

ties of Finnish society. Here, she argues, is a certain symbiosis, the values of each reinforcing the other. Finns see themselves as members of a small and relatively isolated country. What the Red Cross movement offers is a means of addressing that marginality through entering a wider global stage and escaping the constraints of everyday Finnish life. Running through the book is a concern with how people understand their Finnishness. In part this is a matter of social reserve, privacy, and extreme individualism, and engaging with the Red Cross is a means of escaping what she presents as an at times stultifying environment. But at the same time, the principles underlying the Red Cross movement—neutrality, impartiality, and humanity—are also integral elements of what it means to be Finnish. So working for the Red Cross is both a form of escape from certain aspects of Finnish society and an intensification of other values that people see as core to Finnish identity.

Overall, this is an excellent book in terms of both its discussion of humanitarian professionals and its presentation of key elements in Finnish culture. The arguments are clearly laid out, although one wonders whether the chapter on children, animals, and “power objects,” excellent in itself, would perhaps have been better published separately.

At the same time, as all significant books do, Malkki’s discussion raises many questions. For instance, it is questionable how generally the values she ascribes to Finnish society are shared by all Finns. One suspects that they characterize middle-class professionals rather than all Finns, and there are hints that not all Finns may be as committed to the humanitarian values she identifies as key to Finnishness. Neither Finns nor other Scandinavians (whom Malkki suggests share similar cultural backgrounds) have a monopoly on working for the ICRC or other humanitarian organizations. This raises the question of how significant these specific “national characteristics” are in recruitment to humanitarian organizations such as the ICRC.

But these questions in no way detract from what is an original and highly significant analysis of “Aidland,” essential reading for anyone interested in the growing literature on the people who work in the development industry and humanitarian organizations.

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Surplus: The Politics of Production and the Strategies of Everyday Life.
 Christopher T. Morehart and Kristin De Lucia, eds. Boulder: University Press
 of Colorado, 2015, 304 pp. \$36.95, paper. ISBN 978-1-60732-371-6.

The concept of surplus plays a central role in many materialist theories for understanding organizational variation and change in past societies. The concept allows us to imagine a complex dynamic of social life involving relationships between pro-

ducers, extractors, distributors, and receivers of surplus in its myriad material forms (e.g., prestige goods, feasting foods, labor service). Such dynamics are often at the heart of change trajectories toward social inequality and stratification. Theories that account for efforts to produce and resist the extraction of social surplus, and to control its distribution, can help explain archaeological patterns that remain mysterious when considered through the lens of theories that ignore such relationships.

This volume brings together a variety of case studies about surplus production and distribution from around the world: Mesoamerica, North and South America, northern Europe, West Africa, Mesopotamia, and East Asia. The studies range widely across time and expressions of cultural complexity. Contributing authors examine how surplus production impacted people differentially positioned in society according to age, class, gender, ethnicity, and other factors. They avoid top-down, deterministic models. They are keen to explore agency at the level of households and individuals—in other words, the “strategies of everyday life” employed to secure biological and social reproduction.

An introductory article by the editors clarifies why the study of surplus is important and relevant. Christopher Morehart and Kristin De Lucia provide a useful history or “genealogy” of theories and theorists, and they review key debates about the meaning of the concept.

Cathy Lynn Costin examines the impact that Inka tribute demands had on the Wanka of highland Peru in the late fifteenth and early sixteenth centuries CE. The cultivation of maize for the brewing of *chicha* beer was politically and ritually necessary but took a toll on labor and the food supply. Morehart and De Lucia consider the intensification of *chinampa* agriculture in the pre-Aztec polity of Xaltocan in central Mexico, rooting the cause in social and political dynamics. Heather Miller stays with this theme by analyzing producer choice among different types of water supply systems for generating surpluses in the late fourth and early third millennia BCE Indus Valley.

E. Christian Wells takes us into Mesoamerica’s sixteenth century to consider how two contrasting forms of religious practice among the colonial Yucatecan Maya and Mexican Nahua—what he terms “imagistic” (involving sensory stimulation) and “doctrinal” (involving repetitive behavior)—have different implications for the production and distribution of surplus.

Two studies of northern Europe illuminate the dynamics of surplus production in areas that will likely be relatively unknown to many readers. T. L. Thurston and Douglas Bolender examine surplus production in early Sweden and Viking Age Iceland, respectively. They consider how and why households produced surpluses vis-à-vis larger, regional economic and political relationships and emerging structures of social inequality.

A couple of very interesting case studies from West Africa focus on how production of surplus is contingent on producing “wealth in people”: the number of attached supporters a leader can attract to his house. Neil Norman illuminates how Hueda kings in seventeenth- and eighteenth-century southern Benin built elaborate

houses that measured their power over human surplus, as well as the associated “tensions, anxieties, and fracture points” of palace politics. Ann Stahl considers surplus in the Banda area of west-central Ghana through the lens of human enslavement and with respect to much broader regional and interregional power dynamics.

North America is a similarly rich area for exploring relationships of surplus production and distribution. James Brown and John Kelly look at the role of large communal feasts in generating social inequality at eleventh-century Cahokia. Victor Thompson and Christopher Moore consider two kinds of surplus—“opportunistic” and “anticipated”—and their associated social relationships among Late Archaic hunter-gatherers of coastal Georgia.

Timothy Earle offers a concluding chapter that also incorporates the voice of Elizabeth Brumfiel, who was the original discussant for the Society of American Archaeology annual meeting symposium upon which the volume is based. Brumfiel found the contributions difficult to integrate but fascinating in their individuality. I agree. Earle usefully summarizes five archaeological approaches to measuring surplus that form the evidentiary basis of the volume’s case studies: analyses of potential agricultural surplus, storage capacity, densities of tools and other utilitarian artifacts, labor invested in monumental architecture, and labor invested in the production of materials for social exchange.

This volume expands our understanding of the environmental context of surplus production and the institutional processes, relationships, and frameworks through which it flows. It is theoretically and empirically rich, and a useful reference for scholars working in any area or time period.

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From Prehistoric Villages to Cities: Settlement Aggregation and Community Transformation. Jennifer Birch, ed. New York: Routledge, 2013, 226 pp.
\$140.00, cloth. ISBN 978-0-415-83661-6.

This volume is a useful compilation of eight case studies (five from the Americas, from Bolivia to the Great Lakes, and three from southeast Europe/Anatolia) of different forms of non-urban aggregation, analyzing causes and effects, related social transformation, political context of aggregation, and ritual and symbolic enablers of community cohesion. The types of aggregation are varied, including cases of relatively large-scale settlement population at specific settlements, cases of coalescence of regional population, and cases that might be typified more as settlement clustering. Whilst the focus is thus not a tightly delineated phenomenon, the range is use-