



A Review of ALEX BLANCHETTE, *PORKOPOLIS: AMERICAN ANIMALITY, STANDARDIZED LIFE, AND THE FACTORY FARM.*
Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2020, 320 pp.

Stepan Petryakov

European University at St Petersburg
6/1A Gagarinskaya Str., St Petersburg, Russia
spetryakov@eu.spb.ru

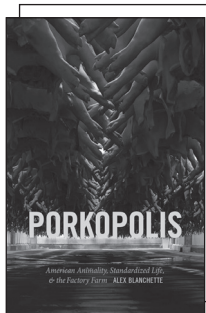
Abstract: The book is devoted to a large-scale experiment in the industrialisation of the pork industry in the supposedly post-industrial USA. The author demonstrates how thanks to new forms of labour and sociality at the very heart of the Global North, corporations are engaged in creating and maintaining the life of a standardised factory-produced pig, out of which over a thousand kinds of goods can be produced. “Porkopolis” introduces the reader to the workplaces of the factory farm, which changes the everyday life of the workers, disrupts the hierarchy of species, and opens the possibility for humans to reinterpret their common life with each other. The rich ethnography, equally sensitive to the phenomenology and the political economy of labour, calls into question some propositions of contemporary Euro-American common sense. Industrialisation as a key aspect of the capitalist mode of production still plays a fundamental role in agriculture, and it is impossible to change the basis of industrial food production by means of the transformation of individual practices of consumption.

Key words: capitalism, labour, animal studies, food, industrialisation, USA.

To cite: Petryakov S., ‘A Review of Alex Blanchette, *Porkopolis: American Animality, Standardized Life, and the Factory Farm.* Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2020, 320 pp.’, *Forum for Anthropology and Culture*, 2025, no. 21, pp. 235–245.

doi: 10.31250/1815-8870-2025-21-21-235-245

URL: <http://anthropologie.kunstkamera.ru/files/pdf/eng021/petryakov.pdf>



A Review of **Alex Blanchette**, *Porkopolis: American Animality, Standardized Life, and the Factory Farm*, Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2020, 320 pp.

The book is devoted to a large-scale experiment in the industrialisation of the pork industry in the supposedly post-industrial USA. The author demonstrates how thanks to new forms of labour and sociality at the very heart of the Global North, corporations are engaged in creating and maintaining the life of a standardised factory-produced pig, out of which over a thousand kinds of goods can be produced. “Porkopolis” introduces the reader to the workplaces of the factory farm, which changes the everyday life of the workers, disrupts the hierarchy of species, and opens the possibility for humans to reinterpret their common life with each other. The rich ethnography, equally sensitive to the phenomenology and the political economy of labour, calls into question some propositions of contemporary Euro-American common sense. Industrialisation as a key aspect of the capitalist mode of production still plays a fundamental role in agriculture, and it is impossible to change the basis of industrial food production by means of the transformation of individual practices of consumption.

Keywords: capitalism, labour, animal studies, food, industrialisation, USA.

What is the production seamy side of the pork on the supermarket shelves? What are the animal and the (post-)human labour that are loaded into the context of making a profit? What is “industrial” about modern pork production? These are the questions asked by Alex Blanchette, an anthropologist at Tufts University, in his book *Porkopolis: American Animality, Standardized Life, and the Factory Farm*, which came out in 2020 and has already been awarded the prestigious Victor Turner and Gregory Bateson prizes.

