Review

Reviewed Work(s): Converting Words: Maya in the Age of the Cross by William F. Hanks

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people caught up in its ethos. When addiction links parents and children, for example, gifts of heroin or the injection of drugs into fresh graves become important acts of care. Garcia describes these processes of care as they culminate in suicide through overdose and in incarceration through loyalty. One of her more important interventions is to describe how the male symbolics of addiction and criminology impose grave repercussions on female experiences of the same.

Garcia sets before us a tangle of addiction, loss, care, history, and place with tremendous grace and honesty. She exposes a place of deep and affecting contrasts: the depth of the heroin epidemic and the ubiquity of suicide amid the strength of social bonds; the beauty of the landscape amid its scars of land appropriation; the impetus of care amid the often-tragic consequences of caring relationships. A gifted writer, Garcia has clearly thought deeply about the ethics of writing. This brief review cannot begin to do this book justice. Instead, I urge anyone interested in care, kinship, Hispanic life, the United States, and the craft of ethnography to read *The Pastoral Clinic* for herself. A singular accomplishment, Angela Garcia calls forth an ethics of care from which it is impossible to turn away.

Converting Words: Maya in the Age of the Cross

William F. Hanks. Berkeley: University of California Press, 2010. 472 pp.

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Reduccion, a term used to describe the Spanish conquest of the Yucatec Mayan in 16th century, is understood by scholars to have had two principle objectives: to gather native peoples into towns *(pueblos)* and to transform their habits, dispositions, and beliefs—that is, to turn them into Christian subjects of the Spanish crown. In addition to these two objectives, author William Hanks argues, reduccion had a third goal, this one key to understanding the encounter between the Spanish and the Maya during the colonial period. In his richly detailed, impressively researched, and erudite study, Hanks argues that reduccion aimed at transforming the Mayan language; indeed, it aimed at producing a new language—a *Maya reducido.*

Because Yucatec Mayan is not a creole, readers may scratch their heads at the notion of "Maya reducido" as a "new" language. Would a study of cognates reveal such divergence between pre- and postconquest Mayan languages as to suggest that the two were mutually unintelligible? The question of intelligibility, in fact, pinpoints the brilliance of Hanks's insight. Maya reducido, "neither European nor Maya in any simple sense" (p. 16), made the world intelligible in a new way.

Vocabulary change, central to the transformative process, is studied in chapters 5 and 6 through analysis of Spanish–Mayan dictionaries developed by missionaries. Hanks looks at what he calls "commensuration"—how the Spanish words (both form and meaning) were brought into alignment with Mayan words. Commensuration produced an asymmetrical conduit through which Spanish meanings worked their way into Mayan lexical forms, creating the new intelligibility characteristic of Maya reducido. Hanks traces the creation of this "translanguage," as he dubs it, into morphology and syntax.

His thesis is not that the creation of dictionaries and grammars is sufficient to bring into existence a new language. Forging a new language, one capable of making the world intelligible in new ways, depends on getting people to take that language on as their own. In other words, the language must be made to circulate. *Converting Words,* indeed, is a study of discourse circulation. It is an investigation of the forces that initiated the motion of this "translanguage" through the world—over space and through time.

Motion through space is not just a metaphor. After an introductory chapter laying out his vision of reduccion as social process, Hanks describes the gathering together of native peoples into pueblos and into a broader system of Spanish governance. This organization of space, however, does not suffice to make it intelligible to Mayan speakers—needed as well are concepts of "property," "ownership," and "government." For this reason, Hanks returns to the intelligibility of space in chapter 9, in which he shows that land documents produced by Mayan speakers also embody the new language.

How did these Maya come to adopt the new language? Hanks charts this fundamental process in chapters 3 and 4. Missionaries endeavored to fashion the Maya into "new men." Through repetitive practices of both a religious and secular nature, the Maya in pueblos came to adopt new habits—habit being, as Cicero averred, "a second nature."

However, it is not just any habits that are crucial to the spread of a new language. It is specifically discursive habits such as recitation of memorized prayers, catechism, confession, and sermons. Repetitive discursive practices bring about the internalization of the new language. In the course of iteration and reiteration, linguistic usage turns into habit; the new language becomes self-replicating. If the language becomes self-replicating, then so too do its forms of intelligibility. They acquire the capability of moving beyond the confines of religion and missionization. Hanks marks this

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transition by distinguishing between part II, focused on the religious realm, and part III, concerned with linguistic usage in secular life.

