IOI BRIEFING: Multiculturalism in anthropology
By Emilie Bickerton

Until a few years ago, Anthropology students were being told that 'Anthropology is Dead'[i]. Post-colonial guilt and introspection racked the discipline, all truths were understood as relative, and any study in the field was informed primarily by subjective values - no neutral, universal rationality could be drawn upon to make use of ethnographic data. As John O'Neill put it, there was a 'neutralisation of convictions' in the field. And as a result, anthropology had ceased to serve any purpose in the contemporary world.

The discipline's defining feature, *participant observation* was born in a quite different context. The first major, specifically anthropological expedition came in 1898 to the Torres Straits Islands, but the motivations of the crew who 'dared to know' were very much in the Enlightenment tradition – to research and develop a body of knowledge about the other peoples of the world. God would not be used as an explanation, but rather, 'Know then thyself, presume not God to scan/ The proper study of mankind is man…' [ii] Human reason was regarded as the key tool of research, and earlier Victorian anthropologists such as James Fraser and EB Tylor, while sometimes romanticising the object of study (the concept of the *noble savage* developed by **Rousseau** (1712-1772) influenced this approach), sought to rationalise the rituals of religion and magic in other cultures, under the same, broader process of secularisation in Europe.

In studying the religious and mystical elements of other cultures, Victorian anthropologists tried to find an appropriate idiom through which they could understand humans in purely human terms. From an environment transformed by the industrial revolution these Victorian anthropologists understood other cultures to be in a stage of temporary backwardness, and took their social structures and actions to reveal elements of human nature less clearly expressed in industrialised countries. The study of culture therefore was a process of learning about humanity in the process of development, as it was assumed that the environments in which small-scale societies were found would not, and should not stay the same.

Scientific objectivity versus scientific racism

Auguste Comte (1798-1857), the French sociologist, sought to establish this form of study through the Positivist movement. For him, society was governed by certain scientific laws, and uncovering these would be the function of the new discipline, sociology. The distinction between anthropology and sociology is at its clearest here, with the former being defined through the establishment of fieldwork, and the ethnographic text, and the latter concerned with the study of social forms.

The most important disciple to Comte's Positivism was the French sociologist, **Emile Durkheim** (1858-1917) whose project provided anthropologists with an alternative to the cruder evolutionist understanding of culture promoted by **Herbert Spencer** (1820-1903). Spencer was a Quaker, and a railway engineer, thus emerging from a context defined both by the industrial revolution, and also a teleological and utopian perspective from his religious background. For Spencer, society was best understood organically, in a constant, inevitable process of development, with each component having a function subservient to the underlying purpose of the 'organ'.

Cultures were an external manifestation of the various stages of human development and in the framework of evolution the process was one of adoption and inevitability – cultural development was directly analogous to biological evolution. The use of Darwinian evolution as a blueprint for social survival and development allowed Spencer to place cultures within a hierarchical scale of development, using the European model as the pinnacle. His substantiation for such claims were poor, however, drawing on the scientific racism of Physical Anthropology which so discredited all fields of the discipline in the twentieth century. Subsequent talk of a hierarchical analysis of culture was, and perhaps still is quickly linked to the flawed model developed by Spencer.

The **Functionalism** developed by Emile Durkheim provided a far less judgmental and more objective approach to the study of society. The focus was less on a progressive, even historical understanding of culture, but instead took societies as static wholes, and sought to discern the key social facts governing behaviour within each. Durkheim developed the term *conscience collective*, which broadly referred to the common consciousness (or conscience) shared by individuals belonging to the same society. It was a term denoting both a cognitive and moral connection between society and individual, with the society taken as the prime mover (eventually replacing the role of religion). Almost as an attempt to confirm the all-pervading role of society in individual life, Durkheim theorised even the most apparently anti-social of acts - suicide (1897). He argued that suicide rates must be taken as indicators of the state of social solidarity in any given society, and that acts of suicide could be incorporated into a strict classification denoting four main types.

