past the Afaloicai stones (or else their surviving photographic representations) may still mediate and elicit in the present.

Following Cultures

Part III, "Following Cultures through Archives," represents approaches that treat the archive as a field site, or else as an important extension of ethnographic fieldwork inquiries, that can give access to indigenous sociocultural life in colonial exchanges. It starts from the assumption that traces of European cultural conceptions as well as traces of indigenous cultures populate colonial written records (cf. Douglas 2015b). Here archival records become locations in which signs of indigenous agency can be unearthed, indigenous cultural concepts and social institutions can be read, and where they can be traced in connection with their relative embroilment with European conceptions and colonizing preoccupations. "Following Cultures" thus involves a consideration of both European and indigenous understandings and their intercultural dynamics and power inequalities as they appear in written records. This approach also elucidates the diversity of cultural meanings of recorded events, with emphasis on the plurality of perspectives, and on how entanglements are experienced by the people involved. This implies attention to differences within each subject category of colonizers and colonized. "European" written accounts and understandings, for instance, were often multivocal and thus—just like indigenous recollections—should be considered as situated, partial perspectives that cannot be reduced to any single and homogeneous vision. This approach brings to light certain methodological challenges, including how to articulate different, and sometimes contradictory, accounts and subject positions *within* European written records; how to use archival registers in anthropological analysis of indigenous cultures; and how to connect polyphonic archival registers to indigenous forms of telling the past.

The first chapter in this section addresses this latter point by proposing an approach to the study of Timorese historicity that implies crossing archival records from different European languages and subject positions. The question of “how to formulate a Timorese history of Timor,” asks historian Hans Hägerdal, must consider the contribution of early modern Western-authored accounts, in which “indigenous voices” can also often be found. However, a Timor-centered historiography should also not be reduced to European accounts. In the case of Timor-Leste, a full answer to that question, the author proposes, resides in a work of “triangulation of source materials”: triangulation between Portuguese and Dutch written documents; between these and the East Timorese oral record (as this can be retrieved from ritual keepers, such as the *lian na'in*); or still between the latter and the findings of archaeology and linguistics. Thus countering a tradition of mutual ignorance between Portuguese and Dutch historiographies, the author reveals the traps of reconstructing East Timorese history with either Portuguese or Dutch records alone, arguing for the advantages of crossing Portuguese and Dutch written sources. To this purpose, Hägerdal reflects critically on the virtues and limitations of early modern records concerning the “conquest phase” of Timor in the seventeenth century. He finds striking contrasts in the themes and events of conquest that were selected and put on written record by Portuguese and Dutch authors respectively—a disjunction that must take into account the distinct political and commercial interests of the two European powers at the time. “Events of obvious importance in one archive,” Hägerdal observes, “are passed over in silence in the other. In order to appreciate them we must read the texts along the grain, elucidating their role in the early colonial milieus of maritime Asia.” And yet crossing written sources is not enough, even for the early modern period of Timor-Leste. Hence Hägerdal argues that the historian may also find valuable materials in the accumulated wealth of oral “genealogical history” that survives within Timorese lineages and houses, sometimes referencing events as far back as three hundred years. Not only can such oral stories register encounters with Europeans, they can also, again, lead to subversive shifts of historiographical emphasis on the protagonists of the conquest phase. Historians may be led to write different histories of conquest. What, one may ask, would histories of early modern colonial conquest of Timor look like if henceforth the Makassarese, rather than the Europeans, appear as central characters; or if the Topasses, the so-called “Black Portuguese,” rather than the invading white foreigners, are described

as the driving force of processes of conquest and claims for governance in that historical period?

