

INTRODUCTION

ON THE EQUIVALENCE BETWEEN ANTHROPOLOGY AND ETHNOGRAPHY

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It is somewhat a common practice for towering anthropologists close to or after their retirements—for instance, Edmund Leach (Kuper 1986), Lévi-Strauss (Massenzio 2001), and Clifford Geertz (Panourgiá 2002)—to be interviewed for their life-long contributions to the discipline. It is rare, however, to be interviewed for writing a single article. In *Cultural Anthropology*, Susan MacDougall (2016) interviewed Tim Ingold to know about the reactions generated by his 2014 article “That’s Enough about Ethnography.” Ingold’s article “sparked a conversation” beyond the pages of *Cultural Anthropology*, both on Twitter and in open anthropology cooperative. An animated debate ensued in *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory*, where his views first appeared. More accurately, Ingold had enunciated his thesis originally in 2007 at the A. R. Radcliffe-Brown lecture, which was published a year later in *Proceedings of the British Academy*. The combined citations of its many versions, according to the Google Scholar in August 2020, are over one thousand. As a “no-holds-barred critique of its [anthropology’s] own raison d’être” (da Col 2017: 2) and approximating a manifesto, in some ways Ingold’s article rocked the field. It received, in the main, two caricaturist responses. While some held that Ingold was dead opposed to ethnography, others maintained that he was “right in challenging the [notion that] anthropology should be a mirror image of ethnography” (da Col 2017: 2). It is true that Ingold challenged the mainstream view that anthropology and ethnography are more or less substitutes. However, it would be simplistic to reduce the depth and range of his contribution to the twin formulaic reactions.

Rationale for the Volume

This volume—*Anthropology and Ethnography Are Not Equivalent*—moves beyond a polarising and caricatured reception of Ingold's intervention as laudatory or antiethnography and instead recognises its fundamental contribution in its generative capability. It takes his multi-layered thesis as important in opening up an analytically productive space to fruitfully revisit many of the common notions about and practices in ethnography as well as those in anthropology. At stake here, then, is not whether or not one agrees with Ingold but how an engagement with his writings enables us to examine some of the most entrenched assumptions anthropologists hold, as do practitioners of other disciplines, about their discipline and ethnography. To this end and in consonance with Ingold's overall objectives, the volume sheds fresh light on the diverse ways in which to renew anthropology's potential for the future, especially when the discipline is faced with precariousness and challenges in the contemporary neoliberal times, including its decreasing voice and relevance in the public arenas.

The six contributors in this volume respond to Ingold in various ways. Whereas some defend the very notion of ethnography, which Ingold subjects to a thorough criticism, by invoking Weber on a specific topic (but without relating it to his overall thoughts such as the idea of "value-free" science and its putative objectivity based inter alia on the surgical separation between fact and value; see Allen 2004: 4; Pollock 1993: 85, 119n11; Weber 1946), and the notion of the disciplinary calling, others, enthralled by the poetic appeal of Ingold's writing, find it less than relevant in conducting research on, for example, themes relating to "dark anthropology." Yet others enthusiastically welcome Ingold's intervention but find his intervention wanting in many respects and less than radical in others. Thus, the contributors aim to further push the frontier of the discourse in directions unthought or underthought in Ingold's original contribution. The sites of engagement are richly diverse ranging as they do from anthropology of science to anthropology of religion, anthropology of terrorism to anthropology of ethnicity and language, and from locations as diverse as Egypt, Greece, India, Laos, Mauritius, Thailand, and Switzerland. The range of engagements—thematic and geographical—goes to demonstrate the salience of Ingold's far-reaching interventions, which the volume in your hands or on your screens further broadens.

