and plan ahead. How social status and asymmetries of exchange of knowledge and information are related is an important stepping-stone in the argument of the book, allowing for a sophisticated combination of Goffman's interactional analysis with contemporary semiotic tools. The higher-level system of contexts, culture, grammar, and knowledge concludes the volume, demonstrating what a generative theory of action may have to offer. For all readers with an interest in the nature of human sociality and communicative behavior in general, and the link between relationship thinking and agency in particular, this volume certainly provides rich and stimulating food for thought.

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Upriver: The Turbulent Life and Times of an Amazonian People.
Michael F. Brown. Cambridge: Harvard University Press, 2014,
336 pp. $29.95, cloth. ISBN 978-0-6743-6807-1.

I first encountered Michael F. Brown's work about the Awajún, nowadays the politically preferred ethnonym for a people once commonly known as the Aguaruna, as a fledgling graduate student. Writing an MA thesis about Amazonian shamanism and growing a little weary of all the "wildness" in Taussig's approach to such topics, I read *Tsewa's Gift: Magic and Meaning in an Amazonian Society* (Tuscaloosa: University of Alabama Press, 2006). I remember being immediately compelled by two things that continue to define Brown's scholarship: the incredible smoothness of his ethnographic writing and the lucidity in his more rational approach to the field. In fact, it was his early work that sent me on my own journey with the Awajún, resulting in innumerable inquiries as to how exactly we were related—Was I his son? His nephew? His grandson?—and confirming my choice to do fieldwork among what Morgan would have called a "blood"-based society. It was also a society in the midst of radical changes and hyperpoliticization. As a result, I was a direct witness to many of the "turbulent" transformations that *Upriver* documents with such careful reflection. Brown's eye for analysis of the Awajún's historical predicament—and their curious combination of collective assertiveness and individual idiosyncrasy—remains extraordinary.

Upriver is something between ethnographic memoir and critical analysis of modernization. Dividing his book into two unequal halves, Brown draws on a unique mix of careful documentation, personal reflection, and a long-anticipated return to the field after a couple of decades of attending to other scholarly subjects.

"Part One: 1976–1978" reads as a sustained, and highly entertaining, reflection on Brown's own dissertation field experience in the late 1970s. It shows just how

creative a revisiting of field notes decades after the fact can be, if accompanied by Brown's mastery of major anthropological concepts and ability to critically rework them. At multiple points, we are also invited to rethink basic points by everyone from Evans-Pritchard to Levi-Strauss. Each time, Brown reveals how quickly theoretical paradigms and ethnographic presumptions prove problematic given the Awajún's stubborn commitment to living in a loosely "structured" society that places a high value on individualism (albeit more for men than women). Amid the flow of ethnographic memories and gripping prose, he also tackles such complex and sensitive topics as the role that a generally suspicious outlook on the world and occasional bursts of uncompromising aggression plays in Awajún society.

The title of the second section, "Part Two: 1980–2012," strikes the reader as a bit awkward, as if to suggest a little too much continuity in the account up to the present (or the "present" of his 2012 trip). All of the changes he discusses are of course decades in the making. Yet, his real attention in Part Two is on those events most indicative of mass transformation, and they are largely the product of the 1990s and 2000s: Awajún in the Alto Mayo region turning to land rents and introducing unprecedented material inequality; increased involvement in state politics and university education; the violent showdown in 2009 with military and police (known as *el Baguazo*) following a two-month-long road blockade. Regardless, he tackles each event with the same poise and critical distance, demonstrating the Awajún desire to redefine and take control of their fate in the face of overwhelming historical forces.

Ultimately, Brown's approach suggests what is truly at stake in doing an anthropology that lasts. His point is less about how this particular cultural context fits into any specific conceptual approach since theoretical trends inevitably come and go and the diversity of human experience constantly demonstrates their weaknesses. In fact, to that end, I find Brown's book a refreshing reprieve from the recent onslaught of ontologists in anthropology. *Upriver* suggests that an attempt to fully discover ethnographic empathy, a kind of empathy that can communicate the depth and peculiarity of human experience, is still anthropology's most timeless contribution.

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Revolt of the Saints: Memory and Redemption in the Twilight of Brazilian Racial Democracy. John F. Collins. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2015, 463 pp. $29.95, paper. ISBN 978-0-8223-5320-1.

During my first visit to southern Brazil in the early 1980s, my wealthy host told me that I must visit the northeastern city of Salvador. It was, he said, with face flushed and eyes moist, "the most beautiful ugly city in the world." One of the