Introduction
An Anthropology of Intellectual Exchange

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Intellectual exchange could be said to be the lifeblood of anthropology. Whenever we learn from and with our interlocutors in the field, discuss ideas with students or colleagues, teach, attend conferences or submit ideas to publishers and journals, we are engaging in forms of 'intellectual exchange'. You, now, reading this introduction, are participating in just such a process. Indeed, it would not be unreasonable to argue that intellectual exchange is not only the lifeblood of anthropology, but also of the very world that anthropologists inhabit. The buildings we live and work in, the economic systems in which we earn and spend our salaries, the healthcare systems that provide us with medical care and public health advice, the forms of statecraft that govern us: all of these have themselves been shaped in powerful ways by processes of intellectual exchange. The same is true for the worlds in which our interlocutors are embedded. Yet despite the apparent centrality of intellectual exchange for anthropologists and for anthropology, and burgeoning interest in intellectual exchange within adjacent scholarly fields, social anthropologists have yet to engage closely with the concept. In this volume we outline the promise of an analytic focus on 'intellectual exchange', as well as elaborating an ethnographically informed framework for its study across cultures and contexts. In short, we seek to develop an anthropology of intellectual exchange.

Our starting contention is that intellectual life – by which we mean the capacities to know, reason, understand and reach conclusions about various aspects of the world – is, to quote Fatsis (2016: 276), 'not the exclusive domain of a few, but a common attribute of the many'. It is thus as foundational to anthropological enquiry as other aspects of the human condition that have been highlighted in recent theoretical movements and 'turns', including our shared embodiment (Csordas 1994), our emplacement in a material world (Miller 2005) and our capacities to will and to feel affects and emotions (Gregg and Seigworth 2010; Murphy and Throop 2010). Moreover, while human intellectual life cannot be considered *reducible* to intellectual exchange (a proposition that would ignore the importance of such processes as inspiration, observation, deduction and so on), the very fact that people everywhere are socialized by others into culturally and historically specific intellectual traditions, as well as often being exposed to other traditions and perspectives over the course of their lifetimes, means that intellectual exchange is an integral dimension of both intellectual life and human existence.[1] By making this claim, we both build on and move beyond existing anthropological literature. A tremendous number of works have already addressed contexts and practices in which 'intellectual exchange' could be said to be taking place: from studies of schooling, training, scientific research and the workings of contemporary universities to ethnographic portraiture of childhood socialization and what Magnus Marsden (2005: 11, and this volume) terms 'the life of the mind' in everyday sociality. Yet despite this rich corpus of work, and a broader theoretical interest in the dynamics of cultural transmission (Bloch 2005; Ellen et al. 2013; Spiro 1997; Tindall 1976) – including an analysis of the different 'intellectual activities' demanded by different cultural settings (Cole and Scribner 1975) – the concept of 'intellectual exchange' remains curiously absent in most contemporary social anthropology.

By contrast, the term is used much more extensively in the fields of archaeology, education and, perhaps especially, history. In these disciplines, enquiries into 'intellectual exchange' have proven an important avenue for: firstly, highlighting the ways in which knowledge and understanding are created relationally; and secondly, tracing the specific relations that have had a formative influence upon particular bodies of thought, including subfields of anthropology (see, e.g., Magnarella 2003; Rivera 2000). Yet, valuable as such studies are, their focus is typically particularistic. Often it is the details of who said what to whom, and to what effect, that are attributed most significance in the authors' analysis. This comes at the expense not only of an interrogation of the term and its purported boundaries, but also of a full analysis of the factors that mediate the exchange and thereby determine its outcomes. Indeed, even one of the most prominent contemporary historians of intellectual exchange, Ian Merkel (2021), acknowledges that the concept remains 'undertheorized'. There are of course exceptions – trailblazing papers that analyse the dynamics of intellectual exchange in revealing ways, such as Nir Shafir's (2014) study of the ways in which the exigencies of 'the international congress' as a social form influence what kinds of intellectual dialogues can take place within such events, or Caoilfhionn Ní Bheacháin and Angus Mitchell's (2019) analysis of the role Victorian 'salon culture' played in facilitating intellectual exchanges between women whose diverse backgrounds would not otherwise give them any cause to meet. Such analytical insights, however, remain largely constrained to the case studies in hand. This volume builds upon these studies, as well as others available in the anthropological canon and our contributors' research findings, in order to develop a more systematic understanding of how intellectual exchange could be studied, and the factors that might influence its character and consequences.

While doing this, it is also our aim to celebrate, take inspiration from and build upon the insights of Professor Susan Bayly, a figure who has not only been a seminal influence within the intellectual lives of this volume's editors and contributors (whether as a mentor, colleague or friend), but who has also, throughout her career, made key contributions to the anthropological study of the ways in which knowledge and worldviews can be transformed through processes of (transcultural) encounter. Bayly trained as a historian in the Cambridge Faculty of History with the renowned historian of India Professor Eric Stokes as her supervisor. She became a Fellow of Christ's College, Cambridge in 1986, and joined the Cambridge Department of Social Anthropology in 2000, where we, the editors, all met her, and from where she retired in 2020.[2] Bayly's extensive publications, as we demonstrate in the next section, have addressed a wide variety of critical issues, including, but certainly not limited to, instances of intellectual exchange. Yet despite – or perhaps even because of – its diversity, Bayly's oeuvre proves a source of considerable inspiration for developing the methodological and analytical perspectives that we believe are necessary for understanding 'exchange' as an integral dimension of intellectual life.

Following an initial overview of Bayly's work, this introduction proceeds as follows. First, we outline why it is so important to pay attention to 'intellectual exchange', demonstrating the value of including the concept more fully within contemporary anthropological vocabulary. We show how the dynamism and acknowledgement of agency implicit in the 'exchange' framing serves as a valuable corrective to simplistic analytics of hegemonic domination, indoctrination and extraction, while simultaneously recognizing the power relations that constrain and enable such exchanges. It can also contribute to foregrounding hitherto unacknowledged voices within the academy and intellectual canon. Second, we address the question of where the boundaries of 'an anthropology of intellectual exchange' should be drawn. We argue that an analysis of intellectual exchange can be productively undertaken at a variety of scales, and suggest an approach in which intellectual life is recognized as being profoundly interconnected with other aspects of human experience, including our embodiment and our capacity to be affected. Third, we examine some of the factors that can shape the conduct of intellectual exchange. In particular, we argue that the framing of 'exchange' invites useful cross-pollination from parallel debates in linguistic and economic anthropology about the category of 'exchange' and the nature of its mediation. These debates, we suggest, can be used to set an initial agenda for a more systematic theorization of intellectual exchange across cultures and contexts. Finally, we ask why intellectual exchange is or is not undertaken, arguing that there is much to be gained from expanding the study of intellectual exchange beyond its practice in actuality to the way that it also exists as an object of desire, contemplation, or as a subjunctive possibility that may nevertheless prove consequential through the way it animates or eludes political and ethical subjectivities. A key point that emerges throughout is that intellectual exchange is intimately connected to ethical life – a domain which encompasses 'trying to do what [one] considers right or good, … being evaluated according to what is right or good, or [being] in some debate about what constitutes the human good' (Lambek 2010: 1). Intellectual exchange may be seen as an ethical good in its own right, although it can also be considered a source of harm, especially when the institutional circumstances in which it takes place work to perpetuate unwanted social hierarchies, inequalities and exclusions (see Garnett 2006). It also has the capacity to challenge established ethical projects. It is a source of risk and uncertainty, that may be characterized by either anxiety or thrill. By exploring these issues, the chapters in this volume develop a theoretical toolkit with which readers can better understand issues associated with intellectual exchange, while simultaneously shedding ethnographic light on many of the transformations and complexities to which it has contributed in the part of the world to which Susan Bayly has dedicated her own life's work: the continent of Asia.

Bringing Intellectual Exchange into View: Susan Bayly's Work in Context

Susan Bayly's work has addressed some of the most complex and sensitive issues in the study of Asia, including syncretic forms of 'Indian religion', the historical context for the emergence of movements of so-called religious fundamentalism, the afterlife of socialism in Asian postcolonial societies, and, most recently, the experience of marketization in Vietnam, one of Asia's fastest growing economies. A consistent concern throughout her work has been the question of how particular cultural models and schemas become established and transformed on personal, community and (supra-)national scales: an issue that lies at the heart of research into intellectual exchange.

