ment of woman’s groups in home-based AIDS care in Kenya as domestic governmentality which has a long history in the colonial and postcolonial state. She convincingly argues that home-based care obtains its power and traction as a public health intervention because it builds on this historical legacy which has opened a space for women to gain social distinction and enter a legitimate relationship with the state. Benson A. Mulemi’s contribution moves from home-based care regimes around anti-HIV therapy to hospital-based care regimes of chemotherapy and radiotherapy. In his ethnography of a cancer ward in the largest public referral hospital in Nairobi, he impressively demonstrates how patients, families, doctors, and nurses recur to diverse technologies of hope to face the ambiguities and uncertainties of treating advanced cases of this deadly disease in a context of limited resources.

The third and final section addresses “Emerging Landscapes of Public Health.” Susan Reynolds Whyte investigates how members of the public in Uganda perceive the causes, prevention, and treatment of diabetes. She suggests that the poor tend to be more concerned about life conditions while those who have money and sophistication increasingly engage in preventing lifestyle diseases, encouraged by the media and an emerging market for health products. The last two contributions center on global health interventions which have dramatically changed the public health landscapes of Kisumu, the third largest city in Kenya. Ruth J. Prince explores “how people in the city navigate these landscapes, how they live and work within them, and in so doing, produce something out of them” (209). She pays particular attention to volunteers and demonstrates that their engagement in the ever-changing landscape of health projects exposes them to new knowledge and opens up new networks, contacts, and identities, although their livelihood remains unstable and uncertain. P. Wenzel Geissler provides a subtle ethnography of a transnational medical research station that operates in and around the city. His account conveys how decontextualized such high end public health and medical research is conducted in Africa, creating a sense of desire and exclusion among the local residents, while temporary staff may cross the boundaries but never really belongs.

This collection of essays provides rich insights into the diverse public health encounters and engagements of district health workers, community members, pharmacists, women living with HIV, cancer patients and those involved in their care, people exposed to diabetes, volunteers in HIV programs, temporary staff in scientific projects, and other social actors. But does the book really “rethink public health and what it means in Africa”, as Ruth Prince claims in the introduction (1)?

The book would have gained from a deeper reflection of the key terms and their interpretations in the various contributions. The concept of “public health” as conventionally defined (3) is tied to a specific concept of the “public” which could have been further elucidated. How does this interpretation compare with the definition of the “public” by Jürgen Habermas, Rebecca Marsland refers to? Marsland argues that such a public does exist in Tanzania, but it is not recognized by the health authorities (81), and Noémi Tousignant suggests that private pharmacists in Senegal constitute such a public with reference to policies regulating their work (102). In a broader sense, most essays contribute valuable insights into collectivist versus individualist notions of health protection and expectations towards the state and international organizations. A more systematic consideration of these overarching themes would have rounded up the deep and experience near insights presented in the individual essays.

The book is of particular interest for medical anthropologist working in Africa. I further recommend it for advanced undergraduate and graduate courses on health and medicine in Africa.

Brigit Obrist


Jon Henrik Ziegler Remme has written an account of his ethnographic research among the Ifugao, an ethno-linguistic group in the Cordillera of the northern Philippines. Remme, then a doctoral student at the University of Oslo in Norway conducting his doctoral dissertation, investigated the intersections between animism and Pentecostalism in Ifugao. The book “Pigs and Persons” focused on the tourist-heavy village of Batad, in the municipality of Banaue. It is also part of Remme’s larger interest on religion and culture in the region. His account of everyday experiences during fieldwork in Batad is a very personal presentation of his encounter with different personalities in the village.

The book provides a narrative of culture change and negotiations between the market economy and customary culture observed, not only in Batad, but also in other parts of the Philippine Cordillera. As the market economy erodes its dominance on traditional cultures, this book provides an account of how a culture deals with acculturation. The Ifugao is a ranked society, where social status, wealth, and prestige are measured mainly by the amount of rice land holdings of an individual. Remme effectively discusses Batad political economy and interweaves his discussions onto different aspects of Ifugao culture (i.e., gender, religion, politics, reciprocity, economy).

Perhaps the main contribution of the book is the attempt to re-evaluate the role of rice in the discussion of Ifugao aggrandizement. As most scholars (and the Ifugao themselves) consider rice as the measure of one’s wealth, Remme reminds us that there are other material aspects that explain Ifugao social ranking. The focus on pigs as the fulcrum of aggrandizement, although not new in anthropology, is the first study of its kind in Ifugao. His work provides agency to the pigs as they are offered to Ifugao gods and spirits. For Remme, the ability of an individual or families to acquire pigs for feasts and rituals ensures the maintenance of the prestige of the individual and her/his family in the community. He attributes this to the importance of pigs in Ifugao mythology and its economic value. However, missing is the explicit discussion of human agency and an explanation of why the Ifugao do
as they do, especially in the rapid economic and political transformation that they are experiencing.

