categories to make sense of Polynesian lives. For example, Shore reinterprets the concepts of *mana* and *tapu* in terms of their implicit cultural logic. This is an exciting enterprise, but it raises problems. There is the risk of overinterpretation, imputing more logic and coherence than the data warrant. There is also the question of salience—who in the society actually shares the ethnographer’s interpretation and at what levels? Finally, there is the question of the relationship of ancient concepts such as *mana* and *tapu* to contemporary Polynesian worldviews. Shore is quite cognizant of these problems, as is Marcus, but they do not always provide solutions that will satisfy critics of cultural analysis.

Marcus’ chapter on chieftainship employs the concept of the personhood of the chief in the “reconstructionist project.” But Marcus is also interested in the contemporary political economy of chiefs. Although Marcus finds this perspective “missing” in the literature (195), in at least one country this kind of study is well under way. In Western Samoa, the political economy of chiefly office has been the subject of work by James Davidson, Pamela Thomas, and Tim O’Meara. This work has a sense of immediacy and relevance that is not fully conveyed in some of the chapters in the volume.

Surprisingly, there is little coverage of the Mead-Freeman controversy that generated more press and professional commentary than any other in the history of the discipline. Polynesian ethnologists should have a good deal to say about the substantive issues involved. Yet readers will have to wait for Borofsky’s forthcoming volumes on contemporary Polynesia and other such works before assessing anthropology’s contribution to this and other important issues. *Developments in Polynesian Ethnology* provides a sound foundation for further areal synthesis.

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The enormous significance of this book lies in great part with the central question it poses: What does it mean to write about culture in our time? “These days,” Rosaldo writes in the preface, “questions of culture seem to touch a nerve because they quite quickly become anguished questions of identity” (ix). Situating his work within the context of the ongoing debate about the nature of “cultural literacy” and renewed interest in redefining American national identity, Rosaldo argues for the need to pluralize precisely these cultural categories of “literacy” and “identity.” The task of social analysis is not one of reinstituting the privilege of certain modes of knowing and being at the expense of others; rather, it entails the discovery of those other identities and literacies that have been historically repressed.

Writing about culture for Rosaldo thus involves rethinking such cherished social science categories as “objectivity,” “distance,” and “thick descriptions” in terms of more indeterminate qualities such as subjectivity, engagement, and emotional force. In doing so, he seeks to interrogate the suppos-
edly disinterested claims of classical ethnographic accounts (from Malinowski to Geertz) by recalling anthropology’s historic association with colonial and postcolonial projects. By historicizing anthropology as a discourse permeated by and dependent on other discourses—of other disciplines, ideologies, and most important of all, of native informants—Rosaldo’s work is allied with recent developments in critical theory that regard culture as a “busy intersection . . . where a number of distinct social processes intersect. The crossroads simply provides a space for distinct trajectories to traverse, rather than containing them in complete encapsulated forms” (17).

The notion of culture as crossroads rather than a set of reified values directly relates to the methodological import of this book. Rosaldo carefully elaborates the pragmatics of doing an ethnography on the “borderlands.” Here, the border is not simply the mark that separates linguistic, social, and political categories; it is also a zone of exchange, conflict, and the reinvention of personal and collective identities. An ethnography of the border would thus stress difference and transformation rather than stability and stasis in a particular society. Ethnographers who write on the border occupy multiple perspectives, implicated in the very processes about which and in the conditions within which they write. It is their task to approach culture as heterogenous, in process, and open-ended.

Rosaldo’s work performs the complexities of this ethnographic positioning, as can be seen in the remarkable proliferation of personal anecdotes in his book. A couple of examples might suffice. He speaks fondly of his five-year-old son, Manny, who had been told in school to be wary of “strangers” and to distrust their solicitations. “Shortly thereafter, at a movie theatre, he surveyed the audience around him and said, ‘It’s good luck. There are no strangers here’ ” (29). Rosaldo interprets his son’s remarks to reflect the arbitrariness—hence, the cultural constructedness—of the notion of “strangers.” As it moves across the border that separates teacher from student, the concept goes through considerable changes. The humor of this anecdote underlines a more fundamental point: the transport of meaning opens it up to contestation and ambiguity.

The consequences of such an insight may at times be profoundly transformative, as in Rosaldo’s story about coming to terms with his grief and rage at the untimely death of Michele Rosaldo, his first wife, while they were both doing fieldwork among the Ilongots in the northern Philippines. Initially unable and unwilling to understand what for the Ilongots seemed like a self-evident connection between grief over the loss of a loved one and the rage that leads men to cut off human heads, Rosaldo sought ways to rationalize Ilongot headhunting in terms of conventional theories of exchange and kinship. Not until he too experienced the force of loss at Michelle’s sudden death, and the blinding rage that overcame him and for which he could not find an outlet, did he begin to slowly understand Ilongot headhunting. In other words, he was “repositioned through a devastating loss of my own” and thus able to “grasp [what] Ilongot
men mean precisely . . . when they describe the anger in bereavement as the source of their desire to cut off human heads” (3). For Rosaldo then, it was not a question of seeing death as symptomatic of a universal “human condition.” Rather, the death of one close to him enabled him to imagine rage as a form of mourning and thus to see in Ilongot headhunting an intelligible response to the emotional force of loss. The grief of the Ilongots is not subsumed into his; instead, he regards it as an occasion to reflect on the importance of anger over ritual in understanding social representations of death.

