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"Afterword "

Palsson, Gisli

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This is a timely and impressive collection of essays, offering a range of perspectives on anthropology beyond Earth. Overall, anthropology, much like geology and geography, has remained geocentric, down-to-earth, and earth-bound. How else would we manage to "ground" our observations, tap cognitive worlds, and produce thick descriptions, long considered the hallmarks of the discipline? This has clearly been changing significantly in recent decades, in line with politics of exploration and empire, progressive scientific understanding of outer space, and Anthropocenic concerns with a damaged Earth plagued by human signatures. A recurrent theme, the editors point out, is the possibility for humans to establish a viable base in outer space, a *domus* or *casa*. Mars now appears more Earth-like than perhaps ever before; the material humanity needs to construct buildings and colonies on Mars apparently exists within the planet's soil, "no need to ship in the bricks." Literally every month, the public imagination is arrested by new space discoveries and predictions based on mathematics, physics, and biology. (Author's introduction)

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