From what I have said so far, it might appear that Hanks views the new language exclusively as a tool of domination and control. This interpretation, however, would miss his main point. Once Maya reducido became self-replicating, it acquired the capability of moving beyond the Spanish colonial world and into the realm of the unsubjugated Maya, where it transformed itself into a tool of resistance. This is the theme of chapter 11. Once set in motion by missionaries, the new language took on a life of its own. It became the Mayan language—a tool usable for subversion and for the self-determination of a people.

Converting Words is destined to become a classic in Mayan studies. Although dense and detailed, it is a must-read for anthropologists and historians interested in the colonial period as well as in contemporary Mayan culture. It will hold great value for all linguistic and cultural anthropologists concerned with processes of contact, colonization, and resistance. Indeed, it represents a distinctive contribution to the literature on discourse circulation and the motion of culture more generally.

The Secret: Love, Marriage, and HIV

Jennifer S. Hirsch, Holly Wardlow, Daniel Jordan Smith, Harriet M. Phinney, Shanti Parikh, and Constance A. Nathanson. Nashville: Vanderbilt University Press, 2009. 301 pp.

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HIV researchers and prevention specialists have long known that marriage does not offer protection from the virus and that women in particular are vulnerable to HIV infection even when they are married. As the authors of the essays collected in *The Secret: Love, Marriage, and HIV* note, this fact contradicts with the globally popular "ABC Campaign" and its promotion of abstinence, fidelity, and condom use ("Abstain, Be faithful, and Condomise"). This volume offers insight into the social, economic, moral, and cultural contexts through which HIV potentially enters marriages and contributes to women's vulnerability to infection.

This research occurred as part of a larger collaborative and comparative study funded by the National Institutes of Health. The authors propose a new approach: comparative ethnography through the framework of "*critical* comparative ethnography." This approach focuses on processes rather than social traits; investigates the relationship between large social forces and individual experiences through experience-near ethnography; and deliberately seeks to include a variety of perspectives and experiences across gender, class, and generation. Such a collaborative and comparative project requires continual revisiting and revising of research questions and consideration of how best to answer them in particular contexts as well as a willingness to acknowledge—and even highlight—the unique ways analytic concepts play out on the ground in each research setting. As a result, each chapter outlines the historical context of gender relations and patterns of social and economic change unique to that context.

The authors offer several key themes that highlight the larger social, political, and economic forces that shape HIV risk opportunities. First, the concept of "extramarital opportunity structures" explores the linkages between infidelity and broader social, political, and economic factors. As Harriet Phinney points out in her chapter on Vietnam, the global market economy has led to the commercialization and sexualization of men's leisure time, with the emergence of new enterprises geared toward sexual services. Spaces for sexual relationships have proliferated, increasing the possibilities for infidelity and decreasing the potential social risk associated with being caught. In addition, the primacy given to a women's responsibility to the home and the need for men to seek economic opportunities through labor migration create opportunities for men to engage in extramarital relations. In Nigeria, as Daniel Jordan Smith illustrates, many men attributed their behavior to the opportunities for extramarital affairs facilitated by work-related migration.

Second, the authors contrast the notion of "social risk" with "sexual" or "epidemiological" risk to highlight that, in many contexts, conceptualizations of "safe sex" are not limited to concerns about health risks. Holly Wardlow's examination of infidelity among the Huli of Papua New Guinea, for example, illustrates that for Huli men extramarital sex partners are considered "safe" if they do not infringe on other men or carry adverse economic consequences. "Safe sex," particularly in the context of marital infidelity, involves complex interpretations of social, moral, and economic risks, such as the degree to which an extramarital affair hurts the financial well-being of the family rather than its potential to introduce HIV into the relationship.

Third, the concepts of extramarital opportunity structures and social risk are significantly tied to gendered social space and sexual geographies. In her essay on extramarital sex in rural Mexico, Jennifer Hirsch illustrates that certain spaces (e.g., motels, bars outside of town) are associated with "socially risk-free sex." She argues that men's moral

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