

very present in the lives and works of many anthropologists outside the U.S. that I wish the volume's contributors had explicitly acknowledged and not just in some of the volume's footnotes or in a handful of chapters.

As many know, a key favored concept in current U.S. anthropology is "engaged anthropology," and it was Sanjek who chose to relate that to the larger world anthropologies' discussion of "mutuality," even "mutualities." The book itself then is both more than it appears to be and less than it appears to be, but readers interested in "American anthropology" today, ethics and anthropologists' struggle to be ethical, power relations and hierarchies in the practice of anthropology, and even the history of anthropology would do well to read it. Sanjek has gathered interesting and strong representatives of contemporary U.S. anthropology in this volume, and I highly encourage readers to read it.

Virginia R. Dominguez

**Schauert, Paul:** *Staging Ghana. Artistry and Nationalism in State Dance Ensembles.* Bloomington: Indiana University Press, 2015. 343 pp. ISBN 978-0-253-01742-0. Price: \$ 30.00

Six decades after the nationalist leaders of African independence movements promoted the showcasing of African performing arts, there are more African music-dance groups, companies, ensembles, and practitioners across the globe today than at any other time in history. The subject of performing arts, and in particular the connection between music-dance groups and nationalist movements, has been extensively addressed (see Gilman, Castaldi, Ebron, Agawu, Askew, Nketia, Chernoff, Shipley, and Donkor, among others), but Paul Schauert's new book is among the first scholarly treatises exclusively about Ghana's national dance companies.

Ghana was one of the first sub-Saharan African nations to gain political independence from colonial Europe. Schauert's work focuses on the Ghana Dance Ensemble, the dance troupe whose history is linked directly to the nationalist ideologies of the 1950s that led to Ghanaian independence. "Staging Ghana" also juxtaposes those ideologies with the post-independence strategies of contemporary nation building, in which the needs of ensemble members are intertwined more with harsh economic realities and individual aspirations than with the rhetoric of Ghanaian independence. Schauert's examination of the institutionalized music-dance practices of Ghanaian performances highlights one of the central themes of "Staging Ghana": how the members of performance ensembles balance or reconcile their personal priorities and goals with the (sometimes opposing) objectives of the nation-state.

In the introduction, the author lays out the historical narratives and issues patent to the development of Ghanaian music-dance ensembles and examines how their members constantly negotiate between serving their nation through music-dance performances redesigned for stage presentations and focusing on concerns salient to their daily existence and livelihood. He describes efforts to unite the many ethnic representations of the Ghanaian societies through choreography ideas based on histori-

cal narratives of the early years of Nkrumah's Pan-Africanism, independence, liberation, and cultural nationalist project. With this background in place, he then addresses issues of authenticity and how ensemble members find ways to balance their ethnic cultural affiliations with the need to adopt performance practices that appeal to and satisfy the entertainment preferences of cosmopolitan audiences.

The author discusses the clever ways in which ensemble members use to their own advantage the alternative education (and, often, strict discipline) they have gained under the leadership of the group's successive artistic directors. For example, the members' ingenuity has led them to pursue business opportunities that draw on their experiences with the University of Ghana (such as its study-abroad programs) and with the arts markets in Accra, Aburi, and beyond. The theme of performers intentionally crafting their own message continues in Schauert's analysis of how Ghanaian performers rely on their cultural knowledge and skills in indirect communication to reinterpret long-gone (or still-present but less functional) nationalist rhetoric of the past for contemporary Ghanaian audiences. In this way, Schauert does a superb job of highlighting how individual performers create and share their own understandings and practices.

He also takes a more macro-level view of the music-dance performance scene in Ghana, through his exploration of the 1992 split of the Ghana Dance Ensemble into two troupes and how that controversial division led to increased competition and significant shifts in onstage representations of the nation. His explication of the performers' ideas about self-expression and the creative ability of artists in ensembles and other groups in Accra is particularly interesting.

