



UvA-DARE (Digital Academic Repository)

Framing Spaces between India and China

van Schendel, W.

DOI

[10.4324/9781003094364-3](https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003094364-3)

Publication date

2022

Document Version

Final published version

Published in

Yunnan-Burma-Bengal Corridor Geographies

License

Article 25fa Dutch Copyright Act (<https://www.openaccess.nl/en/in-the-netherlands/you-share-we-take-care>)

[Link to publication](#)

Citation for published version (APA):

van Schendel, W. (2022). Framing Spaces between India and China. In D. Smyer Yü, & K. Dean (Eds.), *Yunnan-Burma-Bengal Corridor Geographies: Protean Edging of Habitats and Empires* (pp. 29-45). Routledge. <https://doi.org/10.4324/9781003094364-3>

General rights

It is not permitted to download or to forward/distribute the text or part of it without the consent of the author(s) and/or copyright holder(s), other than for strictly personal, individual use, unless the work is under an open content license (like Creative Commons).

Disclaimer/Complaints regulations

If you believe that digital publication of certain material infringes any of your rights or (privacy) interests, please let the Library know, stating your reasons. In case of a legitimate complaint, the Library will make the material inaccessible and/or remove it from the website. Please Ask the Library: <https://uba.uva.nl/en/contact>, or a letter to: Library of the University of Amsterdam, Secretariat, Singel 425, 1012 WP Amsterdam, The Netherlands. You will be contacted as soon as possible.

Willem van Schendel, 'Framing Spaces between India and China,'

in: Dan Smyer Yü and Karin Dean (eds.),

Yunnan-Burma-Bengal Corridor Geographies: Protean Edging of Habitats and Empires (London:

Routledge, 2021), 29-45.

Yunnan–Burma–Bengal Corridor Geographies

Protean Edging of Habitats and Empires

Edited by Dan Smyer Yü and Karin Dean



1

FRAMING SPACES BETWEEN INDIA AND CHINA

Willem van Schendel

How can we think productively about the sweep of land connecting China's south-west, Myanmar's north, India's northeast, Bangladesh, and the Bay of Bengal? In its entirety, this region is rarely the focus of academic inquiry, even though the production of knowledge about some parts has been increasing rapidly. Stretching from the waterlogged environment of the world's largest river delta to the snow-topped slopes of the world's highest mountain range, and from the exceptionally heavy monsoons in the west to much lower—and long-term declining (Tan et al. 2017)—rainfall in the east, it is the home of a range of agro-ecological topographies and the meeting point of three of the earth's biodiversity hotspots.¹

So what is the point of considering this physically and environmentally varied zone as a single region, tentatively referred to as the “India–China corridor”?² Paradoxically, it is its persistent diversity that sets it apart from surrounding regions. First, the region's environmental variety has contributed to its always having been politically fractured. It was never under single common rule—although, for a short while, British imperial designs came close.³ As a result, local forms of sovereignty and territoriality developed out of long histories of political fragmentation and cultural variation, and these persist today. Second, the post-colonial states—India, Bangladesh,⁴ Burma/Myanmar, and China—view their sections of it primarily in terms of security. After the mid-twentieth century, they interdicted economic connections across their borders, thwarting infrastructural upgrading and regional growth.⁵ And third, the region has long been marginalized geopolitically. State elites considered it to be a problematic and unmanageable periphery in which local wars, ethnic confrontations, and drug lords flourished; where resources were hard to exploit; and where state control was haphazard and expensive. As a result, it turned into a political geography of silence and erasure (Grundy-Warr and Sidaway 2006).

In recent years, however, many policy makers have stopped framing these spaces as backwaters. Strategic planning and unprecedented engineering feats have begun to transform the region, and even greater plans are on the drawing board.⁶ These initiatives follow on earlier ones, but the latest, the “New Silk Road,” promises to pack an altogether more forceful punch. This clearly indicates that the region may see a sea change. Therefore, its discursive construction—as the “India–China corridor” or otherwise—links up with an ongoing geopolitical shift. There is a growing awareness that such a construction—however tentative, temporary, and pragmatic—may assist in overcoming generations of academic neglect, not just in terms of the conceptual marginalization of the region and the disjointedness of empirical knowledge production about it, but also in terms of how best to imagine this entity in historical and social terms.⁷

In other words, how can we think *with* these spaces? Which approaches can scholars offer to understanding processes of human life on this slice of the earth’s surface? How can we make these spaces contribute to scholarly critiques of state centrism and methodological nationalism? To be effective, we need to undo much of what we have learned about them, both in classrooms and in everyday life, but especially as a result of being trained in academic conventions that drive home the primacy of bounded states, societies, cultures, and histories. Decades ago anthropologist Eric R. Wolf made this point forcefully:

By turning names into things we create false models of reality. By endowing nations, societies or cultures, with the qualities of internally homogeneous and externally distinctive bounded objects, we create a model of the world as a global pool hall in which the entities spin off each other like so many hard and round billiard balls.

(Wolf 1982, 6)

Weaning ourselves off a billiard-ball perception of these spaces is difficult but essential. Social theorists have developed a plethora of concepts to help us do just that. But which ones are the most helpful? Replacing the billiard balls with celebratory globalism is not the answer. And Wolf’s warning that turning names (such as “India,” “China,” and “India–China corridor”) into things creates false models of reality is well taken. We also have to guard against what Mandy Sadan has called “historical ventriloquism”—imposing ideological and political perspectives on communities whose internal discourses seem to be “impervious to traditional historical enquiry” (Sadan 2013, 459). The only way to dodge such ventriloquism is to opt for approaches that combine local sources of knowledge, different ethnographic styles, and sustained dialogue between insiders and outsiders. At the same time, such approaches should be sensitive to the “extralocal” and the larger intersections of space, subjectivity, and agency (Anderson 2012).

In this chapter, I survey a few selected approaches to spatial imagination that have been applied to the region and might, in some measure, serve as antidotes to billiard-ball fragmentation. As in so much theorizing in the social sciences, these

approaches rely on metaphors from the material world to frame social processes.⁸ By way of shorthand, I call these metaphors structured, liquid, spatial, and sensory.

Structured metaphors

A popular way of conceptualizing human activities across space is to frame them as constituting networks. Social networks are assumed to have structure (even though this structure is mutable and may be short lived) and to consist of interconnected units. These units can be persons but also localities, nodes, hubs, or organizations. The interlinkages are often imagined as resembling biological systems. Parallels with the human body (the capillary system, the nervous system, and synaptic connections in the brain) are common, and so are parallels with plants (rhizomes and ramified and dendritic forms). Other natural patterns (webs, geometrical patterns, and fractals) can also help in thinking about human activities across space.

