

technologies to make appeals for donations, which are affectively driven?

Schwittay's ability to be a true participant-observer demanded of her the ability to understand MFIs from the inside as well as observe the interaction of donors with clients from the outside. Her methods of observation and questioning in both settings allowed her to go beneath the surface of operations to get at the core principles of how MFIs work with donors and clients and how affect motivates donors to give more. I found the chapter on the OI insight trip particularly instructive for the following reasons: the organization's lack of transparency, the failure to orient donors to the culture of clients, "scripted" presentations by local and international staff, prevention of questions on challenges clients face, language and translation concerns, and the overall lack of cultural sensitivity of donors (especially "strange" men [donors]

hugging women [clients]—a no-no in most cultures). For me, the upshot of this chapter was that affect went just so deep—as did the superficial level of information donors require. A deeper knowledge of clients' circumstances was not necessarily needed.

Schwittay has clearly understood how both a more traditional MFI and a newer, media-based MFI maintain donor affect and work to help solve the problems of poverty. Both OI and KIVA focus on finance, while many of the implementing partners through which KIVA distributes loans provide training in business development, literacy, numeracy, and the like. It is this extrafinancial focus on poverty alleviation that is so sadly missing in both "minimalist" operations because to provide such services would increase interest rates—a characteristic of MFIs that is problematic everywhere.

The Chimera Principle: An Anthropology of Memory and Imagination by Carlo Severi.

Janet Lloyd, trans. Chicago: HAU, 2015. 375 pp.

DOI: 10.1111/aman.12795

Katja Hrobat Virloget
University of Primorska

Carlo Severi's *The Chimera Principle* is an essential work of anthropological literature for the study of so-called "oral" societies but also for researchers interested in the transmission of memory, belief, oral tradition, and so on.

In the introduction, Severi warns of the pitfalls of analyzing "the Other" from a simplistic ethnocentric perspective according to which unknown cultures are defined as what they are not (compared to "Us"). An object, classified as a music instrument in a Western museum (a Zande harp), within the original culture bears a fundamentally different meaning, connected to a ritual voice. A big mistake was made by defining societies as "without writing," reducing them in this way to a negative image of "ourselves." By stressing the dependency of their memory only on the arbitrary will of individuals, researchers overlooked an essential mnemonic technique—the one founded on the relationship between images and words, connected to a ritual discourse. In reality, these societies frequently rely on iconographic tradition, which is the central topic of Severi's research.

Severi finds his precedent in Aby Warbourg, who, in his biology of images, elaborated the idea of transmission of cultural symbols through image. Severi's book presents an analysis of case studies of the relation between words, images, and memory, which was studied only randomly. In

the Oceanic tradition of a cord with knots, representing a visualization of the Iatmul cosmology (with its thousands of names of anthroponymic and toponymic nature) and in the ritual clasps or masks representing ancestors, Severi discerns two basic techniques of memorization: order and salience. The former is based on regularly ordered visual sequences that enable the interpretation and evocation of memory; the latter lies in what Severi calls "chimera"—a ritualized image composed of heterogeneous parts, of which the visible part implies hidden meanings. It is this kind of object, which differs from everyday perception, that holds the power to be memorized.

Order and salience present basic principles of what Severi calls the "art of memory" of the Amerindian pictographs. Pictography was for a long time interpreted erroneously as something that it is not—as either arbitrary drawings or a failed attempt at phonetic writing. Contrary to the general perception of it as an unstable semiotic medium, dependent on arbitrary will and incomprehensible to others, Severi shows that it is a conventional, sequential, and widely spread system transcending the limits of languages. Its evolution went in parallel with the evolution of the oral tradition, the one uttered in the ritualized context: from rock art to a biographical song of a warrior to a more complex iconographic tradition of the ritual shamanistic utterance. The constitutive element of this mnemonic codification lies in its parallelist structure. In these ordered sequences of ritual songs made of constant repetitions, the pictography translates into images only the variations of the basic formula, the saliences of which activate the memory.