British Social Anthropologists took on the Functionalist approach to cultures in their various fieldwork studies. Prominent anthropologists such as **Bronislaw Malinowski** (1884-1942), **Evans-Pritchard** (1902-73) and **Radcliffe-Brown** (1881-1955) were eager to carve out a role for their own fieldwork studies and distinguish the anthropological discipline from all others. The Functionalist understanding of culture provided justification for small-scale fieldwork studies. It was now possible to bracket the consideration of the course of human history, and declare biological findings irrelevant to sociological inquiries. Whether practices were independently invented or imported was of little significance in the functionalist approach, which sought primarily to understand the immediate function of actions within a single ongoing social whole (recognising that practices, tools etc may serve entirely different functions in other societies).

The result of this approach was to present radically different, isolated and static societies, but explain away their differences in exposing the inner logics and the functionality of their actions and beliefs. After time in Central Africa, Evans-Pritchard explained that witchcraft amongst the Azande was really quite rational: it worked to its own internal logic, providing explanations for what, in Western terms would be referred to as luck or co-incidence. Using the famous example of the Zande granary which collapsed and killed the people who had been sheltering underneath it, Evans-Pritchard argued that the Zande understood *how* the granary had collapsed (supports eaten away by termites), but the further question of *why* this had occurred at the *same time* that people were underneath it, was where 'witchcraft' provided the answer. Science had no explanation as to why the two chains of causation had intersected at a certain time and place, but witchcraft provided the missing link.[iii]

From culture to cultures

The move towards a more pluralist and historical approach to culture was already being developed in the United States by the German émigré, **Franz Boas** (1858-1942). Coming from a German Romanticist tradition with predecessors such as Herder, Boas emphasised the notion of *cultures* rather than a single culture. At the same time he was historical in his analysis, accepting that cultures were always a fusion of elements originating in various times and places. What differentiated one culture from another for Boas was its particular 'spirit' (*Volkgeist*), creating an' integrated whole', coherent through the 'genius of the people'[iv].

Differences on a horizontal scale, rather than specific function and universal social facts, were Boas' main interest. Today he is presented as a key figure concerned with eradicating the discipline's roots in scientific racism. Under Boas though, the foundations of this approach remained intact, as he merely used a different idiom (culture instead of race) for explaining human difference. Rather than being governed by any underlying pattern in world history, humanity, for Boas, was divided into a plurality of integrated wholes, and each of which we must respect and retain for its specific individual qualities.

The French Anthropologist, **Claude Levi-Strauss** (1908-), was also involved in this attempt to counter the scientific racism of the day, and free the anthropological discipline from its tarnished image. He took from Boas the emphasis on cultures rather than culture, considering the study of the differences between cultures (in myths, artefacts, kinship systems, rituals,

taboos etc) as paramount to the true understanding and celebration of humanity. The legacy Levi-Strauss would leave in anthropology, however, was Structuralism.

Claude Levi-Strauss was an unashamed 'armchair anthropologist'. While his British counterparts were strongly focused on the study of specific social structures and getting out into the field, it was a structure of a different kind that captivated Levi-Strauss, and one which (to his relief) did not require any lengthy stays in the Brazilian tropics he had had to endure in his youth[v].

In the early 20th Century, Levi-Strauss had been particularly influenced by the Cours de Linguistique (1917) given by **Ferdinand de Saussure** (1857-1913) in Geneva. He applied Saussure's distinction between *langue* (language) and *parole* (speech) to the study of cultures, suggesting that a similar distinction could be made between structure and meaning in culture. If, as Saussure had argued in the case of language, 'the very ones who use this code daily are ignorant of it ' [vi], Levi-Strauss concluded that the various myths, art, rituals, cooking methods etc around the world could be diverse manifestations of a similarly unknown 'hard structural core' of the universal human mind, always working to mediate various contradictions (nature/culture, male/female).

The result of Levi-Strauss's excessive research and theory was to depict man as *Homo Faber* (tool-maker), the famous *bricoleur* or handy-man. Variation on this common theme, rather than innovation, grounded Levi-Strauss's formulation of culture. The prime mover for Levi-Strauss was not so much the functionality of society, but rather the workings of the universal mind over which individual subjects had no control. Like *parole*, cultural practices may be endlessly negotiable and contingent on the particular context, but these variations always drew from the same universal code of the structural mind (analogous to *langue*). This always remained intact, and provided the very basis for expression. Accordingly, Levi-Strauss was not concerned with change in human beings. He even dreaded future change, sensing that lucid manifestations of *la pensee sauvage* (found in small-scale, isolated societies) were in decline as industrialisation and technological improvements increased the world over.