What such metaphors allow us to see is the architecture of connections that the billiard-ball perception obscures. They make it easier to understand cross-border connections and the social, cultural, and economic links that transcend national territories and sovereign control. Not surprisingly, scholars working on the spaces between India and China often use this approach. It is important to realize, however, that they have studied cross-border connections more extensively for the eastern end (China–Myanmar) than for the western reaches (Myanmar–India and India–Bangladesh). Thus, Ma Jianxiong applies a network perspective to secret societies, Wen-chin Chang to the jade trade, Karin Dean to kinship ties, Li Yunxia to rubber planting, Pum Khan Pau to ethnic identities, and Alexander Horstmann to ritual geographies (Ma 2011; Chang 2004; Dean 2005; Li 2017; Pau 2018; Horstmann 2012). Gunnel Cederlöf surveys “multiple layered networks” linking colonial Northeast India to wider commercial circulations (Cederlöf 2015). The network metaphor also structures Adam Simpson’s study of cross-border activism, Chyvette Williams et al.’s study of drug use, and studies by Sang Kook Lee and Sahana Ghosh on communication among refugees and migrants (Simpson 2013; Williams et al. 2011; Lee 2012; Ghosh 2015). Research on the region’s economy sometimes foregrounds the value chain, a widely used network image that highlights how natural resources get transformed into manufactured commodities (Dong and He 2018). Other currently popular structured imagery among social theorists—such as “assemblage,” “collage,” “bricolage”—does not figure prominently in writings on the spaces between India and China (but see Dean 2020).

Liquid metaphors

Occasionally, social scientists use another image to capture human activities that involve movement. It is the image of fluidity or liquidity. They speak of streams of migrants, a trickle of investments, goods flooding a market, or a supply of

labor that has dried up (van Schendel 2005, 39–40). Fluidity is associated with spatial elusiveness, improvisation, and tactical maneuvering, and it is often juxtaposed with social structure, order, and territorial control. In this approach, it is not so much the architecture and geometry of network nodes as the dynamic connections themselves that are foregrounded. These are harder to grasp because of their volatility, but the strength of this approach is that it helps us “go with the flow” and that it invites us to consider the direction of physical movement across space in tandem with the meanings attached to that movement. This does not imply that social relations are seen as entirely liquid or disembodied but that the focus is on momentum and tempo rather than on structural design and how flows are moored to infrastructure. In other words, liquid metaphors are more about melody and rhythm than about grammar and syntax. They embrace moments of turbulence and flux as well as moments of stillness and stasis.⁹

Liquid metaphors have not been as popular as structured metaphors in the study of the spaces between India and China, but they can be elucidating. Thus, Gunnel Cederlöf, Kuntala Lahiri-Dutt, and Debjani Bhattacharyya apply them to the study of environments, describing these as “fluid landscapes” (Cederlöf 2009; Lahiri-Dutt 2014; Bhattacharyya 2018). Jason Cons and Rajib Nandi provide case studies of upstream-downstream politics.¹⁰ A study of the timber trade between Myanmar and China portrays logs in liquid terms.¹¹ And Liu et al. speak of the coupling of “multiple streams” in their analysis of policy making with regard to the Myanmar-China energy pipeline (Liu et al. 2017).

Spatial metaphors

In contemporary social science, one of the most popular new ways of framing human activities is to insist on “process geographies” (Appadurai 2000, 6–7). Scholars imagine regions afresh by abandoning what they describe as relatively immobile, essentializing “trait geographies”—“values, languages, material practices, ecological adaptations, marriage patterns, and the like” (Vink 2007, 52)—and by replacing them with process geographies characterized by “various kinds of action, interaction, and motion (travel, trade, marriage, pilgrimage, warfare, proselytization, colonization, exile, and so on), in which regions can be conceptualized as both dynamic and interconnected” (Vink 2007, 52; Appadurai 1999, 232). Such mental remapping has created whole new fields of inquiry: for example, Indian Ocean studies and trans-Himalaya studies. Historians Patterson Giersch and Bérénice Guyot-Réchar, working on spaces between India and China, have found the concept of process geographies a useful tool (Giersch 2010; Guyot-Réchar 2017).

But spatial metaphors take other forms as well. These are often based on the example of the landscape: for example, the “fluid landscape” that we encountered earlier (Cederlöf 2009; Lahiri-Dutt 2014), the “sovereigntyscape,”¹² the “sutured landscape” (Sen 2018), the “liminal landscape” (Wittekind 2016), the “crescent,”¹³ the “bridgehead” (Marshall 1988; Su 2013), the “gateway” (McDuie-Ra

2016), the “remote” (Harms et al. 2014), or the “contact zone.”¹⁴ Studies that apply the lens of “borderlands,” “border space,” or “borderworlds” also make use of the landscape metaphor (Sadan 2013; Smyer Yü and Michaud 2017; Jackson 2016; Misra 2011; Ghosh 2015; Guyot-Récharde 2015; Sturgeon 2005). The same is true of studies on the spaces between India and China that frame this expanse in terms of “frontiers.” For example, Xiaobo Su describes Yunnan as a military, economic, and cultural frontier (Su 2013; also Steinberg and Fan 2012). Arupjyoti Saikia employs the term in the same way, as an unfixed zone of encounter, antagonism, and exchange, to analyze land reclamation (Saikia 2008). A recent repackaging of the frontier concept as the “resource frontier” is overtaking this more conventional understanding. Resource frontiers are frontiers to capitalism: Rainer Einzenberger understands resource frontiers in Northern Myanmar as capitalist state spaces formed by land enclosure and resource extraction, which, in turn, stimulate discourses of indigeneity (Einzenberger 2016; also Imamura 2015b; Cons and Eilenberg 2019). In the same vein, Aparajita Majumdar uses “resource frontier” to demonstrate how, in Northeast India, the colonial state’s appropriation of rubber involved both disruption and dialogue (Majumdar 2016).

