



The Australian Anthropological Society Newsletter

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AAS Annual Conference 2007

October 30 – November 2, 2007

Australian National University

Transforming Economies, Changing States

Radical changes in the economic and political aspects of human life-worlds characterize the late twentieth and early twenty-first centuries. Although the economy has always been at the heart of social life, both national and local economies have taken on an increasingly monetary character, transforming the social fabric and leading to a widespread economization of cultural practice. Neoliberal claims about the receding state notwithstanding, it is increasingly apparent that these transformations have depended on a growth and consolidation of state power, particularly as exerted around the object of 'economy' and the practices of 'economic development'. Growth of state influence has occurred through the emerging framework of international institutions, through the 'outsourcing' of state functions, and through the increasing incursion of state policies and programs into daily life and subjective experience.

At the same time, it is clear that many places remain either at the periphery or beyond the ambit of the state, whilst new spaces of 'exception' have also emerged as part of contemporary changes in state organization and economic practice. Similarly, various forms of 'customary' economic practice and political organization persist, even in the face of current transformations. At least some of these practices offer forms of local

resistance to or transformation of what are often presumed to be monolithic or homogeneous forms of global capitalism or governance.

Preliminary call for session themes

This conference aims to provide a forum for contemporary anthropological engagements with 'the economic' and 'the state', 'government' and 'the political' more generally. The conference seeks to foreground the role of the economy in relation to the late-modern social transformations. In addition to plenary panels on The economic in contemporary anthropology, and The subject of the state, we call for panels and papers dealing with various aspects of economic and political anthropology across a range of global settings. In addition to 'themed' papers and panels, the organizers also welcome contributions reflecting the wider interests of Australian anthropology.

Those proposing sessions should in the first instance email a session name and a description of no more than 200 words to the conference Organising Committee, c/o Dr Monique Skidmore (Monique.Skidmore@anu.edu.au). Once the session themes have been finalized by the Committee, a call for papers will be made.

A separate workshop provisionally entitled '**Practice and Practicality: Anthropology in Indigenous Australia**' will also be held on Monday October 29, and a '**Postgraduate Workshop**' on October 30.

The conference proper will begin with a keynote address on the evening of 30 October. October 31, November 1 and the morning of November 2 will comprise the various sessions with one plenary session on each day. The conference dinner will be held on the evening of November 1. The Heads of Departments and AAS Annual General Meeting will be held on the morning of Nov 2 and the conference will conclude following the AGM at midday.

A full conference website is being developed, and will be available as soon as details have been determined.

Further details will appear at

http://www.aas.asn.au/aas_conference.php

AAS Executive: Election of Officers

During December 2006 and January 2007 elections were held for the positions of President, Vice-President and two Executive Members of AAS. Successful candidates were Gillian Cowlshaw (President), Alan Rumsey (Vice-President), Mary Patterson and Yasmine Musharbash (Executive Members).

The current composition of the Executive is as follows:

President: Professor **Gillian Cowlshaw**, Faculty of Humanities and Social Sciences, University of Technology, Sydney

Vice-President: Dr. **Alan Rumsey**, Department of Anthropology, Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies, Australian National University

Secretary: Dr. **Monique Skidmore**, Centre for Cross Cultural Research, Australian National University

Treasurer: Dr. **David Martin**, Anthropolos Consulting Services, Canberra

Other Executive Members:

Associate Professor **Mary Patterson**, School of Social and Environmental Enquiry, The University of Melbourne.

Dr **Yasmine Musharbash**, Anthropology and Sociology, School of Social and Cultural Studies, The University of Western Australia

Postgraduate Representative: **Klara Hansen**, School of Archaeology and Anthropology, ANU

Ex Officio: **Rozanna Lilley**, Editor, *TAJA*

Shane Silva is AAS Administrator, John Hughes is AASNet Manager, and Mary Patterson and Peter Dwyer edit the Newsletter.

Joint International Conference of ASA, ASAANZ and AAS

December 8 – 12, 2008

University of Auckland, New Zealand

OWNERSHIP AND APPROPRIATION

In 2008 the ASA (Association of Social Anthropologists of the UK and the Commonwealth), the ASAANZ (Association of Social Anthropologists of Aotearoa/New Zealand), and the AAS (Australian Anthropological Society) are combining their annual meetings for a joint international conference. This will be hosted by the Department of Anthropology at the University of Auckland. The ASA organises an international conference every five years, but has never held one previously in either New Zealand or Australia. So this conference is a 'first' both collaboratively and geographically. We hope that anthropologists from all three countries, and from many others, will join us for the event.

Conference Theme

Centering on the core theme of *Ownership and Appropriation*, the conference aims to extend anthropological theory, by shifting the focus from

'property' and 'property relations' to notions and acts of 'owning and appropriating'. It will explore a variety of dimensions of ownership and appropriation, being concerned with process rather than states of being, with dynamism rather than stasis, and with agency and creativity rather than with property and objects. This emphasis is highly relevant in a globalising world in which resources are at once being depleted and increasingly privatised or enclosed, and ideas about the very kinds of things that can be property are expanding. Anthropology, with its emphasis on agency and understanding actors' perspectives, is well placed to advance colloquial understandings of such processes.

Call for Workshops/Sessions

Our description of the conference themes includes suggestions for possible sub-themes and panels, but we would also like to invite members of all three Anthropology associations to propose panel sessions for the conference. In essence, we hope that panels and papers will engage closely with the conference themes, to enable coherent discussion at the event, but we also want to encourage participants to approach the theme creatively. Further details on the conference themes are available from the convenors (email addresses below), and will be on the conference web site when this comes online in November/December 2006.

The deadline for proposals for workshops/panel sessions will be November 1st 2007. All members of the three associations are eligible to present papers at the conference. The deadline for paper abstracts will be May 1st, 2008.

Convenors:

Professor Veronica Strang v.strang@auckland.ac.nz & Dr Mark Busse m.busse@auckland.ac.nz

Changing Places

From Deakin University

In February 2007 **Tony Redmond** left his teaching position at the School of History, Heritage and Society, Deakin University, to enable further fieldwork in the Kimberley region and to advance his ongoing writing projects. Tony is now a Visiting Research Fellow at CAEPR (ANU), is a partner in an ARC Linkage Project with Ian Keen, Chris Loyd and Mike Pickering on Aboriginal involvement in the frontier economy and is undertaking research on a small number of native title claims.

In mid-year **Holly High** will be leaving the School of History, Heritage and Society, Deakin University, to take up a position as lecturer in the School of Philosophical and Historical Inquiry, The University of Sydney.

From The University of Western Australia

David Trigger will be leaving anthropology at UWA in July 2007 to take up a three year secondment as Research Professor at the University of Queensland.

Congratulations

Congratulations to **Mary Patterson** who, from January 2007, has been appointed Head of the newly formed School of Social and Environmental Enquiry at The University of Melbourne and to the Australian Research Council College of Experts.