This volume engages with Ingold to address two sets of questions: (1) those about the relationships between ethnography¹ and anthropology that are explicitly at the core of his writings, and (2) additional

and implied questions, which his writings enable but do not elaborate or enunciate. Patrick Eisenlohr and Patrice Ladwig take up the first set of questions. Unlike Ingold, both seem to be mostly committed to the “traditional” ideas about ethnography and find the concept of “correspondence” between participant observers and people they work with less than helpful. Based on their respective fieldworks in Mauritius, Laos, and Thailand, they demonstrate their unease with Ingold’s idea of correspondence. For Eisenlohr, this takes the form of radical incongruence between his commitment to anthropology (also to his own ideology) and those of his interlocutors who were wedded to the ethnic and religious ideology of Hindu nationalism. In his study of the Buddhist death rituals and while working in crematoria in Laos and Thailand, Ladwig, contra Ingold, felt the need for noncorrespondence as well as a temporal objectification.

As concerns the second set of questions, other contributions take the debate in unexpected (but connected) directions. For instance, if ethnography is so problematic, as Ingold has it, then is there an alternative to it? If not ethnography, what sort of -graphy should we practice? Drawing on Walter Benjamin and his own recent works on historical-cultural memory in Europe and the place of architecture therein, Jeremy Walton proposes an alternative graphic form, “constellational writing,” in conjunction with what he arrestingly calls “textured historicity.” Irfan Ahmad takes on elision of the political (Ahmad 2018) and international relations (IR) in Ingold to foreground a reformulated notion of holism by scaling it up to a horizon anthropologists have hitherto been reluctant to approach—holism on an awkward global scale with politics, IR, and other fields as its lynchpins. He also examines the category of “the people,” which is at the heart of Ingold’s definition of both anthropology and ethnography. Tracing the changing trajectory of the subject matter of anthropology from “other culture,” “race,” “the native,” “the primitive,” and “simple society” to “the people,” Ahmad asks if the replacement of earlier terms with “people” solves the problem or instead raises more questions, especially from the perspective of political theory and IR. Based on her research in Egypt among intellectuals and concerning the role of media, Hatsuki Aishima asks if and to what extent Ingold’s exposition on relationships between and conceptualizations of ethnography and anthropology work in anthropological studies of Islam in the Middle East. She also relates these questions to her role as a lecturer teaching courses on Islam at the University of Manchester—a subject unmentioned by Ingold. Based on her fieldwork with particle physicists at CERN (Conseil Européen pour la Recherche

Nucléaire—the European Organization for Nuclear Research, Switzerland), Arpita Roy aims to shift the focus from Ingold's emphasis on the ontological to the impersonal and the logical to note the limits of ethnography. Viewing anthropological research as a form of experimental mode of inquiry, she observes that the logical relations—contradictions, dualisms, separations, oppositions, and the like—are no less human. Taking the Socratic approach to inquiry, she asks if and how ethnography can, viewed mainly as an ontological encounter, account for the logical.

Questions such as these relate as much to the past of anthropology as to its present and future. And since the future of anthropology is predicated on the future of other disciplines—indeed the future of the world at large, including the transformation in/of academy—these contributions likewise touch on these multiple futures. In the context of this volume, these questions are clearly linked to the relationships between ethnography and anthropology, as understood conventionally by anthropologists as much as by nonanthropologists (see below).

Thanks to the prevailing consensus that practicing anthropology amounts to practicing ethnography (Clifford Geertz being its one prominent example—see Aishima, this volume) and the increasing embrace of “ethnographic methods” by nonanthropologists, there is a superabundance of publications on ethnography. For example, practitioners of political science such as Schatz (2009), Wedeen (2010), and Priyam (2016) have made a strong case for political scientists to adopt what they see as anthropology's “ethnographic method.” While for Wedeen it is ethnographic method in plural, for Priyam it is in singular. In contradistinction to rational choice and game theories preponderant in political science, especially in its dominant behaviorist model, Wedeen (2010: 257) defines ethnography as “immersion in the place and lives of people under study.” However, as Ingold rightly notes in his response to his interlocutors in this volume, contra Wedeen, immersion is far from an innocent idea. Along lines similar to Wedeen, for Priyam (2016: 119), “ethnographic method” is characterized by “small n” and it distinguishes itself from the quantitative method marked by “Large N.” Concerned as she is primarily with election studies, for Priyam, anything that is based on conversation with voters and is not derived from surveys or opinion polls conducted by psephologists or media houses briskly passes as “ethnographic.”