In recent years, socio-spatial theory has influenced conceptualizations of the region in many ways. For example, Jason Cons speaks of “sensitive space,” Iftexhar Iqbal of “crossroads,” Karin Dean of “Thirdspace” and “territorialities,” Patterson Giersch of “geographical scales,” Willem van Schendel of “place-making,” and Galen Murton of a “spatial fix” (Cons 2016; Iqbal 2014; Dean 2005; Giersch 2010; van Schendel 2015; Murton 2013). Such attempts share a concern about space and place as social concepts, as human constructions rather than as physical givens, and understand them as historical and political processes. Part of a wider “spatial turn” in the social sciences and humanities, these approaches show that there is a growing sense that the spaces between India and China should be interrogated in a more spatially sophisticated way than is conventionally done. The idea of a “corridor,” used in this chapter, is yet another spatial metaphor—and we will explore its usefulness in some detail.

Sensory metaphors

Most social scientists frame the spaces linking Yunnan to the Bay of Bengal in terms of structured, liquid, and spatial metaphors. A fourth way to interpret these spaces, however, is to think of them in terms of sensory experience. The best-known example of this approach, which plays on the sense of touch, is the metaphor of friction that has recently been enjoying considerable popularity.¹⁵ Anna Tsing uses spatial metaphors when she speaks of “zones of awkward engagement [and] cultural friction [that] are transient; they arise out of encounters and interactions” (Tsing 2004, xi). But her argument goes beyond the idea of the resource frontier. She makes the case for studying the universal in these encounters.¹⁶ Rather than assuming that global change radiates from world centers, she argues that global change is co-produced in the friction of myriads of

local encounters. “Friction refuses the lie that global power operates as a well-oiled machine” (Tsing 2004, 6).

An ethnography of the global can be developed by studying the contingency of local encounters, whether in global cities or in, for example, the spaces between India and China. In other words, the idea of friction makes these spaces an exciting arena for studying global interaction. Tina Harris uses this approach in her work on trans-Himalayan trade, and she shows how friction is actually a local concept as well. Her interlocutor, Pema, speaks of global “friction” in the wool trade owing to chemical processing, nation-state borders, and Tibetan nomads adopting new Chinese consumerism (Harris 2013, 77–78). In a slightly different way, James Scott also applies the idea of friction to the region when he speaks of the friction of terrain (rugged landscapes hampering easy movement) and the friction of appropriation (shifting cultivation hampering state-making and surplus collection) in explaining why large unified states never developed in the upland sections of the region (Scott 2009). This idea of friction points to long-term historical transformations resulting from the development of better transport infrastructure, which have been theorized as “time-space compression” (Harvey 1990). Yongming Zhou applies this to road building, Soe Lin Aung to cross-border mobility, and Gary Sigley to new streams of tourists (Zhou 2013; Aung 2014; Sigley 2016). The shift from high connectivity during the Second World War to what we might call “time-space expansion” in the subsequent half century is a good reminder of the transient nature of friction and the non-linear trajectories that it fashions.

The metaphor of the senses is also invoked when we emphasize motion, a cross-sensory phenomenon because it engages several senses at once. Our eyes notice movement in space, our ears pick up the sound of objects getting closer or moving away, and our skin feels the whoosh of displaced air. Such sensory effects combine with the idea of friction in Martin Saxer’s idea of the pathway, which is “a configuration that is at once geographical and social.”

A pathway is thus not just another word for trade route . . . Life along a pathway is shaped by things, stories, rumors, and people passing through—by motion, or by flows, if you will. However, a pathway is neither just another word for flow. While shaped by motion, pathways are also conditioned by terrain, infrastructure and environmental factors like climate and weather.

(Saxer 2016, 105)

In other words, human movement is never as free as the word “flow” suggests. Flows get “conditioned” by their encounters with the friction of the environment, creating moments of “awkward engagement and cultural friction” (Tsing 2004, xi).

Other sensory metaphors—based on seeing, hearing, touch, taste, and smell—are becoming influential in the social sciences (Sui 2000; Lee 2017), but they

have not yet made much of an impact on studies of the spaces between India and China. Notable exceptions are Manpreet Janeja (2010), who explores “food-scapes,” and Jonathan Saha (2016), who speaks of “dairy geographies.”

An “India–China corridor”?

Framing the spaces between India and China as a “corridor” allows us to combine some of the strengths of these four different types of metaphor—structured, liquid, spatial, and sensory. The image captures processes of perpetual spatial construction as well as the movement of people, goods, and ideas.¹⁷ A forte of the “corridor” metaphor—used by both scholars and policy makers—is that it points not only to movement and fluidity but also to the directionality of movement.¹⁸

Looking at available studies, we may hypothesize very long-term variations in the direction of major human movements across the spaces between India and China. Population geneticists suggest that the first humans reached this region from the west, possibly more than 40,000 years ago, and that the corridor acted as the main thoroughfare for the peopling of eastern Asia and the Americas. Countless successive waves of migration are thought to have shaped the complex genetic makeup of its current population.¹⁹ These waves were primarily from west to east and from east to west, but migration in other directions, crosscutting the corridor, also occurred, thereby reminding us that the “corridor” is a metaphor: a heuristic construct, not a physical reality.

The corridor may also have been the region where humans first domesticated rice (Van Driem 2017). It is a web of truly ancient trade routes through which numerous goods and ideas have travelled for millennia (Ray 2003; Mukherjee 2006; Hazarika 2017). Bin Yang suggests that over the last ten centuries or more, there has been a preponderance of ideas and goods travelling eastward, from coastal Bengal to inland Yunnan. His argument is based on the movement of *kauri* (or cowrie) shells, Buddhist ideas, and place names—for example, from the ninth century CE onward, there is evidence that Buddhist states in Yunnan adopted names that were translations of Gandhara (in contemporary Pakistan) and that their leaders styled themselves “maharaja” (Yang 2012). Over time, Yunnan’s leaders slowly and haltingly became enmeshed in “a thickening web of economic, legal and cultural links” extending from the Chinese empire, but Yunnan remained culturally distinct and difficult to control (Victor Lieberman, quoted in Giersch 2006, 213).