Bayly's initial work concerned the study of religious conversion in India. *Saints, Goddesses and Kings* (1989) broached the tremendously sensitive issues surrounding the nature of the historical interaction between Islam, Christianity and Hinduism in South India. At the time Bayly conducted this research, India's political landscape was being transformed by the growing political power of Hindutva movements and organizations seeking to establish the hegemony of Hinduism in India, which depicted the Abrahamic religions in general and Islam in particular as foreign to the Indian cultural environment. By analysing archival and interview-based materials through the analytical lens of anthropological debates relating to contested terms such as 'conversion' and 'religious syncretism', Bayly's study demonstrated that sharp distinctions between Muslims, Christians and Hindus were not an old but a recent feature of South India's cultural landscape. Just as crucially, Bayly demonstrated the active role of local actors in creating this interactive religious landscape, thereby challenging the notion that Islam and Christianity were not 'fully "Indian" religious systems' (1989: 454). *Saints, Goddesses and Kings* was a powerful and conceptually sophisticated study which demonstrated that Christianity and Islam were an integral part of religious life in South India rather than external penetrations. At the same time, by addressing the agency of Muslim, Christian and Hindu actors in processes of religious interaction, Bayly also brought attention to the dangers of treating 'Indian' religion as being inherently timeless and unchanging. This played a powerful role in enabling later scholarship to explore the historically diverse, layered and differentiated nature of Indian experiences of religious 'syncretism'. Bayly's sensitivity to complexity and nuance stands as an exemplar for the anthropological analysis of situations of encounter and co-existence, and such an approach is also fundamental to the way we envisage processes of intellectual exchange within this volume.

Bayly next turned her analytical focus to the study of caste in India in her celebrated *Caste, Society and Politics in India* (1999). The study of caste in Indian society was significantly polarized between scholars who depicted caste as an immutable core of Indian society, and others who sought to assert that clear-cut caste identities and roles emerged in the context of the British colonial state in India. As with *Saints, Goddesses and Kings*, in *Caste, Society and Politics in India* Bayly combined history and anthropology to provide a nuanced and varied depiction of caste's place in modern Indian society. The picture of caste society that Bayly presented in the book was grounded in the study of social and economic processes that had unfolded through early modern and modern Indian history. It also emphasized the role that Indians themselves played in re-inventing and refashioning caste as they integrated it with other aspects of their identities and of the changing environments in which they lived. Of critical and original importance too was the degree to which the book challenged caricatures that treated British scholar-officials' depictions of Indian society as one-dimensional manifestations of 'Orientalism', bringing attention to diverse understandings of caste among British officials in India and to the often unintended consequences of their policies on the shape taken by caste. Dealing as it does with the significance of caste to Indian society in the wake of the collapse of the Mughal Empire to the modern day, this book's scope was and remains unparalleled and it has had major and long-lasting ramifications for the ways in which caste in India is conceptualized by anthropologists and historians. The book's attention to the conscious ways in which Indian actors adjusted caste's role in Indian society in relationship to changing environments set it apart both from studies that depicted caste as the immutable core of Indian society and those that argued it to be the one-dimensional outcome of colonial classification and governance.

As the above summaries make clear, Bayly's first two monographs showed a commitment to highlighting both the active participation of Asian subjects in crafting their lived realities and the subtle nuances of the intellectual pursuits undertaken by colonial scholars and officials. Both of these commitments would feed through into the next phase of her work, which examined the nature and consequences of various forms of intellectual labour, including practices of intellectual exchange, in the context of the colonial enterprise. A series of articles and book chapters that she published in the 2000s (e.g. Bayly

2000, 2004) pointed to differences in the role played by anthropological scholarship in diverse expressions of European colonialism. Critically addressing debates about the degree to which nationalism in Asia was 'derivative' of colonial discourse, these works have also played an especially significant role in understanding supra-national forms of identity and political life. The articles not only compare different forms of imperial project (notably those of Britain and France) but also explore the active participation of actors who worked across and not simply within empires and cultural areas. Bayly demonstrates how the oft-made opposition between pre-modern expansive spatial imaginings that derive from historic world religious traditions such as Islam and those that are conceived of as forming a modern and 'unitary' imagination of the 'national-order-of-things' has had problematic implications for understanding the legacies of empire and colonialism. This opposition, Bayly shows, has led to an under-appreciation of the activities of actors – such as members of the 'Greater India Society' – who played a part in debates about cultural nationalist topics before and after independence from colonialism, but did not simply call for the creation of narrow and nationalist imaginaries. The 'Greater India Society', rather, was engaged in the forging of multiple and divergent visions of identity that were both translocal and supra-national. Inspired by historic connections between South and Southeast Asia, these visions were asserted in the language of scientific modernism, and forged through exchanges between nationalist intelligentsias, diaspora Indians and a consideration of 'Orientalist' scholarship. The original significance of Bayly's analysis lies in it bringing into sharper focus the ongoing vitality to the political cultures of postcolonial contexts of complex forms of identity and political imagination that are neither derivative of narrow cultural nationalism nor of world religious traditions. In this work too, then, Bayly challenges simplistic approaches to the nature of the role played by 'colonial knowledge' in the making of modern Asian contexts (see especially Bayly 2000, 2009a), while bringing attention to the agency of Asian actors – in this case intellectuals – in a domain (cultural nationalism) that was increasingly being treated as derivative of colonialism and Western ideas of the nation.

Bayly's third monograph, *Asian Voices in a Post-Colonial Age* (2007), builds on this interest in translocal forms of identity and affiliation that are self-consciously modern in nature and also forged in the context of colonialism. The book represents a significant step in Bayly's intellectual career, moving beyond the study of South Asia into Southeast Asia, drawing on long-term ethnographic fieldwork in Vietnam, as well as earlier anthropologically-informed archival research in India. Bayly makes a novel attempt to compare the experience of colonialism among Vietnamese and Indian nationalist intelligentsias. In so doing, she brings attention to Asian forms of modernity that are absent from studies based on mind-clamping comparisons between Asian and Western contexts. *Asian Voices*, then, prefigured the emergence of the critical field of 'inter-Asian' studies (on which, see, e.g., Chen 2010; Ho 2017; Yue 2017). It uses nuanced ethnographic data and oral history to demonstrate not only the importance of a language of socialism to the thinking and identities of Vietnamese and Indian nationalist intelligentsias, but also the role played by such actors in creating and sustaining an expansive 'global socialist ecumene'. As a result, and in a sophisticated and non-polemical way, the book questions the underlying arguments of social theorists such as Spivak (1985) and Chakrabarty (2000) who broadly treated nationalist intelligentsias either as the victims of colonial epistemic violence or as agency-less cogs in nationalist projects.

Susan Bayly's concern with understanding the agency of Asians in expansive social and economic processes has focused more recently on Vietnamese experiences of marketization and political transformation. One key theme associated with this work is what Long and Moore (2013) have dubbed 'the social life of achievement'. Drawing on ethnographic material regarding the experience of education in Vietnam, Bayly (2013, 2014) treats the ubiquitous measurement of achievement and urge to become 'creative' not as something imposed by the audit cultures or individualistic underpinnings of neoliberalism but rather as a contested moral site at which socialist ideas and marketization processes interact. At the same time, Bayly also connected her emphasis on the active participation of local people to the highly charged field of the study of propaganda. In a study of the ongoing significance of 'propaganda' to Vietnamese political culture, Bayly emphasizes that propaganda does not have a deadening effect on her interlocutors' moral and intellectual worlds. Instead, building on recent developments in visual anthropology and the anthropology of ethics and morality, Bayly attends to the ways in which her interlocutors differentiate between varying forms of visual propaganda on the basis of assessments they make of both its quality and the nature of the work invested by designers and producers (Bayly 2019, 2020). Highlighting that agentive moral life can be found in what are thought of as 'scopic contexts' (Jay 1993), Bayly contrasts the ways her interlocutors think of the moral agency of the 'individual who performs moral acts discerningly and reflectively' as qualitatively different from 'one who performs rightful action as a creature of mere habit or on command' (2019: 30) and argues this is evident in the way they value the display of taste and sensitivity in their interaction with propaganda.

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From this necessarily broad overview of Bayly's works, we can distil two foundational principles which have also played a central role in much other contemporary scholarship on intellectual exchange. One of these is the importance of recognizing that transformations in intellectual traditions and cultural models do not occur automatically or unilaterally, but are the result of active participation and ethical judgement on the part of all parties involved. The other is the value of analysing social phenomena, including intellectual exchange, on a variety of historical and geographical scales.

Agentive Exchanges

Insisting on an approach that sees intellectual transformations as the outcome of agentive exchanges is important for several reasons. First, as noted above, it complicates work that represents populations that have been exposed to the ideas of powerful outsiders as either inevitably succumbing to those discourses' hegemonic force or, alternatively, showing a 'resilience' or defiant 'resistance' in the face of such ideas (see, e.g., Comaroff and Comaroff 1992; Scott 2009). Although such arguments are motivated by a commendable commitment to developing a critical analysis of power, they run the risk of reducing the populations they describe to their position within structural power relations. By contrast, framing (transcultural) encounters as moments of intellectual *exchange* affords a recognition of each person involved as a complex intellectual and ethical actor whose level of interest in the issues at hand and whose decisions over what to say, what to withhold, and how to respond to what is said cannot be presumed but must be understood in terms of both the specific cultural worlds they inhabit and the dynamics of the intellectual interactions in which they are engaged (see, e.g., Lewis 2004). In short, it is a way of thinking about social transformations that highlights the centrality of human agency and invites active consideration of the complex ways in which that agency is both experienced and deployed.

