across any time, where "different generations can actively 'touch' and care for one another, through words and prayer" (75).

Chapter 3 extends and places into context this living role of ancestors in aitys poetry, staged duals between two poets that use the "trope of ancestry to enact a public conversation about contemporary affairs" (84). These poets draw upon the resources of bata and the living environment of sacred sites to critique the likes of governance and social behavior by inserting the morality of ancestors into the judgement of contemporary acts. As commentary, the aitys performance may seem pedestrian until we take seriously that there exists a context—bata, dreams, sacred sites—in which ancestors do play living advisory roles in judging behavior. As such, the aitys are able to use ancestors to critique authority and contemporary politics in ways others cannot.

For Dubuisson, authority is dialogic (Chapter 4), with cultural legitimacy coming into conversation with ancestral leadership. It is because "ancestors are already present in so many contexts" (134) that their guidance comes to offer meaning in dynamic and at times unexpected ways. One might argue she overestimates the role of ancestors in contemporary (political) life, but if so it is an important corrective for those who see the past as merely deadwood. She gives an ethnographically rich, sensitive, compelling, and engaging story of the value of language in making the past alive and relevant. A welcome addition to Central Asian Studies, *Living Language in Kazakhstan* will be appreciated broadly for its ability to guide readers toward a more empathic analysis of time, influence, and authority.

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Iconic Places in Central Asia: The Moral Geography of Dams, Pastures, and Holy Sites. By Jeanne Féaux de la Croix. Bielefeld, Germany: Transcript Verlag, 2016. 351 pp. Apendixes. Bibliography. Glossary. Index. Photographs. €39.99, paperback.
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In *Iconic Places*, Jeanne Féaux de la Croix (JF) presents a broad-ranging ethnography bringing together mountain pasture communities with local villages, large-scale infrastructural projects, and holy sites into a shared interpretive frame. In conversation with the anthropology of space and place, the author eschews traditional frameworks of religion, economy, or politics in her analysis, in favor of foregrounding the qualities and relationships of a lived environment in Kyrgyzstan. Her approach is deeply phenomenological: how are places experienced as qualities or resources, as connected or meaningful? In forms ranging from daily activities to poetry and song, how do people discuss place? Here the landscape is directly involved in broader themes of time, labor, and history-making across what JF calls a "moral geography," and efforts to build or sustain a "good life" (39–40). Based on eighteen months of fieldwork in Toktogul, Kyrgyzstan from 2006–2008, and multiple visits over the last decade, the book is organized into three major sections: in the first we are introduced to three primary kinds of places—*jailoo* (pasture), dams, and *mazarlar* (burial grounds) and importantly, to the scales of meaning contained in each.

The mountain presents one kind of scale of transhumance, where herds embody a "secure investment" for extended families (63; Svetlana Jacquesson, 2010). JF details the transformations of state and private pasture administration over the last century, noting rightly that privatization is a process still ongoing. She calls attention as well to the forms of romantic attachment to the *jailoo* in popular imagination, and the symbolic

qualities of Kyrgyzness, health, and wealth embodied in the jailoo lifestyle. As objects of awe, markers of destructive absence, and post-Soviet infrastructure in their massiveness, dams (Toktogul and Kambar-Ata projects) present intensive sites of labor and modernist place-making, which connect Kyrgyzstan to an international energy economy, but do not necessarily support or compensate local communities. Sites like *mazars* or burial grounds are differently "sentient" or "charismatic" (128) in the scale of intergenerational connection, inspiring forms of visitation and respect, as people come to seek solutions to life's problems and to receive blessings from the sites' caretakers.

In the second section of the book, JF turns her attention to the "experiences and events, concepts of relatedness and obligation, remembrance and aspirations for the future" (138) that shape moral geographies. Moving beyond nostalgia and "typological time" (Johannes Fabian, 1983), JF analyzes the historical leitmotifs of collectivization, privatization, and culturedness, as well as their periodization. Looking at narrative forms ranging from biographies to national epics to women's narratives and *sanjyra*, JF considers themes ranging from genealogy to mobility in understanding the past and present of *tulgaan jer* (birthland). Ultimately, JF argues that colonialism does not erase commemorative memory, or the right of *ak sakallar* (wise elders) and *kelinder* (daughters in law) alike, to narrate history (205). These are the people, after all, who are "making an effort," (301) demonstrating the *tartip* (skill) to shape the life of places.

In the third and final section of the ethnography, JF returns to both labor and song, as forms that both honor and celebrate the beauty of the jailoo and the "power of well-being" (287). Cautioning against a deterministic reading in the context of postsocialist labor history, JF underlines an emic notion of work as "service," rather than "bondage" (246). JF sees sacrifice and irony in the landscape of moral geography, but also accomplishment and hope, and in her analytic approach insists that we consider the affective dimensions of making places. Following Keith Basso (1984), she suggests that we look at "human emotions, language, and land" (288) together in one frame and consider the possibility not only of struggle, but also of contentment. Further, JF aims to structure a new assemblage of understanding, one that serves "to free these places from their conceptual isolation in our intellectual 'ecology' of knowledge" (293). While this approach might have been more clearly situated in the anthropology of labor and affect, in centering local interpretive frames of *tazalyk* (cleanness), and *jakshylyk* (goodness), this work presents a strong and much-needed intersection among studies of pastoralism, land, and resource management, as well as narrative history in Central Asia and the former Soviet Union.

With a wholehearted commitment to writing across boundaries, JF is showing us that anthropology itself is a "way of working" as well as a way of learning (Timothy Ingold, 2017), and her wide-ranging ethnography of "dwelling" (Timothy Ingold, 2000) helps to unravel the teleological modernist frames that structure so much of our knowledge of post-Soviet development.

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