Across Anthropology

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Across Anthropology: Troubling Colonial Legacies, Museums, and the Curatorial.

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How can we rethink anthropology beyond itself? In this book, twenty-one artists, anthropologists, and curators grapple with how anthropology has been formulated, thought, and practised ‘elsewhere’ and ‘otherwise’. They do so by unfolding ethnographic case studies from Belgium, France, Germany, Italy, the Netherlands, and Poland—and through conversations that expand these geographies and genealogies of contemporary exhibition-making. This collection considers where and how anthropology is troubled, mobilised, and rendered meaningful.

Across Anthropology charts new ground by analysing the convergences of museums, curatorial practice, and Europe’s reckoning with its colonial legacies. Situated amid resurgent debates on nationalism and identity politics, this book addresses scholars and practitioners in fields spanning the arts, social sciences, humanities, and curatorial studies.

Preface by Arjun Appadurai. Afterword by Roger Sansi.

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“An extraordinarily rich and provocative collection of essays on the transformation of museums and exhibitions devoted to non-Western arts and cultures. Punctuated by interviews with path-breaking curators, the volume keeps us focused on contemporary practice—its real possibilities and constraints. The editors’ guiding concept of ‘trans-anthropology’ avoids both defensive celebration and rigid critique. It opens our eyes and ears to the relational transactions, alliances, and difficult dialogues that are animating former anthropology museums today.”

James Clifford, Author of Returns: Becoming Indigenous in the 21st Century