Attention to intellectual exchange not only highlights the agency of populations widely depicted as 'receiving' ideas and techniques from external sources, it also reveals the ways in which the generation of those ideas is itself a collaborative and often transcultural affair. Ian Merkel (2017, 2022), for example, shows how various celebrated French intellectuals, including Claude Lévi-Strauss, Roger Bastide and Ferdinand Braudel, have been 'remembered for their brilliance even when their work was indeed a much more collective production' (2017: 145). Merkel uses archival evidence to demonstrate that the time these thinkers spent living in Brazil and engaging with Brazilian intellectuals had a formative influence upon ideas and styles of analysis that would subsequently be considered quintessentially 'French'. Given that 'any study of Brazilian social sciences acknowledges the influence of French scholars' (2022: fourth cover), acknowledging that the reverse is true challenges the Eurocentricity of established scholarly canons (on which, see Burney 2012). Equally, however, a focus on intellectual exchange can challenge simplistic accusations of knowledge production as extractive or colonial. For Veronica Strang, critiques of anthropology as an 'externalised intellectual space of cross-cultural comparison' underplay the ways in which 'the knowledges acquired through ethnographic enquiry are mentally integrated and synthesised into the subsequent analysis and therefore emerge in the new understandings of the products of the research' (2006: 982–86). Strang emphasizes, by contrast, the ways in which anthropologists conducting fieldwork necessarily undertake a 'fluid and complex exchange of knowledges', for which they then serve as 'conduits', while highlighting how this process might be better acknowledged in scholarly publications by, for example, rethinking authorship criteria (2006: 990).[3]

As this discussion reveals, foregrounding exchange in accounts of intellectual life allows us to move past singularizing narratives and instead enable credit for intellectual accomplishments and transformations to be distributed in a manner that more precisely resembles the complex dynamics of inspiration and influence. Much is at stake in such a shift, since, as recent work in the anthropology of ethics has demonstrated, different ways of allocating responsibility can have far-reaching consequences for both subjectivity and sociality (see, e.g., Agrama 2012; Laidlaw 2014b; Long 2017). The move also serves as a valuable mitigation against the feelings of moral injury that can arise in contexts in which there is a failure to provide adequate recognition of the contribution of all partners (see Assmann 2013; Honneth 1995).

The present collection builds upon these traditions of writing about intellectual exchange, complicating simplistic narratives and highlighting the agency, ingenuity and ethical reasoning evident among the figures involved in the intellectual exchanges that we describe. For example, Nguyen and Nguyen's richly illustrated account of architectural developments in Hanoi (this volume) shows how the 'Soviet-style' apartment blocks that became ubiquitous in Hanoi from the late 1950s onwards should not be seen as mere recreations of architectural forms from North Korea and the USSR. While Vietnamese architects took inspiration and drew on guidance from architects in other socialist countries, they also made meaningful innovations in their own right, adapting designs to suit the tropical climate, Vietnamese cultural heritage and militarized context in which they were working. While such ingenuity is often overlooked, occluded by monikers such as 'Soviet-style', up-close ethnographic observation reveals sophisticated processes of agentive intellectual engagement with external hegemonic forces, in ways that cannot be classified as either passive, uncritical acceptance or outright resistance. Such dynamics are brought to the fore by thinking about architectural design as the outcome of intellectual exchange.

A coherent anthropology of intellectual exchange thus needs, at the very least, to entertain the possibility of conversation without domination, forms of dialogue 'in which we are not playing a game against each other but with each other' (Bohm 1996: 9), and acknowledge that ideas can be vital propellants of action, as much as power and economics. This is not the same thing as asserting the existence of free, equal, unconstrained intellectual exchange between sovereign subjects, communities or traditions. Rather, we argue that 'the power relations that constrain and enable, and weaken and empower' some parties to intellectual exchange in relation to others precisely give such free intellectual exchange as people are ever able to exercise both its shape and its scope (Laidlaw 2014a: 500). Bohm (1996: 8) recognizes something analogous in his framing of both 'freedom' and what he terms 'structure' as 'essential dimensions of any genuine dialogue'. If structure provides the backbone and freedom a spirit of exploration and discovery, it is the interplay between these dimensions 'that creates the dynamic tension and creative ambiguity that [can] make the dialogal process so exciting' (Freshwater 2007: 432). An anthropology of intellectual life must recognize the essential interplay of constraint and freedom as both the condition for and means of dialogue – an interplay that is foregrounded by using the concept of 'intellectual exchange' as an entry point to understanding how people have come to know, understand and think about the world in the particular ways that they do.

Scales of Analysis

As we have seen, the anthropological study of intellectual exchange can make vital contributions by attesting to the very existence of exchange processes within and between intellectual traditions, drawing attention to dynamics and participants that might otherwise be overlooked. Having recognized this, however, a question arises as to the *scale* at which instances of intellectual exchange are best analysed. One possibility is to examine them in their singularity, as components in the biographies of key figures, 'exemplars', or thinkers of particular interest to intellectual history. Another might be to treat them as representing 'intellectual exchange' within a certain time or space: under conditions of late empire, for instance, or within a particular regional or national tradition. Alternatively, one might seek to discern transcendent truths about intellectual exchange in general.

Such scalar dilemmas are not unique to an anthropology of intellectual exchange. As O'Connor (2020: 286) observes, the entire anthropological enterprise is 'fundamentally an exercise in scaling: to speak or write about anything we see, hear, or experience, we must first decide how to "scale" our approach' (see also Strathern 2004). Indeed, debates over whether anthropologists should devote their energies to identifying 'universal' principles and laws or instead focus on the particularity, even incommensurability, of individual cases date back to the origins of the discipline (O'Connor 2020) and continue to rage today (Miller et al. 2019). The challenge in determining how to proceed can be understood as twofold. Firstly, anthropologists must develop forms of writing which acknowledge that self-fashioning, self-cultivation and transformation experienced by people across the world, including via processes of intellectual exchange, never 'happens in isolation from scalar processes, but neither is it reducible to such processes' (O'Connor 2020: 293). Secondly, analysis must move beyond treating scale as a self-evident and objective quality of social ecology (cf. Berreman 1978), instead reflexively interrogating the scalar imagination of the anthropologist (Glück 2013; Carr and Lempert 2016; O'Connor 2020). Doing so not only ensures circumspection regarding the theoretical and personal commitments and assumptions underpinning particular strategies of scaling, it also promises openness to the alternative scales of analysis that may be suggested by one's research participants and ethnographic data.

Susan Bayly's work offers a compelling model for how the question of scale might be handled in the study of intellectual exchange. Bayly never loses sight of the immense personal significance that processes and moments of intellectual exchange can have for the individuals that she has worked with. Indeed, her scholarship is studded with vivid individual biographies, and a corresponding theoretical conviction that her interlocutors' 'tumultuous' and 'often very testing life experiences' are not just *products of*, but *central to* the Asian transformations with which her research has been concerned (Bayly 2007: 1, 7). Such a sensibility can also be seen in the contributions to this volume, which, read alongside each other, reveal the myriad ways in which intellectual exchange can transform, enrich, disrupt and damage individual lives. Yet Bayly's work does not merely 'contextualize' non-scalable individuality within abstracted analyses of processes occurring on greater historical and geographical scales. Rather, it sees those individual experiences as the very stuff of which social transformations are made, thereby disrupting simplistic meta-narratives and inviting more nuanced understandings of the changes afoot in Asia and the wider world. Bayly's early work on Catholicism in India (1989), for example, has been lauded as pioneering because, rather than simply asserting the arrival of Christian missionaries as an inaugural moment of transformation and rupture, it meticulously traces Catholicism's integration and transformation over the *longue durée* (Trento 2022: 8). Similarly, her more recent work on the mobile lives of Vietnamese and Indian intelligentsia families has pushed back against the 'amorphous, ahistorical and agentless conceptions of globalisation and diasporic connectivity' embedded in many analyses of 'late capitalism' and the scale of 'the global' (Bayly 2007: 223). Instead, by building on the work of Cooper (2005: 108) and attending to the specific 'units of affinity and mobilization' and 'collectivities that are capable of action' within her fieldwork, Bayly charts a portrait of a transnational socialist ecumene, all the while showing her readers why this may be a more useful scale than 'the global' for the analysis of socialist mobility and intellectual exchange.