News from the Programs

Australian National University

Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies

[From Mark Mosko]

Kathy Robinson has been recently promoted to Full Professor in the Department of Anthropology in the Research School of Pacific and Asian Studies at the ANU. Kathy received her PhD from RSPAS (1984) and has established a distinguished career in the anthropology of Southeast Asia and Indonesia. Through the latter half of the 1990s she served as Acting HOD of the Anthropology Department. A few of her recent publications include "Chandra Jayawardena and the Ethical 'Turn' in Australian Anthropology" (*Critique of Anthropology* 24:379-402), and *Women in Indonesia: Gender Equity and Development*, co-edited with Sharon Bessell (ISEAS Press, 2002). She is author of the forthcoming volume *Gender, Islam and Democracy in Indonesia* Oxford (Routledge Curzone) and editor of *Asian and Pacific Cosmopolitans*, to be published soon by Palgrave Press.

The Anthropology Department in RSPAS at the ANU will host the 2008 annual meeting of the Association for Social Anthropologists in Oceania during 15-19 February 2008. Registration and other programme details will be announced in forthcoming issues of the AAS Newsletter and AASNet.

Abstracts of the PhD theses by Sabine Hess, Indraswari, Yuko Kitada, Cheng-Yuan Liu, Gregor Neonbasu and Wasan Panyagaew are included elsewhere in this issue of the Newsletter.

The University of Melbourne

Melbourne Anthropology Grows and Transforms

[From Andy Dawson]

2006 was arguably the most significant year in Anthropology's relatively short history at the University of Melbourne. At one level, this has been a period of rapid growth. Firstly, the University undertook a process of large scale restructuring, in which Anthropology has benefited greatly. Through a process of consolidation the larger part of the University's Anthropology community is now co-located in the School of Social and Environmental Enquiry (SSEE). Associate Professor **Maila Stivens** and Dr **Kalissa Alexeyeff**, both of the Gender Studies program, joined the School in 2006. Secondly, we have expanded through new lecturing appointments. **Tamara Kohn**, formerly lecturer at Durham University, **Hans Baer**, formerly Professor at the University of Arkansas, and **Alan Thorold**, formerly lecturer at Deakin University, joined in 2006. Importantly,

this growth is set to continue. In coming years we expect to see the transfer of at least two further Anthropologists to SSEE from other parts of the University. Additionally, in 2006 the University was hugely fortunate to be made the recipient of a large bequest that resulted in the establishing of the 'Thomas and Margaret Ruth McArthur Fellowships'. We anticipate the appointment of two two-year postdoctoral fellowships annually. The scheme favours anthropologists, women and experts on the Asia Pacific region. The first awards to Dr. **Senka Božić-Vrbančić** and Dr. **Kalissa Alexeyeff** have already been made. Of greatest significance, we will be announcing the appointment of an Anthropologist to a major new Research Professorship in the coming weeks. The Anthropology staff complement in SSEE of 7 in 2005 has risen to 13.6 in 2007 and should reach 16.6 by 2008; in short, growth of more than 100%.

At another level, since **Andrew Dawson's** appointment as Professor of Anthropology in 2004, we have sought to change the direction of the program in three particular ways. Firstly, we are encouraging the development of an engaged anthropology that deals more concretely with issues of policy and political praxis and critique. The centrepiece of this is the 'Debates in Contemporary Societies and Cultures' series that brings together anthropologists, other disciplinarians and members of the wider community to debate contemporary issues. For example, in Semester 1, 2007 we will host debates on 'Climate Change' and on 'Islam and the West', the latter featuring **Mustafa Cerić**, Grand Mufti of Bosnia and Herzegovina and author of the 'Declaration of European Muslims'. Secondly, we are fostering an Anthropology that is broad in its regional foci and comparative. We now have specialists on Australia and the Pacific, west, east and central Europe, south, east and south-east Asia, north and central America, east Africa, and the Middle East. Lastly, and most significantly, we are developing an Anthropology that, whilst concerned with ethnography, places theory-building at the heart of its endeavour. Reflecting this, the program has been renamed the 'Anthropology and Social Theory Program' and has been boosted by the transfer in of two specialist social theorists, Dr. **John Cash** and Dr. **John Rundell**. Also reflecting this, the aforementioned Research Professorship will be in Anthropology and Social Theory.

At another level still, Anthropology at Melbourne has internationalised significantly through several honorary and visiting appointments. Notably, **Michael Herzfeld**, Professor of Anthropology at Harvard University, will be established as Honorary Professor. Michael is already an integral part of the team, visiting for several weeks annually, and conducting subjects and professional lectures. More temporarily, we are developing our visitors program that has in recent years brought the likes of **Michael Taussig**, **Nigel Rapport** and **Lila Abu-Lughod** to the program. In 2007 we will host **Akhil Gupta** (UCLA), **Kay Milton** (Queen's University, Belfast) and **Patrick McAllister** (University of Canterbury, Christchurch). Finally, we are currently making the final arrangements for the appointment of two further senior

and internationally significant anthropologists to ongoing honorary positions who will be located permanently in SSEE.

2006 was a year of historic significance in the life of Anthropology at the University of Melbourne. However, 2007 is clearly shaping up to surpass it!

The University of Queensland

Anthropology in the School of Social Science

[From Annie Ross]

The Anthropology program at The University of Queensland encompasses both socio-cultural Anthropology and Archaeology. In 2007 we have had an increase in staff, with the permanent appointment of a lecturer in Aboriginal Anthropology (Dr **Sally Babidge**) and two staff in Archaeology (Dr **Pat Faulkner** and Dr **Chris Clarkson**). In July 2007 the School will be joined by Professor **David Trigger** for a three year period. David will provide much-needed leadership to the Anthropology program.

A recent crisis in staffing in the socio-cultural Anthropology program has had a detrimental affect on recent PhD and Honours enrolments and completions. At the end of 2006 there were five Honours theses in socio-cultural anthropology completed; the authors, titles and abstracts of these appear below.

Mark Love, an Honours graduate from mid-2006, has been nominated for a University medal. His thesis was on marine resources management in the Solomon Islands and is entitled "Projectised Epistemologies and Unintended Consequences". The abstract for this thesis appeared in the September 2006 issue of the AAS Newsletter.

We look forward to a revitalised Anthropology program during 2007, with our new staff and new professor.

Susan Forder

Title: Encouraging the Performance of Inclusive Belonging: Identity and Conflict Resolution in the Solomon Islands

Abstract: This thesis explores how a more accurate understanding of the issue of identity and local ways of being in the Solomon Islands can contribute to conflict resolution. Through a redefinition of the theory of identity and a flexible tool of problematising conflict such as Freud's notion of the 'uncanny', it becomes clear that Solomon Islanders actively constitute and perform varied subjectivities that are constructed through their engendered, embodied identity, located in a specific place and mode of being. A critical poststructural 'anthropological' approach to the issue highlights local understandings of identity and allows a critical review of the Western assumptions inherent in conflict resolution. Analysis of anthropological articles reveals that local people can utilise their shared subjectivities, articulated through social organising categories such as gender and religion, to enact a performance of inclusive belonging across groups' rather than articulating the difference and unfamiliarity of the Other. However, conflict resolution literature marginalises and misunderstands the issue of identity through its conceptualisation of non-Western peoples within binary oppositions and its fixed definitions of

social groups. This thesis proposes that the current conflict resolution intervention, the Regional Assistance Mission to the Solomon Islands, would be more successful if it accounted for the complexity of identity and encouraged local people to form networks and links across boundaries of belonging.