A concern with the Portuguese colonial archive's potential for both enriching and being enriched by contemporary ethnographic research traverses McWilliam and Shepherd's contribution. Andrew McWilliam and Chris Shepherd's ethnographic work has sought to understand social change, with emphasis on how rural livelihoods were disrupted by war, by Indonesian occupation, and by the United Nations and the establishment of an independent state government. In contrast with the early wave of foreign anthropologists, who lacked systematic engagement with Portuguese records and history in general, McWilliam and Shepherd undertake their ethnographic projects while conscious of the need to articulate contemporary questions with past events. In their case, the Portuguese colonial government's efforts to establish a state-based agriculture and plantation system in Timor in the twentieth century becomes a significant benchmark for understanding current issues. The chapter thus offers an insightful reading of the Portuguese colonial plantation archive during and after the important Republican period, 1910–26. Even if they tend to efface Timorese voices, the colonial records can be read against the grain, to reveal traces of colonial land exploitation and labor coercion as well as signs of indigenous agency. "Reading against the grain not only leads to an appreciation of Timorese agency," they argue, "but also to one of the colonial propensity for dissembling and hubris." Timorese agency, the authors further argue, can include not just resistance but also an effective engagement with colonial projects, as in the dramatic cases of destruction and clearing of *lulik* lands for the purpose of establishing coffee plantations. Portuguese records allow an understanding of a colonial culture of power invested in the control, appropriation and transformation of Timorese traditional management of land and natural resources. In addition, they contain a relevant interpretive potential for field studies on sociocultural "change" in Timor-Leste today. Accordingly, McWilliam and Shepherd argue for the pressing need to engage in "historicized ethnographic inquiry" in a kind of "retrospective ethnography of plantation practice," in which both colonial records and living cultural memories play a productive analytical role. In this sense the colonial archive becomes not simply a source for extracting data but also an agent that shapes the very nature of field research.

From a distinct anthropological angle, David Hicks's contribution addresses the issue of how to integrate fragmentary colonial records-as-sources in original research inquiries concerned with the analysis

of Timorese social institutions. Here the focus is on field-based ethnography rather than archive-grounded historiography. In a retrospective and autobiographical essay (an effort at self-historicizing one's ethnographic work in its own right), Hicks reconsiders both his neglect and his use of Portuguese administrative records, census data, and even origin legends collected by Portuguese officers as sources of ethnographic "information" during his different fieldwork stays in Timor-Leste, since 1966. In the 1960s, under the influence of Rodney Needham and structural analysis, Hicks was involved in a kind of social anthropology in which history and the use of colonial documentation were minor and secondary to concerns with the social study of "authentic" indigenous institutions—such as, notably, marriage exchange, *barlake*. Hicks also reveals that in his case—notwithstanding the way that actual analysis ended up masking colonial "sources"—the information networks of Portuguese colonial administration did play a significant role in fieldwork practice. In 1966, Hicks collected and used Portuguese census data extensively (even working as a census officer himself); he also realized that, in some cases, Portuguese administrators and missionaries themselves had already produced an array of ethnographic data in the form of accounts of Timorese legends and origin stories. Although he considered this data too "fragmentary," it was his contact with a local colonial archive that prompted his interest in collecting Tetum myths. Upon his return to the field in 1999, the author resumed and reinforced the use of administrative documentation as method to understand differences between population distributions in the Portuguese period and later on, in the 2000s. Anglophone and Francophone ethnographies from the 1960s tended to simply overlook Portuguese colonial texts or else leave them in the shadow. Hicks's recollection, however, provides an example of the hidden importance of firsthand crossings between social anthropology and the Portuguese colonial ethnographic archive as a "source" for the study of Timorese social life.

Kelly Silva's chapter directs our attention to another way of engaging retrospectively with the potential of the colonial ethnographic record. In the chapter that closes this collection, Silva unearths a controversy from the late years of the Portuguese colonial period—the so-called "barlake war" (*guerra do barlaque*)—concerning the meaning of "traditional" marriage practices, and shows that this dispute informed East Timorese nationalism and continues to influence present-day understandings of marriage alliances. Silva's retrospective examination of the colonial archives was triggered primarily by her own ethnography on *barlake* in contemporary Dili, during which

