

“This work is a must-read for anyone with a desire to understand the influence Atiśa had on Tibetan Buddhism and to further navigate the various presentations found within Buddhist philosophical narratives in Tibet.”

Ford on *Illuminator of the Awakened Mind*

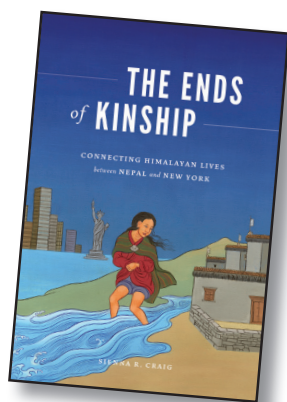
Tibetan Buddhists up to the present day” (pp. 93–94).

The final section is a collection of fine translations of Atiśa’s various teachings. Apple introduces each text with a summary. Every translation reads easily and smoothly, allowing even fledglings to Buddhism opportunities to come to understand Atiśa’s teachings and the topics found within each text.

James B. Apple’s book is part of Shambhala publication’s *Lives of the Masters Series* which as described, “offers engaging introductions to the lives, works, and legacies of key Buddhist teachers, philosophers, contemplatives, and (https://www.shambhala.com/lives-of-the-masters).” The reader reaps vast rewards through Apple’s extensive scholarship on Atiśa and his talents for writing an easily accessible work. The author strikes this balance so that readers find the book enjoyable and knowledgeable. This work is a must-read for anyone with a desire to understand the influence Atiśa had on Tibetan Buddhism and to further navigate the various presentations found within Buddhist philosophical narratives in Tibet.

*Renée L. Ford is a part-time lecturer at the University of North Carolina at Wilmington and a project assistant for The Oral History of Tibetan Studies at the University of Oxford. Renée’s research focuses on how devotion and faith function epistemologically and philosophically in the Nyingma Great Completeness tradition. She received her*

*PhD at Rice University under the tutelage of Dr. Anne C. Klein.*



***The Ends of Kinship: Connecting Himalayan Lives between Nepal and New York.***

**Sienna R. Craig.** Seattle: University of Washington Press, 2020. 304 pages. ISBN 9780295747699.

**Reviewed by Tashi W. Gurung and Phurwa D. Gurung**

Drawing on nearly three decades of anthropological inquiry and friendship, Sienna Craig documents the migration of Mustangis between Nepal and New York City (NYC) asking: How do migration and new forms of mobilities shape and transform traditions and kinship networks? How do Mustangis make sense of, adapt to, reformulate, and rely on global migratory networks and translocal kinship relations across time and space?

Craig takes inspiration from Tibetan Buddhist concepts and practices of

*kora* (*skor ba*) or circumambulation, and *khorwa* (*'khor ba*), the cyclic world of suffering, and uses the English gloss “khora” to conceptualize a circular understanding of migration, belonging, identity, and place-making that weave together individuals, households, and communities between Mustang, Kathmandu, and NYC. *Khora*, she argues, not only takes indigenous concepts seriously but also challenges linear ways of explaining migration. Migration here can be interpreted as a form of *khora*—the cyclic rhythms of transnational mobility, kinship and world-making (though “khora” sounds a bit awkward in Tibetan or Loba parlance).

The book is structured following a circular life course from birth to death and the transformations connecting them. The distinctive feature of the book is her innovative and creative interpellation of short fiction and narrative ethnography that supplement each other to tell layered stories in ways that do more justice to the complexity of embodied realities. The choice to foreground collaborators and include the methodology at the end deviates from the usual academic practice of acknowledgement, citation, and references. The result is a remarkable ethnography of connection across geographical, temporal, socio-cultural, political, and economic borders.

Craig’s relationship with Mustang and its people is centered on friendship and long-term collaboration. This

“...a remarkable ethnography of connection across geographical, temporal, socio-cultural, political, and economic borders.”

Gurung and Gurung on *The Ends of Kinship: Connecting Himalayan Lives between Nepal and New York*

informs and is evident from the depth of her knowledge about Mustang landscape and people, her choice of words, compassionate tone, nuanced attention to detail, and provocative engagement with prevalent social issues. Although Craig declares early in the book that she is a white, middle-class American woman, readers may easily be cajoled into thinking she is a Mustangi. This demonstrates her durable commitment to the place and long-term relationship with many of its people whose stories she tells.

Part I chronicles the birthing journeys of three Mustangi women across three generations. Craig skillfully narrates the powerful bond between mother and daughter at different stages of pregnancy leading to the birth of a child to illustrate women’s shifting experiences in tandem with the *khora* of migration. The challenges of birthing in Mustang, Kathmandu, and NYC are different and that is not just a result of different geographical locations but also of social change: transformation of values and beliefs, role of technology and information, dissolution of old norms and emergence of new ones. Through excellent storytelling, Craig emphasizes how challenges associated with both migration and birthing hinge heavily on many factors across geographical locations and time.

Part II explores long-distance relationships between children and parents. Mustangi children

are often separated, unwillingly, from their parents and home and migrate elsewhere (usually Pokhara, Kathmandu or even India) in pursuit of education. Craig refers to this phenomenon as education-driven out-migration. Even as Mustangis migrate to NYC, oftentimes parents and children part ways for different reasons. Regardless of this physical separation, relationships remain nonchalant. The bond is maintained through circulation of mutual support, obligation, expectation, and care. This section asks: “what is education?” The book doesn’t answer this question directly but it elucidates how parent-child relationships transform across time and space. The process of getting an education is cyclic and indeed a form of, as Craig puts it, an “educational *khora*” (p. 75).