Blanchette’s research interests cover industrial labour and the political economy of the environment. *Porkopolis* was written on the basis of materials from twenty-four months of fieldwork in rural industrial zones in the American Midwest. Over seven million pigs are slaughtered there every year. At the beginning of the 1990s, several corporations “entered” the region to bring about the “vertical integration” of the pig-breeding sector.¹ Thanks to seasonal workers,

Stepan Petryakov

European University
at St Petersburg,
6/1A Gagarinskaya Str. /
SI RAS — FCTAS RAS,
7-th Krasnoarmeyskaya Str.,
St Petersburg, Russia
spetryakov@eu.spb.ru

¹ Vertical integration is the concept of uniting all the stages of production into a single controlled process, which began in the industrial projects of the 1920s. This idea is now being restored by modern agribusiness.

tax breaks and new technologies, the corporations have managed to bring together into a single production cycle genetics laboratories, pig farms, compound feed factories, slaughterhouses and firms processing offal and the by-products of pig-breeding (bones, brains, hides and excrement). However, we are faced not simply by another story of the construction of a supply chain with the aim of minimising expense. Aiming to bring to life the Utopia of the Fordist age, the pig business vertical integration project also presupposed the creation of a new animal — an extremely fertile standardised pig. The control of its life and death is, firstly, absolute, and, secondly, achieved by new forms of labour and sociality.

The theoretical toolkit of *Porkopolis* is as rich as the analysis of the relations between labour and capital in the twenty-first century requires. Blanchette uses the ethnography of the pork business to study the wider context of industrial production in the USA and the projects for standardising labour and life that accompany it. In other words, pigs are just the starting point for a study of the class, gender and inter-species relationships that come about in the course of the industrialisation of agriculture. The reader should therefore not be put off by the diversity of the analytical apparatus laid out by the author: the book combines a Marxist analysis of Fordist production [Gramsci 1971; Braverman 1974] with feminist research into labour [Federici 1975; Rubin 1975; Weeks 2011], a critique of the epistemic habits of anthropocentrism [Haraway 2008; Raffles 2010; Kohn 2013] and a focus on the relationship between “a more than human sociality” and the accumulation of capital [Moore 2015; Tsing 2015]. We are presented with an ambitious attempt to reinterpret labour beyond humanity. These theoretical constructs are, it seems, developed more fully in another of the author’s publications [Besky, Blanchette 2019]. There is no room in the present review to discuss how politically and theoretically consistent such a project is. I shall confine myself to remarking that the study of the totality of modern capitalism evidently requires a certain amount of theoretical indiscipline and, even more importantly, ethnographical imagination. *Porkopolis* demonstrates this brilliantly.

But what is the totality of capitalism, ethnographically understood? That is, in a certain sense, Blanchette’s key question. He admits that *Porkopolis* is an attempt at the impossible: a definitive understanding of industrial meat production in its entirety. Accordingly, the composition of the book is constructed around the phases in the life of the factory-produced pig, and each section is devoted to one of the workplaces that are organised around these phases. The reader is thus introduced to the entire production cycle of the modern factory-produced pig business in several vertically integrated corporations. The author’s research ambitions fully correspond to the extent of his fieldwork. For two years Blanchette was in contact

with company managers, worked together with the workers on pig farms, and also lived in a small town called Dixon, the social and ecological rhythms of which are conditioned by the factory farm. Blanchette combines traditional forms of anthropological narrative with a phenomenologically sensitive auto-ethnography. The book is accompanied by photographs by Sean Sprague, a Canadian photographer who spent three months with Blanchette in Dixon.

The ethnography of the factory-produced pig business, like all good ethnographies, is to a large extent founded on a critique of the forms and propositions of common sense (see: [Herzfeld 2001]). Therefore, *Porkopolis* has nothing to do with the liberal exposure affect of journalistic investigation or the animal rights discourse. Nor is the book the usual critique of human dominion over animals. In the same way, though, Blanchette does not try to see in the farms only encouraging forms of inter-species collaboration. In addition, throughout the whole narrative the author casts doubt on the current thesis of the post-industrial nature of modern American capitalism.

