

EDITOR'S NOTE

The first contribution in this autumn issue of *Suomen Antropologi* is the work of Diana Espirito Santo (Instituto de Ciencias Sociais, University of Lisbon). Entitled 'Making Dreams: Spirits, vision and the ontological effects of dream knowledge in Cuban *espiritismo*', the article explores the status of dream knowledge among practitioners of Afro-Cuban religious cults in Havana, especially the spirit mediums (*espiristas*). Santo notes that in Cuba, both in religious and secular fields, local cosmology is crystallized in dreams and rendered visible, providing a valued source of information and prophecy which is often discussed in detail with friends and family. Meanwhile, amongst the *espiristas*, dreams allow access to an extra domain of knowledge in which "the potentialities of the real" are revealed to the spiritually developed, and may be conceptualized as special states of "receptivity". Her ethnographic project is directed at understanding the implications and effects of this receptivity. Simultaneously, however, Santo is trying to conceptualize how *knowing* may have deeper effects than merely cognitive ones, and how the communicative act in a post-dreaming context is also a transformative act, not just an expressive one. This is not a ground-breaking idea in itself, but she moves beyond conventional constructivism to explore ideas presented in A. Henare, M. Holbraad and S. Wastell's recently edited volume—*Thinking Through Things* (2007)—in order to propose that the anthropology of Cuban dreams may require a relational approach that "allows dreams, spirits, people and words to fully be subjects of their relations, rather than just objects on the one hand and subjects on the other". This, she suggests, shifts the task of anthropology from a fundamentally epistemological one to an ontological project that requires the recognition of what is *real* for different groups of people, rather than what they *think* exists—"which is a matter of 'belief' and thus representation".

In a potentially similar vein but with a rather different focus is the second article in this issue: 'Narrating Religious Realities: Conversion and testimonies in Chilean Pentecostalism' by Martin Lindhardt (Institute of Ethnology, University of Copenhagen). In his article, Lindhardt examines narrative strategies of born-again converts to Pentecostal religions in Chile but, unlike most of the literature on the subject, he is interested in not *why* people convert but *how*. This has led to the centrality in his study of the role played by narrative practice in the constitution and—importantly—the maintenance of Pentecostal identities and shared realities. He postulates that Pentecostal narrative practice provides converts with "symbolic structure and a temporal schema for present and future action", thereby empowering them with tools to interpret their lives over time. Furthermore, he suggests that the narrating and re-narrating of the conversion experience should also be seen as a specific kind of social interaction in which religious realities are created and shared by narrator and listener alike. He pursues this argument by examining various rhetoric and non-linguistic strategies whereby those who are listening to testimonies are invited to inhabit the world of the story and live out its plots themselves.

Of the two research reports presented here, one visits the warrior tombs of Sindh in Pakistan and the second is the result of recent fieldwork in Maluku in Indonesia. Both conform to the policy of *Suomen Antropologi* of presenting reports on the work-in-progress of scholars at any academic level in anthropology and associated disciplines, and offering readers the chance of vicariously enjoying the huge variety of projects on which contemporary anthropologists are engaged. We warmly welcome submissions of this nature which, while they receive editorial advice and feedback from peers working in similar fields, do not undergo the rigour of review procedure accorded research articles, and are guaranteed swift appearance if they present work of quality.

In the first report—‘Tombs of Fallen Heroes’—Zulfiqar Ali Kalhor (Staff Anthropologist at the Pakistan Institute of Development Economics and Ph.D. Scholar at the Taxila Institute of Asian Civilizations, Quaid-i-Azam University, Islamabad) provides a description and discussion of the figurative and other depictions found on tombstones in the graveyards at Oongar and Saidpur Takkar located in the province of Sindh in Southern Pakistan. He also discusses the role of the tribes associated with these graveyards in the tribal history of Sindh and the battles in which they displayed the heroism which gave rise to the images of weaponry in the reliefs which decorate their tombs.

In the following report, Timo Kaartinen (Social and Cultural Anthropology, University of Helsinki) discusses the regional urban diaspora of Bandanese-speakers from two villages in the Kei Islands to the broader island society of Maluku. ‘Urban Diaspora and the Question of Community’ explores the extent to which the dispersing community’s ethnic relations are informed by its previous history of travel, migration and displacement and affected by the Bandanese niche in enterprises connected with fishing and trade—the backbone of the provincial economy. Kaartinen extends his empirical discussion of the specific economic, political and kinship relations of the diaspora with local land-owning groups in the new locales by suggesting that the emerging status quo gives new meaning to the classifications of immigrant and autochthonous people.

Our interview in this issue is a conversation between Maia Green (Global Poverty Research Group and Department of Social Anthropology, University of Manchester) and Marja-Liisa Swantz, a celebrated Finnish anthropologist whose career and work in Africa spans over half a century. Professor Green was in Helsinki in June as opponent to Reea Hinkanen’s dissertation on women’s infertility in West Central Tanzania (see the Forum in this issue), and was eager to meet with this pioneer in the field of the participatory research approach in Tanzania, an approach which is now an integral part of development planning initiatives there and elsewhere. Space has meant that much of the conversation—which roamed through Professor Emerita Swantz’s extraordinary life and achievements—has been truncated in order to focus on the principal theme under discussion, but Swantz is currently working on a volume of essays which will review her life’s work and provide considerable, previously unpublished material whereby the omissions may be rectified.

Finally, mention must be made of the annual anthropology convention in Finland 7th–8th May 2009, titled ‘Continuity through Change: Anthropological perspectives in the contemporary world’, which was a cooperative effort between the Finnish Anthropological Society and the Department of Social Research at the University of Tampere, in which the latter were unarguably the movers and shakers. Keynote speakers were Signe Howell (University of Oslo), Ulla Vuorela (University of Tampere) and Stef Jansen (University of



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Manchester), all of whom approached, in various ways, phenomena that come under the rubric of contemporary globalization: Howell discussed social process through the lens of her multi-temporal fieldwork among the Chewong in Malaysia; Vuorela postulated the anthropologist of any era as a transnational subject; and Jansen's lecture was based on ethnographic research in a post-Yugoslav Sarajevo suburb where he has investigated the materialization of 'the state' through local grids of provision and organization. Over seventy participants took part in nine workshops which reflected the themes of continuity and change at global and disciplinary levels and discussion was animated, informal and very productive. The organizers in Tampere did a wonderful job and we in Helsinki look forward to returning the hospitality in May 2010, when the Convention's theme will be "Ideas of Value: Inquiries in Anthropology." Calls for workshops and presentations are on their way.

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