Magnus Marsden's contribution to this volume makes a similar intervention, grounded in a personal account of how his own theoretical outlook has been shaped by his many intellectual exchanges with Susan Bayly, his former PhD supervisor. Marsden's concern is with how best to frame the many practices of debate, discussion and intellectual exchange that occur among Muslims living in an interconnected yet politically divided 'arena'. He notes how many currents in the anthropology of Islam, if not wholly particularistic, would encourage analyses rooted in methodological nationalism – as if the practices he observed, for example, in Chitral (a district of northern Pakistan) were somehow characteristic of *Pakistani* Islam. (Such methodological nationalism is widespread in many accounts of secular intellectual exchange as well.) Meanwhile, what was taken as exemplary of 'Islam' as a whole was often unduly reflective of the Arab Middle East. Marsden writes against these ways of approaching his material, instead advocating a practice of ‘connective ethnography’ which refuses to define Muslim thought as ‘local’, ‘global’ or related to a single knowledge ecumene, but instead shows how multiple ecumenes, geopolitical processes and temporal scales all mediate the character of intellectual exchange. The direction and nature of intellectual exchange in the arena which cuts across neighbouring regions of Pakistan, Afghanistan and Tajikistan was influenced by dense webs of historical connectivity to the wider Persianate world, including ties of kinship, trade and travel. The intellectual exchanges that Marsden observed during subsequent fieldwork in Afghanistan also reflected this history of Persianate connectivity, with additional influences including the cartographic projects and practical exigencies associated with various national and geopolitical processes, most notably those of the Cold War. Through his analysis, Marsden not only demonstrates the importance of conducting a wide-ranging and open-minded analysis of the many factors and scalings shaping practices of intellectual exchange; he also shows how detailed ethnography of intellectual exchange can contribute to a more nuanced understanding of self-transformation, world-bridging, and indeed world-making, revealing, for example, how ‘the Islamic’ is a field produced by human agency in time and space.

In her 2013 article ‘Mapping Time, Living Space: The Moral Cartography of Renovation in Late-Socialist Vietnam’, reprinted in this volume, Bayly further develops her concern with scales and scaling. Although ‘the vision of a socialist ecumene in which Vietnam has played a role of heroic exemplification is still an active feature of collective and individual memory’, contemporary Vietnamese inhabit ‘a world of multiple chronologies and spatial orders’, including those that celebrate it as a burgeoning ‘middle income’ market economy or label it a troubled ‘country of memory’ confronting the legacy of war. It is from the site of these frameworks’ interpenetration that individual Vietnamese navigate the making and unmaking of the transnational socialist ecumene, something they do through practices of what Bayly terms ‘moral cartography’. As in her previous work, Bayly uses the experiences and concerns of her interlocutors to move beyond the reductive framings through which they could otherwise be presented; to write of ‘post-socialist Vietnam’ would overlook the complicated ways in which ‘a fully ethical life involves many different forms of geotemporal provision’. Such an analysis offers a timely reminder that we must not only pay close attention to the institutions, conventions and relations within which intellectual exchange occurs and by which it is mediated, but also be mindful that it is but a single component within often extremely complex and multifaceted projects of ethical life. Keeping both points in mind offers the promise of an anthropology that not only illuminates how the character of intellectual exchange may vary within and between cultural settings, but also unpacks its complex and variegated meanings.

Locating the Boundaries of 'Intellectual Exchange'

So far, our introduction has argued for the value of embracing the term 'intellectual exchange' as a way of highlighting the situated, agentive and ethical nature of the practices that inform the development of individuals' intellectual lives, as well as noting the value of analysing intellectual exchange on a variety of historical and geographical scales. Before thinking more systematically about how to theorize the mediation of intellectual exchange and its place within ethical life, some important questions arise regarding the definition and boundaries of the concept. While many of the examples we have discussed so far – from the activities of the Greater India Society to Annales School historians collaborating with Brazilian counterparts – seem to be straightforward examples of 'intellectual exchange', what is it that makes them so, and how can an anthropologist determine whether the processes they are observing in the field constitute 'intellectual exchange' or not?

As noted earlier, it is vital to acknowledge from the outset that all human beings, in all societies, are avowed of an intellectual life – capable of knowing, understanding and reaching conclusions about various aspects of the world – and thus embedded in processes of intellectual exchange. This point should not be controversial among anthropologists, whose fieldwork is frequently peppered with vibrant and thought-provoking discussions and debates (see, e.g., Bloch 2005; Marsden 2005). However, it stands at odds with a long academic tradition of foregrounding particular cultural elites – those who are understood as 'intellectuals' or 'intelligentsia' – in discussions of both intellectual exchange and the wider sociology of intellectual life (see, e.g., Fatsis 2016; Merkel 2021). Clearly, the question of whether subjects consider themselves to be 'intellectuals' or are seen as such by their interlocutors could have significant bearings on how any intellectual exchange unfolds. However, intellectual exchange itself must be recognized as ubiquitous, ordinary and partaken in by everyone.

What is it, then, that makes intellectual exchange 'intellectual'? Within secular Western thought, the 'intellect' has often been delineated as the sphere of knowledge, rational thought and logical reasoning, distinct from 'sensibilities' or 'the will' (e.g. Haven 1862). To some extent this distinction has value, and continues to inform our own framing of 'intellectual life' as concerned with the capacities to know, reason, understand and reach conclusions about various aspects of the world. For example, the question of how one has come to take an intellectual stance on the reality or otherwise of anthropogenic climate change is clearly a distinct empirical question to that of how one *feels* about the prospect of climate change, or about the narratives of climate change in public circulation. Either, or both, could be valid issues for anthropological investigation. The mistake has been to sometimes assume that just because these can be posed as two distinct empirical questions, the domains of 'sensibility' and 'intellect' are unrelated, as if intellectual life was purely cerebral and not profoundly connected to one's embodiment and emotional life (for further discussion of this fallacy, see Fatsis 2016: 278–79). As we discuss in the next section, one of the great contributions that anthropological (and specifically ethnographic) research can make to the interdisciplinary literature on intellectual exchange – hitherto strongly dominated by archival, textual research – is a close attention to its embodied, emplaced and affectively charged nature. These are dimensions of the process that will almost certainly shape the outcome of the exchange, but they do not make the exchange, or its outcome, any less 'intellectual' in nature. By defining 'intellectual exchange' as the dialogues, encounters and interactions through which particular ways of knowing, understanding and thinking about the world are forged, we hope to retain the clarity that is afforded from a focus on intellectual life, while nevertheless drawing deeply on the insights that can be afforded from attention to the full breadth of human experience.

Finally, it is important for any anthropological enquiry into intellectual life to recognize that the delineation of the sphere of 'knowledge' is not self-evident but geographically and historically contingent. It was eighteenth-century Enlightenment thinking, Shah-Kazemi (2002) emphasizes, that led the cosmos to be envisaged as 'empirical facts out there to be analysed and exploited to man's advantage', thereby creating an antinomy between 'science' and 'religion' which is not necessarily present in other cultural traditions (it has also been contested within Western faith communities: see, e.g., Anderson 1917). Similarly, Bayly's work in Vietnam (see especially 'Worlds United and Apart', this volume) offers rich portraiture of Vietnamese scholars and government administrators whose biographies reveal a 'confident traversing' of the realms of science and the supramundane. As Bayly acknowledges, these are knowledge realms that 'an outsider might think of as mutually antagonistic because they would seem to be based on radically conflicting views of human and cosmic nature'. Such difficulties are 'not insuperable'; her interlocutors would not 'regard the truths of science and the supramundane as incompatible or in rivalry as claims on the moral self'. And yet, as Alatas (2020) demonstrates with reference to Indonesian debates over the legitimacy of dreams as a source of historical knowledge, the boundaries of legitimate knowledge are not necessarily settled in any given cultural context, but can be matters of active discussion and contestation.

Given these complexities, it would be quite wrong for an anthropology of intellectual exchange to make bold proclamations as to what does or does not constitute legitimate 'understanding', 'reason', 'knowledge' or 'exercise of the intellect' – as opposed to, say, faith or fantasy. What it should do instead is determine how and why forms of knowing and thinking that *could* be considered 'intellectual' within the very expansive definition we have offered above come to have that status implicitly or explicitly affirmed, rejected or disputed through or within processes of dialogue and interaction. In other words, practices of 'intellectual exchange' can be understood as sites at which processes of cultural transmission intersect with the meaning-making and value attribution attendant on locally salient categories of 'the intellect' and its analogues.