Yunnan stayed a frontier region, and the empire did not expand its territorial control to more westerly parts of the corridor.²⁰ On the western and southern ends of the corridor, however, a very expansive polity established itself in the eighteenth century. In an uneven but unrelenting process, the British East India Company (and later the British government in India) began to push its way east from Bengal and north from coastal Burma.²¹

The rise of British power intensified the directionality of the corridor. Early British commercial interests perceived Yunnan as “China’s back door” and strove to unlock Chinese markets for British goods (Cederlöf 2017). New forms of economic and political confrontation developed as British territorial control reached the borders of Yunnan. By the late nineteenth century, the western end of the corridor was the more dynamic one, partly because the Chinese state focused more on maritime connections via the South China Sea. This west-to-east trend reached its apogee during the Second World War, when the corridor became an airborne passage as well, with tens of thousands of army personnel and massive amounts of oil, gasoline, arms, ammunition, and rations being airlifted from British India to Yunnan.²² From the late 1940s, however, all states straddling the corridor threw up barriers to mobility, initiating a period that lasted for over half a century. As a result, the corridor lost much of its dynamism, although mobility across it never ceased. And when barriers began to be relaxed, the dynamism was restored and its direction reversed: by the early twenty-first century, the eastern end was the more dynamic one because Yunnan began to act as China’s key “bridgehead” to South and Southeast Asia (Su 2013; van Schendel 2020). It was this new east-west dynamism that rekindled scholarly interest in the region.²³ The spatial metaphor of the corridor further complicates our understanding of the directionality of movement and fluidity because it allows us to think three dimensionally. This is important in a period in which “the gap between the cartographic imagination and the lived realities of modern political space” is becoming more noticeable (Billé 2017). As we are more aware of the economic, political, and cultural annexation of the air, soil, and sea, as well as subterranean spaces, the three dimensionality of social life emerges as a new focus for the social sciences and the humanities. New technologies (satellite geo-location, the internet, drones, and climate monitoring) and new ideas about the human impact on long-term history (the Anthropocene) lead to novel ways of understanding social life everywhere. This has given rise to a new spatial metaphor, “volumetric space,” which challenges our fixation on the skin of the earth. Volumetric space is not merely “a vertical extrapolation of bounded horizontal space” but may crisscross geopolitical as well as academic boundaries (Billé 2017).

In studying the history of the India–China corridor, we may apply such spatial sensitivity to human interaction with aerial occurrences (droughts, cyclones, epidemic diseases, air travel, air pollution, broadcasting), subterranean agency (earthquakes, volcanic eruptions, mineral deposits, arsenic-contaminated groundwater), and maritime events (tidal surges, tsunamis, submarine landslides, rising sea levels). These may or may not follow the direction of the surface corridor. Thus, we can think of the India–China corridor as a dynamic three-dimensional terrain in which land, sea, and air space always interact in indeterminate ways (Elden 2017). Human attempts to sense and manage the corridor—territorially or ontologically—produce friction because they always run up against these powerful spatial dynamics beyond human control.

Conclusion

Today, new political realities are prompting social scientists to liberate themselves from the state centrism and methodological nationalism that they have inherited from their forebears. As Edward Said put it: “Just as none of us is outside or beyond geography, none of us is completely free from the struggle over geography” (Said 1993, 6). In this chapter on studies of the spaces between India and China, I have indicated that this struggle produces a plethora of fresh approaches but no overarching consensus. It is impossible to say whether we are moving toward more consensus, but at least these approaches are commensurable: on the whole, scholars do not talk past each other but are able to engage in a common conversation.²⁴

We must realize that this conversation on how to conceptualize space complements more conventional descriptions of India–China encounters. The latter focus on civilizational exchanges between historical polities in what are now the territories of India and China, and they are based largely on accounts of the circulation of religious and scientific ideas, diplomacy, and commerce that highlight maritime connections and, for the earliest periods, connections via Central Asia (Sen 2017). These more conventional descriptions tend to bypass the spaces linking the Bay of Bengal with Yunnan because the latter were beyond the reach of those historical polities and therefore did not figure significantly in their chronicles.

Similarly, scholarly analyses of present-day relations between India and China largely ignore connections across the spaces that we are concerned with in this note. Unsurprisingly, these analyses tend to be state centric, zooming in on geopolitical and commercial issues and on cultural dissimilarity. They are less conversant with, and therefore downplay, actually existing connections across Myanmar and Bangladesh that the emerging conversation on the spaces between India and China explores. Framing these spaces as the “India–China corridor” may provide a timely scaffolding for research into these connections. It is crucial to think of this discursive move as temporary, however, bearing in mind Eric Wolf’s (1982, 6) warning that turning names (such as “India–China corridor”) into things creates false models of reality.

The importance of this new endeavor goes well beyond tracing economic, political, and cultural connections across these spaces. It goes to the heart of how “India” and “China” (as well as “Myanmar” and “Bangladesh”) get framed today, not only in prevailing scholarly debate and policy notions, but also in everyday life. Revealing how people in the “India–China corridor” deal with each other directly, based on long histories of travelling identities and “neighboring,” can help overcome the knee-jerk reflex always to seek contrasts between “India” and “China” (Saxer and Zhang 2017). In practical terms, this could, for example, contribute to challenging the mutual stereotyping and, indeed, racial viewpoints that flourish in both India and China.²⁵

New spatial imaginations that drive the conversation about the spaces between Yunnan and the Bay of Bengal can feed into wider debates on how

to theorize social life, including states, in a historically sensitive and non-state-centric way.²⁶ The structured, liquid, spatial, and sensory metaphors that we have encountered are just a first step. They deserve to be critically examined because “metaphors do not travel empty-handed” and need to be constantly scrutinized with regard to their applicability and their heuristic potential (Simonsen 2004, 1333; also Smith and Katz 1993). The “corridor” is a metaphor to help us nuance—not displace—others. As we have seen, it enhances our awareness of deep historical connections, directionality, and three-dimensional interaction. In this way, it can help us figure out which metaphors work best in tackling urgent questions regarding past and present connectivity in the spaces between India and China.

