

the development of stratification as marked by the appearance of very large houses. Also addressing social complexity, Colin Grier, using data from the Dionisio Point site, argues increased complexity during the Gulf of Georgia's Marpole phase resulted from intensifying regional interaction. Gregory Monks examines the taphonomy of whale bone assemblages with data from Ozette and Toquaht. Although hampered by small sample sizes he establishes that while whale bones were used in myriad ways, the prestige economy was probably the most important factor affecting the butchering and use of whales.

Precontact metallurgy on the Coast is an old nagging issue. In his chapter, Acheson assesses current evidence, demonstrating metal working was widespread and ancient. In addition to copper use, which is quite ancient, there good evidence in late precontact context for iron working. Bernick uses a single, apparently unique basket to explore material culture variability and the use of basketry as an ethnic marker. Explicitly drawing on Donald Mitchell's work, Alan McMillan reviews Mitchell's hypothesis that migrations by Wakashan speakers caused abrupt technological changes in Johnstone Strait around 2000 B.P. Integrating linguistic and archaeological evidence including his data from Barkley Sound, McMillan concludes there may indeed have been population shifts around 2000 B.P.

In a methodologically intriguing paper, Mackie uses a spatial interaction model to explore relationships among site size and site distribution on the southern two-thirds of Vancouver Island's west coast. He concludes site distributions cannot be explained using what he terms "straight-forward decision making terms." Rather, he argues, correctly I think, the social landscape shapes subsequent site distributions even as they evolve. I suspect his results also display multiple scalar effects; i.e. there are large regional scale as well as sub-regional and very local site distributions merged in his data.

In the final paper, Donald contributes to the long, ongoing discussion of what, exactly, is the Northwest Coast culturally and environmentally? What are its boundaries? What features define the culture area? How do we cope with variation? One method, of course, is defining subregions although recent work shows as much variation within subregions as between them. This paper is an important contribution to this issue. In the epilogue, Donald briefly discusses what he views as the volume's themes and their relationships to the broader issues in his chapter. He identifies five such themes: boundaries, whaling, stratification and big houses, social and economic interaction spheres, new kinds of data and new kinds of analyses.

Emerging from the Mist is a valuable contribution to Northwest Coast archaeology. Its value lies in the individual paper's overall quality and their subject matter, although some are stronger than others. However, it does not fully succeed as an assessment of Northwest Coast archaeology. Many topics are absent, most notably research on the Late Pleistocene/Early Holocene. This is a consequence of the book's origins as a set of papers reflecting Don Mitchell's research interests. Additionally, and despite the editors' and Leland Donald's best efforts, the book is not tied together by its themes; it has too many of them. Finally, the book has an inward looking quality; the authors talking to other Northwest Coast specialists more than to the broader disciplinary audience the editors hope to reach. However, the

book does succeed in the way an exceptional journal issue does; the papers are all useful and timely, some are quite important; it materially moves the field along, and there is the promise of many more such issues to come.

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The Bone Woman

A Forensic Anthropologist's Search for Truth in Rwanda, Bosnia, Croatia, and Kosovo.

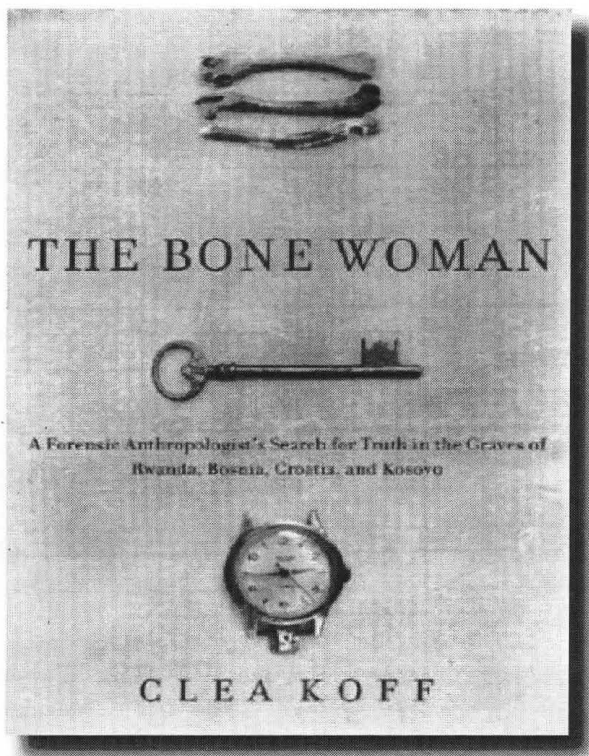
Knopf, Toronto, 2004. x + 271 pp., illus. ISBN Hardback 1400060648; Paperback 0812968859 (February 2005).