Each part of the book begins with an ethnographic interlude, which sets the tone for the subsequent considerations. The first part ("Boar") opens with the following sketch. James, once a fighter against corporate interference in agriculture, notes the consequences of the presence of a factory farm not far from his home: mutant flies, the heavy stench of the slurry pits and a huge number of wild rabbits on his property. These consequences show that factory-produced pigs, which are supposed to be isolated from the rest of the world, are capable of turning into an ecosystem. This vignette sums up the key argument of the first part: the farm is not confined within the walls of its pigsties, but seeps through them and transforms everything round about.

The thesis that factory production is deeply rooted in processes taking place outside it is not a new one. Feminist theoreticians have long pointed to the key role of housework in the reproduction of class relationships at the factory [Federici 1975]. However, in the context of what Blanchette calls *the political economy of speciation* (p. 46), the critique of the dichotomy between internal and external capitalist production becomes less straightforward.

The process of the *standardisation of the animal* consists in creating a uniform pig body, which, on the one hand, reduces expenditure on the workforce, and, on the other, allows the system of the factory farm to be made potentially scalable. In this connection it is worth noting the distinction between *the animal* and *animality* (animal life in the abstract), which Blanchette introduces on the first pages of the book (p. 26). While the first denotes the animal as a concrete organism, the second is to be understood as an idea that permits thousands of individual lives to be reduced to an abstract unit.

Blanchette stresses that the creation of such a standardised life required the total fragmentation of the species and of labour, which at the same time redrew the regional map of social classes and the everyday life of the workers. Thus, there exist about thirteen different kinds of pig on which the “meat pig” sent for slaughter is based. In accord with the principle of fragmentation, hired workers were forced to deal with one kind only, or even with a particular element of the animal’s life. One deals only with boars, another works only with “meat pigs”, another is occupied with artificial insemination, one looks after the condition of the animals’ skins, and another butchers thousands of carcasses a day. The managers are engaged with the abstract idea of “the whole”.

Such a model of the division of labour, together with the fragmentation of the species, has led to the factory-reared pig’s being extremely susceptible to disease. Therefore the managers are absorbed in the development of protocols of biosecurity. One company’s instructions declare that physical contact between workers from different production sites outside the workplace may indirectly lead to infection of the pigs. As a result, for example, a woman who looks after newborn piglets should not have contact with a meat filleter, and managers at different levels can only meet each other at corporate events. In the context of factory business, routine actions outside the workplace can become connected with maintaining the animals’ health in a way that is not obvious, and the social life of the workers is viewed by the corporation as a threat to the life of the factory pigs.

In Blanchette’s opinion this process of fragmentation has several curious aspects. On the one hand, we have a post-anthropocentric class policy in which both managers and workers, formally in an unequal relationship, are nevertheless equally obliged to arrange their lives outside work in accordance with the animal life with which they literally come into contact on the farms. In other words, social class is mediated by the ways they interact with the pigs. On the other hand, we observe post-human labour, since the pigs’ ability to reproduce and their immune system become what the workers create. At the same time, the workers’ life outside the industry, structured by biosecurity protocols, turns into a form of invisible labour to maintain the fragile lives of the factory pigs. The workers’ slightest activities, from looking for a flat to drinking wine in the park, are seen by the corporation as affecting the animals’ immune system, and the workers themselves are transformed into self-disciplining subjects of biosecurity who supervise their own behaviour far beyond the limits of the farm.¹ This is also post-

¹ The very idea of biosecurity, as Blanchette shows, has an extremely remote connection with the prevention of epizootics. Its basic function belongs rather to the discipline of labour, quite traditional for industrial capitalism.

anthropocentric production *per se*, in which human sociality is viewed by the corporation as potentially dangerous. The theory of industrial production of pork developed by the managers demonstrates that the threat to the industry is not uncontrolled movements of wild animals or insects (which is characteristic, for example, of anthropocentric fears of zoonotic diseases), but human labour and its suspicious subjects.