the “*barlake* war” was evoked as a foundational moment in local East Timorese intellectual history. Thus, following *barlake* as a distinctive cultural trait in Timorese self-perceptions of “tradition” led to an investigation of a colonial controversy preserved in the Portuguese written records. In the 1970s, a public debate on the relative value, meaning, and moral significance of *barlake* in Timorese culture occupied the pages of the main newspapers in “Portuguese Timor.” Several Portuguese colonial officials and missionaries devalued *barlake* as no more than a commodity transaction, while a group of Catholic-educated East Timorese intellectuals—among whom were soon-to-be prominent pro-independence political leaders and resistance fighters—highlighted its social and ritual meanings and praised its positive value as an essential Timorese “traditional” institution. Although addressing a theme (marriage exchange) that was critical to foreign ethnography in Timor and elsewhere, this debate was grounded mostly on Portuguese colonial knowledge and as such developed parallel (and largely unconnected) to contemporary developments in European social anthropology. Yet the debate also reveals the vibrancy of local colonial intellectual circles and the political centrality that “nativist” concerns with establishing cultural authenticity, identity, and “tradition” around emblematic practices (such as *barlake*) played in the early phase of Timorese nationalism. The *barlake* war, Silva contends, stimulated nationalist feelings and encouraged some indigenous intellectuals to do “research on Timorese traditional forms,” as opposed to their involvement with Portuguese culture and education.

Coda: The Past in the Present

Suddenly they spoke at the same time about stories ancient and different. They only coincided when they spoke about the Manufahi war. . . . It was as if they wanted to become reconciled again concerning the war that had put a definitive end to the wars of pacification. . . . As if they were resurrected beings from the past.

—Luis Cardoso, *Crónica de uma Travessia. A Época do Ai-Dik-Funam [The Crossing: A Story of East Timor]*, 1997, our translation.

This volume calls attention to how colonial historicity can be followed in research practice and how it can be turned into a field and archival object of history and ethnography simultaneously. In East Timor—as well as in many other places strongly marked by histories of colonization—colonial history can be instantiated in documentation and in vernacular materials, in written as well as in oral, bodily, and perfor-

mative practices. The “colonial past” can be read in distinct materials and heard in a variety of cultural idioms; it can belong simultaneously to distinct and yet coexistent, partially juxtaposed forms of historicity. Our epigraph, from East Timorese writer Luís Cardoso’s 1997 autobiographical novel *The Crossing*, is inspiring and evocative of this point—and it provides an eloquent close to our introduction. The novel, originally written in Portuguese, is justly celebrated for its elegant rendering of the tensional intersections between Timorese historicities and chronological orderings of time (Moutinho 2012: 103–7). Cardoso recalls above how his late father blended rumor and fact, imagination and events, in accounts of colonial pasts. His disruption of linear chronology makes visible wider East Timorese practices of folding together past and present. In his recollections, more or less remote colonial events are made to bear upon the present as if they were one and same condensed moment: the Manufahi rebellion of 1911–13, the Japanese occupation of 1942–44, resistance fighting in 1970s, and, in the end, the very moment of storytelling. And yet even among Cardoso’s East Timorese interlocutors—let alone between them and the Portuguese intruders—the potential for dissonance in conversation about “old and different stories” is high. Such is the fascinating world of proliferated historicities in which the chapters in this volume dwell. We hope the stories they tell will inspire other researchers to make new crossings between histories and ethnographies.

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Notes

1. Ortner was somewhat dismissive of the 1970s critiques of the link between anthropology and colonialism; she included domestic social movements (the counterculture, the antiwar movement, the women's movement) among the "real-world events" that had unsettled the discipline but made no mention of anticolonial nationalist movements that proliferated over the same period (1984:138).
2. Louis Dumont's theory of caste as exemplifying a non-Western orientation toward hierarchy is a focus of Dirks's critique (2001, 1987); on the orientalizing aspect of Dumont's sociology, see also Peter van der Veer (1993).
3. Bronwen Douglas includes Island Southeast Asia within a broad definition of the Pacific Islands (or "Oceania").
4. The Pacific provides a particularly vivid case of Eric Wolf's argument (Wolf 1982) that ethnographic models of bounded, separate systems did not adequately depict the situation before European expansion, let alone the global system of links that expansion would create.
5. One of his main arguments in that article is that objectification makes it possible for traditions to be rejected by modernist Fijians.
6. Thomas has reiterated this argument numerous times (see Thomas 1996: 112–13; 1997: 37–38).
7. A significant but still underresearched case concerns the realm of Luca to the east of Belu. Combining oral and archival records, Barnes, Hägerdal and Palmer (2017) recently called attention to the lasting significance of claims to political and ritual centrality over eastern Timor (perhaps even the whole island) by the ruling lineages of Luca (see also Roque and Sousa, this volume).

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