

and homosexuals. From the influence of psychology and social justice, pastoral counselling emerged as an important method of healing. She concludes her research with her ethnographic research among liberal Protestants in Ontario and their use of supernaturalism and syncretic healing methods drawn from non-Western backgrounds, including yoga, reiki, and Indigenous practices.

In this superbly researched text, Klassen makes invaluable ethnographic and theoretical contributions to the anthropology of religion, studies of Christianity and healing, the anthropology of the body, and the intersection of modernity, secularism, and religion. However, this book can be quite dense and is ideally suited to specialists rather than generalists. Moreover, while I appreciated her comments on the critical reflection and regret of liberal Protestants involvement with colonialism, it seems that she focuses more on their complicity and regret rather than on their active engagement. On this important point, I was left curious about the role of liberal Protestants in the establishment and governance of residential schools.

Paerregaard, Karsten, *Return to Sender: The Moral Economy of Peru's Migrant Remittances*, Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2015, 336 pages.

*Reviewer: Patricia Jean Hammer
Center for Social Well Being, Carhuaz, Ancash, Peru*

Karsten Paerregaard brings to publication a well-researched, comprehensive study of what he refers to as the “social life” of migrant remittances sent back to relatives in home countries. Impressive is his extensive review of the literature of current discourses and debates that take issue with the subject from differing standpoints of economists, sociologists, policy-makers, and anthropologists. He clearly illustrates that contrasting analyses and conclusions are due to distinct disciplinary methods of both data collection and interpretation. In part, Paerregaard's objective is to respond to the heavy bias of policy-makers who are convinced that remittances are a “remedy for creating economic growth” and presume unquestioned positive influence on the home country in terms of development. In contrast, a negative picture comes into view in both economy and sociology studies that underline how the out-migration of workers drains labour and how the increase of funds in the home country can lead to government inefficiency, dependence, and dangerously opens doors for corruption.

In his multi-sited ethnography that traces the social life of a wide range of remittance sending circumstances, a wide variety of examples are examined – from Quechua-speaking sheep herders who migrate to the pasturelands of the western United States to successful immigrant politicians in New England. Paerregaard follows the full life cycle of particular cases in families and does an excellent job of bringing to the forefront, what he calls, “true motives” that give life to remittances. As he explains, guaranteeing the well-being of family and relatives is the pure underlying motive, and earning, saving, and “gifting” money is simply a means toward gaining greater moral objective, which leads to the subtitle of his book, “The Moral Economy of Peru's Migrant Remittances.”

This careful, in-depth study relies on ethnographic inquiry carried out from 1997 to 2011 at a number of major sites where Peruvians have migrated, with a focus on the importance and impact of remittances on family relations. This point of departure provides historical analysis of the term and practice of remitting. It emphasises the significance of anthropological methods, which differ from economic and sociological approaches, solely concerned with statistics and the effect of remittances to reduce poverty on a national scale.

The strength of Paerregaard's very original study is his framework of the life course of remittances from birth to death. He offers a clear look at how families and society attribute moral and political value to remittances and moves on to focus on the “new family roles” that emerge when a member migrates and the consequent effects on relationships and responsibilities. His analysis takes the debate far beyond the optimistic versus pessimistic stances of current discourse, by bringing to light the implications of gender, class, and identity on the movement of people and funds, which he refers to as the “social anatomy” of remittances.

Three novel analytic approaches are applied to understand remittances that comprise, first, phenomenology, which explores the social biography of remittance behaviour; second, a process approach that pursues the life trajectory to explain how such transactions are born and flow through family networks; and, finally, a structural perspective that examines the socio-economic framework in place and asks “what is the moral economy of remittances?”

Three categories of commitments are identified by migrants to describe their personal goals. The first is a *compromise*, which is an individual promise or pledge to family members to send money; the second is a *voluntad*, which refers to free will or social volition, such as unrequested donations to community, church, or family causes; and the third is the concept of *superación*, which illustrates a kind of self-commitment toward success by overcoming class and economic barriers.

In conclusion, Paerregaard's study shows us that contemporary remittances emerge from a long history of exchange relations in a complex weave of economic, moral, and emotional motives, influences, and impacts. His message to policy-makers is that to calculate remittances as a contribution to home country development is a definite error, and, in fact, remittances lead to existing economic inequalities rather than ameliorating them. He bluntly advises: “Peru is far better off pursuing development strategies other than encouraging its population to migrate and remit” (207). His point is well taken at this particular moment, with presidential elections on the rise and the overall population's revulsion of the repeated menu of corrupt candidates, with no coherent plan to improve social conditions. Youth and working-class voters are demanding fair opportunities and a transformation of Peruvian society toward inclusion, accountability, and justice here at home. Migration experiences, narratives, letters, and stories told may have suggested that better social conditions are potentially possible in Peru, and Paerregaard's study certainly lays the groundwork for further investigation on cultural aspects of the international movement of people throughout the globe.