Here we should proceed to a critique of certain steps in the author's argumentation. Blanchette proposes that in the case of the factory-produced pig business social classes are formed through people's relationships with another species. People's contact with different parts and life stages of the factory-reared pig structures the social space. In this the author of *Porkopolis* identifies work with belonging to a social class. Such an analytical step would, if taken to the extreme, multiply the number of classes in proportion to the typology of workplaces. However, everyone employed on the farm, including the managers, sells his labour and, therefore, still belongs to the same class (at least, within the somewhat old-fashioned Marxist ontology). On the contrary, the place occupied by employees relative to the factory-reared pig will be no more than a particular variation in the more general composition of classes. Of course, a discussion of social class taking multi-species perspectives into account would be useful to the anthropology of labour and class [Kasimir, Carbonella 2008; Carrier, Kalb 2015]. One might go on to discuss classes beyond human sociality, using the concept of the "biotariat", for example — the forms of life that provide the energy for capitalist accumulation [Collis 2016; Moore 2021]. In this the genesis of social structures should still evidently be looked at with an awareness of more historically stable relationships, such as ownership of the means of production, lifestyle or the dynamics of the expenditure of energy in relation to capital.

This sort of critique is also applicable to Blanchette's consideration of the new forms of post-anthropocentric production, whereby the social relations of people are subordinated to an abstract animal life, and the industrial reproduction of another species seems to become an end in itself. Still, Blanchette does not place the accent on the fact that pigs return to the supermarket shelves in the form of goods that are bought by people who are for the most part also employees. In fact, even the discipline of biosecurity protocols makes a hidden contribution to the stable relationship between labour and capital, i.e. it simply supplies with goods millions of (in)visible workers, who are forced again and again to alienate their labour in various forms. As a result, the life of a particular species is interwoven with the process of the reproduction of the human capacity for work. Such is the cycle of the reproduction of capital and its power, which we know from *Das Kapital*, as critically supplemented by Marxist

feminism, and detailed historically and anthropologically by Sidney Mintz [Mintz 1986]. Whether this process had anything at all to do with human beings, or with the other species who appear here as a means and not an end, is a big question.

In the second part of *Porkopolis* ("Sow") we learn about Blanchette's work experience on the artificial insemination line. The operatives of this workplace have literally to "turn into boars", imitating mating and provoking the sows' reproductive instincts with their own bodies. Blanchette shows that this stage of production is based on the acquisition and experiencing by people of one element of the pig's "natural" being. In turn, at this stage the sow is reduced to her reproductive instinct. Consequently, the biological properties that once "belonged" to the species are alienated, so as to be transformed into equally alienated human labour.

In Blanchette's opinion, the attention paid to the instinctive in the context of the factory farm is no accident. Instinct, being a stereotypical action reduced to the automatic, is a key resource for the creation of standardised forms of labour. The sow's reproductive instinct is imprinted on the muscle memory of the workers on the insemination line, who may thus be compared to production line workers in the age of Henry Ford and Frederick Taylor. Blanchette transports his reader from the pigsty to the hotel conference hall, where the corporation managers discuss Japanese theories of post-war industrial production, juggle the terminology of the industrial 1920s and dream of a special "culture of [industrial] integration". The anthropologist again reminds us that the collocation "factory farm" in the book's title is not a metaphorical oxymoron, but the general matrix for modern agribusiness.

Blanchette's arguments are doubly interesting if one considers that contemporary anthropologists' attention has frequently been concentrated on non-scalable forms of business [Tsing 2012], and the thought of the end of industrial labour is not foreign even to left-wing criticism [Hardt, Negri 2004]. The author of *Porkopolis*, by contrast, acquaints the reader with how hyperindustrialised production is appearing not in the countries of the Global South, but in the very heart of the "post-industrial" Global North. In Blanchette's ethnography industry is not a ghost or a ruin recalling the past [Edensor 2005], but a rational decision which links human labour and animals in the here and now.