Notes

- 1 A biodiversity hotspot is a region characterized by exceptional levels of plant endemism and serious levels of habitat loss. The three hotspots meeting and overlapping in the region are Indo-Burma, Himalaya, and Mountains of Southwest China. See www.cepf.net/.
- 2 The “India–China Corridor” research project (www.indiachinacorridor.com/) focuses on the role of natural conditions and human mobility in the formation of subjects and politics in the region connecting Bengal and Yunnan.
- 3 Even though maps of the region turned uniformly pink to denote British imperial territory, actually “large segments of Upper Burma populated by hill tribals remained beyond effective government administration, even into the 1930s. On the Burma side of the Indo-Burma border, the ‘unadministered’ tribal areas included the Hukawng Valley, ‘the Triangle,’ the northeastern Naga Hills (Burma), and an area called the Somra Tract bordering on Manipur. On the India side of the border there were also ‘unadministered’ areas of Assam within the Tirap subdivision and the Sadyia Frontier Tract in the North East Frontier Agency” (Means 2000, 185).
- 4 Up until 1971, Bangladesh was known as East Pakistan.
- 5 This closure followed a short and unusual intermezzo during the Second World War when the corridor became very well connected by land (the Ledo or Stilwell Road) and air (the India–China airlift across “the Hump”) as Allied forces in India and China tried to stem the advance of Japanese forces in Burma and Northeast India. There had been mid-nineteenth-century visions to connect the Brahmaputra and Yangtze Rivers, but these came to nothing. After the Second World War, new plans came up to create a Trans-Asian Railway (1959) and a Trans-Asian Highway (1960), followed by India’s Look/Act East policy (1991) and the Kunming Initiative (1999). (Cotton 1867; van Schendel 2020).
- 6 “[T]he China–India–Myanmar nexus looms large in strategic consideration of all parties in the region, including that of ASEAN itself. As the “containment” policy, actual or perceived, by the US has been used by the Burmese, so the Chinese “containment” policy toward India, as perceived by the Indian government, has caused a major shift in Indian policy toward Myanmar” (Steinberg and Fan 2012, 313).
- 7 This is part of a wider awareness of the importance of borders and margins: “scholars of margins make analogous claims to those of scholars of borders: that such spaces are privileged zones for understanding processes unfolding in ‘centers’ and that, indeed, the very notion of centers is fundamentally predicated on the relational production of margins, borders, and zones of exclusion” (Cons and Sanyal 2013, 7).
- 8 Metaphors are important cognitive tools that we use to understand abstract concepts. They take the form of figures of speech in which a word meaning one thing is used for another: for example, “the political situation was explosive,” or “love is a two-way

street.” The aim is to suggest a similarity and to creatively transpose the connotations and imaginaries of the original word to a new context. Metaphors are ubiquitous because they may be fundamental to human thought: we may speak metaphorically because we think metaphorically (Landau et al. 2013).

- 9 “Moorings are the fixed elements of infrastructure needed for things to move. To fly, for instance, we need airports, air traffic control systems, fuels supply pipelines – even the infrastructure of oil extraction itself. Another way of thinking about mobility in relation to relative fixity is through the concept of ‘stillness’ . . . Scholars of stillness have focused on the episodic moments of stillness, often very embodied stillness, that contribute to the experience and practice of mobilities” (Cresswell 2016, 1084).
- 10 Liquid images abound in the culture of the Bengal delta: for example, the distinction between downstream and upstream, which translates into identity politics pitting “downstreamers” (*bhatias*, “people of the tide,” river-displaced immigrants from the southern tidal delta) against locals (“upstreamers”) in North Bengal and Assam (Cons 2013; Nandi 2014).
- 11 “Timber, overwhelmingly in the form of raw logs, flows through scores of crossing points along the 1,000 km border, ranging from formal international channels to clandestine dirt roads” (*Organised Chaos* 2015, 6).
- 12 The idea of the “sovereignityscape” evolved from “an understanding of sovereignty, as a way of seeing (and as an element or form of expression of what Foucault called ‘governmentality’), [that] offers a productive subversion of the understanding of states as ‘containers’” (Sidaway et al. 2005, 779; Sidaway 2003, 161).
- 13 Masao Imamura discusses the idea of the “East Asia Crescent” – stretching from Assam to Yunnan – that catered to a nostalgic longing for a “Lost Japan” and became popular in Japan in the late twentieth century (Imamura 2015a).
- 14 Originally formulated by Mary Louise Pratt, the concept is applied to the Eastern Himalayas in Viehbeck (2017). In his introduction, Viehbeck points out that today “the range of its [i.e., the contact zone’s] interpretations varies considerably: from a weak understanding as referring to a (physical) space of encounters between two or more factions, to a highly loaded normative concept that not only detects inequalities of power within encounters, but also calls for overcoming them” (7).
- 15 “A wheel turns because of its encounter with the surface of the road; spinning in the air it goes nowhere. Rubbing two sticks together produces heat and light; one stick alone is just a stick. As a metaphorical image, friction reminds us that heterogeneous and unequal encounters can lead to new arrangements of culture and power” (Tsing 2004, 5).
- 16 Citing Pheng Cheah, she points out: “As long as area studies closes itself to the universal . . . it will cordon off those it studies from participation in remaking the world. Only because area studies scholars have conventionally imagined themselves in the service of the all-seeing West, [Cheah] argues, have they confined the scope of the non-Western dreams and nightmares they study into area-bound particularities. From inside any ‘area,’ universal claims are key to global agency. . . . [T]here is no reason to begin a retelling of global connections in imagined world centers such as New York, Tokyo, or Geneva. Globalization is not delivered whole and round like a pizza, to be munched and dismantled by the hungry margins. Global connections are made in fragments – although some fragments are more powerful than others” (Tsing 2004, 270–71).
- 17 Introducing the notion of the transnational “deportation corridor,” Drotbohm and Hasselberg characterize corridors as follows: “Corridors are spaces of in-between-ness and movement, connecting and referring to [spaces] of clearer positionality, assignment and representation. . . . [C]orridors are often poorly lit, shady and suspect” (Drotbohm and Hasselberg 2015, 553).
- 18 China, Bangladesh, India, and Myanmar, the states that started the Kunming Initiative in the 1990s, coined the term “BCIM Corridor” for the spaces between Yunnan and the Bay of Bengal. After 2013, China incorporated it as one of the “Economic Corridors” of its imagined future New Silk Road (Uberoi 2016; van Schendel 2020).

- 19 Van Driem (2016); Hazarika (2017). For more references, see van Schendel (2020), from which this section derives.
- 20 But see Steinberg and Fan (2012) on China's dispute with Burma over the northern border, an issue that was settled in 1960.
- 21 This imperial success gave rise to the first infrastructural plans to connect British India directly to the east coast of China, even before the British had gained control of the entire tract up to Yunnan. As Arthur Cotton wrote in 1867: "The throwing open of all India to all China, the access of a country containing 200 millions to the produce of a country occupied by 400 millions, and the opposite . . . would be of its kind a work of such magnitude as that nothing approaching to it has ever yet been seen in the world; and the export of a large portion of the produce of Western China for Europe through our own principal port of Calcutta is an imperial question of the very first importance" (Cotton 1867, 232–3). See also Iqbal (2014).
- 22 See Hasnu (2017) for the beginnings of the airborne dimension in the 1930s.
- 23 State-centered views have influenced scholarly constructions of the corridor's physical orientation. State authorities thought of the corridor as linking the power centers of China in the northeast and British India in the southwest. This dual imperial perspective "tilted" the imagined corridor itself: it is often supposed to run northeast to southwest as well, whereas actually, the principal direction of this band of land is east to west: the southern reaches of Yunnan are at the same latitude as the southern reaches of contemporary Bangladesh.
- 24 On incommensurability (the absence of common units, terms, and conceptual frameworks) during periods of scientific paradigm shift, see Kuhn (2012).
- 25 Shen (2011); McDuie-Ra (2015). On racial categorization in Myanmar, see Cheesman (2017).
- 26 Bérénice Guyot-Réchar (2017, 1024) describes the colonial state in Arunachal Pradesh as a highly mobile entity: "a certain form of governance in the Himalayas, distinct (though not isolated) from the rest of India: a frontier governance that stemmed from a state presence that remained itinerant, seasonal, and personalized well into the independence period."

