

Recovering the Human Subject

This volume responds to the often-proclaimed ‘death of the subject’ in post-structuralist theorizing, and to calls from across the social sciences for ‘post-humanist’ alternatives to liberal humanism, in a distinctively anthropological manner. It asks: can we use the intellectual resources developed in those approaches and debates to reconstruct a new account of how individual human subjects are contingently put together in diverse historical and ethnographic contexts? Anthropologists know that the people they work with think in terms of particular, distinctive, individual human personalities, and that in times of change and crisis these individuals matter crucially to how things turn out. The volume features a classic essay by Caroline Humphrey, ‘Reassembling Individual Subjects’, that provides a focus for the debate, and it brings together a distinguished collection of essays, which exhibit a range of theoretical approaches and rich and varied ethnography.

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Caroline Humphrey with a group of Buddhist lamas at the Mergen Monastery near Baotou, Inner Mongolia, 2005

Recovering the Human Subject

Freedom, Creativity and Decision

Edited by

James Laidlaw

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