Language is a means we use to communicate feelings; we also reflect emotionally on the language we and others use. James M. Wilce analyzes the signals people use to express emotion, looking at the social, cultural, and political functions of emotional language around the world. The book demonstrates that speaking, feeling, reflecting, and identifying are interrelated processes and shows how emotions such as desire and shame are attached to language. Drawing on nearly 100 ethnographic case studies, it demonstrates the cultural diversity, historical emergence, and political significance of emotional language. Wilce brings together insights from linguistics and anthropology to survey an extremely broad range of genres, cultural concepts, and social functions of emotional expression.

James M. Wilce is Professor of Anthropology at Northern Arizona University.
The aim of this series is to develop theoretical perspectives on the essential social and cultural character of language by methodological and empirical emphasis on the occurrence of language in its communicative and interactional settings, on the socioculturally grounded "meanings" and "functions" of linguistic forms, and on the social scientific study of language use across cultures. It will thus explicate the essentially ethnographic nature of linguistic data, whether spontaneously occurring or experimentally induced, whether normative or variational, whether synchronic or diachronic. Works appearing in the series will make substantive and theoretical contributions to the debate over the sociocultural-function and structural-formal nature of language, and will represent the concerns of scholars in the sociology and anthropology of language, anthropological linguistics, sociolinguistics, and socio-culturally informed psycholinguistics.

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