References

- Anderson, Christian M. 2012. "Lost in Space? Ethnography and the Disparate Geographies of Social Process." *The Professional Geographer* 64 (2): 276–85.
- Appadurai, Arjun. 1999. "Globalization and the Research Imagination." *International Social Science Journal* 51 (160): 229–38.
- Appadurai, Arjun. 2000. "Grassroots Globalization and the Research Imagination." *Public Culture* 12 (1): 1–19.
- Aung, Soe Lin. 2014. "The Friction of Cartography: On the Politics of Space and Mobility among Migrant Communities in the Thai–Burma Borderlands." *Journal of Borderlands Studies* 29 (1): 27–45.
- Bhattacharyya, Debjani. 2018. *Empire and Ecology in the Bengal Delta: The Making of Calcutta*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- Billé, Franck. 2017. "Introduction: Speaking Volumes." *Theorizing the Contemporary, Cultural Anthropology*, October 24. <https://culanth.org/fieldsights/1241-introduction-speaking-volumes>.
- Cederlöf, Gunnel. 2009. "Fixed Boundaries, Fluid Landscapes: British Expansion into Northern East Bengal in the 1820s." *The Indian Economic and Social History Review* 46 (4): 513–40.
- Cederlöf, Gunnel. 2015. "Corridors, Networks, and Pathways in India's Colonial Northeast." Fourth Jayashree Roy Memorial Lecture. North East India Studies Programme, Jawaharlal Nehru University, New Delhi.
- Cederlöf, Gunnel. 2017. "Seeking China's Back Door: On English Handkerchiefs and Global Local Markets in the Early Nineteenth Century." In *Trans-Himalayan*

- Borderlands: Livelihoods, Territorialities, Modernities*, edited by Dan Smyer Yü and Jean Michaud, 125–44. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.
- Chang, Wen-Chin. 2004. "Guanxi and Regulation in Networks: The Yunnanese Jade Trade between Burma and Thailand, 1962–88." *Journal of Southeast Asian Studies* 35 (3): 479–501.
- Cheesman, Nick. 2017. "How in Myanmar 'National Races' Came to Surpass Citizenship and Exclude Rohingya." *Journal of Contemporary Asia* 47 (3): 461–83.
- Cons, Jason. 2013. "Narrating Boundaries: Framing and Contesting Suffering, Community, and Belonging in Enclaves along the India–Bangladesh Border." *Political Geography* 35:37–46.
- Cons, Jason. 2016. *Sensitive Space: Fragmented Territory at the India–Bangladesh Border*. Seattle and London: University of Washington Press.
- Cons, Jason, and Michael Eilenberg, eds. 2019. *Frontier Assemblages: The Emergent Politics of Resource Frontiers in Asia*. Hoboken, NJ: John Wiley & Sons.
- Cons, Jason, and Romola Sanyal. 2013. "Geographies at the Margins: Borders in South Asia: An Introduction." *Political Geography* 35: 5–13.
- Cotton, Arthur. 1867. "On a Communication between India and China by the Line of the Burhampooter and Yang-Tsze." *The Journal of the Royal Geographical Society of London* 37: 231–39.
- Cresswell, Tim. 2016. "Afterword: Asian Mobilities/Asian Frictions?" *Environment and Planning A* 48 (6): 1082–86.
- Dean, Karin. 2005. "Spaces and Territorialities on the Sino–Burmese Boundary: China, Burma and the Kachin." *Political Geography* 24: 808–30.
- Dean, Karin. 2020. "Assembling the Sino–Myanmar Borderworld." *Eurasian Geography and Economics* 61 (1): 1–21.
- Dong, Min, and Yun He. 2018. "Linking the Past to the Future: A Reality Check on Cross-Border Timber Trade from Myanmar (Burma) to China." *Forest Policy and Economics* 87: 11–9.
- Drotbohm, Heike, and Ines Hasselberg. 2015. "Deportation, Anxiety, Justice: New Ethnographic Perspectives." *Journal of Ethnic and Migration Studies* 41 (4): 551–62.
- Einzenberger, Rainer. 2016. "Contested Frontiers: Indigenous Mobilization and Control over Land and Natural Resources in Myanmar's Upland Areas." *ASEAS: Austrian Journal of South-East Asian Studies* 9 (1): 163–72.
- Elden, Stuart. 2017. "Terrain." *Theorizing the Contemporary, Cultural Anthropology*, October 24. <https://culanth.org/fieldsights/1231-terrain>.
- Ghosh, Sahana. 2015. "Anti-Trafficking and Its Discontents: Women's Migrations and Work in an Indian Borderland." *Gender, Place & Culture* 22 (9): 1220–35.
- Giersch, C. Patterson. 2006. *Asian Borderlands: The Transformation of Qing China's Yunnan Frontier*. Cambridge, MA and London: Harvard University Press.
- Giersch, C. Patterson. 2010. "Across Zomia with Merchants, Monks, and Musk: Process Geographies, Trade Networks, and the Inner-East–Southeast Asian Borderlands." *Journal of Global History* 5 (2): 215–39.
- Grundy–Warr, Carl, and James D. Sidaway. 2006. "Political Geographies of Silence and Erasure." *Political Geography* 25 (5): 479–81.
- Guyot–Réchard, Bérénice. 2015. "Reordering a Border Space: Relief, Rehabilitation, and Nation–Building in Northeastern India after the 1950 Assam Earthquake." *Modern Asian Studies* 49 (4): 931–62.
- Guyot–Réchard, Bérénice. 2017. "Tour Diaries and Itinerant Governance in the Eastern Himalayas, 1909–1962." *The Historical Journal* 60 (4): 1023–46.
- Harms, Erik, Shafqat Hussain, and Sara Shneiderman, eds. 2014. "Forum: Remote and Edgy: New Takes on Old Anthropological Themes." *HAU: Journal of Ethnographic Theory* 4 (1): 361–81.