Even without giving examples of how social scientists other than political scientists think of anthropology and ethnography (for an account by a sociologist, see O'Reilly 2012), needless to say, anthro-

pologists themselves have published too many books on the topic to list here. However, most such books—both by anthropologists and nonanthropologists—often adopt the taken-for-granted view of ethnography as a method, tool, technique, procedure, and so on (e.g., see Eriksen 2001, Gingrich 2012, Kottak 2008, Kuper 1983, Robben and Sluka 2007; these examples are obviously representative, not exhaustive). In contrast, this volume approaches the subject quite differently. It is distinctive in three respects.

First, at the center of this volume are the diverse, engaged, and critical responses to Tim Ingold's recent interventions (Ingold 2008a, 2008b, 2014, 2017), which are probably among the very few to comprehensively and systematically interrogate the received wisdom on the equivalence between ethnography and anthropology. To the best of my knowledge, I cannot think of another volume that discusses this subject so substantively and pointedly.

Second, contrary to the consensual view of ethnography as a method or tool, the volume follows Ingold in going past the construal of ethnography as a method to relate it to the very constitution, aims, and objectives of anthropology as a discipline, which in turn brings into question the very idea of method and ethnography. Put differently, it is this dialectical take on ethnography and anthropology, whereby both become simultaneously the subjects of critical examination and renewal or reorientation, that makes this volume distinct.

Third, although the single-authored books by McLean (2017) and Rees (2018) address, albeit quite differently, some of the questions Ingold raises, this volume is distinct because unlike these two books, which solely propound the views of their respective authors, this volume foregrounds a multiplicity of standpoints. This multiplicity is also distinguished by its thematic and spatial diversity. Rather than being preoccupied with specific concepts (of aesthetic theory, in the case of McLean), this volume approaches the issues from a fairly broad, more diverse set of theoretical frameworks, not to speak of the variety of cultural settings ranging from Europe and the Middle East to the Indian subcontinent and Southeast Asia. The respective subfields from which contributors to this volume engage with and expand Ingold's propositions are likewise diverse: anthropology of science, anthropology of religion, anthropology of terrorism, and anthropology of ethnicity and language. The diversity of viewpoints and cultural settings this volume presents further opens up the field for future dialogues with a range of scholars and interlocutors working in varied cultural sites and political milieus.

Anthropology, Ethnography, and the Future

In my reading, Ingold's multiple intervention consists of two connected propositions. First, his exposition on the idea that anthropology equals ethnography is crucially tied to the larger goal of securing "the kind of impact in the world" anthropology "deserves" and that "the world so desperately needs" (2014: 383, 384). This goal will remain unfulfilled, he observes, as long as there remains a conflation between ethnography/fieldwork and participant observation (PO). This precisely is his second point. Ingold's article is a diagnosis of this double conflation to rescue anthropology "under threats"—a concern earlier expressed by fellow anthropologists such as Bruce Kapferer (2007) and Marshall Sahlins (1999).

In Ingold's view, the conflation between anthropology and ethnography did not operate in the past, at least in British anthropology, which he heavily draws on to foreground his contention. They became "virtually equivalent," he observes, "over the last quarter of a century" (2008b: 69). There is something odd about Ingold's assertion here. Broadly the same period during which he thinks the conflation between the two took place, however, also saw many anthropological works that were seldom ethnographic, as conventionally construed. These works also became popular, even canonical in some ways. Some examples are as follows: Appadurai's (1996) *Modernity at Large*; Asad's (1993, 2003) *Genealogies of Religion and Formations of the Secular*; Mamdani's (2005) *Good Muslim, Bad Muslim*; Trouillot's (1995) *Silencing the Past*; van der Veer's (1994, 2001) *Religious Nationalism and Imperial Encounters*; and Eric Wolf's (1982) *Europe and People Without History*. Obviously, examples cited here are by no means exhaustive, and they bear the mark of the editor's interest (perforce his limitations too). My point is that the subfields of historical anthropology (as distinct from anthropology of history—on which, see Palmié and Stewart 2016) and comparative anthropology (see below)—historical and comparative are not mutually exclusive—flourished independently of ethnography. Needless to point out, ethnography was not even possible in the kind of work and questions that Sidney Mintz's (1985) *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History* undertook. In the book's Acknowledgments, Mintz expresses gratitude not to "informants" but instead to librarians of various libraries across the Atlantic. Concerned with the production of sugar in the Caribbean and its consumption in Europe and North America, Mintz aimed to chart out the entangled but asymmetrical historical relations, in place since 1492, between the colonies and the metropolis. To this

