

had legal power and their testimony had influence in the court cases related to infanticides, rapes, adultery, premarital pregnancies and in defining gender. They also had an important religious obligation: in cases of emergency, the midwife could baptize the child if no priest was available and the child's life was in danger. However, to me this speaks more to the meaning of the baptism to the Lutheran Church than to the significance of midwives. After all, they were present at births and in many cases they were the only persons to offer the sacrament of baptism, which was considered as indispensable for salvation.

Vainio-Korhonen is mainly interested in midwives working in towns. I would have liked to, as a contrast to this, read more about childbirth in the countryside, where traditional, untrained midwives, so called *bona fides*, had a greater role in labours. All in all, Vainio-Korhonen sees the position of midwives in a very positive light. She emphasises their professional skills, medical knowledge, education and status in eighteenth-century society. On the other hand, Vainio-Korhonen pays very little attention to social pressure and the hierarchies defining the limits and communication between people. It is true that professional midwives were educated women and that they were also expected to be able to read and write fluently: some of them – albeit only a few – even wrote their own guidebooks and textbooks on midwifery. When reading Vainio-Korhonen I draw the conclusion that the gender issue – the position of women in relation to the authority of the male profession and medical knowledge – was more apparent later, than it was in Sweden in the age of Enlightenment. In nineteenth-century Britain, which I am more acquainted with, during the Victorian era, British midwives were constantly called “ignorant” by the medical profession, mainly consisted of university-trained male doctors. As one English midwife, Mrs Baker, stated in her 1857 guidebook: “it is much to be regret-

ted that the talent of women is neither cultivated nor appreciated by many, though the necessity for co-operation must be apparent to everybody.” In light of Vainio-Korhonen's book, this was not the case in eighteenth-century Sweden and Finland.

*De frimodiga* reminds us that not only men have represented the public and socially active sphere in the past, while women were relegated to domesticity with the children and servants. Although I would have welcomed a slightly more critical approach and especially a wider medical and social background, I was fascinated by the wealth of detail and a new perspective on the lives of women in eighteenth-century Finland. After all, as Vainio-Korhonen writes in her book: “the authority of the midwives was not inherited from their deceased husbands, but rather it was achieved by their own education. They advertised their services and worked outside their homes, exposed to the public eye, in a profession that was regulated by law” (s. 184).

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Han F. Vermeulen, *Before Boas: The Genesis of Ethnography and Ethnology in the German Enlightenment*, Critical Studies in the History of Anthropology (Lincoln/London, NE: University of Nebraska Press, 2015). xxiii + 718 pp.

In this monograph, Han Vermeulen, an associate of the Max Planck Institute for Social Anthropology in Halle, traces the prelude to the formation of modern anthropology through Franz Boas (1858–1942). Both thematically and methodologically, *Before Boas* follows up on the author's research over the last thirty years (cf. 676–678). This shows at first sight. The list of references amounts

to 173 pages, turning this work into a valuable starting point also for bibliographical search on related topics.

The first of eight chapters provides an overview of the conceptual history of anthropology and ethnology. The author recounts how the meaning as well as the overall standing of these concepts within the scholarly community evolved over time. He clarifies the complicated interrelations of these terms within several national traditions and presents the main research literature on the topic.

The following five chapters are intellectual biographies of spearhead figures, each exemplifying developments in the history of anthropology. Chapter two sheds light on Gottfried Wilhelm Leibniz (1646–1716) as an advocate of historical linguistics, by tracing his interest in Russia. The author emphasizes Leibniz's role in redirecting scholarly interest in different peoples away from morals and customs towards their languages. He describes him as a key figure crucial for the establishment of Göttingen as a centre of the Late Enlightenment. While Leibniz is mostly known for his contributions to mathematics and philosophy, Vermeulen underscores his impact both as a theoretician of linguistics and as an adviser to Tsar Peter the Great.

The third chapter covers “the first scientific explorer of Siberia” (88), Daniel Gottlieb Messerschmidt (1685–1735), whose findings were disseminated through the classic book on *Das Nord- und Ostliche Theil von Europa und Asia* by the German-speaking Swede Philip Johann von Strahlenberg (1676–1747) in 1730. En passant, Vermeulen treats the Russian conquest of Siberia, Halle as a hub of Early Enlightenment and Pietism, the Swedish Pietist school in Tobolsk, and several other influences on Messerschmidt's exploration of Siberia.

The protagonist of chapter four, Gerhard Friedrich Müller (1705–1783), is generally regarded to be the founder of ethnography, and thereby of “one of anthropology's earliest

and most enduring incarnations”, as Vermeulen puts it (132). Müller's accomplishments, including his participation in the Second Kamchatka Expedition and his role in the formation of the Saint Petersburg Academy of Sciences, receive ample treatment.

Chapter five introduces Carsten Niebuhr (1733–1815), the sole survivor of the Danish-sponsored “Arabia Felix” expedition (1761–1767). Both preparations and execution, results and reception of the expedition are described in detail. The chapter closes with an insightful discussion of Niebuhr's idea of ethnography and of the emergent discipline's relationship with imperialism.

August Ludwig Schlözer (1735–1809) is depicted as the inventor of ethnology in chapter six. In order to recount the term's history, the author elaborates on definitions by Johann Christoph Gatterer (1727–1799), Alexandre César Chavannes (1731–1800), Adam František Kollár (1718–1783), and Johann Gottfried Herder (1744–1803). Listing early examples of ethnological journals, he integrates different understandings of ethnology in an overview of the academic world up to the Congress of Vienna in 1815.

Vermeulen outlines how interconnected the various research networks in the field were throughout the eighteenth century and well into the nineteenth (348). While the prominent terms up to this point are “ethnos”-terms (cf. 354–355), in chapter seven a concise survey of anthropology, or more specifically, “Anthropology in the German Enlightenment” is attempted. The author stays consistent with his overall approach and elaborates on the conceptual prehistory of anthropology, tracing its roots back to the seventeenth century. The objective of this chapter is threefold: first, to demonstrate that there existed far more definitions of anthropology than of ethnography or ethnology, second, to explain that ethnological studies were much more systematically conducted than anthropological ones, and third,

to establish the terminological framework needed for a conclusion.

Although chapter seven interrupts the array of intellectual biographies, Vermeulen's arrangement is sensible. This becomes clear when looking into chapter eight, an epilogue discussing the "Reception of the German Ethnographic Tradition". Through a string of concise introductions to several national anthropologies, all strongly influenced by the aforementioned tradition, the reader encounters amongst others the eponymous "German who professionalized American anthropology", Franz Boas (433). A trimmed and succinct conclusion summarizes this thorough and well-structured study.

In short, Han Vermeulen identifies crucial early modern developments and characters that helped prepare the ground for the formation of modern anthropology. By introducing Boas' forerunners through intellectual biographies, he puts in order the complicated terminology of several (e)merging disciplines. Precisely presenting the interconnectedness of research networks in the German Enlightenment, *Before Boas* is not only a multifaceted contribution to the study of the history of science, it is just as much an anthropological portrait of the Enlightenment scholar.

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