The third part of the book ("Hog") is devoted to the super-fecund sow and her litter. Here one should say that Blanchette, in partial contradiction to the actual logic of the capitalist farm, calls pigs "animals", and uses the terms "species", "inter-species" and "animal labour". However, there is much to show that the factory-reared animal is an artefact. As the anthropologist reminds us, the factory-

reared pig is a creation that is so lacking in viability that it requires constant human work. The very physiology of the animal is changed radically in order to increase the size of the litter. Such a situation, in which life is very hard to distinguish from non-life, may be described as indeterminate.

The reader may form the impression that factory-reared sows are not much different, for example, from a grain silo or a domestic stove. There is even a temptation to look at the living beings in the pigsties as a form of capital, i.e., in accordance with a well-known definition, “dead labour, which, vampire-like, lives only by sucking living labour, and lives the more, the more labour it sucks” [Marx 1977: 352]. Nevertheless, Blanchette is convinced that the factory-reared pig cannot be reduced to a product of “exclusively” human labour. Complex relationships come to exist between people and pigs, and this makes the idea inter-species closeness relevant. For example, the improvement of the reproductive qualities of sows results in such huge litters that there is not enough sustenance for the embryos. As a result, some piglets, which the workers call runts, are extremely weak. These feeble runts need to be strengthened within twenty days, otherwise they are put down. Thus, in the name of saving their lives a policy of inter-species closeness is born. Within this policy the workers (mostly women) who look after the little piglets begin to experience very warm feelings towards the fragile life of the animal.

It would be easy to treat this sentimental story in the spirit of the “anthropology of the good” [Robbins 2013]. Blanchette, however, holds to another interpretation. In his view, care for feeble runts is a productive force, and disinterested love to creatures from another species turns out to be a re-production of the animals.¹ This process fits nicely into the logic of increasing the norm of corporate profit. The author stresses that both the runts and the workers’ care for them are incorporated into the structure of the exploitation of labour and inter-species violence, in which the sows’ large litters demand a greater and greater workforce. It is curious that such a scheme of exploitation is far from the usual images of the person’s alienation from the product of his own activity and relies, on the contrary, on their excessive closeness.

Throughout the third part Blanchette stresses that the factory farm creates radical forms or inter-species relationships and knowledge: the harsh conditions of standardised exploitation create the possibility of rethinking the idea of living together with other species.

¹ Heuristically valuable here is Sylvia Yanagisako’s argument, according to which “affective ideas and ideas with affect” form and limit capitalist production [Yanagisako 2002]. In Blanchette’s book this is love and care for a different species.

If my treatment of this argument is correct, then the force of Blanchette's propositions is as follows. The reassessment of the relations between the human and non-humans takes place in an exceedingly unexpected (from the point of view of bourgeois common sense) place: stuffy pigsties with a cheap seasonal workforce. In other words, the standardisation of human and non-human labour at factory farms favours the creation of post-anthropocentric solidarity.

This logic is to a certain extent inherited from Marxism. Just as the workers in conditions of factory production, homogenisation of the rhythms of life and a more concentrated workforce become aware of themselves as a class, exploited "people" and "animals" immersed in the identical context of a factory farm, must become aware of themselves as something at least interconnected.

The philosopher Alain Badiou recently remarked that a strategy has long been gaining popularity among the intellectual class of the Global North, according to which one must go away, for example, into the country to discover new "forms of life" there to replace the destructive capitalist machine. Badiou called this strategy "ecological Buddhism". Blanchette's thoughts are completely the opposite: he suggests looking for answers to politically topical questions not in the deeply conservative ideals of traditional agriculture or "retreating to the woods", but in the very heart of the capitalist machine.

The fourth part of the book ("Carcass") deals with the "vertical integration" of workers' bodies. Although the "disassembly line" of pork carcasses has reached the limits of the human body, the question of a further increase in business efficiency remains on the agenda. For this very reason the corporation clinic is so concerned about the workers' health. It is not, however, a question of timely medical treatment to reduce the number of sick days and the amount of sick pay. Such a critique of corporate efforts to increase profits by reducing injuries would be too superficial. On the contrary, by avoiding worn-out *pointes*, Blanchette succeeds in seeing new forms of capitalist power over human bodies.

