in the latter half of the 20th century. Here her discussion becomes less comparative, per se. She focuses on the dynamic tropological specter of "India" as well as the moral politics of sex and gender at work in the overlapping musical genres of chutney, soca, and calypso. For the uninitiated, her summary and explication of the fascinating and hotly contested genealogies of these musics is especially valuable. Chapter 3 deals with the local hybrid "Indian" category of chutney music, which draws on Hindu wedding and childbirth songs sung historically by women but has become secularized, popularized, resexualized, and Anglicized since the 1970s. This chapter also considers soca, an overlapping musical genre that is now more associated with Afro-Trinidadian festivity though it was in fact originally conceived by the late Ras Shorty I as an Afro-Indo (or *dougla*) fusion.

Chapter 4 rehearses the development of what is often taken as a quintessential form of Afro-Creole expressive culture—*calypso*—again, paying special attention to tropes of "India" in terms of food, sex, gender, and race. Niranjana usefully uncovers several historical trends concerning the "Indian" in calypso: imagery of Indian men as a political trope compared with Indian women as a sexual trope, dynamics that are now being challenged and reconfigured by the steady increase in Indian calypsonians since the 1980s.

Chapter 5 canvasses the history of Bollywood film circulation in the Caribbean. Niranjana shows how *filmi* music has been more influential at the local level than the cinema from which it derives, more or less trumping all other Indian musical forms, and despite the fact that Hindi had dissipated as a living language within the Indo-Creole sector by WWII. South Asian films and their musics have increasingly constituted a resource for the Indo-Trinidadian imagination, inspiring a complex host of responses and politics.

The greatest achievement of this book is the author's interweaving of a non-Eurocentric perspective on the symbolic machinations of "India" with critical analysis of the moral politics of sex and gender in relation to local popular musics. These forms of expression and performance are the vehicles of cultural production and hybridity, as well as the sites of intense cultural negotiation and debate. Niranjana rightly emphasizes throughout that the Indo-Trinidadian's primary alters include not just the "real" Indian of South Asia, as well as the "European" of colonialism, but also—just as crucially—the "local" African. This perspective animates her analysis of the gendered politics of popular musics throughout. For example, Niranjana argues that chutney represents a gendered space of resistant cultural practice especially for Indo-Caribbean women, not only in relation to Indian men but also vis-à-vis the Afro-Creole sector. She also discusses how the Afro-Trinidadian soca star Denise Belfon (who graces the book's cover) has recently turned the tables on the historical proclivity of calypsonians to paint an exoticized portrait of desire for Indian women with her 2004 hit, "I Am Looking for an Indian Man." A final chapter explicates resonant twists and turns in the meanings of gender and ethnicity that surfaced in an experimental trip to the Caribbean with Indo-Indian pop-rock star Remo Fernandes in 2004.

The author's positioning as an Indo-Indian studying Indo-Trinidadian culture and history leads her to innumerable insights. The text is studded with delightful deconstructions and ironical twists. For example, Niranjana observes the troubling contradictions inherent in the views of Trinidadian Indocentrists who invoke "subaltern studies" yet tout the late 20th-century neotraditionalist Hindutva of the *Vishwa Hindu Parishad* (World Hindu Forum) and *Bharatiya Janata* political party in India. Yet I cannot help worrying about overly privileging a new "South–South" agenda for the study of the "Third World," Niranjana's own, admittedly problematical terms. We clearly need more complex and decentered frameworks for the study of globalization and modernity—to which her study surely contributes. However, if the world is as layered, convoluted, and overdetermined as she herself avers, and if Indo-Caribbean modernity is indeed one that predates the Indian modern, and if global power relations and the history of colonialism matter as profoundly as her analysis takes for granted, then we must struggle toward multipolar theorizations that do not obscure as much as they clarify. I think such a critique would not be lost on Niranjana, yet it bears saying nonetheless.

Although based on years of interviewing and excavation in the field, this study is not based on extensive participant-observation, per se, making it relatively thin ethnographically for the anthropologist. Niranjana is a literary scholar and ambivalent about anthropology anyway, thus she may well be nonplussed by such an observation. It is meant not so much as a critique here, but important to note in an ethnological journal.

Lost People: Magic and the Legacy of Slavery in Madagascar. *David Graeber.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2007. 469 pp.