Erin McKewin

Title: Finding Relevance: Old Codes and New Fields

Abstract: Anthropologists are increasingly finding themselves in global contexts which have created new ethical dilemmas that are new to anthropological practice. Currently there is a lack of ethical dialogue on ethics in the field of forensic anthropology which must be addressed. This thesis investigates the relevance of current anthropological codes of ethics and current dialogue on ethics to the growing field of forensic anthropology. Drawing on anthropological and archaeological discourse on the ethical concerns of excavation of human remains, I summarise the key ethical issues for anthropologists and review the contents of four anthropological and archaeological associations' codes of ethics to outline the ethical issues that have been codified therein. I question the relevance of current codes of ethics in light of new applications of anthropological practice in forensic contexts, using the excavation of a mass grave in Vukovar, Croatia, as my primary case study. I compare and contrast the ethical dilemmas that arise during the forensic investigation of the Vukovar mass grave against those ethical issues surrounding the investigation of massacre sites in Australia, the Coniston Massacres. The diametrically opposed outcomes of ethical decision-making is problematised to elucidate how and why the issues raised are ethical dilemmas for anthropologists. Discussion highlights the inevitability that anthropologists may be required to adopt new, non-anthropological codes of ethics that may conflict with anthropological codes of ethics. I contend that anthropologists must recognise that the application of anthropological techniques to a new field requires transference of epistemologies and values, which may affect the ways in which anthropologists incorporate and interpret new codes of ethics and subsequent practices. I suggest that anthropologists reconceptualise codes of ethics and dialogue on ethics through Bourdieu's notion habitus. I stress the need for the contextualisation of interpretation of ethics in the field and the need for personal reflection on the points of divergence between anthropological and other codes of ethics.

Sophia Maalsen

Title: Worshipping Wax: Vinyl records and the Underrepresentation of Females Among Hip Hop DJs"

Abstract: Applying the theoretical insights of the anthropology of consumption, gender analysis and material culture studies, this thesis examines the underrepresentation of females among hip hop DJs. The practice of "crate digging" (record collecting), is viewed as central to the accumulation of the necessary cultural capital required to successfully DJ and achieve prestige within the culture. This reflects the mediational capacity of objects and their role in regulating power and relationships and establishing hierarchies. Accessibility to such objects, circumscribed by the subjects' positions in the social matrix, has implications

for participation in certain activities and the degree of mobility afforded within given cultural domains. It is asked whether differential male and female involvement in crate digging influences the level of female participation in the hip hop scene.

To answer this question the role of crate digging in hip hop DJing was examined using a range ethnographic methods, including formal and informal interviews and discussions, analysis of music media and participant observation. The results demonstrate that records and crate digging practices are vital elements of a DJ career and that the comparative lack of female involvement in this activity affects their level of participation in hip hop DJing.

These results have broader implications, however: They suggest that it is limited access to certain forms of material culture that restrict females' ability to engage in certain spheres of social and economic life and not the lack of cultural knowledge or skills. This suggests that traditional efforts of encouraging greater female involvement in male-dominated fields that focus on females acquiring the necessary technical skills should be reconsidered. Instead, improving access to such items of material culture may be the key to increasing female participation in these areas.

Sarah Webb

Title: Making Small Fights into Big Fights: Representations of Papua New Guinea Highland Warfare in the Anthropology Museum Collection, at the University of Queensland

Abstract: A material culture perspective is used to examine how conflict in the Papua New Guinea Highlands defies Western constructions of war and peace, focusing on representations of Highland warfare in museum collections. It is argued that collections with a predominance of weapons represent Highland warfare as more extreme and frequent than was the case, and that this representation ignores practices of conflict management in the Highlands. The University of Queensland's Anthropology Museum collection of Highland objects is analysed and the results are compared to ethnographic descriptions of warfare to ascertain how accurately the collection reflects Highland practices of warfare and conflict management. This comparison of the collection analysis and the ethnographic evidence reveals inconsistencies in the portrayal of Highland warfare and conflict management, indicating biases in the collection's representation of Highland warfare. These biases in the collection's representation of warfare have serious implications for contemporary understandings of conflict and conflict management, in the Highlands specifically and in Indigenous cultures generally.

Mary White

Title: Imagined Nation, Constructed Hero, Myths of Masculinity: A Case Study of Cliff Young

Abstract: Through gender analysis, a common tool in anthropological investigation, this thesis traces sporting identity Cliff Young's ascendancy to national folk hero. I execute the analysis by tracing the peak and decline of Cliff Young's adulation through the Australian media. A conceptualisation of the media as a powerful sociopolitical institution works to demonstrate the cultural forces that shape our imaginations and understandings. An early discussion of Cliff Young's

resonance with powerful cultural narratives identifies nationalism as a key signifier in the semiotic processes that enabled a subordinate character to take his place as a national hero. A content analysis of newspapers and a documentary identify the re-emergence of important Australian archetypes in the media's representation of Cliff Young. Cliff Young was a contradictory character, and evidence has suggested that so too are the archetypes of the battler, the bushman, the larrikin and the fool. The tendency of the media and, in a broader sense, our culture to essentialise certain traits that are 'manly' or 'Aussie' is non-representative of the lived experience of many Australian men. No male perfectly fits these archetypes, but some embody some characteristics that can be attributed to them. Persuasive constructs of Australia as a nation and Australian hegemonic masculinity are dependent on borders, shared understandings, a creation of Other, and monoglossic discourse. Cliff Young's story dissolves borders through dissent from cultural norms. His identity and convictions uncover a far more complex framework for hegemonic masculinity in Australia that is 'culture'. Cliff Young's story reminds us as a 'culture' that what we believe to be real is as much a construct as that which is ideal.

ANSA - The Australian Network of Student Anthropologists

If you are interested in becoming a member of ANSA, membership is free to current AAS members and the benefits are great! For information on how to join please visit www.ansa.asn.au.

New Member of ANSA Subcommittee

We would like to welcome **Nelia Hyndman-Rizic** to the ANSA Subcommittee. Nelia is a PhD student in the School of Archaeology and Anthropology at ANU and recently finished fieldwork with the Lebanese community in Sydney. She will be concentrating on ANSA involvement with the 2007 AAS Conference in Canberra.

Plans for 2007

ANSA is working on a plan of action for 2007. So far the plan includes: AAS conference scholarships, updating the ANSA website, a couple of seminars with top-notch international visiting anthropologists and working on the WCAA project.

World Council of Anthropological Associations

ANSA continues to be involved in the international push to get postgrad representation within the WCAA. **Jenny Gabriel**, from the ANSA subcommittee, has taken on the job of managing the email list for the various interested parties that have so far come together on this project.

ANSA Subcommittee

The ANSA Subcommittee now includes students from institutions right around Australia. However, some institutions are still sadly un- or under represented while others are well represented. If you would like to become a member of the ANSA subcommittee and ensure that your institution is represented, please contact ansa@ansa.asn.au.

