

EDITOR'S NOTE

This issue of *Suomen Antropologi: Journal of the Finnish Anthropological Society* showcases the work of a number of young local scholars, demonstrating the broad range of ethnographic areas and research subjects which are capturing the interest of the latest generation of Finnish-based anthropologists. With the aim of balancing perspectives between work 'at home' and abroad, we begin with an article by Edward Dutton, a British scholar living and working in Finland, entitled, "Here the Status Symbols Clash: Social status and status expression in Finnish homes". In it he presents ethnographic research he has conducted in the northern Finnish cities of Oulu and Kokkola. Through examination of the material artefacts which Finns from different social backgrounds choose to decorate the more public rooms of their houses, Dutton draws some conclusions about the evolution of identifiers of Finnish social status over time. The body of publications by Finnish anthropologists working on home ground is not very substantial—though perceptibly on the increase (e.g. in migration, medical anthropology, memory studies)—and it is to be hoped that Dutton's contribution sparks discussion and further research along similar lines.

This is followed by two articles which address interaction between state initiatives and community-level activity from different perspectives. In her article, "Animating the Unseen: Landscape discourses as mnemonics among Kolguyev Nenets", Karina Lukin (University of Helsinki) explores local discourses on Kolguyev Island (Barents Sea) concerning a sacred hill whose idols were destroyed in the Soviet years. Framed as recollection, Lukin analyses the stories both as valued speech and as part of everyday resistance to imposed transformations of the Nenets traditional way of life. This is followed by discussion of a combined logging and agricultural project in the remote Pomio district of Papua New Guinea in an article titled, "Strengthening the State: Logging and neoliberal politics in East New Britain, Papua New Guinea", by Tuomas Tammisto (University of Helsinki). In it, Tammisto argues that private development projects such as the one he examines create 'legible environments' for state expansion, but unforeseen local responses to the changes may be as significant in strengthening the state as the provision of infrastructure in previously inaccessible areas.

The two reports which follow—by Heidi Härkönen (University of Helsinki) and Mari Korpela (University of Tampere)—discuss research conducted in Cuba and India respectively. In "Gender, Kinship and Lifecycle Rituals in Cuba", Härkönen continues the theme of the effects of state initiatives at local levels by exploring the relationship between matrifocal gender and kinship structure, and revolutionary Cuban governance; her ethnographic data is drawn from her participation in major Havanian lifecycle rituals such as Catholic baptism, girls' *quince* parties, weddings and funerals. Korpela's paper, "Westerners in Search of a Better Life in India", is a revised version of her dissertation defence (Lektio), performed at the University of Tampere on December 4th 2009, in which she presents her research on communality among peripatetic Western residents in Varanasi in a framework of lifestyle migration.

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The Forum section—“Anthropology of oil and the resource curse”—concludes this issue with a discussion of the substantial social, economic and cultural transformations instigated by oil production in an increasing number of new African oil states. Andrea Behrends and Nikolaus Schareika kick off the debate by looking at existing studies of the phenomenon, asking how social and cultural anthropology might contribute to analysis of this important conjuncture in world history. Gisa Weszkalnys' subsequent contribution critically examines the notion of 'the resource curse'. As the term is commonly used among economists, this underlines that the presence of large natural resources such as oil, rather than resulting in general economic development in the producing country, may lead to the decline of certain sectors of the national economy and internal struggle for access to resource revenues—a curse rather than a blessing. Dinah Rajak continues the debate by suggesting that anthropology's contribution to problematising the 'resource curse' should lie as much 'in illuminating the powerful agency within the forces of extraction' as in dealing with the experience of those who become subject to it. Tim Di Muzio's final contribution offers the opinion that the real 'resource curse' is a 'pattern of capitalist, high energy intensive social reproduction premised upon cheap and dirty fossil fuels' which might offer the most appropriate target for anthropological intervention.

May I personally conclude this brief introduction by reminding readers of the Finnish Anthropological Conference 2010 (May 11th–12th), this year being held in Helsinki. The programme and further details may be found on the Society's home page: <http://www.antropologinenseura.fi/en/home/>
Welcome!

MARIE-LOUISE KARTTUNEN
EDITOR-IN-CHIEF