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This is a book about the political acts of telling stories and of getting stories told about oneself. The action takes place in Betafo, a rural community in central Madagascar comprising people of slave and noble descent. In the ethnographic present of 1989–90, the people of noble descent, *andriana*, have lost much of their land and wealth to people of slave ancestry, *mainty*. Under these circumstances, one might expect the political action documented by Graeber to be characterized by open hostility between clearly defined factions of mainty and andriana. But this is not the case. The intriguing feature of this tale is the extent to which people appear to work quite hard at keeping their animosity below the surface—but just below the surface. They do not want to fight openly, but they also do not want past indignities to be completely forgotten. Indeed, much of the political action described in this book is contradictory, and one of the strengths of the book is Graeber's ability to capture the community's ambivalence about how to manage their pasts.

The plural "pasts" is appropriate here, because one form of political action is telling stories about the past, hoping one's own version will influence others' interpretation of present events. In chapter 9, Graeber provides an example of how this works, repeating five versions of one story as told to him by five community members. The story is about a conflict between a mainty ancestor and an andriana ancestor, and Graeber speculates about why some individuals would prefer to emphasize some details, while others would minimize those details and highlight others. Almost everyone is uncomfortable forthrightly discussing past slave–noble relations in the community, even though their very anchoring in the present depends on maintaining some memory of that past. This is a recurring theme throughout the book. Some acts, and the stories that circulate about them, seem designed to overcome past injustices, and their political effectiveness depends on shared knowledge of the violence that was inflicted on slaves by nobles. Yet, for the community to remain a community—a "moral community," as Graeber describes it—the underlying divisions within Betafo cannot become an overt organizing feature of community life. Therefore, other acts seem aimed at glossing over past hostilities, obscuring the very different paths that brought mainty and andriana ancestors to reside in this space.

Many of the stories recounted to Graeber detail the ways particular people gained and lost control of space and of land. These stories are inflected with moral lessons about violating taboos, marrying inappropriately, treating others disrespectfully, and the like. The stories pulse with accusations of witchcraft and sorcery, which, when given the chance, the accused only half-heartedly deny, knowing, Graeber says, that their political power depends on others' uncertainty about their actions and abilities. There are two key characters whose rise and fall are documented in the book (one mainty, one andriana), and in each case local theories abound regarding the ways in which the individuals' own actions led to their demise. In the case that is most central to the book, the ultimate result is also the demise of the community as the underlying fissures are forced to the surface.

Graeber's writing style parallels certain themes of the book. The author writes in his preface that he set out to produce a classic ethnography, to present a people's "total way of life" (p. xi). He does not aim to develop a particular theory or to engage in building a social science model. He writes of individual "characters," not of abstract "actors." The author distinguishes his work from social scientific research, which, he says, is in search of regularities and predictability. In contrast, he describes his writing as more akin to history, which "tends to focus on the very opposite, on the irregular and the unpredictable, on events that could no more be predicted, before they happened, than the production of a novel or a work of art" (p. 380). The book's style reflects this point of view. Chapter 10's title, "It Must Have Gone Something Like This," refers to the ways local people in Betafo interpret the past by making their own logical connections, understanding the unknown by drawing on the known. But it also is a reference to Graeber's own approach: "the basic structure of this book has been almost precisely the same as that of speculative frameworks" used by people in Betafo—"using one's knowledge of how things worked to imaginatively reconstruct how it must have come about" (p. 327). To illustrate his speculative process, the author introduces into the text extensive personal observations about his own path of discovery during his research. Despite the frequent references to his own thoughts, however, the author is not entirely clear about what prior knowledge or beliefs support his many speculations about why characters act as they do. For example, he writes of one character that "it was altogether in his interest" to achieve a particular outcome, and goes on to write that "it must have been particularly personally satisfying" when he did (p. 333). In this case, and in others, some more straightforward discussion of the author's own theories of human motivation would have been helpful.

Graeber's decision not to engage much existing theoretical work presents opportunities and challenges. Without being constrained by the author's explicit integration of other scholarly writing on the topics he addresses, the reader has the opportunity to draw her own connections. There could be links, for example, to F. G. Bailey's analyses of the politics of sorcery and rumor, to Clifford Geertz's studies of the politics of cultural forms, and to a large literature on the political power of narrative. However, for those who want to follow up on some of Graeber's more interesting theoretical claims, there are few signposts from the author himself about which writings would be most compatible or incompatible with his work. Nevertheless, this book will be useful for those readers seeking a detailed analysis of the workings of everyday politics in a small community, a politics that involves creating stories that combine the everyday with the eternal, giving mortal characters the possibility for eternal influence over their descendants.