end, he mapped out the history of sugar consumption in Great Britain from 1650 until 1900, when it had become an everyday item in most households. Remarkably, as an anthropologist—and unlike Robben (2010: vi) in a different context—Mintz rightly felt no need to offer an apology that his inquiry was not ethnographic and lacked long-term fieldwork. For him, a historical inquiry was well within the precinct of anthropology, an undertaking that was neither conterminous with nor reducible to ethnography.²

As for the second conflation, between ethnography/fieldwork and PO, Ingold advises dropping the former. He takes ethnography as “*writing about the people*” (2014: 385—italics in original). A monograph that records “the life and times of a people may justifiably be called ethnographic.” However, according to Ingold, it is misleading to call “our encounters with people, to the fieldwork in which these encounters take place, to the methods by which we prosecute it, or to the knowledge that grows therefrom” ethnographic. For Ingold, to choose PO rather than ethnographic fieldwork is to underline the “ontological commitment” to the people with whom anthropologists work. The pivot of this ontological commitment is educational in that anthropology itself becomes “a practice of education” (Ingold 2014: 388).³ Against ethnography that sees encounters with people in terms of reportage or description of that which is already past, Ingold conceives PO as a correspondence between the anthropologist and people, the goal of which is the coimagining of possible futures rather than ethnographizing the past. As an intersubjective enterprise, PO “couples the forward movement of one’s own perception and action with the movements of others, much as melodic lines are coupled in musical counterpoint.” Ingold names this coupling of movements as *correspondence*. Thus conceived, the difference between PO and ethnographic fieldwork, and correspondence and description respectively, comes to its full glare. The “appeal to ethnography holds anthropology hostage to the popular stereotype of the ethnographer” as chronicler of particularism thereby preventing it from “having the wider, transformative effect” (2014: 392–93). In contrast, PO as a correspondence and educational-learning practice attends to the potential and to the “co-imagining of possible futures” (2014: 389–91). It is the PO, not ethnography, that will restore anthropology to its due place, concludes Ingold.

What is anthropology, however? Ingold discusses it in much detail in his Radcliffe-Brown lecture. Ethnography is concerned with the particular, whereas anthropology deals with generalizations. Here, Radcliffe-Brown, who conceptualized anthropology as a nomothetic

and theoretical as opposed to an ideographic (e.g., history) discipline (also see Goldthorpe 2000), seems to be Ingold's source of inspiration (2008b: 70–79, 90). Ingold appears to suggest that it is by (re)turning to Radcliffe-Brown's conception of anthropology as a nomothetic discipline that anthropology can regain its voice. However, the precise contours of this proposition, if such is his proposition in the first place, are far from clear and not adequately laid out. That is, how can one arrive at generalizations in a world marked by sheer diversity? What is the arche in the Leibnizian mould (Dillon 1996: 12–13) from which generalizations and philosophizing would be undertaken? In fact, Ingold concludes by asking: "With its dreams of generalizations shattered, where should anthropology go?" Instead of answering the question pointedly, he suggests a move toward philosophy—a philosophy different from that of philosophers, however. Ingold's philosophy is "not in the arm chair but in the world." He offers the definition of anthropology as "philosophy with the people in" (2014: 393). It is indeed a terse definition, which Ahmad's chapter ahead subjects to a detailed critique.

