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# De la Cadena, Marisol and Blaser, Mario (Eds.). A World Of Many Worlds. Durham and London, Duke University Press, 2018.

Sally A. Applin Ph.D.
*Centre for Social Anthropology and Computing (CSAC,* sally@sally.com

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In *A World of Many Worlds*, Marisol de la Cadena and Mario Blaser assemble the work of six contributing authors, each addressing aspects of the underlying theme of the "Pluriverse," a term created to describe the "ecologies of practices across heterogeneously entangled worlds," such as those that extend beyond what science suggests is relevant, into indigenous cultures and their representative structures. The discussion of these, primarily motivated by a concern for the ecology and preservation of our planet, is illustrated via a focus on the concept of the Anthropocene (a new age of time/temporality) and the mechanisms that form the political ontologies within it. In summary, this volume expressly addresses how we must consider all cultural perspectives as we work to solve humanity's most pressing crises.

To do this, it is argued that we must reassess the "other" in our worldview. The other can no longer be conceived of in the current socio-political climate as being human, bounded by ethnicity or place, but must include both human and "other-than-human-persons" (p.12) having belief structures that are often embedded in their environs—or are the belief structures themselves within, of, or from the environs. These include, and are not limited to, the animal and mountain spirits that are omitted from conversations about the world and whom are rarely included as active participants in the ethnographies and knowledge that shape political decisions, debates, and outcomes critical to the conditions of their existence. In this vein, ethnographic fieldwork is described as being not solely about the collection of data, but rather as a practice capable of shaping outcomes, collectively creating "worlding tools" (p. 6) with political impact for all, while favoring only some.

Understandably, this volume attempts to frame varying heterogeneous realties and how they are impacted by having a continued focus on the Anthropocene. This is a critical topic in 2019's world of rapid climate change, political unrest, and increasing nationalism. The tensions between not only those with and without means but also between the beliefs inherent to their respective places, are overlooked in policies that are shaping our collective future. As the world stares down the barrel of the eradication of multiple species (including potentially and eventually humans) due to climate change, there is a palpable imbalance of inclusion of multiple voices and perspectives on the outcomes of decisions and policies that impact the entire globe. From an ecological perspective, the authors examine the omission of the voices of those most affected by corporate resource extractavism.

A major theme in this volume is knowledge and the critical observation and belief that those making knowledges make the "worlds they know" and, as such, are conditioned to "reinstate themselves" recursively. This is how the recursion of knowledge and knowledge-making practices can potentially perpetuate a system that excludes the 'others' and what they hold sacred. As the authors discuss, this displaces even the 'other of knowledges,' thus limiting the boundaries of knowledge for defining and participating in full realities, especially those including beliefs, spirits, and their embodiments. Marilyn Strathern, in "Opening up Relations," explores how relations enable knowledge. She questions how we make things known, including relations between subject-object and their cocreation (p. 24), discussing how to "open up" the process to include relations and non-relations as objects of knowledge.

In "Spiderweb Anthropologies: Ecologies, Infrastructures, Entanglements," Alberto Corseín Jiménez uses the spiderweb as a metaphor for our current world state, describing the spiderweb's attributes of grace, beauty, tension, frailty, violence, and catastrophe. Most

critically, the spiderweb, functioning not only as a trap or a symbol of entrapment but also as an 'environs,' offers what Jiménez describes as a type of symbiotic recursion of energy, representing what he defines as, "Double Environmentalism" (*i.e.*, in which worlds are being created by the spider while "recapturing the worlds of others") (p. 53). Double Environmentalism alludes to other meanings and worlds, particularly the continuing theme of reality and the others and their narratives and perspectives, which are critical to holistic knowledge-making and which are left out of the planning and any potential future outside of the Anthropocene.

In "The Challenge of Ontological Politics," Isabelle Stengers characterizes the global West as a machine that "destroys both politics and ontologies" and further claims that "a world destroying machine cannot fit with other worlds" (p. 86),  setting the background for political ontologies as a mechanism for potential resistance to this model. Using science as an example, Stengers discusses the elitism of scientists, manifested in their loyalty to the "conquest machine" of science, without much consideration of the other realities (here meaning disciplines, and other-than-human-persons) and contexts that enable such science to occur. Stengers' chapter maintains an interesting compatibility with the notion of Jiménez's spiderweb in that arguments of science are portrayed as recursive, reflexive, and self-bounded.

Helen Verran's chapter, "The Politics of Working Cosmologies Together While Keeping Them Separate," explores how group knowledge is created, with a critical point being that the group together is where new knowledge can be created, separate from each member's prior knowledge (p. 11).  Verran reminds us that to fully understand individual knowledge perspectives when engaging in cosmopoliticas, we must ask knowers their otological, methodological, epistemological, and axiological reasoning (p. 127) and must further acknowledge that these perspectives can transcend the ethnographer's belief or understanding in new ways (pp. 124–125).

In "Denaturalizing Nature," John Law and Marianne Lien discuss the idea of nature as being not a single or static entity but rather an "outcome of [the] myriad practices" that are constantly reshaping it (p. 132). Law and Lin discuss nature as a concept that is location bound, defined as a relation of objects and practices intersecting in physical proximity (p. 147). This shares the theme of heterogeneity and differing perspectives found in the main theme of the volume and also presents support for the conflicts described in prior chapters, touching on science, perspectives of reality, singular foci, and policy, squarely including terrain and physical landscape.

Eduardo Viveiros de Castro and Déborah Danowski, in "Humans and Terrans in the Gaia War," describe the tension of the Earth "taking on the appearance of a threatening power" even while it is "fragile and susceptible" (p. 172). They ask the reader to consider the dual roles of the Anthropocene and of Gaia (a "new way of experiencing space") (p. 172). Within these models, humans are described as being  simultaneously victims and culprits (p. 176) of cause and effect. Using frames from Dipesh Chakrabarty, Gunther Anders, and Burno Latour, Viveiros de Castro and Danowski discuss the detail of the intellectual, physical, and fractal positions of many "others" in time, space, perspective, politic, and existence.

The weakness of this book is that frankly, it is chewy. It's a challenging read, steeped in science and technology studies, with cyborg references and multiple reflections. It also raises issues that while well argued, seem unsolvable. However, it is fascinating and worth the time investment, for there are gems. Jiménez's trap metaphor shines, and the authors' overall earnestness and dedication to the topic at hand is superb. The strength of this book is its

presentation and varied discussion of the omission of all of the "other-than-human-persons" who comprise the heterogeneity of cultures that form worlds beyond the Anthropocene.

Blaser and de la Cadena, with backgrounds in anthropology, geography, and archeology, develop new knowledge that is inclusive, layered, nuanced, and contemporary for our time. They remind us that there is no "one-world world" (p. 3) and that as the colonizers become simultaneously colonized (p. 3), we all must find our way towards new conceptualizations and solutions. This book provides excellent fodder for readers to reflexively consider their individual roles in the global knowledge-making process, the outcomes they create (and are creating), and the frames within which they dwell.  Thus, in the spirit of this volume, the best way forward towards solving these issues is for each reader of this book to acknowledge their own knowledge development biases as they engage with this group's ideas and material, remembering Verran's point of the group as a new knowledge source, with awareness for Jiménez's recursive traps. Perhaps in this way, more collaborative knowledge can be developed, that moves us forward, towards opening our minds and bodies to many more "other-than-human-persons" and their perspectives.

Sally A. Applin PhD
HRAF Advanced Research Centres (EU), Canterbury
Centre for Social Anthropology and Computing (CSAC)
sally@sally.com