In sum, an anthropology of intellectual exchange should encompass three key issues. Firstly, building on the broad definition of 'intellectual exchange' suggested by Carter and Spirling (2008: 375), it should document and analyse the full range of encounters, interactions or processes through which 'knowledge, ideas and techniques' (that is, propositional claims about the nature of the world and how it is possible to act in the world) are communicated, interrogated and/or defended, investigating why these occur in the ways, and with the consequences, that they do. Secondly, it must acknowledge that these are processes that often occur in everyday settings, sometimes fleetingly or unintentionally, even as they can also be undertaken self-consciously, both within and outside professionalized domains of intellectual practice, and investigate the extent to which such different contexts prove consequential for the trajectory and ramifications of the exchange. Finally, it must understand the cultural politics and narratives surrounding such exchanges, including the extent to which they are recognized as 'intellectual' by those participating in them, observing them and commenting upon them – including, perhaps, the anthropologist. It thereby becomes possible to bring the many insights afforded by anthropological methods and theory to our understanding of intellectual life without becoming complicit in reifying a domain of 'the intellectual' in ways that exclude or stigmatize alternative forms of thinking and knowing. Instead, the power dynamics inherent in delineating 'the intellectual' can remain in full view, with the ethnographic materials challenging readers to reflect more deeply on what they recognize as 'intellectual' or 'non-intellectual', and why.

With the value and scope of the term having been defined, we now consider what contributions – besides fine-grained ethnographic accounts – anthropological perspectives could make to existing literatures on intellectual exchange. In line with the insights proffered by contributors to this volume, we make two major arguments. Firstly, the enormous anthropological canon on 'exchange' offers potential axes for comparative study and theorization; secondly, recent turns in the anthropology of ethics allow us to think more deeply about the agencies and desires underpinning and shaping the intellectual exchange process.

Intellectual Exchange as Interaction and Transaction

The rubric of intellectual exchange invites us to see learning and knowledge as the outcome of 'exchanges' in two senses of the term. On the one hand, we can think of an exchange in its linguistic sense: as a conversation, debate or argument; in short, as an *interaction*. Yet we can also think of exchange in its economic sense, as a *transaction*. In both cases, anthropological scholarship offers a powerful analytic toolkit of concepts and perspectives that can be used to better understand how and why certain modalities of thought and practice take hold, transform and/or endure.

Exchange as Interaction

As Tindall (1976: 203) observed almost fifty years ago, any account of cultural transmission needs to attend carefully to 'the nature of the interactive encounters' within which knowledge is communicated. The study of intellectual exchange can thus be greatly enriched by many of the exciting perspectives that have arisen in recent years from anthropologists working at the interface of sociocultural and linguistic anthropology. This work departs from earlier 'cultural' forms of analysis, which saw anthropology's task as documenting and explicating *shared* systems of cultural meaning (e.g. Geertz 1973; Schneider 1984), instead taking its lead from the post-structuralist emphasis on multiplicity, incoherence and fragmentation (Stewart 1996) and from the processual accounts of how worlds come into being associated with actor-network theory (Callon 1984; Latour 1996). It emphasizes how social realities emerge through situated interactions and are thus influenced by both the rules, conventions and habits of interacting that prevail in any given time and place, and the vagaries of any particular interaction in its specificity (see, e.g., Berman 2020; Bielo 2019; Mathias 2020). This work is of considerable importance for an anthropology of intellectual exchange because it highlights not only that the spread of knowledge and understanding is far from automatic and uncomplicated, but also that, besides being subject to agentive reworking, intellectual exchange is mediated by topologies and traditions in ways of which participants themselves may not be fully aware.

Interactional perspectives on intellectual exchange are by no means new. A century ago, as Europe reeled from the impacts of the First World War, the philosophical anthropologist Bernhard Groethuysen turned his attention to how it might be possible to guard against what he considered the 'cultural derangement of hermetic ideologies that passed as normal' (Ermarth 1993: 679). Cultural dialogue and maieutic inquiry were seen as key to such a goal, reflected in his oversight of annual intellectual retreats that sought to bring scholars from across Europe into conversation with each other. But Groethuysen (1921) also highlighted the dangers attendant upon 'the declining use of what he called the "little words," "modest auxiliaries" and "crucial dubities" that foster comity and intellectual exchange rather than conceptual closure and ideological finality' (Ermarth 1993: 679–80). In other words, linguistic conventions such as the use of modifiers – 'perhaps', 'however', 'but' – were, for him, key to ensuring a mode of intellectual exchange that could foster open dialogue and combat the 'blinkering effects of mass ideologies' (Ermarth 1993: 685).

Interactions are not only influenced by linguistic choices. Structures of power – gendered, racial and institutional – may work to inhibit certain voices from either speaking or from being adequately heard (Allen 2021; Love et al. 2021), and can determine whether intellectual exchange occurs in a heterodox manner across different intellectual traditions, or within sealed disciplinary and theoretical silos (Garnett 2006). Broader cultural ideologies of 'how to interact' may have a similar effect.[4] Moreover, interactions never unfold in the abstract; as Csordas (1994) reminds us, the body is the existential ground of meaning-making and understanding. Close attention to embodiment and the ways in which felt experience is shaped by particular interactional topologies is thus essential for understanding how, why and to what effect intellectual exchange proceeds as it does (see, e.g., Long 2018). These concerns extend to the very material forms within which 'the intellectual' is made manifest. Such material culture is not confined to 'books, pamphlets, books and more books' (Nash 2019: 7). Physical means of exchanging knowledge range from paper and CDs to manifold scientific instruments and also one's hands (Sarbadhikary, this volume): knowledge 'travels in people's minds and in their bodies'; scientific communities likewise rely on memory and tacit knowledge (Robson 2019: 40). Conference presentations bring interlocutors together in the same room; social media, the internet and technologies such as Zoom lead them to meet in the realm of 'the virtual', their bodies positioned behind the screens of smartphones, tablets and computers, often many miles apart. But the various objectifications of knowledge that facilitate its exchange are not neutral: we must pay attention to 'the consequences of the particular materiality within which objectification … takes place' (Miller 2000: 21). Not merely reflecting their creators but social agents in their own right, their divergent material qualities – different levels of friction, adaptability and accessibility – enable the knowledge they convey differentially to find new partners and accomplices and join new conversations.

In sum, an anthropology of intellectual exchange needs to pay careful attention to how exchanges are mediated by linguistic and interactional conventions and dynamics, structures of power, and the materialities and affectivities of embodied practice. The chapters in this volume speak to this agenda in several ways. Jacob Copeman's chapter traces the motivations – and consequences – of Sikhs choosing to either renounce or embrace the characteristically Sikh family names of 'Singh' (for men) and 'Kaur' (for women). Such name exchanges can be generative of (as well as precipitated by) impassioned intellectual exchange, especially in cases where the Sikh in question is a public figure, whose actions may be widely debated by strangers on internet forums, comments boards and social media. When the hip-hop artist Taran Kaur Dhillon chose to adopt the stage name 'Hard Kaur', for example, many were outraged, arguing that her actions (her liberal consumption of alcohol, sexual frankness and dressing in revealing clothes) were out of step with the moral standards associated with the name 'Kaur'. Yet as some other commentators observed, there is an apparent double standard, with male artists able to use the word 'Singh' despite falling short of Sikh moral expectations, without experiencing anything like as much opprobrium as Taran Dhillon. Copeman's analysis reveals that the reasons for this double standard are complex – partly rooted in misogyny, partly reflecting the fact that 'Singh' is also used by some non-Sikh castes, and thus less profoundly associated with 'Sikhness' than its feminine counterpart. But it also shows that intellectual exchange, far from being the exclusive preserve of a cool and dispassionate faculty of 'reason', can be – and indeed often is – profoundly affectively charged, grounded not just in ideologies but also identifications (each with their own complex histories) that lead some participants in the exchange to consider certain intellectual positions as clear-cut and others as inadmissible. Of course, partaking in an intellectual exchange may do little more than shore up such outlooks, especially in cases where the medium of exchange leads them to find affirmation from within 'echo chambers' or to attract such hostile opposition that one holds one's ground and doubles down. However, there is also always the possibility that one's position will be reformulated by the exchange – when comments are moderated, or an insightful interjection (such as one questioning the possible misogyny underpinning one's attitude to the name Kaur) makes one think twice. Such open-endedness and riskiness, a point we return to at greater length in the final section of this introduction, is a crucial dimension of intellectual exchange, and one that is foregrounded especially usefully by thinking of it as an *interaction*.

