ten Jahren angesehen werden. Die Autorin macht keinen Hehl aus der Beschaffenheit ihres Samples – was allerdings nichts an dem Umstand ändert, dass es produktionskulturell mit ethnografischem oder ethnologischem Film fast nichts gemein hat. Nicht falsch verstehen: Es geht hier nicht darum, das Format in das Korsett einer starren Definition zu zwängen. Wenn eine Arbeit ihrerseits aber derart stark auf festen, fast dichotomen Vorstellungen errichtet wird (Dokumentation vs. Imagination, klassische Konzepte des Dokumentarischen vs. neue Erzählstrategien, um nur einige der immer wieder bemühten Gegensätze aufzuzählen), dann sollte auch die Abstimmung von Erkenntnisinteresse und Quellenkorpus dieser plakativen Perspektive standhalten. Damit ist nicht gemeint, dass nicht auch Filme, die aus einem gänzlich anderen produktionskulturellen Kontext stammen, als ethnografisch relevant erachtet werden können. Diese zu ermessen erforderte allerdings, die oft en passant reproduzierten Zuschreibungen und die aus ihnen abgeleiteten Dichotomien gegen Zwischentöne, etwa stille (historische) Ungleichzeitigkeiten oder abwägende Darlegungen der oft fluiden Genregrenzen und ihrer Verläufe zu ersetzen. Dies bedeutete jedoch wiederum auch, dass einige der Säulen, auf denen die Publikation ruht, ins Wanken geraten: etwa dass das "Neue" und das "Klassische" sich nur bedingt als kontrastiv in Stellung bringen lassen oder dass "Imagination" und "Dokumentation" keine Gegensätze sind, sondern letzteres wenn überhaupt nur als Resultat des ersteren gedacht werden kann. Die Arbeit aber entbehrt leider einer durchgängig stark reflexiven Auseinandersetzung mit einzelnen Begriffen, ihrer Genese und Diskursivierung, was insofern auch als vertane Chance angesehen werden muss, da die filmanalytischen Teile eigentlich eine gute Grundlage böten. Torsten Näser

Maurer, Bill: How Would You Like to Pay? How Technology Is Changing the Future of Money. Durham: Duke University Press, 2015. 163 pp. ISBN 978-0-8223-5999-9. Price: $ 19.95

This short book by one of the leading scholars in the anthropology of money and finance touches on the transformation of payment systems, that intimately concerns our everyday lives and, in particular, potential poverty-alleviation policies worldwide. Written in a very simple style, the book starts by stating the aim of spurring innovative thinking about money, with an explicit list of wished-for, mainly non-academic, readers, including people working as freelancers in design of monetary payment systems and in development organizations, people working for – and leading – financial corporations and manufacturers of mobile payment devices, and regulators and activists engaged in normative discourse and action about money and payment systems. The book is organized as a series of comments, with only occasionally interspersed theoretical insights, and about 50 photos. This seemingly simple language should not hide the important theoretical propositions of the book concerning the anthropology of money and payment systems, expressing a political stance that is critical, even though it is articulated as a discourse that integrates several points of view. In that sense, the book is not only important for what it says about money, payment systems, and poverty, but also as an exercise in engaging audiences outside professional anthropology.

Equipped with an annotated bibliography, the book can be read as an accessible introduction to pragmatist approaches of money. With many examples, in text and images, it shows that money practices have multiple meanings, composing different, sometimes conflicting or disconnected repertoires, articulated in ecologies, indexing hierarchical distributions of wealth, with different geographical and temporal horizons, that connect individuals locally and globally to ancestors, descendants, gods, and nations, among others. Thus, money always entails moral and political meanings, and its management implies philosophical questions. Maurer remarks that although money can be treated as a commodity, notably by corporations increasingly creating private forms of money, it is also a public good, that needs to be protected and regulated by public institutions such as states. Thereby, the author clearly deconstructs approaches of money that give it a single historical origin, encapsulating it in an evolutionary narrative, often linked to particular interests, and that limit its meaning to the four functions of means of exchange, of account, of payment, and of store of value.

Within this theoretical frame, the main argument of the book is that the future of money, and our lives, will change with new payment systems, in particular through devices such as mobile phones, with consequences still difficult to discern. The author remarks that his research was initially spurred by M-Pesa, the mobile phone-based payment system that allows people in Kenya to make money transfers without owning a bank account, and that this example, with many others presented in the book, shows that this transformation of payment systems is at a crossroads. According to the author, the rapid expansion of M-Pesa shows that it filled needs, and that it was successful in fighting financial exclusion of the poor, as there are now more M-Pesa users than people with a bank account in Kenya. But this also puts people's only means of payment in the hands of a private corporation, with no public accountability and, so far, not necessarily the best tested regulatory framework. Citizens are at risk of not being able to use their money as freely as they did in the past. For instance, the technology of SIM and USSD cards allows them to work independently of any single network service provider, but these companies are reluctant to release them from their grip.