Since the Nuremberg trials in the 40s, and particularly in the last two decades, the increasing willingness of governments to prosecute war criminals has led to the rise of a new discipline within the field of archaeology. This new discipline, dubbed forensic anthropology, is an application of archaeological and physical anthropological techniques to the remains of the recently dead. The primary goal is to provide prosecutors at war crimes tribunals with evidence about the age, sex, identity, and cause of death of suspected genocide victims.

Clea Koff's *The Bone Woman* is a dynamic narrative of post-genocide forensic anthropology in Rwanda and the Balkans. The bone woman herself—author and nominal subject of this work—is a forensic anthropologist trained at Stanford and the University of Arizona. At the age of 23, she left for Rwanda to help exhume five-hundred victims of the 1994 genocide, a journey that is the first of the five missions described in this book.

Koff's work is an attempt to transcend the oft-glamorized labour of forensics by focusing on the stories that emerge from the evidence. Going beyond the archaeological details of exhumation and taphonomy, she describes her emotionally-demanding journey through the thickets of the post-conflict landscape; she becomes intimately acquainted with the fates of genocide victims, the struggles of their survivors, and the bureaucracies responsible for reorganizing this painful geography. *The Bone Woman* is equally an account of Koff's private motivations and her professional experience. As such, it is the subjective experience of the author that drives this "search for truth," and is as much a personal journey of self knowledge as it is a query after the victims of 1990s genocides. *The Bone Woman* is the memoir of a passionate professional, not a textbook in post-conflict forensics.

For the non-specialist, Koff's story provides a direct and detailed account of the process and practice of large-scale, judicially-mandated forensic anthropology. Many pages are



spent detailing the various archaeological tasks involved in the exhumation of mass graves, describing in suspenseful detail the exact steps taken to find, recover, and analyze the large number of corpses encountered on her investigations. Readers become acquainted with the range of techniques for finding a grave, delineating its boundaries, removing its contents, preserving and protecting the gravesite, and analyzing the bodies for age, sex, dentition, and cause of death. Writing for a wide audience, Koff keeps jargon to a minimum. When the occasional technical term is included, Koff includes full, if somewhat pedantic, explanations.

Aside from the direct practice of forensic anthropology, Koff provides a participant's view into the vast, and often confounding, array of authority, hierarchy and bureaucracy that both cripple and enable the work of those seeking answers from the victims' bones. Koff gives humorous, frustrated, and occasionally bitter insight into the bureaucracy of United Nations, Nato, and other regulatory bodies. In her view, many are the hassles and hold-ups of doing forensic work in post-war territory under constant military escort and supervision. And equally prolific are the frictions that exist between the overworked—and frequently intense—individuals responsible for ground-level archaeological work. The tensions that arise from ill-equipped quarters, long days, and inevitable differences in personality and technique among diverse personnel provide a continuous and evolving subtext to the overall narrative. Although this subtext occasionally slips into the realm of soap opera, it does so infrequently enough so as to be interesting rather than irritating.

Critique aside, it is these inclusions that make *The Bone Woman* a personal memoir. Clea Koff doesn't shrink from view to simply play raconteur, but as the book's title suggests, places her own consciousness as the primary narrative element. As

such, this is not merely a book about forensic anthropology, but a text documenting Koff's spiritual and corporeal journey undertaken as part of various post-genocide investigations. She explains the cognitive dualism inherent in forensics: the need for scientific detachment to successfully exhume and analyze the grave of five-hundred civilians; and the concomitant instinct to be a human being, and relate to the bodies as those of fellow humans—forced to imagine their last moments due to the very scientific skills that create and require such detachment.

While the dead tell their stories, in Koff's eyes, it is not just the dead, but also the living, for whom she is working. It is the victims' relatives who often watch over her as she works, and who can at first be strangely ambivalent—or even anathema—to the goals of the investigation. As she continually stresses, this work is an account of her application of forensic anthropology as a tool of truth and justice. While her motivations for the work are admittedly partly intellectual—something that comes across in her descriptions of taphonomic analysis—they are also based on deep moral conviction, and a desire to bring solace to the bereaved and justice to the perpetrators.

As a whole, *The Bone Woman* is detailed and very personal—something that will provide a poignant connection for some, while being gratingly self-absorbed for others. Whatever may be said, this text is certainly honest and straightforward. It is narrative-driven, opinion-laden, and theory-free: a recommended read for anyone interested in a trowel-on-bone account of the character and characters of international forensic anthropology.

D'Arcy Nichol

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