Interactional conventions, structures of power, and materiality all play an important role in Caroline Humphrey's analysis of Mergen Güng Gombojab, a Mongolian hereditary noble and scholar born at the beginning of the twentieth century, who gave up his titles in pursuit of Soviet ideals and travelled widely within Mongolia, Russia and Europe before falling victim to Stalin's purges in 1940. Besides drawing our attention to forms and processes of intellectual exchange that have long been subject to silencing and erasure and showing how the contrasting intellectual currents to which he was exposed left a deep, and sometimes dissonant, impact upon Gombojab's subjectivity, Humphrey also highlights the importance of paying close attention to the governmental techniques that framed his travels through the international socialist ecumene. Intellectual exchange, for Gombojab, took place within the context of Soviet travel assignments (*komandirovka*). This meant that he was a bearer not just of personal but also institutional agency – embodying the goals and values of the sending organization but also endowed with a certain power to act, to proceed, and to expect respectful treatment at his destinations, and treated in specific ways by others as a result. Such a complex intertwining of personal mobility and institutional power even extended to the material presentation of the Soviet body, most notably through its clothing, which Humphrey argues should be understood as a form of equipment, demonstrating 'the social meaning and even the purpose of the person so dressed', even as it also affords scope for individuals to express their own personal takes on matters. Humphrey thus reveals the dangers attendant upon treating such analytic categories as 'transculturality', 'cultural mobility' or even 'intellectual exchange' as if they referred to self-evident or universal social realities, especially given the connotation of free circulation that such terms sometimes carry. Instead, careful attention needs to be paid to the governmental and interactional conventions that make certain forms of experience possible, for certain people, while precluding other outcomes. Her work thus signals the potential fruitfulness of a truly comparative anthropology of intellectual exchange, both within and beyond socialist settings.

Meanwhile, Sukanya Sarbadhikary's chapter takes up the theme of materiality and embodiment. In the spirit of a dialogue between Western and Indian philosophical-cum-anthropological traditions, Sarbadhikary draws on the philosophy informing the manufacture and playing of the *mridanga*, a sacred percussion instrument from West Bengal, to develop an innovative 'anthropology of hands' which foregrounds the primacy of the hands in all forms of exchange, both material and intellectual. When hand-crafting a *mridanga*, the body-self 'extends its own cosmic potential', externalizing the inner world of spiritual origin. When that same *mridanga* is played, having previously been exchanged via human hands in the market economy, sounds emanate from a union of hand and drum, penetrating the inner body of those who listen to it. The embodied, affective experience of listening to the drum and receiving its vibrations then serves as an existential grounds through which listeners reach and (re)affirm their own understanding of the ontological precepts underpinning Hindu cosmology. Equally, despite the tremendous salience of caste in this context, all bodies share the spiritual elements of clay-sound vibrations, and Sarbadhikary emphasizes how hands, by creating a seamless, intensely sensory exchange among the instrument-maker, player, listener and drum, allow intellectual exchange about essential equivalence among the drum sounders to be perpetually regenerated. As she notes, 'the intellectual discourse concerning the *mridanga* is exchanged among the participants as *both* sensory transmission *and* cognitive communication' (emphasis ours).

Through this analysis, not only is embodiment revealed as integral to the process of intellectual exchange, but the very straightforwardness of any distinction between 'material' and 'intellectual' exchange is called into question, since the transfer of *mridanga* for money is itself an essential component of the process by which core intellectual ideas, such as cosmological and ontological precepts, are circulated and sustained. This invites a broader consideration of how else anthropology's long history of thinking about exchange in the context of economic life might enrich our understanding of exchanges that we are prone to thinking of as primarily 'intellectual'.

Exchange as Transaction

Since knowledge itself is frequently a transactional good, numerous forms of intellectual exchange are already implicated in domains that are conventionally demarcated as 'economic'. For this reason, strict conceptual separation between economic and intellectual exchange is not usually tenable. Yet certain conceptual operations have to take place to make knowledge into a commodity due to its special property as a mode of 'immaterial labour' that is not physically manufactured in the same way as other goods. Jane Kenway et al. (2006: 55) explain how transforming knowledge into a commodity requires an understanding of its relation to the economy of scarcity: 'In terms of physically manufactured goods, if two people share the object, then each person's potential use of it is reduced. Rival goods are a precondition for the economic notion of "scarcity" as their depletion through consumption becomes the basis of a system of supply and demand that regulates a capitalist economy'. Knowledge, on the other hand, is a non-rival good because it does not diminish through consumption: its use by one does not preclude its use by another. If, then, knowledge – as 'a collectively shared, collectively produced, non-depletable (or non-rival) good' (Kenway et al. 2006: 56) – is to be exchanged for profit in the knowledge economy, it must be made 'artificially scarce by being turned into a privately-owned commodity' (Kundnani 1999: 52).

Making knowledge commercially exploitable thus requires its exclusion from free exchange – intellectual property rights (IPR) are an obvious example of this, with the knowledge owner gaining a monopoly on exploitation of the results of the research. We also meet here the 'black box' problem, known to anthropologists from the work of scholars such as Bruno Latour (1987) and recently discussed in reference to ancient knowledge networks by Eleanor Robson (2019). To claim ownership and hence restrict access to knowledge is to make invisible the manifold intellectual exchanges that contributed to its creation, a process of 'eras[ing] all traces of the process of production' (Robson 2019: 40) – what James Leach (2004) has called 'appropriative creativity'. In contexts where ownership of knowledge has been asserted, one person's generous, emancipatory, practice of intellectual exchange can be for another 'a form of copying or negative possession' (Reed 2011: 177), or even theft.

What these reflections reveal is that any anthropology of intellectual exchange ought to engage seriously with the anthropological literature on what Humphrey and Hugh-Jones (1992: 2) term 'types of exchange'. The core insight of this work was that 'exchange' can be broken down into different subtypes: barter, credit, formalized trade, gift exchange, monetized commodity exchange, theft and tribute, among others. Each has different 'rules' and moral valence, even as the boundaries between them were often blurred and contested, and individual transactions could sometimes be classified in multiple possible ways. Its value for an anthropology of intellectual exchange comes not only from the ethnographic specificity that is afforded by reflecting upon exactly what kind of exchange any given intellectual exchange might be for its constituent parties, but also from the leverage it offers anthropologists to *reclassify* instances of intellectual exchange, thereby resuscitating hitherto submerged dynamics.

Rather than always being a commodity exchange, for example, some instances of intellectual exchange might be better understood as gifting. In a note in her essay 'Worlds United and Apart' (this volume), Bayly explains how analyses of gift exchange influenced her understanding of Vietnamese intellectuals' participation in international exchanges of knowledge and modernizing expertise. As both givers and receivers of gifts of knowledge and skill, Vietnamese narratives do not neatly reflect the 'inequalities, power and patronage' (Mosse 2005: 20) that accounts of the gift in contexts of foreign development aid typically invoke. Rather, 'animated by feelings of selfless warmth', such exchanges were 'portrayed as something akin to the "empathetic dialogues" which Fennell (2002) sees as generated out of the giving of "illiquid", disinterested gifts between individual partners in exchange'. Bayly is here drawing on the work of Lee Anne Fennell (2002: 93), for whom a gift 'embodies and perpetuates empathetic dialogue between giver and recipient, facilitating and documenting each parties' imaginative participation in the life of the other'. Illiquid gift-giving, for Fennell, is not a form of market transaction but rather 'a specialized form of communication' that is empathetic in the sense that when selecting gift objects, parties imagine not what recipients would most like to possess but instead what they would most like to receive from this particular donor. While much can go wrong due to failures of imagination and gift selections inappropriate to the relationship, the forms of identification such dialogues can engender are unique: for instance, a donor's gift of jazz records might rest on their recognition of the 'higher order' preferences of a recipient who may know little about jazz but seeks to become the kind of person who does. Such a gift is insightful and empathetic since it successfully registers the hoped-for self-transformation of the recipient.

Meanwhile, and seeking to counter increased emphasis on the commercialization of research within the Australian Higher Education sector, Kenway et al. (2006) marshal the work of anthropological and other gift theorists (e.g. Gregory 1982; Carrier 1995; Frow 1997) to suggest parallels 'between the way the circulation of knowledge sustains an intellectual community, and the way the circulation of gifts maintains a gift community' (Kenway et al. 2006: 65). Arguing that knowledge is 'inalienable', they write of 'gifts of knowledge' and citation practices that acknowledge intellectual *debts* and give *credit* to intellectual influences. One need not agree with the normative thrust of Kenway et al.'s argument to recognize that its use of gift theory provides a stimulating perspective on intellectual exchanges and relations.

Economic anthropologists have long taken an interest in restricted modes of exchange, developing models that are likely to prove helpful in accounting for the intermittency or obstruction of certain instances of intellectual exchange. Jonathan Parry (1985) intimated something of this in an essay discussing how in classical Hindu theory only Brahman scholars are pure enough to be permitted to transmit Vedic knowledge. Pollution caused by death or birth can cause the process of transmission to be paused. Moreover, those belonging to certain 'unclean' castes are forbidden from hearing sacred texts: the ears of the Shudra 'are to be filled with mercury if he hears the Veda' (1985: 210); they are disbarred from being recipients of the Brahman's learning. Parry does not just compare the practice to the classical Indic form of gift-giving known as *dana* but argues that the Brahman's teaching actively partakes of – can only be understood in reference to – these gift logics. Brahman mortuary priests must not allow the gifts they receive at the time of cremation to accumulate. If they do, they become the rotting receptacles of sin, inauspiciousness and disease. In exactly the same way, the Brahman teacher who declines to transmit or exchange his knowledge will have to pay grave penalties in this life or the next.