Ingold's decoupling of the second conflation is markedly relevant. Part of this decoupling, including the conflation between anthropology and ethnography, may seem somewhat more stylistic than substantive, however. Many anthropologists practiced it without expressing it precisely in the same terms Ingold uses. For instance, Asad wrote:

Most anthropologists are taught that their discipline is essentially defined by a research technique (participant observation) carried out in a circumscribed field and that as such it deals with particularity—with what Clifford Geertz, following the philosopher Gilbert Ryle, called "thick description." . . .

In my view, anthropology is more than a method, and it should not be equated—as it has popularly become—with the direction given to inquiry by the pseudoscientific notion of "fieldwork." . . . What is distinctive about modern anthropology is the comparison of embedded concepts (representations) between societies differently located in time or space. (2003: 16–17)

As the quote above demonstrates, Talal Asad (re)asserts the comparative and theoretical objectives of anthropology. Importantly, such a comparative anthropological pursuit is not premised on equivalence between anthropology and fieldwork or participant observation. This is not the proper place to go into an in-depth treatment of comparison in anthropology, including the reassessment of its epistemological and methodological assumptions in the history of the discipline over

longue durée and its return in the contemporary moment (on which, see Candea 2019; Gingrich 2012; Gingrich and Fox 2002; Holy 1987; cf. Boas 1896). For the purpose of the present discussion, I want to briefly discuss van der Veer's (2016) book on comparison in anthropology. In the vein of Mintz, in *The Value of Comparison*, van der Veer pursues as well as outlines the task of anthropological comparison without necessarily tying it to the indispensability of ethnography. This is not to say that the book does not use ethnographic materials, those of others as well as his own. It most certainly does. But it equally deploys works by historians, sociologists, scholars of religion, political theorists, novelists, and others. What is clear is that van der Veer rejects the types of anthropological comparison that he terms "the macro sociological form of ethnic profiling," and which, in his view, characterized holism-inspired works such as *Patterns of Cultures* by Ruth Benedict, *The Cultural Background of Personality* by Ralph Linton, as well as works by Abraham Kardiner and Francis Hsu (in Ahmad 2020: 16–17). Fox and Gingrich (2002: 3) make a similar contention as they too abandon what they call "holocultural comparison."⁴

Clearly, the aim of the above discussion about ethnography and its place vis-à-vis historical and comparative anthropology is not to undervalue Ingold's intervention but instead to situate his argument and concerns in relation to earlier and other writings on anthropology in general and ethnography in particular (Mauss 2007; Parkin and Ulijaszek 2007; Reed-Danahay 2017; Robben and Sluka 2007; Wolf 2001). More importantly, the generative qualities of his writings allow us to ask questions that connect with and at times also exceed Ingold's interventions, which, as noted earlier, have generated an important debate, animating anthropologists worldwide.

Outline of Contributions

Before closing this Introduction with an outline of chapters to follow, two disclaimers are in order. First, this volume deals with a fragment of Ingold's otherwise multifarious and prolific list of publications, which span nearly half a century. By its very nature, this volume is problem-oriented rather than corpus-specific. Readers who maintain that a scholar's contribution to a specific subject can properly be appreciated only in relation to her entire corpus can undertake such an exercise on their own. Second, to see various contributions to this volume in dualistic terms of detractors or admirers of Ingold would be close to defeating its very purpose (with the possible exception of

Eisenlohr's essay in the former category). All contributors regard Ingold's interventions as salient enough to engage with, though their modes of engagement and the manner in which they (dis)agree with them are evidently diverse. Overall, their critique is immanent, not transcendental (Ahmad 2017). Risking the charge of reductionism, including slinking away from their multilayered density and diverse points of entry, the arrangement of chapters proceed from application or operationalization of Ingold's reflections and near agreement with them to intense disagreement, questioning and expanding themes and points implied, silent or unsaid therein. It follows that readers can modify the existing organization of chapters to suit their intellectual tastes and priorities.