Overall, Structuralism has been an extremely influential and enduring theory in anthropology. Broad cultural themes were analysed through a structural perspective, as the work by British Anthropologist **Mary Douglas** (1921-) reflects one of the more orthodox readings of Levi-Strauss, working on purity and pollution,[vii] and shopping habits[viii]. More critical readings have come from the contemporary American Anthropologists **Carol MacCormack** and **Marilyn Strathern** who have used ethnographic research to challenge the 'universal' content of Levi-Strauss' basic structural oppositions, without challenging the general form proposed[ix].

Defining the object

By the 1950s distinctive strands were emerging in anthropological approaches to culture. The British tradition of Social Anthropology was concerned with the study of social structure and the functionality each part contributed to the whole. In the US, other important fields were developing. Psycho-cultural anthropology, or the Culture and Personality School, had been a long time in fruition, and would later be the source of many controversial scandals. The earliest work in the tradition would come from **Margaret Mead** (1901-1978) who produced one of those rare things – a best-selling anthropological work – with Coming of Age in Samoa (1928). The study conducted by Mead investigated the way culture and cultural perceptions (of adolescence, marriage etc) shaped our experiences and affected our psyche.

In 1983 Mead's work became the subject of a major anthropological scandal. In an influential book[x], Derek Freeman argued that Mead romanticised the Samoan society in order to criticise American attitudes to education and sexuality. This accusation that Mead had used anthropological subjects to produce an allegorical statement about American society fed the frenzy of doubt in the discipline over why anthropologists are interested in other societies anyway, and whether the desire to know is motivated more by an interest in *self-understanding,* rather than an interest in the world outside of ourselves. Questions arose about the motivations of anthropological enquiry and about a conclusive shift in the anthropological object of inquiry, from Other to Self.

The psycho-anthropologist **Ruth Benedict** (1887-1948) produced another popular work, The Chrysanthemum and the Sword, (1945). The work was a comparative study of Japanese and US personality and culture, and had been funded by the US Government, eager to learn more about the Japanese during the war. Criticism arose over the work for its claiming of anthropological authority, without Benedict having any first-hand ethnographic experience, as well as being produced with strong domestic political motivations.

Psycho-anthropologists engaged with the 'nature-nurture' debate, largely in response to the emerging field of *cultural materialism,* under **Marshal Sahlins** (1930-), which emphasised the role of material factors in determining culture. Instead, the psycho-anthropologists argued that 'Cultures are individual psychology thrown large upon the screen, given gigantic proportions and a long time span' (Benedict 1932:24). In both cases, nurture was emphasised over nature (at birth, the child is a 'blank slate'). But the cultural beings represented were also reigned in by the environment into which they were born. It was impossible for them to transcend their cultural reality.

The introduction of Functionalism to American audiences by the sociologist **Talcott Parsons** (1902-1979), through the works of Durkheim and **Max Weber**, had a strong effect on subsequent theories of culture to emerge in American anthropology**.** The Parsonian theory of social action published in The Structure of Social Action (1937) posited three levels of analysis - structure, culture and personality, none reducible to any other. This provided a specific space for an autonomous study of culture as meanings and symbols, which was taken on by **Clifford Geertz** (1926-) and developed as Symbolic Anthropology. Geertz took a neo-Boasian approach to cultures, with an interest in pluralism and relative perspectives.

Symbolic Anthropology found fertile ground in the United States at this time. There was increasingly widespread disillusion with totalising theories, as previously silenced voices were beginning to emerge under growing Civil Rights, gay liberation and feminist movements, all challenging homogenous understandings of cultures, and any emphasis on universalised experiences which actually appeared to exclude many. In this context of competing voices, anthropologists such as Geertz defined culture as an 'arena'. His definition was 'essentially a semiotic one. Believing with Max Weber, that man is an animal suspended in webs of significance he himself has spun, I take culture to be those webs, and the analysis of it to be therefore not an experimental science in search of law but an interpretive one in search of meaning'[xi]. The object of analysis was experiencing a metamorphosis.