With theory well grounded in (and balanced by) richly textured ethnography and analyses, "Staging Ghana" is a valuable addition to the literature in the ever-growing fields of African studies and performance studies. Its examination of nationalism, creativity, postcolonialism, culture, music, and dance give it great multidisciplinary relevance, particularly to scholars and students of ethnomusicology, ethnography, dance, cultural anthropology, African diasporas, and African politics and history in general.

Habib Iddrisu

**Scherer, Andrew K.:** *Mortuary Landscapes of the Classic Maya. Rituals of Body and Soul.* Austin: University of Texas Press, 2015. 291 pp. ISBN 978-1-4773-0051-0. Price: £ 45.00

Scherer's book is about the treatment of body and soul among the Classic Maya in the form of different mortuary practices. His main concern is the variations in burial rites and he explains them against the background of widely held body and soul conceptions (13). To do this he employs a variety of methodological approaches. As anthropological archaeologist and bioarchaeologist, he enriches archaeological with epigraphic and iconographic data. In particular, he takes advantage of his own field experience at sites like El Kinel, El Zotz, and Piedras Negras along

the Usumacinta River and of research at other sites like Palenque, Tikal, Yaxhá, and Yaxchilan which constitute his material basis of dead bodies and the mortuary landscapes he analyzes.

In order to gain deeper insights into the difficult terrain of body and soul conceptions, he challenges the so-called method of upstreaming, too. That is, he stresses ethnographic data in order to understand the past. Although this might be a dangerous endeavor, he takes precautions not to simply transfer ideas from the present to the past as he uses them heuristically as generator of hypotheses and for comparative purposes. And yet, it has to be said that past Maya studies relied on this approach already more or less frequently and without it, current understandings of the Classic Maya would not have been that fruitful or possible (D. Grana-Behrens, *The Past by the Present – Ethnography as a Means to Explain Ancient Maya*. In: C. Helmke, and H. Karttunen (eds.), *On Methods. How We Know What We Think We Know about the Maya*. Helsinki 2015: 47–64). Nonetheless, Scherer's multidisciplinary approach – archaeology and bioarchaeology combined and enriched by epigraphy and iconography against the backdrop of ethnography – is a worthwhile attempt in order to formulate new questions and to explain differing burial practices in the Maya mortuary landscapes.

The book is divided into four chapters. Chapter 1, entitled “Lived Body” deals with the conception of the body from an ethnographic perspective in comparison to the current understanding of the Classic Maya based on epigraphic and iconographic evidence. In particular, he focuses on four aspects of the body: Maya self, soul, health, and illness (8). As the author himself remarks, this chapter is essential because it provides the framework for the Classic Maya souls upon which his further analysis relies. Scherer makes clear that Western thoughts like the concept of the indivisible person or the separation of self and body are not helpful in order to understand the above-cited aspects (12). He thus stresses ethnographic data mainly from the Tzeltal and Tzotzil to explore the ancient Maya world. It is interesting to note that the Harvard Chiapas Project directed by Evon Vogt from the 1960s to the 1980s laid the foundation for considering these highland Maya groups as particularly important to understand the lowland ancestors. Although this had been proven erroneous concerning their language, it might still be true for some cultural patterns that persist (cf. D. Grana-Behrens 2015). Thus, Scherer draws on aspects like the head representing a person, maize as the vital element of the body, and the creation of personhood by using headdresses or perform cranial deformation, and other techniques like teeth filing (19–23). Good health, as a complement, is based on heat as something positive, while illness, in return, might also in Classic times had a naturalistic and personal category, the first one commonly affecting the body, and the second an affliction of the soul (45).

He makes clear that for the ancient Maya as well as modern descendants like the Tzeltal, “the development of the body was a stepwise process” (30). However, Scherer has dismissed one important aspect of the process: the ancient practice of changing names (cf. M. Eberl and D.

Grana-Behrens, *Proper Names and Throne Names. On the Naming Practice of Classic Maya Rulers*. In: D. Grana-Behrens et al. (eds.), *Continuity and Change, Maya Religious Practices, and Temporal Perspective*. Mockmühl 2004: 101–120). Not only received a Maya king a new name when he took possession, but his name was changed again once he was dead (P. Colas, *Sinn und Bedeutung klassischer Maya-Personennamen*. Markt Schwaben 2004: 281; M. Eberl, *Muerte, entierro y ascensión. Ritos funerarios entre los antiguos mayas*. Mérida 2005: 123–130).

