How Transparency Works

Transparency has become a ubiquitous presence in seemingly every sphere of social, economic, and political life. Yet, for all the claims that transparency works, little attention has been paid to *how* it works – even when it fails to achieve its goals. Instead of assuming that transparency is itself transparent, this book questions the technological practices, material qualities, and institutional standards producing transparency in extractive, commodity trading, and agricultural sites. Furthermore, it asks: How is transparency certified and standardized? How is it regimented by "ethical" and "responsible" businesses, or valued by traders and investors, from auction rooms to sustainability reports? The contributions bring nuanced answers to these questions, approaching transparency through four key organizing concepts: disclosure, immediacy, trust, and truth. These are concepts that anchor the making of transparency across the lifespan of global commodities.

FILIPE CALVÃO is an economic and environmental anthropologist and Associate Professor of Anthropology and Sociology at the Geneva Graduate Institute. His research explores the politics, ecologies, and economies of mineral extraction in postcolonial Africa. Currently, he investigates the intersection of digitalization, labor, and extractivism, with a particular focus on crypto-mining. His research has been published in *Comparative Studies in Society and History*, *Annual Review of Anthropology*, *Economic Anthropology*, *Political Geography*, and *The Extractive Industries and Society*. In addition to being a trained gemmologist and diamond grader, he is the co-editor of the *Swiss Journal of Sociocultural Anthropology*. Previously, he led the SNSF project "Transparency: Qualities and Technologies of the Global Gemstone Industry," and he is now the Principal Investigator of the European Research Council's Starting Grant "Synthetic Lives: The Futures of Mining."

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MATTHIEU BOLAY is a social anthropologist and an Associate Professor at the University of Applied Sciences and Arts of Western Switzerland (HES-SO). He also leads the SNSF Ambizione project "Arbitral Reasoning in the Legal Topographies of Global Extraction" at the University of Bern. His research covers issues related to migration and mobility, extractivism, labor, valuation, and expertise. He is co-editor of the *Swiss Journal of Sociocultural Anthropology*. His work has been published in the *American Ethnologist*, *Cahiers d'Études Africaines*, *Critique of Anthropology*, *Resources Policy*, *Politique Africaine*, *Political Geography*, and *The Extractive Industries and Society*, among other journals.

ELIZABETH FERRY is Professor of Anthropology at Brandeis University. Her work includes *Not Ours Alone: Patrimony, Value, and Collectivity in Contemporary Mexico* (2005); *Minerals, Collecting, and Value Across the US–Mexico Border* (2013); and *La Batea* (with Stephen Ferry) (2017), which won the 2019 Victor Turner Prize for Ethnographic Writing, among other awards. She is co-editor of *Timely Assets: The Politics of Resources and Temporalities* (2010) and *The Anthropology of Precious Minerals* (2019). She is currently writing a book about gold as a physical object in finance and mining.

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Ethnographies of a Global Value

Edited by

FILIPE CALVÃO
Graduate Institute of International and Development Studies, Geneva

MATTHIEU BOLAY
University of Applied Sciences and Arts of Western Switzerland

ELIZABETH FERRY
Brandeis University, Massachusetts

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