Parallelism is not only a way of mnemonic codification but also a technique for orienting the evocation and imagination through the construction of salient figures—chimeras, presented as creatures from the invisible part of the world. The third function of parallelism is to define the locutor of the ritualized text as a chimera. A parallel world is constructed through ritual speech and the transformation of the shaman into a complex and paradoxical image, one who is composed of contradictory identities (one here, other or others in the parallel world). Severi defines the locutor as an “I–memory.” The locutor of a ritual recitation has to be differentiated from the one of a narration, as these two forms of transmission of memory also have to be distinguished. Because he is capable of assuming plural, contradicting, but temporary identities—creating in this way a tension with the everyday perception—the shaman evokes at the same time doubt and acceptance. Something impossible not to believe is created, similar to what Severi finds in Carlo Ginzburg’s (1983[1966]) analysis of European witchcraft. As Severi states, doubt is the essence of any belief. He ascribes the effectiveness of the shamanistic therapy to the process of the patient’s projection in reaction to the incomprehensible parts of the uttered traditional song—it lies in the interplay between

the shaman’s only vaguely comprehended sounds and the patient’s own experiences of pain. Due to condensing of different contradictory aspects, the ritual communication is never totally comprehensive, but it consequently engenders imagination, believing, and mnemonic evocation.

Severi concludes with a reflection on uncertainty in the context of cultural conflict. Memories of it gave rise to the Apache Christ and the Christian Lady Sebastiana (death) as new ritual chimeras presenting cultural hybrids and paradoxes. At the same time, they embody and confront the enemy, present continuity, break with tradition, and engender new forms of beliefs.

Due to his groundbreaking reflections on the old anthropological concepts, *The Chimera Principle* has all the values of the monumental anthropological synthetic works worth reading and “thinking with.”

REFERENCE CITED

Ginzburg, Carlo

1983[1966] *The Night Battles: Witchcraft and Agrarian Cults in the Sixteenth and Seventeenth Centuries*. Anne and John Tedeschi, trans. Baltimore: Johns Hopkins University Press.

Advertising Diversity: Ad Agencies and the Creation of Asian American Consumers by Shalini Shankar.

Durham: Duke University Press, 2015. 328 pp.

DOI: 10.1111/aman.12747

Cindy Isenhour

University of Maine

In a time of mass minority incarceration, racial profiling, and public xenophobia, we are reminded that discussions about the various means by which diversity, race, and ethnicity are constructed are already, and increasingly, important. While Shalini Shankar’s new book *Advertising Diversity* does not engage with racism’s most violent forms, so prevalent today, it makes an equally important contribution by improving our understanding of the subtle techniques through which difference is depoliticized and reproduced through racial and ethnic representation.

Drawing on four years of engagement with eight advertising agencies and more than 200 industry professionals, Shankar illustrates how claims of inclusion and colorblindness contrast with the proliferation of agencies that specialize in emphasizing difference and marketing to minority populations. Echoing Jane Hill’s (2008) *Everyday Language of White Racism* and Eduardo Bonilla-Silva’s (2009) *Racism without*

Racists, Shankar illustrates how, without intent or malice, the focus on diversity acts as “shorthand for inclusion” while simultaneously diverting attention away from the inequalities or prejudices that underpin so many of our differences (p. 19).

In an industry in which whiteness has long been the norm, multicultural advertising is actively emphasizing the significance of race in the name of profitability. Shankar is particularly interested in how advertisers engage in biopolitics, drawing on increasingly fine-grained census data to naturalize racial differences and transform Asian Americans from “model minorities to model consumers” (p. 23). As an economic anthropologist critical of the inequalities the capitalist system perpetuates, I appreciated Shankar’s attention to the circuits of capital that give ethnoracial difference market value. In this assemblage of discursive and material forms, multicultural advertising agencies recognize that their ability to represent diversity and perform as ethnic and linguistic experts is essentially about opening new markets. This “intercultural affect,” Shankar argues, illustrates how race is negotiated in consumer capitalism.