Forthcoming Conferences

For Ethnography: Anthropology and the Politics of the Present

20 April 2007

University of Technology, Sydney

Further details available from either Sanjay Srivastava, Deakin University (sanjays@deakin.edu.au) or Gillian Cowlishaw, UTS (gillian.cowlishaw@uts.edu.au)

Tasa Health Section: Health Social Science Conference

22 – 24 June 2007

Beechworth Campus, La Trobe University, Victoria Health social scientists in the South East are having a conference at the Beechworth campus of La Trobe University, in June. The organising committee is attempting to make the conference as informal, inclusive and modestly priced as possible. The conference, auspiced by TASA and the School of Social Sciences at La Trobe as part of the 40th Anniversary Celebrations of the university, is being run jointly by the Health and Mental Health thematic groups of TASA but attendance by medical anthropologists and other social scientists as well as postgraduates (including possibly intending postgraduates) interested in health, is especially welcome. Conscious of the often prohibitive cost of registration for many conferences for all except those with strong institutional backing, we have tried to make this conference as affordable as possible especially for postgraduate students.

Further details:

<http://www.latrobe.edu.au/socsci/health/health.html>

Beyond Text: Synaesthetic and Sensory Practices in Anthropology

June 30 – July 2, 2007

Granada Centre for Visual Anthropology, University of Manchester

In combination with 10th Royal Anthropological Institute International Festival of Ethnographic Film

Is it possible for anthropology to communicate human experience and knowledge through visual and sensory means and by combining different representational forms rather than simply relying on conventional textual means? For example through acoustic ethnography, using sculptural and other plastic media, art installations, dramatic performance and ethnofiction, as well as photography, museum spaces and the internet? In short is it possible for an anthropology that aims to go 'beyond text'? And if so then what are the implications for anthropological research and practice?

Beyond Text is a landmark conference that brings together leading international scholars, not only from within anthropology but also from a number of cognate disciplines (cultural studies, material culture, film and performance studies, art history, architecture, sociology) to explore questions of contemporary anthropology. Speakers include Don Brenneis, David Butler, Paul Carter, Peter Crawford, Steven Feld, Penny Harvey,

David Howes, Sharon MacDonald, David MacDougall, George Marcus, Howard Morphy, Judith Okely, Catherine Russell, Michael Taussig, Lucien Taylor, Nick Thomas, James Thompson, Janet Wolff.

The convenors of the conference are: Rupert Cox (Granada Centre for Visual Anthropology, University of Manchester); Andrew Irving (Granada Centre for Visual Anthropology, University of Manchester); Chris Wright (Goldsmiths College, University of London).

Further details:

<http://www.raifilmfest.org.uk/conference.htm>

Indigenous Biography and Autobiography

9 – 12 July 2007

Humanities Research Centre, Australian National University

Conference themes

Mixed Identities; Controversial lives?; Who Owns the Story?; Issues in presentation as autobiography; Alternative Narratives and Technologies; That Elusive Relationship; The Performing Arts; Who Owns the Work?; Art and Politics.

Further details: Peter Read – peter.read@anu.edu.au

In the Pipeline: New Directions in Cultural Research on Water

19 – 20 July 2007

Centre for Cultural Research & Cultural Research Network, Parramatta Campus, University of Western Sydney

The symposium aims to explore such questions as: Who's doing what in cultural research on water in Australia? What is convergent and divergent in approach, theory, method, research design? What kinds of networks and partnerships are being developed? What can be done to promote more cultural research on water? How might cultural research and culturally-oriented strategies effectively contribute to water sustainability?

Further details: <http://www.uws.edu.au>, see under 'Events and News'

ICOMOS Conference: eXtreme heritage

Managing heritage in the face of climatic extremes, natural disasters and military conflicts in tropical, desert, polar and off-world landscapes

19 – 21 July 2007

James Cook University, Cairns Campus

The conference theme reflects the modern challenge of managing heritage in a changing and volatile world. It puts Australia and its climatic diversity in a world context and draws together national and international researchers from across the world working in similar environments to talk about common and emerging issues.

Further details: www.aicomos.com

Climate Change and Heritage

To be held in conjunction with ICOMOS Conference

19 July 2007

James Cook University, Cairns Campus

Previous listings (see December 2006 AAS Newsletter)

The 7th International Conference on Oceanic Linguistics (COOL7) [University of New Caledonia, Noumea: 2 – 6 July 2007]

Language of Poetry and Song [Adelaide: 26 – 26 September 2007]

Recent Doctoral Theses in Anthropology

Simone Blair, School of Social & Environmental Enquiry, The University of Melbourne

Title: Shooting a Net at ‘Gilly’s Snag’: The Movement of Belonging among Commercial Fishermen at the Gippsland Lakes (PhD, 2007)

Abstract

This thesis argues that local ‘neighbourhoods’ of shared understanding are not conceived solely through reference to an imaginary ‘other’ but, instead, may inhere in and be rejuvenated by a tension between internally generated and contradictory ways of understanding collectivity. Among commercial fishermen of the Gippsland Lakes in Victoria (Australia), I show that social facts are generated by agents-acting-in-settings, and that aspects of fishermen’s collective practice and representation are informed by such local contingencies as ‘*who you are, what you are up to, and with whom*’.

The neighbourhood, I argue, is realised in performance, during everyday encounters in occupational contexts such as ‘on the lake’ or ‘down at the Co-op’. But fishermen also imagine togetherness, in different contexts, through the construction of conceptual boundaries, by identifying themselves as, for instance, ‘a fourth generation lake fisherman’. These two modes of conceiving how one belongs to a community – through performance or via recourse to structural ideals, produce remarkably different ways of viewing the world, relating to other people, and relating to one’s surrounds. On the one hand, a community constituted by social interaction relies on action in the present and a view towards ongoing future interactions between community members. This mode of belonging is dynamic and is characterised by movement, towards others and towards the future. On the other hand, a community constituted by discourses of tradition and genealogy presumes a person’s social identity is fixed at birth so that action in the present has no effect on a person’s ability to form, reform, or sever the social ties that implicate them in one group or another. When these two modes of conceiving community appear together, as they do at the Gippsland Lakes, a tension between movement and fixity emerges.

That tension, broadly conceived, is an example of ‘systemic flexibility’ – a key characteristic of living systems that persist. As I portray fishermen amid the day-to-day round of fishing concerns, I illustrate how the living system of the neighbourhood persists through the interplay of two modes of expressing togetherness. That

interplay continually reveals, reiterates and recreates anew, relationships, local stories, names and places, while concealing other cosmological terrains. And, thus, in this way, the contours of the neighbourhood are continuously surpassed and redrawn.

I show that in fishing contexts, in responding to the burden of moral obligations entailed by kinship relationships, fishermen downplay those relationships to ensure that other more processual modes of constituting relationships do not become overwhelmed by the fixed structures of family trees. When the apparent immutability of relationships between kin are backgrounded fishermen are able to create relationships with each other that are dynamic and responsive, allowing movement through water space, and, thus, the acquisition of new relationships and the implementation of new knowledge. In their actions, fishermen point out that dwelling on genealogy privileges some relationships over others, weakening men’s independence and, ultimately, their interdependence. On the lake, then, belonging is understood as achieved; it is constituted by shared moments, and conversations, with others.