The intriguing thing is that with the help of the clinic the corporation is literally looking for "new money" in the workers' bodies. Thus, one of the aims of the medical examinations is to evaluate human bodies in terms of their fitness for work on one or another of the sections of the filleting line. This allows the worker to be placed at the place that best suits the condition of his musculoskeletal system. In this way evaluated and interchangeable human actions are matched to the standardised bodies of the pigs, which leads to the commercialisation and standardisation of the biology of both species. Blanchette never fails to remind the reader that the space of the factory farm does away with the hierarchy of humans and non-

humans, and that the idea of abstract animal life as a form of value relates in this case both to the pig and to the human. Here, however, it should be added that the human will always be understood not as the human species as such, but as a representative of the class of employees. The experiment in the industrialisation of animal husbandry in a strange way changes the hierarchy of species within the working class, but unfortunately Blanchette says noticeably less about this.

It may be that in every good book there are judgements that are expressed in one way or another in every chapter, becoming something like magic spells. In the case of *Porkopolis* it is the idea that the factory-reared pig is invisibly present in our everyday lives. This idea is unfolded in greater detail in the fifth part of the book ("Viscera"). Blanchette points out that there is part of the factory-reared pig contained right there in the book that the reader holds in his hands. This is no figure of speech: it refers to the gelatine with which the pages of *Porkopolis* are treated and which is obtained from pigskin.

The final part of the book deals with the techniques of industrial rendering. This concerns the "post-organismal hog", understood as the set of different elements (proteins, fats, amino acids and nitrates) from which additional profit may be obtained. The factory-produced pig, in this way, is not so much slaughtered as dismantled. It does not so much appear as food in the supermarkets as it becomes an important element of thousands of other consumer goods: from cat food and biofuels to ramen noodles and pharmaceutical preparations. In short, the factory-produced pig is designed to spread unnoticed through people's routine. Consequently, our everyday actions invisibly create the value of abstract animal life, and the model of the factory farm thereby lays down its path to the future. In this context, according to Blanchette, it will not be possible to change the world of industrial agriculture by "voting with one's fork", because modern factory farms do not make their profits from meat. This is the totality about which Blanchette writes at the very beginning of *Porkopolis*. It is impossible even to read a book about the factory-reared pig without making a hidden contribution to its reproduction.

In the epilogue to *Porkopolis* Blanchette considers what the factory farm, that strange exception to the usual idea of "post-industrialisation" that is becoming ever more the rule, might teach us. He does not call upon us to become ethical consumers and is extremely successful in avoiding the man in the street's question, "What can be done with this?" In his opinion, the very modality of such questions partakes of the technocratic imagination, in which "experts" propose "clever solutions". The author of *Porkopolis*

prefers to speak of much more serious things, because the life and death of pigs is a reflection of how people exist today. To put it another way, the pig is an organic part of the totality of capital. Accordingly, Blanchette suggests, if we learn to relate to pigs beyond capitalist business and economic value, we could learn how better to live with each other. The author does not explain how such a teaching process is to come into being. At the end of the fifth part, however, he does mention the importance of rejecting the imperative of efficiency that lies at the heart of the ideology of economic growth. Breaking with that ideology is evidently already a question of political practice.

It is worth saying in conclusion that the readers of *Porkopolis* may be extremely varied, from the bored flâneur with a taste for social criticism to the researcher into victualling, animals or industrial labour. Added to that, Blanchette has succeeded in writing the sort of ethnography that could be a basis for teaching, since *Porkopolis* includes most of the headings of modern social anthropology: corporeality, labour, class, ecology and inter-species interaction. In my view, such a course would be a remarkable and significant endeavour.