The author remarks that this discussion is entrapped in a dangerous contradiction. Often, researchers, bureaucrats, and other people engaged with financial inclusion, consider the "poor" as a particular class of humans, with money practices that are different from the rest. The equally dangerous opposite of this view consists of a universalism that is predicated on the practices of an "us," which only need to be expanded to "them." In both cases, the result tends to be the idea that the "poor" are a distinct group, that needs assistance because they are not as able and creative as others when dealing with money. Considering that "we all are" in the same fundamental situation,

the author proposes to acknowledge differences without fixating on them, and moving on to solving issues (140 f.). The transformation of payment systems appears then as harboring some of these solutions, but also creating new dangers of their own. The book thus ends with an open call to imagine new worlds and new lives with new payment systems, keeping in mind the multiplicity of everyday practices and the moral, political, and philosophical questions that must be addressed in this endeavor. As a witness to the book's timely character, in the less than two years since it was written, Chinese mobile phone payment systems exploded, and are now used by around 400 million people, a process regulators are still trying to grapple.

Two critical remarks may be called for here. One concerns the fact that by putting too much hope on the transformation of payment systems, the text may obscure the fact that poverty, or extreme differentials in the distribution of resources, depend heavily on many other factors than payment systems, and these need to be tackled directly. Another related critique concerns the fact that the author repeatedly uses, without any reflexive critique, the expressions "wealthy Global North" or the "West" to talk about "us", and "developing" countries to talk about the "poor." Given the book's aims, it is a pity that it does deconstruct these categories as anthropology has done for already a long time. Besides, the author seemingly aligns with his desired readership, all supposedly belonging to the "us," but without situating this group in the processes he describes. The author remarks in passing that the regulatory frameworks and technological infrastructures remain hidden in most of the everyday uses of money, but the book strangely reproduces this invisibility, not showing, either in the text or in any of the 50 images, the everyday life of those who avowedly are in control of the production and management of payment systems. Yet, the current intimate relation between states and corporations is actually responsible for the production of poverty, showing the limits of how much a public good money is today. Limiting reflexivity about their own participation in poverty production today may help to establish a dialogue with them. But it also implies missing a chance to show how the anthropology of money that the book upholds can expose the political limits of current mainstream monetary and financial imagination, and can contribute, as the book hopes to do, to change its distributive effects.

These critiques notwithstanding, the book gives in a very accessible and short text enough arguments for anthropologists to start taking seriously payment systems, technologies, and money uses, in the interaction between states, corporations, and people with very different access to wealth and political participation. It shows these are fundamental components of everyday life, and of any attempt to tackle poverty. It is also a subtle exercise of engaging non-anthropologists, bringing together theoretical insights, detailed description of everyday practices, and dialogical language, in order to contribute to social change.

Horacio Ortiz

Meyer, Birgit: Sensational Movies. Video, Vision, and Christianity in Ghana. Oakland: University of California Press, 2015. 380 pp. ISBN 978-0-520-28768-6. (The Anthropology of Christianity, 17) Price: £ 24.95

"Sensational Movies" tells the fascinating story of video movie making, screening, and viewing in Accra, as it developed between 1985 and 2010. Unlike the movies it describes, that are made within a short time span, this book is the long awaited outcome of Birgit Meyer's two decades of ethnographic research on and passionate engagement with the Ghanaian video film industry and a career of groundbreaking theoretical reflection on the material and aesthetic forms through which religion becomes tangible in everyday life. As such, it does much more than documenting a particular form of African popular culture; engaging with the movies themselves, and with their spaces, producers, script writers, actors, set designers, special effect editors, vendors, censors, audiences, and critics, Meyer provides deep insights into a society in transformation combined with some of the most exciting scholarly thinking on religion and media to date. Like the movies that have intrigued her for so long, her book offers revelation and excitement and will inspire anthropologists for many years to come.

Meyer's detailed analysis of the video film industry is deeply embedded in the changes brought about by Ghana's neoliberal economic reforms since the mid-1980s, in particular the deregulation and privatization of the media, and the concurrent rise of charismatic Pentecostalism among urban publics. In this context, video emerged as a new but contested medium for the imagination. The book's central tenet is that video movies, out of commercial necessity, mediate popular imaginaries and structures of feeling in urban Ghana that have become heavily indebted to Pentecostalism. Meyer discerns a close affinity between video movies and popular Christianity in the recurrent format of "film as revelation" and Meyer's multilayered analysis of this aspect makes up the core of the book. Revealing, with the help of special effects, the spiritual forces at work behind the physical reality in the urban scene, private video producers not only reflect Pentecostal ideas and imagery, but also contribute to weaving Pentecostalism into the "sensory fabric" of everyday urban life, shaping how and what audiences perceive, feel, and think. In that sense, revelation is also worldmaking. As such, this is not only a book about the making of video movies, but also about the making of Pentecostalism. One of the great virtues of the book in this respect is that it turns away from churches and pastors as Pentecostalism's main sites and agents and instead places the making of Pentecostalism firmly in the realm of urban media entertainment, identifying video producers as important makers of lived Pentecostalism. Published in the UCPress Anthropology of Christianity series, this work offers scholars of religion important new directions in thinking about what religion is and does, where it is to be found, and how it can be studied.

Analyzing video as a technology of worldmaking, Meyer takes a material praxis-oriented approach with particular attention to the specific affordances, power struc-