

is perhaps the most provocative argument in this book. By drawing on comparative materials from societies as diverse as Byzantium, Neolithic Europe, Buddhist Asia, and ancient Peru among many others, Palka points us to shared practices and even types of artifacts that seem to be indicative of pilgrimages globally. Mesoamerican archaeologists are thus presented with new methodological tools for interpreting archaeological assemblages that may constitute the sparse remains of pilgrimages.

Yet, one is also left with the sense that any journey, of any length, to a given place on the landscape for ritual purposes constitutes a pilgrimage. A pilgrimage could, under this rubric, be long or short and involve great effort or almost no effort at all. What is important under Palka's model is simply the ritual intent and purpose driving that visit.

In summary, *Maya Pilgrimage to Ritual Landscapes* is a fundamentally important piece of work for anyone considering landscape archaeology in the Maya region. Most significantly, it integrates data from Mesoamerica into the broader tapestry of pilgrimage in worldwide context. In so doing, it in some sense demystifies the Maya engagement

with the landscape, showing it to be part of more general human patterns of religious and ritual life. Yet, the book also maintains a focus on what is particular to Maya, and particularly modern Lacandón Maya, cultures. In the end, however, Palka's fundamental argument that visits to any place on the landscape for purposes of religious or ritual veneration constitute a pilgrimage must remain a question to be answered through closer scrutiny and careful application of the term *pilgrimage* to archaeological analyses. Only by treating this broader vision of pilgrimage as a hypothesis to be tested through further archaeological research will it be possible to determine whether this makes the term too weak or, rather, provides scholars with a keenly effective tool for better understanding the archaeological record and ethnographic present in Mesoamerica.

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The Reappeared: Argentine Former Political Prisoners by Rebekah Park.

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Rebekah Park's *The Reappeared* is a focused ethnography addressing the struggles and eventual success of Argentina's former political prisoners to gain collective recognition of their experiences during the Dirty War period. Park primarily worked with members of the Association of Former Political Prisoners of the city of Córdoba (Asociación de Ex Presos Políticos, or AEPPC), who were imprisoned and brutally tortured during Argentina's Dirty War period (roughly 1974 to 1983). Park worked closely with this organization between 2006 and 2009; her book considers the individuals who survived their time in tortured captivity but who also deeply suffered long past the time of their imprisonment. *The Reappeared* features individuals who were imprisoned for political reasons during the 1970s and 1980s, and at the time of Park's interviews they spanned an age range from 53 to 75.

In 2007, the AEPPC became the first group of former political prisoners to be recognized as survivors of this period. Legal and political recognition gave them the right to participate as historical guides at former military detention

centers, now preserved as memorial spaces marking Argentina's dark history. It has taken approximately 30 years for these specific voices to be recognized because of the layers of complex debate in and across left- and right-wing ideological factions about how to interpret the events leading up to and encompassing the Dirty War, which until recently left little room for these actors. A central question still being asked in Argentina is how perpetrators and victims of human rights abuses are to be treated in transitional and post-transitional democratic contexts.

As Park explains well in *The Reappeared*, for some in the human rights community, the voices of former political prisoners may have been inconvenient to the larger battle of how to reconcile divergent understandings of the Dirty War, and for this reason they remained suppressed. One predominant early narrative supported by the human rights community depicted those who disappeared as innocent victims of the military regime. According to Park, the survivors who "reappeared" therefore posed a conceptual problem to this narrative because they preferred to be understood as activists not victims. The human rights community has had to evolve to a point whereby it could argue for a different conceptualization of human rights, one that could encompass individuals not conforming to the early narratives of the disappeared. In the Kirchner period, it seems that a visible

societal shift has taken place that has enabled these particular voices to emerge, to be respected, and to be accounted for more clearly within and beyond the history of the Dirty War. Their struggle and success at obtaining recognition and the ongoing current reconstitution of their lives is at the heart of Park's book.

Park's ethnography succeeds in explaining how different voices may emerge in the aftermath of large-scale human rights abuse cases and how the human rights community itself can unintentionally marginalize some voices in the process of pressing particular claims. The clearest argument—and a compelling one—coming both from the former political prisoners themselves as well as from Park's analysis is this: the Kirchner period (since 2003) has expanded the meaning of human rights and enabled the muted voices of ex-political prisoners to emerge in contemporary Argentina. Yet *The Reappeared* perhaps assumes too much knowledge on the part of the reader regarding Argentine Dirty War history and its attendant controversies. The book's weaknesses include overly simplifying and in places ignoring more complex debates that have taken place in Argentina on these themes. A more nuanced understanding of the Argentine public and scholarly debates, as well as reference to the broader literature on human rights, would have strengthened this timely ethnographic work. Yet without these complexities to tend to, the book moves quickly into the experiences of these individuals years after detention and torture, bringing us to

contemporary reflections on lives that exhibit a very deep and particular form of suffering.

The Kirchner presidencies (both of Néstor and Cristina, extending from 2003 to the present) have given opportunities for this emergence, advancing a broader human rights-oriented perspective, including recognition of the AEPPC as an official organization. Individuals belonging to AEPPC found themselves on the margins of (if not downright outcasts from) the human rights movement, in spite of being direct witnesses to the abuses of the Dirty War. Exhausted by levels of social and political exclusion even from the human rights community, these former political prisoners had their mere survival questioned as a form of complicity because the narrative of the disappeared did not account for those who returned from detention. Park's book describes this Argentine habitus well.

In the more recent political opening since 2003, AEPPC members who were once prisoners can now work in memorialized public spaces and share their stories with the general public, engaging with and producing distinctly nuanced narratives that include resistance. The recognition of their public marginalization and their more recent historical recovery in the changing context of human rights narratives in Argentina makes this book an important contribution to the post-Dirty War history and to the process of what has become known (beyond Argentina) as transitional justice.

Dying Unneeded: The Cultural Context of the Russian Mortality Crisis by Michelle A. Parsons.

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In *Dying Unneeded*, Michelle A. Parsons convincingly and lucidly illustrates the utility of ethnography to shed light on epidemiological puzzles. Through interviews and participant-observation with Muscovites about their experiences during the early to mid-1990s (the apex of Russia's mortality crisis), Parsons interrogates several such epidemiological enigmas. Some questions are broad: What are the underlying mechanisms that have transmitted the shocks of socialist collapse into increased morbidity and mortality? How do shifting political and economic structures translate into a mortality crisis? Other epidemiological puzzles are more specific: "Why are certain social connections associated with poorer health, while others are associated with better health? [In Russia], why is alcohol drinking often associated with better health?" (p. 8). In her book, Parsons demonstrates that

ethnographic perspectives are necessary for tracking and unraveling such connections between the political, economic, social, and mortal. The ethnography focuses especially on her respondents' social connections, including their narratives of "being needed." Parsons tracks the centrality of this sense of "being needed"—and becoming unneeded—and combines epidemiological and ethnographic data to argue that being unneeded (an experience most common for Russia's men) is in fact a distal driver of the mortality crisis in Russia.

Dying Unneeded is essentially divided into two parts. The first five chapters (a good two-thirds of the book) are ethnographic. Parsons queries her informants (Muscovites most at risk of dying—those between 55 and 70 years old in 2006 and 2007) about their experiences during and since the socialist collapse. Through well-written ethnographic descriptions and interview excerpts, Parsons explores key Russian cultural concepts: *dusha* (soul), *prostor* (space), *blat* (connections or "pull"), *poriadok* and *bezporiadok* (order and disorder or chaos) and the related *rozrukha* (collapse), *krutit'sia* ("spinning," meaning "to hustle"), and (*ne*)*nuzhny*