

Material Relations: The Marriage Figurines of Prehispanic Honduras. By Julia A. Hendon, Rosemary A. Joyce, and Jeanne Lopiparo. (Boulder: University Press of Colorado, 2014. xiv + 200 pp. Illustrations, maps, tables, bibliography, index. \$70.00 cloth.)

This richly illustrated and meticulously researched volume presents a compelling interpretation of the social networks linking settlements in western Honduras during the period AD 500 to 1000. The title conveys the focus of the authors' argument, which is to show how small, everyday objects such as the marriage figurines produced, used, distributed, and discarded can inform archaeologists about the social relations and alliances of individuals and groups. The thread that binds their analysis of social relations within and between settlements is their detailed descriptions of marriage (or double) figurines and their archaeological contexts from six sites—Copán, Tenampua, Campo Dos, Currusté, Travesía, and Cerro Palenque.

The theoretical underpinning of their research is the application of semiotics to archaeological material and their focus, not on culture history or political and economic aspects of prehispanic Honduras, but on the activities of individuals at the household level of analysis: constructing their houses, making artifacts, feasting, carrying out ceremonies, and burying their dead. They conceptualize households as "social houses" in which individuals related by kin, marriage, adoption, capture, or geographic proximity maintain an "estate," which is defined by both the practices its members engage in and its actual, material, physical construction (pp. 27-28).

The authors synthesize more than two decades of their own and others' research at these six sites, providing detailed descriptions of the figurines and their associated artifact and architectural contexts. The comparative tables, site maps, and photographs facilitate the reader's understanding of their argument. In addition, they make extensive use of museum collections from previous excavations and, when possible, try to reconstruct the context in which the artifacts were found. This provides a wide scope of comparative material for the authors to analyze the social meaning of these figurines, and makes a strong case for archaeologists to reassess the value of museum collections for contemporary interpretations. Relying on extensive excavations that allow a reconstruction of the household contexts in which these figurines are found at sites ranging from larger sites such as Copán and Tenampua to the small village of Dos Campos, the authors interpret the inter-social and intra-social alliances practiced by individuals at these sites. They demonstrate the complexity and variability of figurines and the social networks that connected the individuals that lived in these sites. Material relations translate into social relations, and, the authors argue, it is through the repeated practice of making, using, trading, and discarding materials such as the marriage figurines that social alliances are formed and perpetuated through time and space. Archaeology becomes social archaeology

in their analysis and social relations are created, maintained, and transformed through the manipulation of material objects.

After an introductory summary that traces the tradition of clay figurine making in Honduras, the authors dedicate separate chapters to each of the six sites included in their analysis, and each site's description builds on the previous one. Detailed descriptions of the figurine/s found at each site and their reconstructed archaeological contexts are used to infer scenarios of the daily and/or ritual activities carried out in a style of writing that brings the community to life and provides a human story. They instill a human aspect that is mostly missing in traditional archaeological research reports (see, for example, the description of the child burial at Copán that starts chapter 2).

Archaeologists and anthropologists interested in the analysis of small-scale contexts of the household and community, as well as those interested in gender studies, will benefit from this volume. As the authors' have asserted, the work should appeal to more than just specialists in Central American archaeology. As a Caribbean archaeologist, I find parallels in recent studies in the Circum-Caribbean area that are also going beyond the culture history chronological framework of previous work to address similar small scale contexts and that demonstrate the social and cultural variability of Caribbean indigenous societies.

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The Black Doctors of Colonial Lima: Science, Race, and Writing in Colonial and Early Republican Peru. By José R. Jouve Martín. (Montreal: McGill-Queen's University Press, 2014. xxvii + 209 pp. Illustrations, notes, bibliography, index. \$45.95 cloth, \$39.95 paper.)

José R. Jouve Martín presents very readable (sometimes somewhat repetitive) short monograph, nucleated around the activities, thoughts, and involvement of three main medical characters in Lima's varied and highly colored society: José Manuel Valdés (1767-1843), José Manuel Dávalos (1758-1821), and José Pastor de Larrinaga (1758-ca. 1821). By the beginning of the 1790s, there were 56 surgeons in the city of Lima, most of them mulattoes, following an established tradition of over 250 years in which medicine and medical treatments had almost exclusively been in the hands of a hierarchical order of mulatto doctors (*barchilones*, *jeringuero*, *untador*, first/second nurse, etc.). The main reason for this predominance, as explained by Jouve Martín, was Lima's demographic evolution over time; up until the end of the eighteenth century, the black population and their descendants accounted for around half of Lima's inhabitants, mainly working as artisans,