Return to Ixil: Maya Society in an Eighteenth-Century Yucatec Town. Mark Christensen and Matthew Restall. Louisville: University Press of Colorado, 2019, 319 pp. $76.00, cloth. ISBN 978-1-60732-921-3.

Return to Ixil is the story of a place and its archive. The place is Ixil, a small town northeast of Yucatan's capital, Merida; the archive is no physical site, but rather an extraordinary group of more than one hundred Maya language testaments authored by town residents in the mid-eighteenth century. The documents—once presumably bound into a larger colonial-era tome—were found in two different repositories in Merida by Mark Christensen and Matthew Restall. Whereas both scholars drew upon sections of this documentation in their previous historical work on the colonial-era Maya, here they join forces. The fruit of their collaboration, *Return to Ixil* provides a transcription and translation of the entire testamentary corpus, an analytical treatise on working with testaments, and an ethnohistory of late colonial Ixil. As such, this work will be an invaluable resource both for advanced undergraduate and graduate students of colonial period Maya history and for specialists in the field.

The testaments constitute roughly half of this monograph and are presented in an appendix in the original Maya and English translation. As wills they are formulaic, beginning with the name of a dying man or woman, who invokes God and the Holy Spirit and perhaps requests Masses and alms in his or her name, before listing out possessions and the family members who are to receive them. Signatures of a notary, a "*batab*" (native town leader), and *regidors*, or councilmen, are affixed. But though generic in form, the testaments brim with particulars. There are the possessions: a spoon, a wooden chair, trousers, a shotgun, a house plot or fruit tree, a stretch of forest land, a beehive or two (or, in the case of Joseph Yam, eighty-five of them). Inheritors are specified by name and relationship to the decedent. Sometimes a child born out of wedlock might be included, while at others even the closest of ties might be disowned (Marta Mis, disinheriting her daughter: "she has no shame, that one," p. 277).

In five thematic chapters, Restall and Christensen closely analyze the testaments. In some ways the documents from Ixil confirm earlier conclusions from the work of both scholars—perhaps most notably, findings about the survival of preconquest lineage groups, or *chibalob*, and their predominance in governance of the colonial-era *cah* (community), through occupation of town-level offices as councilmen and *batabob*. In others, though, this analysis of the testaments, alongside other colonial-era documents, provides new insights. One chapter focuses on the notaries who authored the testaments, carefully analyzing their stylistic choices, emphasizing their role in the material and spiritual lives of Ixil residents, and demonstrating how the position was closely held by descendants of precontact Maya elites, and instrumental to their control over local governance. Another explores the important role of Ixil in coastal defenses of the peninsula against piracy, finding a predominant role of powerful lineage groups in exercising their

position in *cah* governance, via militia service. A chapter on the economy of Ixil considers substantial wealth differences between individuals and families and observes that as much as half of Ixil's population claimed noble descent—a finding that challenges our assumptions about nobility as the province of few. A consideration of religion highlights how the testaments demonstrate both the Maya investment in the Christian process of "dying well," and also how Maya cosmological elements—such as the concept of *pixan*, roughly equivalent to the soul—continued to be expressed within an overall Christian framework. In a final chapter on family life, Restall and Christensen consider gendered inheritance patterns, marriage practices, and lineage group endogamy. Here, as throughout their analysis, the authors stress that "what stands out as the focal point and what ties everything together is the family unit . . . where the roots and bonds of chibal and cah intersected" (pp. 134–35).

Although theirs is not a work of ethnography, in every chapter Christensen and Restall return to present-day Ixil, with vignettes highlighting enduring traces of the past—surnames of the dominant families, the central place of the church in daily life, pride in colonial-era fortifications as local heritage—even as they signal how life in Ixil today is profoundly different from life in eighteenth-century Ixil. More than a literary device, this tacking between past and present recognizes Ixil as a place and people in movement, with a history that stretches long before and long after the testaments were penned. It demonstrates a recognition that however rich the testaments may be as source material, they still provide but a glimpse of Ixil.

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Exotic No More: Anthropology of the Contemporary World, second edition. Jeremy MacClancy, ed. Chicago: University of Chicago Press, 2019, 408 pp. $76.00, paper. ISBN 9780226636023.

The stated object of this collection, edited and introduced by Jeremy MacClancy, is to disband the notion of anthropology's focus on the exotic and to reclaim its public value as a discipline bent on addressing the complexity of human experience, which is wide and varied, as are the interpretations we impose on it. This is abundantly reflected in the contributions MacClancy has gathered, which cover current analyses of major topics in anthropology—from race to ethnicity, gender, religion, ideology, migration, economics, environment, and the invention of tradition—as well as hot topics in current events—from narcotics to human rights, terrorism, the media, and the Internet.