References

- Badiou A., 'Politics Today: Thirteen Theses and Commentaries', *Crisis and Critique*, 2022, vol. 9, no. 2, pp. 11–22.
- Besky S., Blanchette A. (eds), *How Nature Works: Rethinking Labor on a Troubled Planet*. Santa Fe: SAR Press; University of New Mexico Press, 2019, 272 pp.
- Braverman H., *Labor and Monopoly Capital*. New York: Monthly Review Press, 1974, 465 pp.
- Carrier J., Kalb D. (eds), *Anthropologies of Class: Power, Practice, and Inequality*. Cambridge: Cambridge University Press, 2015, 248 pp.
- Collis S., *Once in Blockadia*. Vancouver: Talonbooks, 2016, 148 pp.
- Edensor T., 'The Ghosts of Industrial Ruins: Ordering and Disordering Memory in Excessive Space', *Environment and Planning D: Society and Space*, 2005, vol. 23, no. 6, pp. 829–849. doi: 10.1068/d58j.
- Federici S., *Wages Against Housework*. Bristol: Power of Women Collective; the Falling Wall Press, 1975, 8 pp.
- Gramsci A., *Selections from the Prison Notebooks*. New York: International Publishers, 1971, 483 pp.
- Haraway D., *When Species Meet*. Minneapolis, MN: University of Minnesota Press, 2008, 360 pp.
- Hardt M., Negri A., *Empire*. Cambridge, MA: Harvard University Press, 2000, 478 pp.
- Herzfeld M., *Anthropology: Theoretical Practice in Culture and Society*. Malden; Oxford: Wiley-Blackwell; UNESCO, 2001, 388 pp.

- Kasmir S., Carbonella A., 'Dispossession and the Anthropology of Labor', *Critique of Anthropology*, 2008, vol. 28, no. 1, pp. 5–25.
doi: 10.1177/0308275X07086555.
- Kohn E., *How Forests Think: Toward an Anthropology beyond the Human*. Berkeley, CA: University of California Press, 2013, 288 pp.
- Marx K., *Capital: A Critique of Political Economy*. New York: Vintage, 1977 [1867], vol. 1, 1152 pp.
- Mintz S., *Sweetness and Power: The Place of Sugar in Modern History*. New York: Penguin Books, 1986, XXX+274 pp.
- Moore J., *Capitalism in the Web of Life*. New York: Verso, 2015, 336 pp.
- Moore J., 'Empire, Class and the Origins of Planetary Crisis: The Transition Debate in the Web of Life', *Esboços: Histórias em Contextos Globais*, 2021, vol. 28, no. 49, pp. 740–763.
- Raffles H., *Insectopedia*. New York: Pantheon Books, 2010, 480 pp.
- Robbins J., 'Beyond the Suffering Subject: Toward an Anthropology of the Good', *Journal of the Royal Anthropological Institute*, 2013, vol. 19, no. 3, pp. 447–462.
- Rubin G., 'The Traffic in Women: Notes on the "Political Economy" of Sex', Reiter R. (ed.), *Toward an Anthropology of Women*. New York: Monthly Review, 1975, pp. 157–210.
- Tsing A., 'On Nonscalability: The Living World is Not Amenable to Precision-Nested Scales', *Common Knowledge*, 2012, vol. 18, no. 3, pp. 505–524.
doi: 10.1215/0961754X-1630424.
- Tsing A. L., *The Mushroom at the End of the World*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2015, 352 pp.
- Weeks K., *The Problem with Work: Marxism, Feminism, and Postwork Imaginaries*. Durham, NC: Duke University Press, 2011, 287 pp.
- Yanagisako S., *Producing Culture and Capital: Family Firms in Italy*. Princeton, NJ: Princeton University Press, 2002, 248 pp.

Stepan Petryakov
Translated by Ralph Cleminson