Part III grapples with the relationship between identity, migration, and sense of place. By tracing the social lives of documents like land deeds, *nagarikta*, passports, visas, and green cards, the story highlights the fraught and paradoxical dynamics of “making a living and claiming kin” (p. 84). Subsistence and traditional strategies get abandoned in favor of migrating abroad and the irresistible “love affair with cash” (p. 123). Craig expounds on how people are (dis)entangled in the transnational dynamics of citizenship and belonging between the state-making practices of Nepal, US immigration policies, historical ties with Tibet, and the global currency of Tibetanness. In the process, Mustangis

simultaneously become Nepali, Tibetan, and American—as well as none of them. Like many immigrants, Mustangis become invisible in NYC as racialized “flexible citizens” subject to exclusion and exploitation.

Part IV considers the affective and social dimensions of love, relationships, and marriage. Focusing on sex and gender, it discusses the biological aspects of kinship and social expectations. Indeed the biological and the social intersect and are blurred in kinship: “DNA is more than a double helix. It is a rope of relatedness” (p. 139). The section explores the complexity of various relationships including love and arranged marriage, monks to householder transitions, cross-cousin and polyandrous unions. Social norms and expectations are stretched by the fluidity of these relationships that span love, proposal, unions, and betrayals. Although “kinship travels” (p. 126) through new geographies and mobilities, old relations and hierarchies are reinscribed and reinforced in unexpected places.

Part V centers the relationship between migration and place to show how “the decision to migrate affects not only the people who stay behind but also the land itself” (p. 154). Narratives of place-making are weaved through accounts of sacred geographies and stories that evoke changing values and practices of farming; preservation of cultural heritage; the role of deities and rituals in making sense of and coping with illnesses, environmental

precarities and disasters; the political ecology of junipers and poplars; road building and other infrastructures of development in a geopolitically eventful period. With migration, these place-based ways of knowing travel too, creating new geographies of dislocation and belonging. Indeed, the evocative description of a Brooklyn apartment that is occupied entirely by Mustangis encapsulates the observation that “we remake geographies of dislocation into geographies of home” (p. 175).

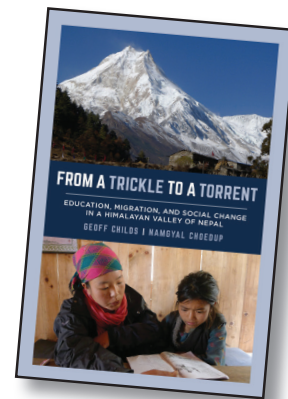
In part VI, Craig asks: “to what extent are the ends of kinship bound up with the ends of life?” (p. 197). The end of life does not equal the end of kinship but rather represents just a single cycle in the *khorma* of existence. By narrating the stories of three women in their seventies, Craig delves into the challenges Mustangi elders are facing and the ways in which they are learning to adapt within the *khora* of migration. In the wake of new mobilities, Mustangis have had to change their way of taking care of elders (e.g. via virtual networks of care such as WeChat or hiring a caretaker) but the values around caretaking have persisted. Despite geographical distance, the ethnography illustrates how Mustangis still honor their connection to and care for their elders.

*The Ends of Kinship* is a poignant journal of the fascinating voyage of Mustangis from the Forbidden Kingdom in the high Himalaya, via the dusty streets of the Kathmandu valley, to the cosmopolitan boroughs of Brooklyn and Queens in NYC. It is a treasure for the Mustangi community and an excellent resource for both Himalayan scholars and scholars of the Himalaya. It is an important book for those interested in contemporary Nepal, Tibet, South Asia, and North America as well as in translocality,

belonging, and identity in the context of migration in cognate fields of anthropology, geography, and development studies.

*Tashi W. Gurung is from Lo-Monthang, Mustang. Gurung is a PhD candidate in Environmental Social Science at the School of Human Evolution and Social Change at Arizona State University. His research interests lie in climate change adaptation, tourism, sustainability, and institutions focusing on the Himalayan communities in Nepal and across the world.*

*Phurwa D. Gurung, born and raised in Dho-Tarap, Dolpo, is a doctoral student in the Department of Geography at the University of Colorado Boulder working with Dr. Emily T. Yeh. He is broadly interested in political ecology, infrastructure studies, and more-than-human geographies. His research examines the political ecology of caterpillar fungus in Dolpo to explore the production and transformation of Himalayan landscapes at the intersections of state-building, indigeneity, and multispecies world-makings.*



***From a Trickle to a Torrent: Education, Migration, and Social Change in a Himalayan Valley of Nepal.***

**Geoff Childs and Namgyal Choedup.**  
Oakland: University of California Press, 2018. 248 pages. ISBN 9780520299528.

**Reviewed by Rune Bolding Bennike**

Despite the increasing popularity of mixed-methods research, it is rare to find studies that successfully combine original quantitative data with fine-grained ethnographic sensitivities. *From a Trickle to a Torrent* is such a study. There is a lot to learn about contemporary Himalayan life in this book.

The core focus of the book is the relationship between education, migration, and social change. Over the past two decades, the Himalayan valley of Nubri has seen a massive increase in youth outmigration. This migration is largely driven by the increasing availability of scholarships for Himalayan students sponsored by Tibetan Buddhist institutions and foreign donors. Going from a small trickle in the late 1990s (when Childs first began studying the valley) to a ravaging torrent in recent years, this outmigration is causing rapid change in village life as well as in the life of the young migrants. Labor is