- Harris, Tina. 2013. *Geographical Diversions: Tibetan Trade, Global Transactions*. Athens and London: University of Georgia Press.
- Harvey, David. 1990. *The Condition of Postmodernity: An Enquiry into the Origins of Cultural Change*. Cambridge, MA: Blackwell.
- Hasnu, Santosh. 2017. "Inception of Aviation Routes between India and China." *Economic & Political Weekly* 52 (33): 24–7.
- Hazarika, Manjil. 2017. *Prehistory and Archaeology of Northeast India: Multidisciplinary Investigation in an Archaeological Terra Incognita*. New Delhi and Oxford: Oxford University Press.
- Horstmann, Alexander. 2012. "Sacred Networks and Struggles among the Karen Baptists across the Thailand-Burma Border." *Moussons* 17: 85–104.
- Imamura, Masao. 2015a. "Imagining a Remote Homeland: Japanese Quasi-Academic Ethnography of Upland Southeast Asia." *Newsletter of the Center for Southeast Asian Studies, Kyoto University* 71: 14–16.
- Imamura, Masao. 2015b. "Rethinking Frontier and Frontier Studies." *Political Geography* 45: 96–97.
- Iqbal, Iftekhar. 2014. "Reclaiming the Crossroads between India and China: A View from the River." *Economic & Political Weekly* 49 (51): 20–23.
- Jackson, Kyle. 2016. "Globalizing an Indian Borderland Environment: Aijal, Mizoram, 1890–1919." *Studies in History* 32 (1): 39–71.
- Janeja, Manpreet K. 2010. *Transactions in Taste: The Collaborative Lives of Everyday Bengali Food*. London: Routledge.
- Kuhn, Thomas S. 2012. *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*. Chicago: University of Chicago Press.
- Lahiri-Dutt, Kuntala. 2014. "Commodified Land, Dangerous Water: Colonial Perceptions of Riverine Bengal." In *Asian Environments: Connections across Borders, Landscapes, and Times*, edited by Ursula Münster, Shiho Satsuka, and Gunnel Cederlöf, 17–22. Munich: Rachel Carson Center.
- Landau, Mark J., Michael D. Robinson, and Brian P. Meier, eds. 2013. *The Power of Metaphor: Examining Its Influence on Social Life*. Washington, DC: American Psychological Association.
- Lee, Joel. 2017. "Odor and Order: How Caste Is Inscribed in Space and Sensoria." *Comparative Studies of South Asia, Africa and the Middle East* 37 (3): 470–90.
- Lee, Sang Kook. 2012. "Scattered but Connected: Karen Refugees' Networking in and beyond the Thailand-Burma Borderland." *Asian and Pacific Migration Journal* 21 (2): 263–85.
- Li, Yunxia. 2017. "In-between Poppy and Rubber Fields: Experimenting a Transborder Livelihood among the Akha in the Northwestern Frontier of Laos." In *Trans-Himalayan Borderlands: Livelihoods, Territorialities, Modernities*, edited by Dan Smyer Yü and Jean Michaud, 243–62. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.
- Liu, Dawei, Kensuke Yamaguchi, and Hisashi Yoshikawa. 2017. "Understanding the Motivations behind the Myanmar-China Energy Pipeline: Multiple Streams and Energy Politics in China." *Energy Policy* 107: 403–12.
- Ma, Jianxiong. 2011. "Shaping of the Yunnan-Burma Frontier by Secret Societies since the End of the 17th Century." *Moussons* 17: 65–84.
- Majumdar, Aparajita. 2016. "The Colonial State and Resource Frontiers: Tracing the Politics of Appropriating Rubber in the Northeastern Frontier of British India, 1810–84." *Indian Historical Review* 43 (1): 25–41.
- Marshall, Peter J. 1988. *Bengal: The British Bridgehead: Eastern India 1740–1828*. New Cambridge History of India. Vol. 2, Part 2. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press.
- McDuie-Ra, Duncan. 2015. *Debating Race in Contemporary India*. Houndsmills and New York: Palgrave Macmillan.

- McDuie-Ra, Duncan. 2016. *Borderland City in New India: Frontier to Gateway*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.
- Means, Gordon P. 2000. "Human Sacrifice and Slavery in the 'Unadministered' Areas of Upper Burma during the Colonial Era." *Sojourn: Journal of Social Issues in Southeast Asia* 15 (2): 184–221.
- Misra, Sanghamitra. 2011. *Becoming a Borderland: The Politics of Space and Identity in Colonial Northeastern India*. New Delhi: Routledge.
- Mukherjee, Rila. 2006. *Strange Riches: Bengal in the Mercantile Map of South Asia*. New Delhi: Foundation Books.
- Murton, Galen. 2013. "Himalayan Highways: STS, the Spatial Fix, and Socio-Cultural Shifts in the Land of Zomia." *Perspectives on Global Development and Technology* 12 (5/6): 609–21.
- Nandi, Rajib. 2014. "Spectacles of Ethnographic and Historical Imaginations: Kamatapur Movement and the Rajbanshi Quest to Rediscover Their Past and Selves." *History and Anthropology* 25 (5): 571–91.
- Organised Chaos: The Illicit Overland Timber Trade between Myanmar and China*. 2015. London: Environmental Investigation Agency UK Ltd.
- Pau, Pum Khan. 2018. "Transborder People, Connected History: Border and Relationships in the Indo-Burma Borderlands." *Journal of Borderland Studies* 33: 1–21.
- Ray, Haraprasad. 2003. *Northeast India's Place in India-China Relations and Its Future Role in India's Economy*. Professor H.K. Barpujari Endowment Lectures 2002. Kolkata: Institute of Historical Studies.
- Sadan, Mandy. 2013. *Being and Becoming Kachin: Histories beyond the State in the Borderworlds of Burma*. Oxford: Oxford University Press/British Academy.
- Saha, Jonathan. 2016. "Milk to Mandalay: Dairy Consumption, Animal History and the Political Geography of Colonial Burma." *Journal of Historical Geography* 54: 1–12.
- Said, Edward W. 1993. *Culture and Imperialism*. London: Chatto & Windus.
- Saikia, Arupjyoti. 2008. "State, Peasants and Land Reclamation: The Predicament of Forest Conservation in Assam, 1850s–1980s." *The Indian Economic and Social History Review* 45 (1): 77–114.
- Saxer, Martin. 2016. "Pathways: A Concept, Field Site and Methodological Approach to Study Remoteness and Connectivity." *Himalaya, the Journal of the Association for Nepal and Himalayan Studies* 36 (2): 104–19.
- Saxer, Martin, and Juan Zhang, eds. 2017. *The Art of Neighbouring: Making Relations across China's Borders*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.
- Scott, James C. 2009. *The Art of Not Being Governed: An Anarchist History of Upland Southeast Asia*. New Haven and London: Yale University Press.
- Sen, Anandaroop. 2018. "Sutured Landscapes: Making of an Imperial Frontier in Tripura (1848–1854)." In *Geographies of Difference: Explorations in Northeast Indian Studies*, edited by Mélanie Vandenhelesken, Meenaxi Barkataki-Ruscheweyh, and Bengt G. Karlsson, 53–71. London and New York: Routledge.
- Sen, Tansen. 2017. *India, China, and the World: A Connected History*. Lanham MD and London: Rowman and Littlefield.
- Shen, Simon. 2011. "Exploring the Neglected Constraints on Chindia: Analysing the Online Chinese Perception of India in Its Interaction with China's India Policy." *China Quarterly* 207: 541–60.
- Sidaway, James D. 2003. "Sovereign Excesses? Portraying Postcolonial Sovereign-tscapes." *Political Geography* 22 (2): 157–78.
- Sidaway, James D., Carl Grundy-Warr, and Bae-Gyoon Park. 2005. "Asian Sovereign-tscapes." *Political Geography* 24 (7): 779–83.

