form. This documentary is a chance to see what surveys do not show: ambivalence, hopes, emotions, aspirations. Instead of reporting numbers or expert analyses, the movie presents particular individuals in their everyday surrounding, expressing their opinions in their own words.

One weakness of the documentary stems from the method of visual anthropology itself. Photography, film making and other visual materials are very valuable tools of anthropological observation that capture many more details of cultural context than written texts do. However, there are also certain drawbacks. In most cases people are not eager to express sensitive political issues in front of a camera. They will not touch human rights concerns nor discuss current political programs. The roles of the military and Islamism are barely mentioned. The fortune-tellers will not publicly confront some of the issues which postpone Turkey’s entry into EU. For that reason, the discussion presented in the documentary is missing one crucial voice – a voice that would respond to Europe’s objections toward Turkey.

I believe that the movie makes a very valuable contribution to the debate on the Turkish route towards the European Union. One can learn the 50-year-old history of the official integration process, the breakthroughs and the main statements concerning the mutual relationship. More important, however, are the ordinary everyday voices of Turks – the voices that are mostly unknown in Europe. From the movie we learn about everyday Turkish culture, which can be a surprise for those Westerners who associate Turkey predominantly with Islam. This also shows that anthropology can have something to say in vital public debates on contemporary issues.

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At first sight the documentary Gringolandia by Dennis Lanson has nothing in common with the contemporary Middle East and Central Eurasia. Even the title suggests that we speak of another corner of the world. Gringolandia – the land of gringos (i.e. Americans living in Latin America) – refers directly to San Miguel de Allende. In this previously provincial Mexican town an increasing number of Americans have settled down, changing its character and scenery. In the 54-minute documentary voice is given both to Americans and Mexicans who comment on these changes. Thus, the movie is a perfect introduction into everyday culture of Latin America, with stories and pictures presenting Mexican values, social norms, attitudes towards life and death etc.

The main anthropological contribution of this work, however, lies not only in the precise and vivid account of one town in Latin America, although for anyone
interested in the culture of the region this film is a must. The value lies in the universality of questions that the director poses. He asks, among others, how do people live in a totally different culture? Which culture is alien [for migrants]? Are there any limits to integration with other culture? What kind of barriers discourage us from embedding oneself in a foreign society? How can two cultures peacefully coexist? In the contemporary world where immigration is constantly on the increase these kinds of questions obviously deserve special attention. They are inspiring in Latin America as well as in the Middle East and Eurasia – regions known for their cultural heterogeneity.

The interviewees’ narratives, which form the basic material for the film, are structured according to the dominant topics. The first part explores the motives for American immigration and settlement in Mexico. What is astonishing is that the early Gringos of various social backgrounds, jobs and life histories are agreed in rejecting ‘their own’ American culture and in praising the ‘alien’ society. The second part is entitled ‘Real Estates.’ Both Americans and Mexicans critically comment on current economic and social processes that have turned San Miguel de Allende from a cozy town to a crowded and popular destination of American expatriates. US developers invest heavily in the town and build or buy apartments in central areas. As a result, many Mexicans are tempted to sell their houses and move to the suburbs. The center is increasingly inhabited by Americans, who form the recent wave of immigrants. The clash between them and the early Gringos is reflected in another part of the film: ‘Two cultures.’

The group of newcomers is striving to recreate their home culture abroad, taking advantage of the cheaper amenities that Mexico can offer them. This attitude stands in stark contrast to that of the early American diaspora, whose members used to learn Spanish and get acquainted with local customs and mentality. It is underlined that many of them were anthropologists or artists for whom local Mexican culture was an object of fascination. The new Gringos tend to separate themselves from the local population, looking for a comfortable life in which there is no or little place for inter-cultural awareness.

However, there are positive aspects for the locals as well. The documentary presents a volunteering initiative – ‘Casita Linda’ – that builds houses for the poorest Mexicans. This project is made possible by the engagement of foreigners, including Americans. Apart from direct help, such initiatives serve as a bridge between local and incoming population, thus strengthening mutual trust.

The main advantages of the film lie in the ethnographic material gathered by the director. The interviews with the Gringos in their everyday surrounding bring a fresh perspective to the anthropological study of immigrants, diaspora and acculturation. Accompanied by the pictures of city life and cityscape, *Gringolandia* helps us understand various aspects of social integration into another culture. In a relatively short time viewers are introduced to some crucial factors that enable successful
integration into a foreign culture. The are also encouraged to think of the limits of this process: are we, as humans brought up in one culture, capable of adapting into another culture to a full extent? Does it mean rejecting previous outlooks, habits, ways of life, or rather merging the values of two cultures? Is a multicultural identity really possible and what can it mean? The experience of Americans in Mexico can serve as a universal example of cross-cultural communication.

On the other hand, in my view the documentary suggests a black-and-white picture of the Americans abroad. The basic impression is that the first group of Gringos that came to San Miguel years ago managed an almost ideal adaption to the Mexican way of life, language, values and social norms. Local people appreciated these endeavors and accepted the old Gringos as part of their society. By contrast, the recent influx of new Gringos searching for comfort is presented almost entirely as a negative trend. There are some voices that balance this perspective, but they do not get enough attention. For example, there are a few people speaking of American involvement in the local economy, but these voices are exceptions in the general apocalyptic vision of an end of idyllic American-Mexican cohabitation. Anthropological research on migration makes us suspicious of any idealistic picture of cultural contact. Even well-known anthropologists, such as Bronislaw Malinowski, noticed in their diaries the culture shock they experienced living abroad.

In spite of this critique, the director has managed to present his thesis of a cultural clash in a convincing way and, more importantly, pose questions that relate to all kinds of cultural contact. He presents a diversity of voices, of both American and Mexican communities, describing mutual interactions. While for anthropologists the problems of integration into another culture are well known, for viewers who are not acquainted with immigration or diaspora studies this film serves as a valuable introduction to this topic. Gringolandia should interest also those interested in urban studies, who explore city dynamics or the influence of migration on social segregation.

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This gentle and informative film is a portrait of Dukhushyam Chitrakar, a minstrel and scroll painter of the Patua caste living in Naya village in West Bengal, India.

While scrolling through painted cartoons that illustrate the songs and mythical stories of the Chitrakar minstrel singers, this film explores the life and artistry of one particularly renowned minstrel. The transmission of oral tradition binds the many castes and social groups of Bengal together and give them a history, a sense of identity and is used to educate people about developmental and educational issues.