These conversational occasions ‘on the lake’ are also pedagogical. In these moments, fishermen attend to, and are orientated by other’s approaches to fishing. Through these encounters fishermen become ‘enskkilled’ by the practice community and learn certain styles of environmental and inter-personal interpretation. Fishermen are guided in their fishing practice by the principles of *incomplete knowledge, being there* and *raw fishing*, modes of engaging with the environment that sets them apart from other groups such as recreational fishers who also use the lake. Further, I show that, through an attention to the ironic potential of inter-personal moments, in the context of the contingencies of everyday life on the lake, fishermen state and restate their style of being together – that they are in competition but in competition *together*. In this way fishermen emphasise that it is the movement away from family towards fraught, ambiguous encounters that enlivens the world.

The purposeful movements of ‘wandering’ in search of fish and ‘shooting’ a net are both expressions of a person’s particular history of enskilling, while at the same time they are possessive movements. Fishermen recognise that a person’s skill in, and knowledge of, a particular place gives them entitlement to that place. The performance of ownership is inherently a socially – and an ecologically – embedding institution, because it interweaves not only the dynamism and idiosyncrasies of memory, self and community but also those ecological processes of order and flux that trace out landscapes or lakescapes.

Fishermen implicate themselves in the lakescape as they skillfully use their nets and their charm to catch fish and constitute the neighbourhood. The lakescape emerges, in this way, as a region of named sites held in place by amiable conversations and fraught ownership negotiations. I show that ‘laconic’ place names conceal big context and index the importance placed upon contextualising knowledge. Thus, I argue that place

names are pedagogical in themselves, because they invite fishermen to look beyond the surface of events. Place names express the principle of *incomplete knowledge*.

A change in emphasis, from processual to ascriptive practices of formulating the fishing community, place and knowledge, is now perceivable at the lake, however. In response to external intrusions from the nation state fishermen began to fix in text, contingent aspects of neighbourhood relationships, in the hope that this might enable them to continue to reproduce the neighbourhood. Yet, I argue, such a strategy has loosened the tension that drives the reconstitution of neighbourhood because such discursive articulations of performance are antithetical to the 'ineffable' essence of the actual practices they seek to represent. Thus, at the very moment fishermen meet the intrusions of the state on its own terms they become authors of a very different kind of neighbourhood.

Sabine Hess, Department of Anthropology, RSPAS, The Australian National University

Title: Person and Place on Vanua Lava, Vanuatu (PhD 2006)

Abstract

This thesis draws upon existing bodies of work on 'place' and 'person' in Melanesia, but brings them together in a new way. In the anthropological literature on Melanesia, 'place' has been discussed in relation to colonial history, political economy and effects of the national economy rather than in relation to concepts of the person, as has been done by researchers working in Papua New Guinea and other regions of the Pacific. Personhood in Melanesia has been theorised using concepts of dividuality, individuality, partibility, and degrees of permeability and autonomy. This research suggests that Marilyn Strathern's argument, that for 'Melanesian persons' the distinction between 'individual' and 'society' is not relevant, can be extended to the concepts of 'person' and place. However, these concepts also need to be considered in their specific local history, taking account of Vanua Lavans' ongoing engagement with modernity, in particular with different forms of individualism. Engagement with Christian individualism, with a singular person's relationship with God, presupposes a moral 'core self' that makes a person responsible for their own actions. Capitalist notions of possessive individualism and the simultaneous change from an oral, flexible mode of knowledge transmission to a more rigid written one have also affected Vanua Lavans' understanding. This thesis provides a snapshot of contemporary notions of personhood and a 'Melanesian modernity' in flux, where discontinuities and continuities compete, merge, co-exist, and are moderated by a cultural logic that might be changing itself.

Indraswari, Department of Anthropology, RSPAS, The Australian National University

Title: Women and Warung in an Urban Kampung (PhD, 2006)

Abstract

This thesis is a study of women, *warung* (small shops) and Cicadas *kampung* community of Bandung, West Java. Data on warung, women, and the Cicadas *kampung* is based on 12 months fieldwork in 2002. To collect the data, a combination of in-depth interviews, observation and participant observation were adopted. In this research I explore the warung issue from the perspective of warung owners and other members of the kampung.

From the owners' point of view the main reason to establish warung is to extend the limited income produced by their family members to make ends meet. Other reasons are the possibility to combine income earning activities with domestic chores and social prestige. Having a warung gives more social prestige to a woman warung owner than being a domestic helper. On the other hand, having a job in the formal sector is considered better than conducting a warung business.

From the kampung residents' point of view, the reasons to shop at warung are mainly related to certain services offered by warung which are not available in other trading sectors. Warung offer small quantities of goods and credit. These services match the socioeconomic condition of the people, who are mostly low income. For the poor, warung indeed 'support' them by providing these affordable services which are in accord with their purchasing power. Moreover shopping at warung enables the people to save, especially when buying cooked food. For kampung people, cooking may lead to a higher cost. Proximity is another reason people shop at warung—which could be as close as next door—and this saves them transportation costs.

Warung are also a social centre where people interact and discuss community affairs. Buying snacks (*jajan*) and credit (*nganjuk*) are important practices which mark the relationship between warung owners and their customers. These practices are less likely to characterize other trading sectors.

More women than men run warung because having a warung enables women to combine reproductive and productive work, though this leads to the women working extremely long hours—up to 16 hours a day—to perform both tasks. Warung can also be seen as an extension of women's domestic responsibilities, by reinvesting money and providing meals for their family.

Tanya J. King, School of Social & Environmental Enquiry, The University of Melbourne

Title: Between the devil and the deep blue sea – Negotiating ambiguous physical and social boundaries within the shark fishing industry of Bass Strait, Australia. (PhD, 2007)

Abstract

This thesis addresses questions of identity and ontological legitimacy within the commercial shark fishing community of Bass Strait, Australia. I consider the implications of competing discourses for the integrity of fisher identity, environmental conservation and public narratives on environmental 'crises'. I draw upon ethnographic material developed with commercial fishers

and, to a lesser extent, fisheries 'experts', to explore ambiguities in understandings of individuality and perceptions of the marine environment. Informing this analysis are theories of practice, particularly notions of embodied relationships and knowledge; the role of 'luck' in enabling a particular expression of 'individuality'; the 'skipper effect'; a consideration of nation-state sanctioned and popular media representations of the environment, and the peculiarly Australian experience and representation of individuality, both as performance and as trope. These themes are considered against a backdrop of the physical and social activities involved in commercial fishing, and the 2001 nation-state-initiated introduction of an Individual Transferable Quota management system.

A thematic link throughout the thesis is the role played by perceived boundaries in physical and social environments. I describe how commercial shark fishers and fisheries 'experts' encounter boundaries, and how they are strategically created, dissolved, enforced and ignored in the realisation of agency. The demarcations which are particularly salient in the range of contexts considered are those which bound the 'individual', and those which distinguish between human and non-human environments.