Social constructionism

From the search for laws to the search for interpretations, the world had become primarily one of social construction. Symbolic Interactionists such as **George Mead** (1863-1931) and **Erving Goffman** (1922-1982) in Chicago had promoted this theory in sociological studies of urban and everyday life, and the parallel developments in Psycho-anthropology incorporated this social constructionist framework (sometimes called social constructivism). Although in Geertz's Symbolic Anthropology, culture remained something 'out there', it was specifically something to be *read*, like a text, and the analysis demanded both *thick description* (describing what you see in great detail), and interpretation.

Geertz agreed that symbols were 'vehicles of culture', but in direct contrast to Levi-Strauss, he saw the variety of interpretations to which they gave rise as the beginning and the end of what 'culture' really was. For Geertz, meanings were meant, they were consciously derived and expressed, they were indeed, everything, and so this relationship between actions and meanings gave culture its logic. Symbolic Anthropology was not looking for universals: the aim instead was to express a plurality of meanings, giving voice to localised truths as a proud democratisation of the field.

In this *hermeneutic phenomenology* one can see the origins of the impasse in anthropology. (Indeed, Geertz's theory of culture holds similarities with the contemporary view of culture and cultural spaces – museums, heritage sites – as a 'sites of contestation'.[xii]) The only difference here was that the position of the observer was still intact. Geertz's own fieldwork in Bali in the

1960s for example was conducted in the 'splendid isolation' of the traditional anthropologist, who could 'look at persons and events .. with an eye at once cold and concerned'. Under Geertz, there was somebody looking 'over the shoulder of the native'[xiii], with a certain conviction over the conclusions he or she would be able to derive.

Much of the crisis in anthropology seems to have stemmed from the loss of this 'splendid isolation'. The 'scratching of other pens'[xiv] seems to have startled many, and the progress of other cultures has been taken as a real challenge to the discipline. 'When anthropologists go to Bali these days, they find not only the exotic Balinese, but Balinese engineers, linguists, psychologists, literary critics, historians and so forth. Not only do they know the language and complexities of local culture rather better than the anthropologist, but the anthropologist's presence invokes unhappy memories of other white and well-funded colonial interlopers … Anthropologists today worry with good reason, that they can not compete on scholarly grounds with scholars from that distant land'.[xv]

The very fact that this positive progress of other cultures has been taken so negatively (forcing anthropologists into a retreat) seems to reveal some kind of contorted, guilty conscience – as anthropologists seem keen to accept that the splendid isolation was nothing more than a power game, an act of dominance over the weak. If this is the case, then the discipline was one entirely dependent on the poverty and isolation of Others.

A discipline in crisis

The 1970s was a key decade in the development of intellectual ideas which would have an enduring effect on the authority of anthropology. Describing the actions of the Parisian academics on the Left Bank, Marshall Berman explains that 'For two minutes, in May 1968, their lives were transfigured, a terrible beauty was born; in two minutes more, all their hopes were dead. The postmodernisms of the past twenty years grew out of this trauma, and also out of a collective refusal to confront it. The intellectuals of this period, including Jacques Derrida, Roland Barthes, Michel Foucault and Jean Baudrillard, expressed a pessimism in the potential for social change which still characterises the times.

The atrocities of the Algerian War of Independence (1954-62) had thrown the 'civilising' French colonial mission into chronic doubt, and belief in the general public's capacity to demand change, and want freedom enough to embrace it, dissolved following the disappointments of May 1968. After that the French intellectual elite expressed a very different kind of radical politics, concerned now with radical negations of knowledge, of reality and of truth, debating over the aesthetics of language or sign games.

These negations can be seen as part of a general nihilism, often associated with the works of **Friedrich Nietzsche** (1844-1900) who had proclaimed the death of God, and a re-evaluation of all values. But the nihilism being expressed in the 1970s was as Berman puts it, 'without tears', a deconstruction without expectation that men and women would respond with something better – a radical rejection of the real world without any radical hope. [xvi]

Particularly pertinent to the immanent process of self-criticism and re-evaluation in anthropology were the ideas of **Michel Foucault** (1926-1984), who encouraged major polemics over the relationship between power and knowledge. Foucault argued that, 'history, which bears and determines us, has the form of a war: relations of power not relations of meaning'[xvii]. He wanted to draw in all categories (madness, sexuality etc) and grand narratives and subject them to a severe reassessment in order to construct a genealogy of knowledge and understand how these truths became appropriated as Truth by those in the position to order knowledge.