What is extraordinary about these and other anecdotes are the ways they foreground the “I” of the anthropologist. At stake in these narratives is no less the refriguring of the relationship between the personal and the social, the ethnographer and the native informant, such that neither is seen to hold special purchase over the other. Anecdotes function like parables insofar as they open up a process of interpretation. Because they highlight their nature, both as stories that unfold in time and as artifacts that shape and are shaped by specific human agents, anecdotes form an important strategy for furthering the “remaking of social analysis.” In them, Rosaldo finds ways of defamiliarizing the familiar, unhinging the domesticating power of conventional anthropological approaches, thereby bringing the borderline character of cultural formations into prominent view. Moreover, such anecdotes allow him to illustrate persuasively the need to consider the position of the subject that speaks and the subject that is spoken to and about. To see subjectivity as simultaneously situated and mobile is to raise yet another series of issues regarding ethnographic representations: Who speaks in such accounts? For whom, for what purposes, and under what sorts of historical conditions? And under what forms of authority?

In a series of astute readings, Rosaldo addresses these questions from various angles. He recalls the historical links between the rise of anthropology as an academic discipline and the consolidation and fragmentation of imperialism in the West. Decolonization brought with it new forms of interpretations that had the cumulative effect of redrawing the idea of “objectivity.” The “objective” and the “rational” were no longer coterminous with the real, but were rather increasingly seen as rhetorical operations that generated conventions of thinking and acting in the same way that habits cultivate systematic blindness to their contingent nature. Knitting contemporary ethnographic works, including his field notes on the Ilongots, with a selective mix of literacy theory, cognitive psychology, and philosophy, Rosaldo moves deftly between critiques of imperialist nostalgia and liberal humanist ideology characteristic of classical ethnographies. In the final section of the book, he offers a set of alternative ethnographies that include essays on the shifting modalities of Chicano identity gleaned from historically and sexually distinct narratives; the salience of subjectivity in drawing attention to the shifting relations of power between ethnographer and informant; and the irrevocably hybrid
nature of contemporary American culture where the resurgence of ethnic identities (and its regressive counter, racism) have made it all the more imperative to see culture "on the border."

The summary account I have offered of Rosaldo's book falls short, of course, of portraying the vibrant and extensive range of its insights. He has quilted together a remarkable array of contemporary social theories in ways that rescue them from academic obscurity and make them available for wider discussions and varied appropriations. In doing so, he has raised the political and ethical stakes of cultural studies, locating the question of culture on the terrain of other struggles over the future direction of American education. Herein lies what I take to be the significance of the book's title. Unlike Matthew Arnold's stark and reductive opposition of "culture" to "anarchy," the "truth" of culture in Rosaldo's writings lies less in its "civilizing" and normalizing effects than in its capacity to bring to bear on our lives what Adrienne Rich calls an "increasing complexity."

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In her book Gone Primitive: Savage Intellects, Modern Lives, Marianna Torgovnick unravels the Western discourse on the "primitive." By examining a number of diverse cases from anthropology, art, art history, literature, and psychology, she outlines the variations of the Western obsession with the "primitive," explores its implications, and discusses its relevance for modernism and postmodernism, because "to study primitivism's manifold presence is to recontextualize modernity" (193). She critically probes the texts of Edgar Rice Burroughs (Tarzan of the Apes); of art historians Roger Fry and the Museum of Modern Art's William Rubin; of ethnographers Michel Leiris, Claude Lévi-Strauss, Bronislaw Malinowski, and Margaret Mead; of novelists D. H. Lawrence and Joseph Conrad; of Sigmund Freud; of professional adventurers Tobias Schneebaum, Lorne and Lawrence Blair, and Henry M. Stanley ("Dr Livingstone, I presume"). She shows how the authors rely on, and construct, power hierarchies when writing about the "primitive," how their fascination with the "primitive" has to do with their "need to clearly demarcate subject and object even while flirting with other ways of experiencing the universe" (157), and how "gender issues always inhabit Western versions of the primitive" (17). Torgovnick's book is a self-critical analysis of our (Western) view of them, and a polemical critique of men's representations of non-Western humankind and of women.

The illustrations Torgovnick has chosen for her book supplement the texts she quotes. In much the same manner that she unMASKS Western primitivism in novels and ethnographies, she analyzes paintings such as