While small-scale fishers explicitly venerate 'individuality', the productive reality demands a level of cooperation. Many Australian commercial shark fishers 'pick partners' in order to locate and track fish, while attempting to maintain enough secrecy so that shoals are not shared between so many boats as to be economically unviable. By strategically claiming individuality, fishers are tactfully and legitimately able to withdraw from particular partnerships, freeing them to invest in alternative relationships. Within a community of like-minded others, it is precisely the ambiguity of interpersonal boundaries that facilitates the agency of fishers, enabling them to variously privilege individuality or sociality as the productive context demands.

The paradox between professed individuality and serial cooperation has been addressed in the Australian context through descriptions of 'mateship' as a trope for rendering ambiguity innocuous. In emic narratives on individual success, Australian and international small-scale fishers often refer to 'luck' rather than to collectively enabled performance. In etic depictions of individual fishing success also, most notably in the 'skipper effect' literature, anthropologists have referred to 'luck' in contexts where a consideration of collective activity might have yielded a more accurate explanation of individual success. While 'individuality' is a vital component of small-scale fisher identity, it necessarily operates as a component of sociality.

Though fisheries 'experts' also negotiate ambiguous boundaries strategically, their interpretive licence is restricted by the rigidity of the parameters they encounter as agents of the nation-state; as civil-servants. The context of their experience is vastly different to that typically encountered by fishers. Centralised bureaucratic management systems rigidly define the ocean, commercial fishers and civil-servants according to criteria

that tends to be generic, demonstrable, replicable and quantifiable. From a nation-state perspective, those features which are salient to the management of commercial fishing are different to those perceived by commercial fishers themselves. As nation-state authority affords ontological legitimacy to bureaucratic decrees on 'the marine environment', fisheries are increasingly compelled to defer to the authority of this tangible domain in their role as 'citizen'. In the process, however, the ambiguity of various boundaries is compromised and the efficacy of fisher 'individuality' is attenuated.

These groupings – commercial fishers and fisheries 'experts' – are not unproblematic. However, the domains of experience encountered by these two groups are different enough to occasion the development of significantly distinct categories of meaning. Adding complexity to the situation is the investment by all of these people in a more general cultural domain manifest in media representations of 'the environment'. I explore some of the complexities and disruptions which emerge when commercial fishers and national fisheries regulators come together to discuss an ocean and a group of people which they experience – understand – in distinct ways. Towards the end of the thesis I draw together emergent themes such as individuality, agency, ambiguity, boundaries, experience and ontology, consider these themes in relation to the ethnographic material. My purpose is not to merely highlight these differences, but to consider the durability of particular ways of seeing the world, and to muse over what can happen when those with minority perspectives are compelled to adjust their behaviours, understandings and identities in response to boundaries and categories that do not correspond to their existing systems of meaning.

Yuko Kitada, Department of Anthropology, RSPAS, The Australian National University

Title: Earning Childhood in Manila, Philippines: Bringing Working Children's Agency into the Picture (PhD 2006)

Abstract

This is an ethnography of working children in an urban low-income neighbourhood in Manila, the Philippines. What does it mean for the children to be working? In answering this question, I aim to bring in the children's point of view in understanding childhood in order to account for their agency. Previous studies of working children have focused on social structures in accounting for the situation of working children, and laid less emphasis on the capacity, agency and power of children to craft their own lives under difficult conditions of poverty and deprivation. This thesis tries to give a more balanced picture of working children's lives than was often the case in previous reports of child labour, that is, children as victims of poverty.

Studies of childhood in social sciences have largely been characterised by the 'socialisation' paradigm which viewed children as blank slates to be written on, and as objects of adult activities. Since the late 1980s, a new paradigm, often referred to as the 'new sociology of

childhood', emerged. This called for recognition of children as social actors with their own view of the world that may be different from adults. A particular concept of childhood emerged by the early 20th century in industrialising countries that childhood is a special period in one's life characterised by innocence and dependency. Within that concept, study and play are deemed appropriate for children, but not work or adult-like responsibilities. One main argument condemning child labour is based on this particular concept of childhood which sees working children as being denied childhood.

However, work is an important part of childhood in the context of poverty in Paco and Pandacan, Manila. I argue that contrary to the imagery of 'lost childhood' of working children, working children in Paco and Pandacan, in fact, 'earn' their own childhood through working. Work makes it possible for the children to have what they consider important in their lives, namely education and being part of the family.

The particular concept of childhood with the image of children as vulnerable and dependent, and in need of protection, has increasingly become an 'international gold standard' for childhood. However, this thesis argues that denying children work marginalises them from production of value and hinders us from recognising children's active contribution to their own lives as well as to others.

Cheng-Yuan Liu, Department of Anthropology, RSPAS, The Australian National University

Title: Negotiating Colonialism in a Taiwanese Sugar Town (PhD 2006)

Abstract

This thesis examines how local people in Taiwan negotiated colonialism in the Japanese colonial period (1895-1945). This exploration is based on a case study of a small town – Kio-a-thau, a place where the Japanese established their first modern sugar refinery in Taiwan in 1901. The historical dimension of the thesis is the long-term colonial transformation of the town and its neighbouring areas, a process beginning in the eighteenth century, while the ethnographic dimension is the sugarcane workers, staff of Kio-a-thau Sugar Refinery, immigrants, women, and businessmen who contributed to the social transformation of Kio-a-thau. The aim of this thesis is to come to a more detailed knowledge and awareness of the social and cultural processes of the Japanese colonial period, a time that was an integral part of Taiwan's legacy. In turn, this increased awareness serves as a basis for a greater understanding of contemporary Taiwanese society. While acknowledging the agency of the colonial power in social transformations, the thesis seeks also to investigate the agency of local people in such developments.

The theoretical focus on negotiations provides three important insights. First, the dichotomy of coloniser and colonised is challenged, and a detailed interaction between these two categories is clearly examined. Secondly, Taiwanese women's agency in their colonial encounters is reexamined. Thirdly, the discontinuity as

well as continuity in history is highlighted. The specificity of Taiwanese society is illuminated in this social history, which shows through an examination of the Japanese colonial period that the Taiwanese people have different experiences of negotiating such external political, social, and cultural influences. To conclude, I suggest the coloniser and colonised model is simplistic and misleading. In theoretical terms, this conclusion implies a breakdown of the dichotomy.

Gregor Neonbasu, Department of Anthropology, RSPAS, The Australian National University

Title: We Seek Our Roots: Oral Tradition in Biboki, West Timor (PhD 2006)

Abstract

This thesis describes the pattern of the daily life of the people of Biboki in West Timor – Eastern Indonesia – in terms of their efforts to affirm the 'roots' of their lives. The core claim of this study is that oral traditions form the basis from which local people both trace their origins and at the same time endeavor to conceptualize their relationships with their fellow human beings and with the cosmos. In this respect, oral traditions are a fundamental tool for people in establishing their roots of life within a community and in assisting their efforts to establish authority and success within society. The chapters of the thesis present a range of genres of oral traditions, in conjunction with detailed exegesis and linguistic analysis, in order to demonstrate the fundamental role of these traditions within the life of the people of Biboki.