By discussing two types of select writings in her contribution—those on anthropology of Islam in general and on anthropology of Islam in Egypt in particular—Aishima critically assesses if and how Ingold's observation sheds light on those specific writings and the implication arising therefrom for an anthropology of Islam. Put differently, she works to determine if and how the practices of correspondence operate in the anthropology of Islam. Here, she discusses the changing nature of works on Islam in the Middle East after Edward Said and Talal Asad's interventions and relates these changes to Ingold's (re)formulation of anthropology. Along the way, she also dwells on the postmodern debates on crisis of representation in anthropology. More importantly, she observes incongruence between her role as an ethnographer, which, in Ingold's terms, is oriented toward learning from people with whom one works, and her role as a teacher when she taught courses on Islam. Aishima finds Ingold's thesis about anthropological research as study *with* rather than *of* Egyptians/Muslims as fruitful (and echoing Asad's formulation of Islam as a discursive tradition), while wondering if the same holds true for classrooms where her many Muslim students sharply object, for instance, to her views about sectarian differences within Islam. She adds further richness to her analysis by reflecting on her own subject position.

Against the possible (mis)reading of Ingold as seeking to renounce ethnography, Roy thoughtfully reads him as arguing for correspondence and attending to others. Beyond the ontological imperatives, Roy, however, pleads for a Socratic dialogue whereby fieldwork becomes more than an intersubjective correspondence to pursue the larger dialectic of anthropological craftsmanship. To foreground her contention, Roy draws on her extensive fieldwork with practitioners of "hard science" at CERN, Switzerland. Central to her contention is the primacy of the logical and impersonal relations vis-à-vis the

ontological, which she analyses with unusual brevity and in a flowing prose. In the tradition of anthropological thinking such as Uberoi's (2002), she asks: To what extent and how can logical relationships in the forms of contradictions, dualisms, separations, and oppositions be accounted for through ethnography, putatively conceived as an inter-subjective enterprise alone?

In his contribution, Walton interrogates the strict distinction between anthropology and ethnography that Ingold proposes. Noting that Ingold rightly identifies serious problems in the ideas and practices of ethnography, he finds Ingold grappling with a "graphic" dilemma that his argument logically entails: If not ethnography, what sort of -graphy should anthropologists, then, practice? Based on this reading—Ingold finds it a misreading bordering on "accusation"—Walton takes on the challenging task of proposing an alternative, which he calls "constellational writing." Drawing on Walter Benjamin, especially his publications on the practices of writing, and relating them ethnographically to a mosque in Thessaloniki, Greece, he shows what an alternative to ethnography might look like. At the center of his alternative proposal lies the notion of time. Unlike anthropologists–ethnographers who write about people with whom they work in the past tense, in Walton's reading, Benjamin dialectically viewed the present as a "past future."

Taking the subject of "correspondence" head on, in his contribution, Ladwig provocatively argues—along the "counterpoint" method of thinking associated with Dutch anthropologist–sociologist W. F. Wertheim (1974)—for a "noncorrespondence." While recognizing its relevance elsewhere, he argues that practicing "correspondence" in what Sherry Ortner calls "dark anthropology" is less than easy, to some extent even undesirable and impossible. Discussing the dynamics of Buddhist death rituals in Laos and Thailand, Ladwig instead argues in favor of establishing distance and noncorrespondence with his informants as a more reasonable practice. Largely sympathetic to Ingold's "idealist" vision imbued as he finds it with a theological baggage, in practice, Ladwig finds it unworkable because fieldwork is equally marked by circumstances with cracks and fault lines. In contrast to Ingold's rejection of objectification, he instead offers qualified justifications for it, noting how temporal alienation may well be a useful strategy to deal with such tough situations as during his own fieldwork.