- Sigley, Gary. 2016. "The Mountain Changers: Lifestyle Migration in Southwest China." *Asian Highland Perspectives* 40: 233–96.
- Simonsen, Kirsten. 2004. "Networks, Flows, and Fluids: Reimagining Spatial Analysis?" *Environment and Planning A* 36 (8): 1333–37.
- Simpson, Adam. 2013. "Challenging Hydropower Development in Myanmar (Burma): Cross-Border Activism under a Regime in Transition." *The Pacific Review* 26 (2): 129–52.
- Smith, Neil, and Cindi Katz. 1993. "Grounding Metaphors: Towards a Spatialized Politics." In *Place and the Politics of Identity*, edited by Steve Pile and Michael Keith, 66–81. London and New York: Routledge.
- Smyer Yü, Dan, and Jean Michaud, eds. 2017. *Trans-Himalayan Borderlands: Livelihoods, Territorialities, Modernities*. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.
- Steinberg, David I., and Hongwei Fan. 2012. *Modern China–Myanmar Relations: Dilemmas of Mutual Dependence*. Copenhagen: NIAS Press.
- Sturgeon, Janet C. 2005. *Border Landscapes: The Politics of Akha Land Use in China and Thailand*. Chiang Mai: Silkworm Books.
- Su, Xiaobo. 2013. "From Frontier to Bridgehead: Cross-Border Regions and the Experience of Yunnan, China." *International Journal of Urban and Regional Research* 37 (4): 1213–32.
- Sui, Daniel Z. 2000. "Visuality, Aurality, and Shifting Metaphors of Geographical Thought in the Late Twentieth Century." *Annals of the Association of American Geographers* 90 (2): 322–43.
- Tan, Liangcheng, et al. 2017. "Decreasing Monsoon Precipitation in Southwest China during the Last 240 Years Associated with the Warming of Tropical Ocean." *Climate Dynamics* 48 (5): 1769–78.
- Tsing, Anna Lowenhaupt. 2004. *Friction: An Ethnography of Global Connection*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press.
- Uberoi, Patricia. 2016. "Problems and Prospects of the BCIM Economic Corridor." *China Report* 52 (1): 19–44.
- Van Driem, George. 2016. "The Eastern Himalayan Corridor in Prehistory." In *Проблемы китайского и общего языкознания [Problems in Chinese and General Linguistics]*, edited by Elena Nikolaevna Kolpačkova. Vol. 2, 467–524. St. Petersburg: Izdatel'stvo Studija NP-Print.
- Van Driem, George. 2017. "The Domestications and the Domesticators of Asian Rice." In *Language Dispersal Beyond Farming*, edited by Martine Robbeets and Alexander Savelyev, 183–214. Amsterdam: John Benjamins.
- van Schendel, Willem. 2005. "Spaces of Engagement: How Borderlands, Illegal Flows, and Territorial States Interlock." In *Illicit Flows and Criminal Things: States, Borders, and the Other Side of Globalization*, edited by Willem van Schendel and Itty Abraham, 38–68. Bloomington and Indianapolis: University of Indiana Press.
- van Schendel, Willem. 2015. "Spatial Moments: Chittagong in Four Scenes." In *Asia Inside Out: Connected Places*, edited by Eric Tagliacozzo, Helen F. Siu, and Peter C. Perdue, 98–127. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press.
- van Schendel, Willem. 2020. "Fragmented Sovereignty and Unregulated Flows: The Bangladesh-China-India-Myanmar Corridor." In *Shadow Exchanges along the New Silk Roads*, edited by Eva P.W. Hung and Tak-Wing Ngo, 37–73. Amsterdam: Amsterdam University Press.
- Viehbeck, Markus, ed. 2017. *Transcultural Encounters in the Himalayan Borderlands: Kalimpong as a "Contact Zone"*. Heidelberg: Heidelberg University Publishing.

- Vink, Markus P.M. 2007. "Indian Ocean Studies and the 'New Thalassology'." *Journal of Global History* 2 (1): 41–62.
- Williams, Chyvette T., Wei Liu, and Judith A. Levy. 2011. "Crossing over: Drug Network Characteristics and Injection Risk along the China–Myanmar Border." *AIDS Behavior* 15: 1011–16.
- Wittekind, Courtney T. 2016. "A Space 'in-between': Liminality and Landscape on the Thailand–Burma (Myanmar) Border." *Visual Anthropology Review* 32 (2): 180–91.
- Wolf, Eric R. 1982. *Europe and the People Without History*. Berkeley: University of California Press.
- Yang, Bin. 2012. "The Bengal Connections in Yunnan." *China Report* 48 (1&2): 125–45.
- Zhou, Yongming. 2013. "Branding Tengchong: Globalization, Road Building, and Spatial Reconfigurations in Yunnan, Southwest China." In *Cultural Heritage Politics in China*, edited by Tami Blumenfield and Helaine Silverman, 247–59. New York: Springer.