

## EDITOR'S NOTE

This issue of *Suomen Antropologi* begins with a tribute to Victor Turner, an initiative which was sparked by the translation and publication of Turner's seminal *Ritual Process* (1969) in Finland in 2007. (*Rituaali. Rakenne ja communitas*. Helsinki: Summa & The Finnish Anthropological Society. Translated by Maarit Forde. Foreword by Edith Turner.) In commemoration of the occasion, Bruce Kapferer (University of Bergen) presented a lecture in the Department of Social and Cultural Anthropology, University of Helsinki on March 17th, 2007, which we are honoured to publish here under the title: "Beyond Symbolic Representation: Victor Turner and Variations on the Themes of Ritual Process and Liminality." In the article Kapferer convincingly develops his ideas concerning the dynamics and virtuality of ritual which he relates to Turner's concepts of process and liminality.

This is followed by a vivid, generous essay by Edith Turner (University of Virginia) who was not only Victor Turner's life partner but also a long-time collaborator in his research and its academia-transforming findings. We are grateful that she took the time to share with us and our readers an intimate account of her intellectual life with Turner and the events and influences which prompted the development of his ideas, particularly with regards his conceptions of liminality and its product, *communitas*: "social facts, but not Durkheim's kind of social facts". Entitled, "Exploring the Work of Victor Turner: Liminality and its later implications", Edith Turner provides us with insights of Turner's lifelong commitment to exploring the potentials and far horizons of human being and to always viewing this object of anthropology as other than static.

Still on the subject of Victor Turner, Donatella Schmidt and Giovanna Palutan then explore the current turbulent situation of migrant influx in northern Italy—an ongoing research project ("The Construction of Public Identity through the Rhetoric of Political Discourse. An Interpretation through Victor Turner", coordinated by Prof. Donatella Schmidt) for both scholars—using Turner's 'social drama' model as an analytical framework. By examining the multitude of public speeches made in Padua on the subject of immigration, by social actors from a range of interest groups, Schmidt and Palutan demonstrate how the formulation of a 'narrative and redressive phase' in social drama serves to cast new light on unfolding events in their home city. The tribute closes with an essay by Peter Metcalf (University of Virginia): "Unravelling Ritual: Victor Turner and the Problems of Exegesis", in which he explores the problems of re-presentation Turner faced when accessing deep understandings about the nature of life: the rituals which were an enduring focus of his research and thought. Metcalf offers us a valuable discussion of problems of character introduction, of ethnographic description of interpersonal relationships and ritual details and exegetical reproduction Turner encountered, and of Turner's solutions and those of subsequent scholars.

Joel Robbins, the Department Chair of Anthropology at the University of California, San Diego and co-editor of the journal *Anthropological Theory*, revisited Helsinki in the fall of 2008, always a welcome event in the diaries of Helsinki-based anthropologists. During

the week he spent here, he was guest speaker at a public discussion hosted by the Finnish Anthropological Society where special attention was given to the ways in which Robbins has used Louis Dumont's work for theorizing culture, value and globalization. We are very pleased to publish the resulting transcript of the introductory interview—lightly edited for readability—in which Robbins ranges over broad, scholarly territory, finishing with a critique of anthropology and its current trends and directions.

To conclude this winter publication, the Forum section brings together four short papers under the title “Approaching the Mediterranean”—something many of us in far northern Europe dream about during the long dark months. As I noted in the last issue, the aim of this recently introduced section is to provide a locus for current opinion pieces, for raising issues of importance to anthropologists, for suggesting fields and phenomena worthy of research, for polemic and declarative statement. This Forum examines the idea of the Mediterranean as an anthropological ‘region’—much as Africa, India, Oceania and so forth are claimed as regional specialisations by anthropologists working in them. Three of the papers are the products of a seminar series entitled “Europe and the Mediterranean” jointly organised in Helsinki by the Network for European Studies, the University of Helsinki, and the Unit for Policy Planning and Research (Ministry for Foreign Affairs) between 27<sup>th</sup> October and 8<sup>th</sup> December 2008. These comprise contributions from Professor Henk Driessen (University of Nijmegen), who discusses problems with regional specialization in general, the Mediterranean in particular; Anna-Maria Tapaninen (University of Helsinki), who examines the recent resurgence of interest in the Mediterranean as an anthropological field and leaves us with some perplexing questions; and Professor Tom Selwyn (London Metropolitan University), who very briefly sketches in the interconnections of tourism, the environment, public/private and local/global interests in the region. The Forum concludes with Minna Ruckenstein (University of Helsinki) querying how people in the Mediterranean are drawn into processes of cultural change that they see as part of the making of the global, illustrating one mode via analysis of the blood miracle of San Gennaro, so much a part of Neapolitan identity formation and yet increasingly available as a global spectacle.

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