Along partly similar but markedly different lines, Eisenlohr defends the conventional and what some might take as an "old-fashioned" idea and practice of ethnography. To this end, Eisenlohr dwells, *inter alia*, on the significant difference between knowledge interests and

institutional and professional commitments of anthropologists on the one hand, and those of their informants or interlocutors on the other. Due mainly to this difference, what Ingold calls “correspondence” and “ontological commitment” as hallmarks of participant observation, Eisenlohr maintains, do not fully work. If they do, they do only precariously, even indefensibly. Eisenlohr’s analysis is based on his long-term, extensive fieldwork in Mauritius where he finds a radical incongruence between his own goals and those of the activists–interlocutors committed to an explicitly ethnic, anti-Muslim Hindu nationalist cause. In disagreement with Ingold and invoking Max Weber, he notes that anthropological fieldwork is more like a Weberian calling rather than a process of becoming or coimagining of futures in Ingoldian registers.

While in agreement with Ingold’s questioning of the substitution between ethnography and anthropology, Ahmad critiques Ingold for his failure to fully account for politics and international relations (IR) in any enterprise to reimagine anthropology. To this end, Ahmad focuses on “the people”—a term at the center of Ingold’s definitions of both anthropology and ethnography. Ahmad asks how the replacement of earlier terms—such as other culture, the primitive, race, tribe, simple society, and so on—with “the people” serves the purpose of renewing anthropology. Drawing on his fieldwork with journalists and media’s reporting on terrorism in India, Ahmad calls for a reformulated notion of holism with political theory and IR as its lynchpins. He also argues that beyond the cliché of anthropology as studying “others,” anthropology should also study “us,” asking how people become “other” or “us.” For anthropology to be a voice beyond the university silo, so goes his contention, it should concern itself more with the true than with what is merely real. After an extensive critical engagement with Ingold, Ahmad offers his own definition of anthropology as “political philosophy with ‘people’ in.”

Addressing the key issues that various contributions have raised, the volume concludes with a detailed and an animated response from Ingold. His response lucidly clarifies many issues and answers several questions raised here. Ingold deftly spells out the distinctions—once more—between ethnography and anthropology; he also dwells on the pitfalls emanating from their hurriedly assumed union. Reflecting on objections to the term “correspondence” by some interlocutors, he relationally and vividly elaborates on the associated concepts of “harmony” and “resonance” to clarify and assert the significance of “correspondence” as a term. Particularly illuminating is his exposition, albeit too brief—in response to Eisenlohr with whom no other

contributor seems to share the ground—on the disciplinary boundaries and the continuing image or claim of academia as an institution of autonomous knowledge. It is also the case, however, that Ingold does not address every issue or argument that contributors make, at least not comprehensively enough. To take one among many examples, Ingold's response to the questions of truth and the true that Ahmad and Roy broach are certainly instructive. However, it does not offer an elaborate treatment of their various components and the interrelationships among them; much less resolve these thorny questions. No response, including the texts, from which the response emanates and is directed at (here Ahmad and Roy), can truly answer these questions. That would indeed tantamount to closure of conversations, or what Ingold in his response tellingly calls a "final resolution." In that very spirit to continue rather than resolve the conversations, Ingold's response demonstrates the generosity and openness characteristic of a true scholar. This is manifest, for instance, in Ingold's willingness, in light of Ahmad's interdisciplinary critique (at the intersections of political theory, international relations, and the related fields), to revise his earlier definition of anthropology—anthropology is "philosophy with the people in"—as follows: "I was naïve not to anticipate the way in which the idea of 'the people' would be mobilized in the rhetoric of contemporary populism, as the signs were already there. In retrospect, it would have been better to leave out the offending article, rendering anthropology thus as 'philosophy with people in.'"