According to Biboki people, the root of life is considered to be the ancestors and the Supreme Being represented in the heirlooms that kept in traditional houses. Life in society should be based on performing rituals at the traditional house as a vital way to create and preserve a flourishing community. At each performance at the traditional house – and also at other traditional sites where people hold rituals – oral traditions become a key factor in maintaining links with the past. This is considered as the 'trunk' (*uf*) that becomes the foundation for the 'branches' (*tlaf*) and 'sprouts // flowers' (*sufa // kaun*). People believe that the fundamental issue in performing oral traditions is the juxtaposition of the notions of locality and belonging, in order to identify the nature of the 'name group' (*kanaf*) with its 'land and water' (*pah ma nifu*).

Although oral traditions are not the only source that may be used to trace history or to identify something with accuracy, such traditions can be a pathway to uncovering the layers of a region's history. Importantly, oral traditions place a strong emphasis on the importance of human dignity and people draw on these traditions to provide the background to the relationships between human beings and the cosmos. Oral traditions become a beacon for human beings and have a specific role in highlighting the splendour of human achievements: past, present and the future. So the recitation and observance of oral traditions become the roots for Biboki society, and accordingly must be recorded with accuracy and treated

with respect by researchers, officials, and the people themselves.

Wasan Panyagaew, Department of Anthropology, RSPAS, The Australian National University

Title: *Moving Dai: Towards an Anthropology of People 'Living in Place' in the Borderlands of the Upper Mekong* (PhD 2006)

Abstract

Moving Dai - an ethnography of the 'journeys' of the 'Lue of Sipsong Panna' investigates the ways in which members of the Dai minority in China struggle to reconstitute displaced lives within their home country, which has become part of China, and how they re-empower, live, and experience their home places. It proposes that we should think beyond the confines of the nation-state by looking at this cultural process from both a historical and a regional point of view. The thesis traces a history of 'displacements' in these frontier regions back to the mid-19th century when European colonialism began to expand into the frontier regions of the upper Mekong, followed by the contemporary displacement of Lue country, since the early 1950s, focusing on state mobilisation, development projects, and regional trade and economic developments which radically transform and incorporate 'Sipsong Panna' into modern China. Ethnographically, it investigates Theravada Buddhist revivalism, the cross-border journeys of minority monks and novices to study in northern Thailand, a returned Dai family and their Thai restaurant business in the capital of Xishuangbanna, the social formation of Dai popular music, and the cultural production and consumption of this Dai modernity, examined through band concerts and the circulation of this new Dai cultural commodity.

The thesis argues that mobility, both virtual and physical, has always been a feature of Lue social life and history, and is inseparable from their everyday practices of living in particular places, in which it is inscribed. Mobility across the borders is enhanced by new flows of 'messages,' capital, cultural commodities, and the changing state logic of mobility which enables unanticipated forms of movement. It is both based upon traditional connectivities, of kinship, trading, and religion, in these borderlands of the upper Mekong, and creates new social networks which constitute new social spaces among these minority people within the context of the Chinese nation-state. These processes of re-empowerment strengthen the ways in which these minority citizens seek to re-establish a sense of belonging and re-make a sense of place (through Dai sounds and images), within the context of the state project of creating 'Muang Xishuangbanna' as a place of modern China.

Hirokuni Tateyama, Anthropology, University of British Columbia

Title: *Tubuan: History, Tradition, and Identity among the Tolai of Papua New Guinea* (PhD, 2006)

Abstract

This dissertation examines identity formation and transformation among the Tolai of Papua New Guinea through a historically grounded ethnographic analysis of the tubuan, a masked ritual figure which they generally regard as a prime symbol of their "traditional" culture. Much has been written about the contemporary construction of tradition in the Pacific. It has been suggested that Pacific islanders constitute identities by articulating notions of tradition in opposition to what is considered "Western" or "modern" - particularly church, state, and business. Tolai do distinguish their "traditional" culture from what they refer to as lotu (church), matanitu (government), and bisnis (business), but their constructions of tradition are often situated within these three separate yet closely intertwined institutions, which were originally introduced from outside but which they have made their own. This is most clearly evidenced by the deployment of the tubuan in "modern" settings, such as church celebrations, State functions, and tourism events. In the dissertation, I explore historical dimensions of the contemporary use of the tubuan in the institutional contexts of lotu, matanitu, and bisnis by paying particular attention to specific political circumstances in which Tolai negotiated problematic relations between these indigenous and exogenous forms. I show how Tolai maintained the tubuan, which was a vehicle for social reproduction, while eagerly appropriating lotu, matanitu, and bisnis, which were causes for social transformation; how Tolai came to see the tubuan as a prime symbol of their "traditional" culture through their power struggles with European colonizers; and how Tolai have used the tubuan to reproduce or reshape power relations within their society and country that have been manifested since national independence in 1975. The appearance of the tubuan in "modern" settings, which emphasizes the continued relevance of the "traditional" values it embodies to contemporary Tolai life, helps Tolai visualize a distinct Tolai identity that combines and synthesizes seemingly antithetical themes - an identity that challenges a simplistic dichotomy between tradition and modernity that is still perpetuated in ethnographic writing.

New Publications

Anthropological Forum

Volume 16, No. 3, November 2006

Special Issue: East Indies/West Indies – Comparative

David A. B. Murray, Tom Boellstorff & Kathryn Robinson: East Indies/West Indies – Comparative Archipelagoes

Tom Boellstorff: "From West Indies to East Indies: Archipelagic Interchanges"

Kathryn Robinson: "Idioms of Vernacular Humanism: The West and the East"

Susan Rodgers: "Antic Histories: Narrating the Past in a Martinican Novel and a Sumatran Mock Family Memoir"

Robin Balliger: "Empire in the Present: Exploring the Indies through the Cultural Geography of the Commonwealth"

Srinivas Aravamudan: “East Indies and West Indies: Comparative Misapprehensions”

Journal of the Polynesian Society

Vol. 115, No. 2, June 2006

Tobias Sperlich: “Embodied Inter-cultural Dialogues: The Biography of a Samoan Necklace in Cologne”

Elizabeth Keating & Alessandro Duranti: “Honorific Resources for the Construction of Hierarchy in Samoan and Pohnpeian”

Mike T. Carson: “Chronology in Kaua’i: Colonisation, Land Use, Demography”

Journal of the Polynesian Society

Vol. 115, No. 3, November 2006

Dame Joan Metge: “Profile. ‘Poroporoaki’ for Te Arikini Dame Te Atairangiakaahu” 1931-2006

Andrew Pawley: “Explaining the Aberrant Austronesian Languages of Southeast Melanesia: 150 Years of Debate”

Anne-Christine Tremon: “Conflicting Autonomist and Independentist Logics in French Polynesia”

Oceania

Vol. 76, No. 3, November 2006

Jamon Halvaksz & David Lipset: “Another Kind of Gold: An Introduction to Marijuana in Papua New Guinea”

Joshua A. Bell: “Marijuana, Guns, Crocodiles and Submarines: Economies of Desire in the Purari Delta”

Jamon Halvaksz: “Drug Bodies: Relations with Substance in the Wau Bulolo Valley”

David Lipset: “Tobacco, Good and Bad: Prosaics of Marijuana in a Sepik Society”

Lamont Lindstrom: “Afterward 1: New Relations of Substance”

William Jankowiak: “Afterward 2: Drug Foods, Tangible yet Ambiguous”