The knowledge that they hold must circulate, but at the same time its circulation is highly restricted.

Parry contrasts the Brahmanical imperative to keep knowledge in circulation with Tantric traditions of secrecy and also regions of New Guinea where 'the most powerful knowledge is the most highly secret and where access to it is as narrowly restricted as possible' (1985: 208; see, e.g., Barth 1975). Other studies in economic anthropology likely to assist analysts of intellectual exchange include Eytan Bercovitch's work on 'hidden exchanges' in Inner New Guinea (1994), P.J. Hamilton-Grierson's on 'silent trade' (1903), Michael Walzer's on 'blocked exchanges' (1983) and in particular Paul and Laura Bohannan's work (1968) on 'spheres of exchange'. Indeed, exchanges, as anthropologists remind us, rarely if ever take place on an empty ground, but are always governed by rules and codes that are characteristic of social relations in a given time and place (Parry and Bloch 1989). Those rules and codes form *spheres of exchange*, understood as either a system of exchange in which objects are classified according to different spheres of values, and restrictions exist to prevent the exchange of objects in one sphere with those in another (Bohannan and Bohannan 1968), or a network of exchange regulated by specific norms regarding what can be circulated within the network (Pine 2002; Kwon 2007).

The notion of spheres of exchange guides the analysis in Lam Minh Chau's chapter in this volume. Chau examines the institutionalized discipline of anthropology practised by anthropologists employed in state research institutes and universities in northern Vietnam in the 1970s and 1980s pre-Renovation high-socialist period as a 'sphere of intellectual exchange'. Officially, only intellectual products of a certain kind could be circulated within this sphere: those that conformed to Soviet-style Marxist theories of social evolution. Non-Marxist, non-evolutionist theories and ideas were regarded as Western, reactionary and bourgeois, the circulation of which would contaminate the institutionalized discipline of anthropology as a means to facilitate social evolution among the country's ethnic minorities.

Anthropologists have not only paid attention to the ways spheres of exchange block, prevent and disrupt flows of ideas, knowledge and objects. They have also unveiled the many creative paths through which the supposedly rigid boundaries of exchange are overcome and worlds bridged (see Bayly, this volume). One way to transcend the boundaries is to engender the collapse of spheres of exchange altogether, notably by introducing a universal medium of exchange across all spheres (Kwon 2007). But boundaries can be transcended without leading to spheres' terminal destruction. Janet Carsten's work on 'cooking money' shows that Malaysian women who spent the money their husbands earned when working outside the home on the food they cooked and shared among family members converted money from a symbol of commercialized and individualized labour into embodiments of the spirits of collectivism, mutual sharing and non-calculation that could be safely exchanged within the home sphere as moral objects (1989: 132). Guided by Carsten's insights, Chau explores how a group of young Vietnamese state-employed anthropologists not only brought Western anthropological perspectives, particularly those associated with cultural relativism and structuralism, into the sphere of state anthropology as novel objects of intellectual exchange, but also, through their own distinctive interpretation of Western theories, 'cooked' those ideas into novel forms suitable to be circulated within the restricted sphere.

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From contemporary interest in the mediating qualities of embodiment, materiality and linguistic and interactional conventions to the rich literature on forms and spheres of exchange, anthropology has an extensive repertoire of concepts and analytics that can be used to enhance interdisciplinary conversations on intellectual exchange, allowing us to understand it in nuanced and differentiated ways that go beyond, while nevertheless endorsing, the core observation that it is an agentive practice. We turn in the final section of the introduction to yet another way in which contemporary anthropological thought stands to both benefit from and offer valuable contributions to research on intellectual exchange. This line of analysis also builds upon the core recognition that intellectual exchange is an agentive practice. But if our discussion of 'exchange' analytics has been concerned with the minutiae of how such practice occurs, the next section considers its place and significance within the ethical lives of those undertaking it, and the others with whom they share their social worlds.

Intellectual Exchange and Ethical Life

Since cultural production is, as we have shown, underpinned by agentive – and yet contextually and materially mediated – processes of intellectual exchange, it is understandable that many scholars would be concerned with understanding what processes of intellectual exchange are taking place in any given context, in what ways, and to what effect. Such an enquiry may be driven by empiricist ethnographic modes of enquiry, but can also relate to more normative concerns. As seen in the previously cited example of Groethuysen's (1921) interest in fostering linguistic practices of intellectual exchange that guard against the dangers (for him) of hermetic ideologies, and as seen in many recent examinations of the shortcomings of established modes of academic practice (see, e.g., Brković 2022; Brodkin et al. 2011; Garnett 2006), those commenting on intellectual exchange are often keenly aware of divergences between the ways in which intellectual exchange is practised in actuality, and their ideals of intellectual exchange: how they would want it to be, or believe it *should* be. Intellectual exchange, then, is deeply bound up with ethical life: a site of possible moral flourishing, but also of possible compromise, complicity or moral failure. Equally, it is important not to take the occurrence of intellectual exchange for granted. Quite aside from the possibility of some people being excluded from intellectual interactions, ethnographic research has shown how even people with a vibrant intellectual life may actively withhold from, or simply be indifferent to, certain forms of intellectual conversation and enquiry (see, e.g., Last 1981; Long 2019). Conversely, the desire to participate in intellectual exchange cannot and should not be automatically credited to a transcendent cross-cultural domain of 'intellectual curiosity'. It must, instead, be located within an ethnographically contextualized understanding of the enquiring self, since this clarifies the impulses and modes of 'ethical reasoning' (Trnka et al. 2021: S59) that determine how intellectual exchange may be practised, and also sheds light on the affects and desires infusing the cultural politics that surround it.

Nicholas Long's contribution to this volume emphasizes the value of studying intellectual exchange not just as a practice but also as an ideal, developing this theoretical intervention with reference to ethnographic materials from Indonesia. Intellectual exchange, and specifically the prospect of high-achieving youngsters travelling abroad and then bringing knowledge back home – has a hallowed place in the national imaginary, since it is believed that such circuitry may rectify national problems of low human resource quality, educational deficiency and low international competitiveness. Studying overseas is thus a cherished aspiration for many Indonesians, and yet few are able to actually achieve it. While this in itself is a source of discontent, it also renders the endeavours of those who do partake in study overseas a matter of intense concern to their contemporaries back home. Such affective investment, Long argues, explains the shock and disbelief with which the Indonesian public responded to an incident in which David Hartanto Widjaya, an Indonesian high-achiever studying in Singapore, was found dead after allegedly attacking his dissertation supervisor with a knife. Indonesian commentators roundly rejected the suicide verdict delivered by the Singapore Coroner's Court, suggesting that David had been murdered to prevent him bringing state-of-the-art Singaporean knowledge back to Indonesia. When the Indonesian government did nothing to dispute the official Singaporean verdict, Indonesians experienced shock and despair at such apparent reluctance to seek justice for David and such seeming disregard not only for the wellbeing of the nation's most valuable human resources but also for the national futures that could be secured if their intellectual exchanges were conducted successfully. Such feelings were deeply consequential for Indonesians' political subjectivity, leading some to lose hope in the future and others to seek out dramatic forms of political alternative. Long's analysis thus broadens the scope of what 'an anthropology of intellectual exchange' should encompass by showing the need to examine the power of intellectual exchange as an ideal (rather than just a practice in and of itself): one that can be of immense significance and consequence even to those who are not directly involved in the intellectual exchanges.

As this discussion reveals, an anthropology of intellectual exchange can make important contributions to anthropology's ongoing endeavours to better understand various aspects of ethical life, including questions of 'the Good' and different communities' aspirations towards achieving it (on which, see Robbins 2013). Intellectual exchange can be reflected on and operate as an ideal to work towards (Long, this volume; see also Bayly 2009b) – an important point to recognize given the hitherto predominant focus on intellectual exchange as a practice. But equally, practices of intellectual exchange can form key means for striving towards varied conceptions of the Good (rather than function themselves as the Good), as we see in Copeman's chapter in this volume, which describes how exchanges of personal names can allow bearers to take on names capable of acting as models or ideals for assisting them in making of themselves the kind of people they wish to become (Laidlaw 2014b), and how the – sometimes intense – debates surrounding such name exchanges can allow a community of onlookers to not only appraise their success in doing so, but also allow the commentators themselves to performatively construct themselves as rightfully-minded advocates of whatever they believe their community most needs (more respect for Sikh tradition; more freedom of choice, and so on). Ethical subjects then may engage reflectively both *towards* intellectual exchange as the Good and *through* intellectual exchange towards other conceptions of the Good. Both ethical dimensions of intellectual exchange – as a practice of 'moral habituation' and as the subject of 'moral intellectual enquiry' (Yong 1996: 58) – centre on reflection and the aspiration to be certain kinds of person and thus form a privileged site for investigating moral experience and the dynamics of ethical life.