Remme’s assertions that pigs (domesticated as opposed to the wild pig species) are important in rituals and feasts among the Ifugao is supported by archaeology. The pre-Spanish Ifugao’s main source of protein was based on hunted Philippine deer (*Rusa marianna*) and not from farmed pigs. However, my own ethnographic work in Ifugao indicates that chickens are more important in Ifugao rituals compared to pigs. Pigs maybe valued, but chickens are offered to the highest deities while pigs are offered to lesser gods.

As I work in another part of Ifugao, I am fascinated by Remme’s work in Batad. The ethnographic description provides us with an overview of social relationships that he observed in the village. However, there is a nagging feeling, as I read through the book, that a reader who is unfamiliar with the region will think that Batad represents Ifugao. It would have strengthened the book if it explicitly mentioned that the Ifugao is not a monolithic group. More importantly, the book did not mention the heavy tourist traffic that Batad experiences compared to other villages in the province (except the town of Banaue).

Another glaring omission in Remme’s narrative is the absence of any mention on when he conducted his fieldwork and how long he lived with the Batad villagers. Although he mentioned specific national events (i.e., local elections) and the visit of Harold Conklin (47), which could be in 2006, this information would have helped the reader evaluate his understanding of the Batad relationships and cultural processes. His reference to “months of climbing up and down the steep trails” (27) is vague and is not sufficient to assess the validity of his ethnographic representation.

There are several factual errors in book. Foremost of these is the argument that the forest patches on top of the rice terraces serve as watersheds. Work by geographers in the last 30 years has shown that forest cover actually use more water. The ecological function of the forest patches in the Ifugao landscape is to prevent erosion and control water run off. I do not fault Remme for this error since he might not be familiar with the land use literature.

An unacceptable error is his reference to the presence of clans in Batad (19, 136). As a social anthropologist, he should be familiar with kinship models that have been proposed to explain Ifugao relationships. Clan, as an anthropological concept, is absent in the Philippines. Perhaps he is referring to kindred, which is the appropriate term for blood and affinal relationships among bilateral kin groups. Clan is used for unilinear kinship reckoning. He also referred to the *tomon* (ritual village head) as the leader of *tonong* (agricultural district) (18). The *tomona* is a ritual head responsible for sponsoring rituals associated with agricultural activities, the position is devoid of political authority and power. Up until the assimilation of the Ifugao in the Philippine state, no formal leadership was ever documented among the group.

Another extremely important absent information in the book is a discussion of the ethical responsibility of the anthropologist to abide by local laws and regulations. I am not certain if Remme fulfilled the Free and Prior Informed Consent (FPIC) requirement by the National Commission on Indigenous Peoples (NCIP) as mandated by the Indigenous Peoples Rights Act (IPRA). I wonder if the community was consulted, particularly in the publication of this book, because the title is demeaning to Ifugao – pigs and persons (in this case, the Ifugao) are assumed to be on equal footing. I have learned, in my more than ten years of work in the region, that it is an insult to an Ifugao to be mentioned in the same breath as pigs.

In general, the book is nicely written. Certainly, it is a product of scholarly work, with a solid theoretical and historical backdrop. Anthropologists will find this book useful, particularly on the theoretical discussions of social differentiation. General public readers who are unfamiliar with Ifugao and the Filipinos, however, might get trapped in the notion that the Ifugao are different from mainstream societies. The title itself is exoticizing the Ifugao. The use of pigs in rituals and aggrandizement is not unique to the Philippine highlands, lowland Philippine cultures roast pigs (*lechon*) as form of conspicuous consumption (and aggrandizement), which in some way, is not different from the Ifugao’s use of pigs.

Stephen Acabado


Sanjek has assembled an eclectic mix of previously published work from the span of twenty years and a variety of sources. With chapters having former lives as varied as encyclopedia entries, in one case, and a confessed “less conventionally academic” invited contribution to a special journal issue, in another, the volume as a whole has a somewhat inconsistent tone and style – at times didactic and at others introspective. In addition to conducting some revision to these earlier works, Sanjek has provided an essential preface to help orient the reader to this heterogeneous collection, a convenient index, as well as extensive, combined notes, and references.

Much of his stalwartly pro-ethnographic book consists of what could best be described as memoir. This makes sense given that one of Sanjek’s more sustained arguments throughout the collection is that the anthropologist as both ethnographer and social theorist exerts an autobiographical agency by virtue of how one’s past motivates and thus shapes present choices such as what issues to study, how to interpret significance in conversations, observed events, and experiences in the field (at least some of which comes from the unique sociocultural “terrain” of the particular field site itself), and ultimately how to engage with one’s scholarly audience and a greater public. Sanjek holds that “ethnography is inescapably lodged in the social worlds of those who use it” (ix), but that this is satisfactory in that anthropologists today work to both reveal and control, not deny their possible biases. In his own case, he asserts a cohort effect associated with coming of age as an anthropologist in 1960s New York.