

definitely quite divergent features, which only by force could be streamlined to fit the catchwords.

Wolfgang Marschall

**Liebersohn, Harry:** *The Return of the Gift. European History of a Global Idea.* Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2011. 210 pp. ISBN 978-1-107-00218-0. Price: £ 50.00

Harry Liebersohn is a modern historian whose previous work has been devoted to placing European encounters with other peoples in wider social and intellectual contexts. In this short but extremely suggestive and ambitious book he addresses the classical ethnological contributions to gift exchange with reference to the contemporary circumstances in which those scholars wrote, their personal intellectual formation, but also the long term importance of gift exchange in European societies and in European social philosophy. His main thesis is that the European tradition was occluded towards the end of the eighteenth century, before being miraculously revived at the beginning of the twentieth by early ethnological endeavours. Marcel Mauss's famous essay of 1925 was the culmination which returned "the gift" to Europe. In outlining this analysis, Liebersohn not only shows wide knowledge of the history of anthropology but also engages directly with the ethnological data of Boas, Thurnwald, and Malinowski. Although written primarily for historians (and resoundingly endorsed by the doyenne of US anthropologically-oriented historians Natalie Zemon Davis), this book will also be read with pleasure and profit by ethnologists wishing to understand their own traditions, and in particular how some of their most celebrated predecessors hit upon themes among the *Naturvölker* that turn out to be of universal significance.

Liebersohn opens with the trial of Warren Hastings in late-eighteenth-century London. The former governor of Bengal was accused of accepting illicit gifts for personal profit. Edmund Burke denounced his corruption from the vantage point of an evolved stable system in which social regulations were regulated by all manner of gifts and tribute; in his world view the *zamindars* of Bengal were the equivalents of the gentry in Britain. By contrast, James Mill could see no place for such lubrication in his model of rational administration, which gained general acceptance in the course of the nineteenth century, along with his son's utilitarian philosophy. Liebersohn then steps back more than a century to investigate the diversity of this "liberal" tradition. He starts with Thomas Hobbes, who acknowledged the importance of the voluntary gift, just as Adam Smith made room for it alongside his theory of "commercial society" a century later. By contrast, Bernard Mandeville represented the narrow strand of liberalism that posits self-interest as the sole and universal key to human nature. Liebersohn then jumps to Friedrich List and the formation of the German Historical School in mid-nineteenth-century Germany to find academic alternatives to rampant utilitarianism. In particular, Karl Bücher provided more nuanced accounts of how economic life varied in the stages of evolution. Eventually, in the lat-

er editions of "Die Entstehung der Volkswirtschaft," Bücher recognized the need to complement his emphasis on household autonomy by integrating gift exchange.

Chapter 3 depicts the communitarian obverse of this liberal tradition, starting with Adam Ferguson's "rude republic of virtue" and continuing in the nineteenth century with Lewis Henry Morgan, Karl Marx, and Friedrich Engels. None of these authors paid significant attention to gift exchange. Liebersohn's main point is that their naïve visions of primitive communism were just as distorted as the extremes of Mandeville and Mill. Only the consolidation of ethnological fieldwork in the work of Franz Boas, Richard Thurnwald, and Bronislaw Malinowski brought the gift back into focus, by setting aside the futile European dichotomies which opposed liberal-individualism to socialist-collectivism. Despite the differences between them, Liebersohn holds that all of these scholars were deeply marked by their professional training in Germany. Finally, in his last substantive chapter he shows how the polymath Marcel Mauss drew on their contributions, and on a great deal more from his networks of collegial reciprocity in the Durkheimian school, to produce the definitive synthesis; this retained an evolutionist narrative but argued at the same time for the political necessity to embrace new forms of gift exchange in rebuilding European societies after the devastation of the First World War.

A historian who ventures to trespass in the sacred core of another discipline takes risks in some ways as bold as those taken by Thurnwald and Malinowski in Melanesia. Compression of this complex tale into a text of 170 pages, many of which are devoted to biographical details of little relevance to the main themes, will leave some readers dissatisfied. Historians may wonder why Liebersohn explores Hobbes but not Locke. Why Ferguson but not Rousseau? Why overlook large bodies of classical and medieval scholarship? Anthropologists may also complain about omissions, though Liebersohn does in his notes provide helpful long lists to show his awareness of recent contributions, in French and German as well as English. Some will protest that he is too generous to his heroes, especially to Mauss, who for all his selfless dedication to the Durkheimian collective was not as forthcoming as he might have been about his debts to Bücher and other German scholars. Malinowski cognoscenti will notice that he is presented as a son of Poland; but Cracow was part of the Habsburg Empire at this time. Malinowski did not obtain his doctorate in physics but with a philosophical study based on the positivism of Ernst Mach, which was more significant for his functionalist theories than his later studies in Germany. The island of his most celebrated fieldwork Kiriwina is erroneously named Kiriwana; Frazer, whose paradigm he displaced, is Fraser. Worse (since we generally consider personal names to be inalienable possessions), it is embarrassing to come across Marilyn Weiner (replacing Annette) and Arthur Radcliffe-Brown (replacing Alfred). Liebersohn has found a few nuggets in the archives, such as a delightful put-down of Malinowski by Mauss ("décidément un malin, pourvu d'un piètre courage"). But I was disappointed that he does not dig much deeper into the case of Thurnwald than Marion

Melk-Koch in the 1980s, when as a Western scholar she was not grant access to various materials at the Humboldt University. According to Liebersohn, Thurnwald “chose to return to Nazi Germany in 1936”; but Melk-Koch, in the work on which he relies, shows that Thurnwald really had no choice. If he had received an offer to continue teaching in the United States, he would almost certainly have accepted and been spared the ignominy of planning *Lebensraum* for the Nazis in East Africa.