Jadran Mimica: “Dreams, Laki, and Mourning: A Psychoanalytic Ethnography of the Yagwoia ‘Inner Feminine’: Part III Soul and the Work of Mourning”

Sabine Hess: “Strathern’s Melanesian ‘Dividual’ and the Christian ‘Individual’: A Perspective from Vanua Lava, Vanuatu”

Julie Lahn: “Women’s Gift-fish and Sociality in the Torres Strait, Australia”

Social Analysis

Vol. 50, No. 2, Summer 2006

Jadran Mimica: “Introduction: Explorations in Psychoanalytic Ethnography”

Sudhir Kakar: “Culture and Psychoanalysis: A Personal Journey”

Florence Weiss & Milan Stanek: “Aspects of the Naven Ritual: Conversations with an Iatmul Woman of Papua New Guinea”

Jadran Mimica: “Descended from the Celestial Rope: From the Father to the Son, and from the Ego to the Cosmic Self”

Waud H. Kracke: “To Dream, Perchance to Cure: Dreaming and Shamanism in a Brazilian Indigenous Society”

Rene Devisch: “A Psychoanalytic Revisiting of Fieldwork and Intercultural Borderlinking”

Craig San Roque: “Tjukurrpa, Painting Up, and Building Thought”

Renata Volich Eisenbruch: “A Cartography of Mental Health”

James M. Glass: “Psychotic Group Text: A Psychoanalytic Inquiry into the Production of Moral Conscience”

Dan Merkur: “Interpreting Numinous Experiences”

Shahid Najeeb: “The Religion of Psychoanalysis, or Ode to a Nightingale”

Exodus to North Korea: Shadows from Japan's Cold War

Tessa Morris-Suzuki, Rowman and Littlefield Publishers, 2007

[From the publisher’s announcement.] Ranging from Geneva to Pyongyang, this remarkable book takes readers on an odyssey through one of the most extraordinary forgotten tragedies of the Cold War: the “return” of over 90,000 people, most of them ethnic Koreans, from Japan to North Korea from 1959 onward. Presented to the world as a humanitarian venture and conducted under the supervision of the International Red Cross, the scheme was actually the result of political intrigues involving the governments of Japan, North Korea, the Soviet Union, and the United States. The great majority of the Koreans who journeyed to North Korea in fact originated from the southern part of the Korean peninsula, and many had lived all their lives in Japan. Though most left willingly, persuaded by propaganda that a bright new life awaited them in North Korea, the author draws on recently declassified documents to reveal the covert pressures used to hasten the departure of this unwelcome ethnic minority. For most, their new home proved a place of poverty and hardship; for thousands, it was a place of persecution and death. In rediscovering their extraordinary personal stories, this book also casts new light on the politics of the Cold War and on present-day tensions between North Korea and the rest of the world.

The Empire of Love

Elizabeth Povinelli, Duke University Press 2006

[From the publisher’s announcement] In *The Empire of Love* anthropologist Elizabeth A. Povinelli reflects on a set of ethical and normative claims about the governance of love, sociality, and the body that circulates in liberal settler colonies such as the United States and Australia. She boldly theorizes intimate relations as pivotal sites where liberal logics and aspirations absorbed through

settler imperialism are manifest, where discourses of self-sovereignty, social constraint, and value converge.

For more than twenty years, Povinelli has traveled to the social worlds of indigenous men and women living at Belyuen, a small community in the Northern Territory of Australia. More recently she has moved across communities of alternative progressive queer movements in the United States, particularly those who identify as radical faeries. In this book she traces how liberal binary concepts of individual freedom and social constraint influence understandings of intimacy in these two worlds. At the same time, she describes alternative models of social relations within each group in order to highlight modes of intimacy that transcend a reductive choice between freedom and constraint.

Shifting focus away from identities toward the social matrices out of which identities and divisions emerge, Povinelli offers a framework for thinking through such issues as what counts as sexuality and which forms of intimate social relations result in the distribution of rights, recognition, and resources, and which do not. In *The Empire of Love* Povinelli calls for, and begins to formulate, a politics of “thick life,” a way of representing social life nuanced enough to meet the density and variation of actual social worlds.

[From Gillian Cowlishaw: University of Technology, Sydney]

As we have come to expect of Povinelli, what she calls ‘this short book’ is original, exciting and intellectually ambitious as well as studded with startling and enjoyable examples and images. Here are some quotes from the introduction:

This essay is a trial ‘an attempt to provide some preliminary flesh to an intuition about how a set of ethical and normative claims about the governance of love, sociality, and the body circulate in *liberal settler colonies* in such a way that life and death, rights and recognition, goods and resources are unevenly distributed there. I examine how discourses of individual freedom and social constraint – what I refer to as *autological* and *genealogical* imaginaries – animate and enliven love, sociality and bodies; how they operate as strategic maneuvers of power whose purpose – or result – is to distribute life, goods, and values across social space; and how they contribute to the hardiness of liberalism as a normative horizon.’ [p.3]

‘I want to show how the uneven distribution of the flesh – the creation of life worlds, death worlds and rotting worlds – is a key to the way in which autology, genealogy and their intimacies are felt, known, and expressed.’ [p.8]

She seeks to ‘resist the choice between individual freedom and social determination as the only foundation for

governing love, sociality and the body’, a choice usually presented as natural, vital and irreplaceable in liberal settler colonies. [p.9]

Her ambition is nothing less than to follow up Michel Foucault’s project of ‘investigating power and the discursive narratives that underpinned it’. This was not simply to understand the disciplining of sexuality, ‘but to understand how all of these were the means by which power in a robust sense – power over life and death, power to cripple and rot certain worlds while over-investing others with wealth and hope – is produced, reproduced and distributed when we seem to be doing nothing more than kissing our lovers goodbye as we leave for the day’ [p.10]

This book, she says, ‘runs headfirst into the serious question of how to write an account of a historical formation without fetishising that formation, without abstracting it from its immanent social contexts, and without collapsing the social reality of that formation into ideological accounts of that formation.’ [p.15]

And from Chapter 1: ‘In perhaps their most damning social analysis of settler society, indigenous men and women from the northwest coast observe how comfortable white people are living alone, how they seem satisfied by the thinnest embrace of the conjugal couple, how they would rather be alone (*gamaparrking*) than have one little louse.’ [p.46]

I have not yet read the whole book, so cannot discuss how her juxtaposing of Indigenous and queer social realms is brought to bear on these theoretical and interpretive ambitions. However, the original way of posing such questions seems to me a substantial achievement in itself.

AAS Newsletter Contributions

The Newsletter provides a vehicle for informing members about AAS matters and other issues of relevance. We welcome items such as Conference announcements; notable appointments, retirements or honours received; titles and abstracts of MA and PhD theses in anthropology that were awarded in the past 12 months; short book reviews or brief notices regarding important new publications; short articles on issues of importance to the discipline; reports on research-in-progress; postgraduate events of significance. The current editors are Peter Dwyer (pddwyer@unimelb.edu.au) and Mary Patterson (marycp@unimelb.edu.au), both at the School of Social & Environmental Enquiry, The University of Melbourne.

The next issue of the Newsletter will be published in June 2007. Some back issues are available on the AAS web site: <http://www.aas.asn.au>