Indeed, in the context of anthropology, the power to order knowledge was traditionally in the hands of the subject, as s/he observed the object from that position of 'splendid isolation'. In his later works Foucault would move away from the notion of discipline and docile bodies, to an analysis of *discourse* and *subjectification* (later taken up by the (anti) discipline of Cultural Studies with theorists such as Stuart Hall and Homi K Bhabha), putting into doubt how 'splendid' and 'isolated' this position really was, as the question became not only about the

construction of the Other, but even more about the subjectification of the Self when entering into any particular discourse[xviii]. As the psychoanalyst **Jacques Lacan** (1901-1983) declared 'Language is the discourse of the Other… desire is always the desire of the Other'[xix]

Key post-colonial texts at this time illustrated the widespread crisis in ethnographic authority. Already there were experimental ethnographies being published, using discursive and polyphonic techniques in an attempt to erase the author from charges of authority or subjectification (one of the first ethnographies written with this aim was Paul Rabinow's Reflections from the field in Morocco, 1978).

This crisis of authority was fuelled by the charges of complicity with colonial regimes directed at traditional anthropologists by **Talal Asad** in Anthropology and the Colonial Encounter (1976). Broadly speaking, Asad charged that the Western project to study mankind had failed in practice because of inherent contradictions. In the attempt to unravel the mysteries of humanity through research into all the peoples of the world, the anthropologists of the nineteenth century, Asad argued, immediately negated their inquiry by reducing their subjects to either romanticised, passive 'primitives', or violent 'savages'.

Subsequent revision of anthropological accounts of other cultures formulated in a colonial context did reflect varying degrees of prejudice and collaboration with the colonial regimes. Many Anthropologists were employed as informants to the colonial administration, and through the *techniques* of representation, the colonial presence could be legitimised or erased from outside observation. Reconsidering colonial anthropological texts, Asad notes the two images of Non-Europeans to emerge from European scholars: Islamic societies were persistently portrayed as inherently violent, thus necessitating external intervention and control, whereas many African societies (under 'indirect rule') were documented without any reference to the presence of the colonial regimes. Instead, the ritual practices, taboos and belief systems in these various cultures were emphasised, creating the impression that the colonial presence in the region was of little consequence.

Two years later the publication of **Edward Said**'s Orientalism would further fuel this shift in focus in the study of culture, from meaning (overt, tangible) to (implicit relations of) power. Edward Said's notion of Orientalism broadly refers to the Western representations of and knowledge about the Orient in historical, political, geographical and anthropological documentation. He charged European disciplines and cultural genres with reifying and essentialising the Orient in a manner that was complicit with, if not always directly in the service of, the effort to dominate. The text is a crucial one. But the doubts that it provoked in many disciplines have been profoundly debilitating.

Said's explanation and historical dating of Orientalism are never entirely made clear, and subsequent critiques have exposed this. Aziz[xx] for example argues that Said sometimes subscribes to 'Ontological Orientalism' as the root cause, tracing the origins of Orientalism back to Homer, Aeschylus, Euripides and Dante (1978:56, 62, 68). As a result, one wonders if Orientalism was (and is?) primarily developed in the interests of economic expansion and political force, as a cultural apparatus, or is simply 'in the nature of the human mind'[xxi].

Orientalism paved the way for an anthropology of colonialism, acting as a framework for a reconsideration of representation, and the implicit assumptions being made. Museum displays were subject to new scrutiny, as well as literary texts (scrutinised by Said in Culture and Imperialism, 1993), and ethnographic texts. **James Clifford** and **George Marcus** were, and still are, key figures in this process with their collection of essays, Writing Culture (1986), and with Clifford's The Predicament of Culture (1988).

The relationship between the 'self' and the 'other' was entering new and complex ground, and this coincided with reconsiderations of the nature of reality in social constructionist terms. This definition of reality was becoming an overtly political issue, as 'universals' were increasingly represented as mistaken and imposing. Indeed, Said's own thesis is rooted in the particular. He distances 'units of knowledge' from the 'raw reality' (1978:60), noting that there will always be a certain construction involved: 'the real issue is whether there can be a true representation of anything… a representation is *eo ipso* implicated, intertwined, embedded,

interwoven with a great many other things besides the "truth", which is itself a representation' (1978:272).