Chapter 2, entitled “Dead Bodies” centers on the dead from an archaeological perspective. After first giving insights into the ancient Maya conception of life and death as a cycle (grave, pool, rebirth), he then turns towards the journey of the soul and soul representations in Classic Maya iconography, inscriptions, and modern ethnography (52–61). Most of his description in this section rests upon analysis from Stephen Houston, David Stuart, and Karl Taube, among others. The last pages of chap. 2 center on grave goods accompanying the dead bodies, body position, and bone treatment. Quantity and quality of adornments in form of ear ornaments, beads, or funeral masks, most of them of jade or jadeite, are considered not only as expression of wealth, status, and power but “to capture the spiritual essence of the dead” as well, as already has been proposed by two of the above mentioned scholars, among others (76). This resembles the later and contemporaneous conception of the Maya that a certain kind of soul (*ch'ulel* among the Tzeltal) leaves the dead body through the mouth as it had entered it at the tip of the tongue by birth (75). In the same sense, Scherer explores the position of dead bodies and shows, how the verticality of rulers versus the horizontal of captives in the Classic period might have some relevance, as the Tzeltal take the horizontal position to be the “submission of the body to the inner soul” and associate the vertical one with the “awakened body and rational self” (80). Finally, the treatment and portrayal of bones among the ancient Maya (after having them excavated or not) might as well signal a conceptual link between bones and soul as it is attested from the contemporaneous Tzeltal and Yucatec Maya (96). Hence, chap. 2 shows how death is a process that extends beyond the mere death and funeral (73).

The many aspects that Scherer links to ancient Maya burials: the *axis mundi*, the heart of the hearth, poles, the jaguar sun, solar portals, sacrifice, vases, and thrones, among others. In my opinion, this is the weakest chapter in the book, because it lacks consistency among these heterogeneous aspects. For instance, the discussion of “fire and the jaguar sun” (126–130) tries to link fire, the Jaguar God of the Underworld, and the practice of blackening some long bones by heat exposure as a post-burial re-entering practice. One wonders why Scherer did not deal with this practice in chap. 2 instead of linking it with “ascension and descension of celestial bodies” among them the Jaguar God of the Underworld (126). Another example is his interpretation of plates with holes as evidence to establish the *axis mundi* after having declared graves as quadrangular spaces or quincunx with the central point

marked as *axis mundi* (107, 117). While the first part of his argument is an interesting hypothesis that forces us to reconsider the current interpretation of holes as practice of ritual killing of dishes before their entombment, the second part of his reasoning weakens his initial argumentation. Why should there be a quincunx space (plate, vessel) being established within a quincunx space (grave)? His argument is further complicated as he then declares perforated vessels not only as quintessential symbols of rebirth and resurrection but also as a kind of tool to exchange heat from the head as a “seat of senses and the locus of vitality” and/or to establish “further communication with the dead” (121). Moreover, he points out that plates or vessels with holes are sometimes placed either over the abdomen or the head (126).

Another argument that lacks empirical foundation is to link the practice of child sacrifice (as a form of substitution or *k'ex* for someone's soul or body) to the myth of the so-called Baby-Jaguar as displaced on certain types of painted vessels from the Late Classic. Although Scherer himself remarks that the connection between them is in the case of one vessel out of four, his reference is unclear (145), he correlates the decline of child sacrifice in Tikal precisely at the start of the Late Classic with the decline of textual references to the baby-jaguar (153). Although he interprets other objects like pyrite mirrors in graves as tools to facilitate the soul journey (135), one misses a discussion of other objects or practices associated with human burials like frequently accompanying deer bones or the knotting or binding of dead kings and their veneration in buildings or temples (D. Grana-Behrens, *Death and Deer Riding among the Ancient Maya of Northwest Yucatán, Mexico*. In: T. Stanton [ed.], *The Archaeology of Yucatán*. New Directions and Data. Oxford 2014: 3–20).