This brings me to some more general points in conclusion. The quartet whom Liebersohn links together as somehow collectively responsible for bringing “the gift” back to Europe were, as he himself shows, very diverse characters with very diverse values. While Thurnwald eventually worked for the Nazis, Boas and Malinowski agitated against them in the final years of their lives. Mauss had by this time fallen silent. Yet Malinowski and Thurnwald were similarly opposed to socialism, temperamentally more inclined to endorse the conservatism of Edmund Burke than to share Mauss’s interest in cooperatives and new forms of mutuality such as the welfare state. When they wrote about gift exchange, these scholars had radically different phenomena in mind. Boas and Malinowski may have thought they were challenging the axioms of the embryonic discipline of economics, but most of what they wrote is entirely consistent with an emphasis upon individual utility-maximization; Mauss and Thurnwald seem to have had a deeper appreciation of the limitations of this perspective. In short, at the end of this essay I was craving a more differentiated picture and wondering if the very diverse phenomena studied by these four scholars can be lumped together under a single rubric, “the gift.”

Finally, I was puzzled by Liebersohn’s dismissal of the work of Karl Polanyi (in favour of Max Weber: see pp. 174f., n. 8). Polanyi drew on all four ethnological scholars of gift exchange in his own economic anthropology, but he did not make significant use of this category, preferring the ideal types “reciprocity” and “redistribution.” Yet in positing a decisive break at the end of the eighteenth century, Liebersohn’s general model is entirely compatible with that of Polanyi. What Mandeville had proclaimed generations earlier as an intellectual conceit became a reality in the era of Hastings, Burke, and James Mill: Europeans suddenly lost their own traditions of gift exchange, which explains why these were ignored by the founding fathers of sociology in the nineteenth century and had to be reimported by the ethnologists in the twentieth. It is perhaps a bit too simple, but it remains a powerful model, with rich implications for the twenty-first century.

Chris Hann

**Liebmann, Matthew, and Melissa S. Murphy** (eds.): *Enduring Conquests. Rethinking the Archaeology of Resistance to Spanish Colonialism in the Americas*. Santa Fe: SAR Press, 2011. 325 pp. ISBN 978-1-934691-41-0. Price: \$ 34.95

While colonialism is undeniably one of the “haunts” of historical archaeology, native perspectives on colonial

enterprises have been relatively less well represented than European ones in the historical and archaeological literature. The reasons for historical bias are largely artifacts of the nature of the surviving sources, and for this reason historians of the Americas have done groundbreaking and intensive work over the past few decades with notarial archives and sources written by native hands. The archaeological record is equally authored by native hands and has the potential to address the daily experience of colonial life, yet historical archaeology in Spanish America has developed much more unevenly. “Enduring Conquests” is a welcome addition to the nascent literature on Pan-American historical archaeology.

The edited volume is the result of a School of Advanced Research short seminar on the topic. Matthew Liebmann and Melissa Murphy show a sure editorial control in the high degree of consistency of the chapters. The contributors read each other’s chapters, and the central concern of the book – the native colonial experience – overrides regional and temporal differences. The participants in the Advanced Seminar make for a coherent and logical group in that they focus on Spanish America and mostly share theoretical perspectives. Indeed, similar language is used throughout, creating conceptual threads that integrate the work as a whole. Each chapter in some way deals with ideas concerning entanglement, agency, strategic action, and the breaking down of conceptual boundaries. “Enduring Conquests” equally contributes to the literature on the application of practice theory and constructivist approaches in archaeology.

The chapters loosely proceed both geographically and chronologically through Spanish America, beginning with the mid-sixteenth-century *entradas* in the southeastern US. Robin Beck, Christopher Rodning, and David Moore set the tone for the rest of the book by turning a seemingly obvious case of native resistance to colonial rule on its head. Beck et al. argue that Juan Pardo’s efforts at colonization of the interior southeast played into Native American political and social machinations. The construction of forts and provisioning of Spanish soldiers by Native Americans was less a submission to Spanish authority than a display of the ability to mobilize labor and reinforce native military goals. Once those goals shifted, as they did by June 1568, the forts were erased from the landscape, never to return. Kathleen Deagan’s chapter on Hispaniola and La Florida emphasizes that effective resistance was through the alliance of native and other groups – in other words, along class rather than race or ethnic lines.

The next few chapters shift to the Andes. Melissa Murphy, Elena Goycochea, and Guillermo Cock present the only data from physical anthropological data in the book in their study of Late Horizon and possible colonial burials. Here, we see direct evidence of violence through the use of metal weapons, but wielded by whom, when, and where remain debatable. The archaeological observation of disinterment is provocative yet hard to interpret. Steven Wernke argues that the early, short colonial occupation of Malata in the Colca Valley of Peru was organized to create a “centripetal” civic plaza and processions to the