Assimilating the critique

The response in anthropology to this questioning of the objective value of representations was not retaliation, but assimilation of such critiques. Indeed, today in anthropology, social construction is explained as representing an *awareness* of how the real world is organised and understood, rather than posited as a particular *theory*. Discursive and polyphonic ethnographies were the first attempts to work with this new reality, attempting to neutralise the authority of the author by allowing other, 'native' voices to dominate the text.

Under the revelations of colonial anthropology, the various scandals concerning motivations and hidden agendas, and the reconsideration of the agency of the subject has led to a fracturing of the discipline's foundations. The Other is no longer tangible, and a certain implosion has resulted, with self-analysis and flagellation flooding the discipline.

Subsequently, anthropological theories of culture have been described as 'auto-fageous'[xxii]. But rather than signifying the subject's inner dynamic, its constant strive for re-invention and improvement, such a definition comes across more as admission of failure at the inability to contribute important and relevant information. Anthropologists today have generally subscribed to the understanding of culture as a process of meaning-making[xxiii], and so their current role seems one of the sensitive expert, acutely aware of the pitfalls of commenting on and categorising the outside world. If 'raw reality' is out of bounds, a genealogy of knowledge about the genesis and development of definitions and categories is not.

This careful approach to the world and representing it may avoid (what is often presented as) the horror of judgement, but it is debilitating in any discussion over contemporary issues. During the US military engagement in Afghanistan in late 2001, anthropologist Professor Richard Tapper, who conducted fieldwork in Afghanistan between 1968 and 1972, commented on his own reaction: 'watch[ing] with growing cynicism, the antics of the instant pundits… with a sense of powerlessness and futility, that [my] own field experience was limited in time and space, and not particularly relevant to the current crisis'[xxiv]. For Tapper there are no generalisations to be drawn from fieldwork studies, because by its very nature fieldwork uncovers the complexities of social reality and cultural practices; it is about breaking the stereotypes and seeing a world not crudely cut up by categories. His silence in the face of the crisis reflects the pitfalls of such a perspective.

Because the conviction and use of the discipline is in question, every change erodes its very tenuous foundations rather than building on past experiences and ideas. The aim now seems to be what TM Luhrmann has called the 'interpretive drift' (in Persuasions of the Witches' Craft, 1989), effectively the assimilation of the anthropologist into the culture of study so that interpretations are made from within rather than 'outside'. This 'drift' seems proudly ambiguous – a position many anthropologists seem willing to take when there is such a fear of authority. It is a selfless act, born of a fear and cynicism about the subject, and a confusion over how to overcome the apparent dilemma between overt presence, and pretended absence as a fieldworker.

Shunning universals, embracing absolutes

Judgement and criticism of others is perceived as a reprehensible power, to the extent that now, 'good anthropology is about siding with the weakest and most vulnerable in any situation'[xxv]. In shunning universals, the discipline now seems to have embraced ethical absolutes, and is primarily concerned with benevolence.

So, it is little wonder that the cultural pluralism promoted by Boas is enjoying a contemporary revival in the form of multiculturalism. The right to difference and the recognition of particular identities is the only way to function in a world which has 'neutralised' its convictions. Much of the work in anthropology today is endorsing the multiculturalist agenda rather than challenging it.

It must be said that there are at least some attempts to seek out new fields of study and analyse the impact of the constant changes and innovations in communication technology, for example, yielding rather more interesting results.[xxvi] The new voices and new spaces[xxvii] are perhaps sometimes hailed overly optimistically. Economic status, the role of the state in censorship and the contingency of space and time on the uses of such new modes of communication and information clearly still influences the ways technology is used, and reflects a barrier in the freedom these new spaces do allow. Nevertheless, it is in such cases that the anthropological analysis is most fruitful.

Still, acts of altruism and selflessness are a long way from contributing to an instructive and progressive study of human beings in society.

Emilie Bickerton is an anthropology student at the School of Oriental and African Studies in London.