Chapter 4, “The Mortuary Landscape” discusses the meaning and importance of dead bodies in ancient Maya society. In particular, Scherer challenges Patricia McAnany's (*Living with the Ancestors. Kinship and Kingship in Ancient Maya Society*. Austin 1995: 8) interpretation that ancient Maya ancestor veneration served to legitimize land claims because then they should have shrines in the fields like the ancient Chinese (175, 181). He also criticizes McAnany for centering too much on resource rights for which she claims that ancestor veneration was the control mechanism. To the contrary, Scherer provides here a new insight as he claims that domestic inhumation might be the instrument to facilitate “control over the rites of veneration” rather than to “map access to resources” (175). Hence, in his view, burying the dead within domestic complexes says more about claims to legitimize rights *within* the lineage rather than *among* lineages. But he also states that the practice of domestic inhumation was not so much important compared to other aspects of veneration, as it was abandoned shortly after the Spanish conquest (178).

Another aspect that Scherer discusses in chap. 4 is the orientation of dead among the Classic Maya. He provides evidences that Maya sites like Palenque, Piedras Negras, and Tikal oriented their dead towards north (between 12 and 120 degrees East of North) in the Late Classic, where-

as Yaxchilan preferred an east-west orientation. He tries to explain the northern orientation as something equivalent to the modern Tzeltal concept of maximum heat in the north (by sunset) and equates this region with the location of “flower mountain” in ancient times (197).

In sum, Scherer's book is worth to be read, as he challenges rusty and stuck-up pattern and interpretation of ancient Maya mortuary practices. His ethnographic approach applied to his empirical data sets of burials and his iconographic and epigraphic consideration opens up some new insights and hypothesis for future investigations.

Daniel Grana-Behrens

**Schmitz, Michael, Beatrice Kobow, and Hans Bernhard Schmid** (eds.): *The Background of Social Reality. Selected Contributions from the Inaugural Meeting of ENSO*. Dordrecht: Springer, 2013. 251 pp. ISBN 978-94-007-5599-4. (Studies in the Philosophy of Sociality, 1) Price: \$ 159.00

Since the very beginnings of philosophy, the problem of the social has been discussed, to recall, e.g., Plato's “Republic,” Aristotle's “Politeia,” and Cicero's “De re publica” – all of them have to consider social ontological questions like relations between social groups (state) and individuals (citizens) in context of political action and legal normativity. The debates were continued in the Middle Ages (status of communities) and in modernity (various readings of social contract) to reach its more scientific formulation at the dawn of sociology (Marks, Durkheim, Simmel, Weber). The main problem discussed might be spelled as: How is society possible? What human groups consist of? How are they composed? What are the emergent properties of individual actions which approach? Or may we reduce a group to its constituents? Which approach to social ontology is the right one? The individual, emergent, or collective one?

In 1998, a group of scholars started a conference on social action taken from the collective (team) point of view. The first organizers of a workshop on “Collective Intentionalities” were Wolfgang Balzer and Raimo Tuomela (Munich). Since that time every two years there have been conferences organized in Leipzig (2000), Rotterdam (2002), Siena (2004), Helsinki (2006), Berkeley (2008), Basel (2010), Manchester (2012), Bloomington (2014), and in The Hague (2016) to mention some of the hosts. The invited keynote speakers have been John R. Searle, Michael Bratman, Margaret Gilbert, Philip Pettit, Seumas Miller, Georg Meggle, Barry Smith, Kevin Mulligan, and Uskali Mäki among others, and they may be recognised as representatives of the first generation who has started and contributed to the debate in question. The conferences were of a significant interest and expanded in the numbers of participants from meeting to meeting by attracting new generations of younger scholars mostly from all over Europe and North America.

In autumn 2009, at the University of Konstanz there took place a two days conference and the inaugural meeting of the new research group European Network of Social Ontology (ENSO). The network groups the younger