Indeed, one reason why intellectual exchange proves a fertile ground for such enquiry is because the pursuit of the Good via intellectual exchange is by no means always successful or straightforward. To understand why not, it is helpful to consider Hans-Georg Gadamer's observations, in *Truth and Method* ([1960] 2004), concerning the relationship between conversation and understanding. Gadamer rehabilitates prejudice and presupposition (or 'prejudgement') as the necessary ground of such engagements: without them we would simply be vacuous subjects to which conversations could reveal nothing (to paraphrase Mackenzie 1986: 44). He also notes, however, that conversational exchange 'is never completely under the control of either conversational partner, but rather is determined by the matter at issue' (Malpas 2018). As such, conversations – and intellectual exchange more broadly – involve high degrees of uncertainty, contingency and risk. Indeed, the possibility that an intellectual exchange might offer parties to it new insights and understandings hinges on its being able 'to assert its own truth against one's fore-meanings' (Mackenzie 1986: 44). Preconceived (and quite possibly cherished) notions may come under critical scrutiny, in ways that may allow subjects to advance towards the Good but may also unsettle established ethical projects and raise the spectre of moral peril.

Exchanges that pose some risk to one's fore-meanings need not precipitate their wholesale disintegration: we insist on the tenacity of subjects' capacity to discern amidst the unsettling winds intellectual exchanges can bring. In this volume, particularly compelling evidence of the durability of fore-meanings is provided in Christopher Goscha's account of French settlers living in Saigon at the time of the fall of French Indochina. Goscha's chapter explores this critical juncture in Vietnamese history from the perspective of French communities confronted with the end of empire, rather than the more widely-studied vantage point of Vietnamese nationalists. In terms of our enquiry into intellectual exchange, Goscha's study is fascinating for its portraiture of a community who 'disagreed vehemently that their time had come' even as their Vietnamese contemporaries argued that the age of colonization was over. Goscha cites the case of Jacques Le Bourgeois, the former director of *Radio Saigon*, whose memoirs betray an ongoing attachment to 'imperial time' and a conviction that Vietnamese nationalistic desire was 'entirely theoretical'. As Goscha notes, such a case resists easy theorization. It may be that Le Bourgeois's limited language skills hampered his understanding – a possibility that reiterates our earlier point about contingencies of interactional ecologies mediating the outcomes of intellectual exchange. Yet it also seems from Le Bourgeois's text that he was 'locked firmly in an imperial time warp', unable or unwilling to acknowledge the reality that surrounded him. Such cases are important for highlighting how intellectual exchanges are not automatically generative of new meaning but vulnerable to the dynamics of refusal (McGranahan 2016), while also showing that the forms of 'discernment' and 'active participation' with which people respond to intellectual provocations are not necessarily always characterized by careful sifting, selection and recombination of elements but can also involve inadvertent or fully wilful blindness (see Bovensiepen and Pelkmans 2020).

Nevertheless, although fore-meanings *can* be resilient in the face of intellectual exchange, this is not to be assumed. Goscha's case should be seen as occupying an extreme position on the spectrum of intellectual exchange outcomes, rather than being the default – for, if it were not possible for worldviews to be reshaped via processes of intellectual exchange, then the very institutions of education, research and learning that have led to this volume coming into being would be fundamentally unviable. The key point to take from Gadamer's work is that risk to fore-meaning is an inherent property of those intellectual exchanges that lead to critical scrutiny and examination of presuppositions. As such, contexts of intellectual exchange necessarily raise important questions about the durability or transformation of subjects' ethical commitments: an observation which means that intellectual exchange cannot be meaningfully understood aside from an engagement with its participants' and observers' ethical and moral lives. Here too, then, anthropology has much to contribute to the interdisciplinary conversations surrounding intellectual exchange, avowed as it is of a wide range of theoretical perspectives and tools designed to understand the contours, practice and experience of moral life (see, e.g., Faubion 2011; Laidlaw 2014b; Mattingly 2014; Zigon and Throop 2014).

Conclusion

With this introduction, we have not only introduced and contextualized the distinctive contributions made by the chapters in this volume, but established a case as to why anthropologists should take an interest, and get involved, in the growing multi-disciplinary intellectual exchanges regarding intellectual exchange. Given that intellectual life is a foundational aspect of human experience which represents a legitimate and fruitful (though by no means the only) point of departure for anthropological enquiry and analysis, there are many good reasons for the notion of 'intellectual exchange' to be front and centre of anthropological vocabulary. It is broad enough to encompass and bring into juxtaposition a wide variety of practices, while nuanced enough to avoid both the deterministic forms of power functionalism and the simplistic assumptions of incommensurability that have sometimes informed anthropologists' accounts of their interlocutors' intellectual lives. Intellectual exchange is thus a vibrant and fertile object of concern for contemporary anthropology.

Moreover, if one problem with much existing work on intellectual exchange has been its tendency towards particularist descriptivism, leaving its core concept 'undertheorized' (Merkel 2021), then anthropologists have much to offer the emergent conversations surrounding the term. While an attention to the complexities of scale, an open-mindedness regarding who or what should be encompassed within an account of 'intellectual exchange', and a critical attention to the cultural politics of the category 'intellectual' are not unique to anthropologists, they are all points on which anthropologists, by virtue of their training, are well positioned to make key contributions. We also highlight three further ways in which anthropologists are perhaps uniquely placed to invigorate the study of intellectual exchange: through their analytic attention to, and close ethnographic observation of, intellectual exchange's mediation by institutions, social structures, linguistic and interactional conventions and embodied topologies; by operationalizing an extensive disciplinary conceptual arsenal to capture diverse forms and logics of 'exchange' and recognize the differences and commonalities across them; and by embedding intellectual exchange within broader accounts of ethical life so as to better understand its consequences for self-making and to understand it not only as a practice, but as an ideal, or object of desire.

Clearly, this is only the beginning of what we hope will evolve into a productive and dynamic field of enquiry and debate: we make no claim to have offered an exhaustive account of all anthropological work related to intellectual exchange, nor to have advanced an all-encompassing anthropological theory of intellectual exchange. Instead, we offer readers from within and beyond anthropology a set of tools with which to think about these issues, and a collection of intriguing and compelling case studies in which to observe those tools at work. We hope that engaging with these writings will allow you, the reader, to gain new insights for your work, just as engaging closely with the work of Susan

Bayly has, in so many ways, inspired and informed the intellectual lives of each of the contributors. If it does not, then we hope that engaging with the volume will supply added clarity as to why you fortify your existing position. For if either outcome is achieved, then that in itself would be proof of the vibrancy, vitality and consequentiality of intellectual exchange – and of its deservingness of becoming a concerted focus of anthropological enquiry.

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Notes

1. When writing of different intellectual 'traditions', we follow MacIntyre's definition of a tradition as 'an argument extended through time in which certain fundamental agreements are defined and redefined in terms of two kinds of conflict: those with critics and enemies external to the tradition … and those internal, interpretive debates … by whose progress a tradition is constituted' (1988: 12). Such traditions are deliberative. Though initially or ostensibly conflictual, interactions between them can produce rethinking, evaluation and examination by a tradition of its own practices and beliefs and lead to decisions to adopt, in their place, values and practices from rival traditions to live by (see also a similar line of argument developed with reference to religious traditions in Das 2014). Intellectual exchange, in this volume, is thus understood to be an emergent and constitutive property of nevertheless distinct traditions rather than something that takes place between already fully constituted self-enclosed universes in the form either of disintegration or mere encounter.
2. Of Bayly's own personal intellectual exchanges in Cambridge, it has always been clear how much joy her life in the Department of Social Anthropology gave her; while of her thirty-four-year marriage to the preeminent historian of India, the British Empire and world history Christopher Bayly (1945–2015), she has written that it was 'sustained and nourished by joyfully impassioned argument, and keen enthusiasm for one another's work' (Clark and Bayly 2018: xv).
3. However, see work by Gil (2010) and van der Geest (2018) exploring how interlocutors in the field may not only co-author or collaborate constructively but also engage in alternative modalities of intellectual exchange, such as refusal to cooperate, deceit, or the deliberate sabotage of one's project.
4. A striking recent example supporting this point is Brković's (2022) analysis of peer review practices in anthropology. For Brković, the effectiveness of peer review is undermined by the dominance of 'a "courtroom" model of an intellectual exchange' which foregrounds picking holes in authors' arguments and 'thinking against' them. While this can be stimulating, she argues, the stakes of publishing often render it a source of anxiety and grievance rather than intellectual pleasure; she instead advocates practices of intellectual exchange characterized by 'thinking with', 'imaginative identification' and 'intellectual accompaniment', modelled on the supervisor-doctoral student relationship.

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