---

[i] Dr. M. Hobart, see Development and Anthropology
[ii] Alexander Pope, quoted in article by R. Bierstedt, *Sociological Thought in the 18th Century,* in Bottomore and Nisbet (ed) A History of Sociological Analysis
[iii] E. Evans-Pritchard, Witchcraft, Oracles and Magic Among the Azande (1937:69-70
[iv] Franz Boas, see George Stocking, A Franz Boas Reader: The Shaping of American Anthropology 1883-1911(1982)
[v] See his autobiographical work, Tristes Tropiques (1955),
[vi] Saussure quoted in Pettit, The Concept of Structuralism: a critical analysis 1977:76
[vii] Purity and Danger, (1966)
[viii] Natural Symbols, (1970)
[ix] See MacCormack C.P 1992 [1980] in *Nature, Culture and Gender: a critique*, from Nature, Culture and Gender, (eds MacCormack C.P and Strathern). Levi-Strauss postulates what content these basic contradictions may have, considering in particular the opposition between nature and culture, female and male, raw and cooked, domesticated and wild. What MacCormack and Strathern noted was the great extent to which his structural models depended on the notions of becoming and transforming. Such a notion they attribute to dynamic models developed from a specifically European conception of history, of progressive change over time. The concept that one category can transform into another, with nature becoming culture, child through socialisation becoming adult, the raw becoming cooked, etc. All are widely accepted because to a large extent 'meaning for us depends on 'becoming'' (MacCormack and Strathern 1992:7). Sahlins (quoted in MacCormack and Strathern 1992:6) comments that such a perception was far from universal, 'As far as I know, we are the only people who think themselves risen from savages; everyone else believes they descended from the gods'.
[x] D. Freeman, Margaret Mead and Samoa: The Making and Unmaking of an Anthropological Myth (1983)
[xi] Clifford Geertz, The Interpretation of Cultures (1973:5)
[xii] For an example, see Anita Herle, *Torres Strait Islanders, Stories from an Exhibition.* Ethnos, Vol. 65:2 2000, she argues that in the preparation for an exhibition, 'the museum emerges as a potentially valuable field-site, a particular type of 'contact zone', with artefacts playing an active role as intermediaries between museum staff, Islanders, and other visitors to the exhibition' (254)
[xiii] Clifford Geertz, The Interpretation of Cultures, 1973.
[xiv] James Clifford, The Predicament of Culture, 1988:26, referring to native voices.
[xv] From *The Touch of the Real: At once cold and concerned, the exemplary eye of Clifford Geertz,*
T. M. Luhrman, Times Literary Supplement, 12.01.2001 (3-4)
[xvi] Marshall Berman, *Why Modernism still matters,* from Modernity and Identity, (ed. S. Lash and J. Freedman) 1989:34-58
[xvii] Michel Foucault, *Truth and Power* (1984), In A Foucault Reader, Rainbow, P. (ed.) Penguin Books: London (1991)
[xviii] See article by Talal Asad, *The Concept of Cultural Translation in British Social Anthropology,* from Writing Culture, 1986:141-165) for an example of these ideas in an anthropological context. Asad refers fundamental changes which occur in 'modes of thought'

when one tries to adapt the notes taken in the field to an ethnographic account prepared primarily for a Western academic audience.

[xix] Jacks Lacan, Ecrits, (1966)

[xx] Sadik Jalal al-'Azm, *Orientalism and Orientalism in Reverse,* from Khamsin: The Journal of Revolutionary Socialists of the Middle East, (8), 5-25, 1980

[xxi] To be clear, Said here is referring to the reaction of human beings to the Other. He finds 'nothing especially controversial or reprehensible' about the domestication of an exotic or alien culture because 'it is perfectly natural for the human mind to resist an assault on it of untreated strangeness' (1978:67)

[xxii] Nancy Lindisfarne, opening lecture to First Year Anthropology students, SOAS.

[xxiii] See Susan Wright, *The Politicization of Culture,* in Anthropology Today (14), 1, February 1998:10

[xxiv] Professor Richard Tapper, *Anthropology and (the) Crisis,* in Anthropology Today Vol 17, no (6), December 2001 (13-16)

[xxv] Nancy Lindisfarne, Anthropology Today (18) 4:20, 2002. Comment was in response to an article by P. Werbner *Reproducing the Multicultural Nation,* Anthropology Today (18) 2, 2002.

[xxvi] See for example the Georgetown Centre for Contemporary Arab Studies (Working Papers in New Media and Information Technologies) for an example of these new kinds of ethnography.

[xxvii] See Dale Eickelman and Jon W. Anderson (eds), New Media and the Muslim World: The Emerging Public Sphere, (1999) as an example of this approach.