However, on occasions, I tend to think that I have been misunderstood, as does Ingold vis-à-vis the critiques of him by the contributors to this volume. For instance, the spirit of my critique pertained not to "the people" only but equally to people without the definite article "the" and which Ingold offers as an alternative to earlier terms anthropology used to describe their subject matter: "tribe," "the primitive," "simple society," "the non-West," "other cultures," and so on. Likewise, my critique of anthropology's holism as delinked from politics and IR relates to dominant practice of holism undertaken in the discipline more widely and not to its sectional or private understandings by some (Wittgenstein 1953). It is puzzling to read that Ingold finds that my reformulated notion of holism involves "totalization," a word that I never use nor do I convey its sense through other words. Like him, I too am no fan of totalization. Even more astonishing is Ingold's inference that my critique of him about his idea of people torn apart, inter alia, from the fields of politics and IR amounts to rejection of his definition of anthropology, "people" being one of the keywords. Put simply, my submission is that "people" with or without "the" is not an innocent

word or term; instead, it is deeply connected to and predicated on politics, from which Ingold's exposition maintains quite a distance. Other contributors may have impressions of similar misreading of their own expositions. As is often the case, misunderstanding is not foreign to discussions, especially of the sort this volume broaches in greater depth. During the years ahead, contributors to this volume, Ingold, as well as readers and future interlocutors will likely have the opportunity to clarify and articulate their standpoints more thoroughly and pointedly. Knowledge, or more appropriately wisdom (*hikma/hikmat* in Islamic and Islamicate traditions), is a process in collective thinking—impermanence and openness being its marked features.

Given the regnant substitutive identification between anthropology and ethnography and Ingold's sustained examination of it, which this volume critically expands, enhances, and enriches, anthropologists as well as the wider community of social scientists who are receptive to ethnographic and anthropological insights will hopefully find this volume of great interest, engaging with its (de)merits.

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Notes

1. Since many contributors to this volume are professionally affiliated with institutions in Göttingen, it is additionally important to note that the word “ethnography” originated in the university town of Göttingen. Historian of anthropology Han E. Vermeulen (1995: 39–40, 43, 50, 53) records that linguist–historian August Ludwig Schläözer of Göttingen first used *Ethnographie* in German in 1771. Vermeulen thus contests the

- demotic belief that this word was first used in Britain in the 1830s. In France, the word *Ethnographie* appeared in the 1820s. Used as an equivalent of *Völkerkunde* and in relation to *Volkskunde*, *Ethnographie* meant historical and descriptive study of peoples or nations, “the history of nations or Völkergeschichte” (also see Vermeulen 2006). See also note 4 below.
2. Elsewhere, Mintz (Undated) observed that without his earlier “on-the-ground-fieldwork,” he could not have written the kind of historical anthropology he did. He considered it important to clarify that he was trained in anthropology, not in history. See Walton, this volume, on the purity of disciplines and methods. For a more recent engagement of history, historicity, and memory in relation to anthropology, see Walton (2019).
 3. Talal Asad’s (2020) following remark is worth quoting: “participant-observation is not merely the distinctive method of a particular academic discipline but the essence of all learning.”
 4. Meanings of the word *comparison* vary within as well as outside a discipline. Though many take comparison as integral to anthropology, others do not. In one reading, based on participant observation, ethnography focuses on a single culture from an emic frame pertaining to the local-particular. In contrast, ethnology studies cultures; it is comparative, broad, and theory-driven. Further, as ethnologists analyze finished ethnographies rather than conducting their own, their standpoint is etic (Flemming 2011). In another account, while ethnography addresses “what,” “when,” and “where,” ethnology answers the questions of “why” and “how” to transcend “simple description” and arrive at “analysis and comparison” (Eisenberg 1971: 298). The interpretative turn and Geertz’s advocacy of thick description, writes Welz, proposed “not to generalize across cases but to generalize within them” (in Welz 2001: 4,864). Absent from Welz’s discussion is Geertz’s *Islam Observed*, which went beyond generalizing within. Elsewhere I have argued (Ahmad 2018) how *Islam Observed* belonged to the genre of Cold War anthropological works (see Chapter 6) engaged in producing “national personality” and “national identity” (Fabian 1983). Dotted with orientalism, Geertz’s work exemplified “holocultural comparison” between Indonesia and Morocco. Notably, definitions in general, including those of a discipline, are an exercise in the drawing of boundaries. Not set in stone, definitions shape and are